

*S. O. 31*

If we had a concern for Canada's well-being, or if this government had a concern for Canada's well-being, it would be sure that there was ample opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of this bill before we got rid of Petro-Canada.

The resource that we are exploiting in Canada, the oil that is being exploited by Petro-Canada and other private corporations, does not belong to those corporations. It belongs to the people of Canada. It should be exploited in the best interests of the people of Canada.

We do not believe—many people of Canada do not believe—that Shell, Esso, Standard, and all the multinational oil companies that do this exploiting are doing so in the best interests of the people of Canada. They do not believe that getting rid of Petro-Canada is the best way to have at least some inkling into what is there.

We recognize that Petro-Canada has, to some extent, ceased to be an instrument of public policy. But this also is a planned approach on behalf of this government.

This company which has a good solid commercial base and more assets than most other companies do have in Canada has not showed up as being as possible as Shell or Imperial because the government has made it a policy approach that it should not show up as being entirely competitive with these companies. The only way it could defend the sale of it was if it was not making a return on its investment.

It has not been a particularly good investment, but it is very difficult at this time to say that we should sell this company. Judging whether or not Petro-Canada has some reason for being in the future, as far as the Canadian people are concerned, it is very difficult to say yes or no to that, because we, as legislators, must be sure before we make that kind of a move that what we do is in the best interests of Canada. We have not explored the possibilities. We have not spent the time necessary to do so.

The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources did a fairly comprehensive study on Petro-Canada. Indeed, in the process, it made the recommendation that the privatization of Petro-Canada not be proceeded with until the federal government has completed the process begun in energy opposites and has articulated an energy policy.

That is why I suggest that we, in this House, as the Parliament of Canada, are proceeding with this bill much too quickly. In fact, I think that the time allocation should be turned around to the extent that the government should withdraw the bill until it knows whether or not it really needs Petro-Canada as an instrument of public policy.

In the six years that it has been responsible for Petro-Canada, the government has failed to use it. It has directly used it as an instrument of public policy, and it has directed Petro-Canada to operate as any other private sector oil company, except that it was not supposed to make any money.

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** I will interrupt the member at this time. There will be 5 minutes left should he wish to continue with his remarks after Question Period.

[*Translation*]

It being one o'clock, I do now leave the Chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 1 p.m., the House took recess.

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**AFTER RECESS**

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

**STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31**

[*English*]

**BEAUSÉJOUR BY-ELECTION**

**Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Miramichi):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, in the beautiful riding of Beauséjour, Jean Chrétien and the faithful, local Liberal Party fashioned a great victory.

This is a victory for a courageous leader and also for all Canadians who are desperately looking for integrity and fairness in government. I say to these Canadians: Do not despair, in a few years the misery will be over. This is a victory for all Canadians, hoping for a real leader, one who will not hesitate to stand up for Canada and Canadian values, whether in western Canada, the north, the Atlantic, Ontario or Quebec.