

Oral Questions

all reports public on the crashes to date and will he refer these reports to a special commission or public board of inquiry charged with bringing in corrective measures?

Hon. Mary Collins (Associate Minister of National Defence and Minister responsible for Status of Women): Mr. Speaker, I know all members of the House join in the sorrow felt by the wife and family of Captain Trottier in the tragic incident of yesterday.

As the hon. member may be aware, since 1982 there have been nine crashes of CF-18s serious enough where the plane has been written off. These have involved six fatalities. Investigations have been completed in three of these instances and from the information I have, in none of those instances does it appear as though the fault was that of the airplane.

The policy of the department has not been to automatically release the investigation results in such circumstances, although the information is available under access to information.

My colleague, the minister, and I, and senior officials are reviewing this policy and look forward to bringing in policy which may be more responsive while at the same time ensuring the integrity of the investigations and the privacy of those who may be involved.

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, the CF-18 is a highly technical piece of equipment. Why does the minister's department not allocate more training hours for pilots who are given the responsibility of operating these very sensitive and sophisticated aircraft?

Why would the government want to skimp on training and orientation and risk the lives of highly skilled professionals, to say nothing of the financial investment lost to the taxpayers of Canada?

Hon. Mary Collins (Associate Minister of National Defence and Minister responsible for Status of Women): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member should be aware that our pilots who fly the CF-18s are highly skilled pilots. They practise on a continuing basis and receive what I think is outstanding training.

There is a requirement for a number of hours to be flown before they can go into a CF-18. There are many hundreds of hours flown each year by each one of our pilots. I believe that they are in fact the best trained within our NATO allies and our incident ratio would

reflect that sophistication and that professionalism of our pilots.

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FISHERIES

Mr. George S. Baker (Gander—Grand Falls): Mr. Speaker, the race is on now for foreign nations to buy Canadian fishing licences to fish inside of our 200-mile zone, just in case this government gets some starch in its backbone and decides to restrict foreign fishing inside our 200-mile zone as the Harris report has suggested. There are 32 foreign factory-freezer trawler licences issued so far for fishing activity that does not take place until the fall.

My question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Does he realize that Canadian fishermen and Canadian fish plant workers understand that they have to cut back and suffer in order to save our fish stocks but they cannot understand for the life of them why the Government of Canada is issuing licences to foreign countries to fish cod, redfish, turbot and capelin, the very fish that we must conserve? Will the Secretary of State for External Affairs act now and put an end to this run on Canadian fishing licences by foreign countries?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I suppose if one were interested simply in making dramatic statements on the floor of the House of Commons instead of trying to deal with a fundamental and serious problem, one would establish a policy of an all out attack on foreigners in any form, foreign fishermen or others.

The hon. member knows that the practices to which he is referring have to do with obligations that Canada has as a member of the North Atlantic Fisheries Organization. He will know that there are difficulties now with regard to the degree to which the European Community will respect NAFO quotas. He will know that for us to take the action that he is recommending would mean, in effect, our withdrawal from the NAFO regime.

It would also mean that the efforts that are being undertaken today by my colleague, the Minister of Fisheries, and my colleague, the Minister for International Trade, to try to use the rules and context of NATO to get more respect for our rights under that international regime would be undercut and Canadian interests,