

Eldorado Nuclear Limited

Recently, we had presented to us a ridiculously unprepared proposition for the privatization of Air Canada. That will be open to considerable debate, but it raises the question of whether or not the Conservative Party is so totally committed on the basis of an ideological imperative to privatization that it very nearly loses its senses whenever the issue is raised in the form of debate.

We have before us the proposition to merge and privatize the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation and Eldorado Nuclear. If ever there was an example of a case of privatization in which ideological considerations have overrun all other considerations, it is this one, and so it should be examined. This is a Government—

Mr. Hawkes: In committee.

Mr. McCurdy: I am very pleased that I am being listened to carefully, because the Hon. Member for Calgary West (Mr. Hawkes) could stand further education and an examination of his own motives.

Not too long ago, various spokesmen for the Government expressed their support for the Brundtland Commission report which drew the world's attention to the tremendous significance of the massive numbers of environmental problems the world faces. One of the propositions enunciated in that report was that there should be a movement in the direction of sustainable development.

For the Hon. Member for Calgary West, whose mind turns to a complete blank every time any question is raised about privatization, sustainable development means development that incorporates in the estimates of the costs and in the determination of whether or not to proceed the costs of all the environmental impacts. Surely even the Hon. Member for Calgary West should understand that the nuclear industry is not beyond question. It is not devoid of widespread concern. For that reason alone, one would have thought that the Hon. Member for Calgary West would have had the common sense to understand that this, therefore, is not just any old deal, it is one that requires the most careful scrutiny. It would get that scrutiny if this Government were not so totally committed to its ideological imperative.

In this instance, there is not only an ideological imperative that is being pursued but considerable environmental considerations that must be taken into hand. We know, for example, that the Port Hope refinery produces hundreds of tonnes of waste each year and that the capacity of the disposal site is on the verge of being completely exhausted. There are no alternatives, and when an alternative is found, will it be the burden of the new owners of this merged company to pay for the disposal of these wastes? No, the Government will pay \$75 million for it in the estimated costs, according to the legislation we are considering today.

We must also be aware that there are similar problems with the mines owned by the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation. The most significant problem we have with the

nuclear industry in its peaceful use is the environmental impact of the waste generated by it and the disposal problem which has not been resolved.

In debate the other day, one of my hon. colleagues indicated that the half-life of some of the waste contamination produced was 300,000 years, and he was talking about it taking 300,000 years to get rid of it. The half-life is 300,000 years—

Mr. Hawkes: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Hon. Member is bringing up interesting general information about the nuclear industry, and indeed the committee might decide that some of that information is required from expert witnesses in order to deal with the nuclear industry, but what does this have to do with the motions being debated by the House, either the amendment or the original motion which provides for the merger of two Crown corporations?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I am sure that the Hon. Member will get to the point.

Mr. McCurdy: Mr. Speaker—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I do not think that whatever the Hon. Member said was recorded because the microphone was off. Again, I said that I am sure that the Hon. Member will return to the amendment. The Hon. Member for Windsor—Walkerville (Mr. McCurdy) has the floor.

Mr. McCurdy: As I said, the Hon. Member for Calgary West (Mr. Hawkes) is undergoing considerable mental strain, I see, in trying to understand the obvious.

This is obviously in support of the motion. It takes no great difficulty to understand that we are pointing out some of the considerations that need to be debated and considered by the Government before this legislation is even considered in the House. That I would understand to be the purpose of a hoist motion. It is to allow the Hon. Member for Calgary West and his colleagues to consider what it is they are doing.

• (1150)

Even the bare facts that I have indicated strongly suggest to any rational individual that we are dealing with an industry which should not be privatized. If there is any source of dependable control over an industry that people fear, it resides with Government. Why, then, do we suggest that we abandon the kind of control that will provide the necessary assurances that the nuclear industry will be handled in such a way as to protect the interests of the people and the environment?

We could talk about the workers and the proposition advanced by the former Minister responsible for privatization, which I will only paraphrase, which suggested there would be vastly increased efficiency as a result of privatization. It will be rationalized in order to achieve that efficiency. When matched against the notion of stock being available to the workers, it surely is of some importance to these workers to be sure that their interests will be taken into account in a fashion modelled