

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I see my time is running out, and that is unfortunate because I would have a lot more to say about basic principles. I simply want to urge the House to pass Bill C-84 at the earliest opportunity because it will be good for the Canadian energy sector, good for the private sector, and good for the economy of Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Questions and comments. The hon. member for Papineau—Saint-Michel.

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, I rise at this in time because the member from Trois-Rivières acknowledged my presence and the fact that I was listening to his comments. I must say that he totally misunderstood the fundamental reason for the establishment of Petro-Canada. When he compares that Crown corporation to others, he lacks complete objectivity or at least a basic sense of reality. Why is there a Crown corporation in the energy sector? It's because the previous Liberal administration thought it was essential for the Canadian people to have a significant degree of ownership in a resource as important as oil which is found in abundance in the Canadian soil. Provincial governments also considered essential that there would be Crown corporations in the hydro field. I cannot figure out why the hon. member would not understand that what is useful and really profitable for private interests become public property and that revenues and profits benefit all Canadians instead of being sent abroad.

• (1830)

We know that large oil multinationals have always refused—not only in Canada but everywhere in the world—to share with governments the huge resources generated by the sale of oil products. For many decades, they have been so powerful and have done away with the basic rules of competition in Canada. And when the Canadian government decided to own its company in order to have a window on the energy sector, the conservatives, who have made themselves the champions of multinationals, objected.

When the Canadian government decided to impose a tax on oil production to collect from the start revenues for Canadians, having realized that the big multinationals paid no income taxes in Canada, the Conservative Party opposed this measure and promised, if it ever

formed the government, to suppress such a tax that it judged inappropriate.

Interesting enough, the first measure President Reagan took when he came to power was to cancel all antitrust measures against the big oil multinationals. Not surprisingly, the first one taken by the Mulroney government, after its election, was to suppress this tax which the oil multinationals considered unacceptable.

The first measure taken by both Reagan and Canadian croney, Mr. Mulroney, was something done to please the big oil companies!

What is this bill if not but the ultimate concession of the conservatives to multinationals?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): The hon. member has been too long in this Chamber not to know that during the period of questions and comments, he should be as brief as possible. I will therefore ask the hon. member to conclude with his question, without any comments.

Mr. Ouellet: Obviously, Mr. Speaker, if this is a period for questions and comments, you should allow me to make my comment!

I want to ask the following question of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance: What guarantee can he give us that this sale will be dealt with more strictly than other sales of Crown corporations? Everyone knows how Canadian assets were sold out in other cases.

One of the most outrageous cases was the sale of CN Route to friends of the government. The sale of Air Canada did not bring about the expected results—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Order, please. I have to tell the hon. member that time is running out. I think, in all justice, that the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Finance should have the floor now.

Mr. Pierre H. Vincent (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Ouellet: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): The hon. member for Papineau—Saint-Michel on a point of order.

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, I respectfully submit that according to our Standing Orders I may use those ten minutes for comments if I wish.