

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION



CHEF DE L'OPPOSITION

September 29, 2005

Mr. Rattan S. Kalsi and Mrs. Harbhajan-Kalsi
953 South Wenige Drive
London, ON N5X 4G7

Dear Mr. Kalsi and Mrs. Harbhajan-Kalsi:

Thank you for your letter. I have noted your request for a public inquiry into the recent Air India ruling and apologize for the delay in responding.

After two decades, the horror of the Air India bombing remains fresh in the minds of Canadians. The senseless terrorist act claimed the lives of over 300 innocent people, and has had a lasting and profound impact on all Canadians.

I had the opportunity to meet with many of those affected by the Air India tragedy last spring, and to travel with the victims' families and friends to the 20th anniversary memorial in Ireland this year. Their search for answers is real, and I firmly believe that they deserve to know that justice has been served.

In an attempt to give closure to the families and friends of the victims, my colleagues and I have continuously demanded that the government establish a public inquiry into the handling of this case.

We believe that it is unacceptable for the government to dither on this issue. During the 1993 federal election campaign, the Liberals promised Canadians that they would initiate a public inquiry concerning the Air India tragedy. More than a decade has passed since that promise was made, and yet families and friends of the victims continue to wait.

For this reason, on April 12, 2005, our caucus led the way in Parliament by submitting a Conservative motion that demanded the Liberal government live up to its 1993 election promise. Regrettably, the government decided to ignore their own promises, their moral responsibility to respect the will of Parliament and the wishes of the families. Instead, they appointed Bob Rae to review information regarding the tragedy and to advise as to whether he considers a public inquiry necessary.

Rest assured that my colleagues and I will continue urging the government to commit unequivocally, clearly and without hesitation to establish an independent judicial inquiry. It is essential that the serious questions raised about the investigation into the bombing are finally answered.

Thank you again for sharing your concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Harper', written in a cursive style.

Hon. Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.
Leader of the Opposition
Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada

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