

Oral Questions

Mr. Trudeau: No, I find the small and petty attitude of the Leader of the Opposition offensive.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: The hon. member for Lincoln is as loyal a Liberal as can be found in this House at any time.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: I can tell the House that the fact that he voted contrary to other Liberal members on that committee is proof of two things; first, that the members are not gagged and, second, that the members were free to vote in the way they wanted.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Baa, baa!

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AIR TRANSPORT**GENERAL AVIATION SERVICES LTD.—LANDING FEES AT CANADIAN AIRPORTS**

Mr. J. R. Ellis (Prince Edward-Hastings): Madam Speaker, while I am loth to change the subject, my question is for the Minister of Transport. For the past five to ten years the Department of Transport has adopted an adversary position with regard to General Aviation. Can the minister tell me whether it is his policy or only that of his director of aviation administration when a \$5 landing fee is applied to General Aviation landings at major airports, obviously as a deterrent; when no program of support is available for important secondary airports such as Boundary Bay and Toronto Island; when General Aviation aircraft are prevented from landing on available parallel strips to reduce congestion when the practice is common elsewhere in North America; when no formal appeal procedure is allowed when a pilot is given a medical rejection; when DOT regulations are so prohibitive that the U.S. has 60 times as many instrument-rated pilots per capita as Canada and all are allowed to fly in Canadian airspace; when DOT requires encoding altimeters above 14,000 feet, but to put them in is maddeningly unreasonable; and finally when important safety items such as ELTs are treated so casually as to cost lives?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, obviously the head of the department is the minister, and I am responsible for the decisions.

Mr. Ellis: Will the minister tell me why he allows all of these things to take place when, by consultation with available and knowledgeable associations in the aviation field, he could be a support to General Aviation rather than an adversary?

Mr. Pepin: Madam Speaker, I can only take one of these questions. It has to do with landing fees. I presume that was the first question I was asked. It has to do with landing fees for

General Aviation in four of the larger airports in Canada. The purpose is simply to have everyone make a proper contribution to the maintenance of these airports. I looked into this in depth and I found that this is the first increase in the last two years. I also found in similar instances in the United States, for example, that the cost of landing fees goes up to \$50 as opposed to the \$5 my department charges. Therefore, it was a judgment call and the minister made it.

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AIRPORTS**INCREASED SERVICE DEMANDS IN WESTERN AND PACIFIC AIR REGIONS**

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Madam Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister of Transport. It arises out of the very serious difficulties being experienced by the management of the western air region and, indeed, the Pacific air region as a result of increased service demands caused by a very dramatic increase in traffic. Traffic has increased by some 32 per cent over the last two years, generated revenues from these two regions have increased 100 per cent, yet the region is hampered by its inability to provide adequate services and parking facilities because of inadequate financial resources and centralized bureaucratic control. Is the minister aware of this serious situation that has developed, and what is he doing or contemplating doing about it?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I am very much aware of this. The Minister of Finance stated the other day that I had asked him to raise the air transport tax. In return, he promised he would add that revenue to my budget for that particular responsibility in my department. I am now asking cabinet for more money for investment in airports. I will be very pleased to send the hon. member the list of expenditures made in western airports—Edmonton, Calgary, Regina and so on.

Mr. Mazankowski: While I appreciate the good intentions of the minister, there are some very immediate and urgent problems which require attention, such as basic maintenance, snow removal and parking. Plans were laid for these some time ago, but for some reason or other they have been withdrawn. Can the minister undertake if he intends any relaxation, that he will provide the respective regions with more leeway with regard to making decisions within their own regions? Also, will he provide commensurate funding to meet the demands that are required because of the increased traffic?

Mr. Pepin: Madam Speaker, I said a moment ago that I agreed with that. There has been no relaxation and no accentuated centralization as far as I know, and certainly will not be as long as I am minister.

Mr. Mazankowski: The minister and his officials cancelled a program to enlarge parking facilities at Edmonton International Airport. Why was that program withdrawn? It is a