

*Aeronautics Act*

small nursing stations, but their staff is not qualified to handle major emergencies.

When the bill is in committee I hope witnesses will appear to say what is happening in the field of air traffic in northern Manitoba, indeed, all across the north. It seems that the Department of Transport people look jealously on Manitoba's program these past few years to develop airstrips in remote places. That this has happened at all is owing to the forward thinking of Duff Roblin in 1966 who said every remote community of 100 or more should be equipped with an emergency airstrip. We have grown, and the department should keep up to date with developments in the north. It should know how important small aircraft companies operating several aircraft are to remote communities, and how they provide those communities with services they need.

**Mr. Doug Neil (Moose Jaw):** Mr. Speaker, I want to speak briefly on Bill C-40. A previous speaker read into the record a letter an aircraft consultant sent him, a letter which said many of the things I want to say.

In my particular part of the country we have many small aircraft owners and many flying farmers. They own and fly small aircraft sometimes for pleasure; often they use them for crop spraying, or for going to a larger centre to pick up repair parts for farm machinery. Most of their flying is done from an airstrip on the farm, or from a small airport not operated by DOT. From time to time they occasionally use Department of Transport facilities.

I am particularly concerned about clause 2 of the bill which gives the minister authority to impose charges on the owners and operators of aircraft. It says the governor in council may impose charges with respect to "any facility or service provided by the minister or on his behalf for or in respect of any aircraft during flight . . ." That is a broad section and needs clarifying. Does it mean that if a pilot of a small aircraft calls a DOT aerodrome for a weather report, he will be charged for that service; or if he calls the control tower for a bearing, to check his position in relation to the airport, he will be charged for that service?

Perhaps there is nothing wrong with the user-pay concept in general but, for owners of small aircraft, I wonder.

Reading Clause 2, I note that the owner or operator of an aircraft will need to deposit each year with the minister "security in the form of a bond or letter of credit . . ." Further, all charges imposed upon the owners or operators of aircraft constitute a lien upon the aircraft. This means that if the charge is not paid, the aircraft could be seized and sold for payment of the charge.

Many private pilots and flying farmers use Department of Transport facilities perhaps only once or twice a year. I don't know what the charge will be—perhaps it will vary from \$1.50 to \$3. Every time one of these small aircraft pilots uses the service, it will have been recorded. The Department will need to set up an administration to do this, either at some central location in the west, or down east. Each time a pilot uses a service, it will be recorded. The question is, how much will it

[Mr. Smith (Churchill).]

cost to administer the system for recording every instance a small aircraft pilot uses a DOT facility—when he may run up a bill of, say, \$5? In addition the pilot will need to file a bond or letter of credit each year. I assume someone will have to check out those letters of credit to make sure they are valid. In cases where no security is filed, the department will need to institute some follow-up procedure. I visualize a burgeoning bureaucracy for recording such charges and collecting fees from pilots and operators, and it seems to me that the administration costs will exceed greatly any revenue the Department of Transport may collect for these services.

The minister should reconsider those provisions applying to private owners or flying farmers and make an exemption in their case. Granted, the language of the bill does not go into great detail. I therefore hope, when the minister or his officials appear before the committee, we shall see some clarification of various clauses.

● (1630)

Another clause which gives me some concern is the one which requires the licensing of facilities where aircraft are being serviced or repaired. This might be necessary in cases where a commercial operation is being carried on. However, on the face of this clause, it appears as though an individual who has repair work carried out in his own hangar on his farm would be required to have his facilities licensed.

I can think of one particular individual who lives in the vicinity of Moose Jaw, a flying farmer who refurbishes antique aircraft. He is a qualified engineer. All the work is done on his own farm by himself. Does he need to have the building in which this work is carried out licensed? That would be a ridiculous situation. I can understand the requirement for licensing aero engineers or air-frame engineers. However, to require the licensing of a particular building where the work is carried out is rather ridiculous.

Clause 3 also gives me some concern. It requires owners or operators of aircraft to carry liability insurance. Most owners and operators of private aircraft do in fact carry liability insurance. I do not know the reason for this clause. It may be to ensure that those operators who are the exception to the rule have insurance coverage. Surely the bill should state the extent of the coverage required. This will be done by regulation, however.

This bill is typical of most legislation that comes before the House. It is in general terms. The meat of the legislation, what you need to know, will be put into law by regulations that do not come before the House. Members will not have the opportunity to discuss, debate, and receive feedback from their constituents. This is one of the faults of this bill, as with many other bills that come before this House.

I look forward to seeing this bill in committee. Hopefully when the minister appears he will give a detailed explanation of the various clauses or, alternatively, the members of his department will do that. This bill should remain in committee long enough so that interested pilots, operators, and groups will have an opportunity to make representations, whether