

Canadian Lawmakers Pass Controversial Anti-Terror Law



Ottawa, May 7 (RHC)-- Canadian lawmakers have passed a controversial anti-terror law that vastly empowers the country's spy agency. The Canadian parliament passed bill C-51, which allows the country's intelligence agency to operate overseas, in a 183 to 96 vote on Wednesday.

The passage of the bill was guaranteed by Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Tory majority in the country's House of Commons, following several attempts by opposition parties to water it down.

Harper announced the anti-terror bill back in January, in response to attacks on Canadian territory last October, in which two people were killed. The bill criminalizes terrorism promotion, simplifies the arrest and detention of individuals without charges, and expands Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS)'s field of operations from intelligence-collection to actively battling terror plots and spying outside of the country.

The controversial law has been decried by a large number of critics who say it is an unparalleled civil rights violation that lacks oversight and is unfocused.

On October 22, 2014, an armed assailant, identified as Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, killed a soldier at the country's National War Memorial in the capital and then stormed the parliament before being shot dead by police.

In another incident just two days earlier, a radicalized Quebec man, identified as Martin Couture-Rouleau, was shot dead by police after he ran down two soldiers, killing one of them, with his vehicle near a military compound.

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