

Eldorado Nuclear Limited

It would not be difficult for inefficient American producers to claim that Eldorado and SMDC are subsidized because they received government guarantees for their debt instruments. Clearly, the American producers would not have any trouble showing that these companies were dumping against the Elliot Lake producers who sell to the Ontario Government, because they could prove that uranium was being sold in the U.S. at a lower price than it was being sold to Ontario Hydro.

Whether or not there is a free trade, if United States producers are threatened they will maintain control on imports, either through the congressional system, the regulatory system or countervailing duties. That will become very important to the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation and Eldorado Resources.

Over the years, no company other than the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation has demanded that it be exempt from the further upgrading policies of the Government of Canada. It is content to see its uranium processed in the United States. If this Bill goes through and the corporation is formed, I hope it will have enough concern for the communities of Blind River and Port Hope that it will want to see uranium upgraded in Canada rather than going to the United States as yellowcake.

Again, I would hope that the services, the labour relations and the worker benefits which have applied to Eldorado workers in places like Blind River and Port Hope will be maintained and that the company's commitment to the communities, both through good corporate citizenship and through grants and assistance to the communities, as well as its policy of operating a high level of activity, will be maintained and that in giving up its right to further upgrading of uranium in Canada the Government will not undercut that commitment.

There is a certain balance to be maintained in the production of uranium-trioxide in Blind River and the upgrading of it at the Port Hope facility. It is not clear whether or not Eldorado's Port Hope facility can meet the full capacity of the Blind River operation.

Those are some of the concerns I have about this Bill. I understand that we will be dealing with it in committee. This is a corporation with very rich reserves that can compete on a world scale. It is important to do further processing of our uranium and natural resources, and I want to see that done in an efficient way so that we are making the very best use of our resources and providing the maximum employment in communities like Blind River in which major Eldorado resources processing plants are located.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, I would like to deal with the amendment moved by my colleague from Regina. That amendment suggests that there should be a delay of six months before this Bill is read for the second time. Of course, the reasoning behind such a decision to delay second reading consideration is itself deeply affected by our

understanding of the context within which this privatization is taking place.

• (1330)

Yesterday the chairperson of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs stood up and said this privatization was the last of a set of steps taken under the Canada Development Investment Corporation. Those steps included Teleglobe, de Havilland, Canadair, and now Eldorado. Yet today we have an entirely different situation because the Government suddenly decided to dramatically expand its efforts to privatize crucial public institutions, which have been at the heart of this country for years, by announcing that, and I quote from the statement of the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski), that this legislation will permit the transfer of all Air Canada's shares to the public.

That puts an entirely different framework around discussions about privatizing Crown corporations such as Eldorado. For that reason it is absolutely crucial that we postpone consideration of this specific decision until we can get a sense of this rather bizarre and remarkably sudden step taken by the Government. It was done so quickly that the Minister's statement could not even be handed to opposition critics before it was delivered in the House.

We now have a sudden and tremendous expansion of the scope of the privatization thrust by the Government. That, it seems to me, forces this House to take very seriously the amendment of my friend which suggests that this legislation be not now read a second time, but that it be done six months hence. It is quite clear that the Government has not spelled out its strategy with respect to privatization. The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) has not articulated the strategy. In fact, if anything, he has articulated promises in the past which now seem to be in direct conflict with the strategy with which the Government seems to be proceeding.

I am sure I do not need to remind you that in January of 1985 the Prime Minister said Air Canada was not for sale. Yet this morning we have an announcement that all of Air Canada's shares will be transferred to the private sector. That is a complete contradiction of a promise made not during an election campaign but during the current term of the Government. That suggests that the Government is not following a strategy. If there was a strategy to get the CDIC portfolios transferred to the private sector, as was claimed by the chairperson of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs yesterday, it has now been abandoned. Instead, a tremendously dangerous new step has been taken in the Government's attempt to severely damage the public sector. That step marks a major escalation in the approach the Government has taken to this point.

As well, this step has been taken without dozens of key questions being answered. How will it be possible in this far-flung country for us to maintain public service to isolated communities which are difficult to serve? What constraints