

Private Members' Business

Let me make a couple of other points about some of the more recent research and possibilities.

• (1910)

In the biotech area, for example, in terms of a radiation facility we can design new kinds of drugs. A nuclear capacity allows us to investigate small, molecular membrane interactions which will help in terms of the health care, the medical field and the life chances of Canadians who are unfortunate enough to have trouble with cancer or other kinds of illnesses. This is a record breaking and ground breaking kind of technology that is important to us all.

The boron neutron capture therapy is another example. It is a new mode of radio therapy that combines tumour seeking components to destroy cancer cells and tumours. Is that wrong? Is that bad? Is that not a worthy undertaking for the Canadian economy? Is that not a legitimate expense for the Government of Canada?

It was mentioned earlier by one of my colleagues that we have built in AECL through one of its spin-off companies over 1,300 of the world's cobalt therapy machines. Each year 500 million people are treated for cancer through those 1,300 machines. Is that not a wonderful contribution and worth the effort of the Government of Canada to participate with our world neighbours in cancer treatment research? I think so.

The nuclear industry is an important factor in the sustainable development equation. Nuclear electricity generation is clean, burning an abundant fuel and has no other practical uses. It does not emit the acid gases, as I referred to earlier, carbon dioxides and particulates associated with fossil fuels.

Nuclear energy has been and continues to be a good investment for Canadians and for Canada. It plays an important role not only in providing clean electricity, but in the creation of jobs, revenues and in spin-off benefits that have improved the quality of life of Canadians and the people in other nations.

We talked earlier about some of the financial aspects in the Ernst & Whinney study which I think was important and timely in terms of allowing Parliament to tell Canadians what this kind of investment has meant over the past 30 years.

As my hon. colleague from Renfrew pointed out earlier, surely I could go to any Canadian taxpayer or the the Canadian business person and say: "For every dollar you give me, I promise you a 400 or 500 per cent return, a 4:1 or 5:1 ratio". Surely that is a wise investment of Canadian tax dollars to bring those revenues back to the Government of Canada, to create jobs in Canada and to continue to place Canada and Canadians at the front of the Canadian nuclear industry.

Mr. Wells: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I understand our time is up for debate on this issue. Unfortunately I am not going to get the opportunity to deliver the tremendous speech I had prepared for this time.

I would like to go on record, with your permission, to advise the House that I was going to speak in favour of Bill C-285 and that I fully support the House referring this to the Standing Committee on Finance for—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): That is not a point of order, but I guess the member was able to get his view on the record.

Under right of reply, the member for Kamloops. No one else will speak to the motion and this will close the debate in a maximum of two minutes.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, before I wrap up my comments, my hon. friend was obviously waiting for an opportunity to get in on the debate and I think has a speech with him. Would it be appropriate for the House to seek unanimous consent to have him table his speech as part of *Hansard*?

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, there has obviously been a difference of views presented here this afternoon. I respect the views of my colleagues, although they are perhaps not exactly the same as my own. Others are similar and supportive.

I make two requests. The other day the minister announced that the government was to examine the whole nuclear industry and the support of that. The question was put to her at that time whether she would allow public input. At that point I think she mumbled a bit.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Riis: She did not say she would. I say mumble because she made no commitment.

• (1915)

I would hope that after hearing the diverse views here she would say that legitimate views exist in the country and that she would agree to hold public hearings in all parts of the country to allow the public an opportunity to present its views.

Just on the long shot that people are generous here tonight, would there be any inclination on the part of my hon. friends to provide unanimous consent to send this to committee for further consideration?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): There is no consent. The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired. Pursuant to Standing Order 96, the order is dropped from the Order Paper.