

Of course, the minister is free to act as he pleases; however, he will bear the responsibility of the decisions he is now taking.

Mr. Balcer: Mr. Chairman, I wish to set the facts straight.

Let me repeat for the third time that my hon. friend implies things that are not accurate when he rises here and says that the Quebecair situation, as far as certain points of the lower St. Lawrence river are concerned, is the same as that of Pacific Western Airlines concerning the Regina-Edmonton-North Battleford line.

When he says that it is the same thing, he implies things that are not accurate. He knows very well that what he claims makes no sense because there is a tremendous difference between no service at all and service by another company.

In the case of Quebecair, if that company had withdrawn from any point where it now operates, within 48 hours there would have been another service in operation there by another company. As far as Pacific Western Airlines are concerned, if they had withdrawn from the points mentioned, the public there would no longer have had any service, at least for several years to come. So there is a difference between the two.

In the case of Quebecair, this was a company which was faced with financial difficulties. In the other case, we had a line which did not produce enough revenues for a company to be interested in continuing its operations.

Such was not the situation at all in the case of Quebecair. There was never any question of Quebecair asking permission to abandon any line.

(Text):

Mr. Pascoe: At the risk of appearing too persistent with regard to this problem, I should like to bring once more to the attention of the Minister of Transport the complete lack of air service to the city of Moose Jaw which I represent, I raise the question now in connection with this item No. 664 which is being considered by the committee at the present time because the minister has referred to possible changes in the T.C.A. milk run which now passes directly over Moose Jaw.

There is no need for me to delay the committee at this time by going into details.

The minister has in his files earlier representations which I and other interested parties have made to him on behalf of Moose Jaw. I should like to refer briefly to a few arguments concerning the inclusion of Moose Jaw in some air service. In addition to its population of 33,000, Moose Jaw serves a rural population of more than 40,000 and a trading area population in excess of 150,000. The city is greatly concerned over the essential necessity of securing adequate air service comparable to the service received by other prairie centres. The general public in this area is becoming more aviation-conscious each year. This is shown by the increased air traffic from Moose Jaw by T.C.A. even though Moose Jaw patrons have to drive over 40 miles to Regina in order to board planes.

As the minister has stated, the air transport board held hearings last autumn on the application by T.C.A. to abandon the air service which is generally referred to as the prairie milk run. In the belief that some other air line will take over this service should it be abandoned by Trans-Canada Air Lines Moose Jaw presented a very strong brief to support its claim for inclusion in any new air service. I should like to read a brief excerpt from a letter I have received from the mayor of Moose Jaw. He writes:

—we have consistently approached Trans-Canada Air Lines to give consideration to this city being included on the east-west run now under discussion by all cities concerned from Winnipeg to Calgary. We have repeatedly stated and sincerely believe that this city should be entitled to an east-west outlet... We think that any change that does transpire with regard to the operating of this service should include Moose Jaw in view of the considerable revenue that has been derived by Trans-Canada Air Lines from this city and district in spite of the inconvenience caused to the travelling public by having to journey by land direct to Regina.

This is a short extract from a letter I received from the mayor of the city. I wish to present once more Moose Jaw's claim for inclusion in any new air service that may take the place of Trans-Canada Air Lines' present milk run. The minister stated that the decision of the air transport board will be announced shortly. Moose Jaw hopes that the city's brief has been favourably considered by the board.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Chairman, I wish at this time to raise a matter which I have already discussed with the minister. I thank him for the co-operation he has displayed in listening to the representations