

National Transportation Act, 1986

Mr. Cochrane: We have added 100 people at a time when we have attempted to restrain our budget. We recognized that priority and added 100 people.

In addition, in the United States there was a major dispute with air traffic controllers. Everyone knows what the President did with regard to the air traffic control situation. Everyone knows how unfortunate it was, not only for the workers but for the people using the industry. That is not happening in Canada. We have an excellent air traffic control system. We are spending \$600 million to upgrade our radar system. We are adding people to our air traffic control system. We are ensuring that the regulation will be accompanied by a uniform system to guarantee improvement in the materials, facilities, and qualifications of the people assigned to those tasks.

The American example does not relate to the Canadian situation. We are involved in an orderly and progressive deregulation of the transportation industry, consulting with the people, the provinces, the shippers, and the employees to ensure that our record in Canada will stand. We are doing it progressively with a very comprehensive plan.

Mr. Ouellet: Mr. Speaker, I have a short question for the Hon. Member. Earlier I asked him to indicate which clause of the Bill deals with a guarantee of continued service in remote areas of the country. He might sound very convincing and strong in his answer, but in reality he did not answer. He gave a long explanation because he knows very well that there is no clause in the legislation which assures continued service in remote areas. It is open season. A company could come in, start to give service, cream the market in the good season, stop operating, and leave the region without any service at all. It will be total chaos unless there are agencies like the CTC to continue to ensure services in these areas. The Government has totally abdicated its responsibility *vis-à-vis* remote areas of the country. Again I ask the Hon. Member to tell us where in the legislation there is a guarantee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Member for Moncton (Mr. Cochrane) on a succinct rebuttal, please.

Mr. Cochrane: Mr. Speaker, because I do not have a copy of Bill C-18 with me, I am not able to give the Hon. Member the exact chapter. Nonetheless, we recognized that concern when we went into northern Canada. There was an expression of that concern, not only by the people but by the companies providing the service.

There is a process by which the Minister can intervene and give a 90-day notice with regard to service, so basically that should take an area through the winter period. Then the Minister can call for a proposal and not allow the carrier to leave the market until he is convinced that there is a solution. Then he can provide for a supplementary program from the Government in order to subsidize the operation into the particular area.

We feel that process may not even be necessary because companies are operating more efficiently. I think they are

enjoying greater respectability as far as the population is concerned. As they build their credibility and reliability, people will rely on them, and I do not think they will encounter economic difficulties in the northern areas.

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to speak to Bill C-18, an Act respecting national transportation. The Bill will have a major effect upon the manner in which goods and passengers are moved by ship, by rail, by airline and through extraprovincial trucking firms which will be allowed to conduct business under the new rules. Everything from foreign ownership of our transportation sector to safety standards and profit margins will be affected by the measures contained in the Bill.

If we were examining a Bill for deregulation which had been put together in an orderly, thoughtful, and careful way, with protection for our Canadian industries, I believe we on this side of the House would be strongly supporting it. However, this is not the case. What we have here—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order, please. If Hon. Members would like to discuss the particular Bill behind the curtains, I would appreciate it very much. I would like to listen to the Hon. Member for Mount Royal (Mrs. Finestone).

Mrs. Finestone: We may share differing points of view but at least we can have the respect to listen.

As I was saying, the idea has good potential and we find the idea acceptable. It is the procedure, the manner, the lack of thoroughness, and the concerns we have which lead us to ask that the Bill go back for reconsideration.

If we take a look at the Bill, we see that what we have is the giving up of a free trade negotiating card. We are jeopardizing our own Canadian markets and our own Canadian jobs. We will really be setting up a unilateral free trade situation with no reciprocal rights. It is absolutely disgraceful.

We have just gone through the whole business of books, drugs, trees, shakes and shingles, softwood lumber, and now we are putting trucking, shipping, and railway lines into jeopardy, and we are not even using it as a bargaining chip. I do not know what is wrong with the planning of the Government, but it is certainly not thinking very far ahead.

I would like to direct my remarks to particular sectors of the transportation industry which will be impacted should our transportation industry be deregulated in the manner outlined and proposed in the Bill. I would like to recommend strongly, at the end of my remarks, that the regulatory framework and the interprovincial agreements need further study, and should be studied, and that the whole matter go back to committee. They should come back with an amended Bill, something of which all Canadians can be proud, safe, and assured.

Let us take a look at the airline industry. The Government spoke of its grandiose plans. I listened to my hon. colleague talk about *la situation dans les endroits éloignés*. I think there is great cause for concern. When we look at those plans, they