

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, I had not originally intended to speak on this particular bill. However, I am glad I was here in the House and had the opportunity to listen to our Liberal colleague from York South—Weston and the comments he made with regard to the disposal of real properties.

To be blunt, I was quite offended by the comments the member made about the decisions made by the provincial government of Ontario about the sale of SkyDome. That comment is very pertinent in terms of the bill before us.

The New Democratic government of Ontario has disposed of the assets of SkyDome because it is trying to clean up a financial mess it inherited as a result of the financial administration of the previous Liberal government in Ontario.

I want to make it very clear that my colleagues in the New Democratic Party and I are supporting this legislation and supporting the government on this particular bill because it makes sense. We are prepared to support the government whenever it does make sense. This particular piece of legislation is pragmatic and will be effective.

The Liberals are opposing this piece of legislation. They are criticizing it. I say to them that any person running a small business would agree with my sentiments that rather than laying off workers or imposing wage restraints on workers, if the revenue of a company has decreased because of tough economic times, perhaps one of the most practical things to do is sell off, to disperse the assets of real properties the company owns. It does make sense, provided that the capitalization of those real properties can be recovered and those assets reinvested in the Crown.

This kind of initiative does not make sense all the time, and there have been many such cases in the past. For example, the sale of the Expo 86 lands by the Social Credit government in British Columbia did not make sense because those lands were sold at a net loss to the province of British Columbia. My provincial New Democratic colleagues, in opposition at the time, did oppose that. The sale of those assets were essentially a giveaway. That did not make sense. That was a net loss to the taxpayers of British Columbia.

We have to examine it on an issue by issue basis. This particular piece of legislation does give the government an opportunity to review those real properties it is in possession of, examine the disposal of those assets and the recovery of the capitalization of those assets to enable to it to reduce the very real debt load that this country is carrying right now.

I would much rather reduce property expenditures than cut back on wages or jobs in the federal Public Service. We know that we face a very serious deficit problem, and I think the government's suggestion in this particular legislation is a practical way of tackling the problem head on.

I am not afraid to say that I agree with the government. This is a pragmatic piece of legislation that should be supported. Quite frankly it amazes me that the Liberal opposition is so willing to take any expedient political position which suits its own political needs. It is simply not paying attention to the pragmatic aspects of the bill before us.

**Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, my question for the New Democratic Party member is this. We said earlier today that the efficiency of this bill is good. I said that after the minister spoke this morning and I repeat myself to the New Democratic Party member. It will be recorded in *Hansard*. I also said to the minister this morning that I have concerns which bother me about this bill because it tends to decentralize.

I did use the example of the domed stadium in Toronto not because the provincial Liberals lost the last election. I know that seems impossible for you to believe, Mr. Speaker, but the facts are the facts.

Is it right with a \$700 million asset—where the Crown by the way was a minor partner because the land that the dome is built on is Crown land, national Crown land through CN—that we take that public policy instrument and move it into the private sector where we have no control on the pricing? Once the sale goes through there is nothing to stop the tickets from going from \$20 to \$40. There is nothing to stop the cost of a coke from going from \$2.50 to \$5.50.

In the short term, sure, this looks like a sweet deal because we are worried about the balance sheet in the province of Ontario. I submit we should be worried about the balance sheet. But they are not thinking long term. This has effects in terms of the food service and hospitality industry in the province of Ontario because