

Oral Questions

AIR TRANSPORT

AIR CANADA REQUEST FOR ROUTE TO PEKING—
GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport. In view of the almost historic practice of allocating Atlantic routes to Europe to Air Canada and Pacific routes to Canadian Pacific Airlines, and in view of the fact that in later years routes were allocated to Canadian Pacific in Europe, can the minister assure the House that Air Canada's request for the route to Peking is being sympathetically considered, and will a decision be made at an early date?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I think in both cases a decision is going to be made very shortly.

Mr. Benjamin: Can the minister assure the House that no further erosion of Air Canada routes and opportunities, both in regard to the new landing sites in Europe and at Peking, will be countenanced and those routes will in fact be granted to Air Canada?

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Mr. Speaker, I think when the hon. gentleman learns the decision of the cabinet he will be able to draw whatever conclusions he wishes.

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TRANSPORT

PROVISION OF RAILWAY CARS TO MOVE BRITISH
COLUMBIA APPLES

Mr. G. H. Whittaker (Okanagan Boundary): Mr. Speaker, my question is supplementary to the question I asked on February 19 of the Minister of Transport which he answered by letter yesterday. In view of the fact that Canadian National Railways supplied only 13 out of the 207 cars for Okanagan apples shipped to the United States while Canadian Pacific supplied 115, and in view of the fact that the Okanagan fruit industry hauled 79 cars across the border at an expense to them of \$15,000 as well as the loss of business because of the lack of Canadian railway cars—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Would the hon. member ask the question. I suggest that a question asked in those terms is somewhat irregular. The hon. member should ask the question as quickly as possible without conveying information to the House.

Mr. Whittaker: Mr. Speaker, I will do that immediately. Will the minister assure the House that the CNR will now supply cars for this export business?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, as of February 21, eight 40-foot cars and four 50-foot cars were on hand in the Okanagan. Twenty-eight 40-foot and 32 fifty-foot cars are standing by in Edmonton and eighteen 40-foot cars in Vancouver. Canadian National system cars that are being supplied are not foreign cars. In summary, CNR have supplied whatever cars have been requested.

[Mr. Gillespie.]

WILDLIFE

ACTION TO PROTECT WOLVES FROM EXTINCTION

Mr. Steven E. Paproski (Edmonton Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. In view of the strenuous efforts made in the United States—may I start again, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

An hon. Member: Tell Georgie boy to keep quiet.

Mr. Paproski: In view of the strenuous efforts made in the United States to protect the Canadian timber wolf, what action is the Canadian government taking for the survival of this threatened magnificent species?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker,—

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have the impression that perhaps this question could be placed on the order paper. In view of the fact we have about reached the end of the question period, perhaps the minister might be allowed to reply—whichever minister is responsible.

Mr. Paproski: Mr. Speaker, a point of order before the minister does reply, I consider this to be a very important question and I want to get an answer this week, since there has been a Canadian wolf displayed in the United States House of Representatives. In view of the fact the wolf population in the United States has been reduced to 350-500 in Minnesota, three to five million in Alaska and 90 in Louisiana of French heritage, which I think are becoming extinct, I really think there should be something that the minister could say.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I want to attempt to reply to the hon. member. I can assure him that the species is alive and well. I saw the tracks of a wolf just about a mile from my house last weekend. I rather think it was a brush wolf and not a timber wolf because of the spacing between the tracks. I will try to ascertain which it was this weekend and perhaps reassure the hon. member next week.

POLAR BEARS—REQUEST FOR NUMBER SHOT IN ARCTIC

Mr. Steven E. Paproski (Edmonton Centre): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Prime Minister for that explanation but I should like to ask the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development a supplementary. When will the minister be prepared to indicate the number of polar bears shot in the Arctic?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, a quota has been set for several years on Arctic polar bear killed by Eskimos under Canadian Wildlife Service supervision and I think the situation is quite under control right now; I believe that even in the Churchill area, in Manitoba, they complain that there are too many polar bears.