

Adjournment Debate

Then we have the consequences of dependence on nuclear energy which has developed in some parts of Canada. I am a Member of Parliament from Ontario and it has already been suggested by others that Ontario Hydro is a major user of nuclear energy. It is worth underscoring the importance of that dependence. In Ontario, 40 per cent of the energy being used is nuclear-generated. That 40 per cent is the base of the Ontario Hydro system. The reason is quite simple. Nuclear energy is a form of energy best used at a steady rate over long periods of time. It is much easier to control hydroelectric facilities by shutting off the water at night and then lifting the gates when morning comes and the energy is needed. It is relatively easy to fire up thermal plants of one sort or another. They are used as supplements.

What is running day and night, week after week, year in and year out, are the nuclear power plants which provide the base. The other power sources are called in as required to meet the demands of industry and the ordinary consumer. That is the reality in this province. As a Member of Parliament from northwestern Ontario, living on the Canadian Shield in an area on which Atomic Energy of Canada has fairly obvious designs for burying its waste, I appreciate the opportunity to address this matter.

There are so many aspects of the use of nuclear energy by Ontario Hydro that it boggles the mind. Surely planting those great stations so close to Metropolitan Toronto has to be an act of corporate lunacy. The cynics, or the tough-minded, I am not sure which they are, or the merely stupid, say that if it is going to be the basis for Metropolitan Toronto's power supply, then let the plants be close to hand rather than far away. I suppose suggesting that it should be in the Bruce—Grey Peninsula or somewhere up there—

Mr. Gurbini: Point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Bruce—Grey area contains the Bruce Peninsula. It is the Bruce Peninsula, not the Bruce—Grey Peninsula, and it is approximately 40 miles away—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Obviously that is a point of debate.

Mr. Epp (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): From the head of the lakes these things sometimes look a little closer together than they do down here. I might remind my friends from southern Ontario that the provincial Government has had the gall for years to publish a map which puts northern Ontario, some 87 per cent of the land area of Ontario, on a piece of paper the same size as southern Ontario.

The decision to build these power plants near Metropolitan Toronto is one of the highly dubious decisions which the Ontario Government made or allowed Ontario Hydro to make as it moved into the use of nuclear energy. We heard the Parliamentary Secretary, the Hon. Member for Brampton—Georgetown (Mr. McDermid), arguing strenuously a few minutes ago in defence of nuclear energy. That makes sense. Who was the MPP and Premier of the Province who allowed

Ontario Hydro to do this? It was the MPP from Brampton. So there is a certain logic to that Hon. Member defending a decision which was never made by the people of Ontario. It was never made by the legislature of Ontario. It was Premier Davis and his colleagues who allowed Ontario Hydro to move into this deadly system of energy generation and who are now part and parcel of the system of research which anticipates the possibility of burying the waste in northwestern Ontario or other parts of northern Ontario and the Canadian Shield.

Let us remember the half life of this material, some 75,000 years and more. What are we going to do with that stuff in the future? Those are the kinds of things that deserve inquiry and that is why I speak in support of this motion.

[Translation]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It being six o'clock, it is my duty to inform the House that, pursuant to Standing Order 82(12), the proceedings on the motion have expired.

• (1800)

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 66 deemed to have been moved.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS—NIAGARA RIVER—TOXIC
CHEMICAL DUMPS SITES. (B) REQUEST FOR MINISTERIAL
STATEMENT

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, to put the intervention tonight in the proper context, I would like to cast your memory back to October, 1984, when the Niagara River Toxic Chemical Committee produced a report on toxic chemicals and emissions into that water body. In May of 1985, the then Minister of the Environment made a glowing promise about obtaining from the United States Government a plan of action for the clean up of emissions, particularly the toxic chemical emissions, into Lake Ontario. It was quite a commitment that the then Minister made. It raised our hopes. I was pleased to hear that because it indicated that the then Minister intended to take pretty vigorous action and to make the United States authorities realize that there must be, on their part, an action that would enforce the commitment they made with us when they signed the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement in 1978.

In October of 1985, when the head of the Environmental Protection Agency visited Ottawa and submitted a report, the Minister of the Environment (Mr. McMillan) was fuming and very upset over a criticism that was levelled by me because he felt I had not seriously approached and studied the proposal that had been brought here to Ottawa. The fact is that that proposal was kept secret in Canada and was made available