

The Address

The Japanese air transport market is large and profitable. It is in Canada's best interest that our two major carriers have a presence there. Canadian Airlines International will continue to have exclusive access to the largest Japanese centre, Tokyo.

[English]

Air Canada stated yesterday its clear and unequivocal undertaking that all litigation that prevents Canadian Airlines from closing its deal with AMR Corporation will be stopped immediately. Air Canada's announcement yesterday was an important one for restoring stability in the airline industry.

I understand that today's decision is a difficult one to accept for Canadian Airlines. However, I am looking forward to a new era for the airline industry in Canada.

Our government is committed to a viable, competitive airline industry. Canada's two great airlines can now get on with their business. They are in a position to move forward with confidence into the future.

I could not let this occasion pass without expressing my sincerest gratitude to Rhys Eyton of Canadian Airlines and to Hollis Harris of Air Canada for having been able to move with great courage toward this resolution of a problem that has plagued the Canadian airline industry for far too long.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Before proceeding, I simply want to advise all members that having reverted to statements by ministers I will recognize a spokesperson from both the Bloc Quebecois and the Reform Party and extend a duration equal to the minister's intervention.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans): Mr. Speaker, like many Quebecers and Canadians, I was very glad yesterday when the media announced the end of the conflict between Air Canada and Canadian International. This news shows light at the end of the tunnel, which is good for both air carriers and their employees.

I am also pleased with the statement by the Minister of Transport on allowing Air Canada access to the Osaka airport. However, since this airport is not a hub for the Japanese market, the Official Opposition would have liked the government to end the exclusive rights which Canadian Airlines International has to the Tokyo airport.

It is essential to promote competition, for the good of consumers, especially in a growing market like Tokyo.

We hope that the government will recognize Air Canada's needs and that these will be taken into consideration in bilateral discussions which the government intends to begin to settle the question of Hong Kong and China in the near future, for the sake of many jobs in Quebec and Canada.

[English]

Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West—Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, the end of litigation is a positive thing both for the aviation industry and the Canadian travelling public. It might also be mentioned that it will not break the hearts of government that it will not have to get further involved in this dispute. That having been said, it is my opinion that the government has been involved in Air Canada's withdrawal from the litigation process.

I believe that the announcement by the Minister of Transport is as a result of a unilateral deal between his department and Air Canada. I have many concerns if these types of arrangements are being made without proper input from all the major parties concerned. The deal appears to be done. I am not convinced it is in the best interests for Canadian aviation, however it is done.

• (1300)

With the dispute between Air Canada and Canadian Airlines ended, both airlines should now be proceeding to build their respective companies. This is done by competing with foreign carriers, not with each other. Air Canada has a major portion of the market in Europe and the U.S., and Canadian has always had a major portion of the Orient. That balance has now been shifted.

I call on the minister to confirm that it will go no further, to pledge that there are no further deals to hand over Hong Kong or the People's Republic of China to Air Canada. The deal has been made. It is now time for the government to get out of the manipulation process and let free enterprise operate as it should.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed consideration of the motion for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his Speech at the opening of the session.

Mr. Glen McKinnon (Brandon—Souris): Mr. Speaker, I am most pleased to rise on this occasion and add my congratulations on your appointment to the Chair of this House.

First I would like to thank the electors of Brandon—Souris riding for allowing me the distinct pleasure to serve them in this Chamber. I would further add my congratulations to all the hon. members who were elected in the most recent election.

On a personal level, I wish to thank most sincerely my wife, Karen, in Virden, Manitoba, and my daughters Corleen, in Edmonton, Alberta, Richelle in Victoria, British Columbia, and Lindsey in Winnipeg, Manitoba, who have all shown unwavering support. As one can see, my family is well represented by the multi-party process in this House.