

Canadian Arsenals Limited

by Your Honour saying that a second question by my colleague, the Hon. Member for Hamilton East (Ms. Copps), would not be a supplementary to the first question she asked. Perhaps something was not clear as a result of the noise in the House, but would Your Honour undertake to look at the "blues"? It appears to us, at least, that the question was on the exact same subject and would directly follow the first question.

Mr. Speaker: I will look at it. If I remember correctly, the first question I heard concerned the deindexation of pensions and the second question was about the unemployment benefits issue. That is what I heard, but I will be glad to check the "blues".

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**WEEKLY STATEMENT**

Mr. Jacques Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Mr. Speaker, is the Deputy House Leader in a position to give us the menu for the coming week? If not, will he tell us when a House Leaders meeting to discuss that is likely to be held?

An Hon. Member: Where's Lewis?

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Deputy House Leader—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: It is my intention to convene with the Hon. Member who is acting in the place of the Hon. Member for Windsor West (Mr. Gray) as Deputy House Leader of the Official Opposition, with the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans) and the assorted members of their staffs, to have a cup of tea and discuss the business of the House for the next week.

I hope we can have the unanimous consent of the House to come back later this day on a point of order to announce the fruits of our discussions.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

**CANADIAN ARSENALS LIMITED DIVESTITURE
AUTHORIZATION ACT****MEASURE TO ENACT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. McInnes (Minister of Supply and Services) that Bill C-87, An Act to authorize the divestiture of Canadian Arsenals Limited and to amend other Acts in consequence thereof, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Hovdebo: Mr. Speaker, before we recessed for lunch, I was attempting to explain some of our concerns about the procedures in this Bill.

I believe we can show that this divestiture is not necessarily in the best interests of the economy of Canada. It is very definitely not in the best interests of the employees of Canadian Arsenals who were concerned about their pensions and job security. Furthermore, since this divestiture would involve a transfer from one labour code to another, they were concerned about not being covered by a bargaining agent during that transfer and that there would be no protection for their collective agreements.

I am disturbed at the Government's lack of effort to attempt to come to a satisfactory agreement with SNC, or at least advise that company what was involved in its purchase of Canadian Arsenals. It is obvious that the Government intended to use its majority to push the Bill through the House without any consideration for its side effects on the employees.

Canadian Arsenals Limited had good labour relations, and I understand that these good relations still exist with the new company. However, the Government was prepared to make the transfer without ensuring that those good labour relations would continue. If the Member from the Liberal Party and I had not held up the Bill and insisted on negotiations with SNC, it is not unreasonable to believe that the employees of Canadian Arsenals would have been prepared to strike as a result of being dealt with unfairly during this takeover period. That is not the kind of company that SNC thought it was purchasing.

Perhaps Members will recall when the employees of Canadian Arsenals demonstrated on the Hill. The fact that they found it necessary to do this is unbelievable in itself. Those demonstrators wore buttons saying that they were an explosive union. The point they were making is that labour unrest is very dangerous in their kind of work and therefore the Government should have ensured that everything was in place before the transfer was made.

This Bill has now reached third reading stage, which means this is the final opportunity to discuss the Bill. Can we expect the Government to take a much more careful approach to privatization in the future? In this particular case every step of the process was sloppy. There was sloppy planning and an arrogant disregard for the people involved. The employees were left out of the negotiations. The whole process was kept secret to the point where everyone involved with it was uncomfortable. I believe that even Members of the Government felt they did not have enough information.

• (1510)

I want to spend a few minutes on the procedure because I think procedure is critical to the concerns of Government with respect to the divestiture of future corporations. Possibly there will be a less disturbing procedure in the future because the