

*S.O. 21*

Canadian officials made representations to the South African Government last fall asking that the sentences be commuted. In keeping with Canada's opposition to capital punishment and in recognition of South Africans, both black and white, who are struggling for racial equality in that country, on behalf of the whole NDP federal caucus I urge the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) to issue a personal plea for the lives of these three South Africans while there is yet time before any more blood is added to the judgment which white South Africa must face sooner or later for its unjust policies.

While the Prime Minister is at it, will he also make representations on behalf of Nelson Mandela, leader of the largest section of the South African population, who is in prison and has lately had the severity of his punishment while in prison increased to the point where he, and other leading political prisoners, are having their very survival threatened.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**BILINGUALISM**

ABILITY OF MEMBER FOR ST. JOHN'S WEST TO COMMUNICATE

**Mr. Roger Simmons (Burin-St. George's):** Madam Speaker, I am rising to defend a very deserving fellow Newfoundlander, who has been mercilessly misrepresented by the press. My good friend, the Member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie) has been accused of lacking the ability to communicate with Francophones as well as he does with other groups in this country. This gross allegation is a cowardly distortion of the facts, which must not be allowed to go unchallenged. I have known the Hon. Member for St. John's West for 20 years. I know him as a federal politician, and I have known him as a provincial politician, both as a Tory and as a Liberal, and, Madam Speaker, I can assure you—and I do not think anyone will be able to deny—that during his mandate as a provincial politician, we in Newfoundland were able to fully appreciate his ability to understand and respond to the poor, the unemployed and people on low incomes. Francophones, have no fear! You will be understood as well or even better by the Hon. Member for St. John's West, once he has been elected Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party. There is no doubt about that!

\* \* \*

[English]

**AIR SAFETY**

DEMAND THAT PLANES BE REFITTED WITH FIRE RETARDANT MATERIALS

**Mr. Geoff Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth):** Madam Speaker, some 48 hours after the Dallas to Toronto Air Canada fire tragedy, my family and I confidently climbed aboard a Tampa

to Toronto flight on Air Canada, which we still regard as one of the world's safest airlines.

Until all investigations are completed in both Canada and the United States, we will not know for sure what triggered the blaze in a rear washroom and killed 23 people. What we do know is that any fire aboard the most sophisticated airliners can spread with frightening intensity. A professional chemist who witnessed the fiery landing says he saw the billowing smoke changing from white to deep gray, and then to black, which made him "pretty sure that was PVC, polyvinyl chlorides, burning . . . Those folks were stunned to their seats and couldn't breathe."

It deeply worries me, Madam Speaker, that anyone who smokes on a commercial airliner can accidentally or deliberately set fire to an airplane's cushions, fabrics, plastic panelling, and other highly flammable materials. My first instinct is to ban all smoking on all airlines under Canadian registry. Realistically, this would be a monumental regulation to enforce. We do protect passengers from guns and explosives through security detection devices, but we cannot prevent people from torching planes, or even the chance that someone might stealthily light up in a lavatory.

● (1415)

What this Parliament can and must do is require domestic air carriers to refit their planes with fire retardant materials. One expert in the field says this could cost passengers an extra two cents a ticket.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

[English]

**CROWN CORPORATIONS**

CANADAIR—REQUEST THAT AUDITOR GENERAL CONDUCT COMPREHENSIVE AUDIT

**Mr. Scott Fennell (Ontario):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Yesterday he suggested that we go to the committee and ask the Minister who is in the other place to answer our questions. Unfortunately, we got no answers.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Stonewalled.

**Mr. Fennell:** Yes, we were stonewalled by him. That is correct.

I would like to point out to the Prime Minister that in 1975 the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce came out with a report stating that Canadair was not equipped nor did it have the personnel to build a plane from the ground up. Further, in 1982, another report from the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce came out stating that this company would lose at least \$1.8 billion and possibly \$2.3 billion.