

*Summer Recess*

question. One can see it in the *Debates*. Events proved that he was not guilty, but the press did not bother making that point. It was no longer news. His career around here had been effectively destroyed. I just make the point: go after the government, but let us be a little more careful in dropping names and weaving that great trail of innuendo, the suggestion that there has to be something wrong because the deputy minister of energy, mines and resources held an office in the boardroom—not in the bathroom, but in the boardroom—of the department, in order to sit down with the leaders of the uranium industry to put together a cartel which, under the Combines Investigation Act in this country, is perfectly legal.

In conclusion, if these firms are guilty, then the courts will decide so. Again, I might say that it might be stretching the patience of some of the members opposite if I suggested they are innocent until proven otherwise.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Chris Speyer (Cambridge):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with great care to the hon. member for Lincoln (Mr. Mackasey). I agreed with certain things that he said, and I wish to point them out. Number one, I do not like abuse of parliamentary immunity. I will be willing to go outside the doors of the House of Commons and repeat anything that I say in my speech.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Speyer:** Second, no one can disagree with the basic and fundamental right of any accused that he is innocent until proven guilty, and that is beside the point in many of the matters that I want to draw to the attention of the House.

The uranium cartel, as it started out, had an understandable purpose. The last hon. member to speak was quite correct when he said that the uranium industry was, in fact, depressed throughout the late sixties and the early seventies, and that there was a need to take some action to protect the uranium industry. No one on this side of the House disputes that fact. What is at issue in this particular case is the manner and the method by which the cartel operated, and second, the actions of the government in implementing the functions of the cartel. I wish to address those two points right at the moment.

The first thing I wish to draw to the attention of the House is the uranium marketing investigation which was called in 1977. At that time the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ouellet) said that it would be in the public interest that the air be cleared and that the status of uranium arrangements under the Combines Investigation Act be thoroughly investigated. Not only has the air not been cleared but it has been muddied and it is murky. The investigation certainly has not been complete.

● (1750)

I think that in some ways too much of the time of the House has been spent considering some of the legalities and some of the charges and not enough time has been spent discussing morality.

No member of this House, including members on this side, has full information about what happened with respect to this cartel. For four years we have been asking, persistently and consistently, for information so that people's reputations would not be smeared, so that there need not be innuendo and that we would not know only a part of the truth. We have been asking for full disclosure so that the facts would be self-evident and that the law could take its normal course, and so that those who have to assume responsibility would assume responsibility.

We know certain facts which I would like to point out to hon. members opposite. We know how the cartel operated. We know that it operated through a secretariat in Paris and that this was agreed upon not only by companies whose ambition was to derive a profit but by a Crown corporation whose president was a deputy minister of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.

In those circumstances, the cartel would meet in Paris. There would be lead bidders, there would be secondary bidders, and there would be tertiary bidders. The sham was carried out in secret, and countries like Japan had to compete with companies whose bids were rigged. Mr. Speaker, it is no different from the dredging scandal which happened in Hamilton, close to the riding of the hon. member—

**Mr. Mackasey:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speyer:** I question the morality of operating a cartel where there are fixed bids, where there is bid rigging in circumstances such as I have described and which is outlined all through the Maas committee testimony and report. I find this absolutely shameful, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that hon. members opposite do as well.

I think we can all imagine that, if profit is the motive, companies might get together and say, "We have to fix the price; we need a floor price". I hope it shocks hon. members opposite to think that senior officials of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources were party to the rules that were established in Paris. That is absolutely clear, Mr. Speaker, and I will say it anywhere in Canada. We only have part of the documentation because we cannot get it in Canada. We have to get it in the United States where it is part of the confidential Westinghouse uranium litigation. There is a memorandum dated March 8, 1974. It should be of concern to hon. members opposite, as it is to me, in which the manager of Gulf said that "the EM and R staff, does, however, recognize that Canadian utilities must be prepared to pay the same price we could achieve for export sales." In other words, one can understand having an international price and having a domestic price. But can one understand when the officials of EM and R are saying, in these circumstances, that Canadian utilities "must be prepared to pay the same price we could achieve", especially when those prices are derived as a result of bid rigging?

There are many other aspects of this case, Mr. Speaker, but in 20 minutes no one could ever outline such a complex matter.

In 1977 the then minister of energy, mines and resources said in this House that there was no cartel, that a cartel did