

National Transportation Act, 1986

existed against people taking all the profit away during a lucrative summer season and then leaving a carrier who has established an infrastructure in the community struggling to make ends meet and to be able to continue to provide the service.

Regulations saw that that would not happen. However, thanks to the Liberal Government and the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy) who introduced his “freedom of the skies” policy, those small entrepreneurs did get some competition. Carriers took over after the hard work had been done by an entrepreneur who had already convinced the people of the community to use the air facilities and who had invested in the community. The carriers took the cream away from the entrepreneur. They offered competition, but the end result was a reduction in service. The ultimate result of this Bill will also be a reduction in service.

As we see the big carriers take over the little carriers who took over the even smaller carriers and as we end up with only two national carriers for all intents and purposes, there will be minimal protection for the consumer and for the communities. The consumers may either lose the service or see the cost of that service blackmail them into paying exorbitant prices to move their goods and themselves and to stay in business. That is our ultimate concern.

Through Motion No. 4, we are trying to shift the emphasis a bit. We reluctantly accept competition as the prime agent, but we want some caveats. We want to ensure that when the courts look at this legislation as a result of legal actions, they will have to consider whether or not the mode of transportation or the carrier establishes and maintains fair rates and conditions that do not constitute unfair or destructive competitive practices.

We want to ensure that there is a mechanism that will prevent a small air carrier who has been out-competed by the biggies and is squeezing every last nickel and dime out of his

operation will not cut those corners that mean safety and will not put in jeopardy that last passenger on that last flight before the company goes bankrupt. I think it is very important that the Government give consideration to accepting this modification.

I freely admit that the Government was very good about accepting many of the ideas about which we spoke in committee. As well, members of the Government moved their own motions. I hope the Parliamentary Secretary who is present will speak to the Minister and to the officials to see whether or not this modification would be acceptable.

I realize my time is running out, Madam Speaker. I know that one of my colleagues from the Liberal Party wants to speak, but perhaps, given the fuzziness of my eyesight when looking at the clock, you might want to join with me in calling it six o'clock.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): The Hon. Member wishes to be recognized?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Fernand Robichaud (Westmorland—Kent): Yes, Madam Speaker. If we do not call it six o'clock, I would like to rise.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): Shall we call it six o'clock?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): It being 6 p.m., the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 3(1).

At 5.59 p.m., the House adjourned.