

*Oral Questions*

reserve international routes for only one carrier, except for the U.S. market, is likely to favour Canadian International, at the expense of Air Canada, whose employees are mainly located in Montreal?

[English]

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should recognize that it is government policy to recognize there are two great Canadian airlines in this country: Air Canada and Canadian Airlines International.

What we have achieved with respect to what we hope we will be able to sign when the president comes to Canada is something that has been worked on in this country for nearly eight or nine years.

I would have thought that instead of playing petty parochial politics the hon. member would have recognized that Canadians from coast to coast in every province and both airlines have accepted this deal as the biggest step forward in Canadian aviation history in the last 15 years.

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#### CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

**Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration sponsored a meeting and flew writers and bureaucrats on short notice to a four star west coast hotel to ask them: What should we do with the citizenship oath? The meeting was purposely kept secret and the new so-called pledge omits the head of state.

• (1445)

Was the minister aware of this meeting and does he approve of its final result, a pledge that is no longer an oath that leaves out any and all mention of the Queen?

**Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I was aware of the meeting. The recommendation to the government to hold such a meeting to bring together Canadian writers was by the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, and the Reform Party agreed with the recommendation.

**Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the recommendation of the standing committee. However they did not recommend a secret meeting.

On this day 30 years ago Canadians chose their new flag in an open forum that included the whole country. Today the minister uses backroom politics in a four-star hotel to try to slip in a new oath by Canadians on the sly. Canadians are saying: "Stop the secrecy but above all stop the waste".

Will the minister tell Parliament that he will put a stop to these backroom meetings and that any future changes of such profound importance will be brought before the Canadian people as was done 30 years ago?

**Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member's long preamble is simply absurd. The member knows full well—he was a member of that committee—that one of the major recommendations was to try to engage some leading Canadian writers to bring some vigour to a Canadian oath, to a charter of values for Canadian citizens.

Rather than undermining the voluntary efforts of the 10 writers who came together, he should be complimenting those Canadians who are prepared to give of themselves like Canadians gave of themselves 30 years ago for the flag.

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[Translation]

#### PUBLIC SERVICE

**Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board.

[English]

The previous government had a clear bias toward contracting services within the public service, with little control on the costs, numbers or quality of this shadow public service.

What means will the minister take to rigorously examine and restrain contracting so that public service employees do not lose their jobs while the shadow public service continues to prosper and grow?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is a close encounter. The government does not have the bias of the past government with respect to the matter of contracting out. We believe in getting best value for the taxpayers' dollar and ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in how we spend those dollars.

In respect of the downsizing that will be occurring, certainly we will want to look at it very carefully and take into consideration the concerns the hon. member has raised here today.

It is our effort to treat our employees fairly and reasonably. We will make every effort to try to put them in other jobs if their current positions have been declared surplus.

However the whole question of contracting out is also a matter that is before the government operations committee.