

capable of further development to meet the challenge of competition from new designs, at least for the foreseeable future. By 1980, Canadian designed nuclear power generating capacity already committed will total over six million kilowatts, and strong efforts are being made to interest other countries in the purchase of reactors of the CANDU type. Any data which might serve to weaken AECL's competitive position would clearly, if published, not be in the best interests of Canada.

• (1740)

These, Mr. Speaker, are some of my arguments in opposition to the hon. member's notice of motion for the production of the reports which were submitted to Atomic Energy of Canada Limited concerning the heavy water plant at Glace Bay, Nova Scotia.

**Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, I want it understood immediately that I support the proposition put forward by the hon. member for Trinity (Mr. Hellyer) that all information in this matter should be made available to the Canadian taxpayer. In saying that I also want it clearly understood that I am definitely in favour of the government's undertaking to rehabilitate the Glace Bay plant in view of the fact that there is an unemployment rate of 29 to 31 per cent in the area and the rehabilitation of the plant would mean a great deal.

Although I fully support the making of this information available, I should like to spend a few minutes referring to some of the comments made by the hon. member for Thunder Bay (Mr. Penner) who gave a brief history—and I emphasize that it was a very brief history—of this government's part in the construction of the Glace Bay heavy water plant.

The hon. member for Trinity referred to some important principles. He referred to the fact that some highly political overtures were made. He mentioned there was expert advice given, that we should review the origin of the decisions taken, and he said that it was a political decision of the Pearson government to rehabilitate this plant. One thing that amazes me is that the hon. member for Trinity was a member of the government which made the decision that put the government of Nova Scotia of that day in a financial straitjacket.

If the government wants the facts, the facts are available. For the last five years I have been listening to snide remarks that have been directed from the other side of the House to my leader on the subject of the heavy water plant at Glace Bay. I say they are snide for this reason: hon. members opposite who make these remarks do not know the history of the heavy water plant at Glace Bay. How many of them are aware that it was the government of Nova Scotia, in conjunction with Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, which first undertook to invest between \$15 million and \$18 million in developing this plant?

The decision was then made to double the capacity of the plant and thereby double the cost of building the plant. I do not think the government of Nova Scotia was necessarily involved in that decision, but even the present government House leader, whom I am sorry to see is not in his seat, referred to it as a tremendous undertaking. Indeed, he had nothing but praise for the decision.

### *Heavy Water Production*

Then having doubled the capacity of the plant, the Liberal government of the day insisted that the Nova Scotia government have a controlling interest of 51 per cent, thereby putting it in the financial straitjacket in which it eventually wound up. Hon. members opposite point their finger at the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) who happened to be premier of the province of Nova Scotia at the time, but he really had no choice; he and the people of Nova Scotia were forced into this position.

When hon. members opposite talk of political decisions, let them remember this. The Nova Scotia government undertook to study the possibility of rehabilitating this plant. The study, which was done by Dupont, showed that the plant could be rehabilitated for \$30 million. So what did the government do? It waited and waited until the cost of rehabilitating the plant had climbed to over \$90 million. This was a political decision that tripled the cost of rehabilitation. If hon. members opposite want proof that this was a political decision, that proof is not hard to find. I am ashamed to say it, but the minister from Cape Breton who is the government House leader addressed a political audience at the eleventh hour of a provincial election campaign at Glace Bay and said, on October 11, that an agreement was ready for signature but that the government of Nova Scotia had not made the new offer which was absolutely necessary.

I have raised this matter before in the House and if anyone questions what I say, I have a transcript here of the television broadcast that the minister gave. If that is not enough, then I invite each and every member to join me in my office where I will play them the tape recording of what the minister said in regard to the failure of the government of Nova Scotia to make that new and necessary offer.

On October 13 there was a change to a Liberal government. Six days later, on October 19, there was introduced in this House a bill to give aid to this plant. The delaying of this decision by the government cost the taxpayers of Canada in excess of \$60 million. The hon. member for Trinity speaks about responsibilities, but he should have taken some of the responsibility for the political decision made when the issue was first brought before parliament. I can turn to a great deal of evidence given before the science committee of the other place. The chairman of that committee was a minister of the government and said that the cabinet had not discussed the matter fully enough to make a worth-while decision.

The hon. member for Thunder Bay talked of the tremendous potential of the plant and referred to the competition Canada is facing in the field of nuclear reactors. I say this is absolute nonsense. The fact is that we cannot sell them; we have to give them away. Only two countries have looked at these reactors, Pakistan and India. And what did they pay for them? I should like to see a financial statement proving that they paid one penny. Probably they became part of the foreign aid scheme.

The hon. member stated that other countries do not make use of heavy water for their atomic reactors but, rather, are using enriched uranium. If the hon. member for Thunder Bay wishes to question this, I suggest he speak to the chairman of the science committee of the