

speaking on behalf of his constituents. I am sure the Hon. Member for Terrebonne (Mr. Toupin), who the employees of SNC have never been able to speak to on the phone over the last month, when he finishes that important constituency work that he is doing at his seat in the House, he will want to speak to those employees. Or he should. I am sure that the Hon. Member for Joliette (Mr. La Salle), who also represents a large number of these people, would also seize this opportunity, or should, to speak on behalf of his constituents. However, they will not hold their breath because it just may be that the Tory Members I have just described will not seize this occasion to speak on behalf of the people they represent. I am sure all Members seated on this side of the House, all Members of the Liberal caucus seated here right now, if there were an incident in which seven or eight hundred of our constituents were to lose their pensions, they could not have locked the door to that committee room to stop any one of us from entering the place to defend their interests. Why is it we had a hard time getting even a response to a phone call from the employees? I cannot understand that. It is my hope that in the next few moments all Conservative Members of Parliament will seize this opportunity and tell the Government it is time to come to its senses and act in a proper way towards the employees of Canadian Arsenals.

[Translation]

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I would also like to speak on the matter, because it is very important for employees of Canadian Arsenals Limited, especially in Quebec, where there are two plants. I remember when I was a boy . . .

Mrs. Maily: That was a long time ago!

Mr. Waddell: Yes, a long time ago. I used to live in Toronto, in Port Credit, Ontario, in Etobicoke, near Lakeshore, west of Toronto, and we had a CAL plant there. That was after World War II, and I now realize that there were many CAL plants in Canada then because that was an excellent Crown corporation during the war. Many people, many workers worked for Canadian Arsenals Limited.

● (1520)

[English]

I understand that it has cut down considerably.

As I was saying in French, this was a great corporation which had many factories that produced a lot of munitions for Canadian soldiers and soldiers of other countries during the war. As a young boy, I remember seeing the plants in my area and talking to some of the older men who worked there. I am afraid that if the Government privatizes Canadian Arsenals it will destroy an excellent Crown corporation. While I am not saying it will happen, the owners could rationalize and we would not see any Canadian Arsenals Limited at all.

Motion No. 4 states:

Canadian Arsenals Limited

That Bill C-87, be amended in Clause 12 by striking out lines 35 to 37 at page 5 and substituting the following therefor:

"12. This Act shall come into force after December 31, 1987, on a date to be fixed by proclamation."

This motion was moved by my seat-mate, the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Cassidy). It postpones the coming into force of the Act. I prefer that Canadian Arsenals not be privatized at all. However, if it is to be sold, surely the Government owes some guarantees to the workers of Canadian Arsenals.

After listening to some government Members, I cannot help but say advisedly that the workers are lucky in a sense because at least we can debate this in Parliament.

My constituency office in Vancouver—Kingsway has an open house on the weekends. I have seen cases of constituents who work in private sector companies that have been bought up or merged with another company. My constituents have told me of the difficulties they have in adjusting to a takeover or sale of a company. Sometimes Members who are lawyers, doctors and businessmen and have many job options forget how tough it is on the workers. We must not forget that there are many workers in places like Canadian Arsenals who have worked for years and believe they have some job security. It is a scary world when one is faced with finding another job, yet this happens often with a lot of companies.

When workers tell me that their company has been taken over as a result of a merger or sale, I say that there are laws for successor rights in trade union legislation. A union can be succeeded by another union so that there is some protection. Occasionally, however, that protection does not exist, and this is a good example.

The Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre is a tireless worker for public servants. He has pointed out some of the problems, including job security, pension and the transition from a company that works under the Canadian Labour Code to a corporation which will be under the Quebec Labour Code. This causes insecurity and is an unsettling situation for these workers who are worried about losing their jobs. They cannot simply go hunting. I see the Hon. Member for Nunatsiak (Mr. Suluk) taking copious notes about my speech, preparing to reply when I am finished. I understand that he just returned from hunting in the Canadian Arctic. He knows that it is nice to get out and go hunting but we have to work too.

My point is that there must be job security for the workers. It is my understanding that the SNC group of Montreal has already manufactured munitions as part of its other investments. It could give Canadian Arsenals a low priority. This would affect the workers, and they want to know about it. They want to see a corporate plan, and such a plan should be filed with the House, outlining what SNC plans to do with this company. That is the least the Government owes to workers in a Crown corporation which it is privatizing.

One might ask why the New Democratic Party is challenging this legislation and moving these amendments. Quite