

*Nordion and Theratronics*

the corporations, including de Havilland when there are some 1,500 more jobs today than when the Government held de Havilland. I could go on with other examples.

Management of federal resources have improved as well. Future potential financial demands on the public purse have been reduced. Most important, these goals have been accomplished without reducing the quality of services that Canadians receive.

In the April 3 Speech from the Throne and in the Budget that was released several weeks later, the Government reiterated its commitment to building a strong economy, encouraged by incentive and opportunity.

The social programs that Canadians value so highly, and the high standards of living to which we have become accustomed, depend on the strength of our economy being fully competitive internationally.

In earlier periods of our history, government ownership was sometimes justified because it was necessary to provide a service to the public that the private sector was unwilling or unable to provide. Sometimes it was to protect the technology or industry that was just getting started in this country. Sometimes it was to continue the process of nation building that was so critical to our future.

Today, government ownership in many cases can no longer be justified. Our social and economic infrastructure is relatively mature. Services for which we were once dependent on government now can be more effectively and efficiently delivered by the private sector.

The Canadian economy has the ability to grow and prosper without intrusive policies such as government ownership. Our privatization program has proved that Crown corporations can compete more effectively in the market environment if they are not tied to the Government's apron strings. Most of the federal Crown corporations now in existence were acquired or established for reasons that were justifiable in the past.

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If I may be so bold as to speak to the motivations of past Governments, there was more reason than ideology in their establishment. The same is true today.

The Government of Canada is divesting itself of Crown corporations where there are good reasons so to do. Contrary to the vociferous and misguided protestations of Members opposite, the success of these privatizations can be amply demonstrated. One just has to look at the number of individual Canadians who acquired Air Canada shares in the initial offering to see that the Canadian people have faith in the future of our national flag carrier and are willing to invest their own dollars to participate in that future. The first share offering attracted approximately 130,000 initial purchasers from across the nation.

Employees, as well, recognized the benefits of that privatization and what it can bring. In the case of Air Canada, many worked actively through employee associations to bring about its transfer to the private sector. Despite three of the four unions that advised them not to buy shares in it, over 80 per cent of the employees of Air Canada displayed their faith in the new company by buying shares.

The Government recognizes that employees are as important to the future success of the company as they were in the past. It works closely with employee representatives to ensure that employee concerns are kept uppermost in mind throughout the entire privatization process, and that the transfer to the private sector is equitable to all concerned.

In several privatizations attractive share ownership plans have been offered to employees. In the case of Teleglobe, for example, employees were given shares in Memotec at discounted prices and were offered interest free loans to help them finance the purchase. When Fishery Products International was privatized shares amounting to approximately 4 per cent of the company were given to employees.

The well-being of employees is a key element of the Government's privatization program because while we want to build a more competitive and market-oriented economy we will continue to do it in a compassionate and caring way. By working together Government, employees and management in true partnership we can prepare for the challenges of the 1990s.

Let us take a look at what has been happening in two companies since they were privatized. Canadair Limited was sold to Bombardier in December, 1986. The sale has resulted in new commercial opportunities for Canadair and an improved ability to compete in foreign markets. Through the financial strength of Bombardier the com-