

S. O. 21

will exist on these companies once they are privatized? How will it be possible for the Government to give up control of a key institution like Air Canada and at the same time say it will keep the maintenance facilities in Montreal and Winnipeg? You cannot hand over control to someone else and yet tell them what they are supposed to do. It is not possible. That is a complete contradiction.

Neither is it possible to say that Air Canada employees can be assured that policies such as those governing salaries, pensions, other benefits, relationships with unionized workers and employment equity will be continued. You cannot say that because you are passing control of this key national institution to the private sector.

As I said, this morning the House was given a complete redefinition of the privatization strategy which has functioned up to this point. Given that, it is not possible to look at the isolated case of Eldorado Nuclear at this stage and come to any kind of sensible conclusion. The broader strategy is not spelled out, and it must be there to justify a set of privatizations such as the Government seems to be undertaking. That is why we have moved this amendment.

• (1340)

We moved this amendment despite some of the tortuous argument presented to us this morning, suggesting that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) has somehow maintained his previous position with respect to Air Canada. It is not possible to say that Air Canada is not for sale and then announce on behalf of the Government and Cabinet that Air Canada will be entirely sold to the public. It is not possible to do that without making a complete U-turn, as the Government has done. In doing so, it has thrown completely into question any strategy or framework it has so far followed with respect to privatization. What will be the result of this new strategy for communities like mine, for communities in eastern Canada and communities in isolated parts of western Canada?

It is no accident that the polls concerning the operation of the Crown corporation talked about by the Deputy Prime Minister show that the Atlantic Provinces, British Columbia and the outlying parts of our country have the highest support for this airline as a national institution. In the case of British Columbia, 72 per cent of Canadians felt that Air Canada was well run. In the case of Atlantic Canada, it was 67 per cent compared to only 17 per cent and 19 per cent respectively who felt that it was not well run.

When asked whether any national institution should be sold, 53 per cent of British Columbians and 58 per cent of Atlantic Canadians were against the sale of Air Canada. I come from one of these more isolated constituencies which face serious problems with respect to airline service.

Since Canadian Airlines became an amalgamated institution, it has cut out its direct service into Windsor and decided to subcontract to a Canadian partner, as it calls it, which uses a smaller aircraft that is much more uncomfortable. We will

see precisely the same kind of decisions take place on the part of Air Canada when it must look at its bottom line rather than consider national service and public accountability. That is why it is crucial that we accept this amendment and put off consideration of this Bill with respect to Eldorado Nuclear until we get a clear sense from the Government of what its new strategy represents.

At the moment, its new strategy looks certain to result in a dangerous shambles for the people from outlying Atlantic Canada, outlying western and northern Canada and for the people in places like southern and northern Ontario who will be hard hit as well.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): There are three minutes left. Does the Hon. Member wish to use that time after Question Period, or will we go into questions and comments?

Mr. Langdon: I am finished with my comments, Madam Speaker.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): Order please. It being 1.47 p.m., I do now leave the Chair until 2 p.m. this day.

At 1.47, the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 21

[English]

APARTHEID

SOUTH AFRICA—EARLY MORNING PROTEST VIGILS HELD IN OTTAWA

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau): Mr. Speaker, this week the Ottawa Coalition against Political Executions in South Africa have been holding early morning vigils in front of the Langevin Block to raise awareness about the plight of many political prisoners who are now facing death in South Africa, part of whom are the Sharpeville Six. Their efforts seem to be falling on deaf ears given the Government's reluctance to act decisively on the South African question.

In 1985 the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) assured the membership of the United Nations that:

If there is no progress in the dismantling of apartheid, our relations with South Africa may have to be severed absolutely.

The Prime Minister knows, as do all Canadians, that the Botha regime is not interested in taking steps to abolish apartheid. Why does the Prime Minister not face the fact that, unless the South African community can be economically and diplomatically isolated, South African political prisoners will