



# Liberal Jonathan Wilkinson

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## The difference between exploiting fear and keeping us safe

The objective of terrorists is to terrorize. Those in this country who are deliberately stoking anxiety need to understand they are aiding and abetting the terrorists' cause.

The Harper government's efforts to keep Canadians on amber alert to rally political support in the lead-up to an election will, I believe, backfire. Canadians to date have shown a refusal to give in to fear and characteristically don't like it much when someone is trying to manipulate their emotions to win an election.

There is a difference between exploiting fear and keeping Canadians safe. In a recent speech made in Vancouver, Justin Trudeau underscored his belief that one of the most important responsibilities of government is to keep its citizens safe.

### Shouting "fire" in the theatre

Bill C-51, Mr. Harper's new anti-terrorism bill, gives broad new powers to police and intelligence agencies. Any legislation that addresses these matters requires a thoughtful and measured balance between protecting Canadians' safety and security and protecting Canadians' civil liberties. That's difficult to achieve when someone in the theatre is constantly shouting "fire."

Matters of national security must rise above partisanship. Bill C-51's objectives are laudable. It contains a number of measures that will help keep Canadians safer – such as better use of no-fly lists and more coordinated information sharing by government departments and agencies.

### Significant amendments needed

However, there are a number of troubling aspects to this bill that cry out for significant amendments including:

- Four former prime ministers have publicly warned of a lack of strong oversight provisions – to ensure we have achieved that essential balance between safety and the protection of rights and freedoms;
- The lack of provision for mandatory reviews of this law – to ensure that the bill is effective and without unintended consequences.
- The very broad definition of "threats to security" – which has created fear that environmental or aboriginal activists could be within the bill's sights.

### Part of election platform

Recognizing that vigilance requires Canadians not to underestimate the potential threat posed by terrorists, we will be supporting the passage of this bill even if the Government rejects our proposed changes. If they are rejected, we will put these crucial amendments to the Canadian people six months from now as part our election platform. And, if elected, we will waste no time making these changes to Bill C-51.

In addition, our response to terrorism would include a robust plan for preventing radicalization before it takes root.

Canada needs to move ahead sensibly and rationally to combat terror. Justin Trudeau summed up our approach with these words: "The Liberal Party of Canada is committed to keeping Canadians safe, while protecting the values that make us Canadian."

## CONTACT INFO:

JonathanWilkinson.ca | email: Jonathan@JonathanWilkinson.ca