

Summer Recess

What is most extraordinary is that the Canadian government initiated the setting up of this cartel. It was set up in large part in the offices of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources in Ottawa with that department's senior officials. The government, according to a Gulf internal memo dated April 12 from Mr. Coleman to Mr. Minks said that it would follow a four-point program outlined by the producers themselves that would result in a promise of non-prosecution from the Department of Justice and a statement of cabinet approval. Two days later the then minister of energy, mines and resources, Donald Macdonald collaborated by sending a telex advising of cabinet approval, and touching on the four-point program advised the following:

I have been authorized by Cabinet to advise you that the Canadian government . . . has followed carefully discussions among world producers, is preparing to allow Uranium Canada and Eldorado Nuclear Ltd. to enter into an informal world producers arrangement, that in order to be workable all Canadian producers should participate . . . your company is requested to make every effort to adhere to the common terms.

The government was so anxious that Gulf be part of the cartel that it gave Gulf officials department of energy stationary and allowed them to draft Gulf's invitation to join the cartel. This was done and then signed by the federal government.

Mr. Austin told the producers that they could, in effect, write their own quotas and allocations into Canadian law by simply supplying the appropriate figures for new regulations under the Atomic Energy Control Act.

Documents which have been released in the United States indicate that the government has taken every action possible to prevent prosecution from taking place. Even after cabinet made the decision to participate, the government solicited an opinion from the Department of Justice in order to protect the producers, "at least as long as the present government is in power", according to the memorandum of April 12.

This government may be able to close down Parliament. This government can padlock Parliament, but the issue will not go away. The truth will come out. We are determined to get Parliament back on the job. We are determined to get the truth. Nothing this government can do can prevent the truth from becoming known.

Mr. Jack Masters (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Mines)): Mr. Speaker, as the House prepares to recess today until October, I go with a clear conscience because, like most other hon. members, I do not really go into a period of vacation but I go to do other things which are necessary to serve the country and my constituents, and to play my part as a parliamentarian.

Miss MacDonald: That is not what Mr. Ouellet said.

Mr. Masters: We have heard many remarks from the other side on the uranium cartel. I do not propose to comment on that because I have colleagues who are better versed in the matter than I am. However, my experience tells me that once the matter is before the courts, and we have been assured that all material will be made available to the courts, the courts are

the proper place for the issue to be discussed. If there are other items to be brought to light, the courts, in their wisdom and with the resources available to them, will do whatever is necessary. On that score I feel very comfortable that the Attorney General of Canada (Mr. Chrétien) has behaved most properly.

I have said that we are going to move on to other things as parliamentarians. While I respect this chamber, it does not give the total picture to the public of our duties and own work.

I shall just run through some of the activities in which I will be involved this summer. They will begin on Monday. I will now have an opportunity to be in my constituency on a weekday. This is not possible while the House is sitting, except on rare occasions. I think that most hon. members will recognize that although I am one of the more quiet members, I am usually here from Monday to Friday, as many of us are. I look forward to the opportunity of being able to spend some time in my riding with my constituents for a number of very good reasons.

On Monday an important report on the airport at Thunder Bay will be released to the public. I will be meeting with the mayor and council, the advisory committee which helped prepare the task force report, with the media and many members of the community. I will be able to hear what all of them have to say on this matter.

Transportation is vital to Canada. This is particularly true in Thunder Bay. But while transportation by air is of immense importance to Thunder Bay, I submit that the transportation system which passes through Thunder Bay is vitally important to the rest of the country, particularly to the west. The port at Thunder Bay still continues to be the major eastern port for western Canada through which flows grain, potash from Saskatchewan, coal from Alberta, and so on.

While we are supposedly on holidays this summer, many of my activities will be devoted to meeting with representatives of the Lakehead Harbour Commission, with railway officials and with a special committee of the city council of Thunder Bay in order to discuss the matter of rail transportation as it affects Thunder Bay. While that is parochial in a sense, because I am concerned about what happens in my own community, it is important that the transportation system of Canada remains strong and remains in a position to serve the needs of the country.

We all recognize that rail transportation and our transportation system in general has basically served the needs of the country well, but the question remains: will it be adequate for the future?

Along with many of my colleagues and people in the area, I will be investigating the rail situation in Thunder Bay to see that that end of it is able to handle the expected heavier traffic from the west. On a more intimate basis, I want to study with people who are more knowledgeable than I the ramifications of the recent report on the Seaway, the bottleneck problems at the Welland canal and so on. There is fear that unless something is done over the next few years while the port of Thunder