

Energy Supplies

situation in Venezuela are absolutely true and, if anything, incomplete in terms of a description of the kind of market place to which this minister is sending Petro-Canada.

Mr. Gillespie: Leave it all to Exxon.

Mr. Andre: Every importing nation, all of the European Common Market nations which import, and that includes all of them, countries like Japan and other western industrialized nations, will have felt the pinch of Iran. Every one of them will be down in Venezuela and Mexico and other places trying to negotiate a deal for their countries. Under such circumstances, we saw in today's paper that Venezuela intends to raise the price on a barrel of oil by 25 per cent. They are in a beautiful situation. This minister and this government are sending down a novice group to negotiate, with instructions to get 100,000 barrels a day, we do not know at what price. They can pay any price they want. Also, there is no question of quality. Quality is not something that the minister is bothered about, nor is price. The group is just told to go down there and buy 100,000 barrels of oil a day. Anybody can do that with a blank cheque.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Yes, Goyer did it.

Mr. Andre: Yes, we had that experience in 1974 when the government paid \$45 for a barrel of oil, the highest price we ever paid for oil. It was the last time this government went out to buy oil and it was the highest price ever paid for heating oil. It worked out to \$45 a barrel, and it was not good heating oil because the sulphur content was so high that it had to be blended.

Mr. Paproski: The minister said he sent it back.

Mr. Andre: So now we are going to send the same group down to Venezuela with a blank cheque and tell them to buy us 100,000 barrels a day. It is the sincere hope of that minister that when the bill comes in for that little exercise, the election will have been over and in the meantime he will have stood up and said: "I stood up to Exxon". My, what a tough fellow he is.

The motion moved by the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Symes) of the NDP is to be expected. It is their doctrine and their dogma that the government should do everything, that Big Brother knows better than you or I, that Big Brother should run everything, not just the oil industry but the Post Office, and so on, that Big Brother is the one who knows all, and that Big Brother in the form of state ownership should run the entire country. I understand that, but I do not agree with it.

I think that socialism is a political philosophy and an economic system which have not worked anywhere in the world. I cannot understand how it is that people continue to advocate an economic system that has a proven record of failure everywhere it has been tried. Nonetheless, I respect that party's right to carry on advocating such silly economics. But what really got me was the rationalization of this dogma when the hon. member said that by putting Petro-Can in the international oil markets and by having Petro-Can buy all of

[Mr. Andre.]

Canada's oil, we will have a trusted Crown corporation to give us a window on the world market.

Obviously the hon. member believes, for dogmatic reasons, that Crown corporations are good and can be trusted. Does he feel the same about Atomic Energy of Canada Limited and their little deal with Argentina? I wonder perhaps if he would explain to me sometime how he can be so absolutely certain that a Crown corporation with the name of Petro-Canada can be trusted to be honest, efficient, and effective, when we have had the experience with a Crown corporation whose name is Atomic Energy of Canada Limited which sold a reactor to Argentina. First we lent Argentina the money to buy the reactor and the contract will cost us millions of dollars, and then we had to pay under the table bribes to get the contract. Here is a classic case of what is wrong with Crown corporations.

When that deal was first signed, the predecessor of this minister, Donald Macdonald—who, incidentally, is now a director of Shell, one of the big, ugly multinationals, and he was fighting multinationals in the 1974 election but now he is their director—stood up and said that AECL is a classic example of the wonderful things that Crown corporations can do for us. He said that because he was pushing through the Petro-Canada bill at that time. He said that we should look at how wonderfully Atomic Energy of Canada had done in selling this reactor; that it was at the forefront of world technology; that it was doing great things which would be tremendous for Canada; and that we should see Crown corporations as wonderful and marvellous vehicles.

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When the Auditor General looked at the books we found out the truth about the deal. It was after the election when we found out the truth. One could not find a minister who would admit ever having heard of the name "Atomic Energy of Canada, Ltd." One could not find a minister who would come forward and take responsibility for its actions. This should have been done by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Gillespie). That was all forgotten, and a new Crown corporation came along. It is called Petro-Canada and it will save us. The onus is upon the government to prove that nonsense before attempting to persuade the Canadian public to accept it. The public is faced with the record of Crown corporations, particularly Crown corporations under the responsibility of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Those corporations are the ones with the most dismal record.

As I indicated, I respect the right of the NDP to be wrong. They advocate a socialist economy and state ownership, for dogmatic reasons. Also for dogmatic reasons they proposed this amendment. It behooves us to think carefully about the consequences of doing this. If Petro-Canada were the sole purchaser of all Canada's offshore supplies of energy, all our eggs would be in one basket. An enormously important sector of the economy would be in the hands of the chief oil buyer of