

Oral Questions

The hon. member also is aware, as my colleague pointed out yesterday, that there was a marketing agency created under the supply management system since the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement came into effect. The Broiler Hatchery Agency was created in that atmosphere and added to the ability to export more agricultural products to the United States than we had before.

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REFUGEES

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Employment and Immigration, I address my question to the Deputy Prime Minister.

As the government knows, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Refugees which Canada signed forbids Canada to cause a refugee to be forcibly returned directly or indirectly to a country where he would face persecution.

Will the minister confirm that Canada is seeking an agreement with the European Community that would enable Canada to remove refugee claimants without having examined their claims to European Community countries through which they pass *en route* to Canada?

[Translation]

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of State (Employment and Immigration) and Minister of State (Seniors)): Madam Speaker, I can assure the hon. member that we as a government recognize our responsibility to respect the various conventions that have been signed. If the hon. member is referring to the Dublin convention, we may remind the House that we support the development of international strategies and that, as a government, we will always respect the international conventions we have signed.

[English]

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the same minister.

Since some countries of the European Community do not have nearly such high standards of definition and treatment of refugees as does Canada, will the minister assure this House that Canada will not remove any refugee claimant unless his or her refugee claim has been examined and judged ungrounded?

[Translation]

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister of State (Employment and Immigration) and Minister of State (Seniors)): Madam Speaker, the hon. member is familiar with our procedures. Every claim is examined individually, and our approach is humanitarian. And, of course, all the eventualities to which he referred will be dealt with according to the procedures established under our Immigration Act.

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[English]

AIRPORT SCREENINGS

Mr. George S. Rideout (Moncton): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Transport, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. It concerns the tendering process for the pre-board screening contract at the Moncton airport and at other airports in Atlantic Canada.

The previous Minister of Transport stated: "When tendering contracts for airport screening services, the airlines will include a specification to protect current employees' wages and fringe benefits at the levels of the existing contract".

The employees providing this service are to be fired and new ones hired at substantially lower wages because a new company has been awarded the contract. What is the government prepared to do to protect these employees?

Mr. Lee Richardson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I think the hon. member is aware that the awarding of contracts and the resulting changes of screening personnel is strictly a negotiating matter between the carrier and the security guard agency.

Mr. George S. Rideout (Moncton): Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question. That response is nonsense.

This contract is renewed every three years and the government has a moral obligation to protect those employees so that they are not victimized by having new contractors undermine any improvements in salary, or worse that they lose their jobs.