

*Oral Questions***AIR TRANSPORT****ALLOCATION OF ROUTE TO MILAN, ITALY—INQUIRY AS TO DECISION**

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Transport. A couple of weeks ago I asked him in the House whether a decision had been reached whereby Air Canada would be granted the route to Milan. Can the minister tell us what the present position is?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Exactly the same position as two years ago—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Marchand (Langelier):—two weeks ago.

An hon. Member: You were right the first time!

Mr. Diefenbaker: I realize the minister is in a position where he proves the meaning of inertia on all occasions, but this is the first public admission. Why is the decision being withheld? Why is it not being taken? Is it a fact that as a result of the discomfiture of Air Canada employees, who believe the government is discriminating against them, Mr. Pratte, the Chairman of Air Canada, has threatened to resign unless granted this particular route?

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): No, Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any threat of resignation on the part of Mr. Pratte. I think Mr. Pratte is interested in having the best airline it is possible to get in the circumstances.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Isn't the minister, too?

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): I share his objectives in that field. We think we have good reason not to designate Milan at this moment because we want to have a broad policy and it will be included in the policy which is to be made known, I hope, in a few weeks.

* * *

● (1140)

FINANCE**GOVERNMENT GUARANTEED LOANS—REQUEST THAT MINISTER ESTABLISH GUIDELINES FOR BANKS ON PROVISION OF FUNDS**

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, may I address a question to the Minister of Finance which is supplementary to the one asked by the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville. In view of the fact small businessmen, fishermen and farmers are not able to get government guaranteed loans at any rate of interest, will the minister suggest specific guidelines to the banks relating to the provision of funds to this particular part of the Canadian economy, and also reprimand the president of the Canadian Bankers Association for threatening to withdraw such loans because they cannot get a higher interest rate?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I informed the House about ten days ago that the

[Mr. Gray.]

government was actively assessing the situation, and I hope we will be able to resolve it by next week.

* * *

HUMAN RIGHTS**ACTIONS OF MINING INDUSTRY RESPECTING VIEWS EXPRESSED BY PROFESSOR KIERANS**

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Acting Prime Minister. Knowing the government's fervent support for the ideal of academic and intellectual freedom, may I ask the Acting Prime Minister whether the attention of the government has been drawn to the campaign being conducted by certain mining interests and companies against the integrity and honesty of Professor Kierans of McGill University, which obviously reflects a desire on the part of the mining industry unduly to influence academic freedom? If so, does the government intend to make any statement on this matter, especially in view of the provisions of the Bill of Rights that declare for academic freedom?

Hon. C. M. Drury (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the only answer is that when members of the academic community become involved in politics, particularly partisan politics, they can expect some kind of response.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Howard: It is easy to see whose side you are on, Bud. May I direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. In view of the fact that this unwarranted attack upon Professor Kierans has come from such sources as John Porteous, president of Chibougamau Mining and Smelting Company, and Alfred Parvis, president of Noranda Mines, and in view of the fact that Noranda Mines and its subsidiary, Gaspé Copper—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Perhaps the hon. member might like to ask his question now.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Speaker, I had just coincidentally reached that point. May I ask the minister whether he will examine the grant program under which these two companies received \$6 million in order to see whether any of these funds are being used for the purpose of this attempt to slander an individual?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

* * *

AIR CANADA**ROTATING STRIKES BY MACHINISTS—POSITION OF NEGOTIATIONS—CONTINGENCY PLANS IN CASE OF SUSPENSION OF OPERATION**

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Labour. According to latest reports there have been 11 cancellations at Toronto International Airport and indica-