

Oral Questions

He knows as well that this matter is currently before the courts and it would be inappropriate for me to make any specific comments in that regard except to say that I am prepared to look at the situation after the courts have dealt with it to continue the government's practice of bringing even greater fairness to the tax system.

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[Translation]

AIRLINE INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Lac-Saint-Jean): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. The minister suggested that he is about to use public funds to put Canadian Airlines on an artificial respirator. But he knows full well that the airline is in dire straits and no band-aid, however costly, can put it back on its feet. Can government not see that by throwing good money its way, it is only prolonging Canadian Airlines' agony? Does government plan to continue squandering public funds instead of applying it toward genuine economic recovery?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I think there is nothing further from the truth than saying that government committed funds. Government committed to look for, in partnership, a solution that would take into account its fiscal constraints, recognize the major role the company's employees are willing to play in finding a viable solution that would ensure the viability of the aeronautical industry and the airline industry for years to come while being in the best interest of the people of Canada.

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Lac-Saint-Jean): Mr. Speaker, this kind of verbal covering-up is not helpful. Either there will be money and guarantees or there will not. It is well known that the usual means of intervention of government are guarantees or money. The minister knows full well that our domestic market cannot support two national airlines. The Montreal coalition also warned him that any public funds he may spend on Canadian Airlines are likely to compromise directly Air Canada's survival. Then we will have two lame ducks instead of one. How can the minister not be aware of the fact that he is destroying the Canadian transportation industry while striking a terrible blow to Montreal's economy at the same time?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, it might be important for the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean to clarify whether he supports competition in the area of air transportation and whether he agrees that air carriers and the air transportation industry should be viable and serve the general interest of all Canadians. That is what we are trying to do, considering there are a great many jobs at stake. That is why we insist that it be in the best interest of the Canadian people.

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[English]

FISHERIES

Mrs. Coline Campbell (South West Nova): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries.

Has the minister now allowed licence holders of ITQs, either companies or fishermen, to buy and receive permanent quota transfers of fish from inshore fishermen in the Scotia-Fundy area?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, I will have to check on that particular point to see exactly what the answer is. I cannot recall undertaking this action myself, but I will have to see whether the department has.

Mrs. Coline Campbell (South West Nova): Mr. Speaker, assuming that the minister is not informed of what his department has done, it has sent out a form to allow such permanent transfers.

Does this not mean in the minister's opinion that the Scotia-Fundy area of fish could ultimately be caught by fishermen from another area or province and then landed in another area or province, therefore leaving communities in South West Nova without access to the fish and certainly without the jobs? In other words, whoever has the money can buy that quota and have the fish to catch and process somewhere else outside that area in Nova Scotia.

• (1500)

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, fisheries in Canada is under federal jurisdiction. We do not have protectionist measures in effect to prevent the fish being caught from moving from one province to another.