

*Oral Questions*

completely irrelevant. I did not indicate that frankness was a question of timing. I indicated that there was no great virtue in deciding a year or two in advance that you are going to control the exchange rate of the Canadian dollar one year or two down the road. You do that when you come to it and decide then.

**Mr. Stevens:** Answer the question.

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**TRANSPORT**

## DATE OF DECISION ON PROVISION OF FUNDS FOR URBAN TRANSIT PROJECTS

**Mr. F. A. Philbrook (Halton):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. As the minister is aware, urban commuter transit in Canada it still in serious need of help. In the Toronto area in particular the expansion of Union Station, and other programs, has been postponed until word is received if the federal government will provide additional financial assistance as promised. In view of this climate of uncertainty, and even the encouraging news that CN actually made a profit of some \$11.8 million in the last fiscal year and could help to finance some of these improvements, I ask the minister if any further decision has been reached regarding federal funding for public urban transit; if so, can he say what the decision is; if not, when can we expect one?

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, a further decision has not been reached. We made it clear to the province of Ontario that existing programs can be of assistance in projects such as the renovation of Union Station. Substantial assistance is available but they have not yet addressed themselves to these programs.

## RAIL LINE ABANDONMENT RECOMMENDED BY HALL COMMISSION—INQUIRY AS TO FORM OF APPEAL AVAILABLE

**Mr. Craig Stewart (Marquette):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. Since certain areas of western Canada will be severely affected by the Hall Commission's proposals for rail abandonment, particularly region 4 area of western Manitoba, and since it is proposed to close some of those lines as early as December 31, 1977, can the minister say what form of appeal is available to those communities which feel the report deals unfairly with their areas?

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that the hon. member would ask that question. I understood from other members of his party the other day that there was practically unanimous support for the recommendations of the Hall Commission.

**Mr. Paproski:** That is not what he said. Why don't you listen?

**Mr. Lang:** Certainly, the job of the Hall Commission—

**Mr. Paproski:** That is not what he said.

[Mr. Trudeau.]

**Mr. Lang:** It appears that the Conservatives again have found after reading the report that it is different from their first impression of it.

**Mr. Paproski:** How do you know? Have you read it?

**Mr. Lang:** Yes, I have read it. I also said, and I thought it was agreed by all sides, that the Hall Commission did a superb job of hearing people, receiving their viewpoints and analyzing the impact on communities and areas of sensitive proposals concerning rail service. The commission had to determine what rail service could be maintained, given the serious cost to the taxpayer of upgrading and maintaining the system. The Hall Commission did this job, and I will continue to pay a great deal of respect to the recommendations of that commission.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** Why don't you try answering the question?

**Mr. Stewart (Marquette):** Mr. Speaker, I am surprised at the minister playing politics with something so serious for Manitoba.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Paproski:** Why don't you pull the plug, Pierre?

**Mr. Stewart (Marquette):** I gather from the minister's reply that there is no right of appeal given to the communities of western Canada. They cannot appeal the Hall Commission proposals.

**Mr. Lang:** Mr. Speaker, to the extent that the question asks for legal advice, I suppose it is not appropriate. Obviously, there are provisions in law in relation to the actual steps to be taken to implement the recommendations of the Hall Commission. Indeed, as the law now stands, the Canadian Transport Commission has the final role in approving the abandonment of any line. They will be looking at that question progressively as they follow the timetables supplied by the Hall Commission. Of course, the Hall Commission did recommend that we in parliament move to a different form of approval for those discontinuations, and that is a matter which we may be considering when we have had time to analyse the Hall report.

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[Translation]

**ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE**

POSSIBILITY QUEBEC WILL BE REIMBURSED FOR NOT USING FORCE

**Mr. René Matte (Champlain):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister.

● (1500)

The Minister of Justice of the province of Quebec having indicated clearly that he would continue the representations