

Oral Questions

not the direct expenditure of effort by the Centre itself; it plays a co-ordinating role. The basic backup is the material available in the various provincial fleets.

I find it astounding that the Hon. Member should ask whether we think this effort is sufficient when he also knows that we recently indicated that we are committing virtually \$150 million of federal Government funds to upgrade and to improve firefighting capacity across Canada by assisting the Provinces in the purchase, on a matching basis, of the most modern and up to date firefighting planes, a move which his colleague from British Columbia has roundly chastised us for taking. I wish he would talk to her and manage to straighten her out on what is required for adequate fire protection in this country.

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WESTERN GRAIN TRANSPORTATION ACT

CAP ON TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Lethbridge-Foothills): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. He knows that the Government decision on the Crow has resulted in a cap being put on the export of grain of about 31.1 million tonnes. This will cost the nation about \$4 billion to \$5 billion by 1990, whereas an investment of \$150 million a year to remove that cap would result in the nation being richer by \$4 billion or \$5 billion. How can the Prime Minister justify the loss of \$1.5 billion for Canadair and other Crown Corporations when the Government is not prepared to make this investment that will give a return of ten or 20 times that amount?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, there is no cap on the export of grain from Canada, none whatsoever. The Bill presently before the House states, however, that there would be a cap on the contribution that the Government of Canada will make to grain transportation. There is a big difference between the two. That was a suggestion made by the Gilson group, and the Government of Canada had accepted that simply as an indication that there is a limitation on the amount of money the federal Government can put into the transportation of grain.

Should the farmers of Canada prefer not to have the cap, that is a suggestion I am quite willing to receive, but only inasmuch as it would be understood that this would not affect the total amount of the contribution of the federal Government.

In specific answer to the question, the fact is completely different from the implication. It is estimated that the amounts of grain exported by Canada will move from 31 million tonnes to 42 million tonnes by the end of the decade.

Mr. Thacker: Madam Speaker, the farmers are paying 10 per cent of the price up to 31 million tonnes. If they pay 100 per cent beyond that, that is an effective cap.

GILSON REPORT RECOMMENDATION

Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Lethbridge-Foothills): Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Transport. If the Government were prepared to accept the Gilson compromise with respect to the cap, why has it not accepted the Gilson compromise with respect to paying 81 per cent to the producers and 19 per cent to the railways?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, the fact is that when Gilson produced his report he had a number of supporters; there is no doubt about that. But a great number of groups of farmers and producers of livestock and others disagreed with this or that aspect of the Gilson report. Since then we have been trying to put together a package that would be acceptable to the greatest number of people. As it is not possible to have everybody agreeing with every part of it, the poor Minister of Transport has been begging people kindly to settle for 65 per cent or 75 per cent of their interest and their points of view on the subject. Hopefully, he will get that soon.

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NATIONAL REVENUE

REQUEST FOR RE-EVALUATION OF FARM LAND

Mr. Mel Gass (Malpeque): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Revenue. It concerns the valuation date for farm land and other properties, dating back to 1971. Has the Minister or his Department any plans to raise the value of farm properties, or to eliminate the clause which makes it necessary for farmers to pay capital gains on cash for farm sales?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of National Revenue): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member's proposal would require an amendment to the Income Tax Act, which would be in the nature of a change in the tax system and, therefore, the responsibility of the Minister of Finance. I can, however, advise the Minister of Finance of the representations made by the Hon. Member with respect to a change in the Income Tax Act in this area.

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[*English*]

HUMAN RIGHTS

INTERMENT OF JAPANESE-CANADIANS—PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview-Greenwood): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Justice. He indicated recently that the Government was considering compensation for Canadians of Japanese ancestry who lost their homes in World War II and were placed in internment