

AIR TRANSPORT

POSSIBLE TRANSPORTATION OF PLUTONIUM THROUGH CANADIAN AIRSPACE

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, following the imagery used by the Minister of Transport in his reference to the wolf, if he has read that fable to the end he would realize that at the end of the story the wolf does show up. He might want to be a bit more careful in his statements in which he seems to be more concerned about Japan and the U.S. than Canadians and our environment in the fragile North.

The Minister's case seems to rest upon the question of safety. There is no way that one can be assured that those safety standards work until an accident occurs. If an accident does occur over the Canadian North, then the game is over.

Why does the Minister place so much importance on the standards to be applied to this flight over the Canadian North instead of taking a clear-cut position now by indicating to the international community that Canadians will not even entertain an application, as the Opposition has been urging the Minister to do since last August?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I suppose we have just heard again from Little Red Riding Hood. The position is—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: One has to assume that a question is asked for some purpose and therefore I should be allowed to reply.

The situation is that dangerous goods, including plutonium, are regulated in accordance with the International Civil Aviation Organization Convention to which over 100 countries belong, which stipulates that states retain the power to apply their domestic regulations concerning the carriage of cargo to international overflights. We also have to keep in mind that we have already filed with ICAO what is called a state variation, which requires our approval for any overflight transporting fissile material across Canadian air space.

We have to understand that there has been no proposal for any such overflight. It would be contrary to our obligations under these international treaties for us to say no when we have not even received a proposal.

When and if a proposal is received, it will have to be looked at very carefully, and unless it meets the strictest standards of safety that apply to all carriage of dangerous goods, it would not be entertained. But we will not say no before a proposal is even made. That would be the height of ridiculousness, absolutely and incredibly ridiculous. Even the hon. gentleman did not act like that when he was in government.

Mr. Caccia: Mr. Speaker, if the Minister of Transport had carefully read his instruction notes since last August, he would not be taking such a shaky, wishy-washy position today on the floor of the House of Commons. He evidently does not know

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his file because, if he did, he would not rise in the House and say today that we have to wait for an application before we take a stand. My question to him—

Mr. Speaker: I would ask the Hon. Member to put his question.

CONDITIONS FOR MAKING DECISION

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, this is a very clear and straightforward question. Will it take an accident, a disaster, and irreparable damage to the fragile Canadian environment in the Arctic area for the Minister to take a position and decide to deny these flights over the Canadian North?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I think it was Dalton Camp who had something to say about the family the hon. gentleman is named after, and he is acting like a cashew nut today.

I repeat, no one has made any such request. No one has made a proposal for such an overflight of Canadian territory and we will not deal with it until they make such a proposal. If they make such a proposal at this time, we would have to say no because at the present time there is no suitable cask in which to carry that material which would withstand the impacts that would have to be regulated and so on, so the answer at the present time would have to be no.

Who knows, there has been no proposal, but in several years' time there may be a safe way of transporting this material. That is the present position. We will listen to the hon. gentleman's fears and alarms and those of the hon. gentleman from Windsor when the time comes.

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TRADE

CANADA-UNITED STATES TRADE AGREEMENT—EFFECT ON PROVINCIAL POWERS

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, the *Kitchener-Waterloo Record* says in a report today on its front page that Ottawa appears to be preparing to force provinces to put the U.S. trade deal into effect. The paper quotes a Justice Department lawyer who said that there is no limit as to the nature of the provincial legislation that could be disallowed.

In view of this very serious report, is the Minister of Justice prepared to make it very clear to the provinces that there will not be any recourse on the part of the federal Government to disallow powers such as that to try to bludgeon the provinces into this unfair trade deal?

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I have not seen the *Kitchener-Waterloo Record* of today.