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Toronto, Ontario M5S 2V1

November 12, 2002

VIA FACSIMILE

The Honourable Elinor Caplan
Minister of National Revenue
555 Mackenzie Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0L5

Dear Minister Caplan:

As officers of our respective Legislatures with responsibility for the protection of privacy, the undersigned wish to register our continuing concerns about the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency's traveller-surveillance database.

As has been pointed out to you in correspondence that a number of us wrote to you last month, the CCRA's database is overly broad and unnecessarily targets innocent Canadians for surveillance by the state. We continue to share the concerns of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada, George Radwanski, that the information contained in the database can be used for purposes unrelated to anti-terrorist security. Rather than collecting and retaining the personal information of a small number of targeted air travellers, as originally planned, the database is far greater in scope and now is slated to expand. We are disturbed that the federal government, in the face of these concerns, plans to expand the database even further to include personal information on individuals who arrive in Canada by other means, such as trains, ships and buses.

We also remain concerned, like our federal colleague that Bill C-17 would permit the RCMP to use passenger information for general law enforcement purposes unrelated to national security or aviation security. The changes to Bill C-17 from the earlier version of this Bill by no means fully address our previously expressed concerns about this measure.

While the heightened national security interest that exists since the events of September 11, 2001 may justify certain intrusions on privacy rights in the name of public safety, any such intrusions must be strictly limited to anti-terrorism purposes, must clearly be demonstrated to be necessary, and must not intrude on privacy rights any more than is absolutely necessary. The public interest in combating terrorism cannot be used as an excuse to expand the powers of the police or other agencies of the state, for other purposes.

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We urge you once again to reconsider these initiatives, which have serious implications for all Canadians. We would appreciate receiving a response to this letter.

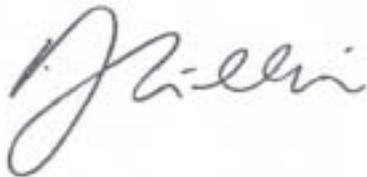
Sincerely yours,



Ann Cavoukian, Ph.D.
Information and Privacy Commissioner
of Ontario



Frank Work
Information and Privacy Commissioner
Of Alberta



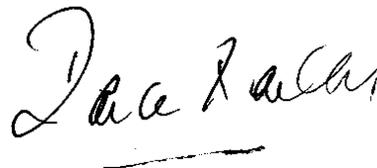
David Loukidelis
Information and Privacy Commissioner
of British Columbia



Barry Tuckett
Privacy Ombudsman for Manitoba



Richard Rendek, Q.C.
A/Information and Privacy Commissioner
of Saskatchewan



Darce Fardy
Review Officer
Nova Scotia Freedom of Information
and Protection of Privacy Review Office



Elaine Keenan Bengts
Information and Privacy Commissioner
for the Northwest Territories and Nunavut

cc: The Honourable Martin Cauchon, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
The Honourable David Collenette, Minister of Transport
The Honourable Arnold Easter, Solicitor General of Canada
Mr. George Radwanski, Privacy Commissioner of Canada