

*Nordion and Theratronics*

**An Hon. Member:** On division.

Motion agreed to, Bill read the third time and passed.

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**NORDION AND THERATRONICS DIVESTITURE  
AUTHORIZATION ACT**

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed from Friday, June 2, consideration of the motion of Mr. McDermid that Bill C-13, an Act to authorize the divestiture of Nordion International Inc. and Theratronics International Ltd., be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** When the House rose at 3.06 p.m. Friday, June 2, 1989, there were nine minutes left remaining in the question and comment period following the speech of the Hon. Member for Ottawa West (Mrs. Catterall). I would now recognize Hon. Members who wish to continue the question and comment, but since the Member is not here, I am afraid I cannot do that. Debate.

**Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak on Bill C-13, the Nordion and Theratronics Divestiture Authorization Act. It is something in which I have a great deal of interest. I do not believe that the privatization of these two companies is similar to a normal privatization which the Government would carry out. These are two very special companies. I believe the Government would be making a very severe mistake if it proceeded with the privatization of these companies, and I will relate why I feel this way.

In order to put my views across, it is very important to go back to the founding of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited and to the beginning of the nuclear industry in Canada. It began approximately in 1947 when the NRX reactor was developed in the Chalk River laboratories. Very soon thereafter, we had radio isotopes. These radio isotopes became very important in the treatment of cancer. When AECL was formed in 1952, it was logical that a branch of AECL called Commercial Products would become a separate division of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited. Thereafter AECL and Commercial Products continued to develop their technology for fighting cancer in Canada and eventually throughout the

world, becoming more and more dependent upon the Cobalt-60 isotope. This became a world famous treatment.

With respect to that, Commercial Products, which in the early 1970s became two divisions, has developed most of the world's supply of Cobalt-60. AECL has secured a large portion of the world market for industrial units in fighting cancer and in the utilization of Cobalt-60. AECL has provided 71 of the 132 units in operation in the world today.

In the late 1970s, Commercial Products, because of its success and because of the fact that it was entering into the Medical Products Division and having some difficulty in marketing these newer products, Medical Products was split into two different groups. The company which dealt with the radio isotope and Cobalt-60 became the Radio Chemical Company. The unprofitable ventures into medical accelerators resulted in the formation of the Medical Products Division of AECL which looked after the accelerator work, the Cobalt therapy, the medical simulator treatment, planning and manufacture. After it was split off, these accelerators, treatment and therapy units became profitable.

So we have as recently as last year the two divisions, Radio Chemical and the Medical Products Division of AECL, being profitable. In fact, the Radio Chemical Company accounted for 80 per cent of the net income of AECL, the most profitable aspect of AECL. This should count for a great deal because we have heard from this Government that it wants the nuclear energy industry in Canada to thrive, to grow and to be solid. They want it to be secure and they want the people in Canada to have confidence in this industry.

In spite of this rhetoric, the Government has done absolutely nothing to secure these results in Canada. It is reducing the money that is being put into AECL and being put into the Atomic Energy Control Board which regulates the atomic energy industry in Canada. The Atomic Energy Control Board in fact has said in committee that it needs 100 per cent more funding if it is going to do the necessary supervisory work in the nuclear industry, if it is going to fulfil its obligations to find final depositories for high-level nuclear waste and for the other very important jobs that it must do.