

Oral Questions

in the development of amateur sports, and we cannot understand why our young athletes who have been in training for hours on end are not given a chance to participate and why the standards have been raised. If this were done on the international level, half the athletes who will be in Sarajevo would not qualify for the Olympic Games.

My provincial colleagues and myself have decided this morning to send a telegram to the Chairman of the Canadian Olympic Association asking him to reconsider this ruling and add another 10 to 12 promising athletes for 1988.

* * *

[English]

SEARCH AND RESCUE

REQUEST THAT HELICOPTERS BE STATIONED AT ST. JOHN'S, NFLD.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, my question is a supplementary one, directed to the Minister of National Defence. The Minister knows that last year on one occasion it took certain search and rescue helicopters fully 19 hours to reach St. John's. Is the Minister satisfied with a 19 hour time lag when lives are at stake in the Atlantic? Will he tell us why he will not station search and rescue helicopters in St. John's in Winter to save lives offshore?

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the question of the time that it takes for resources to get to any distress point is a result as well of the time of notification when we received or when the operation control centre received the request for assistance. I would be pleased to provide the Right Hon. gentleman with a full briefing on the search and rescue capacity on the East Coast. I might point out to him as well that we have done a study, and there have been a number of studies, to review the capacity. We are satisfied that the resources are deployed in the most competent way. We are also satisfied that we are meeting our obligations under the SAR program that we have announced. I would be pleased to do anything within my particular competence to inform the right Hon. gentleman relating to the facilities that we have in place.

SAFETY OF OFFSHORE OIL RIG WORKERS

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, the Minister says he is conducting studies. There were 84 lives lost in the *Ocean Ranger* episode two years ago. If helicopters had been based at St. John's, some of those lives could have been saved. There are 500 people whose lives are in jeopardy offshore. Why is the Minister putting those lives at risk? Why will he not station helicopters at St. John's in winter?

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the Right Hon. gentleman knows that there is a commission presently studying the events involving the *Ocean Ranger*. We have reviewed the facilities that we have in place. I can only repeat what I said initially, and what has been said

by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. There was a meeting involving all interested parties, including the Ministry of Energy, my Department, the provincial Government, and the industry. There was an agreement that the facilities that had been identified were satisfactory. The industry itself has increased its own capacity and has provided an additional helicopter in St. John's.

Mr. McGrath: They do not have the trained personnel.

Mr. Blais: At the time they agreed that was satisfactory. In terms of deploying resources in St. John's and Argentia, the Hon. Member for St. John's East will advise the Right Hon. gentleman that, in terms of weather, in terms of ability to deploy the present resources in Gander, this is much more conducive to being able to reach any point of difficulty or any point of distress than any deployment either within Argentia or St. John's.

* * *

PETITIONS

TABLING OF REPORTS OF CLERK OF PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the petitions, with the exception of one, presented by Hon. Members on Tuesday, January 24, 1984, meet the requirements of the standing orders as to form.

The petition presented by the Hon. Member for Victoria-Haliburton (Mr. Scott) does not meet the requirements of the standing orders as to form.

* * *

[Translation]

POINT OF ORDER

MR. PINARD—APPLICATION OF STANDING ORDER

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, may I call your attention to Standing Order 18(3). Normally, our Question Period should end by 3 p.m. We make plans accordingly. Hon. Ministers have business to attend to. Many of us, who come to the House every day for the Question Period, would like to be able to count on the strict application of our Standing Order in order to leave at 3 p.m. to attend to other duties.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: The President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard) has brought this matter to the attention of the Chair. I think Members of the House will observe that very rarely have we gone more than two minutes beyond three o'clock.

May I call to the attention of Hon. Members who have asked questions the fact that when a question is long and the supplementaries are long, then the answers are long. When it takes 10 minutes for a single questioner and six, seven or eight minutes for subsequent questioners, it is simply not possible to