

Air Canada

Finally, I would like to say, because he asked me several questions . . .

Mr. Fontaine: Only one is important.

Mr. Ouellet: . . . that the money Canadair cost the Government of Canada was well spent. Hundreds and thousands of jobs remained in Canada because the then Liberal Government had the courage to rescue this company which was on the verge of folding up, and to keep here in Canada the technology and know-how in the field of aeronautics and aviation. Had the Canadian Government failed to intervene at the time, Canadair would no longer exist and with it would have gone the highly paid jobs which keep Montreal among leaders in air transportation. I do not hesitate for a moment to defend the steps taken by the previous Government to save these jobs in Montreal and keep Canadair going. In conclusion I would say to the Hon. Member for Lévis that at any time I am prepared to open a debate with him about the various airlines which operate worldwide. Give me more time and I will continue to tell him about the many countries of the world which have the decency to maintain their own national airlines, at a time when our own Government is about to sell off a chunk of Air Canada to foreigners and friends who can hardly wait to merge it with another company and make sure that this jewel in the sky will disappear for ever.

• (1330)

[*English*]

Mr. McDermid: Madam Speaker, I have two or three points I would like to make. First, I would like to thank the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner) for appointing the Hon. Member co-campaign manager for the next federal campaign. It has brought him to life. We thought we would be writing an obituary on him. In the last three and a half years he has hardly been on his feet at all in the House. Obviously, this has given him a new shot of inspiration, and we are pleased to see him back again. It is certainly going to help us, I can tell him that.

I want to point out to the Hon. Member who is bragging about Lufthansa Airlines. Lufthansa happens to be partially privatized. It is not entirely state owned, just to let the Hon. Member know. The airlines that are totally state owned are Aeroflot which not only has an airline but builds planes. It is a totally integrated company. The New Democratic Party would love that. But its safety record is not one we would envy. The Hon. Member knows that, having been a former Minister of Transport. The Portuguese, Saudia Arabian, Air-India, El Al, Olympic, and Pakistan airlines are state owned.

The following are committed to privatization, and the Hon. Member will be interested in this: Aer Lingos, Air France, Air New Zealand with a socialist Government, Austrian Airlines, Iberia, Thai, Qantas, Australia, with a labour Government.

I would like to draw another point to the Hon. Member's attention. He says a Crown corporation is necessary in order to

ensure services in remote areas. Air Canada does not fly anywhere in the territories. In fact, Air Canada serves 28 domestic points. Canadian Airlines, that terrible private sector one—and I know the Liberals do not like this—serves 70 domestic points.

I want to ask the Hon. Member, when he stands here and gives a great "fear" speech about the airline going into foreign hands, Canadians not being good enough to run it, and it being taken over if the Americans want to take over our airlines, why have they not done it by now? It is because Canadians have faith in their own airline companies. Look at CP. CP was foreign owned and Canadians bought it back. Look at what Max Ward has done with his terrific airline, Wardair.

The Hon. Member has no faith in Canadians. Only the Government can do it. That is the Liberal line. That is what we heard in the whole of the Member's speech, that only the Government can do it. Canadians, independent and free of Government, cannot do it. I can tell the Hon. Member that Canadians have proved him wrong over the last three and a half years. The private sector has created 1.2 million new jobs.

When the private sector is freed up to do the job, it will do it, but not under the grip of the Grits. Once the Grits get a hold, they want to intervene and run everything. They want to control everything with their little red-rump sisters over there. That is what happens in this country. Well, Canadians do not want that. Canadians can see, when we let the private sector go, what it can do. It is doing a great job in this country, and it will continue to do so. They are not going to buy the Liberal bunk anymore that only big brother can run Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): The period for questions and comments is over, but I will give the Hon. Member a short time to reply.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ouellet: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am not at all impressed by the rhetoric of the Hon. Member for Brampton—Georgetown (Mr. McDermid). He read a list of companies which could be privatized, including Air France, one of the most important in Europe. It is not because they could be privatized that they will. These companies are not privately owned, but state owned. It is not because Canada is about to make a mistake that these other countries will necessarily follow suit.

Also, I suggest to the Hon. Member that praising private companies operating in Canada is not at all inconsistent with our position in favour of Air Canada. Quite the contrary! Our Government had made it possible for private companies to take over a major share of the Canadian market, and the performance of Wardair, Canadian Pacific and other Canadian firms have all flourished under Liberal Governments. Since this Tory Government came into office, like by magic, all these companies have been purchased or merged in only one, and we have witnessed the disappearance of the regional carriers of which our various regions were very proud. The privatization