

Mr. Clark: Will the minister tell us what he did say and what he meant when he told a journalist, Mr. Lebel, on behalf of the Liberal party as the constitutional spokesman:

Four-fifths of the Parti Québécois program can be implemented within the federal system and the remaining fifth can be negotiated.

That is very clear. If that is not what the minister meant when he said those words, what did he mean when he said those words?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An hon. Member: We know the way you operate.

Mr. Lalonde: Mr. Speaker, I can understand the Leader of the Opposition trying to extricate himself from the problem he has created for himself with his flip-flopping.

An hon. Member: Exactly.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lalonde: But I can assure the hon. member that on this side there has been no flip-flopping at all.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: No one believes you.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lalonde: I have stated quite clearly that as far as this government is concerned, any negotiation with any provincial government has to be in the context of the federal system. We are not negotiating anything approximating sovereignty association and we have no illusions about it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, now the minister has said definitively that there has been no flip-flopping on his side. That means that he is standing by the following statement, and I quote again from Mr. Marc Lalonde, constitutional spokesman for the Liberal government:

Four-fifths of the Parti Québécois program can be implemented within the federal system and the remaining fifth can be negotiated.

He admits he said that. Will he tell us: if it does not mean what it says, what, in the minister's judgment, does it mean?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lalonde: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has not even listened to what I have said.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lalonde: I have said that I have not read the article. But even if I had said what he said—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Oral Questions

Mr. Lalonde: I will read the article and find out, and I suggest that the hon. member should read the whole of the article.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): You have not read it.

Mr. Alexander: You are stuck this time, Marc.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lalonde: There is one thing clear in this party, and that is that sovereignty association is not negotiable.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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● (1440)

AIRPORTS

SAFETY FACILITIES AT VICTORIA INTERNATIONAL

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport: it concerns air traffic safety.

I wonder if the minister is aware that the lives of Air Canada passengers were endangered at Victoria international airport recently when on the night of December 15-16 last a scheduled Air Canada flight landed late at that airport without the protection of the fire engine crash crew because the fire hall had not been notified of a delayed flight, as was the course of action that had been agreed upon many weeks before, and that a similar incident occurred earlier in the month, on December 2?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): No, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Since the minister was not aware of that, he is now aware of it. Is the minister aware that there is a possibility that aircraft could still land there without the protection of the fire engine and crash service? What are his officials doing to ensure that safety is assured there as it is elsewhere?

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, obviously, any matter such as this brought to the attention of my officials is reacted to by them with the necessary steps taken. I imagine this is the reason for the hon. member's question, that there was some dissatisfaction on the part of the people involved in firefighting at that particular airport because of the amount of overtime being worked. Hence, they are coming to the hon. member with a question which I would imagine was handled in a regular way. I will look into that matter, however, and make sure I am right in saying that there is no problem for the hon. member to be concerned about.