

Adjournment Debate

That may very well be, but these high standards are not being complied with.

We need a clear definition of the role, function and authority of our civil aviation inspectors. Clearly, we need a policy to recruit more personnel and, clearly, we must move immediately to upgrade the salary scales of these individuals to make their salaries comparable with their counterparts in the industry. The inspectors have been without a contract since 1975. The last time they had a salary adjustment was in July, 1976. I submit that the Minister of Transport has failed to act responsibly and with despatch and that he has failed to provide Canadians with the degree of air safety which they deserve. He has been derelict in his duty, and if he does not have the courtesy to resign he should be removed from office, as far as I am concerned.

Is there any wonder why Canada's level of safety standards has slipped from seventh place to thirteenth place out of 18 nations throughout the world? That fact is not very comforting, and we must ask ourselves how many more lives must we lose before this government acts. People in this country are still shocked and horrified over the Cranbrook disaster, yet we see in the December 21 issue of the Calgary *Herald* this article entitled "MOT Cites Weak Rules in PWA Crash". It goes on to say in part:

Upgraded air traffic and air-worthiness regulations may prevent a recurrence of the Pacific Western Airlines crash at Cranbrook, B.C. last Feb. 11 that claimed 43 lives—

The official crash report by Ministry of Transport accident investigators cites several instances of weak regulations, primarily in regard to poor communications, that contributed to the crash—

That, sir, is not very comforting either. In fact it is very disturbing and very discomfoting, and if this minister, as my colleague, the hon. member for St. John's West indicated in the House last Thursday, is not guilty of wilful and wanton misconduct, then he is pathetically incompetent and should be removed.

Mr. Robert Daudlin (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, I believe this issue was raised by the hon. member during the question period on February 8, and I believe they tried as well to raise something relating to this issue last Monday in the form of a motion under Standing Order 43.

What the hon. member forgets to remember is that in fact the minister responded to what was viewed as a potential difficulty in terms of trying to police what was happening in the airways by calling for and setting up the task force about which the hon. member has suggested he had some information provided to him even in advance of the results of that task force being made available to the minister. There was some suggestion at the time that, in fact, it was the report of that task force itself which was condemning what was happening in Canada. As the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) indicated to the House that day, the task force had not yet drafted any report, and nothing had come to his attention that was the sort of information the hon. member was trying to put forward.

● (2210)

The hon. member speaks of the decline of safety in Canada and of dropping from seventh place to thirteenth place in the world. I do not know where he gets his statistics, but my information is that Canada is within the top five in the world as regards safety. That is something of which to be rather proud.

If one were to accept the hon. member's suggestion that this government and particularly this minister have done nothing, that would be to negate the fact that the minister has set up the task force, recognizing that there is some difficulty with policing. We also have to recognize that in the air as with other modes of transportation, but particularly in the air, one has to rely upon the responsibility and professionalism of the people operating in that environment.

As one who has flown in the IFR environment on a number of occasions as pilot in command, I can say from that experience, and from experience with people who operate in the industry, that the level of professionalism and competence of the pilots in Canada is something we have no reason to worry about. There may be individual instances where transgressions take place and there may be some difficulty with policing these things, but surely the hon. member would not suggest we should have a policeman in every cockpit or a monitor on all the radio waves. There are difficulties inherent with the kind of policing he seems to be suggesting in order that the minister would be able to fulfil his function that actually go beyond reasonable suggestions that could be made by any member of this House.

The hon. member spoke of the ELT question. The ELTs were required by the department after consultation with the industry, and at the request of and with the approbation of the industry. I suggest they were removed only at a time when it was evident that they were a source of potential danger as opposed to being a help. This kind of action belies the position the hon. member is taking when he suggests that the Minister of Transport has been delinquent in his duties. I see that my time has expired, Mr. Speaker.

STATUS OF WOMEN—EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY OF
GOVERNMENT

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, on January 23 I raised with the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) the matter of the speech of the president of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, delivered in Ottawa on January 10, at the regular quarterly meeting of the council. At that time the Prime Minister indicated to me that with respect to the very strong criticism brought forward by the president he had had a report, and he added:

—I can state unequivocally that either the president was not directing her remarks at the government or else she was unequivocally wrong.

There followed a day or two of fairly intensive debate with the Prime Minister about the validity of the remarks and the accuracy of the remarks. For the record I want to quote extensively from the remarks of the president because I think