

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

### NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION ACT, 1986

#### MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Crosbie that Bill C-18, an Act respecting National Transportation, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee; and the amendment thereto of Mr. Benjamin (p. 2756).

**Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal—Sainte Marie):** Mr. Speaker, the legislation now before the House once again results from another decision made by this Tory Government which is influenced by the American Government.

Mr. Speaker, Bill C-18 now before the House is aimed at deregulating air transportation and rail transportation. Bill C-19 which is to be discussed later also has implications along with Bill C-18 concerning road transportation.

At first glance, Mr. Speaker, people might think it is in fact interesting to see changes being made to the transport policy, and the Liberal Party is not opposed to amending the transport policy, but on the other hand, we are opposed to the Bill as it is presently submitted to us. And my colleague, our official critic, the Hon. Member for Papineau (Mr. Ouellet) is justified in raising the matter before all Members of this House and the public in general, in criticizing and condemning the attitude of our Tory Government in this matter as in so many others, because the Standing Committee which discussed the whole question, the legislation, the idea of amending or deregulating, did not even have the time to meet and visit with people in Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

● (1610)

Mr. Speaker, I think it would be wise to act as a responsible person, to know, to wait for the opportunity to have information, comments, information from all Canadians rather than blindly relying on what a deputy minister, a minister or two and the Prime Minister's Office may have to say. We know who is running this country, Mr. Speaker. Not the Government Members, not the Ministers, not the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), but the Prime Minister's Office and his friends. But this is a case where laughing problems away is not good enough. First, what would be the implications of deregulation as far as air transportation is concerned?

Everyone remembers what happened in the United States some years ago. Even Canadians would say: "This is interesting. People's Express is advertising very inexpensive trips to Florida." People only had to travel to Montreal, to Ste-Catherine Street—they were taken by bus to Plattsburgh, and then instead of getting a hot meal on board the plane to Florida they ate a sandwich on the corner of the table: all this of course was not expensive. What the people did not know is

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that safety was no longer a priority, there were fewer mechanics to check the aircraft and fewer expert technicians standing by and ready to handle any kind of emergency.

In the early stages it did look rather promising. The first and second years were highlighted by strong competition from a number of smaller companies which opened for business and offered truly competitive fares. So where do they stand now, Mr. Speaker? Prices rose to their previous levels and services are still reduced. People still eat sandwiches on the corner of the table. Far from improving, safety has decreased as a result of deregulation, thousands of jobs have disappeared, thousands of companies went bankrupt.

Mr. Speaker, given that kind of experience we in Canada should have said: Well now, they made a mistake, so we should not do the same thing. No, Sir, our beloved Prime Minister listened very closely when Mr. Reagan said: Mr. Prime Minister, you know what the American Government has done, we have deregulated the industry, you do the same thing.

As if job losses were not enough, Air Canada President Taylor himself warned that the price of airline tickets would not go down. So what benefits does the Government expect from this Bill? It is obvious that consumers and passengers alike do not stand to gain anything at all. There will be more losses in terms of safety and ticket sales. Lots of jobs may be lost. But moreover, because of FIRA and given the Government's propensity for crawling before foreigners in the United States—not to mention France when it comes to fishing—if this Bill ever becomes law any foreign company will be able to buy Air Canada or Canadian Pacific Airlines, or any other Canadian airline for that matter, and Canadians will have lost control over their own air transport system.

For my part, I come from Montreal, which is a large urban centre. Naturally, there will always be transport services to cities like Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver and Calgary. But air services and freight transport will always be important for the remote regions, and small businesses in these regions will suffer because the Conservatives want to deregulate everything so that the law of the jungle, of might versus right, will apply. More is offered to the strongest because he pays more, but less is offered to the weakest because he cannot pay. Mr. Speaker, these measures related to air transport will harm all our remote areas, whether we are speaking about the North Shore and the constituency of the Prime Minister, about the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean region in Quebec, or about other regions in Alberta, in the Maritimes or elsewhere. They will harm the consumer, cause job losses and jeopardize our sovereignty and our ability to control the operations of our air carriers.

Let us now look at the impact of this Bill on railroads and trucking. The Government will allow railway carriers to sign confidential contracts. What does it mean? At this time, the shippers have contracts with a trucking company employing a number of truckers to deliver their goods across Canada or