

USE OF COMMONS

Friday, November 13, 1970

The House met at 11 a.m.

PRIVILEGE

MR. PEPIN—ELUCIDATION OF ANSWER TO QUESTION
CONCERNING RYERSON PRESS—TABLING
OF CORRESPONDENCE

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, in answering a question yesterday from the hon. member for St. John's East—he was trying to help me and I am grateful to him for that—with respect to the Ryerson affair, I had meant to say only that no specific request for financial assistance had been received by me from the company. I had meant to table the correspondence which I was holding in my hand at that time, but at the last moment I saw on Dr. Brisbin's letter that it was marked "Confidential". This was when I went into a meandering account of the contents of that correspondence.

I am afraid that when I said, to quote my words as reported in *Hansard* at page 1092, that "there was no specific mention in their letter of the actual possibility that it was going to be taken over", I may have misled the House. Therefore, to avoid any confusion, now that Dr. Brisbin himself has given copies of his file, may I give copies of my file to members of the House and table the said correspondence?

Mr. Speaker: The minister is seeking the assent of the House to table certain correspondence to which he has referred. Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

ATOMIC ENERGY

STATEMENT BY MINISTER ON THE COMING INTO OPERATION OF GENTILLY NUCLEAR POWER STATION

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to report to the House an event of more than ordinary significance. This is the bringing into operation last night of the reactor at the Gentilly Nuclear Power Station, on the St. Lawrence River downstream from Trois-Rivières.

Gentilly not only is the first nuclear power station in Quebec, it is the first of its kind—a prototype. Like the other nuclear plants in operation or under construction in

Canada, it uses natural uranium as fuel and heavy water as the moderator, but where the coolant in the others is pressurized heavy water, the coolant in Gentilly is boiling light, or ordinary, water.

Having in mind the many difficulties and complications that were bound to transpire, some predictable and others unforeseen, it would have been understandable had those responsible declined to make any forecast of how long it would take them to do the job. What the AECL/Hydro-Quebec team in fact did was set for itself, and publicly announce, a tight four-year schedule.

Despite technological innovations, despite a strike that halted work for five months, despite delays in deliveries of key items, despite numerous other problems, they made it. It was four years ago this past October that the first sod was turned at the site; it was on November 2 four years ago that excavation started.

At the outset, one of the primary, declared aims of the signatories was to have engineers and technologists of the province of Quebec take a leading part in the design, construction and operation of the station. This policy was observed, not just to the letter but in the spirit as well. Personnel from Hydro-Quebec and Quebec industrial firms participated in all stages of the design. Hydro-Quebec staff were trained to operate the plant. Every document and drawing pertaining to the station was produced in the two official languages. The conventional part of the station—that is, that portion outside the nuclear system—was designed by a team of Quebec consultants. Hydro-Quebec acted as prime contractor at the site, with responsibility for station construction.

The result of all this has been the establishment in Quebec of a solid body of knowledge, experience and skill upon which to draw and build when the time comes to commit nuclear power stations of commercial size in the province.

I should like to close these remarks, Mr. Speaker, by extending congratulations to all those who had a part in the Gentilly project. I congratulate them for their magnificent achievement and for bearing testimony to the fact that the barriers and frontiers so much talked about these days do not stop men of good will from co-operating in a constructive way. Nuclear science is alive and well in the province of Quebec.

• (11:10 a.m.)

[English]

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I should like to join very briefly with the minister in commending those who are jointly responsible for this venture and innovation in connection with the development of power through this means. I am particularly glad