

Oral Questions

TRANSLATORS' DISPUTE—STATE OF NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. Hal Herbert (Vaudreuil): Madam Speaker, my question follows along much the same lines. It was intended for the President of the Treasury Board but, in his absence, perhaps the parliamentary secretary could answer it. It also pertains to the translators' strike, which is now starting to affect our committee activities. While it is understood that there is a broad area of agreement in the settlement, I wonder if I can be advised whether negotiations have broken off, and whether the point of contention is the alleged refusal of Treasury Board officials to permit the Department of the Secretary of State to predetermine the amounts of the salary deductions that will be applied during the slowdown period?

● (1210)

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Joyal (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board): Madam Speaker, I am pleased the hon. member asked that question, as it will partly answer the question of the hon. member who spoke previously.

It is not true to say that there has been a breakdown in negotiations between translators and their employers. Hon. members are aware that the Treasury Board has already accepted the conclusions of the mediator's report. A qualification has been made by the union representatives to the effect that the discussions which were supposed to go on to determine salary adjustments following last summer's work slowdown be resumed. This morning they requested through the spokesman of the Public Service Staff Relations Board than an independent mediator be immediately appointed to settle this minor point which still stands in the way of a collective agreement. Consequently, at this stage the Treasury Board is awaiting the recommendation of the staff relations board to resolve that minor point and put an end to this most troublesome dispute. I am sure all hon. members from all parties in this House are equally committed to linguistic equality and to the fulfilment of that goal.

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[English]

AIRPORTS

DISCUSSIONS RESPECTING PRE-CUSTOMS CLEARANCE

Hon. Walter Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport. With respect to direct air service between Ottawa and New York, I understand that the government has approved the concept of at least two applicants before the board. Would the minister tell the House whether or not within the government there are discussions going on to allow customs pre-clearance, a service which would be of benefit to international passengers whether they be leaving or entering Ottawa? Are those discussions continuing?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, as the question implies, the discussion is going on at two levels. It is going on firstly at the Canada-U.S. level. As my hon. friend knows, Eastern Airlines has not used its Ottawa-New York licence. Therefore, through different channels in the United States, we are looking at the possibility of using airlines other than Eastern Airlines.

At the other level, Air Atonabee and First Air are also candidates for approval by both regulatory bodies in Canada and the United States. The first effort is toward getting a direct airline service which we tried to get on its own without the pre-clearance facility. That is the first line of effort and, of course, the second will follow.

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CRIMINAL CODE

AMENDMENTS RESPECTING EUTHANASIA—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister, but he has left the House. Perhaps I could address it to his parliamentary secretary or to whomever represents the Prime Minister in his absence from the House. Is the government planning to introduce amendments to the Criminal Code permitting euthanasia along the lines of the 1969 amendments which permitted therapeutic abortions?

Mr. Ron Irwin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Social Development): Madam Speaker, there are at least 12 priorities involving the Criminal Code at which we are presently looking. They range from the Judges Act to the omnibus act. The issue of euthanasia is not a major priority, but we will take cognizance of the issue and deal with it in due course.

Mr. Dinsdale: Madam Speaker, arising from that answer—

Madam Speaker: I am sorry, but we must end the question period; we have already gone beyond the time allotted. Since the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton did not ask a second question, I thought I would end after one question by the hon. member. We must now go to the routine proceedings of the House.

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PRIVILEGE

MR. DEANS—NOTICE OF INTENTION TO RAISE QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

Madam Speaker: I have received notice of a question of privilege by the hon. member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans). While I did receive his written notice of the question of privilege, I must say that procedurally it is not very explicit. The idea of the written notice, I would remind hon. members, is so that I can be informed of what the question of privilege