

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Gregoire: Mr. Speaker, may I put a supplementary question to the Minister of Transport?

Does the minister intend to make known the experts' report and can he assure the house that no member of the house had the opportunity to see this report?

[Text]

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Minister of Transport): The Minister of Transport does not intend to publish the report. The Minister of Transport can assure the members of the house that this report has not been shown to any members of the house, but its contents have been shown to members of the cabinet.

[Translation]

Mr. Pigeon: Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Justice?

Would the minister tell the house why the government recommended the purchase of an aircraft that has not been tested yet, leaving aside two other aircraft, including the Caravelle, which has already stood the test on an international scale?

Mr. Chevrier: Mr. Speaker, the answer to this question is very easy. It is not the government that recommended the selection of that aircraft; it is the crown corporation, after a careful study, that made the recommendation, and the government accepted it.

Mr. Pigeon: The government interfered with this decision.

[Text]

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Transport. In view of the uncertainty that exists at Winnipeg over the question of whether the T.C.A. overhaul maintenance base is going to be retained there, as a result of the statements made by the minister and the president of T.C.A. after the Prime Minister's statement the other day, will the minister consider having prepared a clearcut statement that will do away with this uncertainty and tell us what the work is that will maintain the base there and the full employment that has been indicated for the next 10 years?

Mr. McIlraith: I might try to do that, but I have a suggestion for the hon. member. I hope the officials of Trans-Canada Air Lines will be before the sessional committee within the next week or two, and it would seem to me that would be the place to have such information put on the record.

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Winnipeg South Centre): May I ask a supplementary question. Last week the minister said, and these are his

[Mr. Chevrier.]

words, "I would hope it would be maintained and probably increased, but I cannot be precise on the matter at the moment."

Mr. McIlraith: What is the page reference?

Mr. Churchill: It is page 5055. Is the minister not holding out false hopes to the people of Winnipeg by statements such as that? On what does he base the statement that employment might be increased, when the jet planes are not going to be serviced at Winnipeg and the Viscounts are going to be withdrawn?

Mr. McIlraith: I tried to explain this to the hon. gentleman on Friday last. The significant part of the announcement is that the Viscounts are not to be withdrawn, as was previously indicated in the announcements a few months ago. This is the significant part. Now, those Viscounts are becoming older planes which certainly will require to be serviced.

I have not got the *Hansard* reference, but in answer to a question I indicated that I expected the employment level would be maintained or even increased above the present level. In answer to a further question from the hon. member I indicated that I would not give an assurance that the DC-9 maintenance work would be done at Winnipeg.

That is what has been said on this subject so far; and should any further assurance be wanted, if the hon. gentleman will phrase his question carefully I will try to get a careful answer for him, because I am as anxious as he is to have these fears in Winnipeg removed. I have indicated that the fears in Winnipeg have grown larger than the facts warranted, even before the announcement, and for that reason as well as others I am anxious to have them quite allayed. I believe the situation in Winnipeg with respect to this matter is very much better than I was able to convey to the hon. member in answer to questions on last Friday.

Mr. Churchill: As a further supplementary question, can the minister give an assurance that the number of Viscounts now in T.C.A. service will be maintained at the same level during the next 10 years, and that they will be serviced at Winnipeg?

Mr. McIlraith: No. It would be utterly irresponsible to give an assurance in those terms.

Mr. Knowles: As a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, in view of the uneasiness in Winnipeg to which the minister has referred, and even though that committee is going to meet soon, will the minister consider giving a carefully prepared statement which will reconcile what Mr. MacGregor said with what the minister has said, and thus get this thing cleared up? I am sure he read what Mr.