

Government Orders

a disgrace. The only explanation is the irresponsible attitude, if not bad faith, of Transport Canada and the Liberal and Conservative members who sat and sit on the benches opposite.

This is one more indication that, under Canadian federalism, Liberal and Conservative members from Quebec have always done the bidding of the English Canadian majority and never had any real power. The presence of Prime Ministers from Quebec was, and still is, merely an illusion of power.

• (1525)

Let us now go back to air traffic control. While the regional centres in other provinces serve, on average, some 2.6 million people, in Quebec, according to Transport Canada plans, the Montreal regional air traffic control centre will be serving a population of 7 million. This is what we mean by profitable federalism for all Canadians, except Quebecers, who are paying to provide other provinces with services they can only dream of.

We are not fooled by all this! Why is Transport Canada trying to close the Quebec City airport terminal air traffic control unit? The reason invoked is savings. However, we do not believe it, because we can prove that a series of decisions proposed by Transport Canada will require much larger investments than what is requested by the people involved in the Quebec City area. We believe that the real reason, although nobody would admit to it, is the elimination of a French-speaking air traffic control centre. Then Canada would be left with only two officially bilingual centres, one in Montreal and one in Ottawa.

Speaking of bilingualism at the Ottawa airport, how do you expect francophones of this country to feel that they get some respect, when they know that Transport Canada has been trying unsuccessfully for five years to render air traffic control bilingual at the airport of the national capital of a country which claims to have an official languages policy. This is the Prime Minister's Canada.

By the way, why was the Ottawa airport terminal air traffic control unit not transferred to Toronto, like all other units within a given region? Air traffic control in Ottawa was supposed to become bilingual, so if it were to be transferred to Toronto, could that centre be expected to become bilingual one day? The answer is obvious.

This is one more example of the so-called profitability of federalism as it applies, this time, to air transportation. Over the years, Quebecers have come to realize that Canadian federalism cannot be reformed and cannot be profitable. I should add, by the way, that if the other provinces had not come to the same conclusion, that is to say that Quebec is profitable for them, why would they be so strenuously opposed to Quebec sovereignty?

As for the possibility of the Canadian government compensating people who were about to extort millions of dollars from

Canadians, it is outrageous. If we should compensate friends of Liberal and Conservative regimes for profit losses, how should we compensate Quebecers for 125 years of federalism that kept them unemployed and dependent? This unfair treatment of the people of Quebec began in 1840, when England imposed the Act of Union between Upper and Lower Canada. In doing so, England wanted to make Canadians living in Lower Canada, French Canadians, pay part of Upper Canada's debt. Quebec has already paid its share of compensation and then some.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, clearly, I will vote against this bill.

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Mr. Speaker, listening to the analysis presented by our colleague opposite, it appears to be a black and white issue. His view of history betrays prejudices which have no room in our world.

Sure, if you look at our history, you will find that not everything was perfect, but an analysis such as yours is bordering on slander. I wonder where you found all those data to reach such a negative conclusion. It is unfair. There are two sides to every story and you must take it into consideration when analyzing situations like this one, especially going all the way back to 1840.

Would you be willing to consider the benefits of our confederation, one of the best in the world? It will be difficult to convince you that, were it not for the Canadian federation, you would not have been able to maintain a second official language. It would have been impossible anywhere else but in Canada. We are the only living proof of that in the world.

The Deputy Speaker: Before recognizing the member, I would like once again to ask you to address your remarks to the Chair. It lowers the chances of friction.

• (1530)

Mr. Paré: Mr. Speaker, most of the data I quoted in my speech come from reports published by Transport Canada. To compare the situation at the Quebec City Airport with that of airports in other capitals, be it in the provinces or the Northwest Territories, I relied mainly on statistics from Transport Canada. To compare the increased frequency of flights between those airports, I used Transport Canada data. To compare air traffic, again I used Transport Canada data.

Mr. Speaker, Quebecers have studied history. We may not have had the same history books as our colleagues opposite, however, I can assure you that, in the next few months, we will be prepared for the upcoming debate on nationhood for Quebec. Rest assured that the system has given us all the arguments we need to prove what I just started demonstrating. It is only a matter of time. We only have to read the official reports published by the federal government and Statistics Canada, to find the necessary data. We will make them public and circulate