

On May 17, 1973, I announced in the House that the multicultural programs are being expanded to a considerable extent. I also mentioned that we will be devoting a very substantial amount of funds to assist the ethnic press and to use the ethnic press to convey our messages and information to the Canadian people. It is, of course, of the greatest importance that an awareness of these multicultural programs and of the programs of other federal departments be extended to all citizens of Canada. An important role in this increased information program will be played by the ethnic press as well as by the weekly periodicals.

So far as advertising the program of multiculturalism is concerned, I am happy to say that we included the ethnic press which is printed in languages other than English and French, as well as Jewish newspapers, and other ethnic newspapers which are printed in English and French. All in all, about 125 newspapers were used to inform the Canadian public of the federal government's policy programs on multiculturalism. Many other federal departments and government agencies are also participating in this increased effort on the part of our government to convey essential information to our citizens. I may mention for this year in particular the extensive programs of the Department of National Revenue, the Department of Manpower and Immigration, and the Department of National Health and Welfare. The Canada Ethnic Press Federation has been assisted with federal grants in the holding of meetings and the carrying out of surveys. Recently, the Ethnic Press Club of Manitoba was assisted with a multicultural grant.

I am sure that this program of information and of special projects will facilitate our task in communicating with all Canadians, as the hon. member suggested in his remarks. It also provides increased financial assistance to the ethnic press and enables them to continue in fulfilling an important role in Canadian society. In the meantime, of course, we will be awaiting the reports and special studies being carried out at the present time. I am sure the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury) and other ministers who are especially involved in matters of communication will be able to come up with improved programs.

#### NATIONAL DEFENCE—OPERATIONAL STATE OF AIR SQUADRON 442 BASED AT COMOX

**Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South):** Mr. Speaker, on Thursday last, October 25, I raised a question in this House concerning the operational capability of Squadron 442 which is based at Comox and which has a large role to play with respect to search and rescue in the 690,000 square miles of British Columbia and the Yukon. My question was based on the premise that the squadron is unable to meet normal operational tasks because of worn-out aircraft and lack of parts. The question is recorded at page 7213 of *Hansard*. I asked: "Can the minister advise what immediate steps will be taken to correct this situation?"

The minister, who is present in the chamber this evening and who has shown us the courtesy of not asking his parliamentary secretary to reply, answered: "Mr. Speaker,

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I do not accept the premise of the question." Nothing would please me more than hearing that the premise of my question was wrong. Let me point out, however, that the premise of my question is based on a newspaper article which appeared in the *Vancouver Sun*. It is dated October 20, 1973, and was written by Mr. Odam. According to the article—

In two recent major air searches in B.C., 442 Squadron was unable to throw in all its resources right away . . .

The article further says:

When pilot Neil Carey of North Vancouver was reported missing September 18, one of the Buffalo aircraft was being overhauled at Comox—an overhaul that became extended because maintenance crews had to wait for parts to arrive from eastern Canada.

Another Buffalo was unserviceable in Whitehorse, where it had just come off another search. The third Buffalo was taking parts up to Whitehorse so the second could be repaired.

The next day, when the search should have been in full swing, only one Buffalo was available—the one which had been on the parts run.

Of the squadron's three helicopters, one was undergoing a routine inspection; another took the searchmaster as far as Williams Lake before having to turn back to Comox because of bad weather. The third did get into the search.

It was not until September 28—ten days after Carey went down somewhere on a flight from Quesnel to Terrace—that 442 Squadron was able to put all its six aircraft out at the same time.

Further examples are given as follows:

When a light plane with two people on board went missing last Saturday on a flight from Nelson to Edmonton, two of the three Buffalo aircraft were unserviceable and the third was engaged on a mercy flight.

• (2210)

Two of the three helicopters were available in Comox, the third had left for a major overhaul in the east and is not expected back for six months.

The following day, one of the helicopters left Comox at 1 p.m. to join in the search, which was handled initially by the rescue centre at Edmonton. One Buffalo was still being overhauled, one was unserviceable until 3 p.m. and the third was on another mercy flight.

On Monday, 442 Squadron was able to throw two Buffalo and one helicopter into the search. A second helicopter joined them the following day after crews at Comox changed an engine overnight.

By then . . .

This is important.

. . . three days had gone by since the light plane disappeared in bad weather in the East Kootenays.

Further examples are given. I again quote from the article:

For three days at the beginning of September, 442 Squadron had none of its Buffalo aircraft available to fly . . .

It goes on to describe why that happened. If we look into the records that are contained in this article, between April 1 and October 15, a period of 198 days, one Buffalo aircraft was unserviceable for 74 complete days and 46 part days. The article continues:

The second buffalo was unserviceable 46 whole days and 38 part days; the third, 58 full days and 44 part days.

Of the three helicopters, one was unserviceable 30 full and 23 part days; one, 61 full days and 18 part days, and the third for 40 full days and 25 part days.