

Supply

CN is concerned, it has a reasonably good record. It is unionized, and I think many of the things about which he talked have in fact happened. How would the Hon. Member treat CN if his Party were in power? How would he make it function more efficiently and more effectively? How would he make it more competitive with CPR?

Mr. Blaikie: The word "efficiency" begs all kinds of questions because it is not as if everyone agrees on what constitutes efficiency. We do not think the abandonment of branch lines is efficient in terms of its larger social impact, yet according to certain economic models it is very efficient.

• (1230)

That is the kind of debate that has been going on in this House over the last few weeks about the Crow rate and what actually constitutes efficiency. In the first place, we would not have to worry about the CNR being competitive with the CPR because we would merge the two into one railway. We would have that railroad serve the social and economic well-being of the country. It would operate according to a criterion of efficiency which took into account social and environmental factors as well as economic factors. If you do not take those other factors into consideration, you are not talking about efficiency. You have to judge efficiency over the long term, not just the short term; for example, the profit margin in the latest quarter.

Mr. Taylor: The Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie) mentioned that the profits of PetroCan stay in Canada. A few years ago I heard Liberal and NDP speakers say the same thing about Canadair. Will the Hon. Member tell us what happened to the profits of Canadair? Are the people better off because it was operated by Government rather than private enterprise? If there were losses, they would not then come out of the pockets of the taxpayers. Would the Hon. Member outline that for me so I will be aware where the profit of PetroCan is so far? How much profit has it made and where is it?

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I maintain that the profits which Crown corporations generate are more likely to be reinvested in Canada than the profits of multinational corporations. I stand by that. If a corporation like Canadair has not made a profit, that does not contradict my argument. It has something to do with the way Canadair has been managed and the way the Government has mishandled the whole affair. It is not evidence against my argument that when profits are generated and there is good management, those profits are more likely to be reinvested in Canada. Think logically for a change. I quite agree with the Hon. Member's condemnation of the way Canadair has been handled, but that is not contrary to what I have been maintaining.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask one more question. Does the Hon. Member believe that today there is sufficient accountability of PetroCan to the Parliament of Canada?

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, no, I do not. That was the point I made in my speech. Both as a New Democrat and as one who had the opportunity to study this issue in the Special Committee on Standing Orders and Procedure, I have stated there is not enough accountability of Crown corporations to Government and I am concerned about the many quasi-government agencies that are proliferating and which need to be made accountable to this Parliament. We do not disagree on the need for more accountability. Where we disagree is on whether we are going to use that lack of accountability which exists to attack the existence of these instruments of public policy on principle, or whether we are going to make them accountable and thereby make them better instruments of public policy. Our second disagreement is whether we are going to make private power in this country as accountable to the common good as the Hon. Member and I want to make public power. That is where we disagree.

I wish to comment with respect to an element of a question asked before which I did not answer regarding the taxpayers having to pick up losses of various Crown corporations. Let us not kid ourselves. When private corporations suffer losses, somebody picks up the cost of those losses. People either pick up these losses as taxpayers then they are Crown corporations, or pick them up as consumers if it is a private corporation. When private corporations suffer a loss, they do not assume that they cannot pass on that loss through the marketplace. It works its way into the marketplace. Let us not be naive about the way the marketplace works.

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, today we are dealing with a Government that often talks about the rights of Canadians. When the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) finally goes on to his retirement, and it will certainly be a well justified retirement, one thing he will want to be remembered for is the Charter of Rights and Freedoms which guarantees Canadians specific rights. It is possible to talk about rights and it is possible to enshrine the principle in the Constitution. However, this Government acts in a hundred different ways to undermine those rights. It daily circumscribes the rights of Canadians, daily confiscates their wealth and their income, daily restricts their ability to watch what they want to see and listen to what they want to hear, and daily prevents them from exercising what we as Canadians feel to be our most basic freedoms. This is what we have seen done by this Government, particularly since 1980. We have seen it in many different ways.

The Government has made an attack upon the basic freedoms of Canadians. When the Prime Minister retires from office or, more appropriately, when he is retired from office, we will find that Canadians are less free than they were at the time when he came to office in 1968.

In no area is that more conspicuous than in the case of freedom of the press in Canada. Read the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Lip service is paid to the right of freedom of speech. Lip service is paid to the right to a free press. Indeed, the two are inseparable. In many ways what this Government