

line of Jennifer Lewington. I wish to quote a few paragraphs from that article:

One part of the Senate bill, which passed by a vote of 62 to 28, would penalize use of foreign uranium, including imports from Canada—a direct violation of the proposed trade agreement.

The article further states:

One Canadian official who monitored the floor fight yesterday, said the Senate bill “absolutely” violates a “standstill” clause in the U.S.-Canada free-trade agreement in which both sides pledged not to go against the terms before the deal is implemented January 1, 1989 . . .

Under the bill, between now and 1994, U.S. utilities that use foreign-enriched uranium for between 37.5 and 50 per cent of a their supply would pay a penalty fee of \$200 (U.S.) a kilogram. The penalty would decline in time over a 12-year period.

It is not surprising they passed a Bill like this. As this article states, Senator Jeff Bingaman, a Democrat from New Mexico where a large part of the American uranium comes from, supports the uranium Bill, and criticized the free trade deal with Canada. He said, “In its present form, the proposed agreement will place our uranium supply and industry in jeopardy”. He also criticized the trade deal for retaining restrictions on U.S. investment in Canadian uranium while allowing “Canadian ownership, financing and subsidization of the industry”.

The prospects for this company when it is privately owned are less than perfect. The ability of the company to repay the debt which it is undertaking when it purchases this company from the Government of Canada is, to say the least, doubtful.

I wish to talk for a few moments about the reaction of the people who work in the industry. After all, they have a major stake in the continued successful operation of these two companies. Two of the major unions representing workers at Eldorado and the Saskatchewan Mining Corporation are the steel workers and energy and chemical workers unions. The energy and chemical workers represent employees of the Cluff Lake mine in northern Saskatchewan in which the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation holds a minority share. The steel workers union represent employees at the Key Lake Mine in which the Saskatchewan company and Eldorado hold minority shares, and the Rabbit Lake Mine. Both those mines are in northern Saskatchewan. The steel workers union represent three locals at the Eldorado Uranium Refinery at Port Hope, Ontario. Both of those unions have been subject to the growing testimonial by the former Minister responsible for privatization about the prospect for the new company, and particularly the shareholders which will go to them.

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When introducing the Bill on March 29, the former Minister said:

The new company will employ over 1,000 people. Those people represent a resource to the company as important as the uranium reserves it owns. I can assure the employees of SMDC and Eldorado that both the Government of Canada and the Government of Saskatchewan have placed a high priority on ensuring that employee concerns are adequately addressed through the negotiations leading to the final merger agreement and through the

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privatization process thereafter. Maintaining a committed, motivated workforce is clearly in the interests of the corporation and all Canadians.

That is why the agreement stipulates that employees be given the opportunity to participate in the ownership of the company. The details of that plan will be developed as the company moves into the privatization phase.

Despite this supposed shareholding—and it is a promise although it is quite vague—the unions concerned are implacably opposed to the privatization. Why? There are many good reasons about which they have told us. I am sure they would have told the Minister and the Government about them. I am sure that the Government would have listened if it were really concerned about the views and feelings of the workers.

Let me deal with the question of safety. Perhaps the greatest concern of the workers and their unions is the federal Government pulling back in the safety area, safety in the broadest sense including occupational safety, environmental safety, and public health.

In the 1940s the federal Government recognized the importance of nuclear energy by first expropriating the assets of Eldorado mines and then using the declaratory power in the then BNA Act to take jurisdiction of the resource. This federal involvement and taking of responsibility underlines the seriousness with which nuclear energy was regarded and still should be regarded. The question now being asked by the unions and ourselves is, should the Canadian Government be backing out of the nuclear field when the problems which were beginning to be recognized when the declaratory power was invoked are now with us and are intensifying? We realize how much more serious and important are those problems.

Here are some of the issues which the unions have raised with us. They have talked about increased problems in nuclear plant safety and have used the United States model as an example. They have referred to the problem encountered at the Kerr-McGee company operations. Hon. Members will remember the Karen Silkwood case, which was made into a major movie, and the almost complete meltdown which occurred at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant. They also referred to the difficulties faced by the American people in getting information in both cases. The unions believe—and we believe it as well—that we would encounter similar difficulties here in Canada if these two companies were privatized.

We also have the specific Canadian example in the negotiation of federal regulations governing the nuclear industry between 1982 and 1988. There should have been tripartite discussions among labour, business, and Government. Without hands-on experience there will be less information for the federal Government to draw on.

The alternative is to use political pressure to get the federal Government to address safety questions. We have had continuing problems in Canada with radioactive waste and their disposition. The people in Manitoba are very concerned that Atomic Energy and the Government will try to dispose of waste plant material in northeastern Manitoba. They have made it quite clear that they do not want it.