

Eldorado Nuclear Limited

There is no particular necessity or requirement under privatization that those employees' share ownership continue. As the shares are sold off, as employees' priorities change, they may end up back in the hands of large corporate shareholders.

Mr. Thacker: That is called freedom of choice.

Mr. Cassidy: Management may cease to put shares in the hands of employees. There is no guarantee that the employees with a handful of shares have any meaningful voice in the place they work. I think that is wrong. There are other ways we can handle this question.

I appreciate the Hon. Member raising the issue because it concerns work styles and the way workers organize, which I believe is a fundamental issue for Canadians in the 1990s.

Mr. James: Madam Speaker, I wanted to speak to some of the comments made by the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Cassidy). I am very concerned about this allegation that the Government does not talk about its agenda. The Hon. Member indicated that no statements had been made on this subject. There are newspaper reports which indicate that we talked about examining all Crown corporations, including Eldorado and Air Canada. Certainly one of our campaign themes in 1984 was to better manage Crown corporations. In the November 1984 Economic Statement of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) as well as the Budget of May, 1984, concrete plans were announced for the rationalization and privatization of Crown corporations. If this is a surprise to Members opposite then I am a little concerned about what they have been reading.

In addition, there are public documents which concern how we think employees should be taken into consideration. I am surprised that the NDP, as defender of the worker, is not talking more about that. These public documents show how we want to take employees into consideration. For example, the Government requires a new owner of a Crown corporation to provide a superannuation plan at least as generous as the norm for the industry in which the new company operates. There are all sorts of things like that.

What we are really hearing is the philosophy of the Party which the Hon. Member represents. That Party believes in state intervention. All this other stuff the Hon. Member brings up is just camouflage. The NDP see us moving away from the present system to where we have more and more free enterprise that will allow for employee involvement and growth such as we have at de Havilland. Just look at the mess Boeing took over at de Havilland. The order book was a mile long and the ability to produce was one yard long. What a job they have had to turn that around and keep all those people at work! That is an example of privatization.

Mr. Cassidy: Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member seems to be arguing that there should be no government involvement in the private sector. He is of course arguing against the policies of his own Government. Through its tax policy, tariff policy,

trade promotion policy, consumer standards policy, indeed any number of policies, the Government is constantly involved in a very intimate way with the fortunes and future of different companies in different regions of Canada.

For example, there was the loan to General Motors at Ste. Thérèse on very preferential terms. That was direct intervention in the largest single industrial corporation in the country. In theory, I suppose the Hon. Member would say that he and his Party are opposed to that kind of intervention. Yet they do it all the time.

My Party has no problem with saying yes. Where it is of benefit to Canadians, it makes sense to have public intervention. Governments do it all the time. What I believe is wrong is the hypocrisy of a Party which says it does not believe in that kind of thing, but when the chips are down it will go ahead and do it. However, because it does not believe in it, therefore the Government is not prepared to plan for it and do it in a coherent way. That is what bothers me about this whole question of privatization. Whether it is Air Canada or Eldorado, basically the view is, let us get them off our plate and out of the government sector regardless of whether or not that is a sensible decision. The Government never sees any reason, at least officially and in theory, for new public initiatives in cases where it is desirable.

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I think I will take up this debate where we left off with the question of the reason for privatization and what is the role of state enterprise.

You will recall that in Question Period today the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski) mentioned my name in a quotation of a statement in which where I supposedly supported the privatization of Air Canada. I think that stems from a speech I gave in this House on December 1, 1986, when as NDP privatization critic I tried to define the issues in the debate. I was trying not to be an ideologue. The Hon. Member for Sarnia—Lambton (Mr. James) said a few moments ago that we are blind ideologues. We just want to have state enterprise and we cannot deal with the possibility of privatization because state enterprises are the basis of socialism. He accuses us, by implication, of being ideologues. I will admit that we sometimes do that on this side of the House, too. We throw things at the Government and say, "You are blind ideologues. You just want to privatize for the sake of privatizing. You are a Margaret Thatcher, or that kind of right wing idealist".

• (1630)

In my speech on December 1, 1986, I was trying to deal with the notion that perhaps within the Canadian tradition we could have a sensible way to look at our mixed economy where there are some Crown corporations and many private corporations. Crown corporations only amount to 12 per cent of businesses in our country. I suggest to the Hon. Member for