

*Oral Questions***FINANCE****DOMESTIC PETROLEUM TAX CREDITS—REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT
DECISION ON POSSIBLE TAKEOVER**

An Hon. Member: That's your problem.

Mr. Nunziata: I have a confidential memo here—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Nunziata: Conservative Members may laugh but 3,000 jobs will be lost.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Nunziata: I have a memo from Martha Hynna who is the Executive Director of Employment Services at the Department of Employment and Immigration. It is to Mr. John Edwards, the Associate Deputy Minister and Vice-Chairman. This particular memo dated March 25 confirms that up to 3,000 jobs will be lost as a result of the takeover and that the effective date of the lay-offs will be approximately July 1, 1987. I go back to the Prime Minister and hope he will have the guts to stand up and answer.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Nunziata: I would like to ask the Prime Minister why he approved this particular takeover when he knew, or ought to have known, that it was not in the public interest, when he knew that 3,000 jobs would be lost, that 3,000 families would be devastated, and that most of these jobs are in western Canada. If he is truly concerned about western Canadians, why did he approve this particular takeover?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, it does not take much in the way of guts to stand up to a blowfly.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: I gather from the way that the hon. gentleman puts his question that the policy of the Liberal Party would be to interfere in every commercial transaction in the country that might possibly involve the loss of a job. If that is the policy of the members of the Liberal Party then I hope they will explain it to the business sector from which the Leader of the Opposition came, since it is the first time it has ever heard it suggested that that might be the policy of the Liberal Party led by the Hon. Member from Vancouver—wherever-it-is, who recently left there to go somewhere else.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, I too wish to address a question to the Minister of Finance. Considering that Dome's \$2.4 billion in tax credits is most probably the largest single tax break in Canadian history—and there is no doubt that it will have major revenue implications for us all—will the Minister not assure us that the final decision will be made by Cabinet and justified in the House of Commons, rather than a decision being made by a few officials in Revenue Canada? Can he give us that assurance?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I think the Hon. Member should check the "blues". I believe he said \$22.4 billion, I think he meant \$2.4 billion.

Mr. Broadbent: He said \$2.4 billion.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): I would like to understand where the Hon. Member is coming from. He and his Leader seem to be at odds on this issue. The Leader of the New Democratic Party seems to be concerned about a non-resident taking over Dome Petroleum. The Hon. Member for Regina East seems to be concerned about tax dollars being given to a Canadian company to take it over. I am not sure where the New Democratic Party is on this issue.

Mr. Broadbent: You should be able to master it, Michael.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Perhaps the Hon. Member would like to explain.

REQUEST THAT DECISION BE MADE BY GOVERNMENT

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same Minister. We have two concerns. The first is that a Canadian company take over Dome and that those resources remain in Canadian hands. Our second concern is with respect to a matter of public accountability.

It is true that Dome is a private company. However, there is a great deal of public interest at stake in this decision. There is a major public revenue implication in it. We would like an assurance that this decision will be made by Cabinet and not by officials in Revenue Canada, and that the decision made by Cabinet be justified to Parliament so that there is public accountability for the loss of billions of dollars of taxpayers' money.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member is talking about a tax ruling, tax rulings are made on a regular basis. They are clarifications of tax laws. They are a responsibility of the Minister of National Revenue. The Minister of Finance is not involved in them.