



For Immediate Release

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Conservatives Walk Away from Original Holocaust Monument Commitment

OTTAWA - Liberals expressed their disappointment today after the Conservatives, along with the Bloc Québécois, "gutted" Bill C-442, which would have ensured a publicly-funded National Holocaust Monument in the Nation's Capital within three years.

"The Conservatives had committed in their Speech from the Throne to all Canadians that they were behind this initiative," said Liberal Transport Critic Joe Volpe. "Instead, they waited until the bill reached the committee stage and completely rewrote it, dissociating the government from the monument completely," he continued.

Moreover, Bill C-442 is a diminished version of Bill C-547, presented in the 39th Parliament by former Liberal MP for Thornhill, Susan Kadis, and Bill C-328, a current bill by Liberal MP Anita Neville. The amendments presented and passed by the Conservatives force an appointed committee of five to raise funds from the Jewish community to pay for the land, planning, design, construction, installation and maintenance of the monument.

Almost all of the government's amendments were ruled "inadmissible" by the Conservative chair of the committee, but Conservative members used a rare procedure to challenge and overrule the chair.

"This is disgraceful," said Mr. Volpe. "The Harper government is essentially saying, go out and build a monument on your own and we will show up when it's done to take credit."

In contrast, Liberal amendments would have made the federal government responsible for building and maintaining the monument, because all Canadians want to commemorate the Holocaust's victims. Further, [on May 14, 2010, Mr. Volpe wrote to Minister Baird](#), imploring him to withdraw his government's amendments and to move forward unilaterally to build the monument now.

"The National Capital Commission (NCC) does not require legislation to move forward on this project and has the power to do it now," said Bonnie Crombie, Liberal Critic for Crown Corporations. "If the government were truly serious about this important project, it would instruct the NCC of the expressed will of the House of Commons that approved the original bill at second reading and get this done!"

"Today, Liberals repeat their call on the Minister of Transport who is responsible for the NCC to use his authority, and without haste, to build a national Holocaust Memorial for all Canadians," said Mr. Volpe.

The bill, as amended, now moves back to the House of Commons where the Speaker of the House of Commons is likely to rule that the Conservative government's amendments in committee are inadmissible, thus making the future of the bill uncertain.

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