

*Transportation*

affairs of the Air Transport Board, the individual hearing evidence presents a brief either in written or verbal form to the board. It is on the basis of that kind of information that decisions yea or nay are made.

What will happen? Under the bill there will be set up various committees or subcommittees of the Canadian Transportation Commission. One of those committees will deal with matters affecting air transport in the country. A provision of the bill ensures that the chairman of the Air Transport Board, whoever he may be at the time of the coming into force of this act, will be the chairman of that subcommittee. Over him and over all the other committees will be the chairman of the commission, who, in effect, will be the czar of Canadian transport of all kinds over which the government of Canada has jurisdiction.

This is a tremendous responsibility and tremendous power to put into the hands of an individual. Such administrative control cannot be abdicated by the parliament of Canada, by those of us sitting here representing the people by due process. The immediate word coming to mind, when looking at legislation such as this is Lord Hewart's new despotism. Such will be the inevitable role that this commission will play in affairs of transportation in this country.

Some sort of appeal procedure seems to have been written into this legislation. An appeal simply to the minister, as exists in the present Air Transport Board routine, is insufficient, notwithstanding that with his usual benevolence the minister probably views all such appeals with that impartiality for which he is noted. How does the bill affect air transport generally? The committee proceedings, as I have said, said nothing about this except for two pages in the brief produced by the Canadian Pacific.

● (6:40 p.m.)

The announcement which the minister made to the house on October 20 of regional air carrier policy deals with every phase of air transportation except one. It deals with the two main line carriers in Canada. It deals very briefly with commercial charter operations, but says nothing about general aviation. Notwithstanding the fact that we had recent amendments to the Aeronautics Act, the new despotism is still sniping at an area of aviation which made aviation possible in this country, indeed made Canada a leader in aviation matters throughout the world.

I refer to clause 93 of the bill. If it is passed as it stands it will make every person who is the owner of an aircraft, and who desires to lease it, subject to obtaining first the approval of the Canadian transport commission, or the subcommittee on air. This is an entirely undue restriction. I speak not simply because I happen to be found in a personal position here. Many people in general aviation throughout this country acquire aircraft and are able to do so because of the probability of being able to lease them on a dry lease basis.

I know there are lots of bootlegging operations of frustrated air carriers who purchase aircraft simply for the purpose of getting into the business and lease them to licensed air carriers. But when you pass a blanket provision, such as this amendment which is prepared to the Aeronautics Act, you are catching all the little people who happen to own aircraft.

The minister has been a champion, certainly while he has been Minister of Transport and I have no reason to believe that his philosophy was ever any different, of protecting the government air line, Air Canada, at all costs. In my view, this has worked to the disadvantage of air progress in Canada. I am sure he is aware of the editorials that have been written with respect to his policies, both past and present. When he announced in 1964 a segment of his air policy, he said that in the domestic field any development of competition should not compromise or seriously injure the economic viability of T.C.A. main line domestic operations which represent the essential framework of its domestic network services. In other words, he said there must not be the kind of competition which would put T.C.A. into the red.

The minister nods his head that this is right. I disagree with the minister, as have many editorial writers. I submit to him that this is not true Liberalism when he adopts this kind of philosophy, because it completely negates the philosophy of free competition. The air line that is going to survive will be that one that can compete efficiently and economically, and that is what a mass of editorials have pointed out.

The minister has said that the policy on regional services calls for a reasonable role for regional air carriers, which will give the regional air carriers a reasonable chance to operate without government subsidies. He used the word "reasonable" twice, and that indicates the extent to which the minister feels there must be that degree of control