

*Air Canada*

I think it is extremely important that this House think carefully about what is being done both in limiting the amount of foreign ownership, as Motion No. 2 proposes, and in specifying the 45 per cent public ownership in the Act as well. Therefore, I urge this House to support these very reasoned amendments.

I suppose for most of us they are second choice amendments because they are still directed to privatization. However, they would greatly enhance the Bill and ensure that at least some part of Canada's airline would remain under control of its people.

**Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Madam Speaker, one of the difficulties with duty night is that I have to sit and listen to representatives of the NDP. Do people understand what they are saying here tonight? The Liberals used to have a truth squad. Maybe they would like to reconstitute that organization to follow the NDP around. These people are giving out misinformation. When I am not on duty I can get up and shut off the television and do important work, but here I am on my duty night faced with a steady diet of these people telling us untruths.

Let me just set the record straight. What is this whole thing about foreign ownership? Let me understand what they are saying. Possibly we can get these people into a little seminar and bring in someone to explain the provisions of the Act. A maximum of 25 per cent can be foreign owned under privatization. Where is the Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin), the transport critic for the NDP? I am sure he would bring this to their attention if he were in the House. Airlines in Canada must be controlled by Canadians.

What is the basis of this amendment? They talked about the idea that somehow this privatization poses some threat to our national airline. Quite the contrary. This privatization will ensure a stronger, more vital airline to serve all Canadians. This has nothing to do with whether it is owned by the Government or the people of Canada. We will still have the same strong airline.

**Mr. Skelly:** Point of order, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** The truth somehow affects New Democrats in a very strange way.

**Mr. Skelly:** Madam Speaker, I wonder if the Chair could instruct the Minister that giving misinformation in this House is a very serious matter. When he uses the facts and figures that he is using, that is misleading the House. With 25 per cent, a single American purchaser would control the airline under the terms laid down in the legislation. Could the Minister please give the correct information in the House?

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne):** I think the Hon. Member is starting to debate again, which he did very artfully

a little earlier today. He might want to do it later but this is debate.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Madam Speaker, I want to get on to the question of safety and the NDP suggestion that somehow privatization will negatively affect the safety of airlines, specifically Air Canada, I suppose. What kind of suggestion is that? Are they not aware of the fact that this Government brought in revisions to the Aeronautics Act? Are they not aware that for the first time in 62 years this Government updated and brought into legislation brand new regulations for all airlines?

**Mr. Skelly:** On a point of order, Madam Speaker, this is again a matter of a reputable member of Cabinet providing Members of the House with precise information. The new regulations are in effect, but the Government has cut the staff of people who enforce those regulations and the industry is not safe—

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** That is a joke.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne):** My comments are the same as they were 30 seconds ago.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Madam Speaker, I never correct the Chair, but you said something about an artful intervention. I do not believe it is artful; it is an intervention purely and simply without foundation.

I want to point out to the Hon. Member and the House that all airlines are controlled by rigorous regulations under the Aeronautics Act. This is not a question of privatization. That is totally irrelevant to the question. I would have thought that the NDP, who march to the orders of union leaders in this country, would want to listen to the employees of Air Canada, members of unions. They are overwhelmingly in favour of this Act. They understand the flexibility, the new dimensions, and the new opportunities it gives the company.

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Canada is not acting alone in its privatization program. The socialist friend of the New Democrats, Mr. Mitterrand in France, presided over a substantial number of privatizations. I did not hear New Democratic Party Members standing up on statements and motions, beating their chests, and denouncing President Mitterrand and the socialists in France for not stopping the privatizations in that country. Why the double standard?

We are trying to do something sensible and reasonable here. We should defeat these amendments with alacrity, if not sooner.

**Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill):** Madam Speaker, I always thought it was the Minister for International Trade (Mr. Crosbie) who told jokes in this House.