

Canadair Limited Divestiture Act

Canada by a Canadian corporation. That was in the original contract itself. And certainly Canadair's purchasers, Bombardier, did discuss that with this Government.

In conclusion, I will say it is clear in my mind that the people in Halifax and Winnipeg were taken in, because there was no other way than the right one, which was to give that maintenance contract to Canadair, the company that was the best prepared and the best equipped for the contract. I find it absolutely disgraceful that this Government should have decided on that tender process, the only effect of which was to deceive people in Halifax and Winnipeg since, from the outset, the contract was to be awarded to Canadair in Montreal. So this piece of legislation will have to be scrutinized in committee, because there are too many questions the Government has failed to answer.

● (1150)

[English]

Mr. Hovdebo: Madam Speaker, can the Hon. Member tell us what he believes should be done to ensure that the employees of the corporation are not disadvantaged in the turnover? Is it necessary to have further negotiations, or is it just a matter of delineating the areas of concern?

Mr. Ouellet: Madam Speaker, I appreciate very much the question of the Hon. Member. I am ready to support this legislation at second reading stage in order that it be sent to committee where we will study it clause by clause. In committee we will have a chance to ask the Government more questions about the intricacies of this contract and, hopefully, obtain satisfaction. However, if we do not obtain the answers to our questions, the onus will be upon members of the Opposition to submit amendments which would give the employees of Canadair greater guarantees.

I know many of these employees. Some of them live in my riding. They have been working for Canadair for years. These people deserve better treatment than the Government wants to give them. I believe the onus is upon Members of Parliament to ensure the continuity and vitality of this organization. It has provided a very useful service and a number of well paid jobs in Montreal. It would be a disaster if these people were not guaranteed future employment.

Mr. McDermid: Madam Speaker, I listened to the Hon. Member today and to the Hon. Member for Saint-Jacques (Mr. Guilbault) yesterday. They made the incredible claim that Gulfstream had some confidential information which no one else had and that it got this secret information through a telegram from Gulfstream to someone who is purchasing an airplane. That is the greatest red herring that has ever been brought up in the House of Commons.

A salesman for a company which is trying to sell an airplane will naturally use everything at his disposal to sell the airplane. It was public knowledge that Canadair was for sale. A salesman would tell the client not to buy the product of a company which is for sale. That is exactly what we are talking

about. It is totally untrue to say that they have some confidential information. Gulfstream had no confidential information. It is absolutely ludicrous to try to tie it in with a salesman doing his job for Gulfstream. I believe that the facts should be presented as they are rather than as the Liberals see them.

Mr. Ouellet: Madam Speaker, I regret that I must disagree with the Hon. Member. However, it has been established that the members of the Board of Directors of Canadair were forced by the Government to give Gulfstream the list of potential clients of Canadair and those who have already purchased Challengers. They also had to give Gulfstream their research plans and marketing plans. I cited a letter which was sent. It is quite clear that in order to send such a letter Gulfstream would have had to have the list.

Therefore, three vital pieces of confidential information were given to a competitor. They were given to a competitor because, regardless of cost or risk, the Government wants to get rid of Crown corporations. The Government more or less gave de Havilland to Boeing. It was an absolutely scandalous sale. Fortunately Bombardier made a good offer for Canadair. If the employees had not objected and people of Montreal had not become furious with the Government, Canadair would have been sold to Gulfstream.

Day after day we see the Government's madness to sell Crown corporations at any price. The Government is selling CN Route for less than its book value. All across Canada employees of CN Route are being told that they will lose their jobs due to this sale. I am afraid the same thing will happen with Teleglobe. The Government has twisted the rules of the game three times already. It is so desperate to sell Crown corporations that it will sell them at any cost. We resent this and object to it. I want to say clearly and unequivocally that the Government was foolish to give so much confidential information to Gulfstream, the prime competitor of Canadair.

Mr. McDermid: Madam Speaker, the Liberals established approximately 400 Crown corporations during their years of so-called service to the country. As the Hon. Member knows, there is no mad rush to buy these Crown corporations. However, the Canadian people want Crown corporations which are not serving the public policy of the country to be in private hands. They told us that clearly on September 4, 1984. The Government is carrying out its promise in a reasoned and reasonable way.

● (1200)

I suggest that the Hon. Member talk to the workers at de Havilland today and ask them how they feel about the deal. They will tell him that there is more employment and more activity. They are doing very well. Approximately 1,000 of those workers live in my constituency and they are thanking me because, for once, there is some certainty and, for once, they now know they can have jobs. They are telling me that they are selling planes and they do not have the Government using them as a toy.