

Supply

dimensions of the uranium issue. They believe that our political leaders desire to make peace. They say, and I quote:

We hope that in sharing our reflections on this important moral issue, we are being faithful to our prophetic call as Christian people.

I hear some of my colleagues question, by their remarks the rights of religious leaders to speak on moral questions of this dimension. I believe religious leaders not only have a right but a duty to do so. We know it is one thing to speak to a moral issue. Whether the advice is followed is another question, but it is important, as they say, to speak to the issue in a prophetic role.

Recently I talked with others in my constituency who are likewise interested in the uranium debate. In the last few days I talked to people who strongly support the idea that uranium is one of the few ways by which we can find power and energy for the future. Just last weekend I talked with scientists in that respect. They moved very directly in that way. On the other hand, there are many people who do not have that confidence. They are concerned as well. This group of people has difficulty when it comes to understanding and knowing who is telling the truth. In the recent incident in Saskatchewan, truth has been very hard to find. After the major spill that could not be "closed up", it was found that other spills had occurred previously and there had been no truthful explanation about them. A few minutes ago I learned that press people will not be allowed into the site along with the group which plans to visit this week.

Because of the lack of truth about the industry, the question about its morality is becoming more urgent. I appreciate the fact people in the industry believe that truth is not that important because of the general moral disorder that we find in so many parts of society today. However, as serious parliamentarians we must push for some effort such as this motion proposes so that we and all others interested in the debate can find the truth about what is going on and what we should do.

Mr. Blenkarn: Mr. Speaker, will the Hon. Member advise us whether he thinks it was a good Christian principle to turn off 35 per cent of the electricity in Ontario because the mining of uranium should cease?

Mr. Ogle: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member's question is certainly valid. It also indicates that the Hon. Member has not thought of other ways in which this situation can be dealt with. In the Canadian context, we were sold a bill of goods. Following World War II, we were told that this is the way energy will go and that unlimited amounts of money would be put into research in this area. It would have been much better for Ontarians, Canadians and everyone else if at that time there had been a broader perspective of how to seek energy sources.

The Hon. Member's point is certainly valid in the sense that a judgment has been made that this amount of electricity is going to be generated in Ontario by nuclear power. I hope the Hon. Member is also aware that many people around those places where the nuclear stations are to be built are wondering about that. I can speak from a little bit of experience in

Saskatoon. There was the possibility of a nuclear refinery being built at Warman, 14 miles from Saskatoon. The people now have knowledge about spills, about Three Mile Island and the various problems under which the nuclear business is functioning and operating. In Pickering itself there have been indications of where this system can break down. People had an open debate and discussed whether or not they should have uranium refining at Warman, Saskatchewan, with everybody involved, not just a few bureaucrats, a few scientific people, a few engineers, and a few technicians and representatives of companies that were going to build the reactors. People did not want the refining process there, and they were the ones who would have been employed. They made a moral choice that having the refinery was less advantageous than having a job. This morning we had a question from the other side. I think we have to start looking at the question again about whether this is truly a social and economic good or whether it is leading us down the road which finally we may all have to say was not the right road and will have to be reconsidered. But reconsidering, reconverting and changing is not a bad thing. We have to be ready and aware to do that.

● (1550)

Mr. Foster: Mr. Speaker, I was interested to know, in listening to the Hon. Member for Saskatoon East, if in fact the NDP policy position of 1981, which was to phase out the nuclear fuel cycle and to halt uranium mining in Canada, is still the policy of the national Party? I just wanted to inquire about the actual position of the Party on that. I had hoped to ask the Hon. Member for Regina East who spoke this morning but I was unable to do so during the period of time allotted for questions. The Hon. Member spoke about the spill at Key Lake. Is the Hon. Member aware that the provincial member for the Athabasca riding Fred Thompson, visited that site. The Canadian Press reported that he said there was no need for an inquiry into the matter. In his remarks he seemed to be alluding to the facts that there was no access for outsiders to visit that area.

Mr. Ogle: Mr. Speaker, the policy, as far as I remember it, has been correctly stated by the Hon. Member. The Province of Saskatchewan had its own New Democratic Party convention several months ago. Up to that time it had been a policy different from that. But on the floor of the convention, after a very serious and a very well debated debate, the provincial arm of the New Democratic Party changed its policy to one that is in conformity with what the Member stated. I do not want to go on record as saying that it is exactly the same word for word, but it is in that general direction—

Mr. Blenkarn: No nuclear energy period.

Mr. Ogle: You got it. We are opposed to nuclear energy to be used in the building of military weapons or in the production of electricity, but the use of nuclear energy as it is sometimes used in medical practices, such as in the cobalt bombs and so on, could be useful.