

Oral Questions

● (1410)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

AIR CANADA**ALLEGATION CHAIRMAN MAY RESIGN—DATE OF TABLING OF ESTEY REPORT**

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): Mr. Speaker, I was hoping to direct my questions to the Minister of Transport. I am sorry he is not in the House today but I shall direct my questions to the Prime Minister instead. Is the Prime Minister in a position to confirm to the House persistent reports that the chairman of Air Canada is about to resign in the light of the most recent recurrences of travel agency difficulties?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): No, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Murta: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question still concerning the controversy surrounding Air Canada. Can the Prime Minister inform the House whether the honourable Judge Estey submitted more than one report on the Air Canada inquiry to the government and if so, when will both reports be tabled in the House?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, my only knowledge is that Mr. Estey has finished his report and that it is in the process of being translated.

SUGGESTED REFERENCE OF 1976 ANNUAL REPORT AND 1975 CAPITAL BUDGET TO COMMITTEE

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I certainly hope that the government, and the Prime Minister especially, feel some of the frustration that opposition members feel with the very indefinite kind of answers we get because the report has been in the hands of the government for some time. Will the Prime Minister consult with his colleague the President of the Privy Council to put forward a government motion to refer the 1974 annual report and the 1975 capital budget of Air Canada to the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications? Will he do this immediately?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, on the first part of the question, I believe that the Minister of Transport received Judge Estey's report about 15 days ago. I understand that it was going to be several weeks in the translation and that the minister asked that this period be cut down. I am sure the hon. member is not arguing that we should break the law and regulations and table it only in one language. The report will therefore be tabled as soon as it is translated.

On the second part of the question, that has to do with committee business: if the committee makes a request I am sure it will be considered by all House leaders.

[Mr. Speaker.]

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION OF ALOUETTE TRAVEL AGENCY BY COMPANY AND FAILURE TO CHECK BILLINGS BY TRAVEL AGENTS

Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Acting Minister of Transport. Can the acting minister say how it was possible for Air Canada to continue, responsibly, to approve or recommend to IATA the Alouette Travel Agency in Montreal associated, incidentally, with Captain Hill's company, when Alouette is owned by one Daniel A. Scott whose convictions for fraud, and other corporate disabilities, probably presently preclude him from having a licence to do business under the relevant Quebec statute?

Mr. Ralph E. Goodale (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I will take notice of the question put by the hon. member and refer it to the minister who I am sure will reply to the hon. member tomorrow if he cares to raise it at that time.

Mr. MacKay: A further supplementary question. Can the acting minister also explain why Air Canada has not corrected a practice that appears to be causing the loss of vast amounts of money, because of a strange reluctance to check vigorously and conscientiously, billings from the company's appointed travel agents which claim inappropriate commission over-ride charges, despite the fact that group vice-president, Maurice D'Amours sent out a joint memo with his CP Air Counterpart last March indicating awareness of this fraudulent practice?

Mr. Goodale: Once again, Mr. Speaker, I will draw that matter to the attention of the Minister.

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MULTICULTURALISM**POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE IN PROGRAM AND ELIMINATION OF FUNDING FOR THIRD LANGUAGE TRAINING**

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Labour I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. Could the Prime Minister inform the House whether statements attributed to the Minister of Labour in today's press to the effect that the government's multiculturalism program is going to shift from what it has been in the past, the positive encouragement of folkloric activities, to one of fostering good understanding which, if this is the direction of the new program, will constitute a retraction from the proposals made by the Consultative Council on Multiculturalism to the government? I ask the Prime Minister if this means that there is to be a major change in policy, or is this simply a proposal being advocated at this time by the Minister of Labour?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately I have not had time to read the speech of the Minister of Labour who is responsible for multiculturalism. But I propose to read and discuss it. I repeat: the government is very much committed still to its policy on multiculturalism. That does not mean that we do everything the multicultural advisory committee recommends, although we put considerable importance on the weight of