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REPORT:

A. Border Related News Media

Major cocaine bust brings guilty plea Buffalo News - September 7, 2011

If Ravinder Arora is right, he was part of a smuggling ring that over a two-year period trucked \$64 million worth of cocaine across the border into Canada. Arora finally got caught, and Wednesday he pleaded guilty in federal court to taking part in what officials are now calling the largest narcotics seizure in local history. During his court appearance, Arora, 30, admitted that his arrest on the Lewiston-Queenston Bridge last September came during his 10th trip into Canada. All told, he estimates that he smuggled more than 1,600 kilograms of coke into Canada since 2009. Border agents seized 97 kilograms of coke during his arrest. "The wholesale value of these illegal drugs would have been nearly \$4 million, with the street level values at least triple that," U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul Jr. said of the coke seized last year. Even more dramatic, perhaps, is the value of the drugs — \$64 million — that Arora claims to have successfully smuggled into Canada. Hochul said the Canadian resident did it by conspiring with two other defendants — Parminder Sidhu, the owner of the trucking company, and Michael Bagri — to transport large shipments of cocaine from California. The three men, according to court papers, used a warehouse on Walden Avenue in Cheektowaga to conceal the drugs in the hidden compartments of tractor-trailers. "It was a very good concealment technique," said James T. Engleman, director of field operations for U.S. Customs and Border Protection. "From what we've seen, this was a very professional job." Engleman said the drugs, hidden beneath the trucks' floorboards, were concealed well enough to escape detection by drug-sniffing dogs and X-ray equipment. He said customs agents, sensing Arora's nervousness, decided to nevertheless search his tractor-trailer. "In this case, the officers followed their instincts," Engleman said. The officers eventually spotted unusual markings on the truck's floorboards, which in turn led them to the hidden compartment filled with cocaine. The three men also are accused of using the compartments to smuggle marijuana and ecstasy. Assistant U.S. Attorney Timothy C. Lynch, who is handling the case, said the drug conspiracy started in 2009 and, despite Arora's arrest, continued into this year. Lynch said Arora's guilty plea to felony conspiracy charges carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison and up to life in prison. The other defendants — Sidhu is in Canada awaiting extradition, and Bagri is in custody here — also could face significant jail time. All three men are from the Brampton, Ont., area. "These types of investigations are going to continue, and this investigation is going to continue," said Vincent J. Salvatore, assistant special agent in charge of investigations at U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement. He and others described the coke bust as the culmination of a joint U.S.-Canada investigation. "There's a border," said Richard Comerford, regional director general of the Canada Border Services Agency. "but it's a shared border."

Trucker admits smuggling drugs into Canada Buffalo News - September 7, 2011

A Canadian truck driver who pleaded guilty Wednesday to smuggling cocaine in the floorboards of his truck was part of an operation that sent more than 1 tons of drugs across the U.S. border into Canada since 2009, federal authorities said. Ravinder Arora, 30, of Brampton, Ontario, pleaded guilty in federal court Wednesday to conspiring to export cocaine. He faces at least 10 years in prison at his December sentencing. Arora was about to cross the Lewiston-Queenston Bridge from western New York into Ontario last September when his nervous demeanor led U.S. border agents to search his truck, authorities said. Agents found 213 pounds of cocaine worth more than \$3.8 million in a compartment beneath the trailer's floor. It was believed to be the largest single narcotics seizure in the region's history. As part of his plea agreement, Arora admitted making four other trips and agreed to cooperate in the continuing investigation into what authorities believe is a larger smuggling operation. Two other people, including the owner of the trucking company that employed Arora, are awaiting trial. Investigators said Arora would pick up the cocaine at a warehouse in Chino, Calif., and drive to a warehouse in the Buffalo suburb of Cheektowaga, where legitimate cargo was piled on top of a false floor concealing the drugs. He then drove into Canada to deliver the drugs to a warehouse in Mississauga for eventual street sale in the Toronto area. Arora was promised \$8,000 per smuggling trip, according to court documents.

Arora's attorney, Parmanand Prashad, said Wednesday that his client "deeply regrets his actions and was used by others who were making the big money. "He has since realized that the risks he took were not worth the penalty," Prashad said. Based on ledgers seized during the investigation, the operation is believed to have made nine successful trips before Arora's arrest in September 2010. The group ushered an estimated 3,500 pounds of cocaine across the border, according to U.S. and Canadian law enforcement authorities, who highlighted Wednesday's plea at a news conference at the international Peace Bridge. "It was a very good concealment technique, under the floor in the support structures of the trailer," said James Engleman, director of field operations for U.S. Customs and Border Protection. He said an X-ray of Arora's trailer and a pass by a drug-sniffing dog were inconclusive, leading officers to "follow their gut" and pull up the floorboards. "With some X-ray inspections ... some a second-grader could say, 'I can see what's there.' Other times you look at it and there's no definition, there just appears to be something unusual in a given area," Engleman said. "This was a very professional job. This wasn't an afterthought, quick concealment technique. They spent a lot of time to build a professional quality concealment on these trailers." The group also is believed to have smuggled ecstasy and marijuana into the United States, as well as cash. Parminder Sidhu, who hired Arora as a driver at his company, Prime 9, is in custody in Canada and awaiting extradition, U.S. Attorney William Hochul said. Sidhu is charged with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute cocaine and conspiracy to export cocaine. It was unknown whether he has an attorney. A home telephone listing was disconnected and a phone number for Prime 9 could not be located.

Sen. Gillibrand wants military ID to serve as passport alternative at U.S. land and water borders
Watertown Daily Times – September 3, 2011

Sen. Kirsten E. Gillibrand has vowed to work out a deal with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to allow soldiers and their dependents to use military IDs as an alternative to passports at U.S. land or water borders — much like an enhanced driver's license. "I will focus on that immediately," Sen. Gillibrand, D-N.Y., said during a round-table discussion Thursday with northern New York business owners and politicians. "We can probably do that directly with homeland security. I think that is a fabulous idea and that's a great move especially because, as you know, a lot of our troops are coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan and we expect Fort Drum to literally be full — something like 90 percent full by next year." The idea is to let military families travel across North American borders more easily without having to apply for expensive passports, which cost \$135 for an adult, or other Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative-compliant travel documents — enhanced driver's licenses. Enhanced driver's licenses, which are offered at a \$30 premium over the standard license, cost less than passports but cannot be used for international air travel. These enhanced licenses are only accepted as valid proof of citizenship when entering the U.S. by land and sea from Canada, Mexico and some countries in the Caribbean. Assemblywoman Addie J. Russell, D-Theresa, who pitched the idea to Sen. Gillibrand, said the issue was first brought up during a meeting earlier this year between community leaders from the north country and Kingston, Ontario, which focussed on facilitating cross-border cooperation on a regional level. "Our initial discussion was looking at the possibility of allowing our military servicemen and women and their dependents to be able to use their military ID card to go back and forth across the border like they do in Europe," Mrs. Russell said. The Department of Homeland Security did not return requests for comment Friday. Ever since the new passport law — WHTI, which requires travelers to present a passport or an equivalent document when entering the U.S.— took effect in June 2009, area tourism operators have criticized the federal government of eroding businesses along the U.S.-Canadian border by scaring their customers away. Horne's Ferry, which runs between Cape Vincent and Wolfe Island, was among those hit the hardest by the stricter border measures. "When the passport law was brought in, our traffic dropped 17 percent. That will never come back," said Bruce J. Horne, co-owner of the ferry service. "We've lost a lot of casual, spur of the moment day tripping." And although the Thousand Islands Bridge, which links Alexandria Bay to southern Ontario, is equipped with radio-chip readers that allow border control personnel to access government records of travelers carrying RFID-enabled cards even before a vehicle reaches the inspection booth, two- to three-hour backups at the Wellesley Island border are not uncommon on summer weekends. Officials at the Thousand Islands Bridge Authority have long argued that the inadequate number of U.S. inspection lanes, the main cause of the bottleneck, also discourages cross-border tourism and trade between the U.S. and Canada. "Virtually every summer weekend

and holiday weekends, there are significant delays coming into the U.S. and that's not the fault of Customs and Border Protection," said W. Howard Kelly, director of TIBA's Capital Corridor Trade and Tourism Initiative. "The only way to solve that problem is with more lanes and the only way to do that is with the new port." While the designs for the new Wellesley Island port of entry are complete and funding for the construction was included in the Obama administration's proposed 2012 budget, he said, the \$173 million project is unlikely to begin anytime soon due to the nation's budget woes. "From my perspective, the solution is more private participation in port development," he said. "If we were allowed to build these new ports and lease them back to the General Service Administration or Customs and Border Protection, then many authorities would step forward and build a port."

**North country legislators stand to lose thousands of residents
in redistricting: Assembly report
Watertown Daily Times – September 7, 2011**

The north country's state legislators will lose thousands of residents in the next round of redistricting, mostly to New York City, because of a new law on counting prisoners. The 2010 law mandates that when the state redraws its political boundaries to account for population shifts — a way of making sure each New Yorker has roughly equal representation — prisoners must be counted at their last known address, instead of the prison in which they reside. Last known addresses are often in New York City; of the state's 67 correctional facilities, 58 are north of Westchester County. The lawmakers have spoken out against the measure and some have even filed suit against it. They depict the fight as an issue of adequate representation: the new law dilutes the north country's advocacy in Albany, they argue, even while the residents that won't be counted here anymore drain local resources. Figures compiled by the state Assembly from Department of Correctional Services and Community Supervision data show that the following numbers of residents won't be counted in the north country anymore, despite the fact that they physically reside in jails here:

- Assemblywoman Addie J. Russell, D-Theresa: 1,872.
- Assemblyman Kenneth D. Blankenbush, R-Black River: 1,481.
- Sen. Joseph A. Griffo, R-Rome: 1,842.
- Sen. Patricia A. Ritchie, R-Heuvelton: 3,231.

Politicians just to the east stand to lose the most in their respective chambers: Assemblywoman Janet L. Duprey, R-Peru, would lose 7,715 residents, and Sen. Elizabeth O'C. Little, R-Queensbury, would lose 11,610. Relative loss of population in the north country compounds those on-paper losses. That means legislators' districts must somehow find more residents. Flanked by Canada and similarly anemic districts, many north country districts have little flexibility to grow. Legislators will represent wider swaths of already-wide territory. Mr. Griffo and Mrs. Ritchie have joined a lawsuit seeking to overturn the law, which was passed in 2010. The lawsuit claims the law is unconstitutional. Mrs. Russell, who voted to approve the law, but disavows that particular portion because it was part of a larger budget package, has also spoken out against it. Mr. Blankenbush said he is also against the law and other aspects of the state's redistricting process. On Tuesday, Mr. Blankenbush called on the task force redrawing the state's lines to hold a public hearing in the north country. In July, it held a public hearing in Syracuse. "All too often, the north country is ignored by Albany politicians and it is troubling to me that local residents and community officials would not be given the opportunity to discuss redistricting," Mr. Blankenbush said in a news release. The Legislative Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment has held meetings in Albany. Districts must be in place by early next year. Because of an unrelated fight — Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo and the Senate Democratic minority don't want lawmakers drawing their own lines, but the lawmakers have been reluctant to relinquish that power — the matter could be left up to the courts to decide.

**BNE cites successes in business activity
Buffalo News - September 9, 2011**

The Buffalo Niagara Enterprise is claiming 14 project "wins" in the last year, up 55 percent from the year before but still below its prerecession levels. The results from the region's business development and marketing

initiative are a sign that the Buffalo Niagara economy is beginning to rebound from the recession, although companies remain cautious about investing in expansion projects, BNE officials said Thursday. "I think it's a great sign," said Thomas Kucharski, the BNE's president. "We're still attracting manufacturing projects and have a pretty good pipeline going." The 14 "wins" during the BNE's fiscal year that ended in June and the \$472 million in new investment that those projects will bring is a marked improvement from the depressed level of activity the BNE experienced the year before, when it booked only nine wins and \$11.8 million in new investment. The BNE claimed 19 wins in 2009 and 20 wins in 2008. "It's picking up," Kucharski said. "Companies are still looking. It's just that they're being incredibly careful in their deliberations." That caution is reflected in the job creation numbers from the BNE. Even with the increase in project wins, the 465 new jobs associated with those projects are down 20 percent from 578 a year ago and are far less than the 810 new jobs the BNE reported in 2009. The 465 new jobs that are being pledged from the BNE's project wins are expected to have an average salary of more than \$51,000, the business group said in its annual report to its members. The bulk of the new investment reported by the BNE comes from the \$380 million Greenpac paper mill project in Niagara Falls that is expected to create 108 new jobs. Paper producer Cascades Inc. is building a new paper mill that will make lightweight liner board, a type of packaging in high demand from retailers. The plant, located next to an existing 138-employee plant on Packard Road in Niagara Falls run by Cascades' Norampac division, will produce its liner board entirely with recycled paper fiber. The results also are an indication of the BNE's narrowed focus on targeted industries and on Canada. Ten of the 14 project wins involved Canadian companies. Six projects involved advanced manufacturing, one of the BNE's targeted industries, led by the \$25 million Galvstar LLC project to open a steel mill in a former American Axle Manufacturing Co. plant in Buffalo. That project is expected to create 55 new jobs. "Sometimes, persistence wins the day," Kucharski said, noting that the Galvstar and Greenpac projects both were five or six years in the making. David Smith, the BNE's outgoing chairman, said the results show that the BNE has become a more nimble organization that can adapt to changes in the economy and the regional marketplace. Smith, National Fuel's chairman and CEO, has been chairman of the BNE for the last four years. He will be replaced by Randall L. Clark, who was the BNE's chairman before Smith. Clark is the chairman of Dunn Tire Corp. For 2011-12, the BNE has set a goal of 12 project wins that yield 800 new jobs and \$72 million in new investment.

Council Said OnTrack To Gain Growth Funds
Watertown Daily Times – September 9, 2011

As the North Country Regional Economic Development Council prepares for their third meeting on Monday, their co-chairman said the group is on track to develop a plan they hope will secure millions of dollars to stimulate the local economy and promote business growth. "I think overall we are right on schedule," Clarkson University President and Regional Council Co-Chairman Anthony G. Collins said. "We are on an aggressive time line, but we are on track to develop a strategic plan and make recommendations about what projects are the most ready." On Monday, the group will finalize what Mr. Collins called a "bold" vision for the future of the north country. But a part of that vision will be to recognize the challenges present throughout the region and to work to minimize their impact, he said. "This region is challenged by its low density population," he said. "It's hard to deliver services to everybody in region that is geographically the largest region in state but has the smallest population." Keeping young adults and recent college graduates in the area has been a priority for the council from day one. The area's universities attract some of the brightest minds, Mr. Collins said, and there must be jobs available in order for them to remain in the area after graduation. Too many flee the region to pursue employment opportunities elsewhere, he said, echoing the sentiments of Lt. Gov. Robert J. Duffy. "It is hard to run into a family who raised their kids here and the kids are still here, working where they have an opportunity to live and prosper," Mr. Collins said. "We have to do better than that." That means establishing a closer business connection with Canada, he said, and utilizing the region's potential for the development of biomass and alternative energy production. But representing communities from Watertown to Plattsburgh, the council has the largest area, in terms of square miles, of the 10 regional councils to consider when creating their plan. Mr. Collins said he understood the initial skepticism as critics wondered if leaders nearly 200 miles apart would be able to agree upon a shared vision for the future of the region. But internal conflicts have not been a problem, he said. "I think the benefit of this exercise has been that at the start people thought there are a lot of

sub regions and the villages and towns wouldn't necessarily want to work together and get along and try to collaborate," he said. "But so far, there has been no evidence of that in the council meetings." In fact, he said, it has been exactly the opposite. "We are all in this together, and we all have similar issues," he said. "It makes sense that together we can recognize the challenges and opportunities in order to put in place solutions to overcome the problems."

U.S. Chamber spelling out its own job-creation agenda
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette - September 6, 2011

Putting a business imprint on the debate over jobs, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce on Monday issued an open letter to Congress and the White House, calling for a series of measures designed to increase employment, including greater oil drilling, quicker road and bridge construction and temporary corporate tax breaks. If enacted, the chamber estimates, the steps could encourage corporations to spend much of the nearly \$2 trillion dollars that have accumulated on their balance sheets and generate more than 6 million jobs by 2013, and even more in ensuing years. The chamber is looking to influence job-creation proposals days after a bleak government employment report showed no net job growth in August and four days before President Barack Obama delivers an economic speech to a joint session of Congress. Chamber trade and infrastructure proposals are sure to overlap with some Obama administration initiatives. Others, such as the corporate tax breaks and oil drilling, are more certain to win Republican support. Chamber President Thomas Donohue released the seven-page letter as the first step in a campaign to draw attention to the chamber's proposals and influence Washington policymakers. The effort includes newspaper and Internet ads and outreach to chamber members nationwide. The campaign will encourage business leaders across the country to contact members of Congress and the White House to prod them into passing job-creation legislation. Chances that the president and congressional Republicans can reach any kind of deal appear to be a longshot amid a partisan environment and testy relations. "We're having a bunch of problems right now, but when we get done fooling around and decide what we're going to do, we're going to do it, and this is a good start," Mr. Donohue said in an interview. "We're interested to listen to other ideas that meet the same criteria: Quick, fast, workable and not costing new money." While Mr. Obama's plan will include infrastructure spending, including possibly billions for school construction, it also is expected to propose renewing a payroll tax cut, extending jobless benefits and providing payroll tax credits to businesses that expand their hiring. Mr. Donohue identified six job-creating initiatives:

- Offering reduced tax rates to corporations on profits earned overseas, a move that the chamber says would encourage multinational corporations to bring as much as \$1.2 trillion to the U.S. economy, and by temporarily reducing the tax rate companies pay on the sale of capital assets. White House officials have debated the merits of lower rates for foreign profits, but some argue that similar previous efforts have resulted in higher dividends to stock holders rather than job creation. Some congressional Democrats have proposed offering such a tax break only to companies that expand their payrolls.
- Passing pending trade agreements with Colombia, South Korea and Panama, modernizing export control measures and adopting changes in patent law to protect intellectual property.
- Increase oil and gas exploration to levels in place before the Gulf oil spill prompted a moratorium on offshore drilling permits, expand oil and gas exploration on federal lands and approve a \$7 billion, 1,700-mile oil pipeline from Canada to the Gulf Coast. The pipeline proposal has prompted daily protests at the White House that have resulted in high-profile arrests, including that of actress Daryl Hannah.
- Congressional approval of transportation, aviation and water resources programs that finance road, bridge and airport construction. Those programs are mostly paid for with gasoline taxes or other user fees. Mr. Obama has repeatedly called upon Congress to approve the measures, reiterating his appeal as recently as his weekly radio and Internet address Saturday.
- Facilitate tourism by promoting American travel, streamlining visa applications and speeding up security screenings for low-risk travelers.
- Provide regulatory relief for industries, including a moratorium on rules deemed to have a significant economic impact, until the economy has improved and employment has grown.

Mr. Obama on Friday pleased business interests, but also angered environmentalists, by withdrawing a proposed regulation that would tighten smog standards. The proposed rule was estimated to cost the economy

anywhere between \$19 billion and \$90 billion a year, and had prompted an outcry from Republicans and industry leaders. "Moving ahead on this ozone deal was an A-1 move," Mr. Donohue said.

Canada sheds jobs for 1st time since March Buffalo News - September 9, 2011

Canada's economy shed jobs for the first time in five months as the country's unemployment rate rose to 7.3 percent from 7.2 percent in July, a statistical agency said Friday. Statistics Canada said the net loss of employment was 5,500 jobs in August - the second consecutive month there had been little growth. Economists at some Canadian banks were expecting overall job growth to pick up, but the loss of more than 31,000 part-time jobs overwhelmed the addition of 25,700 full-time positions. The private sector lost 20,600 positions while public-sector employment rose by 22,000. The Canadian dollar took an immediate hit following the jobs report, dropping about half a cent to below \$1.01 U.S. The poor result follows a flat reading that also occurred in the U.S. last month, although Canada's unemployment rate remains about two percentage points lower. Economists said Canadians should prepare for a tough jobs market going forward. A statement from Scotiabank economists said the new data "further calls into question the Bank of Canada's (second half of year) optimism as the effects of a global confidence shock work their way through the economic variables." TD Bank's Derek Burleton noted that the jobs number was not as bleak as the bottom line would suggest, since all the losses were part-time work. Still Canadians should prepare for the unemployment rate to start edging up, he said, predicting the rate could reach 7.5 percent or higher by the end of the year. Meanwhile, there were significant losses in the key goods producing sectors. Construction fell by 24,000, transportation and warehousing declined by 14,000 and the natural resource industries shed 12,000 workers. Students had a hard time all summer with an unemployment rate of 17.2 percent, well above the 14 percent level that existed prior to the recession. But there was a big pickup in the health care and social assistance sector, which gained 50,000 jobs. Thanks to robust results in the early part of 2011 when the economy was stronger, Canada has managed to create 193,000 jobs this year, the agency said. Over the past 12 months, 223,000 jobs have been added. "Over this period, full-time employment increased by 2.2 percent (300,000 jobs), part-time work declined 2.3 percent (77,000 jobs), and total actual hours worked rose by 2.6 percent," reported Statistics Canada. Earlier this week, Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney warned that the second half of 2011 would be weaker than previously predicted and that the export sector would face difficulties in foreign markets due to decreased demand and the high dollar.

Film fest marks terror attacks that stranded stars Buffalo News - September 9, 2011

The Sept. 11 attacks left a lot of Hollywood types stranded north of the border at the Toronto International Film Festival. This year, organizers have produced a short film to mark the 10th anniversary of the tragedy. The four-minute film featuring recollections from festival bosses and filmmakers will show before every screening Sunday, the 10-year anniversary of the attacks. The short film will run in place of the sponsor reels that usually precede festival screenings. "It really looks back on what that was like, this very strange environment of a film festival that's all about celebrating art and having fun, then to have this horrific event happen on that day," said festival co-director Cameron Bailey. Also marking the anniversary is the Paul McCartney documentary "The Love We Make," which chronicles the former Beatle's preparations for a memorial concert in New York City a month after the attacks. McCartney had been on a plane at New York's JFK airport waiting to fly to London when the attacks happened, and from the tarmac, he could see smoke billowing out of the World Trade Center towers. Premiering Friday, a day before it begins airing on Showtime, the film features footage of McCartney rehearsing such Beatles hits as "Yesterday" and "Let It Be" and interview segments in which he recalls how his parents' generation relied on music to get through the adversity of World War II. The festival shut down for the rest of the day after the attacks, canceling all films and other events. Stars and filmmakers in Toronto to promote their movies abandoned their interview schedules, holing up in their suites to watch the news on TV or milling about their luxury hotels to share information and commiserate with those trying to get word from loved ones in New York City. Organizers considered calling off the rest of the festival, which was only halfway through and scheduled to run five more days through the following weekend. But they felt it would be best to

carry on, yet in a subdued manner. "We decided we would continue the festival, but continue in a very different kind of way," said festival director Piers Handling. "We rolled up the red carpets, canceled the parties, canceled the sponsor announcements. We took the partying out of it." With planes grounded for days and the U.S.-Canadian border closed off and on after the attacks, stars, filmmakers, studio executives and others at the festival had to make alternative travel plans. They rented cars and chartered buses to get home, while others who had films playing the second half of the festival never made it to Toronto. Canadian actress and filmmaker Sarah Polley, who lives in Toronto, was at the festival in 2001 with a short film she directed. After the attacks, she pitched in to ease the spirits of some of the people stranded in Toronto. "We had over all of the Americans we knew, my brother and I, to have dinner and be together and hang out and watch TV, because everyone was kind of alone in hotel rooms and freaking out," said Polley, who is at the festival again this time with "Take This Waltz," the second feature film she has directed. Tom Bernard, co-president of Sony Pictures Classics, immediately abandoned his festival plans and strategized how he could get home to New York City. "I called Hertz, rented a car with U.S. plates, bought a Toronto Maple Leafs T-shirt and a hockey stick," said Bernard, who figured he might be able to cross into the United States on an Indian reservation that straddles the border between Canada and New York state. It worked. The Customs agent saw his T-shirt, "asked me how the Leafs were doing and let me through," Bernard said. "You just felt like you had to get back. You've got family, all the people in the office. It was a bad time." Many Hollywood insiders were at a press and industry screening of Mira Nair's "Monsoon Wedding" the morning of Sept. 11. They walked out of that joyous, uplifting film into a changed world two hours after the attacks happened, hearing the scream of emergency vehicle sirens as Toronto authorities went on alert with the rest of North America. According to Bailey, in the festival's Sept. 11 short film, Nair recalls how "Monsoon Wedding" was one of the first to show again when organizers resumed screenings the day after the attacks. "The story she tells is how scary it was to walk in on Sept. 12 thinking, is anybody even going to be there?" Bailey said. "And in fact, it was packed. People just seemed to want to come together."

Oil industry: Boost in energy could create 1M jobs
Buffalo News - September 7, 2011

Government policies to increase domestic energy production could create up to a million jobs over the next seven years, the oil industry said in a report issued a day before President Barack Obama delivers a major speech on jobs. The American Petroleum Institute said Wednesday that proposals to expand offshore oil drilling, boost production of natural gas in New York and other states and build a Canada-to-Texas oil pipeline could boost the U.S. economy. Taken together, the proposals could generate billions in new government revenue and help make the U.S. less dependent on foreign energy sources, said API president Jack Gerard. "We believe that could be a very important part of the president's plan in his focus on job creation and working with the Republican and Democratic leadership in Congress," Gerard said. He said the group's proposals represent "common ground" that should find support in both parties. The API, the oil industry's largest lobbying group, is looking to influence the jobs debate amid a bleak employment report last week that showed no net job growth in August. President Barack Obama is set to deliver his speech on jobs Thursday to a joint session of Congress. The API report calls on the government to speed up issuance of leases and drilling permits and open up drilling in now-closed areas in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic and Pacific oceans and Alaska. The group also called for New York state officials to lift a de facto moratorium on natural gas drilling, and for the State Department to approve a planned \$7 billion pipeline that would carry crude oil extracted from tar sand in Alberta, Canada, to refiners along the Texas Gulf Coast. Besides creating a million new jobs, the API proposals could generate an additional \$800 billion in revenue over the next two decades and double oil and gas production by 2030, Gerard said. "When you add that to our imports from Canada and Mexico, you are at a point of making North America energy secure," he said in an interview. Wenonah Hauter, executive director of Food & Water Watch, a clean-water advocacy group, called the API report misleading. "It's shameful that the oil and gas industry is seeking to horse-trade environmental regulations on the false premise that it will create jobs," she said. Deregulating oil and gas drilling won't necessarily create jobs, Hauter said, but would increase oil industry profits and pose what she called an unacceptable risk for drinking water in New York and other states. Hauter and other critics say a natural gas drilling method called hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, could

contaminate nearby water supplies. In fracking, water mixed with chemicals is injected into the ground to break up shale and allow natural gas to escape. Gas industry groups say their practices are safe. Rep. Doc Hastings, R-Wash., said lifting restrictions on oil drilling in key regions such as the Eastern Gulf of Mexico, Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and the Atlantic and Pacific Outer Continental Shelf would create 530,000 direct and indirect jobs and increase U.S. energy production by 4 million barrels of oil per day. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce offered a similar jobs plan on Monday. Its proposal calls for more domestic drilling for oil and natural gas, as well as approval of the 1,700-mile Keystone XL oil pipeline connecting Canada to U.S. refineries in Texas.

B. Border Communications

Public Safety Minister Toews and Transport Minister Lebel congratulate Gander on their 9/11 community resilience award

September 8, 2011 - The Honourable Vic Toews, Canada's Minister of Public Safety and the Honourable Denis Lebel, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, made the following statement in recognition of the award received by the Town of Gander, Newfoundland and Labrador for its efforts to assist stranded airline passengers following the events of September 11th, 2001.

"In response to the tragic events of September 11th, 2001, U.S. airspace was shut down, requiring Transport Canada to order the diversion of 238 aircraft to Canadian airports across the country. Stranded passengers and crews everywhere received a warm reception from Canadians, who showcased the best aspects of our national character, and exemplified the special friendship we share with our American neighbours.

The people of Gander, Newfoundland and Labrador have become an iconic symbol of unity and compassion. A community of fewer than 10,000 people, they opened their hearts and homes to welcome over 6,500 stranded passengers and crew from the 38 planes that were diverted there. The whole town of Gander spent the days that followed doing their best to comfort their guests and make them feel at home at a time of great anxiety and sorrow.

This extraordinary generosity did not go unnoticed. Strong links between Gander and a range of American communities continue to this day. Today, the Mayor of Gander, Claude Elliott, accepted the International Community Resilience Award from the Washington, DC-based Center for National Policy.

All Canadians can take pride in the actions of the host communities, and particularly the town of Gander, during those difficult days following September 11th, 2001. On behalf of the Government of Canada, we extend our congratulations to the people of Gander for this well-deserved recognition."

CSG/ERC Canada-U.S. Relations Update...

September 2011

Canada – US Committee Meets; Adopts Security Resolution

The CSG/ERC Canada - U.S. Relations Committee met August 7 in conjunction with the CSG/ERC Annual Meeting in Halifax, NS. Led by committee co-chair MNA Francois Ouimet (QC) the committee adopted a resolution regarding the current bilateral negotiations over the "U.S. – Canadian Shared Vision for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness."

The resolution, which was adopted overwhelmingly by the committee urges the governments of the United States and Canada to "move expeditiously to present a joint Plan of Action on a shared vision for perimeter security and economic competitiveness that meets the security needs of both countries while removing unnecessary barriers to travel and trade." The resolution was subsequently adopted by the CSG/ERC Executive Committee.

The Canada – US Relations Committee also featured presentations by the Honorable John Prato, Canadian Consul General in New York and Aaron Annable, Consul, Political Relations and Public Affairs with the Canadian Consulate in Boston. Mr. Prato and Mr. Annable discussed various aspects of the US – Canada bilateral relationship including the pending security perimeter agreement and on-going negotiations designed to ease procurement restrictions.

The committee also heard from CSG/ERC Transportation Policy Consultant David Ewing and CSG/ERC Energy and Environment Program Senior Policy Analyst Rona Cohen regarding the Transportation and Environment Committees' activities and programs.

Doyle Recognized for Years of Dedicated Service

Gathering at its annual meeting August 7 in Halifax, the CSG/ERC Canada – US Relations Committee took the opportunity to recognize the long and distinguished contributions to the committee of Senator William Doyle of Vermont. Senator Doyle has long served as committee co-chair and was instrumental in the creation of the committee in the wake of the threats to cross-border travel and trade that followed the 9/11 attacks. He guided the committee through its early years in fighting some of the more onerous aspects of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative and in supporting passport alternatives. More recently he led the committee in expanding its reach to cover a broad range of regional and cross-border issues. He has been a vigorous supporter of CSG/ERC and has championed the full participation of the eastern Canadian provinces.

Committee Co-Chair Assemblyman Robin Schimminger (NY) presented a plaque to Senator Doyle which read: "In Grateful Appreciation for Many Years of Dedicated Leadership of the CSG/ERC Canada – US Relations Committee."

Towes, Napolitano Discuss Perimeter Security

U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano and Canadian Minister of Public Safety Vic Toews met August 15 in Winnipeg to discuss a wide range of cross-border security issues, including ongoing negotiations over a new "perimeter security" agreement. Gary Doer, Canadian Ambassador to the United States and David Jacobson, U.S. Ambassador to Canada also participated in the meeting.

While details of the talks were not made public, much of the discussion reportedly centered on sharing of sensitive personal data between the two countries. A key element of the pending security deal is expected to be a jointly managed customs database designed to track individuals as they enter or leave either country, with the information to be shared between the two. Concerns have been raised in Canada about who will oversee the data, how widely it will be disseminated, and how it will be stored. Canada is generally considered to have stricter privacy standards than the U.S.

Comments of the leaders following the talks have been scrutinized closely, especially by the Canadian press, for signs of progress on the security perimeter talks. Previous efforts by the two countries to ease the cross-border movement of people and goods while maintaining a strict security regimen have fallen short of expectations and there are signs that the ambitious schedule for announcing the new agreement may be slipping.

Officials on both sides of the border have talked about having a "joint action plan" by September, but their language is now more guarded. "We're talking sometime in the early fall ... where the president and the prime minister can be updated and they can also provide us with further directions," Public Safety Minister Vic Toews said following the Winnipeg meeting. For her part, Napolitano said "Obviously these are areas that require a lot of fleshing out, but they, I think, are further evidence of our mutual intent that this border not be thickened, but that it be made more efficient."

The secretive nature of the security negotiations has been controversial, especially in Canada. Brian Masse, the opposition critic in Parliament for border issues blasted the government for conducting the talks in a “vacuum” without adequate opportunity for public input.

Negotiations on the “Shared Vision for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness” were initiated in February with an announcement by Prime Minister Harper and President Obama.

Obama and Harper to Meet; Assess Border Issues

President Obama and Prime Minister Harper will meet sometime in the fall to assess progress on the on-going bilateral effort to ease border restrictions on travel and trade and improve border security.

Although the meeting has been announced, a date has not yet been set. Many observers believe the outcome of the meeting will be a key test of progress on the talks, dubbed “Beyond the Border: A Shared Vision for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness”.

The two leaders initiated the talks in February amid expectations of major reforms that would significantly ease the cross-border movement of goods and people. The concept includes a “security perimeter” encompassing both the U.S. and Canada characterized by shared intelligence, jointly-managed border facilities and an integrated customs regimen.

However, some business leaders have expressed skepticism the pending agreement will meet expectations. “It’s going to be tough sledding,” said David Bradley, president of the Canadian Trucking Alliance. “Where we look at these things as a priority in Canada, they’re really not in the United States and so trying to get traction on these things is going to be tough.”

Reports Summarize Public Comments on Border Proposal

The Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has released a pair of reports summarizing public response to the bilateral U.S. – Canadian effort on perimeter security and trade. The reports, released August 29, recap public comments on proposals to harmonize cross-border regulations and improve security.

The reports reveal a wide range of opinion. Many business interests expressed a strong preference for more uniform and consistent rules governing the cross-border shipment of goods and for streamlined visa procedures. Individual citizens were more likely to voice concerns regarding personal privacy and national sovereignty. The provinces of Ontario and Alberta called for additional investment in border infrastructure.

One area of controversy surrounds the idea of merging the two countries’ entry and exit systems. This would involve sharing of individuals’ data between U.S. and Canadian customs and possibly a tightening of Canadian requirements to conform to those of the U.S.

However, at a press conference announcing release of the reports, Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird dismissed concerns that Canada would be ceding sovereignty to the U.S. under the pending agreement. “It cannot and will not be compromised”, he said.

Typical of business community comments were those of Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters. “What is critical now is that the government achieves an agreement with the US that meets the originally stated objective -- increase the competitiveness of our industries. This must include a significant reduction in transactional reporting requirements for qualified companies as well as easing the burden on business travelers.” the group said.

Since the “Shared Vision for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness” was announced by President Obama and Prime Minister Harper in February, bilateral cabinet-level talks have been on-going. “Joint action plans” were expected to be announced this month but it now appears that won’t happen until later this fall.

The summary reports of public comments are available online at www.borderactionplan.gc.ca

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 6, 2011

SCHUMER CALLS ON FEDS TO MOVE AHEAD WITH SHARED BORDER CROSSING AT MASSENA – URGES AUTHORITIES TO TAKE CLOSING SEAWAY INT’L BRIDGE OFF THE TABLE

As Canadian And U.S. Authorities Begin Discussions To Create A Shared Border Crossing At Massena, Schumer Announces Full Support For Project, Pledges Any And All Help With Border Officials

In Personal Letter to Homeland Security Secretary and Customs Chief, Schumer Urges Feds To Keep Seaway Port Of Entry Open

Schumer: We Can Keep Commerce Moving While Keeping Drugs and Cigarettes Out

Today, U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer called on U.S. border officials to work closely with Canadian authorities to create a shared port of entry at Massena. Schumer believes the shared port of entry would boost border security to help reduce smuggling while allowing the continued flow of commerce between businesses on both sides of the border. Schumer believes that the shared port of entry at Massena would be a good step forward and important part of President Obama and Canadian Prime Minister Harper efforts to work together to improve border management. In the letter, Schumer also asks border officials on both sides of the border to officially take closing the Seaway International Bridge port of entry off the table.

“Because it can increase both commerce and security, creating a shared port of entry at Massena makes perfect sense and I will press American officials to work with Canada to make it a reality,” said Senator Schumer. “On the other hand, closing the Seaway bridge is a head in the sand reaction that doesn’t make any sense at all and should be taken off the table. We must secure our borders in a way that is smart, tough, and effective, while not eliminating much needed cross-border commerce that is so critical to the region’s economy and job base.”

“The shared port of entry at Massena plays a big part in our local economy,” said Village of Massena Mayor James Hidy. “It’s important to draw industry to Massena, and we need that vein to do so. Also, our border security is of utmost importance, as it is something we all share. Increasing safety, especially for cross-border travel at night, is desperately needed, and by working with our Canadian neighbors we hope to accomplish this.”

The Massena Crossing consists of two bridges. One that links Massena to Cornwall Island and another that goes from Cornwall Island to the City of Cornwall.

In his letter, Schumer wrote: “A joint port of entry would vastly improve our security while, at the same time, removing impediments to cross border travel that cost our businesses much needed revenue. It is also a win-win situation that pleases all of the concerned entities along the border.”

In his letter, Schumer notes that the Seaway International Bridge port of entry handles over 120,000 commercial and 2,300,000 passenger trips each year, making it a vital transportation route for major industry and tourism in Northern New York. The strength of the Canadian economy and current exchange rates both help facilitate consumer and tourism spending in New York, but closing the bridge could put a serious damper on cross-border travel and commerce. Due to the critical role the bridge plays in the North Country economy, Schumer is asking border officials to give stability to local business owners by officially taking closing the bridge off the table, and instead push forward as quickly as possible to create a shared border port of entry at Massena.

A copy of Senator Schumer’s letter appears below:

September 6, 2011

Secretary Janet Napolitano
Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Alan D. Bersin

Commissioner

United States Customs and Border Protection

1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Napolitano and Commissioner Bersin,

As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees and Border Security, I am responsible for directing the Senate's oversight of the Department of Homeland Security's efforts to secure our borders and ports of entry while, at the same time, promoting trade, travel, and traffic that is essential to America's economy.

It is in this regard that I write to express my concern about reported discussions that are occurring between DHS and our Canadian counterparts regarding border crossings in Northern New York. It is reported that, in an effort to stop cross-border smuggling of drugs, weapons, and other contraband, senior Canadian and U.S. homeland security officials are exploring two options: 1) a shared port of entry at Massena, New York, at the eastern entrance to Akwesasne/St. Regis; and/or 2) closure of the Seaway International Bridge port of entry.

As to the first option, developing a shared port of entry at Massena, New York, I write to express my enthusiastic support for the concept of joint operations along the border, including a shared port of entry at Massena. A joint port of entry would vastly improve our security while, at the same time, removing impediments to cross border travel that cost our businesses much needed revenue. It is also a win-win situation that pleases all of the concerned entities along the border.

As to the second option, although I have been informed from your staff that this is not the preferred option, I want to nonetheless voice my strong opposition to the closure of the Seaway International Bridge port of entry. The bridge handles over 120,000 commercial and 2,300,000 passenger transits annually, and is a vital transportation route for major industry in the region. With the strength of the Canadian economy and the current exchange rate—which facilitates Canadian consumer and tourism spending and investment in the United States—it is crucial that we do all that we can to ensure that lawful cross-border traffic can move through our ports of entry as quickly as possible so as to not create a chilling effect over vital cross-border tourism and commerce. Closing the Seaway International Bridge would have negative economic consequences for the affected communities, and could create additional traffic at other ports, which might lead to compromised security at those locations.

Your agency has been working hard to address the problem of cross-border smuggling, and I commend those efforts. But, we must secure our borders in a way that is smart, tough, and effective, while not eliminating much needed cross-border commerce. This is why I support the shared port of entry in Massena, NY. If there is any assistance you need from Congress in this regard, I stand ready to help with any legislation necessary to further this objective. I thank you for your attention to this important matter, and look forward to working with you to assist you in your mission of protecting America while promoting travel, trade, and commerce.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Schumer

Chairman

Subcommittee on Immigration, Border Security and Refugees

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September 07, 2011

Higgins Outlines Job Creation Proposal In Letter to President

Road, Water & Cancer-Fighting Infrastructure Top List

In a [letter](#) to President Obama, Congressman Brian Higgins (NY-27) outlined steps central to growing jobs in Western New York and across America. This comes in advance of the President's economic address before Thursday's joint session of Congress.

"We need to get back to the basics and putting people back to work is fundamental to growing our economy," said Higgins. "Building roads and bridges, positioning American manufacturing first and advancing medicine provided the foundation of our nation's growth historically and can build our economy again."

Congressman Higgins proposes:

- Job creation through transportation and infrastructure investments including:
 - Road and bridge construction,
 - Water/sewer Infrastructure, and
 - An Infrastructure Bank with public-private cost sharing.
- Job creation through medical research and medical capital investments including:
 - Support for cutting edge research aimed at eradicating Cancer and other of our most deadly diseases, as well as
 - Investments that provide facilities with room for research and discovery to grow.
- Job creation through manufacturing opportunities including:
 - A global market that allows today's producers to compete on a level playing field, and
 - A rededication to making and buying products Made in America.

"With transportation projects we grow jobs during the construction phase, support additional jobs in supply industries and create even more jobs with a transportation framework that supports new opportunities for business growth moving forward," added Higgins. "Furthermore, we have seen the ability for medical research to create quality jobs, transform neighborhoods, and save lives right here along the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, a model that can see great economic potential moving forward through continued investments."

Below is the text of Congressman Higgins' letter to the President:

September 7, 2011

*President Barack Obama
The White House
Washington, DC 20500*

Re: Job Creation Priorities

Dear President Obama,

I commend your focus on the need for policies that will create jobs and accelerate our economic recovery, and I look forward to hearing your specific proposals on the subject tomorrow evening. While it is true that Americans are concerned about the size of our federal budget deficit, they are also concerned about job creation and the uneven, slow recovery of our economy from the recent recession.

With this in mind I respectfully urge you to take this opportunity to advocate for investments in transportation and infrastructure, as well as in medical research, as part of the job creation agenda you propose. As Buffalo and Western New York transforms into a modern, 21st century economy, substantial federal investments in these areas will be critical to private sector growth in our community.

Investments in Transportation and Infrastructure

A significant federal investment in infrastructure has been a lynchpin of economic growth throughout America's history. The construction of canals, railroads, harbors, airports, water infrastructure, and the interstate highway system have all relied on significant federal support. The quality of the infrastructure and the resulting economic growth have justified that federal investment.

I believe we need a renewed federal commitment to infrastructure, both to maintain what we have already built and to encourage new initiatives that will create jobs during construction and sustain economic development after completion. Such examples exist in the area I represent. The Peace Bridge Capacity Expansion Project would better integrate Western New York with Southern Ontario, the second fastest growing metropolitan region in North America. And the Buffalo Harbor Bridge project would provide a direct connection between downtown Buffalo and hundreds of acres of urban, waterfront land ready for private investment.

In addition to a renewed and robust federal commitment, the private sector should be encouraged to participate in infrastructure investments as well. I urge you to advocate for an infrastructure bank, a type of public-private partnership leveraging private investment in projects of regional and national significance with federal capital. This type of partnership would create new interest in infrastructure investment, directly and indirectly creating jobs and new economic development opportunities. And especially important during these difficult budgetary times, it would do so with a decreased reliance on direct federal investment.

Investments in Medical Research and Infrastructure

As with infrastructure, the federal government has a long history of supporting medical research. This has happened for an obvious reason: the American people rightly demand and expect scientific advances to alleviate suffering due to disease. The initial federal investment in medical research has an economic ripple effect, creating markets for new products and creating jobs across the country as they improve the health of millions of Americans.

But our federal investment in medical research is on the decline. Adjusting for inflation, federal support for medical research at the National Institutes of Health and the National Cancer Institute peaked in 2003. This is unacceptable. The only failure in research is when you quit or are forced to quit due to lack of funding. When federal research funding is cut over the long term, we lose promising research and talented researchers.

These investments create jobs. In New York alone, federal investments in medical research directly support 39,210 jobs, with each grant supporting 7 high tech jobs on average. In Western New York, institutions like Roswell Park Cancer Institute, the University at Buffalo, Hauptmann-Woodward Medical Research Institute, and countless innovation firms at the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus and across the region rely in some way on basic federal research investment to bring new products and discoveries to market. Without this investment these discoveries, and the jobs they create, would not be possible.

Not only should the federal government improve its investment in medical research, we should assist in developing the infrastructure that supports these investments. I have introduced legislation, H.R. 2747, the Cancer Centers Assistance for Renovations and Expansion Act of 2011, that would create a construction loan program for institutions dedicated to cancer research. Many research institutions have had to delay or scale back infrastructure initiatives due to lack of access to capital markets and the stagnant economy. By filling in this financing gap, the federal government can help create good jobs in the service of keeping American facilities the most advanced in the world.

China Currency Manipulation

Lastly, I know you share my commitment to the American manufacturing sector. I strongly urge you to announce aggressive measures to combat China's currency manipulation that puts American-made products – and American workers – at a devastating disadvantage. Legislation is pending in the House of Representatives to level this playing field but the House Majority Leadership has so far refused to bring it to the Floor for a vote. I urge you to use your bully pulpit to call for swift consideration of this important legislation.

Again, I applaud your commitment to our nation's economic recovery and I urge you to focus on initiatives that will provide direct and necessary assistance to regions like Western New York that are working to meet the new demands and opportunities of a modern global marketplace. I look forward to working with you on these efforts.

Sincerely,

BRIAN HIGGINS
Member of Congress

C. Editorials/Columns

View from Canada, 10 years after 9/11 Plattsburgh Press Republican - September 9, 2011

We thought a wayward private plane had crashed into the tower. Watching CNN from my desk in the newsroom at about 8:30 that morning, we quickly realized that this was no small plane and this was no small accident. I remember going into the studio to do the day's news look-ahead, and shakily stating what the big story of the day — as it turned out, of recent history — would likely be. This week, the world marks the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. Suffice it to say, all people who were sentient at the time have their personal memories, and fortunately I had the opportunity to chronicle my thoughts in a column I wrote for the Press-Republican in the aftermath of the disaster. Allow me to revisit some of those reflections, which in retrospect, have a certain irony.

From Sept. 21, 2001: "The looming war on terrorism, just as it is destined to be like no other war, leaves Canada in the position of being bound to a military action by its NATO commitment, coupled with a very personal reaction to the terrorist attacks — the fact is the suicide hijackers didn't just kill Americans. "The estimate at this hour is that at least 75 Canadians are among the people missing in the World Trade Center bombings. Almost all of these people would have been among the best and brightest who, buying into the "make it there, make it anywhere" vision, headed off to the Big Apple to make their mark. "By any measure, the loss of 75 citizens in one blow, whether to natural disaster or human folly, is a catastrophe of the first magnitude. That they were innocent victims of fanatical murderers only compounds the heart-wrenching loss and helplessness. "Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, who travels to Washington next week as part of President Bush's round of consultations on the war on terrorism, was about as explicit as a leader could be in expressing Canada's solidarity with the United States. "Speaking to the estimated 100,000 Canadians gathered on Parliament Hill in Ottawa for the day of mourning last Friday, he had this to say: 'Generation after generation, we have traveled many difficult miles together. Side by side, we have lived through many dark times, always firm in our shared resolve to vanquish any threat to freedom and justice. And together, with our allies, we will defy and defeat the threat that terrorism poses to all civilized nations ... We will be with the United States every step of the way. As friends. As neighbors. As family.' "Whatever contribution Canada eventually makes to the war on terrorism — and critics have been quick to lambaste the Liberal government's tepid commitment to defence spending — Canadians will continue to do what they find most natural in time of crisis." As it turns out, when Chrétien said "every step of the way" he could not have anticipated that the Bush White House would make one of those steps the invasion of Iraq. Canada did dutifully sign on for the purge of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, a mission that ended in July, although personnel will remain for non-military work. But Chrétien, sniffing the political wind, rejected entreaties from the United States to join the invasion of Iraq, a mission the current Prime Minister Stephen Harper supported at the time. In an interview this week, Harper says Canada is safer now from terrorism than it was before the attacks. Harper, now heading a majority government, says he will beef up the anti-terrorism law adopted in 2001 in reaction to 9/11, giving law-enforcement authorities extraordinary powers. The war on terrorism, including transport security measures and the military commitment in Afghanistan, has cost Canada an estimated \$92 billion since 2001, according to a study released this week. Still and all, despite the differences wrought by Iraq, the family connection remains solid and the grief, we suspect, little diminished, 10 years later. *Peter Black is a radio broadcaster and writer based in Quebec City. He has worked on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, in Montreal as a newspaper reporter and editor, and as a translator and freelance writer.*

Editorial: Canada still clings to royalty Plattsburgh Press Republican - September 7, 2011

It's none of our business, you might say, but, to an outsider, the renaming of Canada's military seems a bit too self-effacing for a nation as great as Canada. Prime Minister Stephen Harper has decided to name the Canadian navy and air force the Royal Canadian Navy and Royal Canadian Air Force. The perhaps more self-confident Pierre Trudeau had earlier removed the designations of "royal." That would seem to be more in keeping with

Canada's elite stature in the world. Canada, of course, was a British subject, as was this country, pre-United States. Whereas we shed the shackles of colonialism, Canada has chosen to keep at least some of the trappings of status as a subject. Queen Elizabeth II's visage graces Canadian money. "Royal" appears, in one form or another, in myriad places throughout the country. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police patrol the countryside, we sometimes visit Prince Edward Island, we often cross the Pont Victoria in visiting Montreal, and we welcome Canadians on Victoria Day. Who hasn't passed, if not stayed at, the Queen Elizabeth Hotel? And banks and other institutions bear "royal" in their monickers.

We've often wondered why. Canada has achieved vaunted international ranking in many areas. It has continued to be an economic stalwart through the globe's fiscal travails since 2008. If it weren't for Canada, the North Country would be a struggling outpost. The North Country Chamber of Commerce credits Canada with contributing more than \$1 billion to our own economy in one way or another: business, industry, bank deposits, investments, payroll, real-estate holdings. Thousands of North Country residents go to work every day and collect paychecks from companies owned by Canadians. Our hope and confidence for the future rests in part with the promise of Laurentian coming to Plattsburgh to establish job-rich airline-maintenance operations. Canada has not only retained its own independence and prosperity, it has contributed greatly to our own. It is an international force in practically every area of endeavor. Yet it continues to not only tolerate, but apparently relish, an implicit subjugation to Great Britain. Great Britain is a fine role model — we borrowed many of its conventions in forming our own nation. But we shucked outright the parent-child relationship that the Canadians seem not to find insulting in the least. All we want to say to Canada is that, here in the North Country, we admire, respect and value you as an independent nation and as a partner in our own aspirations. Continue to curtsy before royalty if you feel you must, but, personally, we think you've proven the sturdiness of your own two very stable feet.

D. Citizens Views (write-in letters)