

S.O. 21

attention of Air Canada and the Minister of Transport, and the Quebec Parliamentary Commission on the future of Quebecair will finish its proceedings on March 24, I wonder, Madam Speaker, whether the Minister of Transport would not consider meeting the press or the people of Quebec, either in Quebec City or Montreal, very soon, to give them a progress report on the Quebecair dossier and on what has been done to date by the Federal Government and what its intentions are with respect to Quebecair, Nordair and Air Canada. Madam Speaker, I believe it is very important at this stage that the Minister of Transport should be concerned about the issue of Quebecair's staff, and generally about Regionair, Quebecair, Propair and all air services on the Middle and Lower North Shore and especially in Eastern Quebec.

I think that full clarification is necessary now and that the companies and users concerned ought to know what is happening. Therefore, the Minister of Transport should take charge of this dossier and as soon as the Quebec Parliamentary Commission has finished its work, direct action can then be taken for the benefit of all concerned.

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[English]

PENSIONS

PLIGHT OF SINGLE WOMEN BETWEEN AGES 60 AND 65

Hon. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Madam Speaker—

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knowles:—my point is one that I have made several times over a number of years. I make it again today, in the hope that one of these times the Government will do something about it.

I refer to the provision with regard to the Old Age Pension under which it is possible for people between the ages of 60 and 65 who are in financial trouble to get a portion of their pension, provided a person between 60 and 65 is related to an older person who is receiving the pension. Still the law denies any such pension to any women between 60 and 65 who is single. It also denies it to a woman between 60 and 65 whose husband may have died before she reached age 60. It is most unfair. We feel these women should be covered, and I hope the Government will soon change the law in this direction.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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ACCESS TO INFORMATION

CONDEMNATION OF GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

Mr. Ron Stewart (Simcoe South): Madam Speaker, our basic democratic freedom is rapidly being stifled, and I view the situation with alarm. The Government is so obsessed with

secrecy it goes to unprecedented lengths to establish its right to conceal. Canadians have no alternative but a free press in the hope of obtaining information.

Lately the concept of freedom of the press has become more illusion than reality. An example is the refusal by the CBC to sell air time to the Ontario Medical Association for an advertisement outlining the danger of more state control in medicine. Is this agency of Government unwilling to carry a message stating the dangers of socialism simply because the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) is so deeply committed to socialism? Is this freedom of the press?

Do Canadians have access to information when the Prime Minister refuses to hold press conferences? Do Canadians have access to information when the Prime Minister appears here for less than an hour each day and replies to questions by refusing to answer? Will Canadians have access to information when the Prime Minister appoints a commission on newspapers which recommends further Government control? Shades of *Tass*.

Alarming as the position of the Government has become, it is equally distressing to witness the lack of response from those whose duty it is to present the information. Are the media not yet sufficiently outraged at this manipulation? Are they not yet prepared to refute such control? The Prime Minister said:

In the last analysis, any given political authority exists only because men consent to obey it. In this sense, what exists is not so much the authority, as the obedience.

I would suggest to the media that obedience and freedom of the press are two entirely different things.

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[Translation]

TRADE

UNITED STATES DECISION NOT TO IMPOSE SURTAX ON
CANADIAN LUMBER

Mr. Michel Veillette (Champlain): Madam Speaker, I was very pleased Tuesday when the Minister of State for International Trade (Mr. Regan) announced the outcome of the negotiations between the Canadian and American Governments concerning exports of Canadian lumber, as reported in the media yesterday. The United States have decided not to levy a 65 per cent countervailing duty on the \$2.1 billion shipments of Canadian lumber, thus saving at least 70,000 jobs in Canada, including 15,000 in Quebec. This duty was a direct threat to the 8,500 workers of Quebec, because 25 per cent of the industry which exports 56 per cent of its output to the United States would have been forced to shut down. A duty of 65 per cent would have signalled the end of the forest industry.

It was good news indeed for several Members, particularly those of the Lower St. Lawrence, Lac-Saint-Jean and Abitibi regions, as well as myself as Member for the riding of Champlain. There are three major sawmills in my riding, and I am