

before I put a question to him about STOL, that Mr. Sinclair was wrong. The minister stated unequivocally that Mr. Sinclair was wrong, but left it at that. Despite his statement that he would disclose information, he would not indicate in what respects or by how much Mr. Sinclair was wrong. The fact is that there appears to be a discrepancy in the calculations on the cost of the STOL program, a discrepancy of approximately \$130 million between the calculations of the government and certain private interests.

Considering the magnitude of this discrepancy, the government ought to clarify these matters immediately and specifically, particularly when the passenger train subsidy for the whole of Canada in a fiscal year is approximately \$140 million. It also appears that the past president of Canadian National Railways, Mr. MacMillan, had very serious doubts about the cost efficiency of this STOL program and whether it was in fact the best way to move passengers between large cities. Mr. Sinclair of CP stated that his calculations were based on, among other things, the cost of construction of airports, pilot training facilities, six Twin Otter Aircraft purchased, the construction of access routes to the airports, and navigational systems installed, all of which appear to be a reasonable basis for his calculations.

As a last word on this subject, I did a little checking. It appears the cost of one-way flight by STOL from Ottawa to Montreal is \$20. When travelling by Air Canada, our large modern air carrier, or CP air—that bastion of private enterprise—it costs \$13 on Saturdays and Sundays, and \$18 on week days. So STOL is expensive. I have reason to believe a great deal of the passenger traffic flying between the STOL ports in Ottawa and Montreal is made up of cabinet ministers, colleagues and civil servants. It appears that the STOL program is being used extensively by government employees, at government expense. It is being subsidized with civil servants. I wonder if that is the purpose for which STOL was established. I leave that point for hon. members to consider.

I wish now to say a few words on a topic respecting which I recently addressed a question to the minister. I will not touch upon it in any great detail because it is to some extent sub judice. It involves an inquiry presided over by Mr. Bruno Desjardins, a Montreal barrister whom I understand has some nautical experience. The inquiry concerns the action of the Laurentian Pilotage Authority which, pursuant to subsection 14(3) of the Pilotage Act, decided to make an amendment to the Laurentian Pilotage Authority's regulations. Pursuant to this course of action, notice of which was published in the May 18 issue of the *Canada Gazette*, the Minister of Transport very properly commissioned an inquiry under Mr. Desjardins.

Although I do not want to prejudge the situation in any way, I wish to put on record some reservations about the terms of reference of this inquiry. They seem to be a little unusual, at least according to the traditional concepts of natural justice. Some of the conditions are as follows:

The investigation shall be conducted in as thorough and complete a manner as the circumstances of the case require.

That is good. The next one reads:

The investigation shall not be subject to the customary rules of evidence nor need evidence be taken under oath.

The Address—Mr. MacKay

I object to that very strongly.

The investigation shall not be conducted by means of public hearings but, on the contrary, through the investigation and examination of those persons whom the said investigator deems possessed of evidence relevant to the subject matter and whose evidence should be examined in the public interest.

This provision prevents one party knowing what the other's position is and having the right of rebuttal. As far as I am concerned, the only issue in the Laurentian Pilotage matter is whether this change, which disrupts long standing procedure, is in the interests of safety and efficiency and whether it is good for shipping in that particular region of the country. I do not think it is helpful to bring in questions involving language or other social consideration. Because I have noticed in the French press words which indicate that I may be against bilingualism, I want to put on record the fact that I am very concerned that any unilingual Canadian may be deprived of earning his livelihood by reason of language qualifications, unless there are very unusual circumstances which can be justified as being of national importance such as our transportation system being improved, safety reasons, or things of that nature. Any other considerations which are regressive and counterproductive of this very worth while bilingualism program may be interpreted as being in the selfish interests of a particular group.

In his speech yesterday the minister said there will be more disclosure. I think he was referring specifically to the railways when he said that. If he is serious—and I hope he is—he should begin by permitting the Auditor General, or some other independent person of his stature, to look at some of the Crown corporations and public utilities generally whose accounts are not examined. For example, there is Air Canada, the Bank of Canada, Canadian National Railways, Canadian National Railways Securities Trust, the Canadian Wheat Board, the Cape Breton Development Corporation, Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and the Industrial Development Bank. It would be very useful if someone of the stature of the Auditor General took an independent look at the internal financial procedures of these Crown corporations.

● (1230)

Also, as we discovered in the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications, it is not permitted to ask, as I did when checking on the qualifications of some of the directors of Air Canada and the CN, questions relating to their tenure of office, their salaries, by whom they were appointed, their specific responsibilities, and so on. Questions of this kind are not permitted and need not be answered. However, I believe there is no reason the public of Canada should not be told a little more about the executives who run their Crown corporations.

There is another matter which concerns me—an issue which has to some extent been neglected or perhaps even forgotten. It concerns the well-being of thousands of people in this country. What is the real status of insurance policies covering air passengers in Canada? Are these passengers as well protected as they believe themselves to be when they board aircraft operated by one of our national carriers? When one looks into the details of some of these insurance cases, one cannot avoid speculating on the trouble and difficulty to which bereaved people have been