

Oral Questions

On the other hand, we are proceeding on this because we think it is the necessary thing to do, to be able to keep Pearson airport as the main, well functioning airport in Canada. At the same time I remind the member that in a time where the economy is at a slow pace the creation of 3,200 jobs in the Toronto area is a very good gesture.

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West): Madam Speaker, the stakeholders, the airlines and other levels of government are all saying the same thing. They agree that this is the wrong move at the wrong time.

Will the minister put the brakes on his request for proposals so that the transport committee can do what is in the best interest of the travelling public in this country?

Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, this is very interesting because on Monday night in Toronto, at the request of the Ontario government, we had a meeting with the minister of transport of Ontario, the minister of the environment of Ontario and four or five mayors from the area.

A document was deposited with us at that time which says that three alternatives for the future ownership and operation of terminal 2 have been analysed. They are continued Transport Canada ownership, transfer to the private sector, or transfer to the SCOA. Nowhere in this document is there any indication that the Ontario government is against the proposals.

Some hon. members: Table it.

Mr. Corbeil: I will certainly table it with very great pleasure. The only concern of the Ontario government was that it would like to form an LAA, on the board of which would sit the federal government, the provincial government and the municipal government. When the devolution of airport policy was adopted by this government, it said very clearly that it would not transfer airports to other levels of government.

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THE ECONOMY

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Madam Speaker, since the budget came out last month, reports have shown our national income in decline, our interest rates rising, unemployment up yet further, and today comes more devastating news with a massive 2.4 per cent

decrease in manufacturing. This government is turning Canadian factories into ghost towns.

Will the government recognize that we are still in recession? Will it turn its budget policy in an opposite direction, start getting people back to work in this country and put the manufacturing industry ahead instead of back?

Hon. Gilles Loiseau (President of the Treasury Board and Minister of State (Finance)): Madam Speaker, I will recognize without difficulty that the manufacturing industry is indeed going through a very worrisome period. I think everybody agrees with that.

We all know that the national demand is very weak. Foreign demand is very weak. That is why in our last budget we came forward with very precise measures, particularly to help the manufacturing industry, and I hope the hon. member realizes that.

What this situation commands us to do is to make the right decisions, to do everything we can as a government to maintain low interest rates because manufacturers need to be able to invest. They must be able to buy the machinery they need. These are measures we have taken in our budget.

As for interest rates, the hon. member knows that we also have to manage the debt. Every Thursday we put on auction a certain number of money bills or government certificates and people either buy or do not buy them. We are living in a very open market and the interest rates have to fluctuate according to that market.

As a government we do everything we can to try to keep them as low as possible and they are at a record low over the last—

Madam Deputy Speaker: We must go on. The hon. member for Essex—Windsor.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Madam Speaker, in fact to give manufacturing incentives to invest at a time when the minister admits that there is not enough demand out there for manufacturing is like pushing on a string. It does not do anything.

Therefore I say to the minister: there is nothing that could hurt our manufacturing industry more than a North American trade deal. Yet the United States now says a deal could be just weeks away. On Monday the Prime Minister attacked our party for not wanting to help a Third World country like Mexico with this deal.