

Inquiries of the Ministry

that if regional air carriers were desirous of providing additional service, that this would be considered. I wonder if the other side of the case will also be exercised whereby the minister, the department or the Transport Commission will ask regional carriers to operate services particularly in areas of important need? These will include parts of both western and eastern Canada.

Hon. James Richardson (Minister without Portfolio): I think the initiative must come from the regional carriers. The commission would not stand in the way of any reasonable request.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Are we to understand that neither the minister, his department or the Transport Commission will be assessing the need independently and make such requests to these air carriers?

Mr. Richardson: As I indicated earlier, Mr. Speaker, the commission has been in touch with the air lines and in consultation with them, but the request will still have to come from the regional air lines for services which they wish to provide. If they do, the commission will want to grant any reasonable requests.

POSSIBLE FATIGUE FACTOR IN JET PILOT OPERATIONS

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Acting Minister of Transport. Since we have had assurance from the Prime Minister and others that other air lines will do their best where requested to take over during this emergency, will the minister make sure air line pilots, particularly jet pilots, are not required to spend long hours on duty in view of the great safety factor involved? I ask this question because of events that took place earlier this year concerning long hours that jet pilots were required to work on occasion, even on regular runs. There is a high safety factor.

Hon. James Richardson (Minister without Portfolio): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member's point is well taken. I am certain the air lines themselves and the commission would want to be certain that the pilots do not work longer hours than they could reasonably undertake having regard to the safety of the travelling public.

[Mr. MacDonald (Egmont).]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

A.B.M. SYSTEM—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT CONCERNING SAFEGUARD SYSTEM

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): My question, Mr. Speaker, is directed to the Prime Minister. Some weeks ago he indicated the government was studying the proposed A.B.M. Safeguard system suggested by President Nixon. The Prime Minister indicated at that time that he was going to see whether the government should condemn the proposal or co-operate. I ask the Prime Minister if he has reached any conclusion with respect to this matter.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): We have not reached any conclusion yet, Mr. Speaker, but it seems the debate is going on well in the United States without us.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): I am not concerned about the debate in the United States, Mr. Speaker. I am concerned about Canada's implications. I ask the Prime Minister if there have been any discussions at any level of government regarding the possibility of co-operation with respect to the A.B.M. system and NORAD. Also is Canada seeking any contracts for the construction of material to be used in the A.B.M. system?

Mr. Trudeau: I do not know the answer to that, Mr. Speaker. I know there is a question on the order paper along these lines which will be answered in due course.

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): As a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, when the government will make its statement to the house or issue a white paper on North American defence could the Prime Minister indicate whether there will be a clear statement with respect to Canada's position on the A.B.M. question?

Mr. Trudeau: I hope so, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

PUBLIC SERVICE

INQUIRY AS TO BILINGUAL BONUS

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Prime Minister.

In view of the fact that he stated recently that the bill on official languages might be introduced and studied within a few weeks, could the Prime Minister assure the house and federal civil servants that the promised 7