

*Government Orders*

It does not bode well in terms of increasing the degree of collegiality and credibility among members who work diligently in committees to try to improve legislation for the government to reintroduce flawed pieces of legislation which we on this side of the House have opposed and against which we have presented arguments from many people who have consistently demonstrated flaws in the legislation. It does not bode well for the government to reintroduce those pieces of legislation without cleaning them up, without improving them, as this government proposes to do with this motion, and not reintroduce legislation which the opposition members have already agreed to support.

Bill C-5, which was introduced in the previous session as Bill C-76 in June 1990, was not proceeded with any further after that. This is a piece of legislation which, as I have just mentioned, concerns a large number of people living in and around Pearson International Airport and concerns the safety of passengers travelling at airports across this country.

With the government proceeding pell-mell with legislation over the opposition of many interest groups, while at the same time stalling on other worth-while pieces of legislation, it is not hard to see why Parliament is looked upon with such scepticism by so many Canadians.

That is the first point I would like to make in general about this piece of legislation.

Now, hon. members may wonder why a member from a rural riding like Cape Breton Highlands—Canso would choose to speak on the subject of airport noise, airport congestion and the safety at our major airports. Certainly noise pollution from jets landing and taking off is not one of the most pressing concerns facing the constituents in my riding.

It certainly does not compare with the problem of the lack of job opportunities which we face. The airports that we have, and we have some which could accommodate additional aircraft—in fact, we have an airport which could quite well accommodate a regular airline service which would improve the ability of the area including my constituency to attract job opportunities—have not been able to convince this government to provide the necessary support for that kind of regular airline service.

• (1710 )

I certainly hope that this government will see fit, since it is beginning with this bill to address certain transportation issues, to address that particular issue.

Unfortunately, and this is one of the real ironies which I want to draw to the attention of the House concerning this piece of legislation and the context in which it is being introduced, at the same time as the government drags its feet in dealing with the noise pollution facing our overcrowded airports, such as Pearson in Toronto, it is simultaneously placing additional costs and additional discouragement on the use of other less congested, less crowded airlines across the country, particularly in regions such as Atlantic Canada.

I am speaking in particular of moves by the Minister of Transport to dramatically increase airport landing fees. These are a considerable disincentive to some of the regional carriers to use the airports in Halifax and in other places in Atlantic Canada. These fees are an additional discouragement to development in Atlantic Canada.

This is occurring at the same time as the government is dragging its feet in dealing with what is a really serious safety and noise pollution problem at Pearson International Airport. Why the government would not work toward diverting some of the traffic away from overcrowded Pearson into other parts of the country, why it would not encourage aircraft to land in less congested parts of the country and at the same time spur development in those areas is beyond me.

Certainly, I hope that while the government considers this piece of legislation it will see that we have to improve airline services. We have to provide better service in some of the outlying regions of Canada. Airline transportation is definitely the most used mode of transportation, and is becoming more and more relevant for an increasing number of Canadians, even those who live in the rural areas, especially those who live in the rural areas.

I hope that the Minister of Transport will begin to stop discouraging airline transportation and airlines from operating in our regions and that this can be done at the same time as he is increasing the safety of airlines in places like Pearson.