

Oral Questions

tions in this regard were strongly supported in the Badgley report. My question is this: why has the government chosen to cut back on funding to these important organizations at a time when over 60,000 abortions were performed in Canada, and what action does the government intend to take to ensure that these vital services, which will reduce the number of abortions in Canada, will be restored at the earliest possible time?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Madam Speaker, the hon. member's information is not accurate. Unfortunately I do not have the exact figures of the subsidy to the Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada.

For several years now, discussions with the federation following the federal-provincial conference of social security ministers have been aimed at ensuring that the provinces finance the local family planning services across Canada while limiting our role to the national secretariats of those associations.

As a consequence, the money we contribute to the local family planning services is now channelled through the provinces. If the provinces fail to do what is expected of them and do not subsidize those associations adequately, then it is up to hon. members who know what the federal role and responsibilities are to do everything possible to make sure that the money goes where it should.

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[*English*]

AIR TRANSPORT**INQUIRY WHETHER DECISION MADE RESPECTING SALE OF NORDAIR**

Mr. J. R. Ellis (Prince Edward-Hastings): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport whom I have always found to be friendly, if not too swift to act sometimes. Can the minister tell me whether he is any closer now to a decision on the Nordair question than he was some three months ago?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Yes, Madam Speaker, but there is a question of temperament here. My feeling is that one should not, in the process of attempting to solve difficulties, create others that would be worse than the ones one is trying to solve. That is my philosophy and it is in my temperament to take this approach.

Progress is being made in the Nordair issue and the problem will be solved, but before we get there, there are a number of accommodations that have to come from the potential owners, the potential executives of the merged company and also the labour unions. This is being worked on now and I hope that one of these days before too long I will be in a position to announce success.

[*Translation*]

SALE OF NORDAIR—GUARANTEES OFFERED RESPECTING INTERESTS OF QUEBEC

Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of Transport. During our short stay in power, several of his Liberal colleagues made representations to me to ensure that the sale of Nordair would at least lead to a majority of shares for Quebec. I suppose that the minister has received similar representations from his colleagues. Can he tell the House today what type of guarantee he can give that a majority of these shares would be reserved for Quebec?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I can assure my friend from Joliette that I have received the same representations, probably in the same form as the ones he got used to. The question he raises is part of the problem, and that is what we are trying hard to settle at the moment.

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[*English*]

THE CONSTITUTION**REPORTED STATEMENT OF PRIME MINISTER RESPECTING PARLIAMENTARY AND PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT**

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley-Hants): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Right Hon. Prime Minister. Yesterday there was quite a discussion in the House about the art of communication, and I should like the right hon. gentleman to communicate to the House, and thus to the country, if the presidential style of government is still his personal preference over the parliamentary form of government we have at present? This is what he told students at the university of Montreal in a most frank and relaxed question and answer period three days after he resigned when he said:

—but if I'd said it before resigning people would say, "Oh, now he wants to be President Trudeau,"—

Then he said:

There's no question of that any more.

● (1150)

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Yes, Madam Speaker, I can confirm that there is no question of that now.

Mr. Nowlan: I have a supplementary question, Madam Speaker. I will just read from the articles which appeared in several papers on November 24, the day after this very frank discussion the present Prime Minister had. He told the students:

—that a presidential system of government like that of France might be best for Canada.

"I can say that now, but if I'd said it before resigning people would say, 'Oh, now he wants to be President Trudeau'"—

"There's no question of that any more."