

Oral Questions

CBC, that any moneys received from that libel action would be turned over to the public treasury?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, it seems to me the hon. member is trying to make a debating point. If he is discussing the matter seriously as a matter of law, I hope he will restate his question.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: I will be glad to. I thought you were a professor of law.

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PENSIONS

REQUEST FOR OVER-ALL STUDY OF PENSION PLANS

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. I put my question to him because the Department of Insurance and the Pension Benefits Standards Act come under his jurisdiction.

In view of the fact that a couple of days ago the United States Supreme Court ruled that in that country employers must no longer require women to make larger payments to retirement funds than men simply because females have a longer average lifespan, and in view of the fact that there are provisions in the Canadian Human Rights Act which prohibit discrimination between men and women in matters of pension plans, may I ask the Minister of Finance if he will take steps to have this matter studied to make sure that pension plans in this country, not just those which come under jurisdiction of governments but those that come under private auspices as well, are set up so that there is no discrimination, bearing in mind that this should include the elimination of actuarial tables which set up differences in rates between men and women?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raises a very interesting question, and I will ask the superintendent of insurance to inquire and report to me. I will then communicate with the hon. member to inform him of the situation as it stands in Canada.

[English]

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is put to the minister so that I can ask if he will have that inquiry directed not only to pension plans but to insurance policies generally, so that there is no discrimination, particularly in the matter of rates being based on differences in longevity between men and women.

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, certainly I will be asking the superintendent of insurance to look at all aspects of the question.

[Mr. Hnatyshyn.]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

SEARCH FOR KOREAN AIRCRAFT—PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF MASTER CADET

Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Defence. Can the minister advise the House if the Canadian armed forces were involved in the initial search for the Korean Airlines' plane which was forced down in the Soviet Union? If so, what was the extent of that search?

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, when the airplane was first noticed overdue, although it was not close to our coastline, as was further indicated, the Canadian armed forces major air disaster plan was put into place immediately. Aircraft were in the air with para-rescue teams on the search path when it was learned that the plane had gone down elsewhere. That the whole system was in being I found comforting, as minister, and I am sure the people of Canada do as well. This capacity works in a highly efficient way. It was put into operation automatically and I was kept informed during every stage of the operation.

While I am on my feet, Mr. Speaker—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Danson: —I would like to draw the attention of the House to the presence in the gallery of Master Cadet Peter Dillon, the most qualified cadet in the cadet corps.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: Qualified cadets make up for the minister!

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TRADE

GATT—CANADIAN POSITION VIS-À-VIS U.S. PROPOSAL FOR LOWER TARIFFS

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the House leader in his capacity as minister responsible for the GATT negotiations. It appears certain the United States will be demanding deeper and broader tariff cuts than those proposed by Canada at the Tokyo trade discussions going on at Geneva. According to some American sources, the Canadian offer—which is basically the Swiss formula—will not be acceptable to the United States.

I ask the minister what Canada's position will be with regard to the United States proposal for lower tariffs than those presently formulated by Canada?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will recall that the negotiations are being conducted under the general hypothesis, or a working hypothesis of, I believe, an over-all 40 per cent weighted average cost. I believe the Americans at an earlier point had argued for cuts greater than the 40 per cent, but negotiations are proceeding. Certainly,