

TRANSPORT

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE TO STUDY POLICY ON CAR RENTAL OUTLETS AT AIRPORTS WITHDRAWN

On the Order:

Resuming the debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Argue, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Petten:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications be authorized to examine and report upon the policy of the Department of Transport regarding car rental outlets at airports, more particularly its refusal to open up competition, to increase the number of car rental outlets, the effect of restricting the major share of business to multinational companies, the adverse effect on jobs in Canadian companies and the advantages to the travelling public of greater competition.—(*Honourable Senator Argue, P.C.*)

Hon. Hazen Argue: If it were convenient for honourable senators, I would be pleased to withdraw this motion.

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Is it agreed, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Motion withdrawn.

THE HONOURABLE RENÉ LÉVESQUE

CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL LIFE

Hon. Philippe Deane Gigantès rose, pursuant to notice of October 1, 1985, that he will call the attention of the Senate to the contribution made by Mr. René Lévesque to the life of the nation.

He said: Honourable senators, one of the most moving moments in the recent history of Canada was the glorious night when the results of the referendum were announced. Suddenly, we saw on the screen a sombre Prime Minister who had the courtesy and the genius to say, "When I see the sorrow of those who lost tonight, my heart isn't in it." I think that Mr. Trudeau gave us all a lesson on how one should behave towards one's opponents, and it is in that spirit that I wish to speak today about the departure of Mr. René Lévesque from the political scene.

● (1500)

[*Translation*]

Today, my province has a new Premier, Mr. Pierre-Marc Johnson.

Honourable senators, I would like to bring to your attention a few of the contributions made by Mr. René Lévesque to the political life of my province and our country.

He was a great journalist of international calibre and at the same time a great teacher. No one will ever be able to deny that. His extraordinary program "Point de mire", whose imita-

tions never equalled the excellence of the original, either in the United States or in Europe, was a model of its kind.

His grasp of the facts, the clarity of his thinking and his fascinating presentation focussed the attention of an entire generation on the world about them.

When he entered politics as a member of the Liberal Party, he became one of the driving forces of the Quiet Revolution. Quebec had to wake up and Mr. Lévesque was one of the Liberals who sounded the bugle call. The results were extraordinary: the expansion of education, soaring industrial development, the founding of institutions that contributed to the progress and well-being of my province. Those were the achievements of the Quiet Revolution, thanks to the Liberal Government of Quebec of which Mr. Lévesque was a member. These were only a few of his achievements under the Liberal regime in Quebec. Unfortunately, Mr. Lévesque left the Liberal Party, heading towards a future that proved to be a dead end. Paradoxically, the mortal struggle he fought and lost to Mr. Trudeau may have been his most important contribution to this country.

He wanted to make Quebec an independent country, closely associated to Canada.

I was and always will be one of those who were not and who are not in agreement with this ideology. I am glad Mr. Lévesque lost.

However, I cannot help admiring him for adhering to the principles and practice of democracy and decency when he was fighting that mortal struggle.

There were people around him who worshipped him. He was and always will be a formidable adversary and a politician with an almost magical charisma. He could have aroused the enthusiasm of his partisans, and I am referring to the Ancient Greek meaning of enthusiasm which means "feeling possessed by a god", which justifies hate and excess.

Most of the time, however, Mr. Lévesque was possessed by reason. That is why he never approved of violence and never failed to observe the rules of a democratic society. He was our opponent and, as I said before, I am glad he lost. Like all of us, I realized that he could hit hard, and I am glad he was not one of those people who hit below the belt.

He could put crowds under his spell, but he never let their mood degenerate into the fanaticism of an emotional crusade.

He never forgot that the power of a democracy lies with the people. He has always accepted the people's verdict. He never went along with the pernicious dogma that the only real Quebecers were those of ancient French ancestry. He was repelled by racism and xenophobia.

Mr. Robert Bourassa, speaking in defence of the Canadian federation during the referendum debate, said that in other countries, separatists were in prison but here they were in power! That is entirely to Canada's credit. There is not another country as noble and as free as ours anywhere in the world. It is also to Mr. Lévesque's credit. Canada is an enlightened democracy that accepts separatists like Mr. Lévesque. And