

REASONS FOR GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt-Lake Centre): Madam Speaker, the second reason raised by press observers for the cancellation says that it was done to avoid conflict with the media coverage of the Tory Convention in Winnipeg. Does this mean that the Government's consensus-forming strategy on the Crow has veered away from its focus on farmers toward concentration instead on reinforcing the more natural alliance between the Government and its allies, those Tory Governments and railways which have a vested interest in breaking the old contract at the expense of the farmers of the country?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, as the Hon. Member just realized, even the Tories find the question posterous.

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HUMAN RIGHTS

JAPANESE CANADIANS INTERNED DURING WARTIME

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. In the United States the Congressional Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians will be reporting and will recommend that President Reagan establish a federally financed education foundation for Japanese Americans, and that the Government should compensate each camp survivor or immediate heir. Is the Canadian Government considering similar assistance to our citizens of Japanese extraction who were interned during World War II?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Madam Speaker, there was, of course a commission in Canada under which compensation was paid to Japanese Canadians involved in that very unfortunate experience. Naturally we will look at the situation in light of the kind of recommendations my hon. friend refers to as being likely to be made in the United States.

REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE REFERRAL

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West): Madam Speaker, I think the actions of our Government during World War II are a serious blot on the country's record of respect for minority rights and human rights, as the Minister will understand.

Would the Minister be agreeable to this subject matter, including the U.S. experience, being referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs so that a representative group from the House will have an opportunity to examine the possibilities in Canada with respect to this initiative?

Oral Questions

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): I am certainly prepared to consider that, Madam Speaker, to the extent that it is possible in accordance with the other responsibilities of that committee.

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AIRPORTS

MIRABEL—SALE OF EXPROPRIATED PROPERTIES TO CROWN CORPORATION EMPLOYEES

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Public Works regarding the six properties at Mirabel which were sold by the Government's Crown Corporation to employees of that Crown Corporation. Can the Minister tell us whether the original owners of those properties were, in any case, offered the first right to purchase those properties?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Public Works): Madam Speaker, I am not familiar with that detail and I will inquire. I doubt very much, as the Right Hon. Member knows, that those who were occupying farms or residences at one point were offered the possibility of purchase. What the Right Hon. Member suggests would, in fact, be a second expropriation. For example, a farmer who has consolidated into a large and successful enterprise would suddenly find that, out of his 400 acres or 300 acres, a good part of his land would be excised like a doughnut. If the Right Hon. Member defends that thesis, I would like to hear how he would apply it.

Mr. Clark: Madam Speaker, I find it curious that the Minister should have such a ready defence of a position he does not know whether or not has been taken. I also find it rather surprising that the Minister, having been under questioning in this House for four days on this matter, and having said this particular question had been studied with particular care, would not know whether the original owners were offered the first right to purchase.

REQUEST THAT COMMITTEE STUDY SALE OF PROPERTIES

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, let us bring the matter into the public domain. Will the Minister agree to have all details of the disposition of those six properties sold to employees of the federal Crown Corporation, including copies of any representations given by any Liberal Member of Parliament, or anyone else—will he allow that to be studied without limitation by a Standing Committee of this House?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Public Works): Madam Speaker, the Estimates of the Crown Corporation involved will be up for review in the natural course of events and it is open to the Right Hon. Member to have his representations heard then.