

Supply—Transport

couple of months from now, we shall see whether the board has reached the conclusion that we should establish the same system as in the United States, or whether we should more particularly assist certain air lines.

I am not an expert with regard to those details, but I am convinced that a report of great significance in the history of Canadian aviation, will be submitted to us by the air transport board, because there has never been so complete an investigation of conditions such as the local air transport companies have to face at this time.

This is the first time that such a far-reaching enquiry is being made from coast to coast, and I believe that it will bring about some extremely important recommendations.

As far as Quebecair is concerned, we will then be in a better position to decide whether that company has a right to an annual subsidy or whether, for instance, it has meanwhile been observing the conditions set forth by the air transport board. If so, the government will reconsider awarding the company an immediate subsidy to help it face up to the present situation.

Mr. Bourget: With regard to that company, Mr. Chairman, the minister undoubtedly remembers that, on February 28, the hon. member for Laurier asked for all correspondence between the Minister of Transport and the president of Quebecair or any other person interested in the matter. I believe that only part of the correspondence was tabled.

Mr. Balcer: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member for Laurier raised that point the other day. I personally checked all our records on the matter and I want to say that all correspondence between the president of Quebecair, myself and the air transport board which was not of a purely personal and confidential nature, has been tabled.

There was some correspondence after the date mentioned by my hon. friend, but, at the request of the president of the company himself, it has been considered as personal and confidential.

As it is a practice in this house not to table any personal and confidential papers, those documents were not included. All we received, which was not of a purely personal and confidential nature has been tabled in this house.

Mr. Bourget: With regard to that matter Mr. Chairman, could the minister not look

[Mr. Balcer.]

over the records again to see whether there is not a letter dated November 13, 1961, which was not marked confidential? Could the minister do that or, having looked up the records, is he now in a position to state that there is no letter dated November 13, 1961, which could be tabled as not marked confidential?

Mr. Balcer: Mr. Chairman, I know which letter my hon. friend means. I believe there is a copy, but it is precisely one of those letters the president of Quebecair asked me to stamp personal and confidential, because he did not want it to be tabled in the house.

He said that the letter contained a few allegations which he considered as not accurate after checking.

At his request, that letter was not tabled because he said he had always considered it as personal and confidential.

Mr. Bourget: Did the president of Quebecair personally ask the minister, either by letter or by phone, to have that letter marked confidential, or is it not the contrary that happened, that is would the minister or officials of his department not have asked that it be stamped confidential?

Mr. Balcer: Mr. Chairman, I know that the new president of the company came to see me and that we discussed all those matters thoroughly.

I could not tell whether it was I or he who raised the question but we have discussed that correspondence and he was the first to admit that it contained some ridiculous allegations and that he did not want me to consider it as business correspondence. And he asked me to have it marked personal and confidential.

Mr. Bourget: Of course, Mr. Chairman, I cannot compel the minister to offer his answer, but those who are interested in this will be able to read it in *Hansard*.

However—and these will be my last remarks—I do feel that two policies are being applied—one for a western company and another for a company in the province of Quebec.

Mind you, I am not at all against a grant that may be needed by that air line company in a western province, but I believe the same policy should apply to Quebecair operating in the province of Quebec.