

*Oral Questions***AIR TRANSPORT****POSSIBILITY OF REVIEWING DECISION ON ADVANCED BOOKING OF DOMESTIC CHARTERS—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Transport. In view of the almost universal condemnation by every level of the media, the Consumers Association of Canada and various sectors of the country, would the minister advise the House when the cabinet intends to review the almost incomprehensible recommendation of the air committee of the CTC with regard to ABC charters within Canada?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, a good deal of criticism has been directed at erroneous interpretations of what the CTC did, but I have been reviewing the decision, and I believe that at a fairly early date I will be placing before my colleagues recommendations with regard to this decision and with regard to charter policy. At this time I am happy to say to the House that I am quite sure that my recommendations will be in favour of greater flexibility.

Mr. Lambert: In order to assist the minister, perhaps he should reread the remarks I made at the time of the debate here with regard to the Air Canada reorganization bill, bearing in mind the requirements of Canadians who travel in Canada at a cost which is commensurate with what they should pay relative to or compared with what they are being asked to pay to travel abroad.

● (1432)

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, that is one of the major misconceptions with respect to air travel. I am glad I heard the hon. member's remarks and I do not have to reread them.

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AIRPORTS**MOUNT HOPE—REASON FOR DELAY OF DECISION ON EXPANSION**

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Transport and it concerns domestic travel. Can he tell the House why it has taken the minister and his department so long to come to a decision with respect to the expansion of Mount Hope airport?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, it is because we have been so careful to have the fullest consultation with people in and around Hamilton, and members of parliament, as well as other levels of government. As yet we do not have a final answer from all of those sources of consultation; but I expect to have that answer very soon and then be in a position to announce what will be done for air facilities in Hamilton.

Mr. Alexander: Mr. Speaker, may I remind the minister that this matter has been ongoing since 1972. Can he give us

[Mr. Stevens.]

some assurance as to when he will arrive at a decision, and that he will make a statement in that regard before the Christmas holidays?

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, I will not give the hon. member that assurance because I am not sure when we will receive a final response from the various levels of government. In reference to 1972, I did not hear the hon. member complain when we set up a consultative process in order to go to the community to hear its views in the past year and a half. I hope the hon. member agrees that has been a most worthwhile exercise.

Mr. Alexander: Quit pussyfooting; quit foot-dragging.

Mr. Lang: The results have been excellent. It is a pattern we will follow in the future, because this government wants to be assured that it has the views of the people in hand before arriving at a decision.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gillies: Just like Pickering and Mirabel.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**STATEMENTS BY AMBASSADOR ENDERS ON FREE TRADE—POSSIBILITY OF PROTEST**

Mr. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West): Mr. Speaker, I have a short question for the Prime Minister, whose attention span is very limited by his own admission. I do not want him to doze off. On November 29 in a public speech the Minister of Agriculture said that he was "sick and tired of the U.S. ambassador running around talking about free trade". Also the minister stated that the United States was the most protectionist country in the world.

Some hon. Members: Question!

Mr. Crosbie: Just take it easy. My question is this: was the minister speaking on behalf of the government and giving the position of the government when he made this public complaint about the United States ambassador? Has the government made any protest, verbally or in writing, of any description to the U.S. government in connection with the actions or statements of the U.S. ambassador, Mr. Thomas Enders, in Canada?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the answer to the first question is yes; the answer to the second question is no.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosbie: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is: is it the view of the Prime Minister and the government that the U.S. ambassador should not go across Canada talking about