

Oral Questions

questions in the House Wednesday afternoon. That is now. The time has arrived.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): The time is now.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): The time has arrived.

Mr. Speaker: I know all Hon. Members would want to remain silent so the Hon. Member can get on with the question—because if he does not, the time will never arrive.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, my question has to do with the thousands of Canadians who lost their unemployment insurance benefits because they happen to have taken an early retirement pension from their workplaces. The Minister and the Government have been saying all along: "We will wait for the Forget Commission Report". The Forget Commission Report has now come down. It states the Government was wrong in the way it went about doing that. Can the Minister stand in his place right now and tell the House that he intends to replace those unemployment insurance benefits which were so cruelly taken away from unemployed workers?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I think the Hon. Member must realize that three o'clock is still the afternoon.

[*English*]

Mr. Blaikie: Is he going to answer questions or is he just going to make a statement?

Mr. Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An Hon. Member: Wait for them.

Mr. Blaikie: Order over there.

REQUEST FOR REINSTATEMENT OF BENEFITS FOR EARLY
RETIREES

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): The Minister knows full well there are no question permitted after he makes a statement this afternoon at three o'clock. He specifically said he would answer questions about the Forget Commission Report Wednesday afternoon. I want to tell him these people are waiting.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An Hon. Member: Listen to the fat cats laugh.

Mr. Speaker: I think all Hon. Members will note that the Hon. Member for Nickel Belt is seeking the Chair's help, assistance, and protection. The Hon. Member for Nickel Belt.

Mr. Rodriguez: The Government might think it is funny, Mr. Speaker, but there are thousands of unemployed workers who do not think it is funny and who are watching. Will the Minister stand in his place right now and tell us—and do not send me notes—when he will replace those benefits which were removed from unemployed workers?

● (1440)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the day before yesterday I said, as the Hon. Member just recalled, that I would provide details or answers this afternoon. I wasn't joking when I said two minutes ago that at three o'clock this afternoon I would provide details on the pensions issue. But I repeat, three o'clock is still part of the afternoon.

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[*English*]

AIR TRANSPORT

PURCHASE OF CANADIAN PACIFIC AIRLINES BY PACIFIC
WESTERN AIRLINES

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. Yesterday we learned of CP Air being purchased by Pacific Western. Does the Minister realize that in the document *Freedom to Move* his Government promised that deregulation would increase competition? Since then we have witnessed seven major takeovers in the airline industry. Is the Minister ready to allow this move to take place that will result in there being only two major airlines in Canada? Is his Government ready to allow this to take place?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I regret the savage attack that the Hon. Member has made upon his colleague, the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry, who introduced the deregulation policy with respect to air transportation three years ago.

Mr. Broadbent: You had a choice.

Mr. Crosbie: The hon. gentleman should have made his protests then when he was in Cabinet and approved that policy.

In the meantime, I think that Canada will be better served by having two healthy competitors than by having the giant Air Canada and a group of financially weak or regionally small airlines. We will have both. We will have two large competitive national airlines and a plethora of smaller regional and local airlines.