

Supply

First, I am sure that as a westerner he shared the agony and pain of the abandonment of businesses and the wholesale sell-out of the petroleum industry when his Liberal Government introduced the National Energy Program. He knows as well as every other Canadian that Marc Lalonde openly admitted that it was an attempt to destroy the power base of Alberta and its economic strength.

The New Democratic Party has been accused of being partners to that program. While it says it had nothing to do with it, we know better. It supported that action in other ways because it very much fits in with its philosophy as a centralist Party in Ontario.

On October 5, as reported at page 9636 of *Hansard*, the Leader of the Liberal Party said:

We have already made a good many concessions... We have already dropped the Foreign Investment Review Agency, our national energy policy—

He went on to say:

Before the negotiations, the Government gave away the Foreign Investment Review Act. It really did a job on that one.

He went on to talk about the National Energy Program. Is the Liberal Party still wrapped up in the National Energy Program? Will the Liberals go out in the next election and tell Alberta, British Columbia, southern Saskatchewan, southern Manitoba, Fort St. John, Fort Nelson and Dawson Creek that they support the National Energy Program? That is the first question I want to put to him.

• (1550)

My second question will be very brief. If the Hon. Member has done his homework as an energy critic at some point, he will know that British Columbia Hydro has a far greater capacity than it has customers. He will know that the blockade is from the Bonneville Power Administration. He will also know that this agreement will open up that Bonneville Power roadblock and allow B.C. Hydro to sell off power to California in order to pay off the debt to the benefit of the rate that consumers are paying today for their power. Let him answer that.

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, once again I thank the Hon. Member for his question. I assume it was not a set-up and I will take it at value because it gives me the opportunity to talk about something I did not have time to talk about in my remarks.

First, let us talk about the Hon. Member's own riding of Kootenay West. What we have experienced there in the past year is that for the first time this country has allowed the sale of a public utility, an electrical power company. Investment Canada, in the dark of night last year, on December 22, at midnight, without any reliance upon documentation or evidence, allowed the sale of the Kootenay West Power and Light Company. We have never done that before. It is symbolic and indicative of exactly what I pointed out, that there is no understanding or comprehension on the part of

Conservative Members that Canada must maintain the right to manage its own resources, especially its important energy resources.

Of course, we support the sale of power, natural gas and oil, because under previous administrations that was permitted. However, we always wanted to ensure there were certain tests applied; first, its availability to Canadians, and, second, a fair return to Canadians. That is what we have given away. We have obliterated the right of a national energy board to set any standards whatsoever for the sale of our energy. What we have is the federal United States Regulatory Commission being able to set regulations on its side of the border, which it had retained the right to do under this agreement, but we have given up our right.

I guess that is what a Tory calls a good deal. If we give up something and they keep what they have, I suppose, under the Prime Minister's definition, that is a good deal. Somehow or other, the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) is going to write a new text book which will say: "We give up. We surrender. You keep yours and we all go home happy". That is a kind of perversity of logic, and it is the reason there is such distrust of this agreement. That is why there is such distrust of the Prime Minister. Canadians realize he does not have the capacity to defend effectively Canadian economic interests and that includes our energy resources and our resources, generally.

Mr. Caccia: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Winnipeg Fort—Garry (Mr. Axworthy) said something interesting, something I have heard for the first time, in a speech that was extremely effective and informative. I heard for the first time the observation that if we as Canadians choose the binational mechanism to resolve a dispute, we would then abdicate our right to choose GATT as a mechanism for resolving that very same dispute. That comes as news to me. I would like to know whether I understood the Hon. Member correctly and, if so, whether he could elaborate on that point.

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, the fact is that this has been a part of the deal about which the Government does not talk. Somehow it has forgotten to inform Canadians. I read its little colouring book it is sending around to the supermarkets, somewhere tucked between the *National Enquirer* and *People* magazine, explaining the trade deal. However, what the Government does not say is that we have given up a right we negotiated back in 1946-47 at Bretton Woods, under the GATT, which gives any country the right to request a panel of impartial people, drawn not from the two parties in the dispute, but from outside that dispute. We have surrendered on that point.

What does that mean? In the last 10 years we have taken about nine different cases to the GATT. We have been successful in seven of them. Back in 1972, when the Americans imposed a major duty on East Coast tuna fish, we challenged it in front of a GATT panel. The Americans settled even before the panel reached a decision because they knew they had a bad case. When the Americans challenged us on FIRA,