

*Canadair Limited Divestiture Act*

them to the private sector as long as it is done in a way that does not disturb the basic economy.

● (1210)

When a Crown corporation stands alone commercially and starts to operate as if it were a private commercial enterprise, then it need not be sold automatically. We must look at it and decide if it was established for a policy reason and, if so, there must be some way in which it will affect the economy of Canada if it is removed from the public sector. Rather than putting it on the block for sale, we should ask why it was set up and see if we can return to the reason for its establishment. We should ensure that the people of Canada are getting the policy development for which the particular Crown corporation was established.

Sometimes successful Crown corporations are filling a need. Those needs are broad and many. Crown corporations have been used to develop resources and regional industries. They have been used as a window into a particular industry, an opportunity for the Government to know what is occurring in the industry and to know what kind of development is needed. This makes it less necessary to depend on multinational corporations whose reasons for being are quite often not necessarily of benefit to the Canadian people. If a corporation is put in place and does have an impact on a particular sector of the economy, the private corporations are forced to get in line in a competitive way.

As well, in the past, Crown corporations have often been leaders, either in a positive or a negative way, in examples of environmental control. Quite often these Crown corporations have also been used to establish the regulatory structure which is necessary in the development of an economy. The Government's privatization program is in place only for ideological reasons. The Government suggests that it is better for a private corporation to operate these industries rather than for a Crown corporation to do so.

For many years, the Government of Saskatchewan was involved in establishing a number of Crown corporations. Many people in the House and across Canada have suggested that the formation of Crown corporations is a basic principle of socialist Parties, while in fact there have been fewer Crown corporations developed in the Province of Saskatchewan than there have been in Conservative Alberta. Conservative Alberta has been much more prone to the development of Crown corporations so it may control the development of its industries. Saskatchewan confined its Crown corporations to the development of utilities and resources.

Tommy Douglas had a favourite saying which was: "You don't have to own an industry in order to have some control over it". He felt that it was quite possible to set up a structure which allowed a fair, easy and worth-while development of the economy of the province or the country without putting Crown corporations into place. That was the basic philosophy under which the Saskatchewan Government operated for those 30 years that Tommy Douglas was the Premier.

During the time Tommy Douglas was the Premier of Saskatchewan, the amount of private investment in Saskatchewan was very high. It contributed tremendously to the development of the province. Saskatchewan went from being a have-not province to being a have province. It went from having the highest per capita debt to having the lowest per capita debt in those years. It also ended up with a diverse economy.

This Government really does not know why it is pursuing privatization. I think that is the basic reason we feel that we cannot support this kind of divestiture, as much as we think that there are reasons in some cases for supporting the divestiture of Crown corporations. Until the Government has in place a policy which we can follow, we feel that we cannot support this kind of divestiture.

Canada is not the same as the United States. We would not have developed in the way we have if we had not had in place over the years Crown corporations like CNR. We would not have developed culturally in the way we have if we had not had in place another Conservative Crown corporation, the CBC. These Crown corporations contributed immensely to the development of Canada. To a great extent, the resources of Canada have been developed by Crown corporations.

It is not as if the Government had suddenly decided that certain Crown corporations were no longer commercially valuable, although that is what occurred with de Havilland. We are now told that de Havilland is producing tremendously and there is no reason to believe that it would not have produced just as well if it had remained a Crown corporation.

Canadair is the fourth, the fifth or the sixth Crown corporation the Government has sold off. It started out by selling off the Northern Transportation Company. I would venture to guess that the subsidies being paid to the present Northern Transportation Company are just as large as they were when it was run as a Crown corporation. The service to northern areas which was a requirement under the Crown corporation's mandate has diminished. Many communities in the north are no longer able to depend on the Northern Transportation Company for transportation.

The Government also sold the Kidd Creek Mines. The Kidd Creek Mines were to close down, but as I understand it, there was a need to keep a number of jobs in that particular area. There was no particular reason why the Kidd Creek Mines should not have been sold. Since it was part of the Canada Development Corporation, it did not require legislation to sell it.

● (1220)

We went through the process of selling de Havilland. Again, as with Canadair, it looks as though we will sell another corporation at a value much less than the people of Canada should have expected for the type of investment that they had made.