

catch a train. Therefore, I wonder whether Your Honour might be induced not to see the clock until after five o'clock in order to give the hon. member a decent opportunity to make his remarks.

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East):** Mr. Speaker, I am overwhelmed by the generosity of the House, but I do not think I shall keep hon. gentlemen very long after five o'clock. In discussing the motion of the hon. member for Moncton (Mr. Thomas) I should like to touch briefly on the question of Canada's regional air policy. I am tempted at times to refer to it as the "appearance" of a regional air policy, but that is not really true. It is a policy which is constantly under review, but unfortunately is one which has not been presented to us in this chamber or in committee for an extended period of review and examination.

This afternoon we have heard quite a bit about the difficulties of regional transportation. The difficulty in the Maritime provinces, of course, is that we do not have the marketing centre that is required in order for industries to be established and by means of which they may survive. No matter what is done, this will always be a fact until we have within our region a centre comprising 500,000 or 600,000 people. Until that day comes, the proposition put forward by certain hon. members will not be possible of achievement. We all agree that at some point subsidies, and so on, should come to an end. But I suggest this is not something which can be determined by the degree to which we are aware of the need to bring these policies to an end. There are physical matters involved which have to do with our ability to market and sell our produce.

In respect of air transportation there was completed recently in the Maritimes a fairly extensive document entitled "Atlantic Provinces Air Transportation Study." This study has to do with the future of airport facilities, transportation by air, and so on, in our region. In the past 18 months or so there has been a very definite change in the approach to air transportation problems by the national carrier, Air Canada. We have seen an attempt to get on with the job of integrating into their system the principal regional carrier in the Atlantic provinces, Eastern Provincial Airways. We have seen the tendency to reduce Air Canada establishments at some of the smaller airports in Newfoundland, in Nova Scotia and in New Brunswick.

In the Atlantic provinces—I wish I had time to properly develop this theme because it is very important—there is a fear on the part of both personal and commercial users of aircraft that within the next two or three years Air Canada will end up with only two centres in the Atlantic provinces, one at St. John's, Newfoundland, and one in Halifax, with the next point in the national trans-

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portation system being where I suppose the system really begins, Montreal. This is the question I would develop if I had a few more minutes. I would have liked to express the fears about the problems created when Air Canada withdrew from centres such as Gander, Stephenville, Moncton, Saint John and Fredericton in the frequency, level of service, and so on.

**Mr. Bell:** They will run it into the ground first.

**Mr. Forrestall:** This is partly what I am afraid of. I am afraid that until we have in front of us a concrete proposal from the Department of Transport in respect of the intentions of the government and its guidelines for phasing out the national carriers' responsibilities in respect of what might be called feeder centres, we will face a very serious difficulty in the Atlantic provinces. We need those policies before this elected body so that they might be viewed from the point of view of what I consider to be the true purpose of the national carrier, that is, that it should exist where we want it to exist and not necessarily where it is economically feasible.

In considering the motion before us this afternoon, I hope the minister will demonstrate a sense of urgency in respect of the problem that faces users of the national air carrier, not only in the Atlantic region but in other regions of Canada where there is a very clear indication that the national carrier intends to get out of the shorter routes and into the longer routes. There is the question of whether we will have a modern and efficient system such as we have had from Air Canada, when we are served by the feeder lines which will take their place. If we continue this policy much longer, I am afraid that the confusion, the fear and the downgrading of service will result in an undesirable situation with respect to air traffic in the Atlantic provinces.

• (5:00 p.m.)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your indulgence in letting me continue for a minute or two beyond the time of adjournment.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard):** Order, please. The hour provided for private members' business has now expired. It being five o'clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday next at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 2(1).

I thank all hon. members who took part in this Friday's debate for their co-operation with the Chair. I wish all hon. members a pleasant weekend. My "thought for today" is that we are fortunate indeed and should thank the Lord that we are alive to share once more nature's transformation. I wish you energy and blessings in the new season.

At 5:05 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.