

Canadair Limited Divestiture Act

unlike the young Member of the New Democratic Party in his comment earlier, said: "This augurs well." And he is the union president. From Jean-Luc Bélanger, a Canadair employee: "I think it means the jobs are going to stay here. I trust Bombardier." From John Turner, the Leader of the Official Opposition:

[English]

—"In general terms, we favour the deal".

[Translation]

And finally, Mr. Speaker, one last quote: "If they say that the City of Montreal has pride of place, then the Government led by the master hand of Brian Mulroney stands for equality and common sense". That quote, Madam Speaker, is mine.

● (1230)

[English]

Mr. Kaplan: Madam Speaker, I would like to take a few moments to discuss the subject. I have a great interest in the Government's privatization program. I do not accept as a principle of ideology that privatization is always good or preferable.

I regret very much that the Government is so dominated by the philosophy of privatization that even the administration of the parole service is being turned over, not to professionals but to volunteers in the private sector. I believe it is a big mistake to approach social problems or economic issues with an ideological prejudice that prevents us from examining the advantages and disadvantages of various forms of ownership.

During the last election campaign the Opposition, as it was, came up with a very attractive proposition for the aerospace sector. The Government, as are the Governments of many other countries, was involved in the aerospace sector and owned de Havilland Corporation in Toronto, a company which manufactures propeller aircraft, and Canadair in Montreal, a company which manufactures jet aircraft.

The Canadian people were promised that if the Conservatives formed the Government, a company called the National Aerospace Company, if I recall correctly, would be formed. This company would be offered to Canadians as shareholders in three categories. Some of the shares of the company would be offered to the industrial sector so that it could be taken over by corporations like Bombardier which is a very good corporation. It would be possible as well for a minority position to be taken by an excellent aircraft company from the United States, like the Boeing Corporation. Another bloc of shares in this company were to be offered to employees of the corporations that were being taken over by the new venture and the third group would be offered to the public. That was an excellent idea. It was attractive politically and made a lot of sense.

I think there has been an incredible betrayal of the Canadian people. The Conservatives had an excellent and popular concept, one which I myself would have supported, as would

my colleague who sits beside me. When he was President of the Treasury Board, he also discussed in a very positive way an evolution of the ownership of Crown corporations. Instead of making the slightest effort to get that project going, the Government immediately announced that these corporations were for sale to the highest bidder on a distress basis. In other words, the Government said that a willing purchaser would not have to give fair market value for the corporations because the Government was desperate to sell. As the months went by, it showed more and more desperation so—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): Order. I would like to remind the Hon. Member that he seems to be getting into debate. Other Hon. Members are seeking the floor to ask questions of the Hon. Member for Laval (Mr. Ricard). The Hon. Member may wish to put an end to his speech at this time.

Mr. Kaplan: Madam Speaker, I am very sorry. I thought that I had been recognized for debate. I would intend to seek the floor, and perhaps the normal time allotted for questions and comments might be given back to the Hon. Member. I had not intended to fill his 10 minutes that way.

● (1240)

[Translation]

Mr. Langdon: Madam Speaker, I have a few questions for the Hon. Member for Laval (Mr. Ricard). My first one is: Why is there a difference between what the Government said about de Havilland and what it said here about Canadair? In the case of de Havilland, they said it was necessary to have a company that would help de Havilland with its marketing problems. They also said they had to find a company that could provide de Havilland with the technology. But now, it seems there is something different. There is a suggestion that the sale to Bombardier is supposed to help Canadair complete and that their technology is supposed to help Canadair. Aside from those considerations, is it a successful deal? That is my first question.

My second question is about what the Hon. Member failed to mention about the price. We as Members of this House must be able to evaluate the issues, and specifically the price factor. However, there was nothing in what the Hon. Member said to enlighten us. I would like to know whether the Hon. Member believes that the price, which is much lower than the assessed value indicated in the company's report . . . Should we as Members see that as a problem?

Mr. Ricard: Madam Speaker, first, I wish to thank the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor (Mr. Langdon) for asking these two questions. He asked about the difference in the position taken by the Government in the case of the de Havilland and Canadair transactions. I do not think that there was any difference in our approach to these two transactions. In the case of de Havilland, we had an airplane manufacturer which was unable to sell its products, and Boeing was the best choice as purchaser since it both manufactured and sold airplanes.