

Oral Questions

[Translation]

MINES AND MININGFEDERAL-PROVINCIAL MINERAL DEVELOPMENT
AGREEMENTS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Forestry and Mines. The federal-provincial agreements on mining development are important for the outlying regions of Canada.

Can the Minister tell us in this House whether these federal-provincial agreements will be extended or renewed beyond 1989-90?

[English]

Hon. Gerald S. Merrithew (Minister of State (Forestry and Mines)): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Hon. Member's continued interest in mining matters. I can tell the House, and therefore the public, that the matter of renewal of MDA's was a discussion topic at the Ministers' meeting in Quebec City yesterday. I should mention that the Quebec MDA does not expire until 1990, so we have almost two years to deal with that particular issue.

The recent agreement that was signed under Economic Regional Development with the Province of Quebec allowed for a topping up of economic regional development agreements in that province. They may very well wish to tap that particular source.

I might say that the mining sector has been treated fairly well by Governments over the years, through the Canadian Exploration Expense, through flow-through share mechanisms, and, of course, through the \$210 million new program for exploration that this Government just announced through the CEIP.

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THE MINISTRY

AIR FLIGHT TO THAILAND BY MINISTER'S SPOUSE—BILL C-114

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Today this House will debate and pass in principle the Government's conflict of interest Bill. The Prime Minister, upon the introduction of the Bill in February of this year, clearly indicated that while the Bill was not law then, the spirit of the legislation was in effect immediately. In fact, in that Bill there is a clause that requires that a Member's spouse or dependant who receives any gift or benefit must record and table that information with the registrar.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister tell the House exactly what he intends to do in the case of the Minister for International Trade whose wife and daughter received a trip costing about \$5,600 on Thai Airlines? What does the Government intend to

do about that, when it is a clear violation of the spirit of Bill C-114?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I think the Hon. Member knows, and he has correctly pointed out, that public office holders have to disclose any gifts over \$200. That was not the case here. If it had been the case, the Minister assures me that he would have complied by providing the notice to the ADRG.

I am also advised by the Hon. Member that if the Bill passes second reading, which is the approval in principle, he will obviously comply with the spirit and intent of Bill C-114. Since it is now public knowledge, always was public knowledge, the Minister examined this consistent with the current conflict of interest guidelines. He is fully prepared to comply with them as well as the future ones that are put forth in the principle enshrined in Bill C-114.

REQUEST THAT MINISTER PAY COST OF FLIGHT

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, it was the Prime Minister who introduced Bill C-114 in the House and who, outside the House, made it crystal clear that in cleaning up the mess that exists in the Government the spirit of Bill C-114 was immediately in effect.

In light of the fact that another Minister in the Ontario Government has quite willingly said he is prepared to pay for the ticket for his wife, is the Minister for International Trade prepared to pay for the tickets for his wife and his daughter? Why do you not follow the example of another Minister of another Government at another level?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, it might be fair if we got this in the proper perspective. Thailand, a country with which we have very good relations and with which we want to do expanding trade, after a negotiation with the Government of Canada and concessions for Canadian airlines, was allowed to start a route from Bangkok to Toronto which will assist both countries and the commerce of both countries.

As is the custom with every airline in the world, they invited the Minister for International Trade to go on their inaugural flight. I could not go, but my wife went in my place, and other Ministers from several provincial Governments and from municipal Governments, known as guests. One Minister paid because he was going on a business trip to the Far East in addition to Thailand.

● (1500)

My wife went to represent me and this country and in furtherance of good relations between this country and Thailand. It is not a gift in the ordinary sense of the word. Therefore, these suggestions are hardly fair, but we don't expect fairness from the Opposition.