

*Aeronautics Act*

● (1530)

[English]

**Mr. Gordon Ritchie (Dauphin):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to say a few words on this bill. It is one which I believe to be considerably more important than one might think at first blush. If there is any form of transport which is regulated or overregulated, it must be air transport. There seem to be commissions and regulatory bodies extending throughout its operations, and the bill before us further increases the scope and power of those who make decisions. Above all, it increases the power of the minister to intervene.

I think the measure should certainly go to committee in order to give us an opportunity to hear further explanations of the way in which it will operate and also, in particular, to hear representations from the people likely to be affected. I should like to comment on the clause which has to do with zoning, having run into these circumstances in a small way in connection with one of the airports in my riding. The present method of zoning leaves much to be desired. Little guidance is offered to those directly concerned. Numerous restrictions may be imposed, sometimes without explanation it would seem, and those upon whom the rules are imposed often find them onerous and difficult to understand. It would appear that if this bill passes, the owner of any type of airplane, even if he keeps it in his own garage, will have to hold a permit and that he may, if he files a flight plan, be liable to pay certain fees. This is on the ground that he is using government services and therefore a charge should be made.

● (1540)

In my area a considerable number of people are flying—so-called flying farmers—who use their flying machines for pleasure and for business purposes. The problem of crop spraying has become important. This seems to be a dangerous type of flying. There always seem to be a few pilots killed every year. One was killed just last week in the interlake country of Manitoba when he was crop-spraying. There is also the problem of the incompetence of flyers in dealing with pesticides and herbicides which are used by them. This is being regulated partly at the provincial level. There is a statute at that level which will soon be promulgated, and no one will be able to fly while crop-spraying without having attended a provincial course on the use of pesticides and herbicides. This is a step in the right direction in that the business of herbicides is very important.

I would like to turn to the bill at page 10 under clause 7 where it mentions the rule of the Canadian Transport Commission on licensing for proposed scheduled commercial air service and also for proposed commercial air service without a schedule. This is important and is coming to the fore at this time, because we are finding a good deal of competition between our airlines in Canada. There is widespread unrest among our airlines and a feeling that Air Canada, having 75 per cent of the cross-country passengers by regulation, is not working in the interests of air travel in this country. This is being particularly voiced in western Canada. This rule that 75

[Mr. Cyr.]

per cent of all passengers across the country must go by Air Canada is working against the best interests of the competing airlines and is not all that successful for Air Canada because it is in the red, as well. One of the important comments which was reported on the CBC not so long ago is as follows:

In a vignette offered on Air Canada recently by the CBC radio program, the Royal Canadian Air Force, in a sturdy voice declaimed, "When you hear nasty things which put down our national airline, then stand up straight and tall and proud and demand in a loud, clear voice so all can hear: Do you know where my luggage is?"

This is indicative of our feelings on the service Air Canada has given. Air Canada has often been, seemingly, in charge of the negotiations of the Department of Transport. This was evident some time ago when the transporter routes were allocated between Canada and the United States. The allocation of those transporter routes, wherein Air Canada received all but one, has certainly made other airlines very bitter. Their feeling is that an airline with a government-supported monopoly and charged to the Department of Transport is not the best thing. In my province of Manitoba, Transair president Arthur Mauro said:

"It seems pretty well it's what Air Canada wants that determines what the cabinet decides."

Mauro said that shutting out Winnipeg-based Transair from the hope for trans-border routes—which went to American carriers has resulted in "the most tragic lack of Canadian carrier participation in the central Canadian-U.S. traffic".

Transair wanted to serve Denver, Chicago, Minneapolis, and Milwaukee but the government "did not even have the courtesy of placing our request before the Americans", he added.

At the other end of the country, Mr. Robert Chartland, the public affairs director of Quebecair, said:

We're really disappointed—maybe we'll have our turn one of these days.

This details some of the problems we have with many regulatory bodies in Canada. We have an airline which we protect through the government and we are restricting privately-owned airlines which give competition to that airline. I would hope we would have this bill in committee and have important and knowledgeable briefs from people who know what this means. I would like to make sure we do not in any way impede or curtail private airlines and small private operators which have contributed so much to the development of aviation in this country.

**Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich):** Mr. Speaker, it is with some regret that I rise once again to express my views about the absence of radar at Victoria international airport. I seem to be getting nowhere with a problem which has been bothering me since the beginning of this year. I should refer to the first clause of this bill which grants the power to construct and maintain all government aerodromes and airports, including all plant machinery and buildings necessary for their efficient equipment and upkeep. I am referring to the plant required for the efficient equipment and upkeep of an international airport.

As long ago as January of this year I raised this question. Actually, I raised it in September of 1976, so it has been standing almost a year now. I had a special cause to raise it