

Oral Questions

Mr. Masse: It is not good for the polls.

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): You are giving away our country.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Hang on to your seat, Derek.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Deputy Prime Minister has the floor.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, I would just hope that the Leader of the New Democratic Party would consider the statement in its fullest. The expectation is that legislation will allow the transfer of all Air Canada shares to the public eventually.

Mr. Broadbent: Right, that is the betrayal.

Mr. Mazankowski: Once the legislation is passed, appropriate financial and regulatory steps are taken, and market conditions permit, the board of directors will be asked to offer initially a Treasury sale of up to 45 per cent, and the Government's holding would remain in the 55 per cent range. If it is then in the best interest of the corporation, the best interest of the airline, and the best interest of Canadians to proceed further, then it will—

Mr. Riis: He promised that you wouldn't.

Mr. Mazankowski: —but 55 per cent will remain in the hands of the Government until such time as further action might be taken.

WINNIPEG OVERHAUL BASE

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, the country will have noted that the Prime Minister refused to answer that question, because he knows he has been caught making another broken promise—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Oshawa has the floor.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, whether it is the Prime Minister or his spokesperson, the Deputy Prime Minister, today, since they promised—and it was not Air Canada; it was the Deputy Prime Minister's words today with reference to the overhaul base at Winnipeg—that the “Winnipeg overhaul base will continue as a prominent and integral function of Air Canada”, and if the intention is to turn, as was made clear in another part of his statement, operational control over to the new shareholders, how can that promise ever be kept down the road?

Isn't the real reason that we are seeing this reference today simply another disguising scheme to get the Conservatives through the Manitoba election? Is that not what that is all about?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: Remember the CF-18.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Deputy Prime Minister.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, if we want to talk about disguising schemes, I have it right here, and I am quoting:

—we in the NDP are not against privatization *per se*, but there must be a practical reason for selling a Crown corporation.

For example, if there was bad management in the Crown corporation, it did not have sufficient money, or there was no public policy reason for keeping the corporation, then maybe it could be sold to the private sector.

• (1440)

Who said it? Ian Waddell, *Hansard*, February 13, 1987.

Mr. Broadbent: That's right.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: We'll campaign on that.

Mr. Riis: Please call an election now.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry.

Mr. Crosbie: Come on over, Lloyd.

Some Hon. Members: We want Lloyd.

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, I hope you will accept that I am somewhat overwhelmed by the wild endorsement from the other side.

Mr. Speaker: I am overwhelmed by both sides.

Mr. Axworthy: And I hope from the Chair itself as well, Mr. Speaker.

FUTURE OF WINNIPEG MAINTENANCE BASE

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, while talking about the source of policy, I think it is proper to point out that if the Deputy Prime Minister is referring to the speech I gave to the *Financial Post* conference, he should properly read the speech which recommended, first, a recapitalization of Air Canada, which the Government has not done, followed by public hearings on Air Canada so that full exposure of the pros and cons of its role could be properly discussed and so that public education could take place.

In keeping with the habits of the Prime Minister, they never follow my good advice. That is why they are in the trouble in which they are today with this measure.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!