

*Eldorado Nuclear Limited*

**Mr. Cassidy:** I would like to ask my friend, the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor (Mr. Langdon), if he could comment a little on what he can discern about the privatization policy of the Government. Yesterday the Member for Mississauga North (Mr. Blenkarn), the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, assured the House that Air Canada was not for sale. Today we find out that Air Canada is for sale. Yesterday Petro-Canada was not for sale, but perhaps tomorrow it will be for sale. Yesterday, although Eldorado was on the block, we were told that the CBC was not for sale. It is going to build a fancy and substantial new headquarters in Toronto, and perhaps it will be on the sale list tomorrow. What the devil is going on? I ask my friend, the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor, if he can explain, since the Government cannot or will not, whether Canadians will have any social investment, or whether it will all go into the private sector regardless of the impact on taxpayers, and regardless of the impact on service to the Canadian people?

**Mr. Langdon:** It is a remarkable and difficult task to explain what is Conservative logic within its privatization policy. There is simply no such logic. There has been a complete reversal, a complete flip-flop today, a breaking of promises, a recognition of one policy strategy yesterday and today a recognition of a completely different strategy and policy. I must say that this is consistent with the lack of direction and the lack of consistency of the Government throughout its nearly four years in office.

The only explanation which can be given for this dramatically poor performance in terms of leadership, in terms of explaining itself to the public, is that the Government is an incompetent Government which has not yet managed to get its act together and, therefore, Madam Speaker, is doomed from ever having that chance in the future.

**Mr. Schellenberger:** I have a question, Madam Speaker. My constituents are very much in favour of the move that has been announced today to privatize part of Air Canada.

**Mr. Cassidy:** How do you know?

**Mr. Schellenberger:** Because I check with them constantly, something the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Cassidy), I believe, does not perhaps often do.

**Mr. Cassidy:** I meet my constituents every day.

**Mr. Schellenberger:** I would like to ask the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor (Mr. Langdon) whether he might explain to the country and to my constituents the policy of his Party of nationalizing the banks in this country.

**Mr. Langdon:** I am quite interested to hear the suggestion from the Hon. Member that his constituents are in favour of selling Air Canada. The most recent polling information available on the subject comes from the March 5, 1988 edition of *The Globe and Mail*. It indicates that in every region of the

country there is a preponderance of people in favour of keeping Air Canada within the public sector.

• (1550)

This assures that we will have at least one airline committed to a national service crossing the country, reaching remote communities, and providing regular service to communities which do not necessarily have the population to justify it.

I point out to the Hon. Member that even among Conservatives identified in this poll, 43 per cent are against the sale of Air Canada and 42 per cent are in favour of it. Even within his own Party there is no support for the ridiculous move which has been made today.

As I am certain the Hon. Member knows, our policies are adopted at conventions. We have never made a commitment to nationalize all banks in the country. There is no such commitment, and I say that as the previous policy chairman of my Party responsible for much of the policy development at conventions in the 1970s and 1980s. No such policy was ever adopted to nationalize the banks.

There was a policy adopted to nationalize a single bank, which was justified at that time as a policy to give greater control over the financial and monetary policy of the country, given the fact that the Bank Act had just been passed by the previous Government which loosened that control very considerably. I have absolutely no apology for such a pragmatic and sensible response to a foolish move on the part of the previous Government.

**Mr. James:** Madam Speaker, I should like to make a comment. The Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor (Mr. Langdon) has said on a number of occasions that the objectives have not been stated by the Government in connection with privatization. I should like to bring to his attention excerpts from the speech of the former Minister of State for Privatization on May 6, 1987 wherein she indicated the five basic objectives for the federal Government choosing the privatization initiative.

The first was the changing economic environment for many Crown corporations. The original objectives behind their creation were no longer valid. Some Crown corporations were created to meet public policy goals which are no longer legitimate. The case has been stated in connection with Air Canada and Eldorado.

In addition, Governments have other options than the owner taxation and spending regulations available to public policy. It was indicated that we must study effectiveness, and the Hon. Member's Party seems to be positive with regard to the effectiveness of privatization in Manitoba recently.

There is abundant evidence to suggest that many Crown corporations are not as effective in serving their clients as the private sector. We must take a look at that and see if they are. That is an objective.