

Oral Questions

safety protection backed by the law? Just a few minutes ago the minister responsible for mines said she would agree with this. I would also ask the Minister of Labour, if he agrees, when we can expect that legislation.

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Social Development): Madam Speaker, we have received the report at the Department of Justice and we will review it immediately. As soon as we are ready to propose changes, I shall be happy to announce them in the House.

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[English]

TOURISM**RELAXATION OF UNITED STATES TAX PROVISIONS RESPECTING ATTENDANCE AT FOREIGN CONVENTIONS**

Mr. David Smith (Don Valley East): Madam Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of State for Small Businesses, who is responsible for tourism. In view of the passage of a bill by the U.S. Congress which relaxes the tax provision for U.S. citizens attending foreign conventions, can the minister advise the House of the impact these changes will have on large metropolitan areas in Canada, particularly metro Toronto?

[Translation]

Hon. Charles Lapointe (Minister of State, Small Businesses): Madam Speaker, I believe that is extremely—if the crowds of the New Democratic Party would keep quiet, I might be able to answer.

Madam Speaker, we are very happy to note that, following representations by this government, the American government has decided to amend its taxation policy governing American conventions held abroad, and I believe this is the best news we could give the hotel industry of Toronto, Montreal and every other city in Canada before the holiday season.

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[English]

AIR CANADA**FLIGHT ATTENDANTS DISPUTE—PLANS TO AVERT POSSIBLE STRIKE**

Mr. J. R. Ellis (Prince Edward-Hastings): Madam Speaker, since I do not want to go the negative route which the hon. member to my left took, I would like to ask the Minister of Transport if he has any plans to ensure that Canadians wishing to fly on Air Canada during the holiday season will not be faced with the threat of a strike and all the problems which that entails.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, as my colleague the Minister of Labour said, there

are good hopes that the strike will be avoided. Everybody who has read the press reports in recent days knows that Air Canada is taking action in order to cope with a strike situation if need be. That action entails giving priority to long-haul trips over shorter ones, since it is easier for people to make shorter trips than long ones by other modes. The action also entails the training of some people to replace flight attendants if need be.

Mr. Ellis: Madam Speaker, since this government is obviously run by polls, and since current polls indicate the public is unwilling to accept strikes in this sector, why will the minister not accept his responsibility and ensure that all Canadians who wish to travel have a reasonable holiday?

Mr. Pepin: The flight attendants are in a better position to do that than I am. What I want to tell the House is that Air Canada is taking all necessary steps to do their very best to accommodate the employees in this matter. The Minister of Labour has already referred to what had been done. Let us all hope together that the story will end well.

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● (1500)

BANKRUPTCIES**ASTRA TRUST—REQUEST FOR JUDICIAL INQUIRY**

Mr. Bill Kempling (Burlington): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. It is obvious from a recent article in *The Globe and Mail* that a number of Liberal party workers made a bundle out of the Astra Trust shares and benefited from inside information. They are being protected and shielded while hundreds of innocent people have lost their life savings. Will the minister initiate a judicial inquiry into the Astra Trust mess, particularly into allegations by the investigators that a highly placed person in the Liberal party put pressure on the Department of Insurance to issue a trust company licence to Astra Trust after it had been rejected by the province of Ontario, and had been rejected three times by the Department of Insurance following investigations by departmental officials and the RCMP?

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of State, Finance): Madam Speaker, I had several opportunities to answer questions about this case and the affiliated companies which come under provincial jurisdiction. I have already indicated that the Ontario Provincial Police economic crimes division has made a serious investigation into the shareholders' activities of Astra and Re-Mor companies. The Department of Insurance is co-operating with the investigators and so is the government. We would all like to see the courts condemn individuals guilty of discreditable deals in Astra Trust or Re-Mor.

[English]

Mr. Kempling: Madam Speaker, I address my supplementary to the same minister. Why did the Department of Insurance request the Ontario Securities Commission not to issue a