

Oral Questions

● (1455)

It is extremely important that Canadian Airlines International have access to Frankfurt, that we open the routes that have been awarded to the Philippines, to Malaysia, to Vietnam. We have signed a bilateral agreement with the United States.

It is a priority of this government to negotiate arrangements to give access to Air Canada at Hong Kong.

If the member were the least bit fair about this he would look over the last 14 months at what has occurred in the aviation industry in Canada and he would probably recognize that more progress has been made in 14 months than in the previous 15 years.

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GUN CONTROL

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice will be at a meeting in Manitoba tonight at the request of Dauphin—Swan River constituents concerned about Bill C-68.

I have been advised that there are hundreds of people who will be denied entrance to this meeting.

Why is the justice minister meeting behind closed doors with only 50 or so people who are attending on an invitation only basis when there are hundreds who want to attend this meeting? Why is the justice minister refusing to meet with these people? Why is he locking them out of this meeting?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every member of the House knows no minister has been consulting with the Canadian people more than the Minister of Justice.

He is doing it so well that there are plenty of demands for meetings with him. Obviously he cannot meet with everybody. I know the Minister of Justice has never refused good consultations on problems presented to the House. He has put forth more propositions for meaningful changes in his field in the last 14 months than I have ever seen.

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time the justice minister has locked people out of his meetings. In Calgary last January there were more people standing outside the meeting in the cold than inside the building.

Will the Prime Minister instruct his justice minister to begin to listen to the people and meet their concerns about his gun control bill and stop locking them out of meetings?

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is completely wrong.

As the Prime Minister has said, no minister in recent years has met more regularly and more diligently than the Minister of Justice, particularly on the gun control issue.

He used his whole summer to go from coast to coast to speak with Canadians, to inform them of what he intended to do, to get their feedback and to get information in order to prepare this piece of legislation.

No one could ask for more.

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*[Translation]***UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

Mrs. Eleni Bakopanos (Saint-Denis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Human Resources Development.

Canadians and, more specifically, Quebecers, have been telling us they want more effective programs and an end to overlap and duplication with the provinces.

What steps has the minister taken through the Unemployment Insurance Program to eliminate wasteful spending of public funds?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are working very hard on a number of projects with the provinces to reduce duplication and overlap. For instance, we signed four agreements with the provinces to protect UI information and achieve substantial savings in spending on social services in each province.

In fact, I believe Mrs. Blackburn, the Quebec Minister of Income Security, is prepared to review the UI system in order to cut costs for her department. I hope this will be one example of close co-operation between the federal government and the provincial governments on reducing the cost of social services.

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*[English]***BASE CLOSURES**

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for ACOA.

● (1500)

Will the minister advise the House how he can justify cutting a \$30 million trust fund by \$10 million? This trust fund was specifically transferred from the Department of National Defence and earmarked for the Atlantic communities affected by the base closures announced in the 1994 budget. What steps will the minister take to correct this situation?

Mr. Réginald Bélair (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will take the question under advisement and relay it to the minister. She will get an answer in writing.