

council under Section 64(1) of the National Transportation Act. I do not want to go into the details of it. I will do that this afternoon. There is a discussion on that, and I say that if there is a shadow of a doubt as to the need to register the orders in council we passed on August 6, we will do so according to the interpretation of this necessity or obligation. Is that clear?

SUGGESTED SAVINGS ON AIRPORT PROJECTS

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (York-Peel): Madam Speaker, my question is again directed to the Minister of Transport. He is speaking about a shadow of doubt. There is a great shadow of doubt as to why the minister has chosen this particular expenditure cut. Will the minister indicate to the House why he chose this priority as opposed to eliminating the sum of \$50 million which will be spent on Mirabel this year alone to keep that airport open to service some one million passengers or, in the case of Pickering, has he given any consideration to selling out the \$110 million investment he has there, which is simply raw land being used for no airport or rail travel whatsoever? Why concentrate on VIA Rail as his point of saving as opposed to eliminating Mirabel or Pickering?

● (1425)

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, the association of Mirabel and Pickering with the announcement of our rationalization of VIA is again a very far-fetched one.

An hon. Member: Do you not weigh your priorities?

Mr. Pepin: Assuming that mistakes were made in the past in Canada, which is debatable—and you can bring the *Bona-venture* into this if you wish—assuming mistakes have been made, does that imply that more mistakes should be made? I cannot understand the mentality behind a question of this kind.

I have explained repeatedly why we have made this decision on the rationalization of VIA. I have explained, ad nauseam, that there were some budgetary reasons for doing that. It seemed to the government that an expenditure of \$535 million on railway transportation, at a time when some of these routes have become extremely infrequently used by the people to whom they are offered, has become indefensible.

The second reason for our decision is one of transportation policy. My friends are embracing VIA at this time. They are strangling VIA at this time. We think that the process we have adopted is one that will strengthen VIA in the very best interests of the corporation itself and in the very best interests of the people it serves. We are very strongly of that view.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

INCOME TAX

REQUEST THAT TAX LOOPHOLES FOR RICH BE CLOSED

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. In 1968 the Prime Minister promised Canadians a just society. Since that period the rich in Canada, in terms of their share of the national income, have got relatively richer and the poor have become relatively poorer. Last night, at a \$175-a-plate Liberal dinner in Toronto, the Prime Minister promised to reverse this trend. After more than a decade of economic hypocrisy, why should Canadians believe him?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An hon. Member: Get up and answer.

Mr. Broadbent: The Prime Minister is obviously a little sensitive on the point. I will put the question more precisely in terms of factual information, and perhaps he will respond, as opposed to hypocritical attitudes, I say to his colleagues. Considering that just two years ago there were in Canada more than 3,000 Canadians earning over \$50,000 a year and almost 200 Canadians who earned over \$200,000 a year who did not pay one penny in income tax—many of them were no doubt at the dinner last night in Toronto—will the Prime Minister in the coming budget at least put an end to the tax loopholes which make this possible?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I understand the hon. member is repeating a suggestion for consideration in the preparation of the budget, a consideration which we will look at. I know the hon. member always has some interesting figures.

If we take that into account, I wonder if the hon. member and his party will vote for the budget when it is brought down.

TAX TREATMENT OF LAND SPECULATORS

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, it would be nice for a change if we could get from the Prime Minister or his smiling colleague, the Minister of Finance, some specific commitment, as opposed to the vague promises about fairness and caring and sharing, touching words which were used by the Prime Minister in his speech yesterday. "The Liberal Party is a party that cares and shares."

I will try another angle to demonstrate the hypocrisy of his claim about caring and sharing. Right now in Canada while 100,000 home owners are in serious jeopardy with respect to maintaining their homes, we have a tax system which permits people who speculate in land, thus contributing to the housing problem, to have only half the income so gained, taxed. Will the Prime Minister at least make these people pay taxes at the full rate just as the ordinary worker in Canada does?

● (1430)

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, to use the hon. member's own words, he is asking for