

Order Paper Questions

They believe it is only right and fair that the Government now dissolve Parliament and allow the people of Canada the opportunity to accept or reject the proposed free trade agreement during a national general election. My suspicion is that they would like it to occur sooner than later.

PROTECTION OF RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

Mr. Roger Clinch (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour and privilege to present two petitions today on behalf of the constituents of Gloucester County.

[*Translation*]

Therefore, the petitioners ask us to act immediately to protect, defend and respect the rights of unborn children.

[*English*]

These petitioners ask us to consider the tragic effects of the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada with respect to Section 251 of the Criminal Code. They pray and beg that we will take immediate action to protect, defend and respect the right of unborn children.

Mr. John Oostrom (Willowdale): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege, duty and honour to present a petition on behalf of some 700 petitioners from Kingston, Glenburnie, Joyceville, Enterprise, Elginburg, Inverary, Orleans, Battersea, Smiths Falls, Cobourg, Pembroke and North Bay. They are disappointed that the Supreme Court of Canada struck down Canada's abortion law leaving unborn children without any protection of the basic right to life. Therefore the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon Parliament to pass immediately legislation to protect the unborn child from the moment of conception.

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[*Translation*]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of State and Minister of State (Treasury Board)): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

AIR CANADA PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed from Monday, June 7, consideration of the motion of Mr. Mazankowski that Bill C-129, an Act to provide for the continuance of Air Canada under the Canada Business Corporations Act and for the issuance and sale of shares thereof to the public, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee; and the motion of Mr. McDermid:

That this question be now put.

Mr. Joe Reid (St. Catharines): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure and an honour to rise in my place today to speak in support of Bill C-129, a Bill which will give Canadians an opportunity to share in the future of Air Canada.

This legislation has been welcomed by Canadians from across the country—by consumers, Air Canada employees, the airline industry, not to mention the Canadian public at large. The Canadian public has welcomed it because it means increased competition. Increased competition means better service for consumers. Air Canada employees have welcomed it because it means expanded opportunities for the company in the future, and an opportunity for them to share in the growth of their labours.

This legislation is fully consistent with the competitive environment created by the National Transportation Act, which Act was passed just last year. That Act replaced a 20-year old law and revamped the transportation sector. It permits greater reliance on market forces and less reliance on economic regulation. The results of this are beginning to be felt in more innovation and enterprise, as well as more competitive transportation services with reduced prices.

For the airlines this has meant that it will be much easier to adjust their services to meet the demands of the market-place and to tailor their fare structure to meet competitive conditions.

The short title of Bill C-129 is the Air Canada Public Participation Act. This is an apt description of what this legislation is all about.

The intent of the Bill is to provide all Canadians with the unique opportunity to become real and active partners in the ownership of one of the world's great airlines. Once the Bill is passed, Air Canada's 22,000 plus employees, all of whom have contributed to the airline's national and international success and achievements, will also be able to share directly in the company's ownership and success.

I would remind Hon. Members as well that the legislation before us limits the level of individual ownership and, in so doing, broadens the base of potential investors.