

Oral Questions

are some 600 classifications or designations involved in this and currently meetings are being held in various parts of the country to resolve it, at which time there will be a reference to the conciliation board. We are trying our best to speed it up, but there are complications of which both sides are aware and I think that both sides are desirous of a successful outcome.

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AIR TRANSPORT**SLOWDOWN BY AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS—GOVERNMENT ACTION TO RECTIFY SITUATION**

Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. It arises out of the increased frequency and duration of delays experienced in air traffic, particularly in the Toronto area, as a result of the air traffic controllers slowdown which has caused inconvenience to passengers and has increased the airline operating costs. Can the minister tell the House whether he or his officials have had the opportunity to investigate this matter thoroughly, and can he tell the House whether he has been able to determine whether the work to rule is a legitimate precautionary measure to ensure that all safety procedures are being adhered to, and if that is not the case, has the minister been able to identify the root cause of the problem and can he tell the House what action he is taking or is contemplating to resolve this important issue as we approach the Christmas rush season?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, we have been in touch with the air controllers in Toronto and have received from them a very detailed analysis of their views about the air traffic control situation there. We have also been talking to the executive of the Air Traffic Controllers' Association about this matter. My officials assure me that the techniques that are being employed in Toronto in no way lead to problems endangering the public. Indeed, I would not personally use the expressions work to rule or slowdown because in fact what the air controllers are doing is simply not applying some of the extraordinary but still safe measures which they used to employ to facilitate traffic. That is partly due to a difference in view with other controllers, particularly about the appropriate classification and relative pay for work which should exist, having regard to the extra traffic which goes to the Toronto airport as compared with some others. This is the root of the problem and we are working with it very closely in a variety of attempts to consult and get to the root of it. I cannot be totally optimistic about the ease with which a solution can be found but I think we are doing everything we can.

● (1442)

ALLEGATION OUTMODED EQUIPMENT AND UNSAFE PROCEDURES IN USE AT AIRPORTS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. There are reports to the effect that outmoded and unsafe equipment is being used at the airport. I wonder

[Mr. Andras.]

if the minister could assure the House and the people of Canada that such is not the case and furthermore that safety procedures are not being compromised in any way.

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the House that the procedures which are in place fully assure safety regardless of the fact that some of the equipment could be better and will be better with the introduction of the jets program which is a major changeover of equipment throughout our air control services. In the meantime, with the equipment we have, appropriate procedures are adapted to that equipment and as usual a very high level of safety in Canadian air space is maintained.

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TOURISM**PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED AT INDUSTRY CONFERENCE—GOVERNMENT ACTION TO SOLVE**

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I put a question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. In October last year the Canadian government office of tourism and the travel industry had a one-day conference and identified 13 problem areas in the declining tourism industry in Canada. What specification has the minister and his department taken in regard to these 13 problems?

Hon. Jack H. Horner (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, we in the department are well aware of the problems in the tourist industry and have announced some measures which I think will help immensely. We will be announcing some measures next week and continuing into the New Year.

Mr. McKenzie: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In Toronto recently the minister stated that all levels of government are losing \$2½ million per year in tax revenue due to the increasingly significant drop in tourism in Canada. I should like to ask the minister what action he has taken regarding the resolution passed in Edmonton earlier this year by the travel industry which requested that the federal government form a national tourism policy. What steps is the minister taking in regard to forming a national tourism policy for Canada?

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, we are setting up a tourist advisory board in the department which will be representative of all segments in the industry in all regions of Canada. As I said earlier, we will be announcing policies between now and the New Year which will eventually help the tourist trade in Canada next year.