

*Government Orders***ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS***[English]***JUSTICE AND THE SOLICITOR GENERAL****NINTH REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**Mr. Bob Horner (Mississauga West):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the ninth report of the Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General, in both official languages.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) the committee has considered certain questions concerning the Christine Lamont and David Spencer case and has agreed to report it.

In its report the committee makes two recommendations: First, the committee unanimously urges the Secretary of State for External Affairs to request without undue delay the expulsion of Christine Lamont and David Spencer in accordance with the laws of Brazil and Canada's international human rights law obligations.

Second, the committee urges that the minister enhance the program of informing Canadians as to the number of Canadians in foreign jails and the importance of conducting oneself in a way so as to avoid any conflicts with laws in other countries.

*[Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.]*

---

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS***[English]***CUSTOMS ACT****MEASURE TO AMEND**

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-74, an act to amend the Customs Act, the Customs Tariff and the Excise Tax Act, as reported (with an amendment) by the Standing Committee on Finance.

**Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan):** Mr. Speaker, let me begin by complimenting the committee that just reported. It is another example of how parliamentarians can work together in a very complex matter and come to agreement that I think all Canadians will be proud of. I hope that the minister will respond appropriately.

With regard to the group of amendments put forward by my colleague from the Liberal Party, I want to say that I do not support them. We have to recognize that in our two countries, Canada and the United States, there are a lot of intermarriages and a lot of families who live on both sides of the border. By restricting the exemption for gifts between families, between friends, between business colleagues, to the current amount as opposed to what the government is attempting to do which is to increase it is wrong.

For that reason I will be opposing the amendment. I certainly do agree with the member in his comments about the registry and giving the opportunity for American-based direct mail firms to have an advantage over Canadians. We have to recognize that all this bill does, and I will come back to this on third reading, is facilitate cross-border shopping. It also facilitates cross-border driving because there are no fees attached to the processing when you drive across the border and bring goods in, but if you are using the mail or courier services, there are. In effect the Government of Canada has made it more attractive to drive south to buy goods than reducing that opportunity.

**Mr. Barry Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue):** Mr. Speaker, in response to the amendments of the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, I would just like to say that amendments Nos. 1 and 2 would force the gift exemption to remain at \$40 instead of being increased to \$60. The gift exemption was increased to accommodate families and friends sending gifts from abroad. It brings it in line with the gift exemption in other countries. Gifts must be sent by an individual, not from a company, in order to qualify for the gift exemption.

As regards amendment No. 3, this amendment would restrict the exemption for postal and courier imports to \$5 instead of the \$20 proposed in the legislation. Dropping it to \$5 would mean additional costs to customs because it would require processing an additional nine million parcels. Dropping it from \$40 to \$20 would result in an additional five million parcels being processed.

The proposed changes in Bill C-74 which we are advancing is in direct response to Canadian business demands that this government make the necessary changes to existing legislation to balance the scales. Representations were received from the Retail Council of Canada, the Canadian Direct Marketing Association, independent retailers and other small business people.