

*Petroleum Incentives Program Act*

Tonight I want to speak about the kind of energy policy that we could have if we had more, yet different, government planning than we are now offered by the Liberal Party of Canada. Our view of the value of public ownership is founded in our commitment to give ordinary Canadians more say in the kind of energy choices which will dictate the quality of their lives and of their children's lives in the future. In this respect, I would just like to make a comment about what we mean when we say that we want to give Canadians more control and participation in their energy industry.

The more I listen to my Progressive Conservative colleagues, the more it becomes clear to me that when they are speaking of more control and participation by Canadians in the oil industry, they mean that very small percentage of people in this country who invest in the energy industry and who buy stocks and that sort of thing. That does not apply to most of the people in my riding. When I speak about giving them more say in the energy future of this country, I am not speaking about creating some kind of tax policy which will permit them to buy what few stocks they can afford in some private Canadian-owned oil company. Big deal! It is absolutely meaningless to most of the people in my riding. They want to have a say in public policy. They do not want to have a few stocks shoved away in a closet somewhere. That is what we mean when we speak about giving ordinary Canadians more say, more participation and more control over the energy policy in this country.

As I said before, our view of the value of public ownership is founded in our commitment to give Canadians more say in the kind of energy choices which will dictate our future. The debate between the Liberals and the Conservatives is really only a debate over which set of bureaucrats will arrogantly and blindly impose their will on ordinary Canadians out of this energy model now before us. I mean, that is what is really going on here. We are not discussing anti-bureaucrats and bureaucrats. We are considering which set of bureaucrats will run the energy future of this country. That is what we are hearing when we listen to the debate between the Liberals and the Conservatives. What would the Conservatives do? They would leave the many, "i.e." Canadians in the hands of a few multinational corporations which have already demonstrated, to anyone with half a brain, that they do not have the public interest at heart. That is the set of bureaucrats which the Conservatives would like to see running the energy industry in this country. The Liberals would put the many in the hands of a few Petro-Canada bureaucrats, or ministerial flunkies, who would have no more interest than Shell or Imperial Oil in involving ordinary Canadians in the formation of a sound and sustainable energy policy. That is the debate which rages on between the Liberals and Conservatives.

We do not see public ownership as the creation of a large monolithic government bureaucracy which is insensitive to people, insensitive to the environment and insensitive to the future. That is what public ownership means under a Liberal government. These Liberals have done more to give public

ownership a bad name than anyone I could possibly think of on this side of the Atlantic. It is no wonder that we have a great deal of anxiety about public ownership when we take a look at what has happened with the AECL, with the secrecy, arrogance and insensitivity shown toward almost anything one could ever imagine. However, let not the Liberals be the example of what is possible—

**Mr. Evans:** NDP hacks!

**Mr. Blaikie:** —when Canadians put their minds to having a publicly-owned energy industry in this country.

**Mr. Evans:** Tell us how you would run it?

**Mr. Blaikie:** When we talk about public ownership, we are talking about a general name for an approach to our energy future which would take control of our energy future out of the hands of the powerful few, whether it be the powerful few in the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, or whether it be the powerful few in Shell or in Imperial Oil, and distribute that control and design over our energy future in a pluralistic coalition of accountable Crown corporations. The one thing we must do if we want to make public ownership a worthy goal in this country is to make Crown corporations more accountable to Parliament and more accountable to people.

**Mr. Evans:** How?

**Mr. Blaikie:** I say that we should renationalize the CNR and many other Crown corporations and make them act as they were intended to act. We see public ownership as a coalition of accountable Crown corporations, co-operative enterprises, neighbourhood conservation initiatives and programs, decentralized solar and other soft energy projects, all of which should be guided by certain perspectives, some of which I hope to outline tonight.

Energy sources on which societies have become dependent are being used up. It is as clear as that. In my view, the most obvious indicator of the poverty of the debate concerning energy in this country is that we can actually speak about an oil glut as if this were some kind of reality that we must address. In the long run, there is and can be no oil glut. We are referring to a finite source of energy. When we are talking about a finite source of energy, particularly when we are talking about it within the framework of an economic system that demands infinite expansion as one of its internal dynamics, to talk about an oil glut is just so much mirage, so much illusion. Yet we continue to allow those kinds of mirages to trick us when we are talking about energy policy in this country.

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If we are to respond in something more than just a technical way to this reality, we must begin to talk about the ethics of energy use and not just the economics. When we begin to do this in earnest and not just be the prisoners of certain economic arguments, we will find that the two perspectives, the ethical