

Oral Questions

laid off and yet on the same day it is being said that we do not have enough workers in the same operation?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I am intrigued by the hon. member's statement. If my hon. friend does not mind, I will check to see whether it is correct. This is the obvious thing to do, because I would not pass comment on something that I have not heard myself.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Pepin: On the general proposition of activities in railway transportation in the west, I have to report that there is a good atmosphere of enthusiasm in the west now in view of the announcement that we made in Winnipeg last Monday.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: That's a lot of Crow.

Mr. Pepin: The decision of the Minister of Finance to grant a special allocation of \$1.35 billion in the next four years to western rail transportation will mean a great boost to the economy of the west.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: The people in Saskatchewan do not believe that.

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AIR CANADA**MANDATORY RETIREMENT AGE—REQUEST THAT PILOT BE REINSTATED**

Mr. Jesse P. Flis (Parkdale-High Park): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. As stated yesterday in my motion under the provisions of Standing Order 43, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled unanimously that Ontario municipalities cannot impose a mandatory retirement age of 60 on their firefighters even though that had been negotiated into their collective agreement. In view of the fact that this case is almost identical to the case of my constituent, Captain Ross Stevenson, an Air Canada pilot, who was forced to retire because of the collective agreement between the Canadian Air Line Pilots Association and Air Canada, would the minister introduce an order in council ordering Air Canada to reinstate Captain Ross Stevenson to his original position of airline pilot and, if not, on what grounds does the minister refuse to bring in such an order in council?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I want to say that I have the greatest respect for my hon. friend's campaign on this subject.

An hon. Member: Write a letter.

Mr. Pepin: I really think that he is entitled to uphold his case.

Miss MacDonald: It will be the last one.

Mr. Pepin: With respect to the particular point, the Stevenson case is now before the appeals court and the Human Rights Commission, so it would not be right for me to comment at this time. Consequently I have to hold to the law as it is now, and the question of deciding at what age a pilot retires from a Canadian air carrier is a decision to be made by the union and the companies, not by the Minister of Transport.

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● (1500)

[Translation]

PETITIONS**TABLING OF REPORTS OF CLERK OF PETITIONS**

Madam Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the Clerk of the House has laid upon the Table the reports of the Clerk of Petitions stating that he has examined the petitions presented by some hon. members on Wednesday, February 10, 1982, and finds that they meet the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.

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[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Nielsen: May I ask the government House leader the usual Thursday question. He has already indicated what the business this week is going to be; will he tell us as far as he can into next week what the business of the House will be?

[Translation]

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, next Monday the House of Commons will study Bill C-78, an act to provide for the payment of benefits to laid-off employees and to amend the Canada Labour Code. On Tuesday we will start debating Bill C-93 to amend the statute law relating to certain taxes and to provide other authority for the raising of funds. Today, I hope we will be able to refer to committee Bill C-89 to amend the National Housing Act and, considering the urgency of Bill C-78, we will debate it tomorrow. The opposition day which was scheduled for tomorrow will be postponed until Friday next week.

What prompts me to postpone the opposition day scheduled for tomorrow and to serve notice of that now is the fact that there was to be a meeting of House leaders this morning. That had been confirmed last night but at the last minute this morning—I appreciate that my colleagues in the Progressive Conservative Party may have had excellent reasons—one of my assistants was advised that unfortunately the meeting could not be held. Under the circumstances, I was unable to review this matter this morning with the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen). Considering the urgency, we have decided to proceed with the report stage of Bill C-78 tomorrow.