

taking on their duties for the first time. I should like also to congratulate all those who have spoken so far in this debate on the motion for an Address in reply.

The speeches have been of a very high order and I can only repeat what I have often said here before, that it is a pity that the speeches given here are not given wider publicity across Canada. I know very many people across Canada who would be interested in knowing, reading or hearing the thoughts and opinions expressed by this body collectively and individually. It is a body which is, by and large, composed of perhaps some of the most distinguished citizens in various fields and from various areas across Canada.

I was interested in hearing, during Question Period tonight, some reference being made by the Deputy Leader of the Government to the recent decision of the federal body which controls such matters to grant the right to a new service from Halifax to Toronto to Canadian Pacific Airways and to deny it to Eastern Provincial Airways. I want it to be clearly understood that nothing I say now is meant in any way to reflect on the ability and competence of Canadian Pacific Airways. It and its parent company form one of the great organizations in Canada, and I have every admiration for it. I do, however, in common with possibly all the caucuses from the Atlantic region, deplore that decision.

At a time when we are giving lip service to strengthening the regions of Canada, and trying to remove some of the inequities that exist in certain areas, for this decision to have been made is most regrettable, and I do hope it will be reversed.

I wish to give honourable senators some information which may not be known by them regarding EPA. I have it on good authority that the failure of the Canadian Transport Commission to recognize, in a positive way, EPA's application, will probably lead to—in fact, I have heard a word stronger than “probably” used by persons competent to make the statement—the eventual collapse of EPA. This would be a very serious matter.

I have here the verbatim decision of the Canadian Transport Commission on this matter. One of the arguments used is that EPA already has a right to a route from Halifax to Montreal. It entirely excludes the fact, for reasons which I am not going to go into at this time, that during the last several years there has been a serious decline in traffic between eastern Canada and Montreal. EPA has suffered from that decline. Although it has always been high, there has been a corresponding increase in traffic, in inverse proportion, between eastern Canada, where Halifax is perhaps the pivotal point, and Toronto. There has been a vast increase.

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EPA has been kept going in recent years largely by profits it made on capital account; not on operating account. It was fortunate enough to invest in the acquisition of a number of planes and other capital equipment, and it was able to sell some of that, without prejudice to its services, at very substantial profits, which is largely what has kept EPA in the black, so to speak, during the past two or three years.

[Senator Rowe.]

Even so, the situation is very serious, even with the profits to which I have alluded. Last year EPA's turnover was \$70 million; its profits were \$500,000, and it cannot even look forward to that much in the coming year and in the coming years. How, then, can a company such as that get the credit, the financing—on that basis? What banks or financial institutions will look with any favour on advancing money to EPA under those circumstances? I have learned from company authorities that the projected loss for EPA over the next two or three years is \$2 million.

It may come as a surprise to some people to learn that EPA directly employs 900 personnel in the Atlantic region, many of them in Halifax. Of course, a large number of them are at Gander, the home base. We also have to consider the large number of people who are identified with auxiliary services connected with EPA operations, which would not apply to the same extent at all with Canadian Pacific Airways operating a service from Halifax to Toronto.

I know the Authority has taken a negative attitude towards it, and there are, of course, some very good reasons for that, but the least that can be done is to give EPA a chance to compete. They ask for a chance to compete in that market. If they cannot be given the right to operate in place of Canadian Pacific Airways, then they ask for the right to compete.

The Authority recognizes in its report, in so many words, that EPA has a real need for a larger revenue base, and they advise EPA to go ahead and, in effect, to put it simply, try to make more money out of its existing runs. That is impossible; it is out of the question; it cannot be done.

That is the situation, and that is why I hope this decision will be repealed. For the sake of all eastern Canada, and perhaps in the long-run for the sake of all Canada, I hope that this decision will be repealed, and that EPA will be given a chance, in one way or another, to engage in an operation between Halifax and Toronto.

I was interested, as I am sure all honourable senators were, in specific allusions in the Speech from the Throne to the government's proposed programs. Inevitably a Speech from the Throne has to be fairly general; it cannot be too specific. Nevertheless, I thought it was significant that in the field of social welfare the Speech emphasized a number of policies and programs which it is the government's intention to try to implement in the near future, such as help for elderly people with low incomes, a national pension conference in 1980, training for women—where I think the emphasis will be on single women and widows who are able to work—for new occupations; more employment for the handicapped. There is also something I have been harping on, as Senator Godfrey knows, *ad infinitum*, *ad nauseum* perhaps, and that is increasing attention to reform of the Criminal Code in respect of, for example, crimes of violence, and reform of the Criminal Code in respect of the rights of women and the protection of women. This is very gratifying to me, as I am sure it is to all honourable senators.