

Oral Questions

In the first place I can tell the hon. gentleman that I cannot report to him on any investigation that the RCMP may or may not have conducted. That would be within the purview of the Solicitor General and it is not his custom to report to the House of Commons or to the public on what the RCMP reports to him after it has instituted an investigation.

The hon. gentleman has some kind of fetish about the Kemano project. There is no peculiar set of circumstances under way in connection with that project. There was an agreement entered into after very careful consideration of all conservation aspects that related to it, and that agreement is in effect now.

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PEARSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport who yesterday in announcing that the government was proceeding with terminal redevelopment at Pearson airport said that he wanted assurances "that changing financial realities are addressed fully before any construction begins".

The minister knows that the airline industry is in a state of turmoil. Why did the government not show some progress on the problem of overcapacity in that industry before contributing to the problem by creating additional capacity at Pearson airport?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, do I understand from the hon. member that his party has been asking the government for a number of weeks to invest an unspecified amount of money in unspecified infrastructure work?

We now have two proposers who have accepted to invest their own money in a defined, very useful and very important infrastructure of this country. It seems that this does not satisfy the member on the opposite side.

Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South): Mr. Speaker, what I am not satisfied about is whether this government has any idea of what to do with the airline industry given its performance over past weeks.

Yesterday the minister in his announcement downgraded his estimate for capacity needs at Pearson by two to three years. We also know that his announcement comes on the heels of the Auditor General talking about

revenues bleeding at terminal 3. This announcement had more to do with political posturing than with the needs of building the economy.

Air Canada said that the winning bidder would not be given the go-ahead until an agreement was reached on the air carriers' rent. Is that true? Will the minister tell us who is going to make that decision on the appropriate rent?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member and other so-called experts were predicting when we issued the RFP that nobody would present proposals for this undertaking. Now we have two very serious proposals from very serious firms.

We did not hide anything. When we issued the request for proposals we said that investment decisions would be complicated by uncertainties in traffic patterns and growth rates, composition of the airline industry, and the air side capacity at the airport. We told the eventual proponents that this would present all kinds of challenges.

These people have responded in kind to this request for proposals. It seems the private sector has more faith in the future of this country than the Liberal Party.

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Trade.

The minister stated that Paxport Inc. was selected to receive the \$750 million contract to renovate and manage terminals 1 and 2 at Pearson based on merit. It had nothing to do with the fact that Paxport founder Don Matthews is a close friend of the party and was co-chairman of the Prime Minister's leadership campaign in 1983.

Will the minister table in this House all the tenders to the contract today?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I would invite the hon. member to repeat outside the House of Commons any allegations of wrongdoing in this.

We have put together an evaluation process that has never been seen anywhere in the world. We have constituted five separate committees to examine the proponents' qualifications, the management and operations, the transfer plan, the development plan and the business plan.