

Excise Tax Act

these people pay a tax to support the existence of such facilities? I refer to the whole of northern Canada although I know a little only about parts of it such as the Labrador, the coast of James Bay and Hudson Bay, the western arctic and the high arctic. These are all areas where commercial air services operate under conditions of difficulty that I have described, where airports are not provided by the federal government and where only minimal navigational aids exist. It is the ingenuity of the operators of such services and of the people who support them that makes it possible for these services to operate. I suggest that it is not proper to tax the users of such services, those who are most deserving, most vulnerable, and who certainly do not obtain benefits from the tax.

Therefore, I express the hope that the government, when and if the bill is passed, will take a careful look at the position of these far northern points of departure that I have described, the ones without airports and virtually without modern facilities, and will do something to relieve the users of air services at these points from having to pay the tax. I call the attention of hon. members to the fact that clause 18 of the bill gives the Governor in Council power to make regulations to cover a number of important contingencies. Paragraph (c) of clause 18 empowers the Governor in Council to make regulations which may:

exempt from the operation of this Part the transportation of a person by air on any classes or groups of commercial air services, commercial air carrier or aircraft.

I have no doubt that the wording of that paragraph is broad enough to enable the Governor in Council, acting under the authority of this statute, to exempt certain classes of air services, namely those provided from far northern points, from the application of this tax. It is my hope that notwithstanding the great need for revenue to support the air services of this country, it will be possible to exempt northern air travellers from this tax.

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister without Portfolio): Mr. Speaker, I presume that I am in a position to close the debate.

Mr. Speaker: The minister cannot close the debate on third reading. If he wishes to speak, he will not necessarily close the debate.

Mr. Gray: Perhaps I can ask for Your Honour's guidance on a matter of order with

[Mr. Blair.]

reference to the amendment just placed before the House.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Question.

Mr. Gray: I wish to ask Your Honour whether or not my rising to speak at this time might terminate the debate.

Mr. Speaker: I have just indicated to the hon. member that a speech made by the minister at this time, when there is an amendment such as the one proposed, certainly does not close the debate. As I said, the hon. member may participate in the debate now, and this might have just the opposite effect.

Mr. Gray: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This was just a question of order on which I sought clarification.

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question now is on the amendment moved by the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert). Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said amendment? All those in favour will please say yea.

Some hon. Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: I have some difficulty in deciding, but in my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Speaker: Call in the members.

The House divided on the amendment (Mr. Lambert), which was negatived on the following division:

● (4:00 p.m.)

YEAS

Messrs:

Aiken	Diefenbaker
Alexander	Dinsdale
Baldwin	Douglas (Nanaimo-
Barnett	Cowichan-The
Beaudoin	Islands)
Bell	Downey
Bigg	Fairweather
Brewin	Flemming
Broadbent	Forrestall
Burton	Fortin
Carter	Gilbert
Coates	Grills
Code	Harding
Comeau	Harkness
Crouse	Hees
Danforth	Horner