

CNR and Air Canada

roads and using up parking space. A re-examination and reorientation of railway service in keeping with the last half of the twentieth century must take place right away. The first thing to do, Mr. Speaker, is to get rid of the Canadian Transport Commission and bring control back to parliament, to the representatives of the people.

I should like now to make a few remarks about airports. It is my opinion that as far as possible airports should be constructed on waste land. Failing that, we should use water transportation as far as possible. I say this from the standpoint of an airplane landing, from the standpoint of pollution and from the standpoint of usage of land. An airport should be far enough away from urban centres so that people do not suffer excessively from noise and pollution.

I have been wondering about the new airport proposed for Brougham, a town near Pickering. It makes one pause and wonder why good farming land so close to the city of Toronto would be taken. It is within 30 miles of Toronto and will add to the pollution of that area. There is also talk about establishing another city of 200,000 people in the area. Yet this government talks of green belts and regional development and doing away with pollution. One wonders why the government is doing what it is. Why is it taking over good, arable farmland that over the years could produce cereal grains, beef cattle, hogs and chickens—food that we will need when our population increases? By paving that beautiful, arable farmland you also stop the production of oxygen from trees, grass and other plants. Therefore, not only are you adding to pollution; you are stopping the creation of oxygen. It seems to me that the government could have used waste land which is less productive. I am thinking of level areas north of the proposed site that is waste or poor land. Such land is not economically viable as farm land. Why could not the government have used that?

• (2040)

I also wonder why we must take two bites at the cherry and build two airports. There is to be an international airport at St. Scholastique, Quebec. Now there is to be another one at Pickering, making two large airports for the Toronto area. Why must we take two bites at the cherry and run backward and forward across Toronto between one airport and the other? What is the purpose of putting the airport there? My question is as simple as that.

The minister is the person who says where national and international airports are to go. The other day in the House I asked why the proposed site has been chosen, but he had nothing to say and made no statement in the House. I suggest that parliament and the people are entitled to know the government's reasons for putting the airport at the proposed site. Perhaps there are good reasons for putting it there. If there are, give them to us. It now appears, that the airport will not be large enough, if the forecasts of statisticians about the size of the population in the area are correct. If their forecasts are right, my argument will be strengthened. I do not know, and not many in this House know why the government is putting the airport there. I think parliament has the right to know.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Mr. Rynard.]

Mr. Rynard: I say this because Parliament and the public deserve an explanation. Other sites are cheaper and not as economically important. Why have they not been chosen? Since this is to be an international airport, the minister is obligated to tell this House why he prefers that site. When the head of the Canadian Transport Commission was a cabinet minister I asked him if he would consider asking the airlines to instal escalators for the use of the aged and those with heart conditions when boarding airplanes. If one looks through *Hansard* he will see that the minister promised to look into the matter as soon as possible and see that such escalators were installed right away. Well, he has gone. However, the escalators or elevators to help people board airplanes have not been installed. This matter is of medical importance since many travelling today suffer from heart conditions. When you consider that one male in three over 50 in this country suffers from a heart condition, you will readily understand why I am concerned about this matter.

I should like to conclude with another observation. The airlines are to serve many people at Toronto International Airport. The other night when I was at the unloading ramp I could not stay there because of the stink in the air from polluting exhausts and from buses. The polluted air was overpowering. What a foul place it was! That operation is run by the Department of Transport. Without using any fancy adjectives, let me say that is a heck of a way to run an international airport. I hope that the former minister of transport who now heads the Canadian Transport Commission will read my remarks and remember some of the promises he made when he was minister of transport.

Mr. Randolph Harding (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, we are discussing Bill C-4 which is to authorize the provision of moneys to meet certain capital expenditures of the Canadian National Railways system and Air Canada for the period January 1, 1971, to June 30, 1972, and to authorize the guarantee by Her Majesty of certain securities to be issued by the CNR and certain debentures to be issued by Air Canada. These matters are outlined in the bill now before the House. The presentation of this type of bill is an annual event. We are being asked, actually, to rubber-stamp the approval of expenditures made by these Crown corporations. However, this legislation gives us an opportunity to speak on general transportation problems and to make suggestions for change. This, Mr. Speaker, I intend to do.

May I speak briefly about the fixed charge debt of the CNR. This guarantee was given by the federal government many years ago when the CNR system was formed in 1923 from a number of railway lines which were on the verge of bankruptcy. The CNR guarantee at that time was more than generous, but I feel it saddled the Canadian taxpayer with interest payments on a debt which could not be justified. The CNR continues to carry this unjust debt load upon which we still pay interest. I believe the CNR capital structure ought to be changed again, for the railway can never be a paying proposition considering the immense load of debt and consequent interest payments now being carried.

The shareholders of the almost bankrupt railway companies which eventually made up the CNR fared well at public expense over the years. In retrospect, Mr. Speaker,