

Oral Questions

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

POSSIBLE TAKE-OVER OF HOTELS—REQUEST THAT
CANADIAN-OWNED SKYLINE HOTELS BE GIVEN
CONSIDERATION

Mr. Arnold Malone (Battle River): Mr. Speaker, in the continued absence of the Minister of Transport I will direct this question to his parliamentary secretary—it relates to a question I asked earlier about whether or not there was to be a take-over of the management of a CN hotel; the response was to the effect that discussions were under way with Conrad-Hilton. In the light of present information that Skyline Hotels would like to be involved in any such discussions, and since Skyline is a Canadian-owned and operated hotel chain, might I seek an assurance that no further discussions will take place with Conrad-Hilton until there has been full discussion with Canadian firms?

Mr. Cliff McIsaac (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): I have nothing new to report since the last time this matter was raised. I shall certainly be glad to convey the point made by the hon. member to the management of Canadian National which is considering this whole question.

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FINANCE

REQUEST FOR WINTER WORKS PROGRAM—GOVERNMENT
POSITION

Mr. John Wise (Elgin): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Prime Minister in the absence of the Minister of Finance? Would the right hon. gentleman give serious consideration to recommending a winter works program either in co-operation with the provinces or directly through the municipalities, conservation authorities, parks commissions and other agencies, bearing in mind, particularly, the unhealthy state of the automobile industry and other industries, especially in the Province of Ontario?

● (1610)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It seems to me that the question relates to a very broad, general policy and perhaps in those wide terms is not particularly suitable for the question period. However, the Prime Minister may want to answer.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, my reaction was the same as yours. The hon. member is asking for a policy statement. I can assure him that his recommendations have been heard. I must point out that they appear to me slightly in contradiction to statements made by a member of his own party who was leading off on my bill yesterday and who said that consultations with the provinces, particularly on winter works, had been ideal in the past. The hon. member is now suggesting that perhaps we should deal directly with the municipalities, and I would think that is something that we would have to consider in order to reconcile the two suggestions.

[Mr. Trudeau.]

PUBLIC SERVICE

SUGGESTED REVIEW OF COURT DECISION IN CASE OF RODIER
JEAN—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the President of the Treasury Board. Will the minister undertake to review the decision of the Federal Court of Canada in the case of Rodier Jean, who was a public servant engaged in a legal strike under the statute and who, by the judgment of the court, has been denied the right to recoup any superannuation lost as a result of compensation or payments not made during the course of that strike, in order to see whether the statute has in any way been circumvented by the court?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I shall review the whole question. As I am not aware of this problem, I shall make inquiries and report later to the hon. member.

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[English]

GRAIN

GOVERNMENT POSITION ON FURTHER SALES TO REPUBLIC OF
CHINA

Mr. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board. In view of reports today that the Chinese are considering cutbacks in the purchase of grains from Canada, would the minister please advise the House whether he has been in contact with the representatives of the People's Republic of China with respect to existing and future sales contracts, and what steps is the government taking to protect our export markets?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Wheat Board is in constant contact with its principal customers, such as the People's Republic of China. In this case, as well there were discussions concerning the actual timing of deliveries. The Wheat Board is always alert to the appropriate time for further negotiations.

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ENERGY

ALLEGED CURTAILMENT OF EXPLORATION FOR NATURAL
GAS ON FEDERAL LANDS—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Peter C. Bawden (Calgary South): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. In view of reports in this morning's paper that significant shortages of natural gas will appear in Canada as early as 1977, is the Prime Minister aware that approximately 90 per cent of Canada's future supply lies under federal lands, where there has been a drastic slide in exploration activity? Would the Prime Minister say whether he has some plans to do something about this serious situation?