

## Oral Questions

## GUN CONTROL

[Translation]

**Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

In the wake of the tragic murder of Constable Todd Baylis, the Solicitor General stated that the killing pointed out the need for tighter gun control. Yet information released in the wake of the shooting indicates that the man who apparently shot Constable Baylis was already in illegal possession of the gun.

Could the minister advise the House how tighter gun control would have prevented the shooting?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, I rely on press reports in pointing out that the weapon used in the crime was a handgun.

• (1445)

The indications as I said earlier at least preliminary are that the handgun was initially purchased by a person with lawful intent who registered it according to the law, had it in a residence from which it was stolen.

I invite the hon. member to observe with me the logical connection between the presence of that handgun in a community from which it was taken by someone with criminal intent and the fact that it wound up allegedly being used in the commission of a murderous crime. The connection is quite obvious.

**Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley):** Mr. Speaker, my supplemental is also for the Minister of Justice.

In a recent joint sting operation by a number of Ontario police departments, 17 handguns were purchased illegally. Sixteen of these guns were illegally smuggled into Canada from the United States.

How would a total ban on handguns prevent criminals from getting their hands on guns?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, it is implicit in the hon. member's question that the government intends to look at just one and not all aspects of this issue.

Indeed we have already started to examine specific aspects of the smuggling issue. We do intend to address it effectively and with concrete action but that is only one aspect. It is not only smuggling guns. It is also people with criminal intent stealing weapons from those who lawfully own them in Canada that is a threat to the safety of our communities.

## AIR TRANSPORTATION

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. The status of French at airports has not improved much since Quebec aviation workers waged their famous fight and managed 20 years ago to obtain the right to communicate in French in Quebec airspace. Let us take, for example, a Transport Canada order on air navigation which barely tolerates the use of French at Canadian airports.

Since the ability to speak in both official languages is at the heart of the Canadian duality, how can the minister justify banning the use of French in air traffic operations in Canada, except in Quebec, while closing Quebec City's terminal control unit, one of only two French-language air control centres in Canada?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, if my hon. colleague wanted to be frank with the House of Commons, he would know that 99 per cent of all flights in Quebec airspace are served in the pilot's language of choice. However, when airplanes are flying at an altitude of more than 29,000 feet, there may be, at a certain point, a lack of communications in French.

In general, these airplanes are flying to destinations outside Quebec where they will have to operate in English on arrival. It is the Department of Transport's fiduciary and primary responsibility to ensure the safety of the people using Canada's transportation system, and if the hon. member wants to fight for bilingualism, I would ask him not to do so on the backs of the people who use Canada's transportation system.

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans):** Mr. Speaker, does the minister admit that only Montreal and Quebec City are certified by his department as bilingual and that, as a result, Moncton's radar control unit, although located in a bilingual province, is not in a position to offer services in French in some regions of New Brunswick and Quebec, namely the North Shore and the Magdalen Islands?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, I will repeat for my hon. colleague's information that 99 per cent of flights in Quebec airspace can be guided in the pilot's language of choice. I know how much the hon. member and his opposition colleagues are interested in Moncton and in the French fact outside Quebec. I know how much they are really interested in ensuring that services are provided in both languages outside Quebec. We know what kind of support they have given us on this issue historically.