

*Nordion and Theratronics*

Listen to this, Mr. Speaker, on March 31, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources made an announcement that he and his deputy minister and the acting president at the present time, who is an outstanding public servant, were forming a special committee to liaise with the Board of AECL in order to bring in a new management and a new type of direction for Atomic Energy of Canada Limited. Here is what he said: "Let me state clearly that the federal Government fully supports the Canadian nuclear program." Fully supports. However, on page 1 of the same letter, which went out to all employees of AECL across the country, he said: "The sources for continuing the necessary level of research and development funding are uncertain."

At the same time that this Government is tremendously in support of research and development, it is uncertain where the money is going to come from. There is not an aggressive, forward looking industrial nation on the face of this earth, except this Government now in Canada, who is saying to its research and development organizations: "You pay your way." Those governments are making a public commitment to them. Japan is making a public commitment to them. The United States makes public commitments to them. Great Britain makes public commitments to their R and D organizations. However, what do we say to them here in Canada? We say: "If you make a buck, we are going to rob the bank. We are going to take everything out of your bank and then if you create a profitable company, we are going to take it over and we are going to sell it, and we are going to put the money"—as my hon. friend has just said—"into the treasury of Canada, the Receiver General of Canada." For what? How can you ever go out and complain about a company not paying its way in research and development when you are taking away its bank account?

The action taken in 1985 clearly mapped out the road that this Government was taking. It failed to give support to science in this country. The Government said: "Pay your way, yet I am going to take away your profitable parts."

What about these private enterprise companies that are going to purchase these two companies, Nordion International, which produces radio medical isotopes, and Theratronics International on cancer equipment and cancer research? Mr. Speaker, can you imagine a government selling off stuff like that when it has been such a

success where it is right now? The Government is going to say: "We are selling it off to private enterprise."

It is a continuation on the part of this Government. It has already proven itself to be friends of the drug companies. Now, it is the friends of the people who want to take away the cancer research and the cancer equipment which has been produced in this country, free of charge, research done with public funds. At the same time, the Government also wants to sell off to its friends the radio medical isotope industry in this country. I say, shame on it.

Public funds provided all kinds of good research and development in Atomic Energy of Canada Limited. Now, what is happening here? My hon. friend has just stated that not only is Atomic Energy of Canada being cut back—and I do not mean just cut back, it was 50 per cent, Mr. Speaker—but also the Atomic Energy Control Board is being interfered with. If there is anything that is needed more to build confidence in the nuclear industry of this country it is to have a strong well-equipped Atomic Energy Control Board to do the job that will give all Canadians confidence in the industry. The people across the way are destroying that. This Government has already proven itself to be the friend of the drug companies and now it wants to befriend other big enterprises by selling off these research and development arms.

• (1720)

What is going to happen in the future to these well-founded institutions? Atomic Energy of Canada Limited has produced Candu reactors for the production of hydroelectric power in this Province of Ontario and in other provinces of Canada. If it were not for that we would not be enjoying the standard of living that we are enjoying as Canadians today, because that hydroelectric power feeds half the industry in Ontario, to say nothing of the production of the jobs that are there because of the research done by AECL.

We now have a special committee looking into how the industry is going to fund itself because the Government has made a big decision that in no way will it support the industry. The Government is going to wave a flag and say "We do love you. We are in favour of you. The Government is fully in support of you, but you get out and raise your own money after we take the money you have already and after we take the profitable assets that you