

*Supply*

We have in effect already in place what the Bloc is calling for in its motion. The spokesperson for the Reform Party made the important point that since CSIS is already carrying out this work, there is no need for the creation of another body that, looking at what the history of royal commissions indicates, would involve considerable additional expense for the taxpayer.

[Translation]

Parliament created SIRC precisely to ensure that so-called wrongdoings such as the ones which are being raised in this House today undergo objective investigation.

Moreover, SIRC was given important statutory powers to carry out its mandate. SIRC is authorized to obtain from CSIS all necessary information to fulfil its responsibilities, including documents, reports and explanations. Obviously, SIRC has the abilities and the powers required to investigate the allegations being made.

The Official Opposition was unable to prove that we should set up another review agency to do exactly what SIRC is authorized and able to do.

[English]

As I have said, it is my intention, my objective, to make as much of the CSIS report into the recent allegations as public as possible, subject of course to the requirements of any relevant legislation. In fact if the legislation permits me to do so I certainly would like to make the entire report public. Mind you the spokesperson for the Official Opposition herself has pointed out there may be some justifiable reasons for some of a report of this nature not to be made public and her views should be taken into account.

• (1115)

I believe the SIRC investigation and the preparation of its report should continue. While it should take the time it needs to do the job properly, as I have said SIRC has already indicated it wants to complete that work as soon as possible. It expects to have a report available in October.

I should also mention that the CSIS act provides for an Inspector General to report to the minister about CSIS. The Inspector General has been quoted publicly as saying that he himself is undertaking reviews with regard to policies and procedures governing the use of human sources by CSIS and the handling of CSIS documents. These reports will be another valuable source of information and analysis for me to use as a basis for seeing if action should be taken with regard to what has been alleged over the past weeks and months.

I want to stress as I have done before that I will not hesitate to have corrective action taken where such action is in fact necessary on the basis of real proof that there are definite problems to be corrected with regard to the work of CSIS.

However, I do not think it is fair or reasonable to make judgments in advance, as the Bloc has done in its motion, as to the value or the quality of the work of SIRC in this matter before that work is even completed.

To conclude, I submit that what the Bloc's motion calls for is not in fact necessary since Parliament in passing the law creating a framework for the operation of CSIS created an oversight mechanism for it. This involved the creation of SIRC, which I have said I look on as being very much like a permanent royal commission with a specific mandate for the ongoing review of the work of CSIS.

I believe we should allow this body to complete its work on the recent allegations. Then we should make use of the report which as I have said I intend to make public as much as is possible in the light of the requirements of the relevant legislation. Then decisions can be made on what action may be necessary to take in the light of definite proof, if there is any, with respect to problems regarding the work of CSIS.

However I submit that at this time the motion presented by the Bloc calls for action that is not necessary. It duplicates the work of a body created by Parliament which is like a royal commission. We should allow SIRC to complete its work so that its report can be completed and we can have access to it and take any action necessitated by that report.

**Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley):** Madam Speaker, I was pleased to hear the hon. Solicitor General acknowledge that he will take into consideration my comments about how much of the report should be made public. I hope he notes that the only exclusions I made were the names of additional sources other than Grant Bristow. I feel all else should be made public.

My concern is that some of the legislation he may be looking at to see how much flexibility he has is outdated. I would like some assurance from the hon. minister that he will use some flexibility in the interpretation of these outdated pieces of legislation so that he is not restricted and bound by classifications of material that do not apply in this case.

I would like some assurance from the hon. minister that he will be open minded in the interpretation of this legislation to allow a more open process.

• (1120)

While I have the opportunity I would also like to ask for the minister's assurance that he will support the efforts of the subcommittee on national security to further investigate this issue beyond that which SIRC can do. I hope the minister will give full co-operation to and persuade government members of this House to support the subcommittee in its efforts to get to the bottom of this.