

CROWN CORPORATIONS

CANADAIR—IMPACT OF FINANCIAL LOSSES

Mr. Charles Mayer (Portage-Marquette): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister and it has to do with the reported \$1.4 billion loss by Canadair. A billion dollars is a lot of money for most Canadians. To put it in some kind of perspective, \$1.4 billion would mean that in Manitoba, for instance, the taxation level could be half of what it is now for one year. Would the Prime Minister tell the House how his Government establishes spending priorities for such large sums of money when there are so many obvious requests on the public purse for Government to get involved in different programs?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member obviously realizes that this loss was not a spending priority of the Government. It is an unfortunate loss and one which, indeed, has to be shared by the taxpayers of all Provinces, and that is very unfortunate. What a responsible Government must do now—and I would suggest what a responsible Opposition should do, if we had one—would be to ask itself the question: do we kill the industry? Do we let it die because of these unfortunate incidents? Or do we try to keep it alive and manage it in a better way? For the time being the Government has chosen the latter option. The Opposition does not seem to have taken any option at all. It does not dare say to let it die. It just bemoans the past. It has no plans for the future, which has been proven by that Party throughout its leadership campaign.

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LABOUR RELATIONS

WEST COAST GRAIN HANDLERS' DISPUTE

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. It concerns the possibility of a grain port shutdown on the West Coast. It also concerns the important \$5 billion per year grain trade. Last Friday in the House we suggested the possibility of having Mr. Justice Emmett Hall mediate this dispute. The union was reported yesterday as having welcomed the idea of Mr. Hall being a special mediator—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Nystrom: Madam Speaker, can you get those crows to quiet down over there, please?

Given the Government's reluctance to intervene in this dispute, will the Minister now at least propose the idea of Mr. Hall being a special mediator to both sides, and let them decide whether or not they would accept this avenue of solving a dispute which is so potentially damaging to the economy of western Canada?

Oral Questions

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, the Minister of Employment and Immigration, who was answering the question for the Minister of Labour on this subject a week or four or five days ago, has explained very, very well, in my view, that in this, as in other instances, the responsibility for settling labour problems belongs to the employers and the employees. It is apparently, and that is obvious for everyone to see, the judgment of the Department of Labour that the problem is better left now in the hands of the parties. This is a judgment call which it has made. This is the present situation.

I have read in the newspapers that the union has said that it has no intention to strike, and that the employers have said that they have no intention to lock out. That would indicate a willingness on the part of the two parties to compromise, and that is the judgment call which the Department of Labour has made. While I respect the suggestion made by my hon. friend of Justice Hall as a possible conciliator, he should go along with the judgment which has been made. Because both parties seem to want to reconcile their views, we should let them exercise this particular right.

CALL FOR MEDIATION

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Madam Speaker, the union has repeatedly called for mediation and is now willing to accept Mr. Justice Hall. We have had no opposition to the idea expressed by the grain companies. Our Party and the Conservative Party have both called for mediation. The people in western Canada want mediation. I wonder when the Government is going to act. When is the Minister going to show some compassion for the people of western Canada? Why is he going to sacrifice the West once again? When is he going to act?

Mr. Nielsen: Act responsibly.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member seems to postulate his question on the grounds that the parties have no intention of coming to an agreement, that it is a wrong judgment call on the part of the Department of Labour. Be that as it may, I can only assure the Hon. Member that I am informed the Department is keeping in very close touch. There is a certain gentleman there by the name of R. Kelly, who knows something about these questions. He is on the job and watching events.

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ENERGY

PROVISION OF NATURAL GAS FOR MARITIME PROVINCES

Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. Among the