

*Oral Questions*

people of Canada in their investment and by the employees of Air Canada, one of the top 10 ranking airlines in the world.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Benjamin:** Is it the intention of the Government or Air Canada to announce this Friday the privatization of Air Canada?

• (1450)

**Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Privatization)):** Mr. Speaker, I am also very happy to lend my congratulations to Air Canada for 50 years of service to Canada and I know it will continue in the future, either in the public sector or in the private sector.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Nystrom:** That is like being progressive and conservative.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Benjamin:** I worry they might turn the birthday party into a funeral.

## QUERY CONCERNING DATE OF ANNOUNCEMENT

**Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West):** Mr. Speaker, since some employees have already been told by a personnel officer of Air Canada that the Government will be announcing very quickly the privatization plans for Air Canada, will the Minister say whether they will be announced this Friday, within two weeks, within a month, or when?

**Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Privatization)):** Mr. Speaker, I will say what I have said in this House before. We are seriously reviewing Air Canada with some other corporations with a view to whether or not it should be in the private sector. There are many benefits for it to be in the private Sector.

**Mr. Benjamin:** For whom?

**Mrs. McDougall:** We are looking at those. When I have more to tell the House around when that decision is reached, I will be happy to report to the House.

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## REFUGEES

## CHILEANS IN ARGENTINA—REQUEST FOR RE-EVALUATION OF FILES

**Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Last August in reference to the plight of refugees and immigrants he said to the country: "If we err, we will err on the side of compassion and justice". Since those words, the Government has turned back the clock

on our immigration program and forced groups and churches across the country to mobilize against its unjust direction which is epitomized by the Government's irresponsible refusal to re-evaluate the files of the 70 Chilean refugees stranded in Argentina.

Given the new evidence presented on torture by lawyer Noel St. Pierre and the scenes on our TV sets during the papal visit to Chile, will the Prime Minister not order his Minister of Immigration to re-evaluate at least the 70 files and thus show Canadians that his policy on immigration is just, is compassionate, and is humane?

[Translation]

**Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada showed compassion in several ways and in various circumstances in a number of cases which were found deserving. However, we have always maintained that there is legislation in this country dealing with refugees which we intend to enforce. As I told my hon. friend yesterday, all the cases of Chileans now in Argentina have been assessed with special consideration to those referred to us as refugees. As for the others, I say again today, as I said and repeated yesterday, there is absolutely no question of reviewing the decisions.

## REFUGEES—MINISTER'S POSITION

**Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West):** It is not true, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of State for Immigration indicated to the House that on the basis of new information, the files could be reopened. My question to the Minister, therefore, is this: Why does he refuse to recognize the seriousness of the new evidence of torture? Why will he not even meet lawyer Noël St-Pierre? When will he start protecting the legitimate interests of his Department's clients? Or would the Minister rather stand on his statement that immigration is bothersome?

[English]

**Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, when we do not have good reasons we can say anything. It is exactly what the member said. I have repeated many times that we have considered the recommendations by the U.N. Commissioner for Refugees, and we did. We have considered the recommendations of the people of Quebec. We have considered all the recommendations made. The first interest I have to defend as Minister of Immigration, Sir, is the interest of this country.

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## THE ECONOMY

## WESTERN ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGY

**Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Hon. Member for Vegreville, the Deputy Prime Minister, who has been told on a number of