

Oral Questions

this situation. However, he told the representatives not to be optimistic in the sense that the Angolans in particular who have been displaced from the former province of Angola have gone to Portugal, of which they are citizens, and the move to come to Canada has been essentially one of economic hardship. We have indicated that we will expedite consideration of applications, particularly from Angolans with relatives in Canada and Portuguese applicants with relatives in Canada, but we cannot declare this a refugee or a minority movement. That is the substance of what the Prime Minister indicated to the Portuguese community in Toronto yesterday, according to the transcript which I have examined.

Mr. Hees: That is not the way it sounded on the radio this morning.

Mr. Brewin: I put it to the minister that there is a large number—I think about 300,000—of destitute people who have lost their homes and their jobs. We have a large Portuguese community in Canada, and it would be consistent with Canada's generous attitude not to qualify refugees in different manners by legalistic phrases, but to admit at least a portion of those people, so that they can join their relatives and friends in Canada, without applying the very strict immigration rules which are generally applied.

Mr. Andras: I tried to explain this to the hon. member and certainly to the Portuguese community. First, let me say that we all recognize that the Portuguese people who have come here have made very fine Canadian citizens, so we applaud the way they have assimilated into our society. However, the description of the situation the hon. member has given is one I could apply to the people of many countries of the world. There is no question about that.

The Angolans in Portugal are now being helped to settle by the Portuguese government. There has been a Canadian contribution of some \$300,000 or \$500,000 to the Portuguese government to assist in that very endeavour, and beyond that I have indicated that we will entertain and expedite applications within the immigration laws which now exist, but we cannot establish the precedent of allowing these kinds of movements on the basis of economic hardship, particularly when we have, unfortunately, considerable unemployment in this country.

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AIRPORTS

RUNWAY EXTENSION AT VANCOUVER—REASON FOR MINISTER'S SUPPORT OF NEW RUNWAY WITHIN DYKED PORTION OF SEA ISLAND

Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. It refers to the Vancouver airport runway extension. In the minister's press release of March 12 he said that a decision will be made in the next few months as to whether environmental or urban penalties will result from the proposed parallel runway. Then, the minister asked that all interested parties present their views to him. However, then the release goes on to say that the minister thinks the better solution is a new runway entirely within the dyked portion of Sea

[Mr. Andras.]

Island. Can the minister explain why he is expressing support for this runway when this particular proposal was not studied by the airport planning committee and in fact was expressly excluded from the study of the airport planning committee?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, my expression of preference for the shorter runway within the dyked area was designed to focus attention on what I considered to be the most likely and reasonable alternative. In the course of the study this alternative did emerge more and more as a realistic one, and it certainly did in the eyes of the officials who advise me and who ordinarily judge what is possible and necessary with regard to airport facilities.

It also became apparent that the greatest area of concern which had a real and fundamental basis to it was the interference with the area beyond the dyke, and as a result I thought it better to indicate that this might not be necessary at all in considering another runway for Vancouver.

RUNWAY EXTENSION AT VANCOUVER—REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE STUDY OF ALL RELATED REPORTS

Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): I will have to come back to this on Monday, but the question to the minister now is as follows: on July 9, 1975 at page 7391 of *Hansard* the then minister of transport, who is now the Minister of the Environment, said all reports on the proposed expansion of Vancouver airport—and that would include that of the airport planning committee and also the environmental study which has been put in by the former minister's department—would be referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications for full discussion. Can the minister assure this House that the commitment of the former minister will be kept? Can the minister also assure us that in view of the recommendation of the environmental study that there should be no short runway within the dyke, of which the minister just spoke, unless it goes through the proper environmental planning stage, that there will be a referral back to the committee of this House and that the proposals to which he is referring will not be decided upon until it is also subjected to the departmental planning and assessment regulations of the government?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): I can assure the hon. member that I will not be trying to rush any decision. I will be allowing for full time for appropriate discussions, but I will decide from time to time on the nature of those discussions and the kind which is, in fact, most appropriate. I will even give the hon. member time to make up his mind about whether he does or does not want some additional facility in Vancouver.