

Oral Questions

are not nearly as suited to fisheries patrol work as modern pressurized aircraft with proper up-to-date electronic gear for identification, localizing and helping in the apprehension of fishing vessels that violate our fishing regulations.

For all these reasons, we have gone through the normal tendering process to seek public tenders for a service which we estimate will cost some \$28 million over the next five-year period to replace those Tracker aircraft. We believe that we will get the best service money can buy for that amount.

Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same minister. There are people in the industry now doing the Tracker refits who say that with the Tracker air frame, the Tracker is by far the most superior aircraft that can do the job.

The minister has received a proposal from the IMP group which would see the Tracker squadron taken over by that company, crewed by an air reserve squadron and operating out of Summerside at a cost of \$12 million to \$14 million. That proposal was sent to the minister last December and the proposal has not been responded to.

Why has the minister totally ignored this proposal from a company that is expert with the Tracker aircraft and whose proposal would establish the foundation of an aeronautical industry for Summerside? Or is Summerside being blacklisted by this government?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I understand the concern that the hon. member and all members of this House have for the circumstances in Summerside which result from the closing of CFB Summerside. However, the hon. member should not pretend or lead his constituents to presume that we could replace the closing of that base by mere maintenance of the fisheries patrol activity from Summerside.

The specifications for the modern patrol service that we require, not a 1960s style patrol service but a 1990s style fisheries patrol service, have been drawn up to take into account the best aircraft capability including pres-

surization, on-board radar and other equipment that will be required to do a good job.

I have every confidence that the service which is successful in winning this tender will be the very best we can find in Canada.

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CFB SUMMERSIDE

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. Last Tuesday, the Prime Minister told this House that every time he visits Atlantic Canada he commits this government to something constructive and useful for Atlantic Canadians. It is apparent that the Prime Minister has not visited Prince Edward Island for some time.

The people of my province have waited since the April budget announcement for this government to take responsibility for its decision to close CFB Summerside. Last week, the Prime Minister's inner cabinet met to discuss alternatives for CFB Summerside.

When is this government going to make an announcement of a firm commitment of jobs for the Summerside area?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member should be reminded that CFB Summerside is not yet closed. It is still in operation. She should also be reminded to listen to her Premier who announced yesterday how pleased he was with the co-operation he received from the federal government in helping to bring about the announcement by Cavendish Farms in that region of the province which will be very important.

She should also be aware, as the Prime Minister has indicated and as she alluded to in her question, that there is a committee of cabinet looking at what can be done to ease the changes occurring as a result of the DND decisions. She will, I am sure, when she sees the whole picture be very pleased with the result.

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, I am certainly well aware that the base is not closed. We all hope that it will not be closed, but this is a very serious matter on Prince Edward Island. If it is closed, it