

*Oral Questions*

[English]

The Minister himself has told the House, I think quite openly and candidly, that he was terribly busy, that he was in Washington and that he did not have time to set up his office, hence he appointed this individual who, presumably, was not supervised; otherwise the Minister would not have needed his help.

The Deputy Prime Minister remembers very well that we have had volunteers before in service. We had \$1 a year men.

**Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):** Order.

**Mr. Johnston:** This Government is now introducing volunteers—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. With great respect, it is time for a question.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Would you repeat the punch line? It wasn't funny.

**Mr. Johnston:** Yes, \$244,000 a month men. I repeat the punch line for the benefit of the Government House Leader.

Could the Minister of Finance set the record straight by telling us exactly what these administrative functions were which were conducted by Mr. Robson? And what was the period of service? When did he actually begin and when did he leave the office of the Minister?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, let me make it clear that my chief of staff was supervising Mr. Robson throughout the whole period during which he was in my office. The two of them were working together to staff the office, to get the office set up in as quick a time as we possibly could, because I had the major responsibility of presenting an economic statement early in the month of November. Mr. Robson was in my office from, I believe, September 17 or September 18, shortly after the swearing in, and he continued roughly until the end of October.

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**AIR CANADA****EFFECT OF HIRING PART-TIME WORKERS**

**Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. The Minister is aware that there is an impending work stoppage at Air Canada this Sunday morning, and that the basis of the dispute is Air Canada's insistence on increasing the percentage of part-time workers in its work force to 45 per cent of the total. That will have the effect of decreasing the number of full-time jobs, which are basically jobs for women. This is a matter of policy, and I wonder if the Government will direct Air Canada to stop its insistence on drastically increasing the number of part-time workers at the expense of full-time jobs?

**Ms. Mitchell:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, the negotiations between Air Canada and the unions are currently taking place right now. There was a new offer, I understand, put on the table by Air Canada last evening. The negotiations continued up until 12.30 a.m. this morning. They are back at the bargaining table again as of now. I think it would be inappropriate, Mr. Speaker, for me to comment further since it could very well be implied as interfering with the collective bargaining process.

**EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN—POLICY INQUIRY**

**Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same Minister. The fact is that the union has turned down the latest offer on the grounds that there is no real job security offered in Air Canada's position. Again I ask the Minister, as a matter of government policy and its control over Crown Corporations, is the Government going to allow Air Canada to destroy thousands of full-time jobs? Is it going to be government policy to allow that to happen to women workers?

**Ms. Mitchell:** What about employment equity?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, without agreeing with the preamble of the Hon. Member's question, I repeat, Air Canada, I think, has an excellent policy with regard to the employment of women. In fact there has been a substantial increase in the number of women at the management level. I disagree totally with the Hon. Member when he suggests that Air Canada is trying to hire part-time workers at the expense of full-time permanent workers. In fact, I think laid on the table is a very generous offer respecting job security. Beyond that, Mr. Speaker, I think it would be inappropriate for me to comment further.

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**THE ADMINISTRATION****RESIGNATION OF FORMER DEFENCE MINISTER**

**Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** Mr. Speaker, my question was to be directed to the Prime Minister but in his absence I will have the pleasure of directing it to the Deputy Prime Minister, and I hope for the best for an answer. Yesterday the Prime Minister informed this House for the first time that he asked for the resignation of the former Minister of National Defence. But on February 13 in this House, in response to a question put by the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain, the Secretary of State for External Affairs said: "Mr. Speaker, just so that the facts might be absolutely clear, the resignation of the former Minister of National Defence was offered by that Member of Parliament". Who is telling the truth, the Secretary of State for External Affairs or the Prime Minister?

**Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):** Both.

**An Hon. Member:** It's a slow day.