

Committee on Railways and Shipping

Toronto and Montreal. On Friday he was making the same trip again when the crash occurred. I have gone into this matter very thoroughly both by studying the T.C.A. timetable which was in effect at the time and by making a thorough study of the transcript of evidence, which is over 550 pages, which was laid on the table of the house as sessional paper 187-A. I find that in that period of six days—

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member again but this time I am afraid it will be for good.

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to ask to be on sufferance here. References are made to this crash in the report which was laid on the table of the house. With the greatest of respect, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that we not treat each other with formal courtesy. I ask you to rule whether I have the right to make this speech now or have not. If I do not have the right now, I shall make it as soon as there is an opportunity on the motion to go into supply.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): If I may intervene for a moment, it seems to me my hon. friend has said too much for his statements to be allowed to go without rebuttal. He has stated that fatigue entered into the situation. I am prepared to show that there was no fatigue, and I think my statement should go out along with the hon. member's. If there are going to be charges of improper operation made here, we had better thresh them out.

Mr. Knowles: On that basis perhaps I had better carry on. By reference to the documents, and I suppose the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe) has the same documents, it will be found, as I have just said, that in the six-day period from Sunday morning until Friday night this pilot made four round trips, one of them to Bermuda and the other three to Florida. It will be found that the scheduled flying time for these four trips, had he been able to keep to the schedule, was 43 hours and 20 minutes. It will also be found that his actual flying time up to the point of crash was 43 hours and 57 minutes, although at that point he had not yet got back to Montreal.

But what you will also find, and to me this is something the board has failed to take notice of, is that if you take the time this pilot was on duty it adds up to a duty time in these six days of 61 hours and 37 minutes, which was put in in four working days. Some hon. members may wonder just how one adds up that time. I did it in the way that the board itself suggests. I started his day one hour before take-off time on each of the four

days and took the time from then until he brought the plane to the conclusion of the trip that night. I have these figures and can put them on the record if they are necessary. They add up to a total of 61 hours and 37 minutes.

Two of the flights, the Monday flight and the Wednesday flight, were delayed to such an extent that he did not get back to Montreal from the Monday flight until 4.30 a.m. Tuesday and from the Wednesday flight until 2.00 a.m. Thursday. Yet despite that he was off again on the flight on Friday. Taking the calendar day from midnight to midnight, there was actually no calendar day in that period of six days that this pilot was not flying. I suggest, not as an expert in aviation but just as an ordinary human being who knows what long hours are, that you cannot have a person on duty 61 hours and 37 minutes in four working days out of six, and not have the possibility of some element of fatigue.

I take it that the Minister of Trade and Commerce proposes to make some reference to the documents, as he said. It is true that on page xxvii of the report the board deals with the matter and says this:

The board finds itself in agreement with the company in concluding that if the crew have had adequate rest on the day preceding, the flight is not a particularly arduous assignment with modern flight equipment.

Well, in this case the day preceding was Thursday and he did not get back from the Wednesday trip until two o'clock Thursday morning. That was on top of an arduous trip on the previous Monday, and that again on top of the trip that he had taken on Sunday. I suppose that by "official documents" the minister may also have in mind the report that was made to the technical board of inquiry by a special board of doctors which was convened to deal with the matter. The board consisted of six departmental doctors, every one of whom is listed as a consultant in one type of medicine or another. Some of the words are too long for me to try to pronounce, but at any rate they state as follows:

Although it is recognized that Captain T. N. D. Ramsay had been on duty for approximately 12 hours, with approximately 9½ hours of intermittent flying and that he was possibly tired, there is no indication that he was over-tired or fatigued to the point that it would interfere with the safe performance of his duties.

If that is the evidence, so far as I am concerned, it is not satisfactory for six doctors to say that, although he was possibly tired, he was not over-tired when they, in that report, first of all say that he had been on duty for approximately 12 hours that day