

From Parliamentary Hansard – 21 Feb 2007

Airline Security

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Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):

Mr. Speaker, Canada's aviation inspectors understand air safety better than anyone and they are telling the minister that his so-called SMS, self-serve safety, is a literal disaster waiting to happen.

These inspectors know what they are talking about. We need only look at what happened to railway safety and marine safety when oversight was handed over to the industries' CEOs. Accident rates rose and safety plummeted.

Will the minister listen to those who know best and stop his attempt to turn Canadian airline passengers into cannon fodder? Will he stop playing games with the safety of Canadians?

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Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):

Mr. Speaker, the facts are the following. We are putting in place a security management system that basically calls upon everybody who is involved in the industry to add on an additional layer in terms of security and safety to those who take our airlines.

In that sense, we are continuing to be the safest airways, not only in Canada but throughout the world. I call upon my colleague to support these actions. They are good actions for Canadians.

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Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):

Mr. Speaker, the fact is, the minister is promoting the reckless endangerment of Canadians.

Eighty per cent of Canada's inspectors say that the minister's self-serve safety will prevent them from correcting safety problems before they happen. Three-quarters of Canada's inspectors believe that a major accident will occur soon and that the public would lose confidence in aviation safety if they knew what reckless, feckless plans the minister has.

The minister is putting Canadian lives at risk. Why will he not listen to those who know aviation safety best?

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Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):

Mr. Speaker, surely it is not my hon. colleague who knows aviation safety the best.

We have been working extensively on this file. We are putting in new layers of protection. We are ensuring that our inspectors are doing the job.

Incidentally, we have just appointed a review panel to look at railway safety in the country. We are acting and that party is not doing anything.

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