

Government Orders

successful and must be continually supported to keep it operating. The Canadian Wheat Board is in trouble. The United States wants it gone. Its top officers have just been replaced and the present government believes in privatizing everything and is examining the future of the Canadian Wheat Board.

If any of the public questions the future of the Board, take a moment to review the market for oats in the past year since the present government removed the Wheat Board's authority over oats. The price has tumbled. The marketplace has caved in. The Wheat Board obviously is a very important factor in the future of grain prices for Canadian farmers.

Crown corporations have been created to do what private corporations could not or would not do. The Potash Corporation in Saskatchewan was created when the international potash corporations were reaping windfall profits and refused to share Saskatchewan's resource wealth with the people of Saskatchewan.

Ontario Hydro, one of the largest Crown corporations in the world was created originally to protect the electricity consumers in that province and went on to become a pioneer in large dam construction and in high power long distance transmission.

Petro-Canada was created when the world's energy stocks were in crisis and Canadians demanded to be a player at the table. The world's resources continue to be in crisis. Fossil fuels present a challenge to environmental scientists and the future of the world. Canada is preparing to abandon its public role in the sector and in the industry. The government does not need to own a gas station on every corner in this country, but we do need a presence in the energy industry, and Petro-Canada serves that purpose. We must maintain Petro-Canada as a Crown corporation. It can be well managed and it can operate without affecting the federal budget and the taxpayer's pocket-book.

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There are a lot of problems associated with language used by governments when we talk about privatization. In fact, the word itself "privatization" means removing public influence and control and turning the enterprise

completely over to the private sector. As much as the government wants that to happen, it instead tells us that privatization is public participation and that there will be greater public involvement in an enterprise that is privatized because of the ownership of shares. The theory is that you own the shares, you influence the company. The reality is you own the shares, you have less control of the company.

When a Crown corporation operates, it does so in the interests of its constituency, national or provincial. When a private company operates, it does so in its own interests and the interests of its immediate shareholders. The shareholders are almost always the more wealthy in our society. A few shares held here and there by ordinary Canadians in the system mean virtually and return virtually nothing. When we give up a successful Crown corporation, we give up a community-centred entrepreneurship that ties every taxpayer together.

There is the theory that the Crown corporations are costing taxpayers money and must be sold if we want to reduce the debt. Look at examples. Saskatchewan is full of them. I tend to think of this game of privatization as an exercise, as a game of Monopoly, the great illustration of private capital at work. The object of the game of Monopoly is to build a base from which revenues will flow and grow. No one ever won the game of Monopoly by selling their properties. When you started to sell your properties and your hotels, the other players in the game knew you were done for. That is what happened in Saskatchewan. Revenue generators were sold and the ones that cost money were maintained. Saskatchewan by selling its Crown corporations was selling Boardwalk on the Monopoly board. It cashed in its chips and let others play the game to win.

The federal government must not be allowed to make the same mistakes. At the same time as Saskatchewan sells off its assets, the provincial deficit continues to grow. The provincial debt in Saskatchewan is now \$4 billion and we have seen privatization hit Sask Oil, the Potash Corporation, the Prince Albert Pulp Company, Sask Minerals and parts of Sask Tel, to name a few. Threats are being made against Sask Energy and Saskatchewan government insurance. We are selling off the province. We are not paying the debts.