

Inquiries of the Ministry
INCOME TAX EXEMPTION

REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON NEGOTIATIONS
 BETWEEN GOVERNMENT OF CANADA AND
 PROVINCE OF QUEBEC

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. M. Macdonnell (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I desire to ask a question of the Prime Minister of which I have given him notice. The question is as follows: Having regard to the widespread public interest in the negotiations between the dominion government and the province of Quebec in the matter of tax exemption, and to the fact that there was no reference made to it in the speech from the throne, is the Prime Minister prepared to make a statement on the subject?

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): I thank the hon. member for sending me notice of his question. I regret to have to say that I am not yet prepared to make a statement on the subject matter referred to in the question.

GRAIN

INQUIRY AS TO RATES ON MOVEMENT THROUGH
 VANCOUVER

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. L. MacDougall (Vancouver-Burrard): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. Can he make a statement now with respect to the rates on grain going through the port of Vancouver?

Right Hon. C. D. Howe (Minister of Trade and Commerce): I should prefer to take this question as notice and to make a statement at the next sitting.

TRANS-CANADA AIR LINES

STATEMENT ON REPORTED NEAR TRAGEDY AT
 MOOSE JAW

On the orders of the day:

Mr. M. J. Coldwell (Rosetown-Biggart): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Transport. What explanation does the minister have of the report that, in spite of the tragic accident at Moose Jaw last year, another near-tragedy should have occurred at the same place and under almost identical circumstances? May I ask what steps are being taken to deal with this matter?

Hon. George C. Marler (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, an investigation of the alleged near mid-air collision between an R.C.A.F. Harvard and a T.C.A. North Star in the vicinity of Moose Jaw on 6th January, to which the hon. member has just referred—and I wish to thank him for having given me

[Mr. Howe (Port Arthur).]

notice of his question—has been completed by the Department of Transport with representatives of the R.C.A.F. and T.C.A. present, including the pilots of both the aircraft involved. This investigation shows the newspaper and radio reports to be grossly exaggerated and misleading.

The R.C.A.F. Harvard, captained by an experienced flying instructor with some 4,000 flying hours to his credit, was on a navigation training flight with a pupil pilot. The T.C.A. North Star, also with a very experienced captain, was on a scheduled flight from Winnipeg to Calgary. The weather was clear with bright moonlight and good visibility.

The course of the North Star was 250 degrees and that of the Harvard 288 degrees. The aircraft instruments showed both aircraft to be flying level; the North Star at 6,000 feet and the Harvard at 5,500 feet above sea level; with the speed of the North Star being almost twice that of the Harvard.

Thus, at the time of sighting one another the T.C.A. North Star was behind and overtaking the Harvard, with the Harvard slightly to the left ahead and at 500 feet lower altitude, their courses thus crossing on an angle of 38 degrees with a height separation of approximately 500 feet between them. These conditions were in conformity both with the authorized pre-flight plans of the two aircraft and with the air regulations which govern civil and military aircraft.

The navigation lights of both aircraft were flashing normally and the first pilot to sight the other aircraft was the T.C.A. pilot, who was in the overtaking position.

The Harvard captain very shortly thereafter sighted the lights of the other aircraft approaching from his right rear, at which time both pilots, as a precautionary measure, altered course away from the other aircraft and then resumed their original courses after the faster aircraft had passed. The T.C.A. pilot at no time found it necessary to carry out any violent manoeuvre; in fact his turn involved a bank of 35 degrees only and, so far as is known, disturbed none of the passengers. However, one passenger sighted the other aircraft through a window and apparently became unduly alarmed, which may be explained by the fact that it is more difficult to judge distances, angles and relative altitudes at night than in daylight.

In this instance the occurrence was not a near catastrophe, as much of the publicity concerning it would indicate. In fact, both pilots acted in conformity with the air regulations which are designed for such occurrences and which, in fact, proved their practicability in this instance.