

East and Saint John-Lancaster (Messrs. McGrath and Bell) happy.

For instance, I will mention the case of an operation subsidy granted to certain regional air lines, among which Eastern Provincial Airways, in the Maritimes. Some highways have been subsidized from this grant.

In New Brunswick, a particular highway which serves part of my constituency has also benefited from that subsidy. I can mention for instance the extraordinary development of EPA in the Maritimes for the past two years. It certainly has been the result of the air transport policy of the government.

An hon. Member: It was EPA's.

Mr. Breau: I hear an hon. member say that it was EPA's. Members of the opposition are always ready to blame the government when things go badly, but when all is well, they never give the government credit.

The hon. member mentioned a few moments ago that the government took no initiatives on the matter of air transport in the Maritimes. How can he substantiate this statement when in Charlottetown only, for instance, the government started from scratch to establish a twice-daily jet service during the summer. Such is the concrete result of the air transport policy of the federal government. This policy provides that the Maritime provinces will be protected for Eastern Provincial Airways, Quebec for Quebecair and central and western Canada for other companies.

● (5:30 p.m.)

So, as a direct result of such a policy, EPA, for instance, was able to get jets and provide a much better service to the Maritimes, especially to Newfoundland, so that my friend from St. John's East is quite proud of the federal government's air policy. In fact, his province is enjoying a better service.

Now, to get back to the study that my friend criticized earlier, I must say that I have read it with a great deal of interest, since I had hoped that it would give the federal government and to the minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson), a much larger and much more accurate view of transportation problems.

And once again, as many experts and teachers do, they suggested another study, if not two. For example, they hardly paid any attention to the northern part of New Brunswick, which means that in future it may have to be served by a highway connecting it with Moncton, Bathurst, Chatham, Charlottetown, Quebec City and Montreal.

Without making too many recommendations, they simply said: It will be necessary to conduct a study about it. So, once again, I must tell my hon. friend that they are academic experts like him, and this is how they claim that they will solve problems. They say: This is one of the suggestions, it will be necessary to find others and to make another study.

Mr. Comeau: Your minister is like that.

Mr. Breau: Yes, he is, but at least, unlike the opposition, he does act.

24107—57½

Suggested New Brunswick Airport Complex

Mr. Speaker, I have one criticism to make about the Maritimes transport policy. Unlike that of the opposition, my criticism will be constructive and concrete. I think that there is a lack of co-ordination in decisions and in the policy regarding the various transportation systems.

For instance, we are told that the federal government may pay from \$3 to \$5 million a year to railway companies only for passengers in the Maritime provinces. On the other hand, Air Canada or EPA do try to give air service to the Maritime provinces in order to bring about a transport policy.

Consideration must be given to airport sites, population density and distance to Montreal because the latter is the closest and the most important metropolitan area.

Therefore, before setting up any kind of policy, all those factors must be taken into account.

Furthermore it seems that at the government or the Canadian Transport Commission level there is no organization that decides anything once and for all. If we are willing to spend \$3 or \$5 million in grants to the railways, the CN for instance, or if we spend so many millions with EPA to service Moncton, Charlo, Chatham and Montreal, how could we use that money and build airports that would be situated in more strategic centres and decide in what way the money will be spent, because if it is true that from \$3 to \$5 million—the latter figure is the most probable—are spent in subsidies to rail transport in New Brunswick solely for passenger service, I am concerned, because I am not sure that Maritimers receive the best transportation service for those \$5 million.

As far as I am concerned, it is not exaggeration to say that people prefer air transport to trains because, obviously, they want to get to the metropolitan centres more rapidly for about the same price. In the Atlantic provinces airlines are most aggressive; in fact EPA is more aggressive than Air Canada. EPA is not only aggressive, but it wants to improve its service. However, the federal government subsidizes the CNR to help the people of the Atlantic provinces to go to Montreal. Indeed the help is granted to the people not to the CNR. There is no coherence, no administration that says: Well, instead of spending \$5 million for that, we shall instead give \$1 or \$2 million for the construction of airports in the northern part of New Brunswick. In providing the citizens with better air service we shall reduce the subsidies to the railways. That is, generally speaking, what I criticize about the passenger transport policy of the government and I hope that before long this matter will be looked into thoroughly and that coherent and co-ordinated decisions will be taken.

To come back to the motion introduced by the hon. member for Saint John-Lancaster, I must say that it is difficult for me to oppose an initiative by a member from my province. However, the study mentioned by him and by other members is of a technical nature and reveals interesting facts. It reveals, for instance, that the Moncton airport should not be deprived of aid as it brings in more revenue than it costs the government for its administration.