

Oral Questions

For over five years, the RCMP has been investigating the 1985 Air-India jumbo jet crash which caused what everyone could well be knowledgeable of as one of the worst single mass murders in Canadian history. Of the 329 passengers who had their lives snuffed out, 295 of them were Canadians including 82 children and six infants.

Because of the long delay in this behind-closed-doors investigation, would the Solicitor General now call a public inquiry, or better still, would he allow for a parliamentary inquiry? At the minimum, would he place a time limit on the RCMP to report back to the government?

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, although I cannot agree with the entire terminology used by my hon. friend, I want to reassure my hon. friend and all members in the House that the crash of Air-India flight 182 is still under investigation by the RCMP, and that the RCMP is planning another mission to the North Sea this summer in order to try to get further evidence from the wreckage.

In addition, there is a civil suit that is ongoing. Therefore, I think it would be inappropriate right now to agree with the suggestion made by my hon. friend, but I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that I am kept informed with respect to this ongoing investigation and hopefully it will be terminated as soon as the RCMP can get the additional evidence it is seeking.

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IMMIGRATION

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

Today, Canadians had to come to Parliament to protest against the Minister of Employment and Immigration for the delay of the reunification of their spouses. Five years ago it used to take nine months. Now, it takes two and one-half years to be reunited with loved ones.

In the spirit of Christmas, will the minister intervene and have hundreds of Canadians spend Christmas with their loved ones in Canada?

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, one of the things that we have tried to do in our new immigration plan is to move forward the processing of spouses.

I would point out to him that we are very much in favour of having families reunited as quickly as we can and, indeed, we know that larger numbers of family members will be coming in the future under our new plan.

The difficulty, of course, is that the demand is so extraordinarily high. We try to keep up with it as best we can. We have put in improvements for processing. We have given it a higher priority, and I would hope that in the future we could do better. It is important to us and we know that people want to be reunited with their families.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, the minister sounds like a broken record.

Would the minister grant a visitor's visa to a newly-wed spouse so that the couple can be together while waiting for the documents to be processed in Canada? Would that not be an easy way?

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I understand the dilemma that the hon. member is describing. It is difficult to say whether a newly-wed is in a more difficult and lonely situation than someone who has been married a long time.

Let me say that we are looking at ways to ease the situation for spouses and that I will be reporting back to the House when we have new regulations and our new processing in place. I think the hon. member will be pleased.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

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[*Translation*]

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Nic Leblanc (Longueuil): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Quebec has established one of the best health care systems in the world. A number of American experts, including Senator Ted Kennedy and experts from other countries have recognized this fact. At the present time, the Government of Quebec is making