

AIR CANADA

POSSIBLE PHASE-OUT OF CERTAIN ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES—CRITERIA TO BE USED IN FILLING VACANCIES

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, I know I have greater hope of obtaining an answer to a question directed to the Minister of Transport than to one directed to the Prime Minister. Have the administrative employees of Air Canada, which I regard as one of the finest, if not the finest, air service in the world, received any communication to the effect that some 3,000 of them are having their records reviewed, that there will be a phasing out of that number and that in reappointments to fill some of the vacancies youth rather than length of service and experience will be the prime consideration, as recommended by the McKinsey report?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, that is a rather complicated question. I will do my best to answer it and I hope to give some additional information later. There is some reorganization going on within Air Canada. As I have said on earlier occasions, I have not received the details of it because it is a corporate matter, but I will make some inquiries for the right hon. gentleman. I am sure that my views to Air Canada will be that people with long service ought to be given more consideration than in the circumstances referred to by the right hon. member. But I doubt very much if what he has outlined is really the case.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, my information comes from the employees, and they are the ones who are particularly affected. Regardless of whether a United States company comes to Canada and tells us how to run Air Canada, do we have the minister's assurance that regardless of what the McKinsey recommendations are those who have served well and honourably will not be discriminated against even if they are over 55 years old?

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Speaker, I am getting close enough to 55 myself that I have a particular concern for that age group. I will see what I can do.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Vancouver East.

Mr. Hees: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I wonder if the hon. member would remove his blinkers and look in the direction of the Chair.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

OIL

AUTHORITY FOR PROHIBITING EXPLORATION IN STRAIT OF GEORGIA

Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry. In view of the fact that a British Columbia cabinet minister has challenged the authority of the federal Minister of Fisheries to prohibit oil exploration in Georgia Strait in British Columbia and has alleged that there is no statutory authority from the House of Commons, can the minister assure the House that he is determined to continue the closure? Also, will he give information as to what authority he was acting under in issuing the closure order?

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries and Forestry): Mr. Speaker, it has always been a requirement under the Fisheries Act that the use of explosives in water requires a prior permit. All outstanding permits have been cancelled and therefore it is not possible to continue seismic work in the Strait of Georgia area. That is the ruling to which the hon. member refers.

REVIEW OF DRILLING PERMITS OFF EAST COAST

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Is it the government's intention to review the oil drilling permits that have been issued to companies to drill for oil off the east coast of Canada, especially in light of the amendments to the Fisheries Act now before the House?

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the question of permits for seismographic work and for further exploration and drilling comes under the aegis of my department. The officials of the department are highly expert in determining what is safe and ecologically sound, and permits have been issued on that basis and will continue to be issued on that basis subject to the strictest interpretation of the rules and to the work being done being supervised by the officials of my department.