

*Bilingual Air Traffic Control*

are, specifically, plans to examine procedures for bilingual air traffic control in the broad Montreal area, in completing bilingual air traffic control in the province of Quebec both in instrument flight procedures and visual flight procedures. Because of the complexity of our air traffic which the interest in general aviation creates, we had to take the time to develop procedures which were particularly suited to this area, in keeping with the fundamental commitment, we will maintain the safety standards and practices in aircraft operations in Canada of which we have been proud. These will not be lowered or jeopardized.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lang:** It is important to note that this matter is under study and examination in terms of the development of procedures, and we have asked for and been given an indication of support from pilots and controllers in the development of these procedures with elaborate simulation equipment which exists here, in the national capital region, and at the Dion site as well. If this succeeds, then we will move to the next step. This was something that was to be done in 1977 and 1978 as we could proceed with it.

In every case it should be emphasized that throughout Canada the pilot of the aircraft will determine the language of use between himself and the air traffic controller. In no case would it be required of any pilot that he become bilingual, certainly not in any case if he was unilingual English, because throughout Canada air traffic control in English would be available to him at all times. What we were hoping to do, and what we are hoping to do, is provide air traffic control in the French language when the pilot is better served by that in the province of Quebec, and perhaps at a later date in the national capital region. No controller will be required to be bilingual except in areas of bilingual air traffic control or, in other words, basically in the province of Quebec.

In order to provide double assurance that safety remains our pre-eminent watchword, we agreed to the appointment of a commission to examine the manner in which our procedures were being developed, and at the end, when those procedures were ready for implementation in our view, to comment upon them and the standard of safety which we have achieved.

As hon. members know, Mr. Keenan, first appointed to such a commission, found it necessary to resign. Today I announced the appointment of a new commission. In view, not only of the distinction of the commissioners who will be at work, but the fact that the work being done is toward the development of procedures which will be put in place if we are successful in developing them in a year or two years from now, and in view of the fact that everything that is being done in air traffic control in Canada at present is judged safe by all the parties involved, I think it is right for me to ask hon. members in the House to join in the request to the parties to go back to work flying passengers in Canada while the work of this commission goes on, and to cease the disruptions which have so afflicted our country.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

[Mr. Lang.]

**Mr. Lang:** I ask for that support earnestly, as I have done in the past, in the belief that the right thinking members of all parties in the House—and I take that to be the majority in every party—believe that these steps are reasonable and that so long as the principle of the high standard of safety to which I referred is maintained, this course of action deserves support.

Just before coming to the House I received word that Mr. Maley of the Canadian Airline Pilots' Association had indicated through the press that he would like to see a meeting between himself and Mr. Livingstone, certain of the airline chief executives, myself and senior officials. I immediately responded by inviting Mr. Livingstone, Mr. Maley and such of the executives as can be present at such a meeting tonight to come to a meeting in order to attempt to resolve this matter. I am sure that in that resolution the support of all members of the House will be helpful indeed, and again I solicit it.

● (1510)

**Mr. Jack Horner (Crowfoot):** Mr. Speaker, we in this party welcome the statement of the minister and join with him and wish him success in getting our airlines, air pilots and air traffic controllers back to what might be called a cordial effort to return our air freight and passenger travel to a normal situation.

We are deeply concerned about the safety aspects of this question and it is regrettable that language and racial questions have to enter the picture. We also regret that the minister has taken this long to meet the president of the pilots' association and the air traffic controllers. We believe that he, as Minister of Transport, would serve the country well if he answered the question put to him yesterday by the hon. member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay) and released all the air safety studies which have taken place in his department to this date so that we who want to judge this issue in an unbiased and fair way could have an equal opportunity to do so. I urge the minister to consider the question put yesterday by the hon. member for Central Nova, to answer it and to make available to the country those studies, because I think that would be helpful to the country in reaching a favourable decision.

It is regrettable that the minister does not, in essence, come completely clean. He says in his statement that pilots can and will be available to operate in both official languages at five airports. In his statement he also threw in the question of the Ottawa-Hull region, and that leaves the question in the minds of people as to whether this is the beginning and not the end.

**An hon. Member:** What are you afraid of?

**Mr. Horner:** I am afraid of nothing.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Horner:** We urge the minister to come completely clean and to place the facts on the table, and we regret very much that the whole question of safety has become clouded. I am particularly pleased that the minister has agreed to meet with Mr. Maley and Mr. Livingstone, because as a passenger I share their concern—

**Miss Bégin:** We all share it.