

*Oral Questions*

The RCMP wrote a report which said the Railway Safety Act is a federal statute enforced solely by the CN and CP police. In response to a petition to the Minister of Transport, the answer was that the RCMP does have the authority to enforce the provisions of all federal statutes, including the Railway Safety Act.

Which one is right?

**Hon. Doug Lewis (Solicitor General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend has brought this matter to my attention. It would appear there is a conflict between what is said on the one hand in the report and on the other hand, in the answer to the petition.

It is a valid point to make. I will draw this to the attention of my officials and try to come back with a definitive answer.

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**AIRLINES**

**Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.

On Monday the Minister of Transport said that overcapacity in the skies was up to the airlines to resolve. On Tuesday he said that he might legislate a resolution to overcapacity.

I want to ask the Minister of Transport, after dithering around for months while our national airlines have practically been driven out of business, what is his solution to the crisis in our airline industry?

**Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, in my statement in the House at the end of November I made reference to the fact that one of the major problems in the airline industry in Canada, as in the world, is overcapacity.

I indicated at the time that if the airline companies did not have the self-discipline necessary to bring down capacity we would legislate on it to recalibrate the situation. It is still our position.

**Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West):** Mr. Speaker, the position is not solving the problem in the industry, is it? There is nothing being done for the industry.

While the national airlines continue to schedule these money losing, half empty flights the minister stands in

his place and says: "Maybe I will do this and maybe the industry should have this intervention".

What is the policy of the minister and the government? When will the minister stop blaming everyone but himself and demonstrate some level of competence to resolve this destructive competition in the skies?

**Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transport did not invent anything. The CEOs of both major airlines, appearing at a recent hearing said they fully realized that their major problem was overcapacity. However, instead of doing it themselves they are waiting for the government to do it.

I said yesterday that we are working on legislation to put order in this industry if the owners and operators are not prepared and do not have the discipline to do it themselves.

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[*Translation*]

**CANADA POST CORPORATION**

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for Canada Post. As though it were not enough to scare communities in St. Clément and elsewhere, Canada Post is getting ready to close the post office in La Rédemption.

My question to the minister is this: When will his government stop this policy of abandoning rural Canada? When?

[*English*]

**Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Mr. Speaker, of course we are not abandoning rural Canada. We are opening retail postal outlets as opposed to corporate-run outlets. They stay open longer and are more accessible to the public. When we asked the public how they liked them, 90 per cent thought it was a good idea.

The hon. member was complaining about a couple of post offices left open in the Prime Minister's riding, inferring political privilege.

**Mr. Boudria:** Five.

**Mr. Andre:** Five. I just want to inform the hon. member that six were left open in the riding of Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.