

Board of Directors of Ports Canada. Otto Lang said: "If you want me, you must have my former assistant as well." So the former assistant was hired as well. The porkbarreling has started.

I would like the porkbarreling to stop in Ottawa; but it comes all the way to Halifax. In Halifax, everyone is interested in this situation. The port is vital to the city. It has been the guardian of the North for 200 years. Halifax has performed that function for 200 years and we finally have an independent port corporation with local autonomy in the management of the port. After 117 years of being classed as a public harbour, since Confederation, we get our own port authority. So who do government Members put on the board of directors of the corporation? Do they put people from each sector of marine transportation on the board? Do they get somebody from the shipping side, somebody from the marine workers, somebody from the ship's chandlers? No, that is not what they do. They get a defeated federal Liberal candidate, a defeated provincial Liberal candidate and a former Member of Parliament who has been retired for many years. This conglomerate of people have only one thing in common. They are partisan supporters of the Liberal Party. They are the ones who are going to manage the Port of Halifax. No wonder we will be in trouble.

I wanted to speak of the real challenge to our transportation system of the future. That challenge is deregulation. As my colleague, the Hon. Member for Vegreville has pointed out, the question of deregulation has arisen in respect of the air transportation industry. I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that that is one area in which we will not stand for any quick fixes by the Minister of Transport. We will not let him pretend to the airline consumers of Canada that they will get a lower ticket price if they follow his deregulation policy, because we know what that will cost. It will cost thousands of jobs. Air Canada has 20,000 employees and I know that some Air Canada flight attendants have already lost their jobs right across Canada. In the Riding of Halifax West alone, 80 such jobs have been lost. I would like to point out to the Minister of Transport that when he is talking about deregulation, he is talking about lost jobs.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): I regret to interrupt the Hon. Member but his time has expired. A 10-minute question or comment period will be allowed.

[Translation]

Mr. Deniger: I listened with interest to the speech delivered by my colleague. When dealing with air transport deregulation, he contended that jobs will be lost. I do not see how he can come to such a conclusion since in the United States where drastic deregulation is now taking place, the number of jobs in the air transportation industry has gone up from 292,000 to 307,000. Then how can he make such a statement?

[English]

Mr. Crosby: Mr. Speaker, I have no difficulty explaining that. We have an entirely different airline transportation system in Canada. In the first place, our immense major

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carrier is an agency of the Government of Canada. Air Canada is simply a Crown corporation. It does not have to worry about profits because its financial future is ensured. It may be that the President of Air Canada, Mr. Taylor, takes it upon himself to try to show a profit, but we do not know if he shows a profit in private industry terms. He can charge, or not charge, or do what he wants. He has no investors and is not involved in the stock exchange. He has no outside auditors so he does what he wants.

The point is that Air Canada accounts for a large percentage of the entire Canadian airline activity nationally and internationally. The reason for that, of course, is that it has a mandate and obligation to provide air services at various points and frequencies. That sets the stage for our entire airline industry. In Canada, we have an airline industry that is not only in business but is in business with a duty and a responsibility. When we talk about deregulation, we cannot abandon the duty and responsibility that exists. We cannot simply say that it is not profitable to fly an aircraft between Halifax and Fredericton or between Saint John, New Brunswick, and Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.

The Hon. Member has given himself away because Montreal, Toronto and areas like that are not affected by a potential deregulation process, as are remote areas like the Maritimes and some parts of western Canada. My point is that whereas deregulation in highly populated areas like New York and Chicago may result in greater airline activity between those points, with increasing employment following on that, we are dealing with an entirely different concept in Canada. We have a different quality of passenger and, indeed, other different airline services, and we must maintain those services.

If the Minister of Transport is suggesting a deregulation which would allow Air Canada or Eastern Provincial Airways to abandon routes between Halifax and Saint John, New Brunswick, then I am entirely opposed to it. Even if the deregulation is simply a process that will allow for one less flight attendant, one less pilot, one less safety inspector, one less ground maintenance person and one less agent at the counter, I am not in favour of it unless it can be demonstrated that there is a clear advantage in terms of passenger rates to justify that loss of jobs and activity. If I am able to pay less for an airline ticket but have to pay more in taxes to provide welfare and other payments, I do not see where I as a consumer, or where any other Canadian has gained one thing.

• (1530)

Mr. Deniger: Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that the Hon. Member opposite does not know at all what deregulation is. First of all, I would like to make it quite clear that when we talk about deregulation, we never talk about safety. Safety will not be deregulated. What we are talking of is a lessening of the rules of entry, exist and setting fares. Safety will never be deregulated because in itself safety has to be regulated.

Second, I am surprised when the Hon. Member says that Air Canada does not have to worry about profits. If he had been present at the Transport Committee which considered the