

suspicion that the Government feels that the less said about environmental aspects of uranium production the better. We know where this attitude has led us in the past.

Here are two critical environmental areas that fail to be addressed in the legislation. This is unfortunate when we consider that this Government assumed office with the expectation that it would examine the inherent difficulties of the nuclear fuel cycle. During the election campaign in the summer of 1984, commitments were made on a number of occasions that the whole matter of the future of the Canadian nuclear industry was of concern to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). The Prime Minister has been in office for nearly four years but still there is no initiative in terms of a public inquiry into the nuclear fuel cycle. When he was asked about this, the Prime Minister indicated that it was not a priority at this time.

Fortunately for Canada, such an inquiry is now under way. It is being conducted by the New Democratic Party, chaired by the Member for Winnipeg—Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie) and the Member for Vancouver—Kingsway (Mr. Waddell). They have been examining the process surrounding the nuclear fuel cycle for some months and will soon submit a complete report based on their evaluations and on public and private hearings that have been held at various locations across the country.

It appears that the Government is backing away from involvement in the nuclear industry while indicating sincere concerns about uranium mining. At the same time, it is proposing legislation that essentially passes this matter on to new jurisdictions without any indication of improved categories of safety. I do not want to deal entirely with the environmental problems associated with this legislation.

There are problems in this legislation in terms of processing and mining itself. I do not believe we should proceed with this legislation until the Government has a clear policy on the nuclear industry. Perhaps the appropriate place to raise questions of this nature would be in the legislative committee where presumably this legislation will move very quickly.

We are also concerned about this legislation in light of our history of dealing with the nuclear industry. This country's track record is not very good. I can recall the government sponsored uranium cartel in the 1970s which, quite frankly, has never been satisfactorily explained to the people of Canada. The causes of the cartel were economic and brought about by an over supply and closure of the U.S. market in 1984. The cartel had a profound effect on the price of uranium, which went from \$7 a pound in 1973 to as high as \$40 a pound two years later. The cartel was investigated and lawsuits were brought in Canadian courts. However, to my recollection no knowledge of this cartel has ever been made public from a governmental point of view, and the charges were ultimately dropped.

A whole set of questions were left unanswered. Eldorado was a member of the cartel alongside Denison Mines. There

was an investigation under the Combines Investigation Act by the director of research, Mr. Robert Bertrand.

I believe that all of this should be made public, as was demanded by the present Government when it was in opposition. This is a chance to clear the air and an appropriate piece of legislation by which to do it. The Government's only commitment in this area is to say that the new company will be subject to Canadian competition law. That does not bring much comfort when one considers that Canadian competition law is probably one of the weakest of any country I know. It is very little comfort to know this company will be subject to our competition law. The legislation also overlooks the very messy episode of uranium marketing in Canada. The possibility of that happening again is a spectre that haunts us to this day.

The reaction to this legislation by the men and women who work for Eldorado Nuclear or the SMDC has not been positive, in spite of what others have implied in earlier speeches. The United Steel Workers and the Energy and Chemical Workers have indicated clearly that they oppose this transfer of authorization. The steelworkers who represent the employees at the Key Lake mine and Rabbit Lake and the three locals at Eldorado uranium refinery at Port Hope are clearly on record as opposing this initiative. They fear for their health and safety, for which I do not blame them.

The privatization of these companies will not be a major step in the right direction toward workplace health and safety. More than 1,000 men and women in Canada are killed in the workplace each year, to say nothing of the tens of thousands who are seriously injured. When a man or woman who works in the police force is killed on the job, people are quite rightly outraged at that act. However, these people are in an environment of occasional violence. When one considers that there is not much comment ever made about the hundreds of men and women who are killed on work sites every year in this country, it indicates that we must pay much more attention to what is happening there. In that respect, this legislation is certainly not a step in the right direction for the men and women working in the mines, refineries and mills of the companies we are concerned with today.

Ms. McLaughlin: Madam Speaker, I want to make a short comment on my colleague's interesting debate on the proposed amendment. I think many Canadians understand that when the federal Government has responsibility for a particular company, organization or Crown corporation, the expectations are greater than those for the private sector that such things as a regard for environmental issues will be particularly addressed by the Government and it will assume responsibility for the resource company that it owns.

My colleague mentioned the kind of public inquiries being undertaken by some New Democrats in this House into the whole nuclear fuel cycle. I would like to ask my colleague what his views are on the responsibility of the federal Government to have one of its Crown corporations clean up its act before it is sold on the private market. The Hon. Member raised the