

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, April 10, 1987

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[Translation]

AIR CANADA

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY—TRIBUTE TO MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEES

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau): Mr. Speaker, to mark the 50th anniversary of Air Canada, on behalf of the Liberal Party of Canada I am pleased to pay tribute to the management and employees of this Crown corporation which, over the years, has gained national and international recognition.

Now that the Conservative Government is on the verge of adopting Bill C-18 which will bring about complete air transport deregulation, it is appropriate to question the wisdom—let alone the need—to privatize Air Canada at this juncture. The Government would be much better advised to convert the Air Canada debt into equity, commit itself to make it easier for the corporation to seek private sector funding to upgrade its aircraft fleet, and abide by the unwritten rule under which Air Canada deserves preferential treatment in the attribution of international and transborder routes, were it only because in many instances Air Canada is the only carrier providing domestic services in the most remote and least profitable regions of Canada.

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[English]

NATURAL RESOURCES

OTTAWA RIVER—POTENTIAL FOR RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, right here in the National Capital Region and in the area immediately beyond we have a great national asset which has never been given the importance or attention it deserves. I am talking about the majestic Ottawa River which flows for hundreds of miles as a borderline between Ontario and

Quebec. It flows from the massive waters of Lake Timiskaming and joins up with the navigable waters of the historic St. Lawrence at Montreal.

• (1105)

The Ottawa River and its many tributaries were the highways for hundreds of fur traders during the formative years of Canadian history.

In today's world this great Ottawa River and its tributaries can become the recreational paradise and the waterway route for small craft navigation for years to come. It can become the answer in part to the economic problems which plague eastern Ontario and western Quebec. We have the imagination and the plans to bring this new development into reality with proper environmental considerations. Now we need the political will to do the job.

The boating industry brings in more than \$1 billion a year in taxes alone for provincial and federal Governments. Why can we not reinvest some of this money and create more tax resources for the development of waterways in Canada? Let us be prepared for the leisure world of the 21st century which we created in this century.

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AIR CANADA

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF ESTABLISHMENT—TRIBUTE TO WORK OF EMPLOYEES

Mr. Gerry St. Germain (Mission—Port Moody): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the government side of the House it gives me great pleasure to advise you and the Canadian public that on this date 50 years ago, April 10, 1937, the Trans-Canada Airlines Act was passed in this House. Trans-Canada Airlines later became Air Canada and is today celebrating its 50th anniversary.

This corporation has served our great country and its people with distinction. Over the years it has become one of the world's largest and most respected airlines. I think all Canadians can share with the employees of Air Canada their pride in an airline which is truly recognized around the world for its professionalism and expertise. Mainly, I commend to all Canadians the quality of the service given to us by the crews and the staff of Air Canada.

I ask all Hon. Members to join me in wishing Air Canada a very happy 50th anniversary.