

Adjournment Debate

an objective one, one which requires accountability. We cannot go on simply doing what we want to do and taking our chances. These are public funds we are using and for which we are responsible. We must have a code of conduct.

● (2325)

I want to end by quoting an article which appeared in the *Edmonton Journal*. It gave some advice to the trade Minister; it said, "Take the train." The article indicated that the CBC released some documents showing that the Minister of State for International Trade took members of his family with him on 15 official trips, and it pointed out the pressing need for strict enforcement of federal restrictions on Government travel. It ended up telling the Minister, "Take the train; we do not trust you with our airplanes any more".

It is obvious the Minister of State for International Trade has abused his privileges and now must be held accountable, notwithstanding his defence or his saying that there was room on the aircraft and that he could take his family because it was not costing anybody anything. That is not good enough. I do not think anyone in Government fails to recognize that that is not good enough. We must have an objective test. My purpose is to appeal to the Government, to the Ministry and to those responsible for the public Treasury to come up with a code of conduct and rules governing the use of executive aircraft and to impose them upon every Member of Cabinet, every Member of the House.

Mr. Jesse P. Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member had several specific questions about the use of executive aircraft and made reference to the Minister of State for International Trade (Mr. Regan).

First, I think it is unfortunate the Hon. Member is dwelling on the travel of an individual Minister, especially a Minister who has done so much to promote Canadian exports around the world. If the Hon. Member really has concerns about the use of executive aircraft, he can pursue them without reflecting on an individual who happens to be promoting Canadian interests abroad.

The guidelines governing the use of executive aircraft provide for aircraft to be booked in the names of Ministers of the Crown. It is left to their discretion who will accompany them. This is not unreasonable in the Government's view. Once

a Minister has established the need for the aircraft for the conduct of Government business, as he must under the guidelines, the marginal cost of filling one or more otherwise empty seats is minimal. Therefore, it is possible for a Minister to be accompanied by officials of his Department, members of his family, members of the press or, as sometimes happens, members of other Parties.

It is interesting that the Hon. Member did not complain in his remarks tonight about his Conservative colleagues who take their spouses and children on DND flights from Shearwater to Ottawa and back. Also it is interesting he did not mention whether he takes his family or part of his family on such DND flights. If he does, the Government has no objection since we see our families so little.

It is very unfortunate the Hon. Member would take off on the Minister in this way rather than seek information on what are the guidelines of the Department of Transport. The guidelines are there. They are very clear. Manifests are kept. This is something about which the Hon. Member asked on June 7. The most important thing in the manifest is to obtain the individual's name. An attempt is also made to obtain the individual's affiliation, such as whether the traveller is a Member of Parliament, a public servant or a guest, but this information is supplementary. If there was an error on a particular manifest, about which the Hon. Member also complained on June 7, I can assure him that there was no intention to mislead him or anyone else. Naturally efforts will be made to be as accurate as possible, remembering the main purpose of the manifests.

Mr. Crosby: Where is Regan?

Mr. Flis: The Hon. Member asks where the Minister of State for International Trade is. He had to leave just before 11 o'clock to fly to Vancouver. I did not ask what flight he took. The Minister is sufficiently knowledgeable to be able to decide whether to take an MOT flight or a commercial flight.

[Translation]

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 11 o'clock.

At 11.31 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.