

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

Region is defined, and this embraces the province of Quebec, metropolitan Ottawa and Atlantic Canada including Labrador. It stretches from Stittsville, in other words, to Bonavista. There would be a regional office for this large land-mass in Montreal, says this bulletin of Air Canada, and the vice-president for this new region has not yet been appointed. So the prophet, the hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond may have been partly right when he said that three vice-presidents were on the way, because certainly one of those three is on the way.

Apparently, Air Canada has not advised the Minister of Transport of this, or perhaps if they sent him the bulletin it was put in the hands of the minister in charge of the Post Office and has not yet arrived. But what a heady word is "voyageur." Instead of canoes, one can see Viscounts, Vanguards, DC-8s and DC-9s floating through the great skies over Atlantic Canada, invisible strings attaching them to some vice-president yet to be appointed in Montreal. Montreal, sir, was always the great centre of the fur trade in the days of the early voyageurs who deposited there the skins that they took from western Canada. Now it looks as if it is the turn of the east to be skinned.

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): I can merely reiterate in part at least what I said this afternoon and remind the House and you, Mr. Speaker, that in so far as management decisions are concerned it is for the directors of Air Canada to make them and it is not the habit, nor do I think that hon. members opposite any more than any member of this House would want it otherwise, for them to consult with or get the approval of the Minister of Transport for such matters as are entirely and by law, in fact, assigned to them.

I am in a bit of an awkward position, as hon. members will know, in seeking to answer these questions as specifically as I would like to, for the simple reason that until this reorganization is completed I have no way in which I can intrude into the process. I simply have to get the advice on the request

of members and pass it along to them. This I have attempted to do.

I was informed, subsequent to our discussion this afternoon, that in fact in the judgment of Air Canada—I am passing this on as a result of our conversation and not in any written form, so I would ask members to bear this in mind—the use of such terms as "regions" and so on has not really been in the old framework of Air Canada; that it came into common usage but was not necessarily a part of the organizational structure.

In fact, now there are going to be regions but there will only be three for the whole of the country. I have undertaken to provide members with a complete outline of the reorganization as soon as it is obtained from Air Canada. But as I understand it, under the new grouping there will be three separate regions, the one to which the hon. member has referred—and I agree with him that it is rather romantically titled—and two others. These will presumably be central Canada and western Canada.

Within these regions, however, I am told that there will be very large districts and that in fact the position with regard to, let us say Halifax, which is naturally the object of the hon. member's primary concern, would continue to be an important focal point in terms of Atlantic air transportation. Whether or not the outcome of this will be satisfactory to the hon. member, I frankly cannot say at this moment. I can only indicate the two steps I have taken. One is to request the details of the reorganization, the second is to advance the time at which the Committee on Transportation can deal with this matter and then hon. members will have a chance to question both the chairman of Air Canada and its top officials as to what is proposed.

I am assured by Air Canada that it is their intention to achieve a more efficient operation, in their judgment, but to do so and to temper this need for efficiency with a great deal of understanding of the personnel problems involved. I hope that satisfies the hon. member.

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 10.27 p.m.