

*Eldorado Nuclear Limited*

should be publicly owned. What I am saying is that there has been no real case made for the privatization of those companies. There is no evidence that the people of Canada really believe that we need to privatize all or most of the companies, both federal and provincial, which are operating as Crown corporations.

• (1630)

On the part of this Government we see the movement to privatize some of the smaller publicly owned corporations. It certainly has not been ready to bring forward proposals to privatize Air Canada, Canadian National, or any of the other major publicly owned corporations.

Let me deal with two illustrations of successful privatization mentioned by the Minister in her speech. Let me deal for a moment with Fisheries Products International. The fact is it was privatized. It was publicly owned at one point. Why was it publicly owned? Because the private companies that were operating in the fishing industry on the Atlantic coast were losing money, were inefficient, and were virtually bankrupt. At that point the Government of Canada stepped in and took them over and created a publicly owned corporation, Fisheries Products International. When the industry was rationalized through public ownership, when the debts had been absorbed, and when the company became efficient and profitable, because of its ideological blinders, that is when the Government decided to privatize it. Having absorbed all the losses first created by private ownership, it is then sold back to the investors in order that they can make a profit.

For a moment let us look at Canadair. I am sure that some of my colleagues who will be dealing with this at a later stage will go into more detail, but let us look at what happened at de Havilland. Because of the type of labour practices exercised by the private corporation which took over de Havilland there was a strike. The workers at de Havilland had to go on strike in order to maintain the labour conditions and the security of employment which they had when the company was publicly owned.

They were and are concerned about the fact that much of the technology which was worked out when the company was publicly owned has now gone to corporate headquarters in the United States. When the company was publicly owned local servicing and the supply of components was done by privately owned companies mainly in Ontario. The union is worried and the people of Canada should be worried about how much of that local servicing will continue to be done in Canada.

Lastly, the research and development that was done when the company was publicly owned, how much of that will be done in Canada? There may be more jobs. But it seems to us, and it seems to the union, that there will be a repetition of what happened in the automobile industry. Yes, there are more jobs in the automobile industry now than there were before the Auto Pact. But there is virtually no research and development

in the auto industry done in Canada because it is all concentrated in and around the head offices of the multinational corporations that have plants in Canada.

It is also worth noting that until now the Government has concentrated its privatization efforts on some of the smaller corporations which were publicly owned. We saw the Government dispose of Canadian Arsenals; now it is proposing to dispose of Eldorado Nuclear. There is no evidence that the Canadian public wants the Government of Canada to privatize the major Crown corporations.

There was an Environics poll published earlier this month in *The Globe and Mail* on March 5, 1988, on the question of selling Crown corporations. When asked in this national poll whether the Government should or should not sell Air Canada, 31 per cent of Canadians indicated that they believed that the Government should, but 51 per cent indicated that they opposed the sale or privatization of Air Canada. When asked the same question about Petro-Canada, 33 per cent of Canadians supported the idea that Petro-Canada should be sold, and 50 per cent opposed the sale of Petro-Canada.

Therefore, we do not say that we are opposed to any privatization. We say that we are opposed to privatization for the sake of privatization. We say that the Canadian public agrees with us in that approach.

Let us look at Eldorado Nuclear as a company. As the Minister indicated, it was formed in 1942 and acquired by the federal Government shortly after that. Very quickly the federal Government of the day realized the implications of nuclear energy, and used the declaratory power it had to assume jurisdiction in this sector. This was a very significant step, one that should not and was not undertaken lightly. Similarly, the step that the Government is now taking to get out of the active mining and processing of uranium in Canada is also one that should not be taken lightly. We intend to debate this question seriously, and when it goes to committee to ask for and to demand very precise answers to many of the questions which we believe need to be asked.

There are profound nuclear, environmental, competition and public policy issues which have to be faced. It is our contention that the Government has not addressed any of those problems in Bill C-121.

By leaving the uranium field the Government, by its own admission, no longer wishes to be involved in discovery, mining, or processing of uranium ore for which Canada is one of the leading sources in the world, if not the major source. If this Bill is passed, the Government is contending that it will leave a complete regulatory scheme in place through the Atomic Energy Control Board and federal regulation. It loses the hands-on experience with uranium, particularly with the high grade uranium ores found in northern Saskatchewan. Given the experience in other countries and in other jurisdictions, we maintain that this is a very serious derogation of the authority and control which any federal Government should exercise in this area.