

AIR TRANSPORT

REACTION TO MINISTER'S OFFER TO BROADEN TERMS OF REFERENCE OF INQUIRY INTO USE OF BILINGUAL AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport and refers to a question of yesterday. In view of the positive response last evening of the spokesman for the air traffic controllers welcoming the minister's offer to broaden the terms of reference of the public commissioner, has the minister approached the commissioner or the interested parties to see whether such action on his part would facilitate solutions to the outstanding issues, or was his offer just a gesture?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. member does not mean to add that kind of final phrase, and I would be glad if he would refrain from doing it.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: You are very touchy.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: You are not back in the classroom.

Mr. Lang: I simply meant, Mr. Speaker, that he is sometimes better than that. I expect to meet representatives of the controllers this afternoon.

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, will the minister be taking steps this afternoon when he does meet the Commissioner to extend the time so that all parties directly concerned may reach a solution, especially in light of the complexity of developing satisfactory procedures for IFR through the simulator which, by some accounts, has not yet been activated and made operational?

● (1430)

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, the accounts are largely wrong. I am sure the hon. member did not mean to misunderstand me. I did not mean that I was meeting the commissioner this afternoon but rather the representatives of the controllers. I would like him to be more specific about what he wants in respect of an extension of time since the time is indefinite.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

ALLEGED DEFRAUDING OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION—INQUIRY AS TO CHARGES

Mr. Tom Cossitt (Leeds): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Solicitor General I should like to direct my question to the Minister of Justice. Could he confirm to this House details concerning the recent extensive defrauding of the Unemployment Insurance Commission of thousands of dollars which was investigated by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Could he also tell the House whether charges will be laid against bogus companies and individu-

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als involved in addition to charges already laid against Gordon Gunn of Ottawa last Friday.

Mr. Hugh Poulin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Solicitor General I should like to advise the hon. member that I do not have the particulars of the allegations in respect of charges to which he has referred. We will look into it, study it and advise the hon. member of whatever the charges are.

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

REQUEST FOR REPORT ON INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED FRAUD—POSSIBILITY OF CHARGES

Mr. Tom Cossitt (Leeds): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is directed to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. Is the minister in a position to provide the House with full details of the investigation carried on by his officials in co-operation with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police into the extensive defrauding of the Unemployment Insurance Commission, particularly in Ottawa, and can he tell the House when charges will be laid against all those involved in addition to those laid against Gordon Gunn of Ottawa.

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I can only indicate to the hon. member, as he pointed out, that this matter is under investigation by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Until they have completed their investigation I think it would be a disservice for me to make any detailed comment. Charges, if they are warranted, will be laid. We will encourage that course if that is the case, but we have to await their investigation.

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FINANCE

NUMBER OF OUTSIDE EXPERTS RETAINED TO HELP PREPARE BUDGET—MAINTENANCE OF BUDGET SECRECY

Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. As it is understood that the minister has retained certain outside experts to help him with his budget, would the minister indicate how many of these brains not in the public service have been retained, what type of concerns they come from and, specifically, what is their job in relation to the budget?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman would be inexact in saying that in respect of the fiscal aspects of the budget. In respect of whether there have been any such outside retainers, it is true that the Anti-Inflation Board and the officials of my department have been in consultation with a number of people in the professions with regard to possible amendments to the anti-inflation program which I indicated would be announced at the same time as the budget.