

Oral Questions

that General Motors Corporation has decided to transfer its production of the small Vega from Ste. Thérèse, Quebec, to the United States and to replace it with a new vehicle, the sales potential of which is unknown, would the minister inform the House whether he has obtained assurance from that company that the numbers employed at Ste. Thérèse will not be below what they are at the present time?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I have spoken with the president of General Motors of Canada with respect to this particular item. He has assured me that the automobile that will go into the Ste. Thérèse plant will be a comparable vehicle in terms of a small car with a very comparable potential. He has gone further and said that he sees no reason to expect any reduction in employment.

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[Translation]

INCOME TAX**PERMISSION TO COMPANIES TO DEFER PAYMENT—REQUEST FOR EXTENSION TO INDIVIDUALS WITH LOW INCOMES**

Mr. Jean-Marie Boisvert (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Minister of Finance.

In 1973, the government granted an interest free loan of \$774 million to Canadian corporations in allowing them to defer their fiscal payments. Can the minister tell whether he intends to give to low-income taxpayers that same privilege through which multimillionaire corporations use tax moneys without paying any interest?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I do not share the opinions expressed in the article the hon. member quoted. In any case, one must take into account jobs created not only in Quebec but also in the whole of Canada through grants or rather tax reductions granted to these corporations.

Mr. Boisvert: Mr. Speaker, may I ask a supplementary?

Could the minister tell whether he considers it normal that low-income taxpayers should be penalized when they do not pay their taxes before April 30 whereas corporations that make millions of dollars of benefits can defer their tax payments and thus use government money without paying interest?

Mr. Speaker: I think this is more of an argument than a supplementary question.

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[English]

AIR TRANSPORT**STRIKE BY FIREFIGHTERS AT VANCOUVER AIRPORT—SUGGESTED USE OF ARBITRATION TO SETTLE**

Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Transport. In view of the minister's invitation to the opposition on Friday to settle the strike, would the minister consider a special arbitrator or arbitrators and include my col-

[Mr. Broadbent.]

league, the hon. member for Burnaby-Richmond-Delta, who obviously is well informed.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Fraser: No one from British Columbia is trying to exploit the situation, as the minister suggested on Friday.

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I think we should look at the situation as it is. I think there are some very important values at stake in Vancouver. I know that the alliance has taken a very serious stand concerning these firefighters. This is not a normal dispute but we are trying to solve the problem by normal means. I do not see what would be achieved by forming a committee of the House.

Mr. Fraser: Mr. Speaker, would the minister tell the House why he rejects an independent arbitrator as a means to bringing the union, the firefighters involved and the government together so that negotiations can continue, particularly as the minister said, that the circumstances are special?

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Mr. Speaker, for a reason which is very simple. We have a certain number of laws in this country which regulate labour relations between employees and employers. You have the Public Service Alliance of Canada which is certified to represent this group, and Treasury Board is negotiating with the certified agent. Treasury Board cannot negotiate with anybody else because this is an exclusive bargaining right.

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PUBLIC SERVICE**REGIONAL PAY DIFFERENTIALS—POSITION OF PRESIDENT OF TREASURY BOARD**

Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the President of the Treasury Board. In view of the current serious problems involving the firemen at Vancouver airport and similar problems in the recent past with regard to nurses and dockyard workers under federal jurisdiction, will the President of the Treasury Board now concede that his concept regarding regional pay differentials for Treasury Board employees is inequitable and unworkable and contributes to labour problems—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am sure the hon. member will appreciate that is debate rather than a question.

Mr. MacKay: May I rephrase my supplementary question, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: The first question was hardly a supplementary. Perhaps the hon. member has a supplementary question to ask now.

Mr. MacKay: Perhaps I can rephrase the question. Since the policies of the President of the Treasury Board appear to some of us to be inconsistent in that many employees under Treasury Board jurisdiction do not receive equal pay for equal work across the nation and, on the other