

Oral Questions

● (1430)

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I really want to make a point of this. It is not appropriate for members opposite to inquire about the business of the Liberal Party or how the government and members of the government relate to their supporters. That is not an appropriate subject matter for questioning on the orders of the day. I do not mind answering the question, but I do not think in principle it should be acknowledged that these members opposite, who apparently have no ideas of their own, have to come to our caucus to get ideas to ask us questions about what our members are discussing with us.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

DATA SUPPLIED TO LIBERAL CAUCUS MEMBERS

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is also to the Liberal Minister of Finance who is ashamed of the fact that his backbench members are spewing their comments about his economic policies all over the public press. It is from the public press that the information comes.

I would like to ask him about this latest group of dissidents who had data made available to them which shows that the unemployment rate in Canada will probably be increasing this year. That is a matter of grave concern, given the present disastrous jobless rate in the country. I would ask the Minister of Finance whether that data which shows that the unemployment rate will be going up this year has also been made available to him. If so, what programs is he prepared to introduce that will prevent the jobless rate from going up this year? Will he introduce them this afternoon during the opposition debate on unemployment among youth to match the employment measures that we will be putting forward so that we can see if the government has any measures to combat unemployment?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, if the hon. member wants to ask about the unemployment rate, and trends in the unemployment rate, I would be glad to answer, but when she asks me questions about the Liberal caucus I want to make a principle of it; I am not going to answer.

* * *

AIRPORTS

FUTURE OF DORVAL AND MIRABEL

Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley-Hants): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Transport I will address my question to the Prime Minister. I must say that the sophistry in the answer of the Minister of Finance—

Madam Speaker: Order. I did say before that comments on previous answers are not justified in the question period, and all the more so if it is a new questioner taking the floor. The hon. member of Annapolis Valley-Hants, on a question.

Mr. Nowlan: Yes, Madam Speaker, on a question, after we have heard the most insulting sophistry in this House from the Minister of Finance.

My question to the Prime Minister is on an issue that has been debated by members on all sides, an issue that has got into the public press, and not just from the Liberal caucus, whose members have taken positions on Mirabel and Dorval. In the decision that is about to be taken by his colleague in cabinet, the Minister of Transport, will the interests of all Canadians be taken into account on any shift of air traffic from Dorval to Mirabel and not be just a tug of economic war between those who live close to Dorval and/or the Minister of Communications, and members who have an interest in Mirabel?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Yes, Madam Speaker, I can give that assurance. I am pleased to see that the hon. member for Annapolis Valley-Hants is taking an interest in this very important question.

Mr. Nowlan: I am taking a very real interest in it. I certainly hope that the Prime Minister, who is a member from the Montreal area as well as the Prime Minister of a national government in name only, continues to take an interest in it.

MINISTER'S APPEARANCE BEFORE COMMITTEE

Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley-Hants): Madam Speaker, will the Prime Minister assure the House that when the Minister of Transport appears before the Standing Committee on Transport he will in his open way, and sometimes very frank way, give some of the reasons both pro and con why he is even considering such a move from Dorval to Mirabel?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I cannot comment on the proceedings in a committee, let alone predict what will happen at that committee and what questions will be asked. I can give the hon. member the assurance that the minister will answer with his usual honesty and competence.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

REQUEST FOR CHANGE IN MONETARY POLICY

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Over the weekend the very distinguished Liberal member of Parliament for Thunder Bay-Atikokan said in an interview with *La Presse*: