

Africa, there remain the great issues of trade, aid, investment, arms control and security, reform of the United Nations, where Canadian support for multilateral approaches and Canadian leadership in multilateral institutions will be most important. There is, therefore, a great agenda before this Parliament and before the country—tax reform, trade initiatives, regional policy, child care, pension reform, repatriation of Quebec, aboriginal rights, language reform, international issues. I say, honourable senators, that this agenda is worthy of the best efforts of all of us, and one in which I am sure this chamber will play a notable and worthy part.

• (1630)

On motion of Senator Frith, debate adjourned.

TERRORISM

MOTION FOR APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE— DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. William M. Kelly, pursuant to notice of Thursday, October 2, 1986, moved:

That a Special Committee of the Senate be appointed to hear evidence on and consider matters relating to terrorism as a real or potential threat to Canada and to Canadians;

That the Committee examine and make recommendations on the subject-matter and effectiveness of existing statutes, agreements and administrative arrangements pertaining to the combatting of terrorist activity;

That the Committee examine and make recommendations on the role of the media in reporting terrorist threats and incidents;

That eight Senators, to be designated at a later date, act as members of the Special Committee;

That the Committee have power to report from time to time, to send for persons, papers and records and to print such papers and evidence from day to day as may be ordered by the Committee; and

That the Committee report to the Senate no later than June 2, 1987.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Explain.

Senator Kelly: Honourable senators, once again I must preface my remarks in this chamber by referring to the fact that I am following two of the most eloquent speakers in this chamber. It is a role I keep getting pressed into and one I do not enjoy at all. I shall be very brief, but I must say that it has been an extremely entertaining afternoon. I found, I believe, two items on which Senator MacEachen and Senator Murray agreed. I did not make note of them because they passed so quickly, but I am sure that I could find them if I delved into my memory.

[Senator Murray.]

This motion is very similar to the one approved by the Senate on June 3 of this year. There are some changes, however, that I shall explain in a moment. The motion of June 3 expired with the prorogation of Parliament announced by the Prime Minister on August 28. If the committee is to get under way, therefore, the process must be initiated once again beginning with this motion.

I continue to believe that the review contemplated by this motion is both important and timely. The incidence of terrorism worldwide has not decreased since the earlier motion was approved on June 3. Since then, we have had the TWA-Beirut and Pan Am—Karachi hijackings, with a significant loss of life. We have had the “Black September” bombings in France, a French military attaché gunned down in Beirut and a synagogue bombed in Istanbul. There is no more evidence today than there was in June that Canada is immune from such barbarism. The Canadian government recognizes and is taking a leading role to combat international terrorism through organizations such as IATA and ICAO. As the Governor General stated in the recent Speech from the Throne, the Government of Canada “recognizes that security is the surest safeguard of liberty.”

I and several of my colleagues have felt considerable urgency that this examination get under way without further delay. Since June 3, therefore, we have done considerable background and preliminary work within the mandate as set out in the original motion. We did this so that the formal committee hearings could get under way as quickly and effectively as possible this fall when the committee's budget was approved. Given our view of the urgency and importance of the task that faced us, we continued this work, quietly and informally, even after prorogation. In that regard, over the course of this past summer we have seen a total of 62 people. These people have included current and former cabinet ministers, federal public servants, federal, provincial and municipal law enforcement officers, representatives from the working and management levels of the Canadian print and electronic media, recognized experts who have studied some facet of terrorism and continue to have a direct interest in the subject, and a range of other people who, for one reason or another, have a valuable perspective or position to offer.

We have also been in telephone or written contact with a host of government and law enforcement people, academics and other experts in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia in order to benefit from their views and experience.

The cooperation and assistance we have received has been gratifying. We have amassed a great deal of information, and we are becoming more and more knowledgeable about the subject. What we have learned only confirms in our minds the need for an investigation of the type contemplated by this motion. I think that we have also reached the point where committee hearings could begin almost immediately. I must also say that the idea of a Senate committee studying terrorism and its impact or possible impact on Canadians has been almost universally and warmly supported by the people to