

Nuclear Liability

Grande Cache, is being built to accommodate the employees of the new mine. It will be one of the most modern and scenic communities in the entire country. Within a few years it is expected to consist of about 5,000 people. The impact of this development, together with the revitalization of the coal branch, is being felt in almost all communities in the area, including the important towns of Hinton and Edson. All these foregoing developments are in large measure the result of the efforts and the foresight of the individuals who have served on the Dominion Coal Board and are tributes to these people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It being one o'clock I do now leave the chair until 2 p.m.

At one o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

[*Translation*]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**FINANCE, TRADE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS**

Mr. Gaston Clermont (Gatineau): Mr. Speaker, with leave of the house, I should like to revert to routine proceedings in order to table a committee report.

Mr. Speaker: Is this agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Clermont: I have the honour to submit the tenth report of the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs, in French and in English.

[*Editor's Note: Text of foregoing report appears in today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**NUCLEAR LIABILITY****MEASURES RESPECTING CLAIMS FOR DAMAGES CAUSED BY ACCIDENTS**

Hon. Léo Cadieux (for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources) moved that

[*Mr. Sulatycky.*]

Bill C-158, respecting civil liability for nuclear damage, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works.

Mr. R. J. Orange (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the nuclear liability bill is intended to lay the basis for suitable financial protection against the consequences of accidents that may occur in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, equipment and materials.

Like other industrial plants, nuclear reactors and other major nuclear installations may be subject to accidents involving injury to persons and damage to property. However, in the 27 years that have elapsed since the first reactor was operated, there has not been a single case anywhere in the world, as far as we are aware, of death or injury to health of a person outside a nuclear plant resulting from an accident in it. There has been no case in Canada, and only one abroad, of damage outside the plant property caused by such an accident. Moreover, waste materials from nuclear energy installations have not become objectionable pollutants in our rivers, lakes and atmosphere.

The good safety record of nuclear installations in Canada is partly due to the early provision of appropriate control legislation, establishment of suitable safety standards, and the introduction of adequate protective measures while the industry was still developing, as well as the careful safety review by the Atomic Energy Control Board before approving the design and licensing the operation of these installations. In other words, the legal nature of nuclear materials caused concern 20 or more years ago and action was taken at that time to ensure, not only public safety, but also the protection of our waters and other segments of our environment.

Had we as a nation, and possibly as a world, the concern about the pollution of our waters, our air and our surface then as we have today, and had we taken the effective steps at that time to control the situation, today we would not be facing as a world the serious dilemma we are facing at present in trying to improve and restore our environment.

In spite of the good record, it would be unrealistic to ignore the possibility of accidents causing personal injury and damage outside the boundaries of a plant. Nuclear installations differ from other industrial plants in that maloperation or malfunction