

Oral Questions

bers of the official opposition also—there can be no absolute guarantee that there will not be a strike. All I can do is assure the hon. member we will do everything possible in our role as the government to prevent it.

STRIKE BY FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES AT WINNIPEG—SUGGESTION MINISTER URGE PRESIDENT OF COMPANY TO RE-ENTER NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary to the Minister of Transport. In view of the fact there is already a strike of Air Canada employees taking place in Winnipeg and because of the fact that the strike is caused by the refusal of Air Canada management to accept the unanimous report of the conciliation board, will the minister discuss with the president of Air Canada that refusal and urge him to re-enter negotiations in that strike?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, there is in this government, like all others, a Minister of Labour who has responsibility in that field and if I have to do something I will do it according to the advice given to me.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Winnipeg North in a moment, if he will resume his seat, and then the hon. member for Calgary Centre and the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands. The hon. member for Winnipeg North.

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the Minister of Transport really understood my question. Surely, the Minister of Transport, through whom Air Canada reports to parliament, has some relationship with the president of Air Canada and can discuss its refusal to accept the unanimous report of the conciliation board with its officials.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Calgary Centre.

POSSIBLE STRIKE OF MACHINISTS—INQUIRY AS TO GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF EFFECT OF STRIKE

Mr. Harvie Andre (Calgary Centre): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is directed to the Minister of Labour. Along with any contingency plans the government may or may not have formulated to avert such a strike, has the government prepared an over-all assessment of the effect of such a strike and will it be tabled in the House?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I think we can accept the fact that if there is a strike of Air Canada it will have serious repercussions of an economic nature, as do all strikes under federal or provincial jurisdiction that involve a number of employees. Still, a price is involved in adherence to the principle of free collective bargaining and all we can do is try to avoid the economic consequences. If they become too serious, I point out that parliament is in record as having taken appropriate action in the public interest.

[Mr. Munro (Hamilton East).]

INDIAN AFFAIRS

POSITION OF ABORIGINAL RIGHTS ON GOVERNMENT'S LIST OF PRIORITIES

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is addressed to the Prime Minister. Since neither the throne speech nor its substitute listed any priority or made any reference to the problems of Canada's native people, I wonder whether the Prime Minister could say at what level these problems, including the question of aboriginal rights, are being considered?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Yes, gladly, Mr. Speaker; at the very highest level and I believe they are being very excellently dealt with by the minister responsible.

Miss MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Am I to understand then that the question of aboriginal rights is being considered by the minister?

Mr. Trudeau: The whole subject of our native people is one which has been before the government since the beginning of the last parliament. The government's position on all aspects, including the one raised by the hon. member, has been stated from time to time.

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AIR TRANSPORT

REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF NATIONAL POLICY AND DIVISION OF ROUTES BETWEEN AIR CANADA AND CP AIR—ALLOCATION OF ROUTE TO MILAN, ITALY

Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. Is the minister in a position to advise the House whether the government has now reached a decision on a new international aviation policy, to which the minister referred on previous occasions, which would allocate international air routes between Canada's two major air carriers? If so, can the minister indicate to the House when this policy will be made public and also can he advise when a decision will be reached on the landing rights at Milan, Italy?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, we are still looking into this problem in the department. I do not think I am in a position to say at what moment we will be ready to make any public statement and not for the Milan route either because it has to be decided.

DISCONTINUANCE OF CUSTOMS PRECLEARANCE— REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary. Having regard to the bilateral discussions now taking place in Ottawa, can the Minister of Transport tell us whether the subject of preclearance is a subject of top priority. Can the minister assure the House that after these meetings are concluded we will have any definitive decisions as to the extended air routes and the