

*Government Orders*

The hon. member mentioned the people who work at Pearson and the fact that he comes from Toronto. I assume he was going to suggest they had argued in the political process of getting elected that they were going to challenge the Pearson deal. They did not challenge the Pearson deal. They simply overturned it.

We are talking about contract cancellation. That is not what they are doing. They are trying to pretend the contract never took place. That is not what they said they would do during the campaign. They said they would have a public review. We are still waiting.

• (1640)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak again on Bill C-22 and the amendments proposed by the other place.

Everyone in Quebec and Canada knows what effect this shameless attempt at privatizing the airport could have had if it had gone through and who would have had their palms greased as we say in Quebec with such a patronage-prone, foul-smelling plan as that to privatize Pearson Airport.

All the potential transactions, all the provisions of the privatization contract per se and all the people involved in this privatization attempt have not been brought to light yet.

Again, not only did we not get right to the bottom of the matter, but Bill C-22 still contains provisions which could be conducive to patronage, that which the people and Quebec and Canada detest most about the politics of older parties.

When you read in this bill that we continue to leave it to the Minister of Transport's absolute discretion to compensate promoters if appropriate, I find that is absolutely absurd. My colleagues have been pointing this out over and over since this bill was introduced and will continue to do so at every stage, unless the government changes course along the way.

I must say that this government's attitude toward Bill C-22 and privatization is worse than anything we have seen under the Conservatives. The Conservatives at least were upfront. They were open about their patronage deeds and about the fact they greased the palms of their friends, while the Liberals have a more underhanded, almost wicked, way of doing things. But they continue to do it after having rent their clothes, in fact a closet-full of made-to-measure shirts, starting with the Minister of Transport.

On November 29, 1993, the Minister of Transport himself openly told the media that he was thinking about holding an inquiry, an exhaustive inquiry into the ins and outs of this

attempt to privatize Pearson airport. It was after he realized that it was not just Conservatives involved in promoting this project or in the investments connected with the privatization of Pearson, but that there were also friends of the Liberals, who had made contributions to the Liberal Party of Canada, that the Minister of Transport, probably on the advice of his cabinet colleagues, backed down and offered us instead the report by Mr. Nixon, a very close advisor to, not to say a member of, the Liberal Party of Canada.

From the beginning of the debate on Bill C-22, we spent some time cross-checking contributors to the Liberal Party coffers, even Canadian companies who had made contributions, and the principal players involved in Pearson. And we found the connections very easy to establish. It was obvious that somewhere there were people who had such an amazingly underhanded, nebulous influence that it halted the process of inquiry into the privatization, the attempt at privatization of Pearson airport.

Yesterday, the attitude of the Liberal majority to the bill tabled by my colleague from Richelieu on public funding of parties was proof to me that members of the Liberal Party of Canada are just as steeped in patronage as the Conservatives.

• (1645)

They roundly defeated a bill that would have applied, at the federal level, the old dream that Mr. Lévesque made come true in Quebec, namely financing parties with contributions from individual citizens of Quebec and Canada who require defended after, who require that those they elect defend their interests and not the interests of the very rich friends of the regime, especially of the lobbyists who previously belonged to former Liberal or Conservative governments. Their attitude yesterday tells me a lot about the inflexibility they have shown every time we asked them to set up a real inquiry process that would fully elucidate the attempt to privatize Pearson.

Why do we need to get to the bottom of it? Because, if we were able, with the fragmentary information at our disposal, to perceive the possibility of ethical problems and patronage in this issue, it may mean that there were many more in the past under the Conservative government and under the Liberal government before that as well. But above all, it means that the incongruities and strange happenings involving very powerful lobbies connected to the main federal parties may occur again in the future.

The taxpayers of Quebec and Canada find that quite costly. They must find out what happened in the Pearson affair and especially they must be assured that such incidents will not recur in future, where friends of the party, former ministers, senators, people who worked very closely with the government as senior officials affiliated with the old parties got rich at taxpayers' expense. That is why it is important to clear this