

Just because an apple tree is owned by the Government, or is a Crown corporation, will it produce more apples than a tree owned by John Jones operating as a free enterpriser?

Mr. Minaker: Madam Speaker, in answer to that question, if the verbal "b.s." of some politicians had solidity, maybe it could grow trees a little better. However, it would make no difference if it was Crown owned or privately owned.

I thank the Hon. Member for reminding me about the services to northern Alberta. To a large degree the same company served northern Manitoba and northern Saskatchewan. We had Lambair and other airways, but TransAir is the one I remember. TransAir flew to Thompson and up to Gillam. It was privately owned and served the North because at that time I do not think Air Canada was interested in going to the North.

Under the regulations at the time it had all the good spots, and I guess rightfully so, because we did not have two or three national airlines at that time. We had to ensure that we had one national airline. TransAir became Pacific Western Air and now Canadian Airlines.

The Western Aviation Museum is in my riding. It is one of the finest aviation museums on the North American continent, second not even to the one here in Ottawa. There is many a plane there from private airlines which opened the North for us.

The Hon. Member is completely correct, which really defeats the argument made by the Hon. Member for Winnipeg North yesterday that we need Air Canada as a Crown corporation in order to get service to all these remote areas.

In addition to the changes in regulations, the smaller airlines have teamed up with the three major airlines. I know that Canadian Airlines has different aircraft waiting in Toronto to take passengers to different spots in northern Ontario. The same is the case with Air Canada. I think it is affiliated with Air Ontario. We now have a unique situation of a Crown corporation working with private corporations and we also have private corporations working with other private corporations.

In the long run this has been very good for Canada and Canadians. There is now more competition, better service and, I might add, safe service because there are regulations which cover safety which will not allow any short-circuiting of safety when it comes to flying Canadians around Canada.

• (1550)

THE ROYAL ASSENT

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): I have the honour to inform the House that a communication has been received as follows:

Air Canada

Government House
Ottawa

May 25, 1988

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that the Honourable Gerard V. J. La Forest, Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court of Canada, in his capacity as Deputy Governor General, will proceed to the Senate Chamber today, the 25th day of May, 1988, at 4:45 p.m., for the purpose of giving Royal Assent to certain Bills.

Yours sincerely,
Anthony P. Smyth
Deputy Secretary, Policy and Program

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

AIR CANADA PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Mazankowski that Bill C-129, an Act to provide for the continuance of Air Canada under the Canada Business Corporations Act and for the issuance and sale of shares thereof to the public, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Mr. Gilles Grondin (Saint-Maurice): Madam Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak to this Bill this afternoon, and I would like to be as optimistic as the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—St. James (Mr. Minaker) about the possibility of maintaining the same quality of service and number of jobs, even in his riding of Winnipeg—St. James, once the privatization of Air Canada takes effect.

Madam Speaker, a decision to privatize a company like Air Canada has some very serious implications for all regions served by this airline.

My colleague from Winnipeg—St. James said it would be possible to maintain the same quality of service and the same number of jobs, and that practically nothing would change, but I really wonder what will happen when the board of directors of the newly privatized corporation does its homework and looks at the viability of certain routes. I will bet you anything the corporation will decide to abandon certain services, certain routes, and this will have a direct impact, both on Winnipeg—St. James and on all other regions served by Air Canada, in terms of services, routes and the number of jobs there will be.

Madam Speaker, the Conservative Government is selling off Canada's identity, bit by bit.

It started its operation with a trade agreement that undermines our sovereignty, and it wants to continue by privatizing Air Canada.

Madam Speaker, Air Canada must remain fully owned by Canadians. The corporation is respected by everyone. It is a symbol, a tradition that goes back fifty-one years to when a