

*Oral Questions*

## MAINTENANCE WORK FOR PROPOSED NEW AIRCRAFT

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry):** Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister is quickly learning the art of the double backward flip-flop. I think what we want to do is come back to this issue. In his statement the Deputy Prime Minister mentions only one centre, and that is Montreal. He now says he has changed his mind. Specifically, will the Government today give a guarantee, that's all—he can clear up the confusion—that with respect to the replacement aircraft for the 727, the over-haul and maintenance work on that replacement aircraft will be done in the Winnipeg overhaul facility?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member wants to talk about flip-flops, but we have to question the sincerity of this gentleman's commitment to western Canada because of what he said on March 1. He took issue with the fact that the Western Diversification Office was going to be located in Edmonton. He wanted it located here in Ottawa.

**Mr. Axworthy:** Answer my question.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** With respect to the Hon. Member's question, it is clearly pointed out—he does not believe me. Will he believe Air Canada?

**Mr. Axworthy:** No, I don't.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** On March 24—

**Mr. Axworthy:** Give us a guarantee.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** On March 24—

**Mr. Axworthy:** No guarantee. Okay!

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Minister has the floor and should be extended the appropriate courtesies.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** Assurances, Mr. Speaker, are given in two ways. The March 24 Air Canada press release stated as follows:

Regardless of the aircraft type which is eventually selected as the replacement for Air Canada's B-727 fleet, the future of the Air Canada maintenance base in Winnipeg is not in question, says the airline Vice-President of Maintenance and Engineering, Bernard Gillies.

Furthermore, as part of the conditions upon which the privatization process will be proceeded with, I said:

No centres will be degraded. The overhaul base in Winnipeg will continue as a prominent and integral function of Air Canada and an aircraft fleet will continue to be maintained there.

What could be more clear than that?

## ALLOCATION OF MAINTENANCE WORK

**Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West):** Mr. Speaker, we will have to try again. Air Canada has looked at bids from three

companies for those replacements of the B-727s, and, of course, it is in the process of getting rid of DC-9s. According to the President of Canadair Limited of Montreal, the Airbus Limited bid is linked to future work for his company, which effectively eliminates Bristol Aerospace in Winnipeg. That is what the President of Canadair in Montreal said.

Can the Minister give us a guarantee that Bristol Aerospace in Winnipeg will get at least a fair share of any construction, repair, or maintenance of the Airbus?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure of the allegation the Hon. Member is making, but I recall the President of Bristol Aerospace totally denying and categorically refuting the allegation made by the Hon. Member, as well as that made by the Leader of the New Democratic Party in Manitoba. The fact is that I do not know what the connection is.

I repeat again, the Government of Canada does not choose the aircraft that Air Canada will use for its purposes. It has established the criteria, the technical requirements, and the mission and mandate which that particular aircraft has to fulfil. It will be making the best decision. I am sure the Hon. Member would take issue with us if we were to interfere in any way, shape or form.

**Mr. Benjamin:** Of course, Mr. Speaker, we do not expect him to pick the aircraft. He wouldn't know the difference between a Tiger Moth and a 747.

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

**Mr. Benjamin:** But there is a difference between picking the aircraft and picking the time of the announcement.

**Some Hon. Members:** Right on!

## TIMING OF ANNOUNCEMENT

**Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West):** Mr. Speaker, a senior Boeing official in Canada has told us that he believes the deed is done. A senior sales official of Boeing in Seattle informs us that his company's offer expired March 30. Air Canada did not ask Boeing to renew it.

● (1430)

A similar story comes from a Canadian official at McDonnell-Douglas who tells the same story.

I want to ask the Minister whether or not the Government is waiting until the Manitoba election is over before letting the Air Canada cat out of the bag, and whether or not Bristol Aerospace will be guaranteed a fair share of the work.

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, it is rather strange, when the NDP are running third, that there are some