

SOCIAL INSURANCE

USE OF SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBERS IN CASHING CANADA SAVINGS BONDS—MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Bob Brisco (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I rise, under the provisions of Standing Order 43, on a matter of urgent and pressing necessity.

In view of the fact that two constituents of mine, aged ten and 12, last week cashed in coupons from their Canada Savings Bonds to buy Christmas gifts for their parents, and in view of the fact that they were penalized by an unfair 25 per cent deduction because they did not have social insurance numbers, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay):

The Minister of Employment and Immigration immediately rescind the regulations that brought about this parsimonious action, and allow children, or at least pensioners, to cash their Canada Savings Bond coupons without penalty or, conversely, that the minister be called Scrooge instead of Santa Claus.

Mr. Speaker: The presentation of such a motion for debate at this time, under the provisions of Standing Order 43, can be done only with the unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

ENERGY

SALE OF CANDU REACTORS TO ROMANIA

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Given the sorry history of financial negotiations by this government with regard to the sale of Candu nuclear reactors abroad, a history which includes losses of hundreds of millions of dollars, disappearing agents and mismanagement by AECL—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Miss MacDonald:—can the minister say that the \$1 billion loan made by the Export Development Corporation to Romania for the construction of four Candu reactors is all the financing that will be made available, in view of the fact that similar financing with Korea by EDC for one nuclear reactor has now escalated to a cost of \$560 million—\$1 billion for four; \$560 million for one? Is this another \$1 billion financial fiasco?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and Minister of State for Science and Technology):

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker, I believe that Canadians will take pride in this transaction.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gillies: Especially when they develop an atom bomb, like India!

Mr. Gillespie: Canada has developed the world's best nuclear technology. There is no question that the Pickering reactor, for example, is the best performing reactor anywhere in the world. I do not think most Canadians would want to keep that technology to themselves, on the basis that they are not prepared to export it, or would want to hold back on the manufacturing opportunities which that technology represents.

Mr. Fraser: Answer the question.

Mr. Gillespie: That particular arrangement which has been negotiated with respect to a licensing fee, an engineering fee, and Export Development Corporation standby credit in the amount of \$1 billion will provide \$1 billion in opportunities for the Canadian manufacturing industry.

Miss MacDonald: Mr. Speaker, I notice that the minister was very careful not to answer the question as to whether or not this \$1 billion would be the limit to which this government would involve itself in this particular transaction.

It appears that the licensing agreement between AECL and Romanero could encompass the construction of more than four reactors. Can the minister tell the House whether the licensing agreement will allow Romanero to sell reactors to other countries, or expressly states that reactors will be built solely in Romania? In other words, could it allow for further nuclear proliferation even to Soviet satellite countries?

● (1417)

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, Romania has signed the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and has accepted international safeguards and inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Romania has in every respect observed Canadian safeguards, the toughest in the world. We negotiated the agreement with Romania a year ago.

As to the question of additional Canadian benefits which may flow from this transaction, it is quite possible that after the four reactors have been put in place, Romania will want to purchase additional components and engineering services from Canada. That would be to the advantage of Canada. But before they can export any part of that technology to foreign countries there will have to be a further agreement negotiated with Romania with respect to those export opportunities.

Miss MacDonald: A final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if perhaps the next customer on the government's list of clientele will be the People's Republic of China.

Since Canada has only recently begun to develop the technology for nuclear waste disposal, and since Romania has not moved in this field at all, could the minister assure the House that any agreements signed between Canada and Romania