

## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

### SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE RAISED

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne):** Order. It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38(1), to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the Hon. Member for Victoria (Mr. Brewin)—Royal Canadian Mounted Police—Bus Hijacking—Timing of Information; the Hon. Member for York West (Mr. Marchi)—Immigration—Refugee claimant applications backlog; the Hon. Member for Prince George—Bulkley Valley (Mr. Gardiner)—Forestry—Federal—Provincial agreements—Administrative responsibility—Request for consideration at First Ministers' Conference).

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## TRANSPORTATION ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BOARD

### MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Bouchard (Roberval) that Bill C-2, an Act to establish the Transportation Investigation Board and to amend certain Acts in consequence thereof, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Transport.

**Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre):** Madam Speaker, I only have a few comments because many of the points we sought to raise during this debate have been made by other Members. I want to re-emphasize our concern that the questions of safety are addressed properly by the Government. Our desire to debate this in detail is very much influenced by this concern. While we appreciate the anxiousness of the Government to assure Canadians that it too is concerned, we think the Government has moved too hastily with this particular legislation.

Some of the principles that are at stake here are worth reviewing to make sure that Canadians understand them. First, by switching from a single purpose agency to a multimodal agency to review investigations, the Government runs the risk of having a group of people who must respond to crises of a completely different order. While it is very convenient, I am sure the Minister took the advice of his Ministry which has its own parallel organization. The Department of Transport has a surface section, an air section and a marine section. Lo and behold, this legislation proposes a parallel organization.

### *Transportation Accident Investigation Board*

Our fear is that while it may be convenient from a bureaucratic point of view, the risk one runs is setting up an organization that is too close to the original Department so that there will develop a buddy system which is contrary to the purposes of the legislation.

The second concern we have from an administrative point of view, in principle, is that there is a small number of people appointed to the board with such wide ranging responsibilities. If there are five people appointed, one of them must be the chairman. I assume one will take responsibility for air, another for surface, including pipeline and rail, and a third would take responsibility for marine, with an extra member performing various duties. It does not take much imagination to see that with a series of crises occurring in the country and an investigating time of some two or three years, which is not uncommon, the five members will not be able to pay attention to crises as they evolve. This means that people at the second tier will have to address the issue, which raises another problem of public servants investigating public servants.

I suggest the public needs reassurance that we are moving away from investigating ourselves and having others study the question. The principle of parliamentary government is to invite as many Canadians as possible to review our activities rather than doing it among ourselves.

The third principle that is not explored enough, although the Government attempted in its various ways to pretend it understood the issue, is the requirement of public investigation and public inquiry. We hope that as we review this legislation at its various stages in the House it will be improved by ensuring immediate publication of information, the holding of public inquiries under all circumstances as needed, so that the public not only feels that the Government is looking after its interests but their concerns from one region to another can be addressed.

There is the question of where this organization should be headquartered and whether it should be kept close to the Ministry of Transport or physically removed. In the past, the Government followed a pattern with the establishment of CN in Montreal, the establishment of VIA Rail in Montreal, and the establishment of Air Canada in Montreal. It took the strategy that it should separate Crown corporations and independent agencies from the Ministry of Transport. I will be interested in seeing future announcements from the Government about where this should be located so that Canadians understand the independence of the organization.