

Oral Questions

This matter could have been resolved if the house had been ready to form a special committee to take care of the western rail initiative. That has not taken place yet and I am still open to suggestion on that subject, but I have not been able to convince people that we should have a special committee. Should that be possible, indeed we could attend to the establishment of the Air Safety Board now instead of waiting for the Fall.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE

Mr. J. R. Ellis (Prince Edward-Hastings): Madam Speaker, without having a lengthy discussion with my House leader, I think it would be fair to say that we would be delighted to have a special committee. In fact, we have been asking for a special committee.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, there are three Parties in the House and obviously all three must agree—

Madam Speaker: I am sorry, that was not a question; it was simply a comment.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): It was an implied question.

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AIR CANADA

REPORT OF CHAIRMAN'S MEETING WITH FUGITIVE FROM JUSTICE

Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley-Hants): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. Surely the Minister must be aware of the story that appeared in *The Gazette* of Montreal on Saturday, reporting that Rene Amyot, Chairman of Air Canada, met Joseph Zappia in Rome in March, 1982. This is the same Mr. Zappia who is a fugitive from Canadian justice and wanted in Quebec to face charges of fraud, extortion and kickbacks in connection with the construction of the Olympic Village.

Could the Minister please tell the House in what capacity the Chairman of Air Canada met with Mr. Zappia and, if in his personal capacity for whatever reason, can he assure the House that no Air Canada tickets, property or stationary were used in connection with the meeting?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, my hon. friend is really very persevering on that subject. I think he is wrong. We have said often enough that there is an inquiry on that subject. It is impossible for me to comment for the reasons I have indicated many times. I will not even be naughty on the subject. I read that Mr. Zappia was running at one time for the leadership of the Conservative Party, but I will not say that, just because the idea is not to impute motive or to have guilt by association or anything of this kind in Canada. I would suggest very respectfully to my

hon. friend that he lay off for a little while and await the results of the inquiry, when all his problems will be resolved.

Mr. Nowlan: I understand part of the Minister's dilemma, but the dilemma for a member of the Opposition is to find out what is under investigation.

REPORT OF MEETING ON FINANCING OF NEW HEADQUARTERS

Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley-Hants): Madam Speaker, I think the first question on this matter occurred on December 9, 1982. That was over six months ago. We do not know whether the investigation involves Air Canada or the personal activities, affairs, and business dealings of Rene Amyot and his friends. That is why I am forced to ask some questions. Since there has been no statement in the House from the Minister of Justice, the Solicitor General or the Minister of Transport as to the parameters of the investigation, the time it began and when it is to conclude, I think these questions are properly in the public domain.

The other part of the story in *The Gazette* reported that Mr. Amyot—and this may touch on the investigation; perhaps the Minister can tell us and I will shut up on this type of question—Montreal businessmen Isaac Gelber and Sheldon Mintzberg met with a French financier to discuss financing for Place Mont Royal, a possible site for Air Canada's new headquarters. Again, can the Minister tell the House whether Mr. Amyot attended this meeting on behalf of Air Canada? If not, why was Mr. Amyot holding discussions about the financing of a project that was a contender for the Air Canada headquarters?

● (1430)

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): No, Madam Speaker, I cannot, for reasons often given.

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INCOME TAX

REQUIREMENT THAT SENIOR CITIZENS PAY ON QUARTERLY BASIS

Mr. W. C. Scott (Victoria-Haliburton): Madam Speaker, my question was for the Minister of Finance. In his absence I will direct it to the Minister of National Revenue. On November 17, 1982, I asked the Minister to review the tax policy requiring senior citizens to pay income tax on a quarterly basis. His response was that he would seriously consider doing so in consultation with the Minister of National Revenue. I ask the Minister whether he has done so to date.

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of National Revenue): Madam Speaker, I think I indicated to the House on previous occasions that under the provisions of the Income Tax Act, we must, when conditions so require, ask taxpayers to make quarterly payments. Unfortunately, until the Act is amended,