

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

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** The government has now been heard to say, "Let us get on with the adjournment". It had the option of carrying on if it had been really serious about this matter at the beginning of the week. The government decided to play games and it brought in Bill C-48. All this did was underline the fact that there are a number of serious issues which should be debated by the House of Commons.

**Mr. Collenette:** Name them.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre indicated that he, too, thought there were many pressing issues which should be brought forward. I agree with him on that point; there are a number of pressing issues which face our country. It does not hurt us to sit back and have the government inconvenienced once in a while, while pressure is brought to bear on it which will, in effect, bring forward legislation which will be beneficial to Canada, rather than the legislation and discussion which has been brought forward to date which will be detrimental to the people of Canada.

There is a matter which has been before the House of Commons on different occasions for which our party was severely criticized some time ago by the government led by the Prime Minister. This issue is one of the most serious matters, as far as I am concerned, which has taken place since the present Prime Minister has held office. It is an issue on which, on every front, the government has attempted to avoid its responsibilities. It is an issue which appeared again today on the floor of the House of Commons, one on which the government continues to stonewall. I refer, of course, to the very questionable and serious lack of action on the part of the government with respect to the uranium cartel.

I have never seen the government, and the Prime Minister in particular, look so bad in terms of their performance on the floor of this House at any time in my experience as a parliamentarian. The matter is a scandal, one which the government is feeling very sensitive about. It is the only time I have ever seen the Prime Minister go to such extraordinary lengths to conceal information from members of the opposition and the Canadian public.

I can well understand why the government wants to adjourn the House as quickly concealment which has taken place with respect to the political responsibility it should bear on the issue of the uranium cartel.

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

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** I can understand why members opposite are shouting and attempting to interrupt what I am saying. This is a very serious problem, one which I take most seriously. The fact of the matter is members opposite are extremely embarrassed about this issue. It is one which they wish would go away. We remember what the Prime Minister said when we tried to question him in the House with respect to the uranium

### *Summer Recess*

cartel. He told us to shut up. That was his response. Now he is trying to get rid of Parliament so that he will not have to answer any more questions from the opposition.

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

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** The uranium issue has been a particular thorn in the side of the government as the result of a very serious situation which was announced by the Minister of Justice in anticipation of the adjournment of the House. Only two days before the House was destined to adjourn the Attorney General was obliged to indicate that on his recommendation charges had been laid. It was a very convenient time for those charges to be laid. Parliament would be away for the summer recess and there would not be the questioning from the floor of the House, before television cameras and before the nation, with respect to the government's involvement in this matter. Legitimate questions with respect to the political responsibility of this government would thus be avoided.

The way in which this particular announcement was made was a very convenient—

**Mr. Collenette:** Look at the press gallery.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** To my knowledge the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council has only made one or two speeches off the seat of his pants. Unfortunately, the only time he really speaks is when he is sitting down.

Canadians are growing more interested in this cartel issue now.

**Mr. Collenette:** Even the CP stringer is not there.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Mr. Speaker, the only thing the parliamentary secretary wants to do is interfere with the right of a parliamentarian to speak. If that is his view about the way in which Parliament should be run, I am afraid it is a very sorry commitment—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Saskatoon West has the floor.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker; I appreciate your assistance in this regard. As Your Honour well knows, I always listen attentively whenever government members make their contributions. I would expect a reasonable courtesy on their part.

I wish to review briefly the history of this cartel. In the years prior to 1970 there was a slump in the industry. The reactors were going up but the short-term demand was flat. The Americans restricted access to the U.S. market. Maybe I can best describe the circumstances with regard to what was happening by referring to an article by Mark Gayn of the *Montreal Gazette*, who wrote:

The secret planning began in 1971. Joe Greene was the minister of energy, and the deputy minister was Jacob "Jack" Austin, later a principal aide to the Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and now a Senator.