

opposition critic for bringing this motion before the House today as it provides an opportunity to participate in this debate. I welcome the opportunity of saying something about what the minister and the Ministry of Transport have been able to do for Atlantic Canada, in contrast to all the stories we have been hearing about difficulties in the west.

As I looked at the motion I could not help but think it might fit in with some of the things that have been before the House in recent days, using up the time of this place. I would not want to say that these were entirely frivolous things; however, we do have clear evidence of the delaying tactics that have been used in recent days.

We have many members on all sides of this House who are considered to be reasonable and intelligent men, yet we find members of the official opposition, when referring to transportation, using words like "condemn", "terrible", and "awful". There is nothing in that that is of use to Canadians. I have one word for it, and that is "hogwash." The evidence is very clear as to what the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) has been able to do in these modern times, and particularly in recent years in effectively carrying out his responsibilities.

● (2110)

As I was saying just the other evening, the hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie), I believe, was going on at length in his usual rhetoric, and at the beginning, the middle and the end of his interjection and intervention in the House, repeatedly, the best he could come up with was to call for the Minister of Transport's resignation. We all know how ridiculous this type of intervention is, and that is how it will be interpreted by Canadians because transportation is a very serious topic.

One aspect of this motion before us tonight is air safety. Canada has nothing to be ashamed of whatsoever with respect to air safety. Indeed, because of the very stringent air safety regulations, Canada enjoys one of the best, if not the best, reputations in the world for air safety, and that is something of which each and every one of us can be proud.

Canada's safety record for scheduled air carriers has not deteriorated over the past years. In fact the latest complete figures available on commercial air travel, 1970 to 1977, indicate that our country's air safety record has remained relatively constant over that time period that it is on par with that of the United States and Great Britain, and that it is considerably better than the International Air Traffic Association's average for fatal accidents of all countries.

I am not sure where those who are making the allegations are getting their facts and figures, but the most recent data from Statistics Canada's aviation statistics centre on accident rates for Canadian registered aircraft provide an analysis of the number of accidents per 100,000 hours flown. These data reveal that over a five-year period, 1973 to 1977, there has been a consistent decline, from .63 accidents per 100,000 hours flown during 1973, to .21 accidents per 100,000 hours flown in 1977.

Transportation

The information on accidents and activity of Canadian air carriers presented in the article "World Airline Safety" in *Flight* magazine, January 20, 1979, suggests that the number of fatal accidents per unit number of flights is the best single safety measure when, in fact, the number of accidents per unit activity is a more comprehensive measure for comparisons among different countries and airlines. Added to this difficulty of comparing accident records among countries fairly and accurately, is that there are different definitions of accidents. Comparisons among countries on the basis of fatal accidents are comparisons among measures of the countries' liability to fatal accidents. This liability to accidents is measured by the average number of fatal accidents per unit time. As time is a measure of the length of exposure to risks, it is measured by the amount of activity over the period, including flights, hours flown, and production.

The definition of accident in the *Flight* article those occurrences, "involving fatalities to one or more occupants . . . of public transport aircraft—including scheduled helicopters—operating scheduled or non-scheduled revenue passenger or revenue cargo flights." In Canada it should be noted that "public air transport" is not a recognized term. Canadian commercial air transportation services are classified as unit toll—scheduled and non-scheduled—and charter. Charter services are grouped into various subclasses according to the weight of the aircraft used.

I do not wish to take up the entire allotment of time permitted me, Mr. Speaker, to speak only of air safety, but I would like to make it very clear that Canada places great importance on air safety, as I think we should, and because of our very stringent air safety regulations Canada enjoys one of the best reputations in the world.

I would like to talk now about the benefits we are enjoying in Atlantic Canada as a result of some of the measures and policies of the Minister of Transport. In the last year or so the minister has deemed it important and necessary to allocate over \$100 million for the over-all strengthening of the transportation system in the Atlantic provinces and, indeed, these funds, coupled with DREE programs under special agreements, under highway agreements and subagreements in the four Atlantic provinces, have enabled us to improve our position substantially both in the highway transportation linkages and in air transportation by providing more modern facilities to ensure modern air passenger service.

If hon. members will look at the recent estimates presented in the House by the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Buchanan) they will find that in the Atlantic provinces, and particularly in New Brunswick, a substantial number of dollars has been allocated for the improvement, not only of the facilities at Saint John and the landing equipment at Moncton, but as well for the construction of a new modern air terminal at Charlo and for the new air strip and facilities at St. Léonard, New Brunswick.

This is a need that has been expressed and pursued for a considerable period of time, and I know that the citizens of the areas which I have mentioned are very, very pleased with these