

*Adjournment Debate***PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT  
MOTION***[English]*

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

AIR CANADA—SERVICE OUT OF HAMILTON—EFFECT ON  
NORDAIR

**Mr. Bill Kempling (Burlington):** Mr. Speaker, I asked a question in the House of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) on May 1 regarding the Hamilton airport and the activities in the future of Nordair and Air Canada. I think it would be appropriate for me to recount briefly what has happened in this area in the last few years.

For more than ten years the expansion of the Mount Hope airport has been discussed by the people of Hamilton and the people in the area beyond that city which could reasonably be serviced by a scheduled airline. The Chamber of Commerce formed an airport committee, as did civic authorities, and several other interested groups joined them. In 1973 the federal government set aside some \$10 million for land acquisition. There followed a series of studies costing many hundreds of thousands of dollars on this area. It seems to me there have been about two studies a year for the last nine years. I believe they have studied every tadpole, garter snake and groundhog from Copetown to Tapleystown, and back again, and now we are told there will be some more studies.

I think it would be appropriate if I put on the record the *Hansard* for May 10, 1978, where the hon. member for Hamilton Mountain of the day, the Liberal member, Gus MacFarlane, asked the following question:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Transport. Early in the year he committed the government to the support and development of the airport at Hamilton. At this time, can he give the House any kind of time-frame as to what is occurring there, particularly with regard to runway 06 which seems to be in all the plans; and is anything being done that will prevent the costly diversion of Nordair aircraft to Toronto which seems to occur on a daily basis?

Here is the reply from the Hon. Otto Lang who was then minister of transport. He said:

Mr. Speaker, I believe that runway, in fact, is one which has been identified as being a clear part of the development plan at Hamilton, and accordingly we will be moving forward immediately with improvements to the landing system. I can assure the hon. member that in Toronto not long ago, I stated that in my view the Mount Hope airport stands in a really good position to help with the overload that we see at different times at Malton. I will certainly try to see that my officials move forward as rapidly as possible with the Hamilton development plans, and, indeed, encourage additional flights by regularly scheduled airlines through Hamilton.

That was in 1978, two years ago almost to the day.

My colleague, the hon. member for Hamilton-Wentworth (Mr. Scott), asked the Minister of Transport a question on April 28. In his reply the minister said:

Yes, Madam Speaker, I was about to mention that there is another aspect of very great importance, namely, the servicing of that airport by Air Canada. There are a number of negotiations to take place in that connection because it

would be rather useful to have the assurance of regular service if the airport is to be expanded.

Then, in my question on May 1 I asked the minister a supplementary question as follows:

—Air Canada opened an office in downtown Hamilton a few months ago, and a senior official at that opening said Air Canada would be offering a service out of Hamilton once the new airport facilities were arranged at Mount Hope.

I wanted to know what was going to happen to Nordair because, in his reply, the minister said that they really have to do these studies to know what traffic there is before Air Canada could make a decision. Mr. Speaker, I ask you, who is kidding whom? Air Canada controls all the share stock of Nordair; we know that. Is the minister saying that Air Canada has to do more studies now to decide whether there is enough traffic out of Hamilton for Air Canada to put flights in there? Surely to goodness they know from their connection with Nordair what is going on in that airport. I know they know what is going on.

● (2205)

The thing which concerns me is that in 1978 the government purchased Nordair through Air Canada. At the time of the purchase they said that they would sell it within one year. They have not done that. I believe it is the purpose of Air Canada and the government to try to run the share stock of Nordair down. If they can dwindle the service away to the point that the shares are worth nothing, it will be just blended into Air Canada and there will be no more Nordair. That was not the purpose of the purchase of Nordair. I think the government should come clean and tell us exactly what its plans are.

**Mr. Robert Bockstael (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, on May 1 the hon. member for Burlington (Mr. Kempling) raised the matter of possible air service by Air Canada out of Hamilton should new airport facilities be put in place at Mount Hope. The hon. member went on to ask "what effect this"—and presumably he meant the possible future service of Air Canada—"will have on Nordair." He asked what effect it will have on the purchase offers which have been tendered to the government for Nordair shares held by Air Canada on behalf of the government. The Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) replied that the matter would have no effect at all on Nordair, that this is entirely a different question, and that Nordair would continue to operate out of Hamilton.

The provision of air service at Hamilton by Air Canada is very much in the future. Should Air Canada in fact enter into such service, I am advised that in all probability these services would be in the nature of charters to southern points and perhaps service to western Canada. In short, should Air Canada introduce air service to Hamilton, this service would not be in competition with Nordair.

During the course of the last several weeks the minister met with several of the prospective purchasers of Nordair. At these meetings none of the interested parties made mention of the future presence of Air Canada in Hamilton. In view of the fact