

Summer Recess

three-month period. It is not my purpose here to say anything about the postal dispute. Our party's and leader's position was stated earlier by my colleague, the hon. member for Ontario (Mr. Fennell). We sincerely wish Judge Alan Gold, whom we all respect, and the parties to the mediation every success in getting the mail moving again, which is in the greater public interest.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kilgour: There are countless other matters of real concern to Canadians which should and might be discussed in this House this summer. Some of these include the past and present federal government fiscal and monetary policy which, I believe, has caused much of our current inflation of 12.6 per cent. I remind hon. members that Chancellor Schmidt, who is visiting here today, has inflation of approximately 5.5 per cent in West Germany, or less than half of that which we have in Canada. We do not have to have 12.5 per cent inflation. We do not have to be second from the bottom on the list of OECD countries in terms of keeping inflation down.

Second, we could discuss interest rates of 20 per cent plus which, as surely as tomorrow's sunrise, sooner or later will affect adversely virtually every Canadian in this land, and none more than home owners, present or would be, and the small business community. I remind the House that the small business community creates approximately two of three jobs nowadays in our country but obviously cannot continue to do so with interest rates of 20 per cent plus.

We might discuss energy policy which, in present form, has already cost western Canadians enormously in terms of lost jobs, and it will cost Canadians in my region and in other parts of Canada more jobs in the future. The policy is also costing us in terms of oil and gas self-sufficiency in the future. I remind the House once again that oil and gas are Canadian-made products. We do not have to continue to import more and more oil from Mexico, Venezuela and the OPEC countries. We could have self-sufficiency in Canada.

We might discuss national unity. We all might discuss national unity and why the federal government of the most fortunate nation on earth and the NDP could amend their joint constitutional package just before it went to the Supreme Court of Canada to provide that voter majorities in fully three western or three Atlantic provinces are necessary to block an Ottawa-proposed constitutional amendment. At the same time, a simple majority in Ontario or Quebec is of equal weight, this despite the fact that the Federal-Provincial Relations Office of the federal government concedes that it knows of no other parliamentary democracy in the world which weights the votes of its citizens for constitutional referenda on the basis of place of residence. If this is the Liberal-NDP idea of a just society in which Canadians everywhere can feel that they are full partners in their own country, I do not think many Canadians in or outside Ontario or Quebec will buy that idea of a just society in the future.

● (2120)

Next we might talk about crime prevention. We have a crime conference going on this very day in Winnipeg, which I had hoped to attend on behalf of my colleagues. We might talk about why, for instance, senior citizens, as we hear from the conference, are evidently more and more afraid to leave the safety of their home out of fear of being mugged. We might talk about why violent crime is increasing. In part, because of legislation of the past decade, in part because of some—I stress some—of the government's more unsuitable appointments to various benches and to the National Parole Board.

However, Mr. Speaker, we cannot discuss everything at one time. So in the time remaining I propose to discuss the uranium issue which makes me very mad, and very sad for my country. It will be the thrust of my argument that, perhaps better than any other issue we have today, this issue shows how little this government estimates the intelligence of Canadians, and how it deserves their contempt. To put it another way, Mr. Speaker, the government shines on the issue. It shines like the eyes of a long dead fish on a moonlit beach. From a long distance in the dark, the eyes of the fish look far better than it smells close up.

Let me begin with some history of this matter. I will try to avoid the facts raised by the hon. member for Saskatoon West (Mr. Hnatyshyn). Most of the facts have come out despite the best efforts of this government to prevent at every turn the truth from coming out about what they have been doing this last number of years. A little history, Mr. Speaker.

In the fall of 1970, the Canadian energy minister of the day, while in Japan, said it was time for uranium producers to get tough. In late 1971 and the first eight months of 1972, conversations took place between persons in Australia, South Africa, France and between various multinational mining companies. The details as to the cartel's workings were agreed upon in February, 1972—a long time ago, Mr. Speaker. For the rest of 1972, little information was provided by the participants as to the cartel's existence. Press reports noted only there had been meetings between government officials, but nothing as to the existence of a cartel. It operated, in fact, in a concealed manner with prearranged bidding practices, quotas dividing international markets, and a secretariat concealed in the French Atomic Energy Commission.

From 1973 to 1975 there were no references made to the workings of that cartel in the general press. There were vague references in some trade journals. In the period from September 1975 to March, 1976, Westinghouse announced its inability to fulfil uranium contracts. The U.S. Department of Justice established a grand jury investigation into the uranium activities of U.S. oil companies. In the summer of 1976, a U.S. congressional subcommittee initiated an inquiry into the international uranium cartel. In August of 1976 Mary Kathleen Uranium, known as MKU, documents were leaked in Australia, and transmitted to the California Energy Commission which in turn passed them on to the U.S. Department of Justice and a Congressional investigation.