

Air Canada

Mr. Cassidy: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Ms. Dewar) was on her feet to ask a question. It is my distinct understanding that the Chair is certainly free to recognize a Member from any Party on a question or comment until the period for questions or comments has expired. At that time, the Chair is certainly free to recognize the government House Leader or any other Hon. Member to speak. I am not sure where we were in the normal rotation, but where we were not was in a situation in which, purporting to rise under questions and comments, the government House Leader could proceed to move a motion for time allocation.

● (1340)

My point is this. That motion would have been all right at the end of the time for questions and comments or when questions and comments had come to a close. I believe the procedure followed by the Minister just a few minutes ago, where he got up purporting to do one thing and then did another, is misleading, deceitful, wrong, and should not be permitted.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: There is no need to hear the Minister. The correct procedure was followed.

Mr. Cassidy: On a further point of order, Mr. Speaker. My colleague from Yorkton—Melville was able to hear the Minister while I was trying to attract your attention on a point of order. As he pointed out to me, the Minister sought to introduce a motion for time allocation. He was not calling for a further extension of hours on this Bill. Since he had just gotten up and called for an extension of hours the last time he got on his feet, I had no choice but to try to attract your attention on the point of order. However, I believe the point of order is still valid, and that is, when we are on questions and comments it is surely inappropriate and out of order for a government spokesperson to rise in order to move a procedural motion.

Mr. Lewis: Lorne, take over, that guy is hopeless.

Mr. Cassidy: That should take place in the gap between one speaker and another.

Mr. Lewis: Save him, Lorne.

Mr. Cassidy: That would be at the end of the period for questions and comments. That is the point I draw to your attention, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I realize full well what the Hon. Member is saying. On certain types of motions the Hon. Member would of course be correct. However, the notice that was given can be given at any time.

We are now back to questions and comments on the speech by the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Cassidy).

Ms. Dewar: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the extensive rationale that my colleague gave for opposing the sale of Air Canada. However, he did not address the kind of policy introduced by the previous Government concerning deregulation, and I think it is important that we look at that.

My question is whether the fact that we are getting deregulation is part and parcel of what the Government is concerned about when it talks about selling off Air Canada, the felling that maybe consumers will not benefit from lower air fares. Or has the experience in the U.S. been that consumers really have not benefited that much from deregulation? Is my colleague aware of the situation in the industry in the U.S. as far as consumers are concerned, and would this inhibit our ability to stabilize the industry here when we lose such an important tool as a national airline?

Mr. Cassidy: Mr. Speaker, I think the best way to describe the situation in the U.S. is that it is a bit like the curate's egg, it is good in parts. However, it is certainly bad in parts as well. At times it is downright chaotic.

Every sector has cause to complain about air travel in the U.S. There are certain people and groups who benefit. For example, if you live in New York and have a girlfriend in Los Angeles, it is cheaper than ever before to go and visit her once a month or vice versa.

Ms. Jewett: What about a boyfriend?

Mr. Cassidy: Or a boyfriend. If you live close to a major airport and wish to go someplace else, then it has perhaps been a benefit. On the other hand, should you have family living in some smaller community, then just watch out.

I talked with someone in my constituency office about this the other day. She had a telephone call telling her about the death of her mother in California. In order to go there for her mother's funeral, which she was in the end unable to attend, she would have had to go through four changes of planes. Because the fares were not melded in many cases, they went up and up and up if you were trying to get to the smaller communities. The names of the airlines seem to change every six months. For example, I do not know who Piedmont is but it seems to be very big in the eastern United States right now. I wonder what happened to Eastern Airlines. They seem to have disappeared.

Mr. Friesen: They are still there.

Mr. Cassidy: Are they? Maybe.

My final point is that for people in business or politics, those who need a premium quality service to get to places quickly and are very busy on behalf of their corporation or the people they represent, the situation is one of chronic delays, sitting stacked up in the airways over O'Hare Airport, Kennedy Airport or La Guardia. It means constant and chronic delays, fatigue, frustration and that kind of thing.