

Government Orders

I remain to be convinced that the sale of these lands now are consistent with either of those two recommendations. That royal commission was instituted by this government. I would like to know why the bill as proposed does not, on its face, come close to complying with those two key recommendations which are found in Volume IV of the report at page 68.

Also in metro Toronto there is a land ownership issue very close to my riding of Scarborough—Rouge River respecting the Rouge Valley lands. The federal government owns pieces of the Rouge Valley. The province owns most of it. Recently the province made a decision to give over all of those lands to the preservation of the Rouge Valley. That was lousy economics, but it was good planning. I caution the government that when it deals with the Vancouver and Toronto lands not to chase the god of great economics and end up with lousy planning.

We all have an interest in the proper disposition of these issues. This is a caution flag. I want everyone to know that we in opposition will be looking at these two aspects of this bill very carefully. We want to see the government's own policy analysis dealing with the sale and disposition. We want to see the program that is contemplated for both of these matters before we can feel comfortable supporting this bill.

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Madam Speaker, I too would like to say a few words on the bill before the House.

As the minister says, the bill deals with six different corporations. In many cases it transfers the work of one of the existing Crown corporations to another agency of the Government of Canada. The main thing we should be doing today is saying to the minister across the way that we want this bill in committee so that we can ask some specific questions about each of these six corporations.

I am concerned, for example, whether or not the employees are being dealt with in a proper way. Those are the kinds of questions that I would like to ask. Employees are going to be transferred from a Crown corporation to a government agency, and I want to know if that is going to be done properly in terms of their benefits, their salaries, and their pensions. Is there going to be job loss? Are the employees in agreement with what is happening? I am also concerned about the

various relevant interest groups, as to whether or not they are pleased with this new activity.

If I can take as an example the Harbourfront Corporation in Toronto, which is going to be transferred to local control. In principle I like the idea of local control. It is a way of democratizing our economy and our country, but I would like to know more details about what the government has in mind about what local control is.

If it is along the lines of the recommendations of David Crombie and the royal commission, my understanding would be that this would be very attractive and would have the agreement of most Torontonians. We would probably give a green light to that. Perhaps we could get more details on that from the minister in committee.

The second looks attractive in principle. It is the Mingan Associates Limited company which was established to obtain land and fishing rights. It is now a Crown corporation. The intent of the minister under this bill is to transfer this corporation to the relevant Indian reserve so that the Indian people themselves have control over it.

I would also like to know what those local Indian people think of the matter, whether or not they have requested it. Is this the route those Indian people wish to go? If it is the route they wish to go, it could be the proper direction or the proper move toward further democratization of our economy.

I have been one for a long time who thinks that we should be moving toward what I call economic democracy in our country, where people have more control over the economic levers that affect their own lives. I would be very interested in whether or not these are the kinds of steps, in these two cases in particular, that would move in that direction.

Those are two moves, the elimination or the transfer of two existing Crown corporations, which indeed may be interesting in terms of local people or local associations having more control over the lives and over the future development of that relevant agency in terms of their own community.

I notice that for three other Crown corporations there is a slightly different move recommended in this bill at seconding reading. One is Canadian Patents Development Ltd., a Crown corporation that is going to be