

Book Review

Government Intervention in the Canadian Nuclear Industry.
By G. Bruce Doern. The Institute for Research on Public Policy, Montreal, Quebec, Canada (1980). 203 pp. \$11.25.

Montreal's Institute for Research on Public Policy has published some dozen studies of government intervention into Canadian affairs. This new one examines the nature and effect of its intervention in the nuclear industry.

Author G. Bruce Doern directs Ottawa's School of Public Administration at Carleton University. He concludes that intervention by government in the nuclear industry, however it has manifested itself and whether at the federal or provincial level (or both simultaneously), has been motivated by practical, rather than ideological, considerations. The most consistent effect of this intervention, Doern finds, is "the remarkable degree to which Ontario Hydro, the Ontario Government, and the Ontario taxpayer have been subsidized by the federal support of CANDU [Canadian deuterium uranium reactor] development."

Early chapters of the study present a lengthy, albeit helpful, exposition of generic concepts, issues, and instruments of government intervention. An illuminating picture of the worldwide nuclear industry is painted and fitted neatly into the Canadian nuclear industry's very own administrative and legislative framework and its special intermixture of scientific and political policies. Perhaps for non-Canadians, this is the most valuable portion of the study, since it serves as somewhat of a procedural guide for any foreigner wishing to engage in similar critical introspection *vis à vis* his own national nuclear industry.

With such preliminaries out of the way, the volume plunges deeply and parochially into three complex studies of actual interventions by government into Canada's nuclear industry:

1. as the putative father of that industry
2. as the neglectful parent to its health-ravaged uranium miners
3. as the profligate progenitor of the industry's unique uranium mining economics.

Each study exemplifies a different means of intervention taking place at separate periods of time. These are

1. a decision in 1959 by Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, a Crown corporation in collaboration with Ontario Hydro, a Provincial Commission, to build the pioneering 200-MW(electric) Douglas Point CANDU reactor as Canada's entry in the worldwide nuclear power sweepstakes
2. during the 1960s, a conscious decision by federal and provincial regulatory authorities *not* themselves to enforce uranium miner health standards, but to leave the subject vaguely to mine owners as a matter of compliance with their licenses to operate
3. in the 1970s, an intervention by Ontario in the form of Ontario Hydro's long-term uranium supply contracts, which has served to limit competition, fix profits, and otherwise influence the nature and development of the Canadian uranium mining industry.

Undoubtedly interesting and informative to aware Canadian readers, these disparate examples seem to fly a little higher than the average non-Canadian's level of easy comprehension of their subtleties. In short, the study is good. It is thorough. It is instructive. It is must reading for any conservative-minded individual anywhere who may be thinking about utilizing nuclear industry examples to extol the possible vices of government intervention.

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About the Reviewer: Craig Hosmer is a former member of Congress from California (1953-1975) who served as ranking member of both the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy and the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee. He is the founding president (1975-1978) of the American Nuclear Energy Council. He is now counselor to the Washington-based international law firm of Doub and Muntzing.