

Oral Questions

I ask the minister: Where is the funding necessary to double the number of mathematicians, scientists and engineers, that this government says should be done, if it is not prepared to put money in the pot? What is going to be in the Challenge program in 1992?

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Minister of State (Youth) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, as my hon. colleague knows, although he seems to be losing his cool today, the program has been announced and numbers will be made public as quickly as possible.

I am sure that the students are going to be more amused with the numbers than my colleague's facetiousness.

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[Translation]

RAIL PASSENGER SERVICE

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. CN has appealed the National Transportation Agency's decision to maintain service on the Franquet-Chapais subdivisions in Abitibi. Can the minister tell us today when this case will be heard?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I note again that my colleague from Abitibi is very involved in this issue, which he really cares about. I commend him for that, but unfortunately, I do not have the authority to decide when cases will be heard in court.

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[English]

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Madam Speaker, my question is for the minister of immigration.

The minister ought to know that the investor immigrant program is in jeopardy and our reputation in the Pacific Rim is being tainted. Investor immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan thought they were buying western Canadian real estate. Instead their money was spent on rural Saskatchewan gold mines. The prospectus of the offering was approved by the federal government. Therefore, the minister is ultimately responsible.

What will the minister do to protect the investor immigrant program so that people who are thinking of investing their fortunes in this country can do so with some confidence and some assurance that this government will look after those investments?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Absolutely, Madam Speaker, that is the objective of the government in implementing the investor program. If the hon. member has a suggestion as to how we can improve it, we are in the process of revisiting the whole program to ensure exactly that and also to make sure that regions in Canada do benefit from that program. If the hon. member has suggestions to make, I will be pleased to consider them.

Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast): Madam Speaker, the Hong Kong and Taiwanese investors the minister will know invested in Canada, much of it in western Canada, approximately \$4 billion in 1990 alone. The federal investor immigrant program is sponsored by the Government of Canada, not by the province of Alberta in this case. The individual in question was acting as a private individual at the time these allegations took place.

Two hundred and seventy-eight Pacific Rim investors want to know why \$34 million went to a gold mine in Saskatchewan instead of shopping centres elsewhere in the province.

What will the minister do as minister today to ensure that Canada's name is not further tainted in the Pacific Rim which is very important to western Canada and all of Canada in terms of investments?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, the hon. member is referring to a case that is before the courts and as soon as the courts have dealt with this case—

Mr. Kilgour: Three years from now.

Mr. Valcourt: I know Liberals would jump the court. I will not. I am going to await the decision of the court in this matter. If it calls for a change to the way we are dealing with the investor program, we will do that because we pursue the same objectives that I am sure the hon. member wants for Canada. Any change that can improve this program will be made.