

Oral Questions

them that the press has asked me this question many times. Generally I have deferred to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, but since he is not here I just want to repeat with emphasis that his view is that of the government, to wit, that we expect to have and entertain very good relations with the new administration of the United States when it takes over.

I wrote to the president-elect the night of the election returns not only congratulating him and expressing our desire to continue improving our relations, but also asking him to seek to visit Canada at a very early occasion in his mandate.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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CROWN CORPORATIONS**AIR CANADA—CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS—SALARIES OF RESPECTIVE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport and is about a matter which has interested me for some time. I refer to the discrepancy between the salaries of the chief executive officers of Air Canada and CNR. I am wondering when this very large discrepancy, which I believe still exists, will be adjusted and whether the failure of the government to do so is related to reported hostility by the Prime Minister to the president of Air Canada as a result of his not buying the airplane the Prime Minister wanted him to buy a while ago, the air bus.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, the salaries of both the president of CN and the president of Air Canada have been decided upon. The decision has been made. Is there a connotation that they should have the same amount of money? I could not hear that question. If there is such an implication, this is the first time I have heard about it.

Mr. MacKay: Madam Speaker, the hon. minister asked me if there is a connotation that they should have the same amount of money. Since he asked my opinion, I think there ought to be some reasonable parity between the two positions. I think Mr. Taylor is doing at least as good a job as Mr. Bandeen, but let me ask a question on one further point. Can the minister confirm or is he aware of reported moves by the board of Air Canada to increase quite substantially on an unaccountable basis the expense account of Mr. Taylor, perhaps to take into account the period of time when Mr. Taylor's salary was not adjusted while Mr. Bandeen's received a very substantial boost?

Mr. Pepin: Yes, Madam Speaker, I have heard the representations of the members of those two boards. The salaries have been decided upon, and there is a degree of retroactivity in them.

AIR SAFETY**DUBIN COMMISSION—EVIDENCE OF POTENTIAL FOR ACCIDENT—INQUIRY AS TO CORRECTIVE MEASURES**

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg-Assiniboine): Madam Speaker I also have a question for the Minister of Transport. It is with regard to the alarming statements coming out of the Dubin inquiry into air safety. It has been stated that pilot-controller friction is nearing the danger level, and that the relationship between air traffic controllers and pilots has deteriorated to the point where there could be an incident and that the potential is there for an accident. What action has the minister taken to correct this situation? Has he met with his officials, and can he fill the House in as to what corrective measures he will take in this very serious situation?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, when my predecessor appointed Mr. Justice Dubin to the commission, I understand that there was an informal agreement between them that the department would not make substantial changes to its *modus operandi* without the consent of the judge. That is my understanding, so consequently each time a subject is brought to the commission it is fully studied by the department. Occasionally the views of the department are put to the judge. A number of actions have been taken, and we might talk about that this afternoon in the committee at which I will be present.

Mr. McKenzie: Madam Speaker, charges have also been made at the Dubin inquiry that Air Canada is flying unsafe planes, that Air Canada maintenance supervisors routinely allow passenger jets needing vital repairs to fly, and that many times on-time departures come ahead of safety. Are those statements true or false, and has the minister met with Mr. Taylor to discuss this very serious problem in the maintenance of these planes?

Mr. Pepin: Madam Speaker, that is exactly why a commission was created, to receive all these views. Justice Dubin is there to present a report in due course and to decide what is right, what is not as right or what is wrong in what he has heard. This is really the purpose of the commission, and I think it would be illogical for me to comment on allegations made before this commission. I call it the "Parliament of the air". It receives views pro and con, and sooner or later, as Madam Speaker does, Justice Dubin will have to say what he thinks of what has been said before him.

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AIRPORTS**IMPROVEMENT IN FACILITIES IN METROPOLITAN TORONTO AREA**

Mr. Otto Jelinek (Halton): Madam Speaker, my question is also to the Minister of Transport who, as far as Toronto is concerned, does not seem to exist. In view of the fact that the potential solutions to air traffic related problems in and