

Energy Supplies

his colleagues in trying to privatize our airports, our nationally-owned railway, and Air Canada. They do not really believe in it. They only set them up in the first place to bail out their privatized friends who had gone bankrupt; now they will write off \$1 billion or \$3 billion and turn them over to their private enterprise friends again. Any dummy could be a private enterpriser with a deal like that.

Once we have written off the debt and start making a good return on the investment, making some profit and providing service to the people, it would seem to me that is the time to keep the corporations in public ownership. As soon as all the risks are gone, however, they are to be handed back to private enterprise and private enterprise laughs all the way to the bank.

What the Conservatives fail to realize is that the world is running out of oil, whether that takes 50 or 100 years. To leave control of those precious resources in the hands of foreign companies whose objective is to maximize profits in the shortest possible time, does not make much sense.

The squeeze that Imperial Oil put on us under instructions from Exxon to divert some of our oil supplies, could be a blessing in disguise. It demonstrated the inherent dangers of foreign ownership and control. It is a blessing because, if nothing else, even this private enterprise government, implementing Conservative policies, has had to go back to what we forced them to do in 1973 and 1974 in bringing in this legislation.

If we heed the signals that we have had for the second time, we will take control of our resources. I doubt that this government or, Lord help us, a Conservative government, will heed the signals. If we were to heed the signals after the many bitter lessons we have had, we would take control.

We continue to let the multinationals squeeze us in many other sectors of the economy, not just energy. Foreign ownership of Canadian industry is growing. That is a further betrayal of our Canadian nationhood. This party is committed to an industrial strategy based on Canadian control, Canadian ownership, both private and public, of our rich resources. This will not only gain self respect for us and strengthen our nationhood and national unity, but I am confident it will also gain us the respect of other nations.

Canadians are frustrated when they see themselves hewing wood and drawing water for foreign corporations, knowing they have the intelligence, the resources, the capacity, the ability and the money to develop an economy owned by Canadians and working for Canadian needs as well as the needs of all human beings.

What would Canadian control do? Instead of exporting raw materials and the processing jobs that go with them, we would export some finished products. That would not only create jobs in Canada for Canadians but would also reduce the need to import finished products, which need has contributed to the economic mess in which we find ourselves.

[Mr. Benjamin.]

We continue to export hundreds and thousands of barrels of oil to the United States. I know we have reduced our exports substantially over the years, but we need to tell our United States friends that we will help them whenever we can, but first and foremost we will see that Canadians from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the 49th parallel to the Arctic Islands, have their needs fulfilled. If we have anything left over, and after we have assured our own needs for decades ahead, we will be a good neighbour and help them, but only then.

As a Canadian I find it embarrassing to watch the spectacle of our limited oil and natural gas resources going across the border, leaving this country in the hands of some multinational corporations intent on making a fast buck while Canadians in five other provinces pay the ransom for their energy needs to corporations in other countries. Surely that is demeaning. Surely we should and could have completed the construction of a pipeline to transport crude oil and natural gas to Halifax and Cape Breton Island, and surely we could extend it to Newfoundland. Why should people in those areas feel part of confederation when they are discriminated against? It is no wonder that so many Canadians, not just in Quebec, are disenchanted.

Any country which calls itself a nation retains and maintains its economic destiny in its own hands. It does not leave it in the hands of corporations outside its borders, or in the hands of other countries.

We wish that the government had brought in a bill even stronger than this one, a bill that would have made Petro-Canada a national corporation operating in the interests of the country and the people, a bill that would have allowed Petro-Canada to allocate supplies to the private sector in refining, and allocate supplies to the private sector through their pipelines. We would not object to them making a reasonable profit, but we would have control. We would be able to secure supplies until such time as we had the political will, because the other attributes are there, to supply Canada first with what the Atlantic provinces and eastern Quebec need—gas, oil, and other refined products. How can we sit here as elected representatives and not agree that that is what we must do? It is not fair to expect, let alone to ask the likes of Imperial Oil, Shell or Texaco to do it for us. That is not what they are here for, Mr. Speaker. That is not what they came here for in the first place, and they are honest about it. They make no bones about it. They are here to exploit a resource and to make the maximum number of dollars. That was the first and only reason they came. They did not come here and say that they would help Canadians to get a secure petroleum supply from St. John's to Victoria. That is not why they came here.

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This mythology from the days of the oil magnates of the 1920s which says "Imperial serves you best", or "trust Texaco", that somehow or other they will do it for us, at best is an illusion held by members in the Liberal and Conservative parties, and at worst a betrayal that members of the Liberal