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Thursday, November 14, 2002

Canadian official to discuss issue about U.S. border screenings with Powell

TORONTO (AP) — The cases of two ment of having terrorism links Canadian citizens ensnared by tighter U.S. border screenings have so angered the country that the Canadian foreign affairs minister will raise the issue with Secretary of State Colin Powell during a visit on Thursday.

Powell's visit is to discuss a possible military strike against Iraq. But Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham plans to raise the cases of the two Canadians, one involving a man jailed in Maine after crossing the border to buy cheaper American gas.

The other involves a dual Canadian-Syrian citizen deported to Syria while switching planes at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport after U.S. officials reportedly accused him of links to al-Qaida. Graham has protested that the man should have been deported to Canada.

Canada has criticized the U.S. National Security Entry Exit Registration System created after the Sept. 11 attacks. It authorizes border officials to fingerprint and photograph people who were born in or are citizens of the five countries accused by the U.S. govern-

Those countries are Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan and Syria.

Canada even issued a travel advisory warning people born in those countries to avoid trips south of the border.

The Americans responded by promising Canadians equal treatment but saying U.S. security overrode any Canadian concerns about unfair treatment.

Graham rescinded the travel advisory last week, but foreign affairs spokesman Rodney Moore said the "high-profile consular cases" would be discussed with Powell.

Michel Jalbert, a 32-year-old Frenchspeaking Quebec resident living near Maine, was arrested Oct. 11 while doing what people in Pohenegamook, Quebec, routinely do driving a few yards into America to buy gas.

The gas station is less than a mile from a U.S. border post on a road primarily used for logging in northern Maine. Residents routinely buy gas without first registering with U.S. authorities

hunting rifle in his vehicle that attention of a U.S. policema check found a 13-year-old crin for vandalism and possessing sto making him inadmissible for

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Jalbert was arrested and cha gally entering the country and violations. He faces up to six more f convicted.

Locals call the harassment, while U.S. officials g World Trade Center and Pentagon Maher Arar, who holds joint

while switching planes in New York trip from Tunisia to his Montreal

According to Canadian n immigration lawyer in New Yorky help Arar said a U.S. Immig Naturalization Service document ined alleged that Arar was a me



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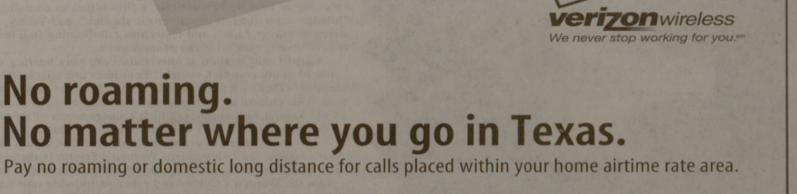
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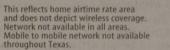
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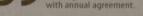


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