

Oral Questions

leasing arrangement. It was a loan with a balloon payment. Obviously the bank is trying, and succeeding, to do through the back door what the Bank Act would not permit it to do through the front door. If the legal opinion is that what the Royal Bank is doing is legal, will the Government bring in legislation to plug what is obviously a hole in the provisions of the Bank Act?

Hon. Roy MacLaren (Minister of State (Finance)): As I have indicated, Mr. Speaker, when we have completed our review of the practice of the bank I shall be able to answer the Member's question.

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AIR TRANSPORT**AIRPORT USER CHARGES**

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. Airport user charges, air passenger ticket taxes, and fuel taxes account for a major portion of the price of an air ticket. I believe the Minister acknowledged that these charges may be out of line inasmuch as he has established a review procedure to look into this. Could the Minister inform the House what form this review will take and when it will take place?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I appreciated the comments the Hon. Member made to the media on the air policy. He said that while he had some dispute with parts of it, he thought it was going in the right general direction. I appreciate the Member, who is learned in these matters, providing that qualified, but nonetheless important, endorsement of the policy.

With regard to the air review, I agree that it is a matter which should be looked at for the purpose of getting costs down. It is a departmental review as opposed to an outside review. I have asked the air administrator to undertake that examination. In the meantime, I have instituted a holding of any increase of airport parking fees for the forthcoming year.

At this point in time we will be examining not only the question of the cost involved but also whether there should be some incentive pricing system in order to provide an opportunity to use, more effectively than we do now, airports which are under utilized.

PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF LOCAL AIRPORT AUTHORITIES

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, could the Minister assure the House that there will be adequate opportunity for industry and other input in the review process? Second, is the Minister giving any consideration to incorporating any form of deregulation within the airport system itself? I believe he has recognized that there is extravagance in the system. For example, is he considering the establishment of local airport authorities? That was recommended by the Hagglund report, which I am sure he will find on the shelves of his

Department. If he is not looking into that, will he undertake to do so?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the study and have looked at it. There has been some discussion over the past couple of years on moving toward a comparable local ports corporation type legislation. At this point in time I feel it could be one of the examinations we would include as part of that review. I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that when I next appear at the Standing Committee on Transport, which I think is scheduled for two weeks from now, we might be able to get into this kind of discussion more extensively. I look forward to the Hon. Member's further representation. Any review which we make will certainly take into account the views of the industry and of the various associations involved.

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EMPLOYMENT**USE OF FOREIGN HARVEST LABOURERS**

Mr. J. R. Ellis (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. With regard to offshore labour, processors and producers in my constituency have recently been told that they must adhere exactly to last year's level of offshore employment. Last year they voluntarily attempted to cut back. Also, last year was a horrendous crop year and they obviously had to utilize less labour.

Would the Minister agree that common sense could be applied to the amount of offshore labour required for this year, even though it may result in a half a dozen or a dozen more bodies than last year being utilized? This would still be 50 per cent below five years ago.

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I agree that I want to approach this matter in a common sense way. Our objective, of course, is to ensure that there are employment opportunities for Canadians. I realize that sometimes these jobs are not one for which there is an adequate supply of Canadians willing to do the work concerned. The best answer I can give to the hon. gentleman is that I will take his question as a representation, reflect upon it, and see if there is some way in which I can make my common sense agree with his common sense.

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WESTERN GRAIN STABILIZATION ACT**INTRODUCTION OF AMENDING LEGISLATION—REQUEST FOR SPRING PAY-OUT**

Mr. Doug Neil (Moose Jaw): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture who states he has a great deal of sympathy for the western farmer. In the February Budget there were indications that amendments would be made to the