

*Adjournment Debate*

hon. member did refer to the green plan. I was pleased that he did so, but I do not think he really did justice either to the green plan or to the attention it has paid to the Fraser River system. I think you will see, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure that all members of the House will applaud, that there will be an expanded program in place in the not too distant future with respect to the Fraser River ecosystem.

• (1820)

We are looking at curbing pollution throughout the entire basin using increased enforcement, if that is necessary; the question of the cleaning up of waste sites, the restoration of wildlife and fishery habitats and the improvement of water quality. That can be done only with the co-operation of all levels of government.

I am sure the hon. member will contribute toward that co-operation.

## AIR TRANSPORTATION

**Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to pursue this evening in the few minutes allotted to me a question I posed in the House to the Minister of Transport on March 18. It concerned the open skies negotiations that will be taking place in a few short weeks. The open skies negotiations refer quite simply to the revisiting of the existing air agreement between Canada and the United States that was last amended and modified in 1974.

The major dilemma in the open skies negotiations, from Canada's perspective, is the whole concept of cabotage, which is a fancy term for simply saying, do we allow American carriers to go beyond simply coming into Canada, as they do now, and dropping off passengers? Do we go the extra step and allow American carriers the ability to pick up Canadian travellers in point *a* and bring them to another Canadian destination? That is what is meant by the word cabotage, which in essence would allow the American carriers to freely access Canadian points and probably offer reciprocal cabotage rights to our Canadian carriers.

The problem is that our industry is very different from that of the Americans. It is a lot smaller and the feeling among the air industry in Canada is that if we granted American carriers cabotage, that is to say if we allowed American carriers to roam freely in and around Canada,

we would probably not have a Canadian industry as we know it in very short order.

In fact, when the government appointed a special parliamentary committee to investigate the dossier in anticipation of the negotiations, we found two things. First, by and large the Canadian industry and the many witnesses who came before us advocated that when we enter into negotiations, we clearly tell the Americans that cabotage should not be on the table as far as it is concerned toward giving the American carriers those rights in Canada. If we enter into negotiations and want to raise cabotage, it should only be done in the context of granting it to the smaller Canadian carriers in the United States, but not reciprocal.

Second, we had an agreement that was unanimous. In fact, members of Parliament from the Conservative, Liberal and NDP parties signed the unanimous committee report that said quite clearly to the minister that we should not pursue giving cabotage rights to the Americans and that if we want to pursue cabotage, it is only for Canadian carriers in the United States.

The minister at the outset of that special committee suggested that he would take the committee report very seriously and that he would listen enthusiastically to the recommendations of the report. Therefore, it came as somewhat of a surprise and also as a frustration on my part, as the transport critic for the Liberal Party, to hear the Minister of Transport going to Washington and giving a major speech on February 12 which put cabotage clearly on the table.

Therefore, my question on March 18 was to have the minister give his undertaking to the House and to the Canadian industry that cabotage for American carriers would not be advanced by our Canadian negotiators.

• (1825)

If it was placed on the table by the American side, we would clearly say no, that as a bare minimum and as a bottom line there would be no deal if it involved giving American carriers the right to travel anywhere they please in Canada.

We said so because the industry is going through some troubling times. We have seen the lay-offs of thousands of workers. Presently we have a monopoly between Air Canada and Canadian. We have the regional interests that want to maintain a sense of quality service. While some cities in the regions have had an additional number