

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, July 4, 1969

The house met at 11 a.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

AIR TRANSPORT

STATEMENT BY MINISTER ON AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL POLICY AND INSTALLATIONS—TABLING OF SECOND VOLUME OF ROBINSON REPORT

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, in accordance with an undertaking to make a statement regarding air traffic control policy, I should like to make the statement now.

Recently I, together with officials of my department, met with the president of the Canadian Air Traffic Controllers Association. We discussed a number of matters of mutual interest and I am pleased to say that there was unanimous agreement that the air traffic control system in Canada continues to operate as the acknowledged leader in its field. I share the department's determination that it should be kept this way. Safety standards maintained by the department in civil aviation services are second to no other country, and this I feel is a direct and proud reflection of the dedication and professionalism of the people we have working in this field.

The remarkable growth in the aviation industry in all major centres during the past decade is self-evident. The next few years will see even more dramatic advances. The Department of Transport is taking steps to meet these rapidly accelerating needs by, for example, comprehensive planning for the development of a supersonic jumbo jet airport at St. Scholastique, and the provision of greatly expanded facilities to serve Toronto and the southern Ontario region. Considerable growth can also be anticipated in many other parts of Canada. An integral and vital part of this forward planning must include provision of an adequate number of skilled air traffic controllers and the most modern equipment to enable them to do their work efficiently and with maximum security for the travelling public.

In this connection I am pleased to announce that a contract amounting to \$3.9 million has been awarded by the federal Department of Transport to Philips Electronic Industries Limited of Toronto for 29 instrument landing systems, known as "I.L.S.", for Canadian airports.

The 29 installations have been purchased as a part of a continuing program to improve the safety and efficiency of aircraft approach and landing operations at airports. The department now has I.L.S. equipment installed at 55 airports and the new ones will be put into service during the next five years.

Each system provides both vertical and horizontal guidance to pilots approaching the runway and is particularly valuable during conditions of poor visibility. The new equipment is of fully solid state design and surpasses the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organization. Delivery of the first unit is expected in April 1971.

To help in the achievement of the best possible system, Judge John Beverley Robinson was commissioned in 1966 to enquire into the working conditions of the air traffic controllers. I am tabling Volume II of his report today, and I am pleased to advise the house that 75 per cent of the recommendations made by Judge Robinson in this document have been or are being implemented. Some of the remaining recommendations could properly be termed matters for collective bargaining. Such collective bargaining is now under way, having begun on June 11 of this year. This represents the second series of negotiations with the Canadian Air Traffic Controllers Association, the first having been completed in August of last year with results that produced substantial improvements in pay and working conditions.

In addition to those matters which are the subject of direct collective bargaining, officials of the Department of Transport and members of the controllers association meet regularly to discuss all phases of air control policy and related matters. I have given an assurance that such consultation will be stepped up in future and that I am ready at all times to hear and consider the controllers' recommendations.