

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

Nevertheless, we are still convinced that the decision will be a purely political one which will not necessarily take into account the long and short term policies of the present government from the point of view, say, of decentralization.

Mr. Speaker, by the decision to construct an international airport in Drummondville, the federal government will solve the overcrowded Dorval international airport problem. At the same time, it will fulfill the landing possibility needs of modern aviation.

I think that the technocrats' report will clearly show that the representatives of the area are justified in making this application. On the other hand, the Quebec government officially endorses this project.

Simultaneously, the federal government will apply its decentralization policy on behalf of an unfavoured region.

Through the investment of public funds in a project of that importance, the federal government will encourage and open the door to private investments essential to banish a staggering local economy and promote prosperity. Never a region has met the needs of such a large project with so many positive arguments: technical arguments are undeniable, social and economical arguments are decisive.

Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure to welcome a delegation from Drummondville in this regard. I have even distributed to each member the brief presented by the Chamber of Commerce, in order to draw their attention to the importance of the substantial investment resulting from the establishment of an international airport in Drummondville.

For several similar reasons and mainly because I am convinced that the Eastern Townships need some very special assistance to promote further economic development, the establishment of an international airport in Drummondville would intensively and continuously contribute to the progress of our region from the labour point of view, as well from the point of view of touristic, commercial and other means of communication. Better roads would lead to the site which is located at less than 30 minutes from Sherbrooke, less than 20 minutes from Victoriaville and less than 30 minutes from Trois Rivières which would be within easy reach thanks to the new bridge. The site is also located at less than 45 minutes from Montreal. Mr. Speaker, the Eastern Townships

[Mr. Fortin.]

have been left out in the cold for too long and, as I said, it is high time that each and everyone's political interests gave way to concern for the economic well-being of our area.

That is the reason why I put my question. However, I was very disappointed with the answer received. I expected a more precise, positive and progressive reply, which would have led us to hope that the ministry, on the advice of well-informed technocrats, would make an economic decision likely to solve the problems of this buffer area which I consider the center of the province of Quebec. Located between Quebec City and Montreal, it has been neglected far too long by the present government and the previous ones.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this is a forceful proposal. I suggest that hon. members acquaint themselves with the brief and the government take a clear and positive decision, meeting the expectations of some 800 municipalities. Through resolutions or other means, they have openly approved the establishment of the future international airport on the site suggested in the brief submitted by the Drummondville Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, I am waiting of course for an answer from the parliamentary Secretary, and I hope he will tell us that the decision made will be an economic one. Indeed, I think that if the government shows that it is serious and makes an economic decision, it will have to choose Drummondville. Since they are dinning into our ears a decentralization policy, we will then see whether such a policy is only talk or if it is a serious one.

Mr. Yves Forest (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Hellyer), all I can say to the hon. member for Lotbinière on this important question of the future International Airport is substantially similar to what the minister answered him last Friday, since the final decision has not yet been made.

The decision obviously rests with the federal government and they will make it. Of course, they will take into account the advice of technicians or experts in that field, who have submitted reports, and they will also have to consider the results of their talks with the authorities of the province of Quebec.