

That brings me to my last point, which the hon. member for Vegreville perhaps did not cover in sufficient depth. We did not know this bill was to come forward so soon and he and I have spoken off the cuff, without benefit of the research which would enable us to scrutinize more narrowly and perhaps attack some parts of the bill.

I am concerned about aircraft incidents, and their reporting. I am thinking of accidents. I was intrigued to find that a little document on aviation safety had this to say some time ago:

Transport Canada has set up an interim aircraft accident review board pending the establishment of an independent transportation accident investigation board which was approved in principle by cabinet in April 1975 . . .

If the cabinet approved the establishment in 1975 of an independent review board, what business has the department in setting up its own board? I disagree with this entirely, and I do not think the department should be setting up its own review board. I am not proud to remember that once I flew an aircraft upside down into a pasture; I walked away from the crash, relatively unhurt. At least, here I stand.

**Mr. Fraser:** But not unaffected!

**Mr. Ellis:** I am sure damage was done, but I walked away. The investigation was cursory. I reported the accident to the nearest airport, answered a few questions, and that seemed to be the end of it. Perhaps that was a relatively minor accident which happened many years ago. However, in the accident with which the hon. member for Timiskaming dealt, there was an obvious and definite conflict, in the sense that you can hardly have an impartial review when the body which is going to look into the accident and lay charges arising from it is also involved in the making of regulations.

I point out that in 1974 the hon. member for Dartmouth-Halifax East (Mr. Forrestall) introduced a private member's bill for establishing a permanent and impartial commission whose job would be to look into and investigate transport accidents. The cabinet approved in 1975 the setting up of an independent investigation board. Why did it not act on the hon. member's recommendation?

Although I have not discussed the point with my colleagues, I am sure they will agree to fight long and hard over this bill, as the minister well knows. I realize we are approaching the summer recess. I am aware the government is most anxious to be out of here by the first week of July so that certain alterations can be made to this Chamber. I have no objection one way or the other. My constituency is close. I travel back and forth every week. I can be here on Mondays and Fridays when the House is a little thin, so I am not worried if we stay here all summer. I want to go on record as saying that I intend to debate this bill for a good long time.

● (1230)

We want to induce the minister to take cognizance of the very worth-while bill introduced by the hon. member for Dartmouth-Halifax East. We would like to see that legislation accepted, or a government bill put in place to do that job.

There is a conflict here that has to be resolved. The way to resolve it is obvious; sometimes it is not obvious in other pieces

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of legislation. I am prepared to spend as much time as necessary to try to convince the minister that this step should be taken.

I see my time is almost up. I close by saying that I have always had a very strong concern with regard to the area of regulation. Canada is a free country. By and large, Canadians are a free people. However, we seem to be faced with more and more restrictive regulations that are very difficult to justify. A number of regulations contained in this bill are difficult to justify. I look forward to dealing with some of them in committee and to receiving a reply from the minister as to whether this area that is so basic and important can be handled in an entirely different way, either the way suggested by the hon. member for Dartmouth-Halifax East or something akin to it, so that we might have a proper review court.

**Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to carry on this debate from where my colleague, the hon. member for Hastings (Mr. Ellis), left off, and to reinforce his plea that all members of this House pay attention to the necessity of establishing an independent board for the examination of accidents involving aircraft in Canada.

In the bill before us, Bill C-40, Section 8 of the Aeronautics Act is amended. It provides authority for the minister to establish a board of inquiry to investigate the circumstances of an accident. It is completely permissive. It does not carry with it the mandatory provision to establish an investigatory board which would be completely independent of the department or the divisions within it.

The hon. member for Dartmouth-Halifax East (Mr. Forrestall) has repeatedly been advocating in this House, commencing in the year 1970, that an independent review board be established. It is a matter of considerable regret to all members of my party that the hon. member, not knowing that Bill C-40 was coming forward today, is unable to be here today to speak on it.

The hon. member for Dartmouth-Halifax East first introduced a private member's bill calling for an independent board to investigate accidents on October 20, 1970, Bill C-66. The substance of that bill has been in front of the House ever since, once as Bill C-85, subsequent to that as Bill C-333, Bill C-109, and Bill C-226. It was debated in the House on April 1, 1977 as Bill C-220. The opening of that debate is reported in *Hansard* for April 1, 1977, at page 4581.

If you look at the debate which the hon. member for Dartmouth-Halifax East led on April 1, 1977, you will see that the arguments in favour of an independent board are overwhelming. The arguments were so well stated at that time by the hon. member that, in the reply on behalf of the government by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs (Mr. Gauthier), the following was said, and I shall quote his reply. Under the circumstances I think this should again be placed on the record for hon. members on the government side. This is the spokesman for the government putting forward the government's view of the hon. member's private bill calling for an independent tribunal. I ask all hon. members to pay attention to this, especially members on the government side.