

*Oral Questions*

**Some Hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Speaker:** I know that the Hon. Member can put the question appropriately.

**Mr. Tobin:** Mr. Speaker, I ask the Prime Minister, is the Prime Minister telling the House now, a few hours past the Deputy Prime Minister's statement, that in fact the Government's plan is not to sell all of Air Canada shares but only a minority position? The Prime Minister ought to be aware that this morning we were told the first offering was 45 per cent, with all of the remaining shares to be sold at a later date.

Now, Prime Minister, have you got your act together? Can you remember your story?

**Some Hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Speaker:** I would ask Hon. Members to respect the proper way to ask questions and the proper way to respond. The Hon. Minister.

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is quite right in saying that 45 per cent of these shares will be offered in the form of Treasury shares immediately, and the legislation will call for the eventual transferral to the public depending upon the conditions.

**Mr. Tobin:** It's all shares now.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** I find it very strange, because if we are to take the Opposition at its word, the Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry said that this is precisely what we should do, don't "put it on the block right away, but the industry must be aware that the Government is moving toward privatization". That is precisely what we are doing, Mr. Speaker.

Why is the Member for Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe attempting to distort the words of the Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry who has a keen interest in this issue, who I think has spoken out with clarity, and I respect him for it? We have taken his comments into consideration as we studied this issue.

**Mr. Tobin:** Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister is obviously spending too much time in the company of the Member for St. John's West, but he is only half as funny.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Tobin:** I have to defend my fellow Newfoundlander at this pale attempt to imitate him.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** You are only half as witty.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Member for Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe is defending the Hon. Member for St. John's West. The Hon. Deputy Prime Minister is defending the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** In this unusual spirit of unity, perhaps the Hon. Member for Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe can put his question.

**Mr. Tobin:** Mr. Speaker, I want you to know that I think someone in the Gallery went too far when they said the Deputy Prime Minister was only half a wit, or a half-wit.

## PROTECTION OF MAINTENANCE BASE

**Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe):** Mr. Speaker, my question to the Deputy Prime Minister is the following. This morning the Deputy Prime Minister said in his statement to the House that the Government of Canada would have an arm's length relationship with Air Canada, that it would let the company operate on a commercial basis, and would not interfere in any way, shape, or form in its decisions.

In the very next breath the Deputy Prime Minister went on to say that he wanted to assure the people of Winnipeg that the Air Canada maintenance centre there would be protected, the same in Toronto and Montreal.

How can the Deputy Prime Minister on the one hand offer shares on the basis that the Government will have its hands off, and in the next breath pretend that he can give assurances to Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal, or Stephenville, Newfoundland, about Air Canada's future operations?

● (1430)

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman does not have to believe me, but I would think that he would want to believe Air Canada. That is fine. That is his privilege and his prerogative, and he has made that very clear. He called me a liar in an indirect way, and I would ask him—

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Mazankowski:** —to reconsider it.

**Mr. Tobin:** I called you a half-wit.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Deputy Prime Minister.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** Mr. Speaker, I will want to check the "blues", because I think the words "deliberately distorted" attributed to me is unparliamentary—

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Deputy Prime Minister, of course, has every right to check the "blues" and bring the matter in front of the Chair at an appropriate time, but this is not the appropriate time.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** Mr. Speaker, I think it is very clear that if the Hon. Member paid a little attention to the structure of Air Canada he would know that 80 per cent of its employees are located in the three major centres of Montreal, Toronto, and Winnipeg, very important operational, overhaul, and maintenance centres.