

relation between the Auditor General and Crown corporations is one that should be looked into.

Perhaps there are areas where for competitive reasons it might not be advisable to disclose all the information, but the information should be available for anyone who is interested. This is part of the Auditor General's work. It would have a salutary effect on the CBC, on Air Canada and on some of the other organizations.

The foregoing are some of the reasons why it is desirable for us to look into the matter of the financial report of Air Canada. There are many more questions involved. For example, prepayments on new aircraft. Last year \$126 million was paid out for new aircraft, and no interest was collected. Most business firms do not operate in that way, but perhaps there is a perfectly good explanation.

I also draw honourable senators' attention to the trans-continental service, which made some money last year, but in connection with which fares were down 5 per cent. A new plan went into effect with respect to this service. If a person who leaves from Vancouver for Zurich decides to stay overnight in Montreal and travel on to Zurich the next day, he has to pay a stopover charge of \$30, and a similar charge coming back. This does not seem to be a good system of merchandising because it adds \$60 to the cost of the return flight from Vancouver to Zurich. I could go on and on in the same vein. There may be perfectly good answers to these questions, but we should have them.

I shall not trespass further on the time of honourable senators. There is ample justification for the motion that we should require officials of Air Canada to appear before the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance to give us some answers. It is true they have appeared before the Transport Committee of the House of Commons and very interesting information has been elicited. However, much more is necessary.

Hon. David Walker: Would you not be putting your finger on it if you considered who the heads of Air Canada are at the present time? McGregor was a lifelong airman. He nominated as his successor, Herbert Seagram, a person of great distinction, who himself had spent all his life in this field. Who have we now as chairman? Yves Pratte, a law partner of St. Laurent, which is in his favour as a lawyer but does not help him to run an airline. As President, we have John Baldwin, who was Deputy Minister of Transport, a charming person, but both of them are as ignorant as Paddy's pig in running any airline.

Hon. Mr. McDonald: I take exception to that on behalf of Ireland.

Hon. Mr. Walker: With the exception of my friend over there.

Hon. Mr. McDonald: I am innocent.

Hon. Mr. Walker: As my friend knows, in any organization there must be a good executive, and the top executive must be supreme. Here we have the blind

[Hon. Mr. Cameron.]

leading the blind, neither one of them knows anything about airplanes, nor airline organization. They have no training in it. They are pleasant ignoramuses in this field and it is a crying shame, because it is costing the public of Canada tens of millions of dollars every year. As long as the lack of administrative and executive ability at the top remains, Air Canada, of which we were once so proud, will continue to crumble. It is an outrage and I am very glad that my friend the honourable senator raised this point.

Hon. Mr. Cameron: I put it slightly less forcefully.

Hon. Mr. Walker: Do you not agree with what I said?

Hon. Mr. Cameron: Yes.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Beaubien, debate adjourned.

THE SENATE

APPOINTMENT OF FEMALE PAGES—QUESTION

Hon. Muriel McQ. Fergusson: Honourable senators, I have a question which I proposed to ask the leader. However, as he is absent and I will not be able to be in the chamber tomorrow or next week and I would like to have an answer, I will ask the question of Senator McDonald.

Could the Senate give leadership in eliminating discrimination on the grounds of sex by adopting the principle of equality in relation to appointments to its staff and, in particular, in light of the fact that the United States Senate has cracked tradition and appointed girl pages and the Ontario Legislature now has four girl pages, could consideration be given to the hiring of girl pages in the Senate?

Hon. Jacques Flynn: What will be the costume, hot pants?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: I am pleased that Senator Ferguson had given notice that she intended to ask this question. I am pleased to be in a position to give her at least a partial answer. Active consideration is being given to employing young ladies as pages in the Senate. However, I understand there are discussions also taking place with educational authorities in the Province of Ontario with respect to the possibility of this service being in the nature of an extension program of the political science course in Ontario.

I think that this problem can be worked out. I can inform you that several legislatures throughout Canada now employ young ladies as pages. I can assure you that every consideration is being given to the program and it is my personal hope that it can be implemented at an early date.

Hon. Mr. Macdonald: Might I ask Senator McDonald whether any of the present pages would lose their employment if young ladies are employed as pages?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: No, they would not.