

Supply—Mines and Technical Surveys

formance under the contract. The law will be observed and nothing less than the law will be accepted in the discharge of the company's obligations. I think, Mr. Chairman, in the face of these facts the public interest is fully protected, except against vitriolic attacks of the kind the committee has listened to tonight.

Mr. Chevrier: The minister has said I have made a vitriolic attack against this company. Will the minister disprove any of the statements I have made? I have made charges in this house in the same way that I made them last year. Nobody rose to dispute them. My statement last year that this company had operated without a licence was admitted by the Minister of Transport. He said he had overlooked it and he passed an order in council by virtue of certain decontrol powers which put this company in a position to operate. I also made a statement that the company's insurance had been cancelled twice and I named the company that had cancelled the insurance. It was the British Aviation Insurance of Montreal. This statement has not been disputed. I also made the statement that this company had not filed a financial statement as it is required to do under the Aeronautics Act.

If these statements are not correct, let the minister or anybody else on the other side disprove them. I am not in the habit of making statements on my responsibility as a member of parliament that I cannot substantiate. If I make statements that are incorrect or inaccurate I will rise in my place afterwards, as I have done on one occasion, and say that I was in error. I have made these statements based upon information which I have received from extremely reliable sources. One of these statements which I have made this evening indicates that, notwithstanding what the minister has said was required in so far as equipment to operate in the far north is concerned, Autair did not possess. Furthermore, Autair is being sued in a court of law for the return of certain equipment that is required, according to the minister himself, for operation in the far north. Surely, that ought to be enough to put the minister and the government on the defensive and to urge them to inquire fully into this matter.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): The hon. member has chosen to repeat something he said last year about this company in relation to its licence. The air transport board is quite capable of dealing with this situation. The air transport board is the body with which this company has filed its tariff, and this company must be licensed. The hon. member keeps on speaking of what happened last

year as though it were a continuing situation. He talks about an action in the courts against the company. It is not customary, Mr. Chairman, to assume that a company that is being sued and, as I gather, defending an action, is at fault until that has been determined by a judgment of a court of law.

I suggest to the hon. member that talk of this kind is the sort of thing that should be put forward in quite different circumstances if he feels that, on his responsibility as a member, he should undertake to do so.

The hon. member has mixed up, along with statements made in a government return, a large number of statements that he himself has made. I respectfully suggest to him, Mr. Chairman, that he has not correctly interpreted the answers that were made by my colleague the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys. I repeat—and in this respect I find myself in contradiction of the hon. gentleman's earlier assertions—that in each year this company was the lowest bidder and that the government in awarding the contract to Autair was serving the public interest and getting the most economical job done in relation to this polar continental shelf project; and in that respect I suggest that my colleague the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys was carrying out his duties.

So far as an action in the courts is concerned, I take it that we may await the outcome of that matter instead of trying to prejudge it. So far as licensing last year is concerned, that gave the hon. gentleman no right to make continuing accusations as to a later period. I have said that this company must obey the law. Nothing less than obedience to the law will be accepted in satisfaction of the company's obligations.

Mr. Chevrier: On that point, Mr. Chairman, may I say that the company has said positively that it would not obey the law last year and there is indication—and I think it is my duty to bring it to the attention of the government—that the company has no intention of respecting the law again in 1961. I refer to the law as laid down under the Aeronautics Act in so far as the filing of a financial statement is concerned.

Then the minister said, "Here I rely on the answers which were given by my colleague the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys". The Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys says that he gives this tender out on proposals and not on bids. I condemn that practice. I say that is not the proper way in which to do it. If there were bids, I would not be here condemning the situation. There were no bids. There was a filing of tariffs and the man who was not the low man was allowed to retender. That was why I enter