



House of Commons Debates

VOLUME 133

NUMBER 173

1st SESSION

35th PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Thursday, March 23, 1995

Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, March 23, 1995

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 20 petitions.

* * *

[English]

ORDER IN COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table, in both official languages, a number of order in council appointments made by the government.

Pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 110(1), these are deemed referred to the appropriate standing committees, a list of which is attached.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, under the provisions of Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, copies of a special report entitled "Treaty Making in the Spirit of Co-existence" prepared by the royal commission on aboriginal people.

* * *

(1005)

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present the second report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development

concerning Bill C-77, which was adopted with amendments.

* * *

[English]

WITNESS PROTECTION PROGRAM ACT

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-78, an act to provide for the establishment and operation of a program to enable certain persons to receive protection in relation to certain inquiries, investigations or prosecutions.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed.)

* * *

RAIL STRIKE

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, in light of the serious rail strike afflicting the country which has been going on all week, I move:

That, notwithstanding any standing order, at the conclusion of Private Members' Business this day the House shall continue to sit in order to consider the report stage and the third reading stage of Bill C-77, an act to provide for the maintenance of railway operations and subsidiary services; that, for the purposes of this order, notice of any report stage amendments may be submitted to the Clerk no later than 5.00 p.m.;

That during the consideration of the aforementioned business no divisions may be deferred to another sitting day; that immediately after disposing of the third reading stage of the said bill the sitting shall be suspended to the call of the Chair, when it shall be reconvened for the sole purpose of a royal assent;

That, when the House returns from the said royal assent, it shall be adjourned until the next sitting day, provided that if a royal assent has not taken place by 9.00 a.m. on March 24, 1995, the House shall be reconvened for the sole purpose of being adjourned until 10.00 a.m. on that day.

I seek the unanimous consent of the House for this motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Does the parliamentary secretary have unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Routine Proceedings

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Blaikie: Madam Speaker, on a point of order. I would like to make it clear that in view of the changes made by the government to the legislation in committee last night in response to suggestions I made during question period yesterday, the NDP would like to go on record as giving unanimous consent this morning to the request by the government.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Duceppe: Madam Speaker, this is not a point of order. I realize the hon. member for the NDP in engaged is some face-saving, but this is not a point of order.

[*English*]

Mr. Milliken: Madam Speaker, I will try something else which might be more acceptable to members of the House. If they do not wish to sit late tonight to deal with the bill, I am going to seek now by way of a motion that we deal with the bill tomorrow. I move:

That, notwithstanding any standing order, the report stage and third reading stage of Bill C-77, an act to provide for the maintenance of railway operations and subsidiary services, may be taken up on March 24, 1995, provided that no divisions requested during the aforementioned business may be deferred to another day.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Does the parliamentary secretary have unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Duceppe: Madam Speaker, we have already told the government that we are prepared to settle this matter very quickly. In this case, as far as parliamentary procedure is concerned, if the government had the decency to consult us beforehand, we could talk about it. Since it did not, for the time being, the answer is no.

(1010)

[*English*]

Mr. Blaikie: Madam Speaker, on the same point of order I would like to make it clear that the NDP gives its consent to this. I urge the Bloc to reconsider its position.

Mr. Milliken: Madam Speaker, I will try another technique. If members do not wish to deal with this bill tomorrow, I move:

That, notwithstanding any standing order, the House shall sit at 9.00 a.m. on March 25, 1995 and at 1.00 p.m. on March 26, 1995 for the purpose of considering Government Orders and, if necessary, for the purpose of attending a royal assent ceremony.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I move, pursuant to Standing Order 56(1):

That, notwithstanding any standing order, the House shall sit at 9.00 a.m. on March 25, 1995 and at 1.00 p.m. on March 26, 1995 for the purpose of considering Government Orders and, if necessary, for the purpose of attending a royal assent ceremony.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Will those who object to the motion please rise?

And less than 25 members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Adopted.

(Motion agreed to.)

* * *

PETITIONS

GUN CONTROL

Mrs. Jane Stewart (Brant, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am tabling two petitions in which the petitioners request that Parliament support legislation which will improve public safety and reduce the criminal use of guns.

JUSTICE

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I rise once again to present another petition in this course of action undertaken on behalf of constituents who wish to halt the early release from prison of Robert Paul Thompson.

The petitioners I represent are concerned about making our streets safer for our citizens and they are opposed to the current practice of early release of violent offenders prior to serving the full extent of their sentences.

The petitioners pray that our streets will be made safer for law-abiding citizens and the families of the victims of convicted murderers.

(1015)

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Tony Valeri (Lincoln, Lib.): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I wish to table two petitions. One is signed by the constituents of Lincoln and the second is signed by the constituents of Hamilton East.

The petitioners request that Parliament not amend the Canadian Human Rights Act or the Charter of Rights and Freedoms so they would provide for the inclusion of the phrase sexual orientation.

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface, Lib.): Madam Speaker, these petitioners believe that the inclusion of sexual orientation in the Canadian Human Rights Act will provide certain groups with special status, rights and privileges.

Routine Proceedings

They also believe that it will infringe on the historic rights of Canadians, such as freedom of religion, conscience, expression and association. They oppose any amendments to the Canadian Human Rights Act.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Mr. Morris Bodnar (Saskatoon—Dundurn, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I wish to present a petition wherein the petitioners request that Parliament ensure that the present provisions of the Criminal Code prohibiting assisted suicide be enforced vigorously and that Parliament make no changes in the law which would sanction or allow the aiding or abetting of suicide or active or passive euthanasia.

Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have two petitions to present today pursuant to Standing Order 36.

The first petition is from a number of residents in my constituency of Regina—Lumsden and pertains to the Criminal Code of Canada, section 241, which states “everyone who counsels a person to commit suicide or (b) aids or abets a person to commit suicide, whether suicide ensues or not, is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 14 years”.

The petitioners request that Parliament not repeal or amend section 241 of the Criminal Code in any way and to uphold the Supreme Court of Canada decision of September 30, 1993 to disallow assisted suicide and euthanasia.

THE SENATE

Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden, NDP): Madam Speaker, my second petition is signed by a number of constituents as well as people from Quill Lake, Saskatoon, and parts of Regina, Saskatchewan. This pertains to the Senate.

The petitioners do not believe the Senate is accountable, is not elected, has become the home of patronage appointments of Liberal and Conservative Prime Ministers and it costs the taxpayers about \$60 million each year. They request that Parliament abolish this institution which they feel does not provide Canadians with anything.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I have three petitions to present, pursuant to Standing Order 36. The certifiers must be very busy because they have just listed the pages and not the total number of signatories.

The first petition says that because of the inclusion of sexual orientation in the Canadian Human Rights Act it will provide certain groups with special status, rights and privileges; and because these special rights and privileges would be granted solely on the basis of sexual behaviour; and because inclusion

would infringe on the historic rights of Canadians such as freedom of religion, conscience, expression and association, the petitioners call on Parliament to oppose any amendments to the Canadian Human Rights Act or the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms which would provide for the inclusion of the phrase sexual orientation.

The signatories come basically from the Langham, Asquith and Saskatoon area.

INCOME TAX

Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.): Madam Speaker, the second petition is signed by people in the Unity—Lloydminster area.

The petitioners state that as citizens of Canada they wish to bring to the attention of the House that Canadians are already overburdened with taxation due to high government spending and that the federal government is considering high tax increases in the next federal budget, which of course has already passed.

They pray and request that Parliament reduce government spending instead of increasing taxes and implement a taxpayer protection act to limit federal spending. Of course that part of the petition still applies.

There are 24 pages of signatures on this petition.

JUSTICE

Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.): The third petition, Madam Speaker, is from the Kindersley—Luseland area in my constituency but also from parts of Manitoba.

The petitioners request Parliament to consider that Robert Latimer was sentenced to life imprisonment for second degree murder with no chance of parole for 10 years. They state the law should be flexible and based on the individual. They further state his sentence is unfair and out of proportion and petition Parliament to grant Robert Latimer of Wilkie, Saskatchewan a pardon conditionally or unconditionally for his conviction of second degree murder in the death of Tracy Latimer, his daughter.

(1020)

YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT

Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I have five petitions to present on various subjects. The first petition is signed by 318 residents of the city of Calgary. I understand it is part of a much larger petition involving the signatures of 64,000 Albertans.

It calls for changes to the Young Offenders Act. The petitioners want an act serious enough to deter young people from committing crimes and tough enough to provide real justice. They ask Parliament to amend the Criminal Code of Canada and the Young Offenders Act accordingly.

Supply

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West, Ref.): Madam Speaker, the second petition is signed by 50 residents of the city of Calgary.

The petitioners pray that Parliament ensure that the present provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada prohibiting assisted suicide be enforced vigorously and that Parliament make no changes in the law which would sanction or allow the aiding or abetting of suicide or active or passive euthanasia.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West, Ref.): Madam Speaker, the third petition is signed by 50 residents, principally of the city of Calgary.

The petitioners call on Parliament to act quickly to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and to adopt all necessary measures to recognize the full equality of same sex relationships in federal law.

I have also received a petition on the same subject matter from 37 residents of the city of Calgary that asks that Parliament not extend spousal benefits to homosexuals living together as a couple in order to prevent further damage to our already overburdened benefit system.

I have 37 signatures from residents of the city of Calgary that ask that Parliament not include the phrase sexual orientation in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, or in the human rights code, or in the Canadian Human Rights Act, in order to preserve the equality and personal freedom of all Canadian citizens and in order to safeguard the economy of our country.

This is obviously a very contentious issue in the city of Calgary, given the conflicting nature of the opinions expressed in the last three petitions.

RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have three petitions this morning. The first petition is signed by about 70 residents of the western portion of Toronto.

It prays that Parliament act immediately to extend protection to the unborn child by amending the Criminal Code to extend the same protection enjoyed by born human beings to unborn human beings.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the second petition is signed by constituents in Scarborough West.

It prays that Parliament ensure that the present provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada prohibiting assisted suicide be enforced vigorously, and that Parliament make no changes in the

law which would sanction or allow the aiding or abetting of suicide or active or passive euthanasia.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have a petition with a number of signatures from the southern Ontario area.

The petitioners pray that Parliament not amend the Human Rights Act or the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in any way which would tend to indicate societal approval of same sex relationships or of homosexuality, including amending the Human Rights Act to include in the prohibited grounds of discrimination the undefined phrase sexual orientation.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.) moved:

That this House condemn the government for failing to commission a broad and public inquiry with a mandate to investigate the government's failure to hold senior officials at the Department of National Defence accountable for command and control shortcomings, deteriorating morale, and decisions which diminished or have failed to improve Canada's defence posture.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Since today is the final allotted day for the supply period ending March 31, 1995, the House will go through the usual procedures to consider and dispose of the supply bill. In view of recent practices, do hon. members agree that the bill be distributed now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(1025)

Mr. Frazer: Madam Speaker, Canada has a glorious history of defence matters starting with the Boer war, the first world war, the second world war and Korea. Now I think the tradition continues in our commitment to UN obligations in several parts of the world.

People have very mixed views when it comes to matters of defence. In the defence committee and our travels around the country, we had representations from groups which called for a

very strong or strengthened defence position. We also heard from others who said that there is no threat and no need for the armed forces, so let us do away with the defence department.

The defence department is much like an insurance corporation in that we do not really want to pay the cost of its protection but we recognize that there comes a time when we may need it. It is like a fire department or a police department. It is obvious to anyone who thinks about it that a country that does not have the ability to control its boundaries, its sea approaches, its air and its interior territory cannot really call itself a sovereign country. Therefore, without question, there is a need for defence.

The problem is that in our current fiscal constraints, Canada must get the very best value for each dollar that is spent on defence. That is really the purpose of the motion this morning.

What I would like to do is provide an overview of happenings in the defence realm since the government assumed power in October 1993 and then deal with some of the perceived shortcomings that we see. I will then leave it up to my colleagues to expand on specific areas within that group.

I will start with October 23 when the government was elected. Shortly thereafter, it fulfilled a red book promise and cancelled the purchase of the EH-101 helicopter. In February, it brought down a budget which downsized the regular forces from 74,900 to 66,700, the reserves of 29,400 people remained at 29,400 until 1998, and the civilian component was downsized from 32,500 to 25,200.

The government closed bases at Cornwallis, Chatham, Moncton, Calgary and Langley. It closed the Collège militaire royal at Saint-Jean and Royal Roads Military College in Victoria.

There was an announcement of a peacekeeping school to be formed at Cornwallis. The government commissioned the special joint committee on defence and the special joint committee on foreign affairs. In March, the government renewed the commitments for the Canadian forces to remain in Bosnia and Croatia. It also announced that Canadians would provide assistance to Haiti.

In September 1994 came the release of the Lagueux report. In response to queries requiring an inquiry into the incidents in Somalia, the minister refused, saying that the investigations to date had been adequate.

Again in September, the commitments to Bosnia and Croatia were renewed.

At the end of October the government received the defence review report. In November, Major Armstrong, the surgeon who was in Somalia, brought forward evidence that finally compelled the minister to say: "Yes, there would be a full public and open inquiry into events in and surrounding the Somalia issue".

Supply

On December 1 the minister presented the defence white paper. Four days later in that same month the Colonel Oehring report was made public.

Moving into January, the airborne videos, first and second, emerged. In February we saw the airborne video plus naval hazing videos. In that same month the minister announced the disbandment of the airborne regiment.

The 1995-96 budget was introduced in February. It further reduced the forces, regulars to 60,000, the reserves to 23,000, and the civilian component to 20,000 to be achieved by 1999.

(1030)

The budget closed Chilliwack, Jericho, Calgary, Air Command Winnipeg, Toronto, London, Land Force Command St. Hubert, Moncton, and Maritime Command Halifax. It reduced Canadian Forces Base Cold Lake, National Defence Headquarters and Canadian Forces Base Bagotville. Also, the government announced a forthcoming study on reserves.

In March of this year the airborne regiment was formally disbanded. A couple of days later the Jeffries report was made public.

To return to discuss some of the issues that were forthcoming in the area of defence, the cancellation of the EH-101 was a promise made by the government and it fulfilled that promise. I question whether sufficient in depth study had been given to the prospect of what should have been done. Unquestionably, the search and rescue helicopters and the shipborne helicopters had to be replaced; they were experiencing further and further fatigue. Although I think they are quite safe to fly, they definitely need replacement.

The cost of the EH-101 was misrepresented, initially by the media, but it was then picked up by the Liberal Party in its election campaign. The actual cost of \$4.3 billion was transposed into the inflated cost at the end the cycle to \$5.8 billion. It was always this \$5.8 billion that was quoted as opposed to the appropriate \$4.3 billion which was the real figure.

The EH-101, granted, was an expensive helicopter, but it also incorporated components that enabled it to interface with the frigates. The judgment of the defence committee and of anybody in the defence department has been that the frigates are basically severely constrained and in fact, much reduced in their usage unless they have a helicopter aboard.

Whatever helicopter the government eventually decides to buy to replace the EH-101, it will have to be able to interface with a frigate. I will be watching very carefully to see what the final price tag on that acquisition will be.

Supply

The additional thing to the EH-101 cancellation is that it basically did away with a whole lot of very high tech jobs. For a government that proposes jobs, jobs, jobs, this was an area where Canada had really forgone the ability to become more deeply involved in the high tech area.

Of the EH-101s to be built worldwide, 10 per cent of each one would have been built in Canada. Of the initial buy for Canada is that more than half would have been built in this country. The benefits of that would spread from coast to coast. It seems to me the government may have been very short-sighted in deciding to do away with that helicopter without adequate study.

In the February 1994-95 budget the government also reduced the size of the forces to 60,000 permanent people. This is 6,700 below the actual minimum the review committee had ascertained was the required number. The review committee basically said that if you go below that number, you must identify some capability you want to give up. The government has not as yet recognized which capability will be forgone.

The decision to place the Lester B. Pearson peacekeeping school at Cornwallis is, I think, a purely political one based on a promise made by the Liberal Party during the election campaign. The location is rather questionable as is the plant on the base. It is going to require a substantial upgrading of facilities. I believe better alternatives were available to the government which could have been pursued at a far better service to the country and also at less cost to the country.

The formation of the special joint committee on defence and the special joint committee on foreign affairs was again a promise made by the government that was fulfilled. I commend the government on that.

(1035)

However, it is obvious to anyone that the committee on foreign affairs should have been given a mandate which required its report to be tabled at least three months prior to the tabling of the defence report. As it was, they ran concurrently. There was some consolidation of the reports, but it would have been far better for the defence review committee if it had been able to see exactly where the foreign affairs committee said Canada should be going before the decision was made to table the defence report.

The white paper of December 1994 said that the report of the special joint committee played an integral role in shaping Canada's new defence policy. Virtually all its recommendations are reflected in the white paper. I would like to question this by pointing out those recommendations of the report which the government did not institute.

First is that Canada retain enough military personnel to do the job Canadians expect of their military, a force of sufficient size to cope with eventualities that cannot be predicted.

As I said a few moments ago, the cut from the defence committee's recommended absolute minimum of 66,700 was violated to the tune of 6,700 personnel. The question is: Does Canada now have sufficient forces to fulfil the recommendation of the report? I do not think so.

The white paper said that the committee's recommendation concerning the size of the regular forces was judged to be inconsistent with the financial parameters within which the Department of National Defence must operate. Of course, defence was cut to \$10.5 billion in 1994 dollars, which was the recommendation of the committee as a minimum. The white paper stated that cuts to the defence budget deeper than those envisioned by the committee would be required to meet the government's deficit reduction targets.

The Reform Party is on record as recommending and insisting on fiscal responsibility. We do not question this. We just think that if the government is going to cut, it should identify where those cuts will take place and what effect they will have on the outcome.

At the same time the government was reducing funding in these areas, the white paper also committed Canada to expand the program of exchanges and extended scope to other countries. It stated:

To this end, we will increase substantially the budget devoted to the Military Training Assistance Program to build up contact programs with Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States, Asia, Latin America, and Africa.

Also the Department government will sponsor peacekeeping training at the Centre for military personnel from countries participating in NATO's Partnership for Peace and developing countries under the Military Training Assistance Program.

I have had personal experience with the military training assistance program. It is a good program. It results in people from other countries being exposed to Canadian standards in military training. However, the results of the military training assistance program come down to assisting the relationship between Canada and the other country. I saw it in Tanzania where as a result of Canada training Tanzanian officers there was a very warm feeling for Canada. That affected the relations between our countries dramatically. Therefore, I would recommend that the military training assistance program, rather than being in the defence budget, be in another place, preferably in foreign affairs.

The defence review report recommended that headquarters strength be reduced by one-third, that is, from 37 to 25 and that personnel be reduced by 50 per cent, that is, 4,000. The white paper stated:

The command of military operations will continue to be exercised by the Chief of the Defence Staff—normally through a designated operational commander—and one layer of headquarters will be eliminated.

The intent of the defence review was to reduce the proliferation of headquarters across the country. The recommendation was that there be one joint headquarters in the west, one located

centrally, and one in the east. This would have enabled the command and control to have been effective and would have done away with a proliferation of unneeded headquarters staff.

(1040)

The defence report also recommended that National Defence Headquarters be studied to determine if it should be returned to separate military and civilian headquarters. The white paper says: "The government can see no compelling reason that would justify reversing the civilian-military integration of National Defence Headquarters". Yet in testimony, the defence committee heard much from many people saying that there were crossed lines of command. There was blurred judgment. There were concerns about who was really in charge.

We did not say that NDHQ should be done away with and separated into Canadians forces headquarters and National Defence Headquarters. We said to look at it and study it. The government refused to do this.

The committee recommended that the government create a standing joint committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on defence with appropriate regional representation. The government has been silent on this one. The aim of the game here was to give Parliament some ability to monitor and control what went on in the defence department. The government when in opposition was in favour of this, but apparently when in power it does not seem to see the need for it. I contend this should happen.

We think DND's annual capital plan should be tabled with the new joint committee. If the government in its wisdom should say that a standing joint committee is not required, we think that capital plan should be tabled with the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs.

We asked that the committee be informed when all capital products over \$30 million pass defence program management milestones so it can examine cases it considers significant. The government has again been silent on this. Once again, we are looking for Parliament to be able to have a little more knowledge and control over what goes on.

We asked that the Minister of National Defence deliver a comprehensive annual defence review and assessment by the minister. It would set out the minister's view of the global security environment and within it the specific challenges to Canadian policy and interests, issues that the minister believes will require parliamentary attention or a government decision over the coming months. This report would also be referred to the standing joint committee. Once again, there has been silence on this, although it may be the government's intention to do so. I would be delighted to hear that is its intention.

Supply

We also asked for an annual debate on defence policy. This is vital if Canadians, the public and parliamentarians, are to be aware of what is going on in defence.

Finally and perhaps most important, we said that full parliamentary debate should be invoked before any deployment of Canadian forces abroad. We now have commitment. I understand they are going to renew our commitment in Bosnia and Croatia. We have not been informed formally yet, but the time is getting fast to the point where it must have been made. We have deployed troops to Haiti and there has been no parliamentary debate on that. I think this is a shortcoming.

Mr. Collenette: We are having it now.

Mr. Frazer: I appreciate the member's intervention. He will note undoubtedly this debate is prompted by the opposition, not by the government where it should have originated.

The Lagueux report, while confined to a relatively narrow area within the defence department, revealed that there are very great discrepancies in the command and control over there. It revealed there was harassment, there was misappropriation or questionable use of funds, that projects were hidden or appeared to be unrelated. Yet the government has not seen any requirement to intervene, to have a look at what is going on in the defence department and ascertain what can be done to correct it.

To conclude, without question we have to commend the government on doing some good things. It inherited many problems. There is no doubt in my mind—and I question the minister when he continually says he trusts his leadership, he trusts everything that is going on—there are obvious errors and problems within the Department of National Defence.

(1045)

We believe an inquiry must be called to examine and hopefully recommend solutions.

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands if not commend him for the motion and the debate on defence today. I always welcome a debate on defence, as I think all members of the House do. He raised a number of questions. He gave some credit and I thank him for it. He also raised some areas that are worthy of discussion and debate somewhat later on.

I want to bring forward two matters in the question and comment period. I will try to do it as quickly as possible. I have to remind the hon. member that things have changed since 1990. He alluded to it at the end of his presentation. He recognizes it.

Supply

In the less than 18 months since the government has come to power we have had more debates in the House of Commons than took place in the preceding five years and in the four years before that. We have done more in 18 months than the previous government had done in nine years. I do not think that is a big issue because we should be debating defence. Defence is more of an issue today than it has been in the past.

For the first time in recent history the government undertook to have a standing joint committee of the House of Commons and the other place look at, from the bottom up, the requirements of defence and what Canadians wanted their Canadian forces and their young men and women in uniform to do.

I consider that was a successful debate. It was a successful report. The hon. member knows that as he was a very valuable part of it. His expertise and distinguished career in the Canadian forces allowed him to have an input and a credibility that were most valuable to the report.

The fact that the report took place and the discussion took place at a very conscious level in Canada and with our allies is something that cannot be forgotten and cannot be minimized in the House. The fact that less than two months later it resulted in the white paper on defence is also something that should be noted.

On my first point I find it very difficult to understand why the hon. member is complaining that the Minister of National Defence has not come forward with an annual report on defence when we have just actually come out with a white paper. Perhaps next year his criticism will strike home a bit more.

On the second and more substantive point I am almost incredulous that the motion today condemns the government for failing to commission a broad and public inquiry. The Minister of National Defence tabled on Tuesday, two days ago, a report into the Somalia business, the Somalia inquiry. It is the broadest commission ever commissioned in the last 50 years. To my knowledge the last similar commission was the Mainguy commission which I believe goes back to 1949.

The opposition complains that we are not having a broad and public inquiry. It could not be broader and it could not be more public. The three commissioners are outstanding Canadians. Not one of them is a serving member of the Canadian forces. They have 19 points which allows them basically the broadest of the broad. I find it inconsistent, untimely and somewhat confusing that the main motion is what is sparking the debate today. We will be voting on it later, I understand.

Why did the hon. member not address this aspect in his presentation?

Mr. Frazer: Madam Speaker, the question of debates to which the hon. member has referred is interesting. I recognize quite freely that there have been far more debates in the House of Commons on defence than in the previous nine years or ten years or twelve years, for that matter.

The problem with the opposition parties is that the debates are a foregone conclusion. The decisions have already been taken. Yes, we are debating so we are able to say something, but we are not impacting or affecting the decisions that are taken. I believe that is not only frustrating but it is not right.

(1050)

Again I recognize that the Minister of National Defence responded quite rapidly to the receipt of the special joint committee's report. That of course implies that he had reasonably good information as to what was coming in the report. That was inevitable and it was good. He did respond quickly. As I pointed out, though, there are many recommendations made within the report which he did not see fit to include.

My problem is that I believe very many Canadians do not appreciate or conceive of the commitment that Canadian forces personnel make when they sign on the dotted line. They are the only Canadians who commit themselves to put their life on the line at order. The fireman, yes, he can get himself involved in a problem but he does it voluntarily. A policeman is the same. If he involves himself he does it because it is his job and because he personally chooses it. A serviceman does not have that choice. If his or her superior says "you go there", regardless of the situation that requires he or she to put themselves in they are required to go without question.

Because of this commitment we owe it to our servicemen to provide them with the very best possible leadership and concern. That is my concern here. The inquiry that the hon. member has referred to as broad is really constrained to talking about the airborne deployment before, during and after. It has to do with the command and control that went into that. However it does not branch into the areas that we have talked about: the overall command and control in National Defence Headquarters. Should it be civilian? Should it be separated into civilian and military? Are the young officers and young non-commissioned members being adequately trained?

We have reports from Colonel Oehring and from General Jeffries, both of whom point out that there is a shortfall in confidence in Canadian servicemen. They question whether their officers are really concerned with them or whether they are concerned with their own careers and they are looking up rather than down.

Supply

We owe it to our service people to give them the very best leadership, command and control that we can possibly provide.

[*Translation*]

Hon. David Michael Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to take part in this debate this morning. I think this is a good opportunity to discuss all aspects of national defence policy.

I notice the hon. member asked why there had been no debate on our future commitment in the former Yugoslavia. Quite frankly, we did intend to have a debate on the future of our commitment in the former Yugoslavia, but it does not really make sense to have a debate initiated by the government, since the opposition gives us a chance to discuss the matter today.

[*English*]

In other words, the hon. member has berated us for not providing opportunity to talk about future Canadian forces engagements in the next few weeks. It has been our intention to have that dialogue with the House, but given the fact that the opposition has culled today with defence as the subject matter, the government will consider today's debate, the opposition motion, as an occasion for all members to express their views not just generally on defence policy on the Somali inquiry but also on the future engagements of the Canadian forces.

I beg to differ with the hon. member. The decision to redeploy for a further six months has not been taken by the government and therefore what is said in the House today will be very useful for the cabinet when it makes up its mind.

I share the concerns of my colleague, the parliamentary secretary, who did such a terrific job for me in the special joint committee and was really one of the reasons that we were able to meet our deadlines and get a white paper out. The whole process was managed very well. Members should recognize the contribution my parliamentary secretary made to the process.

(1055)

The parliamentary secretary raised a point that the motion today condemning the government "for failing to commission a broad and public inquiry with a mandate to investigate the government's failure to hold senior officials at the Department of National Defence accountable", et cetera, was put on the Order Paper. However, the hon. member did not really address the subject matter.

I was rather amused yesterday evening when I read the opposition motion because I wondered why on earth such a motion would be put down, given the fact that two days ago I announced a full public inquiry under part I of the Inquiries Act to look into all aspects of the Canadian forces deployment in Somalia in 1992.

When we talk about the pre-deployment phase and the post-deployment phase going back to November 28, 1994, that is a period of almost two years when perhaps one of the most important missions every undertaken by the Canadian forces will be examined by an independent inquiry, headed by a Federal Court judge.

The inquiry is not solely restricted to what was actually in the order in council. We made it broad. We included a clause at the beginning which gave the commissioners great latitude. If the hon. member looked at that he would know that all aspects of command and control as they relate to the Somalia deployment will be subject to the inquiry. If one is examining that particular deployment, one can also draw conclusions on the general state of command and control within the Canadian Armed Forces. I am sorry he did not really address the matter in detail.

I am very grateful that he agrees with the government that the inquiry should have been under part I of the Inquiries Act rather than the National Defence Act. As I explained in my press conference the other day, it was our intention to have the inquiry under the NDA originally but we felt that we were somewhat constrained especially with the rules of evidence and the compelling of witnesses. Therefore it will be held under part I. I note that both opposition parties and people in the country generally have advocated that type of inquiry. We are providing the vehicle with three prominent Canadians to lead that discussion. We have put a time limit on it, not for any nefarious reason but simply to get the job done.

We have been somewhat constrained. Judicial proceedings have gone on for the last year and we have been unable to convene the inquiry. Now the inquiry is under way and will look into all aspects of the deployment to Somalia. In doing its work it will also reflect upon the general state of command and control within the armed forces, the leadership, the effectiveness of decision making and so forth.

It has not been an easy 18 months since I took over this portfolio. One thing that has troubled me as Minister of National Defence is how an institution such as the armed forces, which has an enviable and wonderful reputation that Canadians have admired for years and years and which has served us so well, has come under such negative public scrutiny.

The hon. member opposite for Saanich—Gulf Islands is a former member of the Canadian forces, but I invite other members who have not been in the forces to come with me some day to defence and go through a normal day or visit a base such as the one I visited last Friday at Val Cartier, Quebec; I am going to Borden on Friday. They would see an incredible dedication.

These men and women are prepared to serve their country. Contrary to what the hon. member says, when they join the armed forces they sign on for any conceivable duty. They know they may have to go to some of the world's most dangerous zones. They know that the job is not simply pushing pencils. There is humanitarian work and work helping Canadians cope

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with natural disasters. At the request of a local community last week we sent the army to a village in Quebec to help with problems resulting from an avalanche.

(1100)

The armed forces are available at any time. Domestically, it is available at any time to go abroad.

Tragically last weekend a number of young people went missing on Lake Ontario. The Canadian Armed Forces out of Trenton, the search and rescue helicopters and the Hercules planes led the search.

Those people who serve in the armed forces are prepared to do the rewarding domestic work in terms of search and rescue, helping communities that have problems such as the one in Quebec with the avalanche. They are also prepared to go to places like Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and Croatia, the Golan Heights, Cambodia, everywhere else to serve their country's interests. Canada's interests are ones the United Nations articulates in terms of bringing peace and civility to various parts of the world.

The dedication in the armed forces is second to none. I am amazed given the fact that we have now had about six successive budget cutbacks. I am glad the Minister of Finance left before my speech because he would not welcome some of the things I say. He has a tough job to do and we are solidly behind him.

The armed forces has had to go through about six successive budgetary cutbacks. During the 18 months we have been in office we have cut about \$10 billion in projected and actual expenditures from the budget. That is tough to manage.

There was a wage freeze on for all public employees. The armed forces has traditionally lagged. I find that unacceptable and I am trying to find ways with my colleague, the President of the Treasury Board, to see if we can address the compensation problem within national defence and within the armed forces without undermining the program of financial restraint of the government in general. We are working to do that.

We recently put in motion a means by which privates can be accelerated into the corporal rank and therefore by about six months gain some kind of advantage in terms of getting to the next salary rung.

We have a group of people who had to move around as bases closed and have had to serve in difficult parts of the world and had to do their jobs at a time of profound social change.

In the last number of years the charter of rights has been enacted, the Privacy Act and human rights legislation. The armed forces, like all other government departments, is under the microscope on a daily basis.

When we compare the Canadian Armed Forces and the way it is dealing with these challenges of being deployed in some of the world's hot spots, of having to deal with budget cuts, of having to be under public scrutiny with respect to changing social mores, and the expectation the forces must at least try to accommodate changing social mores, we find the Canadian Armed Forces is second to none.

Take for example the very controversial issue of sexual preference within the armed forces. The President of the United States must wonder in amazement how the Canadian armed forces changed its policy and allowed people of various sexual preferences to work openly and with dignity within the Canadian Armed Forces and integrate this within our operations.

In trying to get the United States armed forces to accept the same changes, he found out there was such incredible resistance it really has been one of the things that has helped to undermine his presidency in his early years. How could Canada do it and not the U.S.?

I have had these discussions with my counterpart Bill Perry and some of the others in Europe, Malcolm Rifkind and François Léotard and Volker Ruer. They are amazed at the adaptability of the Canadian Armed Forces, the flexibility, the willingness to accommodate ideas and changes in very difficult circumstances.

(1105)

One of the frustrations I have had is we have had some people who have left the Ministry of National Defence and have not been happy. They have taken certain information away with them and they have grievances. Some would say they are seeking retribution. Against whom, I do not know.

They were not employed there since this government has been in office. Maybe they want retribution against senior officials or the chief of defence staff. I do not know.

This information is being leaked to the opposition and to the media. It is publicized and it gives the impression the armed forces is in a state of chaos. The armed forces is not in a state of chaos.

I will do anything possible to walk my colleagues through the lives of men and women in the armed forces on a daily basis. We will take members of Parliament to bases. We will have

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briefings. We will let them find out once and for all that the armed forces is in pretty good shape. There are some morale problems and they have surfaced in certain memoranda. They have to do with financial restraint, with budget cutbacks, with the changing role of defence in the post cold war era and adapting to changing social mores.

There will always be personality differences in any organization. Do all the generals like each other? I hope so. I am sure there are rivalries. Does everybody in the House of Commons like each other? I am sure we all do, although from time to time we may have some rivalry.

We are looking at the largest quasi-corporate organization in the country, an organization that at a moment's notice can deploy troops anywhere in the world. It can discharge its obligations with such quality that our allies, even our opponents such as the three factions in the former Yugoslavia, say Canadians are the best.

Ask the Serbs, ask the Croats and ask the Muslims who are the best. They will say the Canadians. They do not want us to leave because they know we are fair, we are impartial and we are tough. We are professionals.

We are that way because it is a reflection of Canadian society and it is also a reflection of the cumulative leadership in the organization over decades. It goes back to the Boer war, to the first world war, to the second world war. The military tradition in this country is rich. It is alive. It is going to continue to stay rich and alive even in a changing world.

It is my job to answer the hon. member's criticisms and to assure Canadians the tax dollars being spent on defence are done so effectively and that operations are conducted properly. I will do that every day of the week. However, I get frustrated because many of the points raised are not thought through properly. They come from disgruntled people. They come from people with a lack of information, people who do not have full knowledge of the institution or know the full scope of the department's activities. These events are magnified on a daily basis.

The chain of command as it pertains to the deployment in Somalia will be looked at by the inquiry. In principle I want to assure my colleagues in the House and all Canadians that we have outstanding leadership in the Canadian Armed Forces. We have men and women who have gone through rigorous training, who are well educated, who have served in many different theatres of conflict. These people are true professionals.

As the Prime Minister and I have said, we have full confidence in the chief of defence staff, John de Chastelain. We have full confidence in the other members of the high command of the Canadian Armed Forces. We have full confidence in the institution. That does not mean to say the institution should not and cannot be changed. Sometimes there is resistance.

(1110)

After all, I am a Liberal. We look at the political perspective through certain lenses. The opposition has different views. That is what democracy is all about. It may very well be that the course of action the government wishes to follow will not be accepted by everyone within the department or within the forces. They are loyal Canadians and they recognize that the government is elected to direct the affairs of the state and they obviously will follow and implement the policy decisions of the government.

When we disbanded the airborne, General Reay, the head of land forces, and General de Chastelain, chief of defence staff, said to me: "You have our recommendations. You might not wish to follow our recommendations". We did not. We disbanded the airborne. They said: "Whatever you decide, we as loyal members of the armed forces will implement that decision faithfully and honestly". To their credit they have done that.

General Jeffries, the brigade commander at Petawawa, and Lt. Col. Kenward, the former commanding officer of the airborne regiment, did an outstanding job in difficult circumstances when we made a decision for which I will not apologize and which I will defend from now on. They did an admirable job in explaining this decision to their colleagues. As the chief of defence staff said, the airborne had achieved much over 25 years and had to be disbanded with dignity. It was disbanded with dignity.

We do not have a problem in the Canadian Armed Forces. Like all organizations, difficulties arise from time to time. I urge members when they stand in their place to give criticism, which is their due, they should also try to stand back and look at the reputation, the integrity, the experience Canada has had with the best armed forces in the world today. Let Canadians know they are behind the men and women who serve them so well.

Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I thank the minister for his very illuminating remarks.

Everything he said good about the performance of the Canadian Armed Forces I would back in spades. They are tremendous bunch of people. They put up with an awful lot of discomfort, danger and they perform superbly in very instance.

The minister talked about this being a debate on Bosnia. Obviously it is not a debate on Bosnia, because that is not the subject that we are dealing with. We may hit it peripherally, but there is no opportunity here. I would also point out to the minister that this is March 23. Unless I remember incorrectly, the mandate for our commitment in Bosnia runs out on March 31, eight days from now. Is this the time for us to debate or should it have been done in December or perhaps January, so that we could have had some impact on whether or not we are going to renew our commitment in Bosnia? I think this is too late.

Supply

Also, if this debate were to be on Bosnia, it should have been instigated by the other side.

The airborne inquiry I think has been well laid out. The minister has elected to stop the inquiry proceedings as of November 28. In keeping with his remarks about standing by his decision to disband the airborne, I suggest that he should have extended the mandate of that inquiry to March 6, when the airborne was disbanded and thereby allow the inquiry to determine whether or not he was justified in so doing.

Also I question whether the airborne inquiry is related to the forces as a whole. It will of necessity confine itself to incidents around the airborne itself. I question whether that is in fact relatable to the whole armed forces.

The minister talked about the prevailing negative scrutiny on the armed forces. I very much regret that.

(1115)

As he said, I have spent many years in the forces. I think they do good work. It is unfortunate that they come under adverse publicity.

However, in the case of Shidane Arone who was tortured and murdered in Somalia, this individual was under that torture and hollering his lungs out for the better part of six hours. I would say he would have been shouting for two of those hours. Where was the commanding officer when that was taking place? Where was the company commander, the platoon commander? Where were the senior NCOs who were allowing this to happen? They could not have avoided knowing that something was going on but they did not intervene.

It will obviously come out in the inquiry that the leadership was not there. Why was it not there? It is because it had not been instilled somewhere else. That is the concern I have when the minister says that everything is great in the armed forces. I do not believe it is great. There are a lot of problems.

The minister mentioned the matter of compensation for the forces and I laud him on that. When we have sailors on welfare there is something wrong in the armed forces.

The minister, basically though, talked about the personnel in the forces and I support him 100 per cent on that. The problem is he did not address the command and control problem which is the one at which this motion is aimed.

The reports from Colonel Oehring and Brigadier-General Jeffries point out very plainly that there is a command and control problem and a morale problem but the minister has not dealt with that. He said that anything is possible. If anything is possible how about commissioning an inquiry to have a look at the overall thing outside the Somalian inquiry. If it is good,

congratulations, but if it is not good then let us do something about it because our people are in jeopardy.

An hon. member: How many inquiries do you want?

Mr. Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands): In response to the member's question, I would like to see two inquiries at the moment, one on Somalia and one on the command and control in the armed forces.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I would request that the hon. member address his questions to the previous speaker. Comments on the floor are not heard by the public.

Mr. Collenette: Madam Speaker, I would like to comment on one point. The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands berates me for saying that this is not a place to debate our re-engagement in Bosnia and Croatia.

I want to emphasize that although we are prepared and all is in motion to send people to those two countries, the final decision by cabinet has not been taken. He said it was not the place to debate that. However, he spent most of his speech not addressing his own motion. He talked about everything but defence policy. What is good for the goose is good for the gander. If he can talk about anything to do with defence policy then any other member can and that includes whether or not we should re-engage in Bosnia and Croatia.

Another point is that the hon. member did not look at the text of the remarks I made the other day on establishing the inquiry. November 28, 1994 was the date chosen because that was the last date a member of the chain of command caused anything to happen with respect to the Somalia deployment. That was putting in train the court martial process for Captain Sox which was completed this week. It is why November 28, 1994 was chosen, because it dealt with the last action of a member of the chain of command.

The inquiry will answer a lot of the concerns that Canadians have had with respect to the operations of the armed forces. Hon. members would be wise to let the commissioners do their jobs. They have the right to subpoena witnesses and to hear all kinds of evidence. At national defence we will make everything available to them: military police reports and all other kinds of investigations. Members of the forces and civil servants may be called on to testify. We will co-operate in every way.

For the good of the forces and the good of the country, why can we not let the inquiry do its job? We will not have much longer to wait. I ask the hon. member, please, to consider that.

Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to ask the minister a couple of questions. The motion today deals with the public inquiry.

Supply

(1120)

That public inquiry will be centred on something that went wrong. As a result, the entire Canadian forces will be aimed at that during the course of the inquiry and that is sad for the forces as a whole.

I ask the minister today if he could explain to the House in very brief, general terms at least some of the positive things that went on in Somalia. I have a whole sheaf here listing things that the Canadian forces and the Canadian Airborne Regiment did during their posting in Somalia.

When the incident that received so much publicity happened in Somalia, in my opinion whether rightly or wrongly our own defence headquarters at the time handled it very poorly. The minister was not around. He was off enjoying a much more leisurely type of life in those days. However, he is here to see the end of this difficult era for the Canadian forces.

I am glad he mentioned General Jeffries and Colonel Peter Kenward. They are tremendous people. The forces have done a great job of coming back and correcting things that were wrong. However, in all this there has to be something positive.

I wonder if the minister would explain the role of the forces in Somalia; in schools, on roads, on helping them to build up their own police and their own security within their community. As he knows, his department has received many letters complimenting them on that very thing—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I am sorry. I want to give the minister time to respond.

Mr. Collenette: Madam Speaker, I am glad the hon. member raised it. He has Petawawa in his constituency and he is a very knowledgeable individual.

I am sorry that time did not permit me to talk about the good that was achieved in our deployment to Somalia. I will leave it to him and to other members to talk about it. He is absolutely right. While there were incidents that occurred that have brought some cloud over the Canadian Armed Forces, let us not forget that our participation there was very beneficial to the United Nations' mission. There were a lot of accomplishments. Those accomplishments will be recognized by those people who served. We are in the process of preparing a medal for the people who participated in Somalia.

Let us not judge the whole of the mission by the troubling incidents that occurred. They will be investigated.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Marc Jacob (Charlesbourg, BQ): Madam Speaker, from the outset, I want to say that I will keep to the motion tabled by the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands. I intend to support this motion so long as it meets the demands of the

Bloc Québécois. In this regard, I indicated my approval at the Minister of Defence's announcement of the establishment of the commission of inquiry and I congratulate him for setting it up. I also congratulate him on his choice of commissioners.

However, as I indicated to the press, I find the mandate of the commission relatively limited and I will explain why. We would clearly tend to support a request by the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands to broaden the commission of inquiry's mandate. However, before I go on to explain, I would mention that I was listening earlier to the Minister of Defence praising and very clearly applauding the fine actions of the Canadian military over the years. He expressed surprise that members of this House tended to frequently criticize the army and find fault with it without perhaps knowing much about it.

(1125)

I would like to respond to the Minister of Defence by saying that, unfortunately, at times, the better one knows a subject, the more one tends to criticize. The reason is that, like everyone who has spoken on this matter, I believe the armed forces have performed courageous feats of arms and have a reputation for pride and courage earned on a number of occasions.

However, some people try to hide behind the fine reputation of the armed forces. In my opinion, they must be weeded out, like bad apples.

For a number of months, I believed that the Minister of Defence really intended carrying out what we might call a purge at the Department of National Defence. But when I heard him talk this morning, I was a little less sure and was disappointed to see that he does not intend to take the issue any further than he has.

To prove my point, I traced back the development of the Airborne Regiment in Petawawa since it was founded in 1968. From the very beginning, it has welcomed infantry soldiers from three other regiments. Now I will get into how military tradition and reputation shaped the regiment.

Normally, it is the officers and commanding officers who mold a regiment to their image for a specific mission. One of the Airborne Regiment's first commanders was General Vernon, who served in the years 1975, 1977 and 1978.

In the early 1980s, many problems were reported around the base at Petawawa. I regret, by the way, that the hon. member who represents the base did not give us any examples. In fact, police reports show that many brawls and fights were caused by members of the Airborne while they were under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

I will continue reciting the regiment's evolution. The pranks and escapades which have occurred there from day one were

Supply

never any secret. By the way, on a few occasions, they were even brought to the minister's attention here in the House.

The Petawawa base is not only home to the Airborne Regiment, but also to other members of the military and other soldiers who are not necessarily part of the Airborne's second commando. On this base, people have been seen marching around carrying white supremacist flags or wearing Ku Klux Klan armbands and there have even been disgraceful scenes, skirmishes and fist fights, in the officers' mess, to the full knowledge of the commanding officers of this base. I found no evidence whatsoever that anyone of rank was ever reprimanded.

For the sake of troop morale, it would be a little difficult for officers to lay blame on one soldier in particular when they themselves were not always innocent. As I said earlier, and I stress, a regiment generally is the reflection of the officers who command the soldiers and who train them for certain operations or missions.

In light of the mission it was to undertake, the Airborne Regiment is an elite, overtrained regiment with superior physical and mental endurance.

When we learn of incidents like those that occurred in Somalia—it is important to underline that some events occurred before the Airborne was deployed—, what I find disturbing about the board of inquiry set up by the minister is that these events will probably be overlooked, as I understood from the board of inquiry's terms of reference.

(1130)

The board's mandate is limited to the deployment of the regiment in Somalia, before departure, during the mission and afterwards. But the regiment did not spring up overnight. It evolved over the years.

I wish to remind you that one of the individuals accused of misconduct in Somalia, Captain Rainville, had previously been responsible for an incident at the Citadelle in Quebec City, which had been reported by that city's municipal police. He held a command post in Somalia, and after he returned, there was a military police investigation, weapons were found at his home, and he was fined. When he appeared before a court-martial, the Citadelle incidents, which demonstrate this individual's violent and aggressive behaviour, were never brought up.

I think that these things should not be forgotten. When the regiment was deployed in Somalia, it was under the command of Colonel Morneau. Again, some documents show that Colonel Morneau recommended that the Airborne not be sent to Somalia because it was not yet ready. According to Colonel Morneau, the regiment's training and its moral or psychological strength were such that it was not yet fit to participate in such a mission.

What did they do for Colonel Morneau? They dismissed him. They went ahead and sent the regiment to Somalia. One of the first incidents in Somalia occurred in early January 1993. In January 1993, the military hierarchy was notified of leadership problems and of cases of misconduct within 2 Commando in Somalia. In particular, Major Seward, who was first fined for accidentally discharging his weapon and later served a written reprimand for promoting too aggressive action against the Somali.

Curiously enough, when HQ officials tour Somalia with former deputy minister Fowler a month or two later, in February or March of 1993, no problem was found, in terms of leadership or misconduct. On March 4, five or six days after HQ officials left, the famous video of a Somali man being killed and another one tortured was shot.

I have great trouble understanding that seasoned individuals in a position of authority, such as generals and deputy ministers, never realized there was something wrong with these regiments. It might be very difficult to admit that the very people who command and give our troops a sense of what is expected of them were unable to detect the problem, although it had been pointed out to them prior to their visit. The incidents occurred one week after their visit.

My point is that all that the Airborne's history says is that every commanding officer of the regiment was a good officer. The minister mentioned earlier that Lieutenant-Colonel Kenward, recipient of the Order of Merit, was among those who commanded the platoon, at the very time of the unfortunate incidents.

I find it strange that the commission of inquiry is limited to specific events and not allowed to investigate the actions of the officers who shaped this regiment and were followed.

It is also unfortunate that ultimately the only ones penalized by the dismantling of the Airborne are the soldiers sent back to other regiments, while the commanding officers have been reassigned to headquarters here, in Ottawa, with more or less unspecified duties.

(1135)

This is why I support the motion tabled by the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands. The minister should act, considering the many instances of spending—which could almost be qualified as ridiculous—within the Department of National Defence. Let me just give you the example of General Mike Vernon, the force commander in Ontario, who spent something like \$562,000 on furniture for his office. Again, his superior officer covered up the whole thing.

We find out such things when members of the armed forces write to the official opposition critic for national defence issues, such as this corporal who wrote: "Be careful not to confuse the effect and the cause. All these stories of suicide in the armed forces, crimes in Somalia and hazing in the Airborne Regiment are only the symptoms of a greater problem. The reality is that the Canadian Forces, and particularly the combat units, are demoralized". There have been references to the poor leadership displayed by some commanders, etc., 2 Commando in Somalia, and 1 Commando.

When, within an army which a majority of people respect as a whole, non-commissioned officers point out very obvious problems, it is because a real malaise exists. There has been a lot of talk about the morale of the troops. I am trying to put myself in the shoes of a private. Several of them told me that it is difficult for them to accept the fact that an officer lives in a house valued at \$650,000, and that the minister tells me that it is because this officer must act as a host for foreign visitors or generals. But generals here in Ottawa live in smaller houses than the one Lieutenant General Scott Clements lives in, in Winnipeg. The discrepancy between the treatment of combat troops and that of senior officers is probably one of the major causes of low morale in the armed forces.

When we consider, as the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands pointed out, that some seamen tried to go on welfare because they had trouble making ends meet, and when we hear some officers say that you do not join the army to get rich, and we then look at the behaviour of senior officers and the way they sometimes waste money, it is easy to understand why the morale of the military is very difficult to maintain and why these people have lost all motivation. If the department will not or cannot clean up its act and get rid of some of its people, I do not think the situation can improve.

To continue my speech, it is very often said, and the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands and the minister mentioned this as well, that the Department of National Defence has suffered many successive budget cuts. This is followed by some obvious questions: How are they going to play their role? How are they going to get equipment? How will they be able to carry out their mission?

Initially, I found these arguments persuasive, but when we examined the National Defence budget, the Auditor General pointed out several items—infrastructure management, for instance—where the Department of National Defence could easily have saved between 100 and 125 million dollars through better management. If we look at communications, between 325 and 400 million dollars could have been saved on total procurement over a period of three years. Almost every time the Department of National Defence orders or draws up an estimate for the purchase of materiel or equipment or labour, there is always a cost overrun.

Supply

(1140)

Two days ago, we were talking about the CSE in the House, and I gave examples of estimates where the cost overrun had been as much as 120 per cent on equipment purchased by the Department of National Defence. I think the department should start by cleaning up its management procedures and eliminating certain individuals who are no longer performing as they should.

I may add that in the Canadian Forces, there are senior officers and non-commissioned officers who would gladly see the end of the situation that exists within the forces and get rid of certain individuals they have identified, but not publicly, because it would hurt their careers. I think it is very sad that some people will not take this responsibility because it might have an impact on their careers. I would say that the Canadian Forces suffer from two evils that are eroding them from within. First, the military bureaucracy. Nearly one half of the forces are in their offices from 9 to 5 and must be paid a premium when they are on a mission. Are they still soldiers?

Second,—and this is not flattering for politicians—the politization of the Defence Staff. Because it would hurt their careers, they make no major decisions and will not criticize one of their colleagues or subordinates because that might hurt the individual or his or her career. When we have reached that stage, I think the rot is widespread, but there are still some very good people in the armed forces.

A recent poll conducted nation-wide revealed that 48 per cent of Canadians are starting to have doubts about the quality and value of our armed forces, since the latest revelations concerning national defence. I think it is up to the government to improve the self-esteem of the Canadian Forces by extending the mandate of the commission of inquiry to cover all individuals who in some way have tarnished the reputation of the Canadian military.

[*English*]

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his contribution to this important debate. I have a question which really is for clarification.

A few moments before his conclusion the hon. member talked about the civilianization and bureaucratization of the Canadian forces. It is on this issue that I want clarification. I think the hon. member used the expression of people working from nine to five and asked whether they were really members of the Canadian forces or whether they were really in the army. I am not sure what he meant by that.

I am not sure this is what he meant, but if his suggestion is that there are soldiers, sailors and airmen who punch clocks from nine to five, I want to tell him that is not the case. I think he knows it is not the case. He and I shared a tent in Bosnia. It is very much a 24-hour a day operation, weekends and evenings. I know very few members of the Canadian forces, those in uniform and indeed many civilians in the civil service of the Department of National Defence, who operate on a nine to five

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basis. It is very much a 24-hour a day operation, particularly for those in uniform.

Therefore, I really am quite insistent on seeking clarification for that aspect of his presentation. Otherwise I think it was generally positive.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacob: Madam Speaker, I said civilianization and not civilization. I will explain what I meant. When I talk of civilianization, I mean that there are civilians working at National Defence, but there are also members of the military who work from 9 to 5. I have nothing against that.

(1145)

I would like to remind the parliamentary secretary that Canada's peace missions, generally brilliantly conducted, use less than 10 per cent of the total potential of our armed forces. We did indeed go to the former Yugoslavia with the parliamentary secretary and we saw soldiers working 24 hours a day. They did an excellent job, and I congratulate them on it.

However, we must remember that, within the Canadian Armed Forces, there are barely 9,000 privates and more than 32,000 corporals and sergeants. I will spare you the number of colonels, lieutenant colonels and generals. Only privates, corporals and sergeants go out in the field. These people, I grant you, do excellent work, and I admire them. I have been able to see this for myself, on site.

What I would like to say, however, is that, when people do civilian work from 9 to 5, whether they push pencils or complete forms,—I might make an aside here to point out that the Auditor General said the army should remodel its administration due to the many forms required for a decision to be made—this is what I meant when I said that, when pencil pushers or 9 to 5 civil servants are sent on a mission, on the seas, in the air or elsewhere, they should be paid a bonus, because they have lost, if you will, all their training, since they have become clerks and not soldiers.

[*English*]

Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I listened very carefully and with great interest to the remarks of the hon. member for Charlesbourg.

I think I heard correctly but I ask for confirmation that he was speaking about overcommitment in the armed forces and about bureaucracy. I wanted to ask him if in the bureaucracy he was speaking of he included the head man in the shop, the minister.

Does the member for Charlesbourg see the minister being responsible for some of the bureaucracy and some of the problems that are created for the armed forces? In other words,

does the overcommitment result from decisions taken from the top?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacob: Madam Speaker, I will answer the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, perhaps with a grin. I do not claim that the minister can be lumped in with the bureaucracy of the Canadian Armed Forces, except on a level of responsibility, because everyone and anyone knows that ministers are responsible for the decisions made in their departments. Regarding this issue, I would like to refer you to the Auditor General's 1992 report, which pointed out several administrative problems and bureaucratic shortcomings in his critique of the national defence administration.

The Auditor General repeated the exercise in November 1994, pointing out several shortcomings in the Canadian army. In this sense, I think that the minister should be held responsible for not having trimmed the bureaucracy enough and fixed the administrative problems at National Defence, and for having missed out on potential savings in his last budget. Instead, he went full tilt in the direction of closing or reducing bases, but nowhere is there any evidence that he really intends to address the problems within the administration, which employs approximately 70,000 military staff with 30,000 civilian support staff to back them up at the Department of National Defence.

When I see a member of the armed forces getting paid more to do the same job as a civilian, I wonder about the administration, or, rather, its efficiency. That is why I was saying that there are many problems with the administration of the Canadian Armed Forces and they are brought up very rarely. Very often, we hear members of the government say that all is well in the army, that there is no problem and they never criticize the army.

(1150)

In closing, I would just like to quote an English newspaper article on the armed forces, which was run about four or five months ago. The journalist said that "armed forces know no master".

[*English*]

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank both members who contributed to the debate.

I mention one point by way of a comment to which the minister's presentation alluded. We are talking about bureaucratization. I remind the House that in the last 10 years the Canadian forces have been subjected to a number of very dramatic changes that have been fundamental to their organization. I believe the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands will agree because he and I both went through it.

Supply

First there was the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms. There was the Privacy Act and there was the Canadian Human Rights Act. They are all great acts, but they are legislation which required a fundamental change in the way the Canadian forces did things. That caused a tremendous amount of bureaucratisation and reporting by military and civilian people up the chain of command about how changes were to be made to the Canadian forces and how they responded to these items. I underscore the sometimes traumatic experience this caused people whose main job was to be prepared to fight for Canada.

I say this by way of comment. Perhaps I will include more of it in a general sense in my presentation later this morning.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacob: Just a short comment, Madam Speaker. There has indeed been much restructuring within the Canadian Forces. I wish to point out to the parliamentary secretary that in December 1994, the Auditor General and a few generals appeared before the supply and services committee—on which I sat—to talk about the awarding of certain contracts. I asked then Auditor General Peter Kasurak, who deals with national defence data, if it was conceivable that better management could save close to \$1 billion. I asked him to give me a yes or no answer. He said yes.

Therefore, I think that there are still improvements to be made and that is what the departments should try to do.

[*English*]

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Madam Speaker, it is a real honour for me to rise to speak to the motion today. I state at the outset that my comments will reflect a contribution to the debate in a reasoned manner. We all come from different ideologies and perspectives on the issues and I believe my remarks reflect that.

As I speak today I will be considering what I see as a lack of strategic planning from the government regarding its management and administration of the Canadian forces. The government perhaps has let partisan politics interfere with the operations of our military.

Our national defence force is the guardian of our freedoms and a reflection of our values. It is being neglected by a government that does not appear to understand the meaning of an overall strategic plan for military operations in Canada and abroad.

Many examples come to mind. The disbandment of the Canadian airborne regiment for political expediency, base closures, relocations and open-ended peacekeeping missions are stark evidence of what it means to have no plan. I will be referring to these examples to demonstrate my point that the government has an obligation to the armed forces which in-

cludes accountability for planning and expenditure of tax dollars.

The decision to disband the airborne regiment seems to have been an overreaction on the part of government for politically expedient reasons. There is no question that the videos were disturbing. Many Canadians felt as I did, but I question whether the actions of a few individual soldiers merit the elimination of an entire regiment.

The airborne had a long and distinguished history. Airborne soldiers served gallantly in many of the world's most troubled areas in military and peacekeeping capacities. This fact should not be overlooked. Judging the airborne on its long and valued service, disbandment because of the actions of a few hardly seems rational. To add insult to injury, I have learned that the soldiers serving in the airborne regiment in Somalia, who for the most part performed brilliantly, have not yet received their medals.

(1155)

A quick reaction force which the airborne represents is still needed in Canada. At this point the Minister of National Defence acknowledges but has yet to propose a replacement for the airborne. His lack of action leaves Canada without an important and necessary element to our national defence. This is an unacceptable situation for Canada.

One wonders what the long awaited public inquiry will uncover. By disbanding the airborne perhaps the government hoped to avoid answering some of the more troubling questions that have been raised with regard to high level cover-ups resulting from Canadian conduct in Somalia.

How readily will lower ranked soldiers come forward and tell what they know? What effect could such actions have on their future careers? Could they be subject to later intimidation by higher ranking officers?

The decision to close down and relocate CFB Calgary to Edmonton is another example of where our military needs have not received the highest priority. Is Calgary being punished because it elected only reform MPs in 1993? There have been allusions to this very point.

Calgary *Herald* columnist Don Braid wrote on Tuesday, February 28: "Documents obtained through access to information show that there are no sound economic or military reasons for this move". He went on to express the opinion of many others that closing CFB Edmonton may be less costly than the closure of the Calgary base.

Cost benefit analysis would be useful to determine the wisdom of the decision. However without any analysis available I for one remain skeptical of the motive. Past experience has demonstrated that predicted relocation costs have proven to be wrong.

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In last year's budget the Harvey barracks which housed the Lord Strathcona's Horse, the Royal Canadian, was slated to move to Edmonton. At the time of last year's budget the defence minister estimated that the cost of the move would be roughly \$23 million. He has since admitted that the cost will be nearer \$70 million with some speculating that the final amount could reach \$150 million.

These high costs for the relocation of one part of the base lead me to wonder how much the final tally will be to relocate the entire base to Edmonton. The lingering impression is that of political expediency.

I do not want to leave the impression that the Reform Party is against the reorganization of our military forces. However the reorganization must be done for the right reasons, namely cost efficiency within our forces while maintaining effective military capability. Strategic necessity dictates that government cease using the Canadian forces as the political football.

Calgarians will accept the base closing if it can be proven that the \$300 million cost of consolidating the bases in Edmonton will save money in the long run. However if no true economic savings results in the consolidation, Calgarians, those from my riding of Calgary Southeast and all other Albertans will remember. The national energy program disaster has not been forgotten in the west.

Any base relocation should be undertaken on the basis of planning and efficiencies. Detailed cost analysis studies should be completed to determine what bases should be kept open and which should be closed.

Another point is directed to our peacekeeping commitments around the globe. In my maiden speech in the House I spoke of the tragic conflict in Bosnia and the involvement of our Canadian soldiers in a war without end. My fear at the time was that the Canadian presence in Bosnia was not lessening the fighting but sustaining it. The aid we were providing was often stolen by the warring factions thus feeding the fighting that Canadians were trying to end. A bottomless IV bag sustaining a killing machine was my expression of the problem at the time. I still hold the same opinion today.

Canadian soldiers remain in a war zone with no peace to keep nor make. We have committed a Canadian presence in the region for an indefinite period of time and for an indefinite expenditure. Our cash strapped government has yet to implement a long range plan for such open-ended commitments.

Canada needs a clear set of guidelines for foreign intervention. We must continue our longstanding tradition of keeping peace in the world's troubled spots but after a conflict has been resolved. Canada's contributions to sustaining peace in the world's conflicts have been second to none. However, in a time of budgetary restraint, open ended missions costing staggering sums of money should be carefully reviewed.

(1200)

Since the end of World War II Canada has spent tens of billions of dollars on peacekeeping. Logically questions arise for all of us to consider. What is our role in the volatile area?

What is the potential length of the mission? What will such undertakings cost?

I do not want to leave the impression that I do not salute or acknowledge the valuable endeavours of our military the world over. However, we cannot conceivably embark on missions which last for decades at a time. Canadians were in Cyprus for 30 years. Our soldiers had been keeping peace between India and Pakistan for 45 years. Recently more Canadians have been sent to Haiti.

Members might argue all of these tours of duty are necessary. If that is so, how do they suggest we finance these commitments when we have no military plan?

We have a responsibility to all Canadians to spend their money wisely. Therefore, the missions Canada undertakes must be planned according to cost, in those places where Canadians can securely and effectively keep the peace within a timeframe for withdrawal.

I impress on all members that in a still dangerous world where governments have less and less money Canada's armed forces must adapt to fulfil its basic responsibilities in Canada and abroad. For this to happen government must manage the forces in a strictly professional manner, free of political manipulation.

The government must develop new operational techniques to ensure the military uses its financial resources in the most efficient way possible. This fits into the larger context of strategic planning which should be incorporated into all aspects of military activity so that our honourable military tradition continues untarnished.

Mr. John Bryden (Hamilton—Wentworth, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Calgary Southeast made allusion to the disbanding of the airborne regiment which I would like to comment on. The member connected the disbanding with the hazing videos and suggested the videos were the reason the regiment was dismantled.

I cannot speak for the Minister of National Defence or his parliamentary secretary on this issue but it was not the hazing videos that led to the disbanding of airborne regiment. It was the killings in Somalia.

When we look at this issue we have to remember, just as the member for Calgary Southeast said, that Canada's military has a role in sustaining peace worldwide. The image of our peacekeepers abroad is vital. What happened in Somalia led to a situation in which the airborne regiment will be forever haunted by that incident and would never get away from it and that incidents such as the hazing videos would turn up time and time again and bring back the memory of what happened in Somalia.

Supply

I do not think the government had much choice with respect to the airborne, tragic as it was. What happened in Somalia involving the airborne is like losing a major land battle as far as our national image is concerned. I do not think we had much choice on that.

Mrs. Brown (Calgary Southeast): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his comments. Are the videos a mere coincidence?

I have a constituent who was part of the airborne regiment. He has called me a number of times. He is heart sick over the events of the disbanding of the airborne regiment. He said to me: "You cannot imagine how it feels to know that with a tradition that has lasted for decades, I am one of the members of the airborne regiment which in a sense has been dishonoured in the Canadian context of the military tradition. I have to live with that always". It is a very unfortunate and tragic result.

(1205)

In the year between these events and now much happened within the airborne regiment to clean it up. It is unfortunate that was not acknowledge or recognized as the decision was undertaken.

I raise the issue on behalf of the constituent who was part of the airborne regiment and because of the military tradition for which Calgary is noted. I hope the Minister of National Defence, as he prepares another reaction force and a ready force to protect Canadian soil, will acknowledge the tremendous contributions and traditions of the airborne regiment. It is an absolute sacrifice that it was disbanded.

Mr. George Proud (Hillsborough, Lib.): Madam Speaker, some of the member's statements are right about the great history the regiment has had and there is no doubt about it.

During the consultations we had last year from April through to the end of October on the defence review I suggested, as had other members as we talked about Canada's shrinking budgets or shrinking military, that it was possible to do other things. We do not have a huge sealift or airlift capability. We suggested that maybe we could use the airborne regiment to go into certain areas. They tell us they do not like to use that in peacekeeping operations.

I asked them why we needed an airborne regiment at this time. If we ever need one there are a lot of people out there who are very capable and who would come back in and form a regiment.

If that is the case, why do we need one?

Mrs. Brown (Calgary Southeast): Madam Speaker, I would like to clarify something once again for the member. I do thank him for his question.

The focus of my presentation today was on strategic military planning for the Canadian Armed Forces. That included examples of the airborne, the open ended peacekeeping missions and the closure of Calgary CFB. Those examples were drawn specifically to demonstrate the lack of and the need for long term strategic planning within the military.

Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I am rising today to speak on the motion concerning the Department of National Defence and the problems of accountability in it. I want to especially thank the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for having raised this motion today.

I have raised a number of issues regarding things that have transpired in the Department of National Defence; whether they were the problems that came out of the airborne's service in Somalia or events in Bosnia and Croatia, CFB Calgary, problems of command and control, general morale problems. I have raised all of these issues.

To government members who have touched upon this, these questions have not come from opposition research. These questions did not come from the media. In most cases these stories and these concerns came to us from active military people of all ranks who are very concerned about what is occurring in the Department of National Defence.

I want to spend my time mainly on the issue of the infrastructure rationalization and Calgary's role in that. In doing so I do not intend to dispute in any way the need for defence cuts and the need for government spending cuts in general. All parties in the House have recognized that, although the Bloc Quebecois is very open to defence cuts as long as not a penny of it is in Quebec. I do not share that view. I do not share a not in my backyard approach to government spending reductions.

(1210)

I am concerned in terms of infrastructure about the decision making process behind these cuts and specifically that application in the Calgary case. The base in my constituency, CFB Calgary, is going to be closed along with the base in Chilliwack. The member for Fraser Valley East is going to address that later. The plan is apparently to save infrastructure costs by centralizing and consolidating the forces in Edmonton.

The history of defence consolidation and centralization over the past generation has not been efficiency or cost saving. It has created probably the most top heavy armed forces in the western world.

In looking at the announcement of the closure of CFB Calgary, in the 1994 budget it was announced that eventually the Harvey barracks, one of the two major portions of the base, would be closed. The Lord Strathcona's Horse and most of the 1 Service Battalion were to be moved to CFB Edmonton in

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1996–97. The regional medical depot there was to be relocated within the city of Calgary.

Originally, as the member for Calgary Southeast mentioned, the cost for this move was estimated by DND at \$23 million. Six months later the official cost estimates had escalated to \$44 million and sometime after that they escalated to nearly \$70 million.

As little as a few weeks before the budget letters were going out from the Department of Finance assuring local taxpayers in Calgary the cost of the move was only \$23 million. External cost estimates, which frankly were much more detailed and credible than those released by the department, placed the cost for this move at about \$142 million.

It is true that in the year 2005 leases for some parts of the Harvey barracks will begin to expire but it is also true that portions of this land have very favourable leases running to the year 2050. I have trouble believing a compromise was not possible. It would have compared favourably to moving men and equipment and constructing facilities to house them at CFB Edmonton.

Let us say that we can even for a minute accept the department's own revised figure of \$44 million and a projected savings of \$6 million annually. Considering the time value of money it would take over 12 years for taxpayers to break even on the cost of this move. Obviously that cannot be justified as a cost saving.

We have to ask what is the real motivation for the move. According to documents we obtained through access to information the primary justification was to compensate Edmonton for the decision to move that city's air squadrons to Winnipeg, which in and of itself is probably worth investigating, when these inconsistencies are examined on a case by case basis. I called for an impartial review in the case of CFB Calgary. If we look at these moves across the country in combination with the obvious leadership deficit in the department, the review is more imperative.

There were 30 such changes announced alone in the 1994 budget. My guess is that if each of these cost saving measures is as expensive as the changes to CFB Calgary, we will have a very serious problem.

In the 1995 budget it was additionally announced that the rest of the base, Currie barracks, the 1st Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, the 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group headquarters and Signal Squadron, the 1 Field Ambulance, the 1 Military Police Platoon and the 1 Intelligence Platoon will also move from Calgary to Edmonton. Additionally the medical depot, which last year was to be relocated within Calgary, will now also be moving to Edmonton.

In the budget there are no cost estimates available at all, not even the bad ones we had last year. We have since the budget

seen media reports that say the base move will cost about \$300 million now that the government is closing the entire base. Other reports quote defence officials as saying they have no idea of what the cost will be, that the cost analysis will not even be completed until later this summer.

Again, this lack of financial information must lead to the conclusion that the decision was not based on cost criteria.

(1215)

One wonders whether this two stage announcement means that the defence minister's cuts have no focus and no strategy, or whether really he has a political strategy rather than a military strategy. We know there is something going on. The minister himself was quoted on March 6 in the *Calgary Herald* as saying: "In the long run, we were going to close Calgary anyway. We did not really say that last year because we did not want to upset people any more than we had to".

This is very distressing in light of the calls my office is now receiving, calls about expensive upgrades to the base facilities over the last year and even calls about ongoing work. More than a week after the base closure was announced these renovations were still proceeding. New siding was put on some of the buildings and the Currie barracks received new water-conserving toilets.

I should mention that the minister said they had already made this decision a year ago. About a year ago I attended the opening of a brand spanking new headquarters building, the Waters building on the Currie barracks at CFB Calgary. Maybe that explains why the announcement was not made last year. It is pretty hard to announce the closure of a base when opening a brand new headquarters building on it.

I have asked for the following minimum information on this decision: How much will it cost to clean up the entire base? How much have similar clean-ups cost in the past? I want realistic projections. I have asked for an accounting of all the renovations and improvements done over the last year. How much, in effect, did we pay for the minister's decision not to release his announcement one year ago?

I have also asked the government for a complete breakdown of the costs to move equipment and personnel from CFB Calgary to Edmonton and for estimates for the subsequent construction that will be needed at CFB Edmonton. I also want to know what other renovations and maintenance costs are likely at CFB Edmonton since saving these kinds of dollars was cited as part of the reason for the move from Calgary.

I also note a number of issues have not even been addressed yet. CFB Calgary remains the marshalling point for emergency operations to the province of B.C. in the event of an earthquake or some other catastrophe. Those kinds of problems have to be addressed.

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I would point out in closing that Calgary is not a government town; it is a town of entrepreneurs and business people. Calgary will survive this loss but not without pain and regret, in particular, not without some regret on the loss of a valuable and longstanding military tradition.

Contrary to some mythology, Calgary was not founded by the guns of outlaws, nor was it founded by the guns of private citizens enforcing their own laws. Calgary was founded by a police detachment of the North-West Mounted Police, then a paramilitary force. A year after Calgary was officially incorporated, the Alberta Field Force was formed at CFB Calgary to help provide units in the Riel rebellion. In 1900 the Lord Strathcona's Horse was founded to serve in the South African war. Since then, various regiments have trained in both world wars. Calgary has been one of the most popular sites for garrison posting.

I end by saying that I have invited the minister to come to Calgary not just to meet privately with officials to discuss land but to meet publicly with concerned citizens from all walks of life on the base. He would be able to discuss this decision and to reveal fully to them the costs and the reasons for the decision, both economic and military.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Marc Jacob (Charlesbourg, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to comment on what the hon. member for Calgary West said.

He indicated in his remarks that the Bloc Québécois was very open to defence cuts as long as there are not made in Quebec's back yard. I would like to tell him that for nearly 15 years, Quebec has been hit by every new set of defence cuts. I would also like to point out that a study commissioned by Canadian Forces General Addy at National Defence Headquarters and just released in December 1994 shows Quebec's distinct disadvantage over the past 15 years.

Even a 20 per cent reduction in overall DND infrastructures, except in Quebec, would not correspond to Quebec's population or contribution to the budget. I have had enough of this "not in our back yard" business, because we have been at a disadvantage for 15 years.

(1220)

Mr. Harper (Calgary West): Madam Speaker, it is not true that all defence cuts were made in Quebec in the past. Cuts were made in Summerside, for example, as well as in Penhold. Several Canadian provinces were affected.

I generally agree with my colleague that while DND spends less in Quebec and in western Canada than elsewhere in Canada, cuts were steeper in that province. Note in this respect the results of the last election. In Ontario and Atlantic Canada, where Liberals were elected, you have higher defence spending

and lesser cuts. This is a problem, I agree. But it was the Bloc Québécois that requested a 25 per cent reduction in defence spending. It is hard to carry out a reduction of this magnitude without making any cuts in Quebec.

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ): Madam Speaker, I will make a brief comment and then ask a question.

As regards cuts in Quebec, we have indeed been penalized in recent years, particularly since these cuts were not only budgetary ones. Just think of the closure of the only French-language military college in Canada. The impact is not strictly financial, as shown by the drastic reduction in the enrolment of French-speaking aspiring officer cadets since that decision was made. Canada cannot be proud of that decision.

My question is as follows: Has he met, in his region, people from the armed forces reserve who want the situation to be cleared up because they feel that the things for which certain elements are being blamed, as well as the fact that no light is being shed on the issue, are hurting everyone? The result is that people who were once very proud to be members of the reserve or of the Canadian Forces now feel rather uncomfortable.

These people feel that things should be made very clear. We support the Reform Party's motion because it asks that light be shed on this issue. Can the hon. member tell us if members of the reserve forces in his region feel the same way? Do these people feel that the bad apples should be expelled, to avoid letting the situation deteriorate even more?

Mr. Harper (Calgary West): Generally speaking, military personnel are very concerned just now. They do not believe in the government's ability to make cuts in a proper manner. It is my view that, at present, the government does not care about the problems confronting military personnel.

[*English*]

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as I said earlier in my question and comment, I am pleased to participate in this debate. It is an important debate and I welcome it.

In my presentation I am going to relate to the main purpose of the motion. It essentially addresses morale and leadership, and also concerns by its very nature the ambience of the times, the kind of times we are in and how they develop.

Since this is the 50th anniversary of the victory over in Europe by the allied forces, it is appropriate to go back to look at a 50-year parallel. I am not a military historian. I have not been around long enough to be able to give firsthand 50 years of military evolution. However I have studied the business and I have been part of it for a long time, as have other members in the House.

Supply

(1225)

I would like to share with the House a parallel which I believe we are seeing now in this day and age. Again, if I could take some licence, I am more familiar with the naval aspect, but I think what I say for the navy could also apply to the army and the air force.

Let me take the House back to 1945, when we had the third largest allied force. How that developed is important as well. Let me take it from the navy perspective.

Canada started into World War II in 1939 with 10 ships and 2,000 people. By the end of the war, which for the sake of rough calculation was close to 2,000 days if we take the lead up to the beginning and the aftermath at the end, the navy finished up from those 10 ships and 2,000 people with 400 ships and 100,000 people. That is 50 people a day and one ship every five days. A tremendous expansion.

At the end of the war there was a demobilization. Those people who joined to serve their country in many cases had no intention of staying in and were quite happy to demobilize.

Another important aspect of this should not be lost. Between 1945 and the early 1950s history was in the making. The strategic planners had run amok. It was not their fault. There was no route; the hot war was over. Between the hot war in 1945 and the cold war in 1951, defence planners were in great difficulty in providing direction to people in uniform.

To use a navy example, in 1949 a series of undesirable incidents occurred on our capital ships of the day. This resulted in the three man Mainguy inquiry. The inquiry was designed, developed and commissioned purely to investigate the undesirable specific incidents. The findings of that inquiry led to a fundamental change in the way the navy went about its business in the late 1940s, the early 1950s and on.

The difficulty in planning and in providing direction led to some perturbations in the naval service and perhaps in the army and air force as well. It led to an inquiry, which led to better working conditions, better leadership and better direction. It also happened that in 1951 we had what was called the cold war.

Since that time Canadian forces have been reducing in size, reducing in mobility, and reducing in posturing in bases abroad. The funding has been reduced as well. Is that surprising? It may be undesirable for those who want to see more military expenditures, and I happen to be one of those from time to time. The whole world is reducing. We are now going from a cold war to what perhaps is developing into a hot peace.

With the exception of the interregnum in the Korean days from the early 1950s until about the mid-1950s, the forces

continued to decrease. I have a certain amount of sympathy for the defence planners of those days, but we did have a recognized enemy. We did have a recognized capabilities and intentions method of defence planning.

In 1987 the government of the day provided a white paper which was hailed to be the be all and end all. It was lauded by those in the military, by defence planners and other defence organizations, both allied and the other side. It provided things like nuclear submarines for the navy, more aircraft for the air force, more soldiers for the army, a completely new command structure for the army, more reserves, and a further determination to make the total force concept, that is the amalgamation of the regulars and the reserves into one force.

(1230)

That document lasted three years. We all know the cold war finished in 1990. We ran into the problem in the standing committee on defence. We ran into it in the joint committee. It is not as simple as perceiving an enemy, deciding what that enemy may do and then planning a force structure to counter it.

Who is the enemy today? I am not sure who my enemy is. What are its plans? If you do not know who the enemy is, it is very difficult to figure out what its plans are. What do you do? You do not stop planning. I disagree very strongly with my hon. colleague from Calgary Southeast who says there is no plan.

There was no plan from 1987. I cannot blame that on the government. It did not cause the cold war to stop. From 1990 until 1993 the Canadian forces were essentially without a white paper. That was very serious, considering the tremendous changes that had taken place in those years.

Every year there was an effort to reduce the budget and to reduce the people. This was even accentuated after 1990 when peace groups start asking Canada, where is your peace dividend? A lot of us would say that we had our peace dividend when we were paying 2 per cent of our gross national product for defence in the last 20 years of the cold war, 1970 to 1990, when most of our NATO allies were paying 5 per cent. I am not blaming that on anybody. We happen to be in a very unique geo-strategic position and perhaps we should not have been spending more than 2 per cent.

In the years 1987 to 1993, the cry was that we should have a good planning base. In that way deputy ministers, chiefs of defence staffs, commanders and senior planners would know what was in the budget and what was in the defence program, not next year but five years from now. How can you plan for a force when you do not know how much money is going to be there?

We are five years into this hot peace, as I like to call it. A little over two years ago we had 4,700 peacekeepers committed in a force that was shrinking. Since 1987 the Canadian forces have

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gone through a reduction of \$21 billion, in capital expenditure mostly, a reduction of 26,000 people in uniform and 16,500 civilians. The reserve force that had such grandiose plans in 1987 will be reduced to a lot less than was planned, to 23,000. In any organization you cannot have such a shrinking philosophy without it causing an effect on those people who serve.

I recognize there are difficulties. The minister recognizes there are difficulties. There are always going to be difficulties in an organization of 60,000 or 70,000 or 80,000 people. If you have 10 people you are bound to have a problem with one or two. That should not be surprising.

The Minister of National Defence announced the broadest inquiry, certainly since the Mainguy commission in 1949. I want to dwell on that for a few minutes. That commission was set out to look at specific incidents in the navy, but it resulted in a fundamental change in how the navy did its business.

(1235)

While in no way, shape or form would I preclude what kind of findings the commission of inquiry into the Somalia affair will conclude, the calibre of the people and their backgrounds would lead me to believe that any of the recommendations and findings of the commission certainly would have application not just to the Somalia inquiry but to the downstream leadership, *modus operandi* and maybe even the structure of the Canadian forces.

There is not much we can do after the fact but we can learn lessons. I am not going to get specific about the inquiry, but having read the 19 specific subparagraphs, it is very clear to me that the whole range has been covered. It states in the preamble that notwithstanding what is said in the general sense and what is said in the specific sense, the inquiry has a pretty broad range of matters it can look at. I take some comfort from the fact that the problems are being addressed.

The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands and I, with other members, addressed in the joint committee on defence the issue of morale. It was not an issue because members of the Canadian forces were not appreciated by their fellow Canadians. It was not an issue because members of the Canadian forces were dissatisfied with the military reaction to the way of life. That is in the report. More specifically, they were not dissatisfied and morale we felt was not an issue not because of poor leadership specifically. As the report went on to say, the excellence of the senior ranks was evident as we went from bases to stations to ships, operational forces, logistic forces and administrative forces. That conclusion was reached on October 31.

I have difficulty understanding what could have changed so drastically to lead one to conclude that we have command and

control shortcomings, deteriorating morale, poor leadership and that kind of thing.

The chain of command is fundamental to any organization. We all agree on that. I can assure the House that from my knowledge of the hearings the last 10 months and my subsequent involvement with the Department of National Defence, the chain of command is there. However, it is like all chains, some links are stronger than others. We have had incidents and happenings in the last two months that indicate that.

On the business of leadership, I have talked about the shrinking force. It started in 1945 and is still going on. What kind of leadership does it take to keep the Canadian forces in a good state of morale with all the things that are happening that we have discussed here today: reduction in capital programs, reduction in the size of the force?

For the last 10 years the Canadian forces have acted in many ways like the social laboratory for some of the things that have been happening, for the good of the country, but it is the law of the land. I mentioned the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Privacy Act earlier in my comments. All these things have happened in less than a decade. If there was not good leadership what would have happened to the Canadian forces?

One of the things we discovered in our deliberations was that members of the Canadian forces were held in the highest respect. That was not yesterday, that is today, last year and the year before. Notwithstanding the shrinking size of the Canadian forces, notwithstanding the tremendous pressure on the senior and junior members of the Canadian forces, the unpredictability of budgets and not knowing from year to year what is really going to happen, and notwithstanding the tremendous complexity of equipment in the last decade, the Canadian forces continue to operate with the highest esteem of their allies and their compatriots in other countries. On top of all this, I do not know of any time in the history of the Canadian forces where the people who serve in uniform have been under such scrutiny from the media.

(1240)

I wonder if I could be permitted perhaps a minute or so on this perspective. We recently had a program on our new Halifax class ships. It was an investigative type of presentation. The tenor of the program was to castigate in every way a ship that is considered to be one of the best in the world.

I will take a personal side. One of the questions that was asked of one of those who was castigating this class of ship and how it was being brought into service, was asked by one of the commentators: "Would you send you son to sea in one of these ships?" He said no. If I had been asked the same question I would have said yes.

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I have a son who has served and is still serving in one of those ships. He left in August of last year and spent five months in the Adriatic in HMCS *Toronto* as the combat systems engineer in an organization that was enforcing the arms embargo in a 21-ship organization representing 15 countries.

One of the commanders of that group, the commander of the standing naval force, Rear Admiral Jim Stark, U.S. Navy, spent a lot of time in HMCS *Toronto*, not just to visit but as his command ship. The facilities of that ship allowed him an ease in command and control that is a matter of public record for the navy. In the five months that *Toronto* was in the Adriatic Sea she was involved in 370 hailings of ships and 56 boardings. We have seen what sort of traumatic experience is involved in boardings in the recent capture and arrest of the Spanish vessel *Estai* on the ninth of this month. They had one of those every three days as well as other sightings and deflections.

I use this example to add to the kind of scrutiny that members of the Canadian forces are under. I hope they are in the process of being addressed. I am not going to repeat what I said about the inquiry. I take comfort from knowing that the inquiry is under way, who is serving on it and its terms of reference. I take comfort from the fact that after six years of not knowing what is happening for members in the Canadian forces, there is now a bottom up study, that has been referred to many times here this morning, in the standing joint committee and a white paper which gives in output terms what the Canadian forces are expected to do.

We have to look at this debate in the context of our own society, in the changing times. We have been living too rich for our own good. We are all cutting back. The Canadian forces are no different. All government departments are cutting back.

We have gone from a hot war to a cold war, from a cold war to a hot peace. We have more Canadian people, young men and women, in the line of fire than we have had any time since the Korean war and World War II, yet our young Canadian men and women continue to provide the very best. They honour us every day by their actions as peacekeepers. So do their regimental sergeant-majors and their commanders and their admirals and generals by their leadership.

It should not be surprising that a senior officer in a base that has been targeted with the kind of scrutiny and difficulties that they have had would comment on morale. He would be expected to do that but twice in his internal letter, which was meant essentially for the chief of the army, he said morale was good. That is a reflection of his leadership and the leadership of others.

(1245)

There is need to look at morale. These issues are being addressed and debates of this nature will lead to the resolution of some of the difficulties we recognized in the report and which the minister recognizes. Hopefully when these things are put together everybody will be better off as a result.

Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the parliamentary secretary for his very interesting remarks; a lot of history that perhaps was not exactly on the subject of the motion this morning but certainly of relevance.

I also would like to recognize the remarks made by the parliamentary secretary that in fact the Liberal government has introduced a white paper which I think was vital. It is not that I agree with everything that is in it, but it is certainly a step in the right direction.

I want to address the remarks he made with regard to the change of mind I have had since the conclusion of the defence review. Obviously I was a signatory to the report which said that senior leadership in the armed forces is excellent. I do not doubt that it is excellent in a lot of cases.

However, I have since been made privy to not one but two reports from senior officers, one of them a gentleman we met in Bosnia when he was the deputy commander down there, Colonel Oehring. He makes it very clear that the problem with the morale of our soldiers can be summed up in one short phrase, a loss of confidence and trust. In a second report, from General Jeffries, whom the parliamentary secretary has referred to, he said referring to morale: "While this side of the problem is serious, it pales in comparison with the evolving lack of confidence in the chain of command which every commanding officer has identified. This confidence is the foundation of our military system. If it is weakening, let alone in danger of disappearing, it needs immediate attention".

Basically this is what the motion is all about. It also involves decisions that have been taken by the government which may either diminish or not adequately address Canada's defence needs. I believe the parliamentary secretary may have overlooked that in some of his comments.

It is also worthwhile commenting that the chief of defence staff has mentioned that he will be cutting 24 generals from the senior ranks of the Canadian Armed Forces. This will still leave well in excess of 70 generals to command an eventual force of 60,000 people. That is more than one general per thousand people and I think that is excessive. I am not saying for a moment that we do not have requirements to serve overseas in NATO and NORAD where there is a requirement for a certain rank level, but that can be addressed without the overabundance

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of senior ranks we presently have in the armed forces. That was addressed in my remarks with regard to headquarters things.

I would say to the parliamentary secretary that I agree, unquestionably, that things which come out of the inquiry on Somalia will impact on other areas of defence. There is no question about that. I ask him why, when we know there is a distinct problem with morale and loss of confidence in the leadership of the Canadian Armed Forces, is the minister so unwilling to institute an inquiry to find out what is the problem. Either there is a problem or there is not a problem. If there is one, let us address it.

Mr. Mifflin: Madam Speaker, I am pleased by the comments by colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands. I know where he is coming from.

There is no intention to hide either the first letter in December from Colonel Oehring, whom he and I both met in the former Yugoslavia, or the rather thorough letter from General Jeffries.

(1250)

We have close to 100 generals and admirals in the Canadian forces. We heard from one in a base that has been beset with problems for the last two years. That should not surprise anybody. If this is Canadian forces-wide, what is Vice-Admiral Murray saying about this kind of thing in the navy? What is Lieutenant-General Clements saying about this kind of thing in the air force? What is the chief of reserves saying about this kind of thing in the reserves?

I am not trying to be smart about this, but the hon. member is very much aware morale is the first and foremost issue of any military commander. If there is a smattering, if there is a smell, if there is any indication that morale is not the best they can make it, they are charged with the responsibility of doing something about it. These are the examples seen in the two cases mentioned.

I am trying to decry it. I am not trying to minimize it. I am not saying what they are saying is not right. They are military commanders. Clearly they know their system. One would have to accept what they say has meaning.

However, do two letters meant for internal consumption which were not leaked but given to the public set up cause for inquiry into the whole outfit? Do we want to look at the navy, the air force and other aspects of the army? I do not think so.

He asked me why the minister has not done it. I do not think there is enough evidence to indicate that we have a forces-wide problem. The hon. member has commanded units, as I have. If one commands more than ten units, one will have a difficult problem with at least one. In a force of this size with so many

units, so many generals, so many operational tasks, while I am not trying to minimize it, some of the problems are already known. There are some difficulties in the areas that were discussed and we would expect the commanders to talk about this and try to rectify the difficulty.

The hon. member talked about another inquiry. There were complaints by the speakers this morning about bureaucratization and encumbrances of the Canadian forces. We must remember the purpose of the Canadian forces is to be prepared to fight for the country. If we load down generals, admirals and senior NCOs with inquiry after inquiry, what will they be doing when they are supposed to be doing what they were basically designed to do?

Let us do this inquiry. Let us find out what we get from this. Let us move on to where we need to go in the future.

Mr. John Bryden (Hamilton—Wentworth, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his remarks which I listened to very intently and enjoyed very much.

I have a concern in this debate that part of the reason for the lack of morale is perhaps due to the failure to communicate adequately with the armed forces how we as parliamentarians and Canadians feel about it.

It is the question of the soldier who always like to have a letter from home. In this day and age the media can no longer afford to follow the activities of our peacekeepers abroad. Having heard his eloquent remarks, is there any provision to his knowledge for actually distributing the contents of this debate to the Canadian forces both at home and abroad? I am sure it would love to hear what we are saying.

Mr. Mifflin: Madam Speaker, I appreciate that question. It was not planted. It is a good question.

The last part of the special joint committee's report talked about the need for the Department of National Defence to reach out to Canadians more. There is a need for better communication. I think that is the word my hon. colleague used. It was a fair comment. The department is in the process of working on this. When do we know if communications are good? It is a judgmental thing. A better job can be done.

(1255)

I enjoin every member of Parliament to take the *Hansard* of this debate and send it to each constituent serving in the Canadian forces. I have about 700 and every time there is a major debate I send them copies of the debate with some comments.

I thank the hon. member for his question. It gives me an opportunity to encourage all members of the House to participate in this communications and information exercise.

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Mrs. Daphne Jennings (Mission—Coquitlam, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I do not usually speak on the subject of defence but I thought it was important for me to take part in this debate.

I grew up in a home where during my early years my father was away at war. He fought in four wars; World War I, the Palestinian uprising, the Irish rebellion and World War II.

It was a great honour and pleasure to grow up in a family that believed in peace and knew how necessary it was to fight so others could enjoy peace in the world. My father was extremely proud of his military career. However, I have often heard it said that those who are involved in and see the terrible tragedies of war rarely want to talk about it. Such a man was my father. He had seen too much suffering.

After World War II when my father returned to us in 1945 he became a member of the Canadian Legion, an organization which has worked very hard and established a place for ex-service men and women to meet and remember those who did not return, their fallen comrades.

Later in the 1970s when my father passed away in a military hospital in British Columbia, once again the Canadian Legion came to serve our family. The Legion members provided Legion ex-servicemen as pall bearers out of respect for my father's position and rank while he served in the armed forces.

I was younger then and did not become involved with the Legion and its activities at that time. However, since I have been elected as an MP I was asked to become an honorary member of the Legion out of respect for my father. I have come to see first hand the wonderful programs and initiatives given by Legion members to my community for everyone in the community to enjoy.

Last year I spoke at the opening of a beautiful band shell in the centre of the lovely town of Maple Ridge. Legion members enlisted the help of the community to construct this band shell. Those who supported the enterprise paid for it.

Legion members also run the annual Remembrance Day ceremonies as well as the Canada Remembers program. We planted thousands of tulips in the riding last fall. I am looking forward to May this year when we acknowledge the freedom of Holland on May 6 with all those wonderful tulips in bloom in my community.

Last weekend once again I attended legion ceremonies being held to honour two very special young cadets from Maple Ridge. Cadet flight Sergeant Lesley Reitel received congratulations for the top music award in Canada for her performance in a military band. Flight Sergeant Andraena Tilgner received the award of excellence for an all round outstanding performance as a cadet. She was one of 12 recipients in all of Canada. Both were students at Maple Ridge high school.

This recognition given to young people across Canada is yet another service given by our legionaries, our ex-servicemen and ex-service women, present and past members of the military who encourage our young people in the highest schools of achievement and work ethics.

Fortunately these legionaries did not have a government disgrace their battalions, dismissing them as though they never were. These ex-service personnel have a pride in their war service to their country. It is a pride that develops because you are giving to your country. You are defending a way of life we all hold dear. You are following in the footsteps of brave men and brave women who have gone before you, many who have given their lives.

In World War I and World War II we had a large regular force and a large vibrant reserve force. What has happened since that time? Why the necessity for the debate today? Why have we put ourselves in the position where Canada's military with its proud traditions of courage and intervention on all fronts has to be defended and lifted up, not by the government, not by the recognized opposition party, but by the third party, the newest party in the Chamber, the Reform Party?

Let us look to the history since 1945. Slowly but surely the world changed. We had the cold war when we were dependent on the United States for our protection should there be a nuclear war. Fortunately that never came to pass. During the cold war period it became evident that Canada could not defend its land mass on its own without help from the United States.

(1300)

Having come to this conclusion there were only three other uses for our military: serve with the new peacekeeping ventures organized under the auspices of the United Nations, give support to the civil power within our borders and be ready to support our NATO allies.

This could then lead to the decision to start to cut military budgets. This was especially true during the Trudeau era. The military budgets began to be cut as money was needed to keep the deficit as low as possible. Government funds were being used for extra social programs.

During the Conservative years the budget of the Canadian forces was cut so severely that it became evident that our military policy was actually being set by the Department of Finance. However during this period our military maintained its commitment to world peace. We sent peacekeepers whenever, wherever asked. When a real war was imminent and finally broke out in the Persian gulf our ships were there right behind the United States navy.

All this is to the credit of Canada's armed forces. It really did manage to do more with less. However in 1993 after the general election it looked like things would change for the Department

of National Defence. The government mounted two studies, both carried out by special joint committees: one on defence and one on foreign policy. We in the Reform Party participated in both. Why wouldn't we? What an opportunity. After years of being ignored members of Parliament were actually being asked for their input on defence and foreign policy.

The committees met, held hearings and reported. In the case of the defence committee we supported the majority view. One of the main conditions we set forth for the report was that the defence budget would not be cut any more than it was in the 1994 budget. Having drawn this line in the sand we compromised even further. We decided to go along with the cuts in spending which would total \$1 billion over three years. This was our last line in the sand. We even incorporated defence cuts into our taxpayers budget.

Why do we believe the cuts should go no further than outlined by the special joint committee on defence policy? Quite simply we believe Canada should have a combat capable multi-purpose armed forces.

With a budget lower than that recommended by the Senate joint committee we will have to start cutting capabilities. We will not be able to continue to meet our international commitments. We will have to start saying no when the nations of the world come calling for help. We will have to start picking and choosing when new peacekeeping and peace building requests come from the United Nations. In the event of another gulf war we could join in but only if the war lasted for a considerable period of time; it will take us a while to get ready.

Let us look within the country to see the effects of the cuts. It is difficult to explain the anger and alienation felt in certain parts of the west over the treatment by government which has its heart and soul in central Canada. The government has taught the west another lesson with the last two budgets. It is a lesson westerners learned well during the Trudeau years. The lesson is simply that Liberals do not understand the west. They play old style politics with us. "If you didn't return any Liberals to Ottawa we will get even with you", say the Liberals. "In this case we will close your bases". Witness Calgary, Chilliwack, Cold Lake, Jericho Beach and added to last year's closures especially Royal Roads. The government has decimated the military in the west.

Land forces for western Canada will now be located in Edmonton. That will certainly teach all westerners a lesson: vote Liberal or a Liberal government will hurt them severely.

The closure of the bases will mean hardships for many living in the communities, but in the cases of Chilliwack and Calgary it makes little economic sense. It will cost millions and millions of dollars to move the two bases to Edmonton. In my opinion money will not be saved.

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The problems between the government and the military go much deeper than budget cuts. They go to the very core of the problems with the Prime Minister's government. The government does not understand the military. I am referring to the disgraceful treatment of Canada's airborne regiment at the hands of the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Defence.

No one condones the killing of the Somali youth. No one condones the hazing rituals shown so graphically on our television sets. However, why punish the entire Canadian military by disbanding the regiment? The young men and women who thought their futures were with the regiment have had their dreams dashed, have been uprooted and moved away all because the government was too weak kneed to deal appropriately with superior officers, those in the senior ranks who because of their very position are supposed to pay the price if something goes wrong in the trenches. It is not supposed to be the other way around. Then we have the spectacle of the Minister of National Defence stating daily as soon as the courts martial are over that he will establish an independent inquiry.

(1305)

The minister disbanded the regiment and is to hold an inquiry into what? It does not exist any more. It is interesting to speculate on what would happen if the inquiry results in the finding that a few highly placed officers were to blame but the regiment was fundamentally sound. Will the minister breathe life into the airborne, bring it back? If not, why not?

The government does not understand the military. We in the Reform Party understand and we will fight hard to ensure there are no more cuts.

I am proud to be a Canadian and I am proud of the country's military heritage. I would have thought the Prime Minister, with his years of experience, could have fought hard to keep our military a multi-purpose combat capable force.

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.): Madam Speaker, as a matter of introduction I feel it is important for us as members of Parliament to scrutinize our federal bureaucracy.

Just two days ago the foreign affairs committee tried to examine former deputy minister Bob Fowler. I did a lot of research and checked out a lot of information about the matter. One area we wanted to examine in detail was management skills, fiscal restraint, organizational abilities and morale building. These major issues should be discussed when we look at the organization of a particular department.

I found many media allegations about Mr. Fowler and his management of DND. As I did more and more research starting in the early part of January, I found the disturbing clouds of five and a half years as deputy minister certainly brought forward a lot of concerns I know Canadians would like to hear about.

Supply

Most of the problems were fairly obvious and had been dealt with in detail. I felt it was very important to show that there was no problem and there must appear to be no problem. Perception is everything in this area and is vital to the public's understanding of what is happening.

What perceptions concerned us? If we look at the appointment that had taken place and the very rapid departure of the Mr. Fowler on December 23, that was a concern. It was a concern that our committee was examining Mr. Fowler on the last day possible. It was a concern that the minister chose that time, the middle of that examination, to announce the Somali affair. It was a very poor perception when the press had to be called out of the hearing so they could meet with the minister.

What about the research? What happened? There were shocking and surprising revelations. There were many media stories. Another concern, and it is still ongoing today, is the number of people coming forward who are saying that there is something wrong with DND, that there has been something wrong for a long time with the management. That is why we are having such morale problems. That is why we are having the public problems of which most Canadians are aware now.

We need to look at the issue. We need to get into more detail. We need to look at the management skills involved and the cut in the size of DND that is occurring. The rising debt and deficit have made that necessary. All of us would agree that we must do more with less. That is the reality.

In 1984 the debt was under \$200 billion. It increased until 1993 to \$489 billion and today to \$550 billion. As it escalates out of control we must look at all departments including DND. DND was cut from 87,000 soldiers, 34,000 civilians and a \$12 billion budget a few years ago to new targets of 60,000 soldiers, 20,000 civilians and less than a \$10 billion budget.

(1310)

We also have to look at what was happening in the management of DND for the last five and a half years. We came up with a number of very interesting points that should be emphasized.

We came up with the deputy minister's office that has been totally renovated. Its size was increased by more than 65 per cent. The renovations were \$250,000 plus, ranging upward to estimates of \$500,000. When some of the troops in the field did not even have helmets to wear and had 30 to 40 year old equipment this kind of spending was going on at management level in Ottawa.

While some privates were reported in the media to be going to food banks, which may or may not be true, the deputy minister's salary went from \$145,000 per year to \$170,000 per year. The senior bureaucracy ballooned. DND went from four ADMs to

eight ADMs, a doubling of the amount of senior bureaucracy at that level.

There are other items we should look at in terms of management such as real estate deals. In 1991, DND entered into a 25-year lease on the Louis St. Laurent Building in Hull. The annual payments were based on negotiated value of the property at \$73 million. Two separate appraisals were done on the building which came in at \$62 million and \$65 million. The Auditor General said that DND insisted on a long term lease which public works then negotiated. Six months after the lease was signed DND decided it did not need the space for 25 years. The Auditor General called this a lack of due regard for the economy. I call it a scandal and a loss of \$8 million to \$11 million.

Basically we have to question that kind of decision from the top of DND. We have questions about the decommissioning of bases. We have questions about moving expenses, which I know will come out later today. The biggest question most of us will ask about is the airborne, a proud regiment. It is a glaring example of management gone wrong.

If we would have acted sooner, if the guys at the top would have known there were discipline problems and would have acted on them, I do not think we would have had what we are all ashamed of. If the information had not been covered up and had been opened to the public, the public would have forgiven and would have understood. However, because of the way it was handled it did not and the airborne does not exist today.

We need to talk about the deputy minister's rich lifestyle. We need to talk about a \$60,000 per year chauffeur. We need to talk about flowers for generals' wives. We need to talk about lunches twice a week paid for by the taxpayer. We need to talk about extensive travel and overseas military operations done by the deputy minister's office. We need to look at these concerns but as those who attended the hearings will know none of them were answered.

We have to look at the controversy and ask who is responsible for much of it. We had a deputy minister who was prepared to say: "None of it was my responsibility. It was totally that of the politicians". He made none of those decisions even though in the five and half years he went through six ministers. If he was not the guy in charge I do not really know how the six ministers could be held responsible for everything. If the top dog will not accept any responsibility, it is no wonder we have problems today.

We have other examples. Micheline Clairoux was hired as the director of facilities management. She has been a very controversial person in her office. We could talk more and more about that.

Supply

(1315)

Let us end on morale and where that is at. In 1993 a survey of DND employees found sufficient widespread dissatisfaction to warrant immediate corrective action. One pollster said that if DND were a private corporation, it would have been bankrupt long ago.

In December 1994 Colonel Oehring wrote a report revealing just how desperate and abandoned Canadian troops feel. A report written by Brigadier General Jeffries recently surfaced saying much the same thing. Both blamed the problem on a deterioration of senior leadership. Jeffries was blunt. He said that political agendas and careerism have replaced leadership in the defence hierarchy. He warned about a rapidly developing crisis in confidence in the ability of the chain of command to do its job. I would say that those are fairly condemning comments made by reputable people.

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Red Deer was somewhat repetitive in reciting a litany of media reports of which all of us are aware. I will not grace that with any comment.

I am very disappointed that he would use the opportunity of this debate to castigate in the House a public servant whose reputation and ability are outstanding. I do not think there is any place for that in this debate. The actions of all people involved in the Somalia affair will be looked at in great detail by the inquiry. The hon. member knows that and I regret he has used this debate for that reason.

Also, the third party cannot have it both ways. It cannot all of a sudden change its mind on the things it wants. It wants to reduce the deficit to zero, but it does not want the defence department to be cut.

The Reform Party wants to have an inquiry after the last court martial. When the minister of defence called a press conference the day after the sentencing, the member complained that the minister did it because it was the same day the deputy minister of defence, who is now our United Nations ambassador, happened to be in front of the foreign affairs committee.

The third party cannot have it both ways. If it asks for something and the government responds, then it has done a good job in opposition, but do not ask for more. It should not castigate the government for doing what it has asked the government to do.

The Reform Party asked for an inquiry into the Somalia affair; an inquiry as broad as it could get, with three outstanding Canadians and a broad mandate. Now it wants more. Then it complains about bureaucracy and morale. Inquiries are great.

They do wonderful things. However, they do not do a great deal for morale when they are ongoing.

Mr. Mills (Red Deer): Madam Speaker, if everything was so honourable, as was mentioned with the deputy minister, I think there is a fair amount of disagreement about that. That was proven because this investigation is needed.

As far as the day it was announced, I find it a little hard to understand why it had to be at 10.00 a.m., at the very same time that the cross-examination was occurring. Why would it not be at three o'clock right after question period? It is the appearance; it has to appear to be above board.

Mr. Mifflin: Madam Speaker, it was because the minister was anxious to respond to the opposition parties.

Mr. Harper (Calgary West): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The questions and comments are directed to the speaker, not to a questioner or commenter. If there is additional time, I would ask that you allow additional questions and comments to the hon. member for Red Deer.

Mr. Mifflin: That is what this is about. I would like to address the comment of my hon. colleague from Red Deer.

(1320)

It was tabled at 10 o'clock because it was the earliest possible time the minister could table the inquiry after the courts martial were finished. The press conference was held immediately after so it could be done in response to what the opposition and the third party wanted. That is the answer to the question.

Mr. Mills (Red Deer): Madam Speaker, I would just like to say that many times after question period is when press conferences are held. I do not understand why it had to be at 10 o'clock in the morning of the very day that the deputy minister was to appear before the committee. To me the perception of that is totally wrong. The point I am trying to make is that the perception is wrong.

Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to say to the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands who introduced this motion today that it reminds me of a number of years ago when, as part of a NATO parliamentary committee, I went to Europe. We visited Baden-Baden and the hon. member was base commander there and would you believe that he briefed us. I must say that the shoe has dropped today because this is the day I want to brief the hon. member and former commander of Baden-Baden.

The motion he has brought before this House today is all inclusive. Having read all the material on the inquiry that is coming up, it too is in depth. Today we have to keep our minds on the issues here and on the fallout from these issues.

Supply

I have been a strong supporter of the Canadian military community all my political life and before that because I was an educator on a DND base. I knew the families. Today some of my former students visit me with their children. They even visit me at times with their grandchildren, which sends a message of sorts.

The motion about the inquiry also brings to my mind the hype that was in the media about the Somalia incident and also the recent media hype regarding the airborne regiment. It also brings to my mind the very questionable handling by defence headquarters of the Somalia issue when it occurred.

Exactly two years ago today I had open heart surgery. Two years ago I did not know what was going on but I can say that I do know what is going on today. The situation is that Canada's military community is being hammered for particular incidents. The entire role the military community has played for years and is playing today is being ignored, not only to its detriment but to the detriment of this entire nation.

It is time that each and every one of us in this House and across Canada, yes including the national media, remembered what the Canadian military community has meant to Canada and to the world. We have not been the powerbrokers, but we have certainly been the diplomatic brokers, we have certainly been the communicators on the international scene. If we, as Canadians or the media, continue to downgrade and slam the military community of this country, this nation is going to lose an asset that will take years to rebuild.

(1325)

Canada has put a positive step forward in many crises around the world. At this time military personnel are being tried in courts and they were tried by the mass media of this country. I must say that it is a time for us to take a look at the flip side of the coin as to what this really means to us as a nation and to each of us as Canadians.

The minister mentioned chain of command on many occasions. I want to see the chain of command totally included in the upcoming investigation. I want to see senior people in the defence department take a seat and answer questions.

I remember watching television in my hospital room two years ago and being so frustrated because I could not be in the House of Commons to defend those people I knew deserved to be defended. They are the mass numbers of people in our Canadian forces who did no wrong, who simply performed their duties and became victims of the desecration. That is what I fear is happening to our military community today.

The defence review committee did address some of the issues that are mentioned in this motion today. We addressed the

discipline. We talked about morale. We talked about defence headquarters. I think we were dead-on with the issues we discussed in the defence review committee. Some of those have been addressed in the white paper. I expect they will continue to receive serious investigation and attention.

I mentioned the world image. I would also like to mention that Canada is not a military minded state. All of us know that and many Canadians express it. However, it can be when it must be, and it has been when it had to be.

I want to say something about the airborne regiment. There are many people in that regiment who are not to blame for what occurred. It was a handful of people. Massive destruction was caused by information in the media across this country which stressed the negative aspects while ignoring any positive aspects. That is what really started the whole ball rolling.

Let us go back to 1974 when the Canadian airborne regiment was in Cyprus on peacekeeping duty. Things were very tense over there at that time. The airborne regiment played a vital role in the following actions.

It successfully evacuated 386 tourists from the Ledra Palace Hotel under sporadic fire, and subsequently occupied the hotel and caused its neutralization in the conflict. It successfully evacuated 50 residents of the United Kingdom High Commission area under fire at that time. It preserved the integrity of the green line confrontation area under heavy fire. That is the line between the two combatants.

It assisted the contingent commander of DCOS and United Nations forces in Cyprus in arranging a ceasefire at Nicosia airport, subsequently occupied the airport and caused its neutralization. This was done by the Canadian airborne regiment, by the Canadian forces. It stopped the Turks at that time, as my hon. friend has said. During the protection of the UN base camp Kronborg, it saved the lives of two Canadians while under fire. It provided relief assistance to 600 refugees at the blue beret camp. It helped locate and recover 86 Canadians who were stranded in various parts of the island.

(1330)

It assisted general relief and security of 200,000 refugees as part of the total United Nations forces in Cyprus effort.

Canadian casualties during the period from July 15, 1974 to the September 10, 1974 were 2 killed and 19 wounded.

In humanitarian operations it came to the relief of the United Kingdom High Commission and United States embassy. It went to the United States embassy on two occasions to help it out. The United States ambassador in 1974 was killed at his embassy in that local conflict. All other staff members were saved by the Canadians.

There are many other incidents too numerous to list which characterize an outstanding performance by the airborne regiment in Cyprus. Most of these actions were conducted under fire, most often while caught in a crossfire.

I want to bring other examples to the attention of the House that the Canadian forces have accomplished. This is what we are discussing today. That is why I am putting the emphasis on these things today. Let us in our discussions not destroy. Let us correct and get on with the useful and positive things our Canadian forces have been known to do and will continue to do in years to come.

There is a letter to the commander of the Canadian forces in Somalia:

On behalf of the members and the supporters of the United Somali Congress in general and the people of Hiran region in Somalia in particular and on my own behalf, I would like to extend to you and through you to members of your forces that have operated generally in Somalia and particularly to those troops of yours who have operated in Hiran region, our cordial thanks and gratitude for the humanitarian services you have rendered to the people of that region.

Please also convey my personal thanks and that of the people of Hiran region to the government and to the great people of Canada for what their forces have done here. As a matter of fact, the people of Hiran region did not know anything about Canada before your forces arrived in the city of Baledweine, and I want you to know that all the children of Hiran region are writing on the walls of the city the name of Canada with the charcoal.

In addition, we have received countless appeals from people of the region to ensure your stay. This shows how the people of Hiran were truly satisfied with your stay in the region and humanitarian assistance you extended to them.

In the other parts of Somalia where the ex-UNITAF and now UNOSOM troops of other nationalities were operating we did not receive from the natives anything rather than complaints.

Canada more than carried its load. I have a letter from a school system in the region which is really forward in its thanks to the Canadians for what they did with building elementary schools, high schools, helping teachers, helping people to farm. It is all here, written by Somalians to Canadians. It is not some press clipping that has been taken and written up today for today's consumption only.

(1335)

The Hiran education committee states:

Really, we cannot forget the Canadian forces who came from far country to assist our people as humanitarian relief and security basis. The Canadian forces, besides the school repairing, are handling now the security problem in Hiran.

We are limitlessly grateful to how much Canadian forces have done to restore hope with responsibilities sharing our community, especially the students and teachers, endless jobs.

I remind the House and all Canadians that as the courts martial went on in Canada, as the inquiry now goes on in Canada, for heaven's sake remember what our forces did in their

Supply

commitments to humanitarian measures and of peace in the world. Do not take the negative message that everyone is going to hear day in and day out. Let us act very responsible in this matter.

I want to quote partly from a letter by Gen. Johnston, commander of the U.S. Marine Corps in Somalia:

In those early days the Canadian forces had few vehicles and conducted many of their operations on foot under very trying climatic conditions. The temperatures were most often 100 degrees Fahrenheit and the constant blowing dust was a challenge to the best of soldiers. I was impressed then by the high level of motivation and professionalism exhibited during those early operations. Once the Canadian vehicles arrived, the regiment began widely expanding operations to the far reaches of the HRS boundary combining aggressive long range patrols observation posts and helicopter RECCE.

As an infantry officer, I had considerable appreciation for the skill with which they conducted business. The HRS Belet Ven has been a challenging operating area in part because of the close proximity of major militia formations of three of the most powerful faction leaders and because of its proximity to the Ethiopian border.

We have to remember what was there as their challenge at that time.

Our military community and capabilities are some of the greatest assets the country possesses. There will be, as in any organization, corrective steps from time to time. Do not throw the proverbial baby out with the bath water. Let us not destroy our past history. These people have been strong underpinnings in our image around the world and at home.

I talked about the good relationships when the issue of the airborne regiment was on. I was interviewed on "Newsworld" by Norm Perry. Everyone knows Norm Perry. I talked about the great relationships that existed in my home community of Petawawa between the civilian community and the military community and how that worked in recreation, in business and in many ways.

He said: "Are you trying to tell us the people of Petawawa believe in the incident that went on in Somalia? Are you telling us the people of Petawawa believed in the hazing incident?" I almost said to Norm Perry, an experienced reporter who should know better, that is the stupidest question I have been asked in my 30 years in public life.

(1340)

The people of Petawawa do not agree with what went on any more than any other Canadian. I do not want my home community targeted by the incident. I want it to be targeted as a community which supports the military community in the good things that it does around the world, in the hours its people put in training and in the hours spent learning discipline. Discipline is very important in the forces. It is part of the important training.

Supply

We must remember those people are there to be assigned to difficult situations around the world when they arise.

Let the inquiry take its course but let us have the inquiry going into the headquarters of the military community, hauling those people out for questioning as well. We talk about the chain of command. Let us take the chain of command from top to bottom. Let us use that as a corrective measure. Let us get on with the positive things and remember that Canadians have done great things in the past. Let us encourage them to continue to do so in the future, not destroy them over one incident.

Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for his comments. He has always been an impassioned and fervent advocate of the military and once again I support his contention that our military people are doing excellent work.

I did want to point out to the hon. member that while media condemnation has undoubtedly played a part in the downfall of the airborne regiment, the reports that I referred to do not come from the media. They come from commanders, good commanders. I refer to General Jeffries, who said that not only he but all of his commanders were unanimous in reflecting that leadership was a problem, that the lack of apparent concern for leaders in their troops was a problem.

In the instance of the report from Colonel Oehring at land forces headquarters, this is not a narrowly based report. This report covers the army from coast to coast. He too identified a leadership shortfall. While the media impacts, the media is not the total cause of the problem.

With regard to the airborne regiment, I would also point out to the hon. member that it was not the media which disbanded the regiment. That was done by the Liberal Minister of National Defence.

When the member referred to throwing the baby out with the bath water, I would like to suggest that he consider that in this light. I must say that if I had been the Minister of National Defence I would have waited until I had the facts before acting.

He pointed out that some of the recommendations of the special joint committee had been adopted by the government. I agree with that. However, a number of what I consider to be excellent suggestions have not been acknowledged.

If the aim of the game is to correct faults, as he pointed out, does he not agree that is the point of this motion? We are trying to establish that there is a need for an ongoing, in depth, open investigation of what is wrong with the Department of National Defence. If there is nothing wrong, let us put it out there and let the media present that. However, if there is something wrong, let us find it and fix it.

Mr. Hopkins: Madam Speaker, I do not know why the hon. member mentioned General Jeffries' report. I did not refer to it

and I certainly did not talk about it in any of my comments. I am sorry if he had a misconception of my comments in that case.

As I said during the course of my speech, there are always corrective measures to be taken. Corrective measures have been taken and they are ongoing. That is the course. Any organization that does not continually correct itself when problems arise is destined to failure. There is no question in my mind that these questions will be addressed. I would like to see the defence committee continue to work on this. There is a role for well-informed members of the House to do that sort of thing.

(1345)

Let me clarify something for the hon. member. On the television show "Shirley" out of Toronto, people were invited to attend during the airborne issue. When they were on the program they felt as if they were in the middle of a military bashing show. The program was such that the person in charge of the show said that the military had been invited to appear on the show but obviously had not accepted the invitation because they are not present.

That is totally unfair to the military community because as everybody in the House knows, and Canadians know, military people in uniform cannot go on TV shows to talk about their views on military matters. That is not the Canadian tradition nor is it the rules of the game.

This person was doing a great injustice to our military, as was Norm Perry when he asked me that question about my home community of Petawawa. I am not going to let him forget it. I am not going to let the CBC forget it. Politicians are sometimes accused of not defending themselves and not speaking up. When we see something wrong, regardless of whether it will hurt our image from time to time, we have a responsibility to tell it as it is, whether they are the Norm Perrys or the Shirleys or whoever they are. Fairness is fairness and that is what must be built into the system.

They did not get a licence from the CRTC to convey unfairness and misinformation to the Canadian public. They should be talking about both sides of the issue. That is where the train went off the tracks. In Somalia the positive side was forgotten. All that mattered to the media was the issue that took place there. That is what I am emphasizing. I know the hon. member is very fair-minded and he will accept that explanation.

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to put a question to my hon. colleague. I knew the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke long before I became a politician. While I do not know every member in the House, I have to say that he is one of the strongest defenders of members of the Canadian forces and has been consistently known for that. The House in general would do well to pay attention to his words of wisdom.

It is because of that view that I would like to ask the hon. member a question. As we did the special joint committee on defence, what was his view on the state of morale and the state of leadership in the Canadian forces?

Mr. Hopkins: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for the question and for his very kind comments. As he knows, it is not every day that one gets a kind comment around here. So I will take it while it is coming.

When we were sitting as the defence review committee, the hon. member and I, we did look at morale in the forces. I think the state of morale was partly caused by economic circumstances. Particularly, we heard about problems in the lower ranks because of the pay structure. We heard about a lot of real problems because of lack of equipment. I can tell the hon. member and all members that practically as long as I have been in the House that has been a complaint from the military; they do not have enough equipment or the right equipment.

(1350)

Today that is changing somewhat because the new ships, which we had a chance to visit and to have a good briefing on, are state of the art. We learned in Bosnia, that our armoured personnel carriers needed upgrading. We need new ones. The committee, as the hon. member knows, was very supportive of that.

We were very supportive about other items such as helmets and flak jackets. We took into consideration all the things that we heard from the people in the field, not someone coming in to brief the committee sitting on Parliament Hill. We travelled with our military for four days. We slept in the same quarters with them. We ate with them. We travelled in the personnel carriers. Members from both sides of the House had that opportunity.

It was very important because it impacted on the minds of committee members that if we are going to ask our troops to go abroad into difficult positions, whether it be cultural difficulties, the hatefulness that you run into in UN peacekeeping duties, that those people have to have equipment in order to perform their duties.

I am sure the hon. parliamentary secretary will agree with me that by and large on the committee we had unanimous support for this type of thing. The members worked very well together. The report is certainly one of the best reports that has been brought into the House on defence matters, not only in our time but certainly in years past.

Supply

I encourage the members of the committee to be very positive in the future in holding more committee meetings because, as I said in my remarks, we must continue to discuss the problems that arise, to take corrective measures and to make recommendations. We made many recommendations in that report. Many of them are already included in the white paper that was brought in by the government.

I want to point out to the hon. member who brought the motion before the House today that this is all part of the ongoing scenario. A committee brings in a report, we meet people firsthand and we agree they do have problems. Together we sit down, write a report and make recommendations and the government accepts those recommendations. Also, I am sure that more of them will be studied and taken into consideration in the future.

I want to thank the hon. parliamentary secretary who was very good to deal with on that report. He is well informed. We were very fortunate to have him as he is a retired admiral. The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands is a retired colonel. I must say to the hon. parliamentary secretary that I was—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I am very sorry. The hon. member has gone over time.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): The period for questions and comments has now expired. Resuming debate. The hon. member for Shefford.

Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, if I am not mistaken, I will be able to finish my speech after Question Period.

Today, as always when I rise in the House, I think of the people in the riding of Shefford who elected me. In fact, these people put their trust in us, and when we speak in this chamber, we do so on behalf of those who elected us.

(1355)

On March 21, the Minister of National Defence announced that he was establishing a commission that will investigate and report on the functioning of the chain of command, the leadership, discipline, operations and decisions of the Canadian Forces, and the actions and decisions of the Department of National Defence, as to the deployment of the Canadian Forces to Somalia.

Today, the debate in this House is on a motion introduced by the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, and I will read it to you:

S. O. 31

That this House condemn the government for failing to commission a broad and public inquiry with a mandate to investigate the government's failure to hold senior officials at the Department of National Defence accountable for command and control shortcomings, deteriorating morale, and decisions which diminished or have failed to improve Canada's defence posture.

The average person will want to know the difference between these two positions. The minister announced he was establishing a commission that will examine the problem of Somalia and the Second Airborne Regiment, while the motion introduced by my colleague wants to expand the scope of the commission to include the entire department and gives us an opportunity to discuss these problems here in the House. As you know, morale in the Canadian military has reached a new low, and that is because Canadians are increasingly reluctant to trust the people at National Defence.

When we refer to the people who run National Defence, we are not talking about the average soldier. They do not make the decisions. We are referring to the people who make the decisions, to the top level officials.

The Speaker: My dear colleague, you will have the floor again at 3 p.m., after Oral Question Period. Since it is now 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 30(5), the House will now proceed with statements by members pursuant to Standing Order 31.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

WORLD DAY FOR WATER

Mr. Paul DeVillers (Simcoe North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in 1992, the general assembly of the United Nations proclaimed March 22 World Day for Water, an annual event to remind us of the importance and value of water in our daily lives.

Canadians could easily reduce their water consumption by a third. We must return to basics, since water is the public service most vital to our health and economic prosperity.

[*English*]

Water efficiency requires the full commitment and co-operation of all water consumers. Watercan, an Ottawa based non-profit organization, along with several partners has demonstrated its commitment by organizing world water day activities and by raising the public's awareness to use water wisely.

The unveiling of a unique interactive water display called Blue Watercan Caravan at Toronto's Eaton Centre will kick off this year's activities. The caravan will also travel to Vancouver and Montreal promoting water wise messages and will end its tour in Ottawa May 3 to May 9.

[*Translation*]

SALE OF CANADIAN CF-5 AIRCRAFT

Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on Monday, in response to a question from my hon. colleague for Red Deer, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence confirmed that Canada is indeed negotiating with Turkey at the moment for the sale of the CF-5 fighter planes scrapped following the tabling of the latest white paper on defence policy.

(1400)

Since the rules governing Canadian exports of weapons technology are the responsibility of the Department of Foreign Affairs, what assurance can the government give to the people of Canada and Quebec that these Canadian fighter aircraft will not be used against civilian populations as is the case at the moment with Turkish offensives against the Kurds on the Iraqi border?

* * *

[*English*]

SALMO MAKES CENTS

Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West—Revelstoke, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it has often been said that great things come in small packages. That saying is certainly true in my riding.

Salmo, a community of 1,300 enthusiastic people, wants to give Canada a special present on its birthday. Noting that the mint spends over \$10 million a year replacing hoarded pennies, Salmo hit on the idea of challenging communities and service clubs across the country to gather in more pounds of pennies on a per capita basis than it does.

Penny drops are now set up throughout the province and will soon be in other provinces as well. It proposes that all pennies collected will then be shipped to Ottawa to be applied against the national debt on Canada Day. This project has caught the interest of people all over B.C. and it is still growing.

Salmo challenges all hon. members to dig into their jars, dressers, drawers and penny banks to collect more pennies on a per capita basis than the residents of Salmo.

This patriotic project will not only reduce the debt by millions of pennies, it will also save a substantial portion of the \$10 million the mint spends to replace hoarded pennies.

Salmo, a small town that makes a lot of cents.

* * *

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Gurbax Singh Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada is a country of immigrants and a tolerant one. However, Canadians were told this week by the Canadian Human Rights Commissioner Max Yalden that there

appears to be an undercurrent of intolerance around immigration and Canada's changing demographic face.

I must urge my colleagues not to let any actions tarnish the excellent image Canada enjoys around the world as a country of tolerance and compassion. Let us not fan the flames of anti-immigration for they will ultimately consume us all and our good reputation.

In this respect, the timing could not be more perfect for the Liberal government's decision to establish the Race Relations Foundation.

* * *

[Translation]

AMERICANA 1995

Mr. Martin Cauchon (Outremont, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the Liberal Party's policies is to promote and support the environmental industry in Canada to enable it to explore new markets, broaden its activities and create new jobs.

I am delighted to announce that Environment Canada is taking advantage of the opportunity presented by Americana 1995, an event currently taking place in Montreal until March 24, for the very purpose of enabling the promoters of environmental technology funded by our various programs to learn more about gaining access to international markets.

In addition, we have planned certain activities in order to give these promoters an opportunity to meet members of the international delegation invited to this event so they may demonstrate their technological innovations to potential buyers.

Environment Canada, Industry Canada and the Federal Office of Regional Development are partners in this event.

* * *

RAIL TRANSPORT

Mrs. Eleni Bakopanos (Saint-Denis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Quebecois is continuing to do its blocking job in order to prevent the government from passing the back to work legislation for the rail industry quickly.

We must denounce this official opposition tactic because it is prolonging a dispute directly affecting thousands of Canadians, in addition to causing all regions of the country to lose great amounts of money.

Perhaps we should remind the Bloc Quebecois of its commitment to present and to defend in the House the report which the organization Rural Dignity made public on June 16. That report said that railway links are not a privilege but a right. The

S. O. 31

organization said that the railway is a tool needed to maintain and develop the regions.

It is time for the Bloc to be true to its words and to stop blocking this legislation.

* * *

CANADIAN NATIONAL

Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Canadian National treated itself to full pages of publicity in the dailies stating that its employees are paid to do nothing.

Egged on by the unfailing support the federal government has given it from the very beginning, that company is using the worst demagoguery to achieve its ends, which is to stop the strike and to erode working conditions. Some believe that the lower the working conditions are, the easier it will be to privatize CN. In fact, the federal government wants to line its empty coffers with money taken from CN workers.

Does this kind of publicity show the Liberal government's and the employer's good faith and will to settle the dispute? Not at all.

(1405)

CN's ad this morning states that we are no longer in the 1980s and that the company must adapt its employees' working conditions.

For all intents and purposes, by denying the right to strike, rejecting all negotiations and imposing their own conditions, CN and the Liberal government are setting us back several generations.

* * *

[English]

OPERATION VARSITY

Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago tomorrow morning, on March 24, 1945, the first Canadian parachute battalion made its last wartime strike from the skies into enemy territory in a major allied attack across the heavily defended Rhine River. The battalion had first jumped into battle on D-Day in Normandy as part of the 6th British Airborne Division.

Its air assault over the Rhine, which saw one of its members, Corporal George Topham, win the Victoria Cross, was once again marked by success.

The bravery of this hard-hitting unit, dropped in the midst of a desperate enemy defending their homeland, should never be forgotten.

Our Canadian airborne won the respect and hearts of their comrades, joining an airborne brotherhood which transcended all borders of the Commonwealth.

S. O. 31

Historically, Operation Varsity was the largest and most successful airborne operation and is recorded among the battle honours, borne on the colours of the Canadian airborne regiment.

Dawn tomorrow will mark a special anniversary for paratroopers who played a significant role in hastening the end of World War II. We extend to them our sincere congratulations.

* * *

MEADOWCROFT PLACE SENIORS RESIDENCE

Ms. Albina Guarnieri (Mississauga East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday my riding of Mississauga East was struck by tragedy.

Flames evicted the most vulnerable members of our society from their homes at Meadowcroft Place seniors residence on Constitution Boulevard. The fatal blaze took the lives of three of my constituents, while another 10 were left hospitalized. Many more were left displaced and shaken by the experience.

[*Translation*]

I would ask all the members to join me in expressing our sympathy for the families of the elderly persons who unfortunately did not survive.

[*English*]

Our best wishes for the full recovery of the injured and all other survivors. Our prayers and thoughts are with you.

* * *

RAIL STRIKE

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois' continuing blockage of legislation that would put Canada's rail network back to work is clear evidence that the official opposition cares little about Canada's economy or the impact this strike is having on working men and women across this country.

Each day this strike continues costs the Canadian economy tens of millions of dollars. The port of Halifax alone has already lost millions as ships are diverted to American ports such as New York. The Bloc's actions are causing layoffs, shutdowns and misery from sea to sea, including the province of Quebec. This must not and cannot continue.

I urge Bloc members to recognize the impact their actions are having on the Canadian economy. Their continued blockage of the return to work legislation is just the latest example of how truly out of touch they are with the desires of Canadians, including the good people of the province of Quebec.

RAIL STRIKE

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my complete and utter disappointment with the members of the official opposition and the members of the NDP. They have seen fit to allow the people of Canada to be economically devastated as a direct result of their unwillingness to co-operate with the government and its attempts to end the crippling effects of a national rail strike.

It is estimated that the national rail strike could end up costing Canada \$3 billion to \$5 billion.

Certainly members can appreciate the necessity of the back to work legislation tabled by the Minister of Labour on Tuesday. Even the president of the Canadian Auto Workers Union states that there is "absolutely no advantage or reason for them"—the opposition—"to delay the legislation".

Given the economic harm this strike has already brought to the people of Canada and in particular the good people of Ontario, Quebec and the western provinces, I implore members opposite to set aside their petty politics long enough to act in the public interest for their constituents and to put an immediate end to the chaos caused by the national rail strike.

* * *

[*Translation*]

PORT OF MONTREAL

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is with great relief that the official opposition learned that the mediator had managed to bring the parties close enough to allow workers to return to work in the port of Montreal. This is an encouraging sign that it will be possible to solve that conflict through negotiations.

If the Minister of Labour had appointed the mediator earlier, the strike might have been avoided or, at the very least, been considerably shorter. The slowness of the minister in this conflict clearly shows that the government neglects the economic interests of Montreal. The success of the mediator should be an inspiration to the Minister of Labour.

(1410)

Mediation can work when the parties can truly negotiate. It is undemocratic and irresponsible on the minister's part to impose arbitration so quickly in the rail strike and in the Vancouver port conflict, without first giving mediation a chance.

[English]

QUESTION PERIOD

Mrs. Daphne Jennings (Mission—Coquitlam, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in this House when I asked my question, a Liberal member referred to me with the insulting word “scum”. Although this member apologized at the end of the proceedings, the damage had been done and I did not have the opportunity to reply.

I wonder if members of this House realize it is how we treat one another which disgusts our viewing audience at home. This childish display of verbal attacks on members of this House during question period is an attempt to intimidate those very members for whom the question period is designed. This display shows a lack of respect for this House, a contempt for this House—

The Speaker: Colleagues, I only intervene to point out that this specific matter was dealt with yesterday in a point of order. I believed at the time that it had been resolved and that is why I am intervening at this time.

* * *

RAIL STRIKE

Mr. Morris Bodnar (Saskatoon—Dundurn, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, people from Saskatchewan, especially farmers, are very concerned about the effects of the rail strike on their ability to get their products to port.

Farmers across Saskatchewan were quite disgusted with members of the NDP when they put the interests of their union masters ahead of the needs of the grassroots farmers, whom they claim to represent, when they did not give their consent to fast track Bill C-77 on Monday.

As for members of the BQ, farmers are not surprised that the Bloc would stoop to such tactics. No doubt they have realized that the strong economic growth and the excellent government provided by the Liberal Party are convincing Quebecers to remain in Canada. Then the rail strike came and they realized they could damage the economy of Canada.

Farmers and industries in Saskatchewan need the rail lines. Without efficient rail service, any chance of economic growth will be lost. I appeal to all members to allow the bill to proceed as quickly as possible.

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IMMIGRATION

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina—Qu’Appelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, among the many Canadian traditions lost by the wayside in the Liberal budget was the tradition of fairness.

The new \$975 fee imposed on every new immigrant and refugee plus the existing fees will mean that a family of four will need to pay \$3,150 just to get into the country. This new form of

head tax will be a particular burden to immigrants and refugees from poorer countries with low average incomes.

Canada needs new immigrants if it is to maintain its population and economic base. Studies show that immigrants put more money into the Canadian treasury in taxes than they take out in services.

The government with this new discriminatory tax has created a major obstacle for the newly arrived. Where is the fairness? Where is the humanity?

No one denies the need to deal with the debt that former Liberal and Conservative governments have created, but surely we can have a leaner government without it becoming a meaner government.

* * *

RAIL STRIKE

Mrs. Sue Barnes (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is the sixth day of the national rail strike. Ontario’s economy is coming to a standstill. Hundreds of millions of dollars are lost each day in this struggling economy because of the strike. It is unconscionable for the Bloc Quebecois, with the exception of one courageous member, to allow this strike to continue knowing fully the damage it is causing.

Among the millions who have the Bloc and the NDP to thank for this unnecessary strike are: 2,500 CAW members at Ford Canada’s St. Thomas, Ontario plant who have been sent home because of a shortage of parts; 3,900 CAW members at Oakville and Windsor who will be working only halftime this week for the same reason; and at least 70,000 commuters in Montreal and Toronto who are facing long delays in getting to and from work.

Although our official opposition does not care about the Canadian economy, everyone else in this country does. It is time to move and quickly.

* * *

[Translation]

REFORM PARTY LEADER

Mr. Bob Ringma (Nanaimo—Cowichan, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate Les éditions des Plaines, in Saint-Boniface, Manitoba, for publishing a book on the Reform Party leader, Mr. Preston Manning. We welcome the initiative of that publishing house, which followed up on a request made by French-speaking Canadians interested in finding out more about the Reform leader and his ideas.

On behalf of the Reform leader, I thank the publishing house for its objectivity and hope that the community of Saint-Boniface, as well as all French-speaking Canadians, will enjoy some good reading.

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(1415)

[English]

We understand from Les éditions des Plaines that it was responding to a demand from French speaking Canadians and is encouraged that more francophones are demonstrating a willingness to inform themselves about the Reform Party and our leader.

We wish Annette St. Pierre and her publishing house the best of luck and a good read to the community of St. Boniface and French speaking Canadians all over.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD*[Translation]***RAIL TRANSPORT**

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that all members of the House are glad to see that the appointment of a mediator in the Port of Montreal dispute has paid off by allowing the employees to go back to work this morning while leaving the door open to a negotiated settlement.

My question is for the Minister of Labour. Given the success of mediation in the Port of Montreal dispute, where talks had dragged on for 25 months, why is the government stubbornly rejecting mediation combined with a return to work for the railways, as the official opposition has been proposing since Monday?

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Labour, I am very happy to see that the mediator in the Port of Montreal dispute has succeeded in bringing the parties to agree to a voluntary resumption of work, without any act of Parliament. I hope that the mediator will also help the parties negotiate a collective agreement and that we will not experience another work stoppage at the Port of Montreal.

As far as the railways are concerned, that phase is already over. We have already tried to reach an agreement with the parties. We went through several phases involving conciliation, a conciliation commissioner, Department of Labour officials and even the minister herself to help the parties reach an agreement. Unfortunately, this did not happen and we must now take action.

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I must remind you that the minister forgot to tell us that there was no mediation in the rail dispute and that mediation at the Port of Montreal did wonders. The government should apply the same approach to the railways, thus avoiding a bludgeon law.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Bouchard: The federal government can settle the dispute in the next hour by being flexible and agreeing to mediation.

In this context, how does the Minister of Labour explain her refusal to make any concession, when the Canadian Manufacturers' Association begs her to be flexible and settle the rail dispute immediately? Does the government want to settle this dispute in the next hour, yes or no?

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I hope that both parties want to settle this dispute in the next hour. It is up to them to settle this dispute in the short term, thus precluding government action. However, if they cannot do so, we will have to assume our responsibility. This has enormous economic consequences from coast to coast; jobs are being lost across the country. It is our duty to act.

I urge the Bloc Québécois to take a very realistic look at the situation and the jobs that are being lost.

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.

Everyone knows that the only reason why the federal government refuses to allow mediation for rail workers, as it did in the Port of Montreal dispute, is that it intends to break the unions so that it can sell CN for more money.

Does the minister not see that CN will be much harder to sell if it is hampered by a rotten labour relations climate resulting from a bludgeon law?

[English]

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader of the Opposition seems to be operating under a certain misunderstanding of the situation.

When we commercialize the operations and the assets of Canadian National I will not be selling CN. The taxpayers of Canada will be the ones who benefit from the commercialization of CN.

(1420)

That is why efforts are being put forward to make sure that CN is viable and competitive and that it survives as a railroad from coast to coast. I know the hon. Leader of the Opposition is not very interested in what happens in Canada from coast to coast.

* * *

*[Translation]***TURKEY**

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

Kurds in northern Iraq have been under attack for several days by the Turkish air force, supported by 35,000 troops. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees expressed serious concern over the fate of Kurdish civilian refugees. While

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Washington and Moscow chose to turn a blind eye to the Turkish incursion, the European Union sternly denounced it.

Could the Deputy Prime Minister tell us what the Canadian government's position is regarding the totally unacceptable and reprehensible actions by this NATO military ally of Canada?

[English]

Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Foreign Affairs I should like to inform the House that Canada views the ongoing developments in Turkey with some degree of concern.

We believe that all our NATO allies, as with all countries, should respect normal international rights, procedures and respect of others. The minister is actively pursuing the matter. I believe these views have been made known to our NATO allies. It is subject to further discussion.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, could the Minister of National Defence tell us if the negotiations under way concerning the sale of Canada's fleet of 63 CF-5 fighter bombers to Turkey is Canada's way of protesting against Turkish attacks on Kurdish minorities?

[English]

Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a number of years ago there was a memorandum of understanding between the Turkish government and the Canadian government about the disposition of surplus aircraft, the CF-104s, that Turkey indeed received.

Obviously Turkey has defence requirements and it shops around quite frequently. It understands that we have surplus CF-5 fighter planes and has made inquiries of Canada. However no deal has been arranged. No agreement has been concluded.

In any sale of surplus military equipment we have made quite clear that the purchasing countries have to give us certain undertakings on the use of the equipment so that it does not infringe in any way upon the rights of others or the equipment is not used in ways that Canada would not approve of.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, since the February budget the President of the Treasury Board, the Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal and

officials of the finance department have all predicted that the federal deficit would be eliminated by the year 2000.

The Minister of Finance has yet to deny or confirm the predictions publicly so I ask him if in his meetings with Moody's yesterday, the bond rating agency, he gave a target date for the elimination of the federal deficit.

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what I said to Moody's in the meeting yesterday was what I said I would say in response to the leader of the third party's question yesterday, in fact in response to same question the day before, and I believe in response to the same question a week before.

I set out our very clear intention to balance the books. I also said we would do so through a series of short term targets that would keep pressure on the government which was by far the best way of controlling our spending.

Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the minister can keep talking about rolling targets all he wants, but the fact of the matter is that if all the minister told Moody's yesterday was what he said in the House or told Canadians, he is simply inviting a downgrade of the credit of the country.

Even today Dominion Bond Rating Service, a Canadian agency, has reviewed its outlook on Canada's credit rating from stable to negative.

I have a supplementary question. Is the finance minister prepared to take responsibility for any downgrading of the country's credit rating and all the negative effects that will flow from that?

(1425)

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the leader of the third party quotes DBRS. In fact the statement from DBRS is: "We expect to be releasing something in the very near future, a couple of day to a week or so. We have not made a decision on the rating of the federal budget yet but we will be doing so shortly".

In fact it is not Moody's, not DBRS, not Standard and Poors; the only person who keeps talking about downgrading the country's credit is the leader of the third party.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the minister gets cheers in the Chamber for that type of statement, but every time we stand in the House and demand deficit elimination rather than deficit reduction it is investors, lenders and rating agencies that cheer when we make those types of statements.

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This is very straightforward. If Moody's does not downgrade it is because the finance minister told it something he has not told the House or Canadians. If Moody's does downgrade it is because the minister's budget does not go far enough fast enough to restore lender confidence.

The Minister of Finance has one way out of this box. Will the minister end the secrecy and uncertainty and tell Canadians how and when he intends to eliminate, not just reduce, the Canadian federal deficit?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what I told Moody's is contained in the document I tabled in the House when I presented the budget. It is called the budget.

I can understand that the leader of the third party has not read it because when I presented it in the House he was not here. He was out trolling for media clips.

* * *

[Translation]

TRANSFER PAYMENTS

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Dominion Bond Rating Service confirmed the misgivings the official opposition and the Quebec government had about Quebec and Ontario being hit hardest by most of the cuts in transfer payments announced by the federal government in its last budget.

My question is for the Minister of Finance. Will the minister confirm the Dominion Bond Rating estimate that Ontario and Quebec will have to absorb 71 per cent of the reductions in transfers announced in the last federal budget?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, the DBRS analysis did not take into account tax points, which play a very important role in our transfers. Second, their projections for 1997-98 are nothing but pure speculation because, as you know, we did not indicate in the budget how the cuts would be apportioned.

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, be that as it may, can the Minister of Finance deny that, to preserve his own image as a good manager and his own credit rating, he knowingly and deliberately jeopardized the credit ratings of Quebec and Ontario by transferring his budget problems to these provinces?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I should quote from the DBRS report—I will translate for you. According to DBRS, justice, equity and improved efficiency are the guiding

principles of our reform, as far as transfers to the provinces are concerned. In other words, DBRS is saying that what we have done in fact is follow the principles of equity and good management.

(1430)

[English]

In terms of Quebec or Ontario there are models they could follow.

For the first time since it has joined Canada, a Newfoundland finance minister has tabled a balanced budget. Other provinces could follow Newfoundland.

* * *

RAIL STRIKE

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, in April of last year the government commissioned Paul Fraser to prepare an independent report on labour issues at CP, CN and VIA Rail.

If this report is worth anything at all, why were the recommendations not implemented in time to save the collective bargaining process and have the parties come to an agreement on their own without having to resort to back to work legislation and a \$3 billion hit on the Canadian economy?

[Translation]

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister's special advisor passed on his opinion and advice on a regular basis as the situation evolved. I think he has done his best to bring the parties together and, as we speak, Mr. Fraser's mandate has not expired yet. Therefore, no report has been tabled so far.

[English]

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it would certainly be nice if Canadians could see Mr. Fraser's report. We are becoming all too familiar with the secretive and rather stalling tactics of presenting these reports in the House.

Will the Minister of Labour tell the House if this report actually contains any anti-replacement worker legislation?

[Translation]

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat that Mr. Fraser's mandate is not over; therefore, he has not yet tabled his report.

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SUICIDE IN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

Mr. André Caron (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Indian Affairs.

The federal government was criticized by the Canadian Human Rights Commission mainly for doing nothing to curb the alarming incidence of suicide in aboriginal communities.

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In light of the fact that the government was reminded time and time again of how serious the problem of suicide among aboriginal people is, how can the Minister of Indian Affairs explain that, 16 months into his mandate, he still has not done anything to remedy the situation, forcing the commission to take him to task once more?

[*English*]

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have done considerable work with aboriginal communities on the very serious problems that plague some of them.

Let me remind the hon. member that despite some of the communities we hear about there are many others functioning very well. Health Canada has set up a number of initiatives to address the very serious problem of aboriginal suicide in some communities.

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Caron (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, over a six month period last year, in the Ontario reserve of Pikangikum alone, out of a total population of 1,600, 50 young people aged 15 to 24 attempted to take their own lives and, sadly, five others succeeded.

In the face of this tragedy, how does the minister explain his stubborn persistence in uprooting young aboriginal people at a cost of thousands of dollars instead of building a local assistance centre, as requested by the community?

[*English*]

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are now in the process of selecting three sites for solvent abuse treatment. We certainly hope to have some of these sites selected by early this spring so that construction can begin.

This is a very serious problem for aboriginal communities. If hon. members have any other suggestions, feel free to come forward. We will do whatever we can to address this serious concern.

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INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. John Duncan (North Island—Powell River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday Ovide Mercredi, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, released contents from the minister's speaking notes surrounding his secret \$5 million policy paper on inherent right to self-government.

Can the minister confirm that after 16 months of consultation his policy of self-government is based in the municipal style espoused by the Reform Party?

(1435)

Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the question was whether our

concept is based on the municipal form of government as espoused by the Reform Party? Certainly not.

Mr. John Duncan (North Island—Powell River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I expected more of a complete answer.

Can the minister confirm that his \$5 million policy paper states that he is making provincial participation mandatory in self-government negotiations?

Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what was proposed at the Quebec conference of ministers and aboriginal leaders by the federal government is that we would have a broad consultation process. This is the \$5 million alluded to by my friend.

Sixty-nine submissions were received by aboriginal people. I have met with about half of the provinces. I am trying to gain a consensus that there is a good starting document there and not a document that will be repudiated from day one and wind up on someone's shelf to be forgotten.

I am not looking for 100 per cent but certainly for some form of consensus. If I do not get it I will come forward with the policy as we proposed in our red book.

* * *

[*Translation*]

BURUNDI

Mrs. Maud Debien (Laval East, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the situation in Burundi is deteriorating significantly and the risks of a Rwanda-like genocide are increasing. The official opposition is very concerned about this and has asked the government several times to take the steps required to prevent such a massacre.

How can the Minister of Foreign Affairs reconcile his government's position on this matter with the comments made this week on CBC by his representative in Bujumbura, who said that everything was going well in Burundi?

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to remind the hon. member of what I said before in this House, namely that Canada, too, was concerned about what is happening in Burundi. In addition, I would like to correct the hon. member, who attributes to our representative in Burundi an assessment of the situation which is not the one he gave.

On the contrary, he explained that the situation was difficult but that, despite these difficulties, it should not be compared to the situation that existed in the days preceding the massacre in Rwanda. I think that, objectively, she should not ascribe to our representative comments he has not made.

Mrs. Maud Debien (Laval East, BQ): Mr. Speaker, could the minister tell us what steps the government has taken to help stop the escalation of the ethnic conflict in Burundi and, among other things, to promote the creation of an international inquiry

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commission on the October 1993 events, as the participants in the regional conference on Burundi requested last month?

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, I think it is important to remind you that the government did not wait for the opposition to ask us a question in this House before taking action. My colleague, the Secretary of State, travelled to Burundi to attend a conference with officials from other countries concerned about this matter and about Rwanda.

Several weeks ago, we appointed a special roving ambassador on these issues, Ambassador Dusseault, who, week after week, visits Burundi, Zaire, Rwanda and other countries interested in what is happening over there.

(1440)

Of course, Canada wants to avoid a bloodbath. Of course, these ethnic conflicts are reprehensible, but I will remind the hon. member that the representations we have made at both the UN and the Organization of African Unity to try to convince other countries to join Canada in taking action cannot be attributed to Canada's lack of interest. On the contrary, we are very interested, very concerned, but Canada alone cannot resolve this persistent ethnic problem in Africa.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mrs. Pierrette Ringuette—Maltais (Madawaska—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence.

[*English*]

In previous years his department has been contracting seasonal work to retired military personnel receiving a pension, thus double dipping and leaving in the cold many Canadians seeking employment.

Can the minister tell us if his department will continue to hire retired military personnel or will civilians have a fair opportunity to work at these seasonal jobs?

Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the House that retired military personnel have the same rights and privileges as all Canadians.

One set of guidelines we follow is federal legislation. All Canadians have an opportunity to compete for these jobs. We are monitoring the situation to see that there are no instances in which people are being favoured because of their former involvement in the armed forces. It is of great concern to us.

The hon. member should know that everyone should be treated fairly, and they will be.

GUN CONTROL

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, on Monday night 99 per cent of the members of the Saskatoon Police Association voted in opposition to Bill C-68, the Firearms Act.

Polls taken in Estevan, Prince Albert, Weyburn and Moose Jaw show 95 per cent of the city police are opposed to this bill.

Who is the Minister of Justice going to believe, the chiefs of police sitting in their offices or the real police experts out on the streets catching the real criminals?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, like all other information that derives from the gun lobby, I urge the hon. member to check for the real facts.

Let us determine first of all how many officers in those departments participated in the so-called vote. Let us find out what they were asked and the reason for the meeting being called in the first place.

The Saskatchewan Federation of Police Officers intends to conduct its own poll and we shall see what happens when all the police in the province are asked the full question.

There is no doubt there are individual police officers, individual police chiefs, who do not agree with all parts of the firearms bill. However, while it is not unanimous, we continue to believe this bill has the support of the vast majority of Canadians and police officers.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, we have also had many chiefs of police contacting us, vehemently opposed to more gun controls. The Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities is overwhelmingly opposed. It had over 600 members at the meeting. The Saskatchewan legislature is unanimously opposed to C-68 and wants it withdrawn.

If the Prime Minister's claim is true that registering guns is no different than registering cars, will the minister allow the province of Saskatchewan to establish its own gun control laws?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that in this election year all sorts of things will happen in Saskatchewan and in its legislature.

Perhaps the members opposite can look at the facts of this case and examine the question that in Saskatchewan the fatality rate from firearms is 50 per cent higher than the national average. The suicide rate from firearms is twice the national average. Let us talk about community safety.

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(1445)

*[Translation]***INDIAN AFFAIRS**

Mr. Bernard Deshaies (Abitibi, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Indian Affairs.

A report from the Department of Indian Affairs on the transport of food to the far north links the health problems of aboriginal people to the lack of affordable nutritious food.

How does the minister explain that the millions of dollars spent by his department still have not made a significant difference, and that the price of food remains two to three times higher in these regions than in the south?

[English]

Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will be allocating in the range of \$16 million toward food mail. The problem is recognized. The hon. member for Saint-Jean repeatedly brings it to the attention of the House.

We are trying to break up the food into a more definitive process: perishable and non-perishable. It will continue to be a problem. I can only commit to the member that my ministry will be there. We will be lobbying governments and, hopefully, the province of Quebec, which has a responsibility. The people living there are not only citizens of Canada, they are also citizens of Quebec. I would like to work co-operatively with Mr. Cliche and with the premier to solve the problem in Quebec.

[Translation]

Mr. Bernard Deshaies (Abitibi, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is for the same minister.

In the last four years, over 400 pages of studies and reports have been produced by that department on the Omnibus air service and the nutritional status of the Inuit.

Based on these studies, can the minister explain why the cost of food remains so high, in spite of substantial subsidies?

[English]

Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the answer is quite obvious. It is distance. It costs money to send food that far.

The alternative to living as Canadians in their environment is to move everybody to Montreal, which we do not want. We want them to live there. We want them to live peacefully in our country and with good health. I am committed to working with

the hon. member, the Bloc party and the province of Quebec to do a better job.

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NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, earlier this month the general manager of the National Capital Commission proposed a grand plan which would cut 28 per cent from the NCC's budget. But hear this, the 1994 public accounts indicate that NCC's outstanding commitments for office space leasing will increase from \$1 million to \$4 million per year thereafter.

How can the minister explain this 300 per cent increase?

Ms. Albina Guarnieri (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that the National Capital Commission has an arm's length arrangement with the ministry and is responsible for the management of its funds.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the taxpayers of the country have an arm's length relationship with their money too, and they want answers.

Our research shows that the NCC leases no office space other than the new NCC Chambers Building. I have a surprise for the House. José Perez was handed the contract to build and lease the Chambers Building with no tender. His competitors cried foul, to no avail.

Why does the government not order a public inquiry into the whole affair of Mr. Perez? What is to hide?

Ms. Albina Guarnieri (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be happy to relay the hon. member's concerns to the minister. Since the question deals with a specific accusation, I would be happy to provide more details.

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RAIL STRIKE

Mr. Tony Valeri (Lincoln, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have had many calls from small and medium size businesses that are absorbing additional costs because of the rail strike. Other constituents have called saying they will be laid off soon if the rail strike continues.

Can the Minister of Industry explain to the House and, in particular, to those Bloc members who are holding up this back to work legislation just what this strike is costing Canadian industry and what it is costing the business constituents in each and every one of our ridings?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the hon. member indicates an interest in this important question. Evidently some members do not understand

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that as they delay passage of the back to work legislation they are affecting the jobs and the incomes of Canadians across the country.

(1450)

According to the President of the Canadian Manufacturers Association, this strike is costing Canadians over \$3 billion per week in lost profits and productivity. The jobs of Canadians are in the hands of members of the Bloc and members of the NDP. I would like to know where the premiers of the provinces of Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan and British Columbia are. Why are they not calling on the separatists and the NDP to get these people back to work?

* * *

[Translation]

ETHICS

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister said in the House that senior public servants working for or against political parties were not governed by the act which prohibits them from conducting such activities. Moreover, the Prime Minister claimed that the Supreme Court had invalidated the applicable legislative provision.

Can the President of the Treasury Board confirm that this provision in the Public Service Employment Act is still in effect, and can he tell us if the Treasury Board always applies the legislation in an unbiased way?

[English]

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the answer was given yesterday by the Prime Minister. I think that is the valid answer.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister should have reminded us of that answer if he remembered it.

My supplementary is for the Deputy Prime Minister. How can the Deputy Prime Minister explain that the government's code of ethics makes no reference to the political activities in which senior public servants can engage?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am not surprised to see the Bloc Quebecois fishing for other problems, since it is experiencing problems back home.

I might add that, to make a decision in that regard, we have not found it necessary to hire American lobbyists, as the Parti Quebecois is doing, to explain the referendum project.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Ms. Copps: But I can tell you one thing, Mr. Speaker. I am convinced that the CNTU, among others, supports the right of public servants to give political opinions, in the same way that it is doing concerning the referendum.

* * *

[English]

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board.

The government's own Treasury Board manual requires that reports be tabled in the House of Commons annually on the status of contracting out. For two years now the government has failed to release this important information, even though even as far back as 1991-92 this involved over \$10 billion in expenditures, \$3 billion of which was without competitive process.

Why is the minister disobeying his own guidelines by withholding these reports for two years running?

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is no withholding of any information. In fact the contracting out issue is under very careful scrutiny by the government operations committee at the moment.

A wealth of information is being provided and the member has full access to it as we attempt to address the whole question and review the appropriateness of the contracting out of government services.

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons we need this information is to do a thorough job in the committee. We cannot do a thorough investigation without the annual reports.

Contracting out can be cost effective and a good way of performing government work. But without the proper supervision, taxpayers and government workers are doubting whether they are getting a good bang for their bucks so to speak.

Is the minister willing to release these rolling targets, as his manual says he should. Could he tell us what day we can expect to see those annual reports?

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will ensure that what information is available is provided to the hon. member and other members to help them scrutinize this matter in an appropriate fashion.

Let me tell the hon. member that the government has and will continue to ensure the efficient and effective use of taxpayers' dollars. We want to make sure that we are getting good value for the taxpayers' dollars.

(1455)

FISHERIES

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Winnipeg Transcona.

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I thought I was at an anti-tax rally for a minute.

My question is for the minister of fisheries. The minister needs a break and to turn his mind from turbot to pickerel for a minute. I would like to ask him a question about the future of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation.

The minister will know that recommendations have been made by a committee that he struck in order to look into the future of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation.

What is the intention of the government with respect to this crown corporation? Does he intend to privatize it or provincialize it? Is he going to try to meet the concerns of some native people and others who have had problems with the corporation within the existing framework, which is what I would recommend?

Hon. Brian Tobin (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his question on pickerel. I know he did not want to talk about railways any more.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Tobin: He was looking like a pickled pickerel.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: It is starting to sound a little bit fishy.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, I take your sanction. No more firing from the hip.

I want to respond to the member by telling him that we are examining the recommendation of the standing committee on fisheries. We are seeking to find a way to give the native communities concerned an opportunity to participate in the fresh fish market, perhaps without some of the current constraints that are in place under the FFMC.

At the same time, we are not going to move rapidly to privatize or dismantle FFMC. We want to hear from all of the fishermen who access its services and all the provinces that have a concern about its future.

Oral Questions

We are going to move slowly. We are going to consult clearly and carefully. We are going to consult the member because we find that in due course he usually comes to the right conclusion.

* * *

RAIL STRIKE

Mr. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Trade. Atlantic Canadians are worried about the impact of the rail strike in our economy. We are frustrated with the attempts of the Bloc and the NDP to delay an end to the rail strike.

Small manufacturers, employees and exporters in Halifax West want the trains moving again and now. Can the minister please make it crystal clear to the opposition what the cost is, what the impact of the strike is on our exporters and what it is costing our country?

Hon. Roy MacLaren (Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada reported a record trade surplus in 1994. Again in the month of January there were record export sales. This underlines the importance to Canada of our export trade which is now being adversely affected. It is a vital Canadian interest being damaged by the prolonged rail strike. It is evident to every Canadian except possibly the members of the Bloc Quebecois and the NDP.

If we were to proceed to settle that strike, we could restore the full flow of Canadian exports, including those to the United States. Every working day some \$200 million of Canadian exports to the United States are being adversely affected by this prolonged rail strike. We are determined to bring it to an end.

* * *

INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. Mike Scott (Skeena, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister of Indian affairs. Ovide Mercredi and a select group of Indian chiefs in Alberta seem to know more about the minister's secret report on self-government than the House does or the Canadian people do.

Will the minister table this report in the House today?

(1500)

Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member was at the press conference and has presumably seen the write ups from yesterday. This is not a secret report nor a cabinet document. These are some discussion points that I have raised with aboriginal leaders across the country.

After I have had these discussions with the aboriginal leadership, as I undertook to do and as I will continue to do, and with the provincial ministers, I will return to cabinet. The hon.

Point of Order

member will then have a report as a cabinet document or a government document before the House.

* * *

[*Translation*]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Paul Mercier (Blainville—Deux-Montagnes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. The day before yesterday, in response to a question from the official opposition, the Minister of Transport said that he would check Air Canada's compliance with the Official Languages Act. The minister's record as far as his department's services in French are concerned is pretty shaky, since the air navigation system still does not provide services in French throughout Quebec's air space.

Could the minister let us know the results of his enquiries with respect to Air Canada and could he give us the assurance that the future privatization of CN and the air navigation system will not be used as an excuse for lax implementation of the Official Languages Act?

[*English*]

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when another hon. member raised the question with respect to ads placed by Air Canada looking for qualified personnel, the ads clearly stated that bilingualism in one case was required, a third language was an advantage to anybody applying, especially for cabin crew. There is no doubt the application of the Official Languages Act is essential to the operation of Air Canada. It is part of its mandate.

I want to assure my hon. friend the obligation extends to being able to provide service in both official languages on the flights of Air Canada and we expect that will continue.

With respect to the second part of his question concerning the commercialization of the air navigation system and the commercialization of CN, we will undertake to ensure Canadians who speak both official languages will continue to be served in the language of their choice anywhere in the country.

* * *

PRESENCE IN THE GALLERY

The Speaker: I wish to draw the attention of the House to the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Roberto Gonzalez, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

POINTS OF ORDER

COMMENTS DURING QUESTION PERIOD

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was brought to my attention by the Solicitor General that in my third answer to the leader of the third party I made reference to his absence from the House. It has been pointed out to me that was unparliamentary and I wish to withdraw the remark.

I would also like to ask the House leader for an apology because when I made the remark he said, for *Hansard*, the leader of the third party was lucky, that he had to sit here the whole time.

The Speaker: I hope I have a real point of order from the Minister of Industry.

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while we are clarifying things said during question period, it has been brought to my attention by the member for Winnipeg Transcona that this morning while I was endeavouring to get information on the impact of the rail strike on Canadian industry it was not brought to my attention that the NDP had changed its position and is now prepared to let the legislation go through, for which I thank it. I apologize for my comment in that respect.

Hon. Brian Tobin (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to correct the record as well. Given what I just heard, the member does not look like a pickled pickerel.

* * *

(1505)

[*Translation*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would appreciate it if the leader of the government would let us know the business of the House for the next few days.

[*English*]

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to make any comments about fish, budgets, the press or any of those matters. Instead, I will get right the point and provide the weekly business statement. Mind you, I have a lot of thoughts on those subjects, but I am keeping them to myself.

This afternoon the House will continue its consideration of an opposition motion and there will be votes on the motion and on the business of supply commencing at 5.15 p.m.

Tomorrow the House will resume debate on third reading of Bill C-73, the borrowing authority legislation.

On Saturday and if necessary on Sunday the House will deal with report stage and third reading of Bill C-77 to end the railway strike.

On Monday we will consider second reading of Bill C-72 regarding criminal intoxication, followed by report stage and third reading of Bill C-69, the redistribution bill.

We will resume this business on Tuesday and when it is complete we will resume debate of Bill C-68, the firearms bill. We will continue with Bill C-68 if necessary on Wednesday. On Thursday we will start debate on Bill C-76, the budget implementation bill.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, the debate is on a motion, introduced by the third party, in which the Minister of National Defence is asked to extend the mandate of the commission of inquiry to cover all armed forces and not only the military unit in Somalia.

I would like to explain the situation and the position taken by the Bloc. For several months we have been asking the government to consider the importance of establishing a commission that would investigate the situation prevailing in the forces at this time. The government, however, has decided to establish a commission that will cover only part of what we see as the real problem.

This is a very serious matter, and Canadians and Quebecers have doubts about the credibility of those in charge of the Canadian Forces and whether they are doing their job, and they wonder whether all this could be improved. I worked in education for more than 21 years. In my riding, we had four cadet corps, two army and two navy, and I think the people who are involved in these projects do a good job.

(1510)

Now, however, people are not so sure, but I think we should not blame the entire military. As I said before Question Period,

Supply

it is likely that only some of the people who make the decisions should perhaps change the way they do that. The Bloc Quebecois supports the motion of the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, and we think it would be useful for the government or the Department of National Defence to expand the scope of the study so that all this could be cleared up.

I think Canadians are now asking questions about the quality of Canada's defence. As you know, this year Canada has projected a deficit of \$33.5 billion. On the Standing Committee on National Defence, the Bloc Quebecois suggested cuts that would trim the Defence budget to \$10 billion, but the government refused.

The government is going to make cuts. It will cut \$1.6 billion over three years, while we requested a cut of \$4.8 billion over three years. Right now, the Government of Quebec is about to bring down its own budget. In that budget, ministers will each receive an envelope, and they will have to operate their departments with the funding provided in that envelope.

I think the Canadian government could have done the same thing. When we sat on the joint committee with the senators, we were told that Canada was going to buy submarines. Fortunately, this is no longer the case. This is not a time of expansion, but rather of reduction. This is a time of streamlining and of making what we have as effective as possible.

In the spring I had the honour and the opportunity to visit our forces in Bosnia—Hercegovina. We were able to visit Canadians stationed in Gorazde and another group in Visoko. We were able on site to see that the Canadian forces were doing a good job there. Now what people want is an investigation to see what could be improved. We are told that morale in the military is low at the moment. Therefore would this not be a good time for the government to set up a commission to look into all of this?

As I was saying, I am on the Standing Committee on National Defence. Since becoming a member, I have noticed that the committees—there are 22 of them—sit a lot during the week. What is the real role of the committees? Is it not time in Canada for us to review the role of our House committees? The committees sit several hours a week and simply make recommendations. Unlike in the American system, our committees prepare documents, and often these documents, after having been produced at great cost, are simply shelved and never heard of again. It is as if the committees were used to assess popular opinion and to find out what people were thinking. However, the people on these committees, whether in government or in opposition, work very hard. We have people from Canada and Quebec appearing before us to express their points of view. Very often, however, these committees have no real power unfortunately. The power lies in the hands of the ministers and cabinet. I think it would be a good idea, as we suggested in our committee, for committees to have more power so that the government and the opposition could together develop a coherent Canadian policy.

Supply

(1515)

In the past 15 years in Quebec, military investment has been insufficient. There has been a shortfall in Quebec of \$650 million a year. Quebec is not receiving its fair share. They say that 23.5 per cent of Canada's defence budget comes from Quebec. But only 17.4 per cent of the total budget for defence and defence research goes to Quebec. As a direct result of this budget, Quebec will lose 15,000 military and civilian jobs. And this will create a spin-off and an indirect job loss of 25,000, in addition to the 40,000 other jobs lost each year, a 40,000 job shortfall for the past 15 years. While Ontario gets 73 per cent of the defence research budget, Quebec must be happy with a meagre 12.4 per cent. That is unacceptable, 12.45 per cent of research spending for Quebec when 73 per cent goes to Ontario.

Only 15 per cent of all of Canada's military facilities are in Quebec. The closure of the Saint-Hubert base, which was announced in the last budget, will cause a loss of 600 jobs. Six hundred people are going to be out of work. The total number of casualties from the staffing cuts in Bagotville is 285 employees.

We cannot help but notice that, despite commissions, despite studies, despite committees which try to strike a balance, Quebec is getting less and less, and that is unacceptable.

Last year, the Government of Canada made probably the worst decision it will make during its four year mandate, and that was to close the Saint-Jean military college. And I must say that I have often encountered senior departmental officials who tell me in private and who will continue to tell me that it should not have been done. But they did it anyway. They closed the military college. I am telling you this not to reopen the debate, but to make the point that there are 13,000 bilingual positions in the armed forces, of which 7,000 are filled by unilingual anglophones. Of the 13,000 bilingual positions, only 6,000 are filled by Quebecers or others, and because we do not have enough bilingual members of the armed forces, the 7,000 other positions are filled by anglophones.

They talk about having a bilingual policy, but it is just a ploy. If they ever were really serious about it, they never would have closed the Saint-Jean military college because that was really where they trained bilingual members of the armed forces. We will see, but I do not think that Kingston will be able to fill this need.

(1520)

I would also like to discuss defence conversion, because the budget makes no mention of it. There are more than 650 defence conversion businesses in Quebec, of all sizes. Quebec has lost 10,000 jobs since 1987 due to defence conversion. Between 1990 and 1994, 7,391 industry jobs were lost. It is unacceptable that a government which claims to be responsible, as this one does, has neglected to develop a policy on defence conversion.

The Bloc Quebecois will support the motion put forward by our hon. opposition colleague because it is consistent with the official opposition's repeated requests to broaden the mandate of the inquiry on the deployment of Canadian troops in Somalia.

Both the official opposition and the third party have asked questions many times, but we never received any answers. In our opinion, this commission should have been mandated to also look into all the other disturbing events not only in the disbanded Airborne Regiment but also on the base at Petawawa and everywhere else in the armed forces.

According to rumours, which are confirmed by videos and other evidence, some members of the military go around their bases displaying white supremacist flags and wearing Ku Klux Klan armbands. This is totally unacceptable. If ordinary soldiers behave in this way, it is because they are allowed to do so. Their behaviour is accepted and may even be encouraged.

I think it is important to find out if our military bases and what they teach our young people encourage racism, because if such is the case, it is unacceptable. That is why the Bloc will support my hon. colleague's motion.

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that, to have a precise idea of how much the Department of National Defence spends in Quebec, you have to look at the facts carefully. It is obvious to me that my colleague opposite does not have all the facts.

It is true that defense expenditures will be cut in Quebec like in every other province over a period of four years, and not one year, as this was suggested.

At any rate, I would like to point out that defence spending in Quebec, including salaries, operations and maintenance, presently accounts for 22.2 per cent of overall defence spending and that, after four years of cuts, this percentage will only have been reduced to 21.5 per cent. This means that Quebec is being treated equitably.

As far as capital expenditures are concerned, Quebec always benefited from the larger share in Canada on account of its industry.

[English]

Mr. Leroux (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, I completely disagree with my colleague.

A recent study by a Quebec university says that for the last 15 years, Quebec's military budget is missing \$650 million every year. I think no one in this House is refuting that. It is important to say that Quebec has never really received its share. All the documents we have received prove that.

Supply

The Liberal government had one chance to promote bilingualism in Canada and it did not do it. It decided to close the only francophone and bilingual school in Canada, which was Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean. The Liberals decided to do that. I am sure that is the worst decision the government will take in the four years it will be in government, if it ever goes to four years. Who knows?

(1525)

[Translation]

I would have appreciated that my colleagues opposite on the defence committee ask me questions on the importance, for example, of having committees of this House that are effective, committees with decision making authority. It is not the case, at present, in Ottawa. We have committees that sit, gather evidence, do all sorts of things, but when it comes to making any real decision, any major decision, it is then up to the ministers and the system. Ministers make decision and, often, all the work done in committee is ignored. It is a shame. I wish the government would take good note of that.

[English]

Mr. John Richardson (Perth—Wellington—Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the hon. member for Shefford. It is easy when you want to pick a target. It is like a child with a bowl of candy wanting to get the best one out.

The reality is for those of us in Ontario, particularly those in Toronto, there is no federal government presence in the city of Toronto. There are 24 federal headquarters in the city of Montreal. I have never heard the city of Toronto or the province of Ontario make a big claim about that imbalance.

The argument that because a college is in Ontario it is not bilingual, but if it is in Quebec it is bilingual does not wash. That supercilious sort of sham reasoning has been given the lie direct. They are working to have it work in Kingston. Further to that, a kind of insidious logic is taking place here. It has no place in the national assembly because it is being divisive.

We have had excellent and outstanding generals from the province of Quebec, some of the very best and the finest both during the war and after the war. Some of the the very best and the finest of soldiers are from the Royal 22nd Regiment, and from the artillery, from the 12e Régiment blindé du Canada, le régiment de Trois-Rivières, l'autre facilité. Il y aura moins d'argent pour la défense, but it is made up elsewhere year after year with those 24 headquarters, the CBC, et cetera, in Montreal. Nobody is asking that 12 of them be given to Toronto, Vancouver or elsewhere. That kind of argument does not carry.

[Translation]

Mr. Leroux (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, I will simply answer that, in the current system, if you are a francophone and you want to get on in the Canadian Forces, you have to become anglicized. You do not have a choice.

I will not mention by name the many generals I met who are francophones but, as far as I am concerned, have become anglicized because they had no other choice. If you look at the composition of the Canadian Forces, francophones can be found in numbers in the lower echelons, but there are fewer and fewer as you move towards the top. Take Canadian generals for example. Among the 136 general we have in Canada—by the way it is inadmissible to have enough generals to lead 250,000 men when all we have is a small army—there is only a handful of francophones. And these francophones had to be twice as good as their anglophone counterparts to make general. And that is unacceptable.

(1530)

It is true that we have more francophone generals in the army. On the other hand, you will notice that there are very few francophones among the top brass in the air force and the navy, and that is a shame. Someone mentioned earlier that only in Quebec can bilingual schools be set up. That is not true. We can see what is going on in Kingston; it has received much media coverage recently and the press does report hard facts. Kingston is a city where it is difficult for francophones to live. It is so.

By contrast—I would like to point out to my colleagues who may not be aware of this—in Quebec, the minority, which accounts for approximately 20 per cent of the total population, has its own elementary and secondary school system, its own hospitals, two major universities in Montreal, namely McGill University and Concordia University. This minority also has a university of its own in the Eastern Townships. There is no comparison between the way Quebec has traditionally treated its minorities and how the rest of Canada does.

The rest of Canada has a long way to go to catch up to Quebec's way of treating its minorities since the beginning of the Canadian Confederation. I think that the military college in Saint-Jean is important as a symbol and, as such, if we are serious about Canadian bilingualism, it should have been preserved. I think it should have remained open. It was decided to abolish it, to do away with it. I maintain that this may be the worst decision made by this government. It could make even worse ones; its mandate is not over yet. But this far, this is certainly the worst. And the worst of it all is that they know it. They know that this was a bad decision and they have to live with it.

*Supply**[English]*

Mr. John Richardson (Perth—Wellington—Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to join in the debate. The motion of the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands contains a lot of credible and worthwhile information.

Two days ago the minister tabled an inquiry on the deployment of Canadian forces in Somalia that had broad terms of reference including many of the valid and strong concerns the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands has put forward. The terms of reference will allow the inquiry to go beyond what happened in the Somalia incident and what took place in the armed forces before and after the incident. It will go from the highest to lowest levels in its questioning. I hope the inquiry will exploit to the fullest its commission and will incorporate some of the concerns voiced by the hon. member.

At times when the armed forces go through very wrenching changes in life, changes in direction and changes in purpose, the cement that keeps them focused is no longer present.

At one time the newspapers were full of the cold war. The threat was present. It was real. It was easy to motivate, to stimulate and to activate personnel in the forces. The reality today is that with the disintegration of the Berlin wall, within the partners for peace and throughout the world there is not the tension that bonds, motivates and focuses the armed forces.

(1535)

One thing that causes that is the professionalism of senior leaders, officers and non-commissioned officers who serve their country through the armed forces of Canada. In my opinion there tend to be weaknesses when there is no stress to hold it together. The weaknesses become magnified because the press has time to focus on incidents. As a consequence they are sometimes overmagnified.

We have the responsibility to execute and examine errors when they occur or flaws when they are found. The commission has the right, the full support of Parliament and the ability under the Inquiries Act to go beyond the defence act. It has the right to bring in witnesses from outside government and outside the Department of National Defence. It has the right to bring in civilian witnesses as well. That is what we have within the commission tabled by the minister in the House two days ago.

The constant moving of families and postings that come about with a small army, navy and air force put pressure on families that we do not see in civilian life, except maybe at one time when the banks had frequent postings. They have been reduced considerably for a number of reasons, mainly costs. It puts pressure on families. It puts pressure on children when they move from school to school. It puts pressure on wives when they are at home a long time and their husbands are away on

peacekeeping missions or at sea on manoeuvres. It is one stress that is not found in a civilian occupation.

The stress was focused when the threat was meaningful and ever present. People will often question why something is being done and the stress is put on the family. As a consequence it is difficult to maintain morale under those conditions.

The lack of threat sometimes makes it difficult for governments to maintain levels of spending. Therefore governments turn to the armed forces and begin to cut, reasonably so because the hackneyed phrase, the peace dividend, is there. Past and present governments have been pushing back funds for defence, again putting stress on the forces in terms of concerns about job security, their future progress in the forces, et cetera.

Under stressful situations people begin to look at the weaknesses in the system and speak out about them. The flaws become magnified. The press picks up on it because it is the only news in town. Then it becomes overmagnified. Those who are disenchanted and slipping information out in brown envelopes are those who are under stress or disenchanted. This is how the leaks take place.

We have in this minister a minister who has exercised executive quickness and has reacted with a great sense of urgency and fairness. He has looked for and sought advice. When he received the information and made his assessment he made quick decisions in the best interest of the government and the people of Canada. I cannot think of a minister in the last 25 years who has had more things tumble down on his portfolio than this minister has had over the last 15 months. He has continued to show fair-mindedness and good sense in his judgments on behalf of the Canadian people and in his decisions on behalf of the Department of National Defence.

(1540)

The minister saw that it was necessary to come clean and have a full and thorough investigation through the commission he established, based originally on the selection of the airborne regiment to go to Somalia, its actions in Somalia, and the actions thereafter. He is now free to let the commission loose with a broad ranging mandate to seek answers to those and other questions incorporated in the motion of the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

A broad ranging mandate has been given to the commission to investigate the matter although its real purpose is to investigate the airborne regiment in its preparedness, its selection and its actions in Somalia, the actions thereafter, the actions at National Defence Headquarters, the actions of politicians and all things that go into training, morale building and genuine good leadership within the forces.

Supply

The government tabled a report on defence in the House entitled "Security in the Changing World" which called for a number of things. We would like to see one of them, an annual debate in Parliament in both the Senate and the House of Commons on defence. It would provide an opportunity to put forward thoughts on defence. It would be important for it to be held as quickly as possible after the defence estimates were tabled so that it would be relevant, current and not at arm's length or distanced from the realities of the budget at hand.

The report also requested that there be an ongoing standing committee to review matters directly involving national defence issues and that the committee report back to the House. As I have said, the recommendations were clear. The annual defence review and assessment would be one mandate that could be given to the standing committee on defence, making it meaningful and giving it purpose.

The report indicated that there was a role for the standing committee to investigate and oversee the defence budget and major procurement by the government dealing with defence capital expenditures. The committee would be able to bring forward expert witnesses. It could call upon the Auditor General. It could call upon other learned persons within government ranks for their expertise. Then the committee could report to Parliament in a meaningful and forceful manner about its findings.

I am very pleased to have joined in the debate today. The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands made some very valid points.

(1545)

Many of the points he wishes to see covered could be tumbled into the commission that has been established by the Minister of National Defence and picked up and reviewed as part of that mandate.

The minister has been most energetic, forthright and insightful in terms of the judgment he brings to the House. On behalf of all Canadians he has worked on behalf of the armed forces.

Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to the member for Perth—Wellington—Waterloo. I agree with many of his comments. I am concerned with the repeated suggestion in the House today from the government that the inquiry is broadly based.

Mr. Speaker, if I may I would like to quote from the committee directive:

—to inquire into and report on the chain of command system, leadership within the chain of command, discipline, operations, actions and decisions of the Canadian forces and the actions and decisions of the Department of National Defence in respect to the Canadian forces deployment to Somalia and without restricting the generality of the foregoing, the following matters related to the

pre-deployment, in theatre and post-deployment phases of the Somalia deployment.

Unquestionably I agree that fallout from the report will extend far beyond the Somalia commitment. I do believe that the Somalia investigation will concentrate primarily on that and will not expand its base to encompass the things I would like to see and which the motion we have made goes to.

The problem I see is that I am not sure the Minister of National Defence really appreciates he has problem. That is my concern. The member mentioned the minister has been very good at seeking advice. He has not sought advice from our party on our commitment to Bosnia nor to Croatia. He has not sought advice about committing 474 members of the Canadian forces to Haiti. I suspect that he has not approached the members of the official opposition either. Is this the way the minister consults, gets input and appreciates the situation? I do not think so.

We are sitting right now with eight days to go before the end of our current mandate in Bosnia—Croatia. The minister has not consulted us about this. Are we going to extend or not? We are told they do not know yet. Surely this cannot be the case. If it is, it is a dismal failure on the part of the government.

Does the member think the minister of defence has really consulted adequately? Does he think the minister has taken every opportunity to allow parliamentarians to have input into commitments which put the lives of our forces at risk?

Mr. Richardson: Mr. Speaker, it is a question of whether the glass is half full or half empty. The government made a commitment that before it would commit Canadian forces in a foreign country and under the auspices of the United Nations the House of Commons would be consulted. It was consulted. We had debates and on that. That is a step forward and it could be expanded.

When we commit our soldiers, our sailors and our air men offshore in harms way, that kind of debate should be public and in the House.

I do believe consultation can be improved. I also believe the minister is genuinely concerned about receiving that type of contact. I do not think he has been able to get off his bicycle since the day he sat in the chair and he has been pumping hard ever since.

(1550)

I cannot remember when such a tumultuous number of serious issues has down in such rapid action as has happened while during his tour. He has handled them well. I am proud of him.

If the hon. member seeks more consultation I am certainly one in favour of seeing more consultation and I am sure he is. The private member's bill which was drawn up before he brought in

Supply

his bill is not uncomplimentary because of the nature and broadness of this bill.

In my discussions with the House leader he said this bill for a commission inquiry is in the broadest sense the House can give a commission. It can do more. It can call on anyone. It was given the broadest sense of opportunity to interrogate and call witnesses under this broad terms of reference. We can always improve on advice from all sides.

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of the member. For the most part they were a rational analysis of our military commitments and responsibilities.

I would like to get his opinion on one other subject. In the next couple of weeks or so a peacekeeping act I hope to introduce as private member's legislation will be asking the government to make some decisions on how we can commit peacekeeping troops overseas.

The thrust of my argument in the bill I will introduce asks that the government before we commit troops ask for authorization for the specific mission of the peacekeeping service; to specify the objectives, duties and role of the mission; to define the state or area in which the mission is to operate; specify the date on which that authority is to expire; specify the maximum planned expenditure for the mission. It is to do all this before we commit troops, especially overseas into some very dangerous venues.

Does the member think we should debate these subjects and those kinds of details before we commit the troops? Sometimes it becomes cynical when the debate takes place after the commitment has already been made.

Should we debate those kinds of issues or at least debate them before a commitment or after the minister has already made the decision?

Mr. Richardson: Mr. Speaker, it would be a sham if we debated after they were committed. It is then just an information giving session.

I do not think that is the intention of the government. The government is committed to having a debate in the House before committing troops, as the hon. member has suggested.

We are looking very carefully at costs. In some of those situations, for example in the former Yugoslavia at the moment, the UN underwrites a considerable amount of the cost and in others there is hardly any underwriting. It is only fair since it is the public's purse that these things be discussed.

The minister is prepared to do that. It is all part of what has been happening, to get this going so there is more transparency and more input. I cannot fault the minister. He has made the

point and he will continue to make the point that he will listen to that. The hon. member's point is well taken.

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment my hon. colleague from Perth—Wellington—Waterloo for an excellent explanation of aspects of this subject which I am sure all members of the House found illuminating.

I still have difficulty understanding why members of the third party are so insistent on broadening terms. We have now in our possession and under way the broadest investigation and inquiry in the public inquiries act which has been conducted in the Canadian forces, if not in my lifetime certainly in 50 years. What more can they ask? They have said morale is an issue. They gave the reasons for the issue. They talked about the excellent leadership.

(1555)

Any critic in any organization is expected to criticize. That is the job of the opposition. I find it interesting that a critic would make a comment that a minister may have problems that he is not aware of when that a minister is with his department 24 hours a day. This minister has shown his acumen, his preparedness to act and the tremendous ability he has in controlling his department, notwithstanding the difficulties which have occurred since he has been minister. That point was made very well by my colleague from Perth—Wellington—Waterloo.

How the opposition could say the minister may have problems that he is not aware of when it relies on brown envelopes from the media and the odd telephone call is difficult for me to understand.

Mr. Richardson: Mr. Speaker, I have no more to say. I am not going to fill the Chamber with hot air. I did welcome the questions from the hon. member on peacekeeping and I thank the House very much for the opportunity to participate in the debate.

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to raise defence issues which are vitally important to our national security.

The issue which affects me personally is the closure of CFB Chilliwack. The closure is symptomatic of a greater problem within the military, that of the subordination of military interests to political concerns. Our military is becoming a blunt political tool rather than a sharply honed fighting and peacekeeping force that follows the dictates of strategic efficiency and combat readiness.

The morale of the armed forces is being sapped by obvious problems such as the burden of top heaviness where the top man in the military collects \$140,000 a year while the privates are applying for welfare. The gap between the general and the front line soldier is enormous. It speaks to me of diminishing accountability and slackening military ideals.

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We have a problem with our peacekeeping forces where political decisions replace military ones. Soldiers are put into dangerous places for undefined periods where they are sometimes, and have been recently, humiliated, held hostage and left to deal with inadequate equipment so Canada's politicians can save face on the international stage.

I have offered a rational solution to this problem in my peacekeeping bill, which may soon be debated in the House. It would help Parliament decide the parameters of peacekeeping missions by requiring that members deliberate strategic military considerations before plunging into these war torn areas.

There are so many problems in our military. No wonder a nine-page memo from Brigadier General Jeffries surfaced last week talking about the deterioration of the armed forces. Soldiers are frustrated. Allow me to quote from it:

My commanding officers are unanimous in reporting widespread dissatisfaction at virtually all rank levels. The bottom line appears to be a rapidly developing crisis in confidence in the ability of the chain of command to do its job.

The problem is leadership:

There is widespread belief that political agendas and careerism have replaced leadership in the defence hierarchy. The loyalty and focus of senior military leaders is directed upwards and not down, and that political expediency has led to a reactive rather than a proactive posture.

Can we think of a possible reason the loyalty of senior generals appears to be shifting toward careers and politics? Could it have something to do with the salaries, the office renovations, the houses, the perks, the golf vacations in Florida?

Another example of political interference was the disbanding of the first airborne regiment. Because of some objectionable hazing rituals and some racists in the military an entire regiment was disbanded. I am the first to agree that the problems should have been rooted out. Instead, the minister shut down the whole regiment. The action was publicly opposed by the chief of defence staff. Did he resign when the minister refused his advice? He sat, tight lipped and accepted the humiliation of an entire regiment; a regiment which had an illustrious history. It was disgraced by politicians because of the actions of a few.

A new regiment will have to be created, probably at the cost of millions of dollars, probably with most of the same personnel. The decision to disband the first airborne was driven not by political efficiency but by the dictates of political correctness. This appears to be okay with the minister and the generals.

(1600)

Another political decision has been taken by the minister and that is the decision to close CFB Chilliwack. I have publicly objected to this decision, knowing that I would be criticized for taking this not in my own backyard attitude. I want the public to know that I have never opposed cutbacks. CFB Chilliwack

could be significantly scaled down without any protest from me. I maintain that to close the base entirely is a strategic and military error. It will reduce the capacity of our nation to respond to various situations. Allow me to explain.

There is no other base in Canada in which the military can train all year around. The topography is perfectly suited to the varied training requirements of engineers as well as combat troops. Part of the base is now moving to Gagetown, New Brunswick. The military considered this option in 1956 but considered it would be too costly and that Gagetown was simply too cold in the winter for these activities that the engineers are engaged in.

We have 105,000 acres of training range at CFB Chilliwack. In Edmonton, where much of the base will be moving, there are no ranges at all. The closest range is at Wainright, 150 miles away, where troops and equipment will have to be regularly transported at great cost. The logic of this escapes me.

CFB Chilliwack boasts 487 buildings worth \$517 million, with \$40 million spent on upgrading over the last five years alone. The minister hopes to save \$300 million over the next five years by the closure, but he has admitted that it will cost almost that much to enlarge the base at Edmonton. I do not see where the savings or the logic is in that.

CFB Chilliwack has not opened all the new buildings yet. It is preparing to open a brand new \$10 million training centre in July, while at the same time other bases in Canada are spending tens of millions of dollars to upgrade training facilities at others. Obviously defence dollars are not being wisely spent when we are still putting the paint on the walls in some buildings and yet we are going to build others as well.

I have other concerns. CFB Chilliwack is situated 60 miles from a population of three million people, sitting on a high risk earthquake zone. In the case of an earthquake, troops and equipment would have to be flown in from Edmonton, but to what airport? The area could well be inaccessible by air, so they say.

A California company, Risk Management Solutions, has studied the seismicity of the Vancouver area and says the probability of an earthquake there with a magnitude of 7.0 or greater is 48 per cent within the next 30 years. This is only slightly less than the risk in Los Angeles and San Francisco. It would be devastating. An extraordinary response would be required, but the loss of the base would be one less resource to draw on.

The emergency preparedness people in Vancouver are concerned about the base closing because of the engineering capacity there and also because of the stockpile of medical supplies. There are six 200-bed mobile hospitals housed there, which would be vital in the event of an earthquake or other civil

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disorder, as well as other medical supplies. Vancouver would have to go cap in hand to the Americans if the base closed.

We have a national defence force with installations in every province. In B.C. we have developed a versatile base with excellent facilities built over a 50-year period and located near a major city and port. Now Canada's fastest growing province will no longer enjoy any land force presence west of the Rockies. This is an important issue of strategic concern to the former base commanders I have consulted.

The military takes 50 years to develop a base and politicians can throw it away in one term of political office. What if a military problem should arise that requires the defence of our western seaboard? Will the government then re-purchase new land at astronomical expense in the same area to re-establish a new base? It does not make sense when the installations are all in place.

It appears that strategic important considerations are not in parallel. Maybe there are other reasons. Perhaps the government says B.C. is a wealthy province and it will not feel the effects too much. I would counter that B.C., by proportion, already receives \$700 million a year less in defence spending than it should. Closure will only heighten that regional disparity.

A cynical politician might say if we want to close down a base why not close it down in an area where we have nothing to lose? The Reform Party did well in the last election in B.C., so let's hit them hard because we will suffer no political consequences. If that was true it would be sad. Yet the government seems reluctant to answer the questions which would put these rumours to rest.

(1605)

On March 2, I wrote a detailed letter to the minister asking him to respond to the concerns of British Columbians about cost efficiency, emergency preparedness and military reasoning. It is telling that the past five base commanders from CFB Chilliwack have also raised their concerned voices from a military side. They remain unconvinced, and have written letters to the minister, that it is in the best interests of the military to close CFB Chilliwack and leave British Columbia without a land force presence.

It is clear that the decision to close CFB Chilliwack was one in which politics outweighed strategic military considerations. As a result, the capacity of Canada's armed forces to defend our country and assist in situations of emergency will be significantly reduced.

The minister is coming to visit our base on April 3 and I will be there to greet him. It is an honourable thing for him to come to the base at this time and explain to the military personnel and the people of B.C. why he feels the base should be closed down.

I hope the minister also brings with him the top decision makers in the military so they can perhaps inspect the facilities at CFB Chilliwack, and even at this late hour, consider other money saving and military options that would meet the concerns of the civilian and military personnel that have contacted me and meet the minister's own criteria for coming in under budget. If he can do that, then the Canadian forces personnel, especially those affected by the closure, will begin to be satisfied that they are not being manipulated. That is another reason why the minister should come post haste, make the explanations and listen again to the concerns of the people of CFB Chilliwack.

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity this afternoon to speak about defence department policy and priority.

I have risen in the House before to talk about defence department household moves. Somewhere with the bowels of the defence department there are some 200 military men and women who are performing a function that has absolutely nothing to do with their training. They are not peacekeepers, not ace pilots or tank mechanics. They are not sophisticated radar specialists. These fine men and women are immersed in the management details of packing dishes, moving couches and not scratching the coffee tables.

Is this what Canadians want their military to be doing? Is this a function the government should be handling because the private sector cannot or will not handle without government handouts? The answer is no. The private sector has been crying out to get a crack at managing the household moves of Canada's military.

Newspaper reporters have written about the horrendous waste of taxpayers' money. At least \$10 million occurs because these military men and women are not much good at managing household moves. Television crews have documented the gross inefficiencies and ridiculous regulations that hamper the smooth move from one home to another. Even the government's own Competition Bureau has warned against the dubious tendering practices which could cause the major van lines to breach their 1983 prohibition order against collusion.

It is not that no one has heeded all these cries. The last government finally got its act together and disbanded the interdepartmental committee responsible for all this waste. It timidly agreed to try a pilot project to see whether the private sector could, in fact, manage household moves better than this decorated bunch of brass.

The interdepartmental committee for household goods removal services to which I am referring, the IDC, has representatives from the RCMP, public works, government services and defence. Together they preside over all government funded moves.

Did this project ever get off the ground? Did the private sector have a chance to prove it can move the military pots and pans cheaper and in a more timely fashion than a group of war heroes? The answer is no. When the government changed hands these heroes did an end run and somehow convinced the minister of defence that it had been beyond the previous government's competence to approve the project.

The United States military has announced that it is turning its moves of over 200,000 households per year over to the private sector. Why is it that Canada, with 20,000 military household moves, cannot do the same?

(1610)

The time is more than right. The finance minister has stated that the government should only do what government does best. The private sector has already shown that it was good enough to move the MPs when the government changed hands a year and a half ago. Savings of at least 20 per cent to 30 per cent can be achieved for the military as well. Does it really cost three-quarters of a million dollars to move military family pets? That is the number. The last time I checked it cost \$50 to fly a cat from Halifax to Vancouver. How are we running up these horrendous costs?

Here is another item. Does interim lodging and meals really need to cost \$28 million? When the private sector manages a move it asks its clients being moved what day is convenient to load and what day is convenient to deliver. That is the criteria used when a private moving company is phoned.

Anyone who has taken the morning off from work to wait for a delivery or a repairman knows how frustrating and costly inexact timetables are. If we know our household effects are being delivered on Tuesday we do not need a two-week vacation at the Hilton to accommodate it. On the other hand, if we are told that packing will occur sometime during the first week of June and delivery will happen sometime in the third week, as happens with defence department moves, then maybe it makes sense to plan a nice taxpayer subsidized vacation around a vaguely timed disappearance of our television set and slippers. It is a practice we simply cannot condone.

These inefficiencies end up costing all of us more. Government is by far the largest household mover client. Government makes up to 30 per cent to 35 per cent of all of the household moves in Canada per year. When poor management permeates that large a portion of an industry, the effects pervade the entire industry.

I call on the government to finally end this practice and to stand up to this little empire of colonels. When the Minister of National Defence is deciding where to make cuts in his depart-

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ment he should start with the IDC. I would not be at all surprised if he is fed up with that little bunch over there anyway.

The minister should then move to privatize the management of all military and all other government household moves. Consulting and Audit Canada, along with the Competitions Bureau and Public Works and Government Services should be asked to prepare a tender according to treasury board guidelines.

By acting this way, the minister will be doing the taxpayer and himself a big favour. He will be stating forcefully that no longer will move management operate outside the normal parameters of government. No longer will move managers thumb their noses at elected officials and no longer will move managers be accountable to no one.

The taxpayer will save between \$10 million and \$25 million. The Reform Party will support the government for a wise and excellent decision. As a matter of fact, even a lot of Liberals will applaud this long overdue move. At a time when we cannot even afford decent peacekeeping equipment for our peacekeepers, it is appalling that we are wasting taxpayers' money in this fashion.

Our peacekeepers in Bosnia could have used better land vehicles. It is also well known that our *Sea King* helicopters and our submarines are in desperate need of replacement. We know this will not provide too many, but it is an example of government waste that has to be cleaned up.

I call on the government to act now and quickly to privatize the household moves that the IDC is currently conducting.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ghislain Lebel (Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his brilliant speech. He raises a point which I noticed on a number of occasions. I live in the riding of Chambly which, as you know, is adjacent to the riding of Saint-Hubert, where the base of the same name is located, and where, each spring, some 75 to 100 members of the armed forces would be transferred from the base to another location, and vice versa.

There is one aspect of the costs which the member did not mention, but I essentially agree with his comments. In a given year, some 20 colonels and majors posted to Saint-Hubert would buy houses in Saint-Bruno, which is in the riding of Chambly, and borrow perhaps \$100,000 from some bank for that purpose.

(1615)

The following year, these same people would be transferred elsewhere in Canada. It would cost them some \$5,000 in penalty to liquidate their mortgage. They also had to pay \$3,000, \$4,000, \$5,000 and sometimes even \$8,000 or \$10,000 in commission, depending on the value of their house, to sell that house. Since these people would often not manage to sell their house, the

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government relocation services would take the house back and support it for quite a while.

These people would then relocate in another Canadian city. I know that, in Ontario, members of the armed forces currently enjoy mutation rights on property transfers, for amounts of \$1,000, \$1,200 or \$1,500 spent by the government as refunds. All these benefits were in addition to those related to the move and which the hon. member who spoke before me just mentioned.

Consequently, the transfer of military personnel from Saint-Hubert to Petawawa, and vice versa, involved huge amounts of money.

I would probably be stunned to hear the actual cost of this musical chair exercise within the armed forces. However, I will admit that this was not necessarily a bad thing for those who benefitted from it, including myself as a lawyer. Still, we could not help but wonder how a country that claims to be orderly and one of the best as a member of the G7 group—at least this is what we are told by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance—could manage in such a way.

I want to ask the hon. member if he had an opportunity to look at this aspect of military transfers in Canada.

[*English*]

Mr. Penson: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for that excellent question. What it does is it raises a concern. It is another area I was not aware of. I think it is symptomatic of the serious problems that exist at DND. If the hon. member's example of these household moves with the transfers and the cost of mortgages is symptomatic of what goes on in the defence department, we have bigger problems than this \$10 million to \$25 million.

This is a time when we cannot afford these kinds of excesses any more. Even if money were to be had, it could be better allocated in areas such as in peacekeeping to give our peacekeepers better equipment. We simply have to cut out this kind of waste. I do know whether we could ever afford it, but we certainly cannot afford it now. The Canadian public does not have patience with this any longer. It needs to be cleaned up.

Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to the member for Peace River.

I have worked in this area almost from the first day I arrived at the House of Commons. One of the things I am getting used to is that change seems to be slow. Everything the hon. member has said is borne out by my experience.

I am gratified and encouraged there is a review of the process going on at the political level. As the member knows, four van lines used to handle all the moves. It was pretty much restricted to a monopoly of those four van lines. Now that process is being

opened up and two additional companies will be involved. In terms of the management of household moves, I believe the department is looking at that now.

It was not too long ago that we had the case of a number of generals going south on a golf junket. The trip was cancelled by the Minister of National Defence.

Both the member for Peace River and the member from the Bloc have raised the point, which has unanimous agreement in the House, that waste is something which has to be eliminated. It has to be the job of all members of Parliament and not just the government. I commend the member for Peace River for his interest in that matter.

This is an issue I have been working very hard on. I think changes will be coming. I wish to thank the hon. member for his interest and help in the matter.

(1620)

Mr. Penson: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Waterloo. I know he has a keen interest in this area which actually precedes my interest. We have been working together to try to stop the kind of waste that has been going on.

However, it has been a year. I have asked the minister of defence three or four questions over the last year. If change is coming, I certainly welcome it. I would like to remind the minister of defence and the parliamentary secretary that this is a perfect example of where we can save some money with no cost in service. The service can be handled quite well by the independent companies. I believe we should see a change here shortly and I certainly welcome that.

Mr. George Proud (Hillsborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to participate in this debate today. I congratulate my hon. colleague for Saanich—Gulf Islands for bringing forward this motion. Although I do not support the motion, I thank him for bringing it forward. We have heard a lot of debate here on the floor of the House today which I believe is healthy. It is what parliamentarians have to do in order to get our points of view across to the government so it can see what parliamentarians are thinking, especially on behalf of their constituents.

Canadians are proud of our armed forces and of the work these forces have done both at home and around the world. I believe that most people agree with this point of view.

Canada was instrumental in the creation of NATO in 1949 and maintained stationed forces in Europe for over 40 years. Our contribution to alliance security was highly valued. Even among the collection of first rate militaries, Canadian personnel are among the very best.

Today we no longer station forces in Europe, but our role in the alliance remains a very active one. Canada continues to

maintain a full slate of NATO commitments and we are at the forefront of working for change within the alliance.

We see the alliance as a valuable form of insurance, both in terms of providing for the defence of its member states and in terms of giving the North Atlantic communities a way to reach out to their former adversaries in their quest for security in the new Europe. Our personnel, respected for their professionalism and good sense, are playing an active role in this process as well.

NATO does not represent the only venue in which Canadians are working for peace and security. Of course, the most visible contribution our personnel are making to European security today is through the United Nations. I am referring to, as has been referred to many times today, the leading role we have played and continue to play in the United Nations Protection Force in the former Yugoslavia.

Canadian personnel are no strangers to UN operations. Since 1949 we have contributed thousands of personnel in support of the United Nations. They have served in roles as diverse as monitoring ceasefires on the Indo-Pakistani border to reversing aggression in Korea and in the gulf.

There are currently over 3,000 Canadian personnel deployed in peacekeeping and related missions. However, it is not only the scale but the nature of involvement that is changing. In the past our participation was limited predominantly to the type of operation undertaken in Cyprus or the Middle East entailing the positioning of the impartial forces between the parties to a ceasefire as these parties conducted negotiations toward a political settlement.

Today the operations are more ambitious and the range of military activity is much wider and potentially more risky. As part of missions which are designed to restore order between and sometimes within states, our personnel have been asked to enforce economic sanctions or arms embargoes, create secure conditions for the delivery of aid, deny the use of airspace through which hostile forces could prosecute military campaigns or attack civilian populations in so-called no fly zones, and to protect civilian populations and refugees in safe areas.

(1625)

As these operations have evolved, there have been mistakes along the way. Unfortunately we must expect that there probably will be more. Nevertheless, the alternatives to doing the difficult and dangerous work for peace and stability are unacceptable. The result would be a violent, lawless and chaotic world which would be inimical to Canadian values and interests. The international community, Canada included, may be on a learning curve, but there really is no alternative to putting our best foot forward come what may.

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It is in this light that the experience of the Canadian forces in Somalia ought to be seen. No one regards the tragic events of two years ago with anything other than the utmost concern. I would like to take a few minutes to review the history of the Somalia operation and Canada's participation in it and to remind the House and Canadians that there were aspects of that operation, which have been mentioned here before today, which were not only well-motivated but quite successful.

For most Canadians, prior to our involvement with the UN effort, Somalia was merely a faraway country perennially in the grips of civil war, famine, or both. All of that changed in December 1992.

The United Nations finally moved to act on a scale much larger than had previously been planned. It authorized a united task force, UNITAF, to restore order and ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid in Somalia. The Canadian component of a much smaller UN operation in Somalia, the Canadian airborne regiment, was augmented and integrated into this larger effort as the Canadian airborne regiment battle group.

The entire Canadian contribution to UNITAF, which included air and maritime support, including the support ship HMCS *Preserver*, was known as the Canadian joint force group and began to deploy to Somalia on December 14, 1992. The Canadian contingent was given a large humanitarian relief sector in the northern region of the country.

The operating conditions could only be described as extreme: temperatures of over 40 degrees, the constant threat of disease, very little infrastructure, and the constant challenge of operating in an environment where our personnel encountered hostility from the very people they were trying to help. Nevertheless, the Canadian contingent quickly secured its area of responsibility and turned its attention to the humanitarian aspects of the operation.

The efforts of our personnel in this regard were truly remarkable as they helped to deliver aid, assist medical teams and hospitals, rebuild infrastructure; repair and reopen schools, and train the local population, including children, to recognize land mines. Unfortunately, much of this excellent work, truly path breaking work in the realm of UN operations, risks going unnoticed in the light of the criminal activities of a few.

Upon the discovery of the torture and death of a Somali youth at the hands of a small group of Canadian forces personnel, the Canadian forces convened a series of courts martial. These trials have resulted in the courts martial of nine soldiers.

The completion of the courts martial paves the way for a comprehensive civilian inquiry into the entire Somalia affair. The government has decided to conduct the inquiry under the terms of the inquiries act. The advantage of this approach is that

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the Inquiries Act allows the commission to compel the production of evidence and the attendance of witnesses.

The government has named three prominent Canadians of different backgrounds and skills to conduct the inquiry. The commission has the authority to investigate and report on a wide range of issues surrounding the Somalia operation, including the chain of command, leadership and discipline. The terms of reference cover three periods of the operation.

The first is predeployment. Here the commission can examine such issues as the state of discipline within the airborne regiment, its suitability for the Somalia operation and the adequacy of the screening and selection process for the Somalia deployment.

The second is the period spent in theatre. In examining this phase of the operation the commissioners will probe such issues as the missions and tasks of the Canadian joint task force, the treatment of detainees and the allegations of a cover-up and the destruction of evidence.

(1630)

On post deployment, in examining this final phase of the operation the commissioners will investigate the manner in which authorities within the Department of National Defence and the chain of command of the Canadian forces responded to the full range of problems encountered in the Somalia deployment. The commission is expected to report in December and make recommendations to the government. More important, it will finally lay to rest a difficult chapter in the otherwise proud history of the Canadian military.

The government is committed to moving expeditiously to get to the bottom of the Somalia affair. Whatever we may learn as part of the commission's proceedings should not obscure the value of the Canadian forces or the confidence the government has in their ability to carry out their roles.

The Canadian forces are known worldwide for their professionalism and effectiveness. We all know they are in great demand all over the world. They are in demand for UN missions in NATO and working with their American counterparts in the contacts they forge with other countries.

More important, the unique aspects of the military vocation aside, they are recognized to all of us as Canadians. They reflect our values, our history and our culture. They are not only a unique institution, they are a unique Canadian institution.

They will continue to enjoy the confidence and the support of Canadians as they continue to protect our values and interests both at home and abroad.

Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Hillsborough did not exactly deal with the scope of the inquiry.

With regard to the motion we have put forward today concerning the Somalia inquiry from top to bottom and complete coverage of that issue, does he consider that adequate to examine the inherent problems present in the Canadian Armed Forces today?

Mr. Proud: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for Saanich—Gulf Islands for the question.

The inquiry as set forth will do an adequate job on the Somalia operation and on other aspects of the military.

I hear questions from across the way at different times asking for these independent inquiries. This inquiry is necessary and will lay to rest the questions of Somalia. It will lay to rest a lot of other questions out there.

I will not rest until I see the day when this type of investigation will be done from within this organization right here. It is my goal as a parliamentarian to see standing committees and other committees doing the work of these special commissions. When that day arrives I will have contributed my part to the parliamentary and democratic process.

Mr. Ian McClelland (Edmonton Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to say a few words in this interesting debate.

If we are not careful we will end up with a military that we deserve. Perhaps our motto should be talk loudly and carry a small stick. That is really what we have done with our military over the years. We have said to them: "This is your new job, your new mandate. We would like you to do this and if you do not mind, would you do that. At the same time it might be helpful if you did it with a little less".

(1635)

It is not like dealing with the CBC. It is not as if it is not going to be able to show this program or that program. We are asking our military to put itself into the face of danger and very difficult situations. We are changing the mandate almost every time we get a change in government. We are saying do more but make do with less.

Surely we should start to consider what the long range objectives of our armed forces should be.

I am reminded of a quote by Peter Worthington a few years ago which I believe is quite accurate. He said the military in Canada has always been much more loyal to Canada than Canadians have been to the military. It is quite a profound statement because if we expect our military to be loyal to Canadian parliamentary tradition and to the kinds of objectives that we as civilians would have, we as civilians must have some loyalty reciprocated to the military.

I will bring a few thoughts to this debate little different than many of the comments so far. I would like to put it into a personal perspective. The military has given an awful lot of

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young Canadians a start in life, myself included. I joined the navy when I was 17.

In suggesting I joined the military in Edmonton and went to Halifax, I want to remind all members in the House that Edmonton is a great spot for the military to be based, even those military people who will be transferred from Chilliwack and Calgary. It is a great home for those in the military and we welcome them with open arms.

Mr. Strahl: Have you a naval base?

Mr. McClelland: I remind members that Edmonton is the home of the largest freshwater navy in the world, at the West Edmonton mall. We have more submarines there than the Canadian navy. We have it all. We have army, navy and air force in Edmonton in great supply.

Earlier today I had the pleasure to share a few words with the hon. member for Bonavista—Trinity—Conception. Both of us being old salts, sharing this perspective from slightly different vantage points, he as an admiral and me as an ordinary sailor, we were talking about the military, about what has gone on and what the military means to so many people.

The military to a lot of young men and women from the prairies was the first opportunity to see something of our country and to meet people from other parts of the country. The military to many people from the maritimes was the first chance ever to go to the prairies. That is how we got to know each other. In the military was the first time I heard anyone speaking French. I will bet in the military was the first time many people whose first language is French ever spoke English.

The military is the great melting pot of Canada. I do not think it is good for us as a nation to lose sight of the fact that if we are not prepared for the unexpected, if we are honest with ourselves and see others as others see us rather than as we want to see us, we would have to say we are not a world player.

If we are going to ask ourselves what we are, let us ask what we can be with our military and what could be the primary role of our military. It should be something that enhances the country, that is defensive in nature and defends our country.

I read recently that if one comes down from Mars and has a look at Canada's military perspective one would think that our borders are somewhere in Europe. They are not. Our borders are right here in North America.

Why can we not be the very best people ever for search and rescue? God knows we have enough land that we need that capability. We need to be able to protect our sea coasts and we need to be able to help each other in times of distress. Would it not make sense if our military objectives had some semblance to what we need as a nation?

(1640)

We need as a nation the opportunity to share with each other. We need to be able to protect ourselves and we need to be able to protect ourselves from foreign threats. Would it not make sense to have a highly trained backbone of military and have a very broadly based standing civilian military, a huge reserve?

Imagine if all the military bases across the country were used to provide an opportunity for young people, men and women, when they finished high school and are sitting around watching TV wondering what they are going to do with their lives, feeling that perhaps they need some growing up or some direction.

Would it not be interesting if we could have these people come into the military, spend a couple of years in service for the country, get a sense of self-worth, a sense of confidence, and a sense of our country by going from one part of the country to the other and spend a couple of years in service to the country? That would not cost a whole lot more than it would cost if we had to have these very same people on unemployment insurance or pokey.

If even a portion of these people joined the military and as a result ended up with a sense of discipline, the knowledge of how to get up in the morning and clean your own clothes and look after yourself which not everybody gets, imagine the benefit this would be down the road as people had this foundation of self-assurance and self-respect.

While we are looking at the whole role of the military and while we are investigating the military for its actions in Somalia, we should not lose sight of the fact that historically the military has served our country very well.

While we have a few bad apples, we should not paint everybody with the same brush. We should be very careful that we do not give our military a mandate it cannot carry out. We cannot on one hand say it will not have the funds necessary to do the job, but on the other hand say this is the job. We will have to cut the suit to match the cloth we have. That is the reality of the situation.

Mr. Mac Harb (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I had a chance to travel to over 30 countries around the globe and I share some of my colleagues comments that our troops abroad have made us all proud in terms of their contribution to the peace process, not only in hot spot countries but in every country they have put a foot on.

It is a great honour for us as Canadians when we travel abroad when people see the Canadian flag and want to get one of those beautiful red and white pins. There is no question about it. This is precisely what the government wants to maintain.

The government is trying to maintain the integrity of the Canadian Armed Forces. If there are some bad apples, as my colleagues have suggested, this is precisely what the gov-

Supply

ernment wants to do, to make sure the tree is healthy and all of the apples on it are edible; apples that are not only going to be useful for today but also useful in the future.

I agree with my colleague that we should look at ways we could use our armed forces as an example for the younger generation in certain aspect, at least the aspect of discipline, the aspect of doing things with determination, with good will and so on. It is worth while exploring all those opportunities.

Does the Reform Party have a specific proposal to make before the House of Commons when it comes to this issue. If so, would he share it with us?

(1645)

Mr. McClelland: No, Mr. Speaker. This is part of my own personal crusade to add the whole notion of responsibility to being a Canadian citizen. We take for granted the fact that we have rights and privileges. Our Charter of Rights and Freedoms tells us so. Nowhere in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms does it say we have rights and we have freedoms and we have a corresponding responsibility.

I want to move all members of the House to start to think in terms of responsibilities. We should get our young folks to think they have the benefit of being a citizen of this fantastic country. What are their responsibilities to this country? What do they have to give back? What do they have to give before they can take from this wonderful country? We will have achieved something.

If we were to use our military and use the bases we have, the capital cost of one aircraft or one ship could keep a whole lot of young people busy learning about life for a year, half a year, two years, whatever it might be.

Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, a long time ago when I was at staff college I wrote a paper which suggested something along the lines that the member for Edmonton Southwest has mentioned.

The thrust was basically that at a given time in an individual's life, perhaps at the end of high school or at perhaps age 18 or 19, whichever came first, the individual would have the opportunity to leave the school system and involve himself or herself in repaying to the country what the country had put into them. It did not have to be in the military. It could be in the park service, a teacher's assistant and so on.

I would ask the member for Edmonton Southwest whether he considers this a viable proposition, understanding Canadians reject regimentation. Would this be a viable proposition? If so, at what point in a person's life would he suggest this take place?

Mr. McClelland: Mr. Speaker, it is an interesting question. I posed that question in the media some time ago. It struck an extremely resonant chord in Canada.

The average Canadian sincerely believes it is not all a one way street. The average Canadian intuitively knows that if we see young people hanging around shopping centres, if we see young people with no sense of direction, if we see young people looking at life and are afraid because they see many of their peers not achieving success or not doing anything positive with their lives, they instinctively say there has to be something we can do that is better.

To automatically reject any notion of discipline or military training because it offends the sensibilities of people who think we should be making love and not war is to ignore the fact that people need in their lives discipline. Especially young people need in their lives a sense of strength, a sense of belonging and a sense of self-confidence that comes from that discipline.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Order. It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Cumberland—Colchester—Small business; the hon. member for Mercier—Rail transport.

[*English*]

Mr. John Murphy (Annapolis Valley—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I stand in defence of our armed forces and the many excellent highly professional people who make up our military.

In this regard the Government of Canada has shown a great deal of leadership in the area of publishing a new white paper on defence. I believe the government has provided a defence policy—

Mr. Frazer: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I believe it was our speaking rotation. The hon. member for Edmonton Southwest spoke for half the period. The hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan is to fulfil the commitment.

(1650)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands reminds me, and I do apologize to the House. I will seek the understanding of the member for Annapolis Valley—Hants that the Reform Party had given an indication earlier this day it would be splitting its time and I failed to take that into account.

Mr. Bob Ringma (Nanaimo—Cowichan, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, through this motion and the debates herein, Reform is trying to tell the government and the people of Canada there are weaknesses appearing in many areas of the Department of

Supply

National Defence. The government's reaction to these faults is not good enough. We are saying that its leadership is inadequate and so is its management.

Let us look at the airborne regiment. I applaud the fact that the inquiry is finally underway. It should have taken place long ago. There has been ample evidence since the government has been in power to indicate there was something wrong in the regiment. Why did it let it fester?

If the government had launched an inquiry a year ago it would have spared us all a lot of misery and would have spared the sully of the reputations of many fine people.

The government did not act. As late as September last the minister said no to holding an inquiry. If an inquiry had been held, as we advocated, Major Armstrong, a Canadian forces medical officer, would have testified and had an outlet for his pent up concerns. The result would have been no adverse publicity for the forces. By the same token, it is probable we would not have had to go through the public video agony as these also would have found outlet in the inquiry. The government is not doing things in the proper order.

While we are on the subject of the airborne regiment, I would like to use that situation to underline why our motion in part condemns the government's failure to hold senior officials accountable for command and control shortcomings and deteriorating morale. It started with Private Kyle Brown instead of starting at the top.

I cannot believe the command structure of the Canadian forces did not know for quite some time there were problems in the airborne. I presume the Létourneau inquiry will identify the degree to which senior personnel were aware of and responsible for the deteriorating situation. Welcome as the inquiry is, it is too late to save the reputations of hard working professional soldiers and too late to save a fine regiment.

Let us look at the defence review. Once again we laud the government for taking the initiative to open up discussions in the House on defence matters and for conducting a defence review. Here again the government had it backwards. The review of our foreign policy should have come first. Defence policy is a function of foreign policy.

The other problem is that the government is not paying attention to what is being said. There is no point in having a defence review if we ignore some of its findings. Four examples have been ignored; personnel cuts to the forces, the budget cut 6,700 more than the review recommended.

Cuts to the defence budget, headquarters staff cuts, a study of the reorganization of national defence headquarters, creation of a standing joint committee on defence, review of capital expenditures over \$30 million before a proposed committee, an annual review by the minister, an annual debate of defence policy by

Parliament—these things recommended duly by the committee appointed have been ignored. We heard nothing about them.

(1655)

Let us look at base closures and the rationalisation of DND's infrastructure. Once again I compliment the government on its gumption in getting on with the job. Many of this minister's predecessors have found it too politically difficult a task to take on.

My complaints with the government methodology are now confined to the apparent lack of planning that went into the decision to close the bases at Calgary and Chilliwack. Since this has already been covered today by my colleagues, I will leave it at that.

On my own turf national defence is closing the Nanaimo army camp. The community, as it seems typical for the west, has pretty much accepted this partly because it could bring positive things along with it in using the land for other purposes.

According to what I hear, resulting from the first negotiating meeting that took place this week with the community, national defence's primary interest is not the community. It is selling the land at market value and is concerned about native land claims. That is the highest priority on its list. That does not make the city of Nanaimo and surrounding areas too enthusiastic.

Let us look at morale in the department and in the Canadian forces. We had Colonel Oehring's report in December. He was mainly discussing a morale problem which he summed up as a loss of confidence and trust. Without these an army cannot operate. Colonel Oehring talked about an increasingly impotent military leadership and an uncaring system. He cites the widening gap between leaders and the led. He states the crisis of confidence must be at least acknowledged at the highest levels, and that is not being done. He believes it will take a public commitment by the Minister of National Defence, even the Prime Minister, to restore soldiers' lost and destroyed confidence.

What has the minister done to restore this confidence? The latest report dated March 1995 comes from Brigadier General Jeffries at Petawawa, whose assessment after consulting all of his commanding officers was that morale for the moment is in large part satisfactory, but that there is widespread dissatisfaction at virtually all rank levels.

Part of this dissatisfaction is directly attributable to the highest levels of leadership and management in the department and in the Canadian forces. At this level we want more from our soldiers than we are prepared to pay for. Here too, as in other things, we are living beyond our means. The soldiers' perception is that their interests and welfare are being sacrificed so that senior leaders can be successful in delivering the same bang for a much less buck.

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Resolution of this problem must start at the very top. What is the minister doing about the morale and leadership in the department and in the Canadian forces?

Other things are amiss besides morale and leadership and there is no evidence that anything is being done. We hear reports of financial excesses by senior officers, reports of excessive expenditures on furniture and living allowances. What is being done? How does the ordinary soldier feel about his sacrifices, about his having to moonlight when his superiors spend irresponsibly?

What about the unanswered questions regarding former deputy minister Bob Fowler? There is a long list of questions which the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs did not deal with earlier this week. The air should be cleared on matters like this: here are the allegations, answer them. If Mr. Fowler has done nothing wrong, let everyone know about it.

The Reform motion today condemns the government for decisions which have diminished Canada's defence posture; decisions like the EH-101 helicopter. We could spend a day on that one. There is CFB Cornwallis, the size of the Canadian forces, the reserves. What is going to happen to the militia?

(1700)

There is a long list of problems to address and it is not happening. Or if they are being addressed, then Parliament and the Canadian people are not hearing about it. When the airborne inquiry is over, we need a new inquiry, a broadly based, broadly scoped inquiry to be put in its place to address all of the things we have been looking at.

Mr. Ted McWhinney (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker I have a question for the hon. member. The debate has focused above all on the Somalia tragedy and to a lesser extent the Bosnia tragedy.

Would the hon. member not agree that the explanation for the failure there lies in the failure to adequately define the roles and missions in advance of the intervention, the failure to separate and distinguish between chapter VI and chapter VII UN charter operations—peacekeeping as opposed to peacemaking—and the failure to adequately define a post-cold war military mission for our defence forces?

Understanding as he does the doctrine of ministerial responsibility, under those circumstances would he not accept that the responsibility lies not on the civil servants but under our constitutional system on the Prime Minister and defence minister who ventured into those operations without adequate prior thought, that is to say the Prime Minister and the defence minister in the preceding Mulroney government?

Mr. Ringma: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member for Vancouver Quadra that there is a fair bit in what he says. Responsibility can be attributed to the prior government and its minister and the Prime Minister.

It goes beyond that. I could carry that argument further and say we must. We have proposed that the House be involved in the decisions to deploy Canadian troops, that we must do that. It is a good point and well made. Beyond that there are other areas.

There are continuing problems. There is a problem even in Somalia with the leadership of the Canadian forces. Therefore I have to attribute part of the blame to the government of the day for not taking hold of these problems and saying: "What can we do about them?" Let us get them out in the open. Let us clarify them. Let us not condemn the people who are innocent in this process.

Yes, there is something to what the member says. Some blame can be attributed to the previous government, but also to this current government. It has to get on with rectifying things.

Mr. John Murphy (Annapolis Valley—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to stand in defence of our armed forces and the many excellent, highly professional people who make up the military.

The Government of Canada has shown leadership in this area by publishing a new white paper on defence. I believe it has provided a defence policy which gives the Canadian forces the clear direction required in these uncertain times.

As the Minister of National Defence detailed previously, senior military officers are providing leadership. This is evidenced by the effectiveness of our forces at home and abroad.

This debate has special importance for me because in my riding of Annapolis Valley—Hants I have a significant number of military personnel stationed at CFB Greenwood and at Camp Aldershot. I have had the pleasure of meeting with many of these people over the last number of years.

I am most impressed by the dedication, professionalism and commitment of the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces. They do their work with little or no public recognition. Yet our military continues to make significant contributions around the world.

The growing burden of public sector debt over the last 20 years has affected all Canadians. DND and the Canadian forces have rightly been expected to contribute their fair share to reduce the nation's deficit.

Supply

(1705)

In 1989 DND and the Canadian Armed Forces suffered deep cuts to personnel, capital purchases and infrastructure. The most recent federal budget continues that trend.

I am certainly not suggesting that members of the Department of National Defence or the Canadian forces are resentful of having to do their part. It is quite the opposite. They, like many Canadians serving in the defence of Canada, are interested in understanding the need to do their part for the national effort to reduce the deficit.

There is no denying however that fiscal restraint generates stress and uncertainty, a situation certainly not unique to the Canadian forces. Downsizing the Canadian forces means that expectations of a secure military career with unlimited advancement can no longer be met. Salaries and incentive pay have been frozen. Some of the rank and file, particularly those with less than four years' service, may find it difficult at times to make ends meet.

Under these trying circumstances, it is imperative that the leadership in DND and the Canadian forces take positive action to improve morale. They must deal with the problems being faced by those under their charge. I contend they are doing that.

Senior leaders are constantly in touch with their men and women in the forces. They will remain so to explain what is happening and to detail actions being taken on their behalf.

There are a number of workforce pressures that our forces experience. Economic and social changes, as we know, have had dramatic impact on the nature of the Canadian family and the workforce. Marriages in which both spouses work are becoming the dominant trend.

The Canadian forces are like a microcosm of the larger Canadian society and therefore reflect these trends. Between 1980 and 1990 the number of military couples in the Canadian forces tripled. The majority of the force members are now either married or single parents. Among married couples, the number with families and working spouses is significant. This development has put pressure on the military as members are understandably seeking family, career, financial and educational stability.

DND and the Canadian forces have added the challenge of balancing the needs of their members with the needs of operational requirements and effectiveness.

Many career paths are being restructured to reduce the number of postings and assignments that a member of the Canadian forces can expect over a lifetime of service. This policy will result in fewer relocations, easing the burden on military personnel and families. Ways to alleviate the stress and hardship caused by moves that are frequent in comparison with civilians are being highly examined.

There is also social change. Over the past 15 years society has embraced a new idealism based on individual human rights and freedoms. This is reflected in legislation such as the Human Rights Act, the Privacy Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights

and Freedoms. It is the task of the leaders within DND and the Canadian forces to identify and respond appropriately to such changes. It is clear that DND and the Canadian forces have managed to do just that.

Canada's human rights legislation has been actively addressed in both spirit and letter. As a result, the role of women in the military has been enhanced. The percentage of women in the Canadian forces is among the highest of any military force in the world. Nevertheless, DND and the forces have reinforced their commitment to make military careers more attractive to women.

The ability of DND and the Canadian forces to adapt and respond to societal pressures stands in testament to their leaders. As with good leadership, good morale is likewise integral to the success of the Canadian forces.

Lately we have been hearing much about the morale of the military. Members opposite have been suggesting that the Canadian forces are receiving poor leadership and that morale is being affected. Leadership clearly influences morale. The chain of command's responsibility for morale was noted by the special joint committee on Canada's defence policy. This same committee however noted that the leadership provided by senior ranks with the Canadian forces is excellent. If morale among the uniform ranks is not as high as it could be, it is largely for the same reason that morale is not high elsewhere in society: fear of layoffs, fear of the future, fear of the children's future.

(1710)

This is not to suggest that senior leaders within the department and the Canadian forces can remain passive. They cannot and will not abdicate their responsibility for ensuring that morale is as high as possible.

It is understood that like many Canadians, members of the Canadian forces are being asked to do their job with limited resources at their disposal. That is why care is being taken to address those needs that are most acute. Current plans call for the acquisition of a variety of modern equipment essential to the maintenance of multi-purpose combat capacity and capability. For example there exists a recognized operational deficiency in the armoured personnel carrier fleet. The Canadian forces will therefore acquire new armoured personnel carriers with delivery to commence in 1997.

Furthermore, approximately 3,000 additional soldiers will be added to the army's field force despite an overall reduction in the size of the armed forces. This will help alleviate shortfalls in the field army's ability to meet Canada's international commitments.

Supply

A recent memo by Brigadier-General Jeffries has also been cited by some as proof of deteriorating morale within the forces. They claim that the blame can be laid at the feet of senior members within DND and the Canadian forces. First it should be acknowledged that General Jeffries states in his memo that morale remains, for the most part, high. Second, it must be realized that the Canadian forces have been under considerable pressure for the past few years. Memos such as the one written by General Jeffries represents part of the solution.

To again quote the special joint committee, every commanding officer, indeed every military person commanding a unit of whatever size, constantly monitors the state of morale in his or her unit and takes whatever steps are required to maintain good communication within the personnel in their charge.

Good leadership demands that we know what people are thinking and what their concerns are. Through surveys, studies and memos like that written by General Jeffries, issues are brought to the forefront and dealt with appropriately.

In conclusion, the Department of National Defence and the Canadian forces face a host of pressures many of which are shared by all Canadians and some of which are unique to those who have chosen to serve the country. Changing societal expectations, limited resources, evolving demands on the workforce have created new challenges for all of us. Those in the Canadian military have the added challenge of meeting the operational requirements and responsibilities associated with any military force.

Meeting these challenges effectively requires strong leadership. I believe senior members of the Department of National Defence and the Canadian forces are providing that leadership. Many measures aimed at addressing the concerns of force members have been implemented and many others are being examined. The chain of command bears full responsibility for the morale in the forces. The excellent leadership demonstrated by everyone from the Minister of National Defence on down ensures that morale will always remain high.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): It being 5.15 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 81, proceedings on the motion have expired. It is my duty to put forthwith all questions necessary to dispose of the supply proceedings now before the House.

[*English*]

Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Call in the members.

(The House divided on the motion, which was negated on the following division:)

(*Division No. 178*)

YEAS

Members

Bellehumeur	Bergeron
Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)	Blaikie
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)	Brown (Calgary Southeast)
Bélisle	Caron
Chatters	Crête
Cummins	Daviault
Debien	de Jong
Deshaies	Dubé
Duceppe	Dumas
Duncan	Epp
Fillion	Forseth
Frazer	Gagnon (Québec)
Godin	Gouk
Guay	Guimond
Harper (Calgary West)	Harper (Simcoe Centre)
Jacob	Jennings
Johnston	Lalonde
Landry	Langlois
Laurin	Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)
Lebel	Lefebvre
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)	Leroux (Shefford)
Loubier	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
McClelland (Edmonton Southwest)	Mercier
Meredith	Ménard
Nunez	Paré
Penson	Pomerleau
Ringma	Rocheleau
Schmidt	Scott (Skeena)
Stinson	Strahl
Thompson	Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)
Tremblay (Rosemont)	White (North Vancouver)—62

NAYS

Members

Adams	Arseneault
Augustine	Bakopanos
Barnes	Beaumont
Bellemare	Bertrand
Bethel	Bevilacqua
Blondin—Andrew	Bodnar
Bonin	Boudria
Brown (Oakville—Milton)	Brushett
Bryden	Bélair
Bélanger	Calder
Catterall	Cauchon

Clancy
Collenette
Comuzzi
Cowling
DeVillers
Discepola
English
Finestone
Flis
Gagliano
Galloway
Godfrey
Grose
Harb
Hickey
Hubbard
Keyes
Kraft Sloan
LeBlanc (Cape/Cap-Breton Highlands—Canso)
Lincoln
MacAulay
MacLellan (Cape/Cap-Breton—The Sydneys)
Malhi
Manley
Marleau
McCormick
McKinnon
McTeague
Mifflin
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mitchell
Murray
Nunziata
O'Reilly
Paradis
Peters
Pickard (Essex—Kent)
Proud
Regan
Robichaud
Rock
Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury)
Shepherd
Speller
Stewart (Brant)
Telegdi
Torsney
Vanclief
Volpe
Wappel
Whelan
Young —125

Cohen
Collins
Copp
Crawford
Dingwall
Duhamel
Fewchuk
Finlay
Fontana
Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Gerrard
Graham
Guarnieri
Harvard
Hopkins
Irwin
Kirkby
Lastewka
Lee
Loney
MacDonald
Maheu
Maloney
Marchi
Massé
McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton Northwest)
McWhinney
Milliken
Minna
Murphy
Nault
O'Brien
Pagtakhan
Petry
Phinney
Pillitteri
Reed
Richardson
Robillard
Rompkey
Serré
Skoke
St. Denis
Stewart (Northumberland)
Thalheimer
Valeri
Verran
Walker
Wells
Wood

PAIRED—MEMBERS

Asselin
Bernier (Gaspé)
Brien
Canuel
Chrétien (Frontenac)
Dalphond-Guiral
Gaffney
Gray (Windsor West)
Ianno
Marchand
Picard (Drummond)
Simmons
Szabo
Wayne

Bachand
Bouchard
Campbell
Chan
Culbert
Fry
Goodale
Harper (Churchill)
Jackson
Parrish
Sauvageau
St-Laurent
Ur
de Savoye

(1740)

The Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

Supply

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (D)

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (for President of the Treasury Board) moved:

That Supplementary Estimates (D) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1995 be concurred in.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. If I were to seek it, perhaps you would find unanimous consent to apply the vote just taken on the opposition motion to the concurrence in Supplementary Estimates (D) in reverse.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 179)

YEAS

Members

Adams
Augustine
Barnes
Bellemare
Bethel
Blondin-Andrew
Bonin
Brown (Oakville—Milton)
Bryden
Bélanger
Catterall
Clancy
Collenette
Comuzzi
Cowling
DeVillers
Discepola
English
Finestone
Flis
Gagliano
Galloway
Godfrey
Grose
Harb
Hickey
Hubbard
Keyes
Kraft Sloan
LeBlanc (Cape/Cap-Breton Highlands—Canso)
Lincoln
MacAulay

Arseneault
Bakopanos
Beaumier
Bertrand
Bevilacqua
Bodnar
Boudria
Brushett
Bélair
Calder
Cauchon
Cohen
Collins
Copp
Crawford
Dingwall
Duhamel
Fewchuk
Finlay
Fontana
Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Gerrard
Graham
Guarnieri
Harvard
Hopkins
Irwin
Kirkby
Lastewka
Lee
Loney
MacDonald

Supply

MacLellan (Cape/Cap-Breton—The Sydneys)	Maheu
Malhi	Maloney
Manley	Marchi
Marleau	Massé
McCormick	McGuire
McKinnon	McLellan (Edmonton Northwest)
McTeague	McWhinney
Mifflin	Milliken
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)	Minna
Mitchell	Murphy
Murray	Nault
Nunziata	O'Brien
O'Reilly	Pagtakhan
Paradis	Patry
Peters	Phinney
Pickard (Essex—Kent)	Pillitteri
Proud	Reed
Regan	Richardson
Robichaud	Robillard
Rock	Rompkey
Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury)	Serré
Shepherd	Skoke
Speller	St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)	Stewart (Northumberland)
Telegdi	Thalheimer
Torsney	Valeri
Vancief	Verran
Volpe	Walker
Wappel	Wells
Whelan	Wood
Young —125	

(1745)

Mr. Gagliano (for President of the Treasury Board) moved that Bill C-79, an act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service of Canada for the financial year ending March 31, 1995, be read the first time.

(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time.)

Mr. Gagliano (for President of the Treasury Board) moved that the bill be read the second time and referred to committee of the whole.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

[*Translation*]

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I think that if you were to seek the unanimous consent of the House, you might find agreement to apply the vote applied on the previous motion to the motion now before the House.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

[*English*]

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Editor's Note: See list under Division No. 179.*]

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Kilger in the chair.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall clause 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 2 agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall clause 3 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

NAYS

Members

Bellehumeur	Bergeron
Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)	Blaikie
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)	Brown (Calgary Southeast)
Bélisle	Caron
Chatters	Crête
Cummins	Daviault
Debien	de Jong
Deshaies	Dubé
Duceppe	Dumas
Duncan	Epp
Fillion	Forseth
Frazer	Gagnon (Québec)
Godin	Gouk
Guay	Guimond
Harper (Calgary West)	Harper (Simcoe Centre)
Jacob	Jennings
Johnston	Lalonde
Landry	Langlois
Laurin	Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)
Lebel	Lefebvre
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)	Leroux (Shefford)
Loubier	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
McClelland (Edmonton Southwest)	Mercier
Meredith	Ménard
Nunez	Paré
Penson	Pomerleau
Ringma	Rocheleau
Schmidt	Scott (Skeena)
Stinson	Strahl
Thompson	Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)
Tremblay (Rosemont)	White (North Vancouver)—62

PAIRED—MEMBERS

Asselin	Bachand
Bernier (Gaspé)	Bouchard
Brien	Campbell
Canuel	Chan
Chrétien (Frontenac)	Culbert
Dalphond—Guiral	Fry
Gaffney	Goodale
Gray (Windsor West)	Harper (Churchill)
Ianno	Jackson
Marchand	Parrish
Picard (Drummond)	Sauvageau
Simmons	St-Laurent
Szabo	Ur
Wayne	de Savoye

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Supply

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 3 agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall clause 4 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 4 agreed to.)

[*Translation*]

On Clause 5

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Before we proceed, I would like to know whether the Secretary of State for Parliamentary Affairs could give the House the assurance that the content of the bill before us is presented in the usual format.

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this bill is in the same form as passed in previous years.

[*English*]

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall clause 5 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 5 agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall clause 6 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 6 agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall clause 7 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 7 agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall the schedule carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall clause 1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 1 agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall the preamble carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Preamble agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Title agreed to.)

(Bill reported.)

(1750)

Mr. Gagliano (for President of the Treasury Board) moved that the bill be concurred in.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, if you were to seek unanimous consent, you might find agreement to apply the vote applied on the previous motion to the motion now before the House.

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Editor's Note: See list under Division No. 179*]

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr. Gagliano (for President of the Treasury Board) moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Supply

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

[Translation]

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I think that if you were to seek the unanimous consent of the House, you might find agreement to apply the vote applied on the previous motion to the motion now before the House.

[English]

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Editor's Note: See list under Division No. 179]

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed.)

* * *

INTERIM SUPPLY

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (for President of the Treasury Board) moved:

That this House do concur in Interim Supply as follows:

That a sum not exceeding \$13,678,486,367.24 being composed of:

(1) three-twelfths (\$9,436,353,218.25) of the total of the amounts of the items set forth in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1996, which were laid upon the Table Tuesday, February 28, 1995, and except for those items below:

(2) eleven-twelfths of the total of the amount of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Vote L30 and Treasury Board Vote 5 (Schedule A) of the said Estimates, \$412,537,583.33;

(3) nine-twelfths of the total of the amount of Industry Vote 5 and Transport Vote 35 (Schedule B) of the said Estimates, \$49,296,750.00;

(4) eight-twelfths of the total of the amounts of Canadian Heritage Vote 95, and Human Resources Development Vote 50 (Schedule C) of the said Estimates, \$4,292,666.67;

(5) six-twelfths of the total of the amount of Canadian Heritage Vote 150, Indian Affairs and Northern Development Vote 10, Justice Vote 5 and Treasury Board Vote 10 (Schedule D) of the said Estimates, \$11,435,500.00;

(6) five-twelfths of the total of the amounts of Canadian Heritage Vote 75, Finance Vote L30, Indian Affairs and Northern Development Votes 15 and 50, Natural Resources Vote 10, Public Works and Government Services Vote 30 and Transport Vote 1 (Schedule E) of the said Estimates, \$2,273,490,041.66;

(7) four-twelfths of the total of the amounts of Canadian Heritage Votes 40, 45, 60 and 70, and Citizenship and Immigration Vote 10, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Vote 15, Human Resources Development Votes 5 and 10, Indian Affairs and Northern Development Votes 35 and 40, Industry Votes 40, 45 and 95, Justice Votes 1 and 10, Parliament Vote 1, Public Works and Government Services Votes 20 and 25, and Solicitor General Vote 5 (Schedule F) of the said Estimates, \$1,491,080,607.33;

be granted to Her Majesty on account of the fiscal year ending March 31, 1996.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, if you were to seek it you would find unanimous consent to apply the vote taken on the previous motion to the motion now before the House.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Editor's Note: See list under Division No. 179.]

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr. Gagliano (for President of the Treasury Board) moved that Bill C-80, an act for granting Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service of Canada for the financial year ending March 31, 1996, be read the first time.

(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time.)

Mr. Gagliano (for President of the Treasury Board) moved that the bill be read the second time and referred to committee of the whole.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

(1755)

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, if you would seek unanimous consent you would find that there is consent to apply the vote taken on the previous motion to the motion now before the House.

Mr. Speaker: Is that agreed?

Supply

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Editor's Note: See list under Division No. 179.*]

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Kilger in the chair.)

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: House in Committee of the Whole on Bill C-80, an Act for granting Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service of Canada for the financial year ending March 31, 1996.

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Secretary of State for Parliamentary Affairs if this bill is presented in the same form as passed in previous years.

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the appropriations requested in the bill are intended to meet all the basic requirements of the public service of Canada until June 31, 1995. The bill does not appropriate the total amount for any item, and the bill has the customary format of interim supply bills. I can assure the hon. member that the bill is in the same form as passed in previous years.

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall clause 2 carry?

(Clause 2 agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall clause 3 carry?

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 3 agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall clause 4 carry?

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 4 agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall clause 5 carry?

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 5 agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall Schedule A carry?

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule A agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall Schedule B carry?

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule B agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall Schedule C carry?

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule C agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall Schedule D carry?

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule D agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall Schedule E carry?

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule E agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall Schedule F carry?

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule F agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall Clause 1 carry?

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 1 agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall the preamble carry?

Some hon. members: On division.

(Preamble agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: On division.

(Title agreed to.)

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Shall the bill be adopted?

Some hon. members: On division.

(Bill reported.)

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (for the President of the Treasury Board) moved that the bill be concurred in.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

[*English*]

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, if you were to seek unanimous consent you would find there is consent to apply the vote just taken on the previous motion to the motion now before the House.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Private Members' Business

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Editor's Note: See list under Division No. 179.*]

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr. Gagliano (for President of the Treasury Board) moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Some hon. members: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

[*Translation*]

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I believe that if you were to seek unanimous consent you would find there is consent to apply the vote taken on the previous motion to the motion now before the House.

[*English*]

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Editor's Note: See list under Division No. 179.*]

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed.)

The Speaker: It being 6 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

She said: Mr. Speaker, on November 28, 1985, under Standing Order 22, better known today as Standing Order 31, the Deputy Prime Minister sought posthumous pardon for Louis David Riel. At that time, the hon. member for Hamilton East said, and I quote: "Louis Riel, who died unnecessarily, deserves to be exonerated by the Government and recognized as a victim of wrongdoing".

The aim of Bill C-288, an act to revoke the conviction of Louis David Riel, which is before the House in second reading today, is simply to exonerate the victim of a conspiracy. The members of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs representing the Liberal Party of Canada and the Reform Party joined forces and decided that this bill was not votable, despite the fact that a number of government members welcomed it enthusiastically.

It was not the intention of the Bloc Québécois in introducing it to further complicate relations between whites and native peoples and between anglophones and francophones.

(1805)

The Bloc Québécois' action is in step with work begun by Canadian parliamentarians, who, for more than ten years, have been asking the members of this House to rise temporarily above partisan bickering and join together to revoke the conviction of Louis Riel.

Here is a brief history of the interventions preceding this one. On September 23, 1983, MP William Yurko tabled Bill C-691, an act to pardon Louis David Riel. He tried again on March 14, 1984 with Bill C-228.

A few months later, Les Benjamin, member for Regina—Lumsden, twice tabled a bill, this time to revoke the conviction of Louis David Riel—first on June 28, 1984 and then on December 13, 1984.

On September 16, 1987, the member for Kamloops tabled the same bill. On October 13, 1989, Mr. Skelly, member for Comox—Alberni, tabled a notice of motion to recognize Louis Riel as a Father of Confederation.

Lastly, on March 10, 1992, the Right Hon. Joe Clark, President of the Privy Council and Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs in the Mulroney government and hon. member for Yellowhead, introduced a resolution, which was adopted, whereby the House recognized, and I quote: "The unique and historic role of Louis Riel as a founder of Manitoba and his contribution in the development of Confederation" and agreed to "support by its actions the true attainment, both in principle and practice, of the constitutional rights of the Metis people".

The bill currently being debated in the House is identical to the ones which have been introduced by the New Democrats over the past ten years. Furthermore, I have been told that, at one time, there was agreement between the three parties, Conser-

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*Translation*]

ACT TO REVOKE THE CONVICTION OF LOUIS DAVID RIEL

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ) moved that Bill C-288, an act to revoke the conviction of Louis David Riel, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

Private Members' Business

vatives, Liberals and New Democrats, to pass the bill, but it was never pursued.

The bill we are considering today does not aim to rewrite history. That would be impossible. Riel is dead. And, anyway, the act to revoke his conviction aims to revoke his unjust conviction, 110 years after his death.

On November 16, 1885, Louis "David" Riel, the Metis hero, was hanged. At a time when means of communication were far from being what they are today, the unjust hanging of Riel upset an indignant population, even as far away as on Quebec's shores.

Less than one week after his hanging, on November 22, 1885, close to 50,000 people gathered in the Champ de Mars in Montreal, to hear the famous cry of Honoré Mercier, one of the greatest of all of Quebec's premiers: "Riel, our brother, is dead".

Premier Mercier's cry is how any free person would have marked the passing of any just woman or man who was unjustly assassinated. It also is a cry marking the passing of a man who fought injustice towards his people.

For this reason, the case of Riel is exemplary. I remember the resolution introduced in this House by the Right Hon. Joe Clark on March 10, 1992. Watered down to satisfy the Conservative and Liberal dinosaurs of the day, the resolution which was adopted unanimously recognizes that the Metis and Louis Riel had just cause to fight against the Canadian government. The resolution states, and I quote:

That this House take note that the Metis people of Rupert's Land and the North Western Territory through democratic structures and procedures took effective steps to maintain order and protect the lives, rights and property of the people of the Red River;

That this House take note that, in 1870, under the leadership of Louis Riel, the Metis of the Red River adopted a List of Rights;

That this House take note that, based on the List of Rights, Louis Riel negotiated the terms for the admission of Rupert's Land and the North Western Territory into the Dominion of Canada;

That this House take note that these terms for admission form part of the Manitoba Act;

That this House take note that, after negotiating Manitoba's entry into Confederation, Louis Riel was elected thrice to the House of Commons;

That this House take note that, in 1885, Louis Riel paid with his life for his leadership in a movement which fought for the maintenance of the rights and freedoms of the Metis people;

That this House take note that the Constitution Act, 1982, recognizes and affirms the existing aboriginal and treaty right of the Metis;

That this House take note that since the death of Louis Riel, the Metis people have honoured his memory and continued his purposes in their honourable striving for the implementation of those rights.

(1810)

Twice, Riel defended the Metis against the Canadian government: in 1869 in Manitoba and in 1885 in Saskatchewan.

The legitimate, democratic and just nature of what he did must be emphasized. What Riel did was legitimate and has been recognized as such by all those who have made a careful analysis of the behaviour of the Canadian government's representatives in 1869. Even Macdonald later acknowledged that, in the circumstances, the inhabitants of the young colony had been obliged to form a government in order to protect their lives and their property.

What Riel did was democratic. At all stages, Riel ensured that the people were consulted and that anglophone and francophone groups were represented in equal proportions, even though francophones were the more numerous of the two groups at the time.

What Riel did was just. In his list of rights, Riel included representation in the government of Canada, guarantees of bilingualism in the provincial legislature, a bilingual chief justice and provisions for free farms and treaties with the Indians.

Riel was elected to the House of Commons three times as the representative for Provencher. In an upcoming book on Riel, Richard Saindon, a CBC journalist in Rimouski, tells how on March 30, 1874 the then member for Rimouski, Jean-Baptiste-Romuald Fiset, took a hooded Riel in through one of the concealed doors to be sworn in as a member of Parliament and sign the registry. On April 9, 1874 he was expelled from the House. The motion was re-introduced, and when he was re-elected *in absentia* on September 3, 1874 for the third time, he was prevented from taking his seat.

The strain of his battle for the Metis took a lasting toll on his mental health and he had to be hospitalized. He was admitted to the asylum at Longue Pointe, now Louis-Hippolyte Lafontaine, on March 6, 1876. In May of that year, in a move to outwit his political enemies, he was transferred to the asylum at Beauport, now Robert Giffard, which he left a year and a half later on the undertaking that he would lead a quiet life.

In July 1884, at the request of Metis, anglophones and Indians in Saskatchewan, Riel, who was then living in Montana, returned to Canada, to Batoche in Saskatchewan, to defend his people. On December 16, 1884, the organization representing the Metis and anglophones sent the Canadian government a long petition with 25 clauses, mostly about land claims, which outlined Metis and Indian grievances.

Representatives of the Saskatchewan people requested that they be allowed to send delegates to Ottawa with their List of Rights as in 1870, so that an agreement could be reached on their

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entry into Confederation, should they become a free province. Secretary of State Chapleau acknowledged receipt of the petition and then Prime Minister Macdonald, who later denied receiving it, passed it on to his Minister of the Interior, the hon. David Lewis Macpherson.

While Riel suffered renewed attacks of paranoia as a result of the tension, the federal government responded to the Saskatchewan people's fair demands by sending in the army. On May 15, 1885, Riel gave himself up.

As for the trial which led the Metis hero to the scaffold, it was full of irregularities. Let us look at the facts. Militia minister Joseph-Philippe-René-Adolphe Caron sent Riel to jail in Winnipeg. For his part, then Prime Minister John Alexander Macdonald wanted to ensure a unanimous verdict. He analyzed the situation. He knew that people in Regina did not like the accused, while Winnipeg residents were supportive of him. He therefore decided to have Riel tried in Regina instead of Winnipeg.

(1815)

In fact, if Riel had been tried in Winnipeg, he would have been entitled to a 12-man jury, half of which could be made up of francophones. He would also have been entitled to a Superior Court judge whose independence is guaranteed by law and custom.

However, conditions were quite different in Regina: with no guarantee of bilingualism, the jury was composed of English-speaking Protestants. The only francophone out of the 36 people who were called had an accident and the only Catholic recused himself. A unilingual English judge, Richardson, was chosen. He owed his position to the federal government and could be summarily dismissed at any time.

Among the 84 accused rebels, Riel was the only one tried under a 1352 English law rather than the 1868 Canadian legislation. The former provided for compulsory capital punishment and the latter, for life imprisonment.

Although Mr. Roy, the Beauport asylum's medical superintendent, and Daniel Clark, the superintendent of the insane asylum in Toronto, recognized that Riel suffered from megalomania, preference was given to the evidence given by Wallace, medical superintendent of the insane asylum in Hamilton, who, on the basis of a half-hour interview, maintained that Riel was of sound mind.

In his address to the jury, Judge Richardson appeared strongly prejudiced against Riel, according to Thomas in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. In fact, the Macdonald government sacrificed Riel to the powerful Ontario Orangemen's lobby.

To justify itself, cabinet goes as far as falsifying, in a report to this House, the report by Dr. Valade attesting that Riel was not guilty by reason of insanity. From 1885 to this day, every

psychiatrist who reviewed Riel's case, with one exception, diagnosed the Metis leader as suffering from grandiose delusion. Finally, on the one hand, the Canadian justice system convicted 20 Metis and many Indians, but on the other hand, it acquitted two White settlers charged with a national security offence, namely Jackson and Thomas Scott.

Riel's assassination, while being the most visible manifestation of it, is but one of the elements of a national policy aimed at quashing any wish to have a distinct society west of Ontario.

Francophones account for only 1.9 per cent of all immigrants who settled in Western Canada. It is therefore no wonder that, today, francophones account for as little as 4.7 per cent of the population in Manitoba; 2.2 per cent in Saskatchewan; 2.3 per cent in Alberta; 1.6 per cent in British Columbia; 3.3 per cent in the Yukon and 2.5 per cent in the Northwest Territories, when in the days of Louis Riel, the francophone community was the largest community in Western Canada.

No wonder such an adverse immigration policy led to francophones becoming assimilated in a flash, as we can see from 1991 statistics, which indicate rates of assimilation of 52.1 per cent in Manitoba; 69.6 per cent in Saskatchewan; 66.9 per cent in Alberta; 75.2 per cent in British Columbia; and 56.6 per cent in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

In 1891, the Canadian government put a Quebec religious teaching order in charge of opening schools in the West to turn francophone Metis children into anglophones. A century later, at a mass celebrated on September 3, 1991, the Sisters of the Assumption recognized their participation in the cultural genocide of the Metis in Alberta.

Louis Riel was hanged for being a Metis and a francophone, for having advocated a distinct society. I had hoped that on the 110th anniversary of his assassination, this House would rise to the occasion and honour this man who devoted his life to championing the rights of his people. I must face facts and realize that it is no use.

To those who strongly object to such historical reminders, I simply want to remind that to deny the past is to fail to try to understand the present and, most importantly, to refuse to give ourselves a future.

(1820)

We, in Quebec, have looked at these events of the past. What we understand about our present circumstances is that the rest of Canada denies our existence and refuses to see and accept us as different. That is why the only possible future for us rests in the courage and pride we will take in soon giving ourselves a country of our own.

Mr. Robert Bertrand (Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to discuss private member's bill C-288, an Act to revoke the conviction of Louis David Riel, which was

tabled by the hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata. The preamble of this bill states that Louis David Riel, Member of the House of Commons for the electoral district of Provencher from 1873 to 1874, was convicted on August 1, 1885 of high treason, sentenced to death, and was hanged on November 16, 1885, at Regina, North West Territories.

The bill also states that notwithstanding his conviction, Louis David Riel has become a symbol and a hero to successive generations of Canadians who have, through their governments, honoured and commemorated him in specific projects and actions. The purpose of this bill, is to revoke the conviction of Louis Riel for high treason. To that end, the hon. member who sponsors the bill refers to the role played by Louis Riel in Canadian history.

Louis Riel was elected three times to this House. His constituents considered him to be a guide who was reliable, intelligent and educated. Louis Riel worked in close co-operation with the members of his community to help them identify and state their claims and their objectives. Louis Riel played a major role in helping Manitoba become a member of Confederation as a province, not as part of the North West Territories, and in ensuring that the guarantees protecting religion and the language were enshrined in the Manitoba Act. I think we all recognize the very prominent role played by Louis Riel as protector of the interests of the Metis, as well as his contribution to the development of western Canada.

Some actions have already taken in the past to recognize the contribution of Louis Riel to the building of our country. Let me just briefly mention the issue of stamps, the erection of statues and the organizing of cultural events. Moreover, on March 10, 1992, the House of Commons passed a resolution, tabled by the then President of the Privy Council and Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs, recognizing the role played by Louis Riel.

That resolution, which was passed by this House and the other place, received the support of the Metis nation of Canada and ended with these words: "That this House recognize the unique and historic role of Louis Riel as a founder of Manitoba and his contribution in the development of Confederation; and that this House support by its actions the true attainment, both in principle and in practice, of the constitutional rights of the Metis people". Members on this side of the House supported the resolution and recognized Louis Riel's contribution. Louis Riel paid the ultimate price as leader of a movement which fought to protect the rights and freedoms of the Metis people.

He was convicted of high treason, sentenced to death and hanged. This bill, which seeks to revoke the conviction of Louis Riel, raises important issues which must be carefully reviewed. As I said, it seeks to revoke the conviction of Louis Riel, an event which is also part of Canada's history. In conclusion, I

Private Members' Business

suggest that we take a look to see how we could implement this initiative.

(1825)

[English]

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-288, an act to revoke the conviction of Louis David Riel. I acknowledge and appreciate the point of view brought forward by my colleague and friend from Rimouski—Témiscouata.

As a member of Parliament from Alberta, I am well aware of the controversial role that Louis Riel played in the political development of the west. Some historians depict Riel as a traitor who openly rebelled against Ottawa. Others consider him a father of Confederation who in 1870 negotiated Manitoba's entry into the dominion. Still others consider him the founder of western alienation movements which have protested central Canadian political and economic power.

For over a century now this historiographical debate has been raging as to whether Riel was a traitor or a martyr. I do not believe we will resolve that debate today. Having said that, I believe it is inappropriate as well as unnecessary to revisit and to rewrite our national history. Granted, some of the decisions taken in the Riel trial are questionable, but I am not convinced this bill was put forward to simply right a perceived wrong.

Thus far in the 35th Parliament, two Bloc Québécois initiatives with revisionist undertones have been debated. First there was Motion No. 257 which set out to officially sanction at the federal level Patriots Day. On November 1, 1994 I cautioned the House that if it adopted the motion of the hon. member for Verchères we would be galvanizing support for a celebration with sovereigntist undertones.

In addition to the examples I presented to the House last November, I have since discovered another one. It is in a scene from Denis Falardeau's latest film *Octobre*. As most of us know, its production was heavily financed by the National Film Board as well as by Telefilm. At one point in the film the FLQ kidnapers of Pierre Laporte made reference to their historical and emotional ties with the Patriotes' objectives during the 1837-38 rebellion.

Now the House is debating Bill C-288. Our hon. colleague from Rimouski—Témiscouata knows full well the controversy surrounding the conviction of Louis Riel and the national schism which followed his hanging and her eloquence was a statement of that. In 1885 there was a shared minority complex between the French Canadians and the Metis people. Both groups were francophone and both groups were Catholic.

Today some members of the Bloc Québécois are siding with francophones outside Quebec in their fight for greater rights. Since the collapse of the États généraux du Canada-français in 1968 and more recently during the Mahé case heard by the

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Supreme Court of Canada, Quebec nationalists have not always stood up alongside the various francophone communities in their struggles against their respective governments. Now there seems to be a renewed sense of co-operation between the Quebecois and the francophone diaspora.

With this bill the Bloc Quebecois would more than likely win the support of the franco-Manitoban and Fransaskois communities as well as gaining some sympathy for their cessionist cause. The franco-Manitobans and the Fransaskois alike must not forget that the BQ is working toward separation. The BQ may be considered in this case a circumspect ally.

However, in 1885 the French Canadians were not circumspect allies of the Metis. They were genuinely outraged at the supposed mockery of justice perpetrated against Louis Riel.

Considered by the Metis people as a hero who negotiated the Red River colony's entry into Confederation, Riel was once again called upon by his people in 1884 to lead the newest struggle against Ottawa encroachment on their land.

Riel and his followers took up arms against federal troops. Outmanned and outgunned, Riel finally surrendered on May 15, 1885. The prisoner was subsequently transferred to Regina for his trial. On August 1, after only a half hour of deliberation, the jury found Louis Riel guilty of high treason. Under British law, high treason was punishable by death.

The conviction and subsequent hanging of Riel in Regina created great upheaval in Quebec. On November 17, the day following the execution, Honoré Mercier founded a new political party which included bleus as well as rouges outraged by Riel's hanging. The main objective of the new Parti National was to oust Sir John A. Macdonald and his cabinet. One of the Parti national's goals was to canalise and perpetuate the solidarity created among the French-speaking Canadians by the Riel affair.

(1830)

A week after the hanging a rally at the Champs de Mars in downtown Montreal attracted thousands. The crowd gathered to express its frustration with how English Canada had treated one of its own in the west. Honoré Mercier started his now famous speech with a call for solidarity: "Riel, notre frère est mort—"

[Translation]

Mercier went on to say: "By killing Riel, sir John not only hit our race in the heart, but he mostly hurt the cause of justice and humanity, which, represented in all languages and blessed by all religions, appealed for clemency on behalf of the Regina prisoner, our poor brother from the Northwest".

[English]

Also during the rally resolutions were passed which stated:

[Translation]

"Whereas it is obvious that the government used this execution purely for political gain; that it coldly calculated how many ridings would be lost to a policy of clemency and justice; that as a result of these calculations, it sacrificed our brother to the hate of fanatics, allowing them to turn against one another the various races who, in this country, live under the protection of the English flag; RESOLVED: That, by executing Louis Riel on November 16, the government of sir John A. Macdonald committed an inhuman and cruel act unworthy of a civilized nation, and especially deserves the reprobation of all citizens of this province".

[English]

I am afraid Bill C-288 will evoke if not stir these sentiments of English Canada versus those of French Canada once again. On the eve of one of our country's most passionate debates the Bloc Quebecois perhaps is evoking controversial episodes of our national history, episodes that tore at the very fabric of our country. First there was motion 257 which dealt with the Patriots and now there is Bill C-288 which deals with Louis Riel.

Further to this discussion, Jeffrey Simpson stated in his December 20, 1994 article in the *Globe and Mail* entitled "The Liberals refuse the queue that's trying to wag the government":

History is always being rewritten, so that the devils of yesterday sometimes become the martyrs of today, and heroes in their time often lose their lustre with the passing of years. Understanding history is critical so that the errors of the past are not repeated, but retrospective justice asks today's Canadians to pay for decisions they had no part in making.

Jeffrey Simpson is right. We must understand our past so that we may forge ahead. The hanging of Louis Riel created a great uproar all across the land, especially in Quebec. Instead of evoking controversial elements of our past, should we not as legislators be looking for solutions to today's problems?

I find it regrettable that the House is spending this time debating issues such as these. All of us as parliamentarians should be concentrating our efforts on finding solutions to present day problems. By saying this I in no way mean that we should not be proud of our history, that we should not become more familiar with controversial episodes of our national history and that we should not forget where we come from because as Donald Creighton, one of Canada's foremost scholars, argues, for a solution to a political problem to be efficient, it must be based on a sound understanding of history.

When I say the House should be debating present day problems, I mean there are so many issues, political, economic, social, of great consequence. Even my colleagues in the Bloc Quebecois would agree these are the things we should be

debating on the floor of the House instead of arguing whether Louis Riel was a martyr or a traitor. That task may be better left to historians.

Without a doubt Louis Riel is a controversial figure in Canadian history. Some consider him a traitor, others a martyr and still others consider him the founder of the western alienation movements.

Who are we as parliamentarians to revisit events which took place over a century ago and pass judgment on them?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to address the House this afternoon.

I think that this initiative must be carefully examined.

(1835)

My intention today is not to bring back the past. I do not know the answers. As we know very well, there are people who question whether or not justice was served. I honestly believe that a number of irregularities were committed which clearly show that justice was not served. But let us not join the debate. Let us look at the situation today, at what people believe happened to him. That is what I am mainly interested in.

There is a great deal of controversy surrounding Riel, and I think this is not the objective we have in mind. I could identify historians who could come and tell us what they believe is the truth about Riel. They are absolutely convinced that they are right, and I suspect that they would share to a certain extent the opinion of my colleague who spoke before me. Others would tend to side with the hon. member who delivered the first speech.

So I will put all that aside for now. I would like to focus on what we know, the facts on which we can agree. For example, I think that we agree on the fact that irregularities were committed during the trial. We heard all kinds of evidence and I will not go over it again. I think that we should talk, as I did, to the Metis in Manitoba and elsewhere about Riel, because he is still a hero to them. They know, admire and respect Louis Riel, who is a symbol to the Metis and a number of other groups, including francophones, at least francophones in my region—and I am not saying that to denigrate francophones elsewhere. The fact is that we may know him a little better because we lived with him.

He was elected three times to the legislature. There was a certain amount of respect on the part of the population. Whether or not we agree on his definition of society, he worked to define and formulate his constituents' demands and objectives. He was very sincere in doing this. We often forget that he wanted Manitoba to join Confederation and not the Northwest Territo-

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ries. He wanted religious and linguistic guarantees in the Manitoba Act. He looked after, perhaps mainly, the interest of the Metis, but also that of the francophones, of course, and the anglophones as well because, as mentioned earlier, he was a man ahead of his time. Even at that time, he was a man with a very keen sense of justice, a judgment like we wish we could see more often in many sectors of our society today.

On March 10, 1992, the following resolution was introduced in this House, and I quote: "That this House recognize the unique and historic role of Louis Riel as a founder of Manitoba and his contribution in the development of Confederation and support by its actions the true attainment, both in principle and practice, of the constitutional rights of the Metis people". That is what this House declared on March 10, 1992. I was there. I even spoke on this resolution. If I am not mistaken—I did not have the time to go back and check—the majority, if not the vast majority, of the members present supported this resolution. I find this very commendable.

As I said earlier, I do not intend to try to change or rewrite history, because I do not have the answers. But what I will do is look at who Riel is today. I shared with you, Mr. Speaker, and my hon. colleagues of this House what I was told by the Metis people, the francophones who know him, and the historians who studied him.

This bill calls for Louis Riel's conviction to be revoked. As I said at the beginning of my remarks, I think this is something we should take a real good look at and I suggest that we appoint a committee, with perhaps one MP from each party, to determine whether or not this is feasible. Perhaps we could—and this is my wish and my distinct preference—find unanimous consent to do so.

I will sum up with these few words in English:

(1840)

[*English*]

Louis Riel is a hero, a symbol. He was a political personality and a leader who became a victim because of a number of situations in which he found himself. Let us not kid ourselves.

[*Translation*]

He was not treated like just any other individual.

[*English*]

We know that. We know it deep down in our hearts.

[*Translation*]

We know it very well. We know that he was a Metis and a Catholic and that he spoke French. And we know that at the time it was very difficult to be these three things.

Private Members' Business

[English]

I said in 1992 and I will say again that Mr. Riel was a unique person, a historical personality. He was recognized as the founder of Manitoba. He has to be appreciated for his contribution to this confederation.

I will repeat my proposal that we seek the possibility of forming a committee with at least one member from each party to see whether we can make this project a reality or come to some sort of satisfactory conclusion.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to add my comments to those of the hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata who introduced Bill C-288, an Act to revoke the conviction of Louis David Riel who was unjustly accused of high treason.

The man who was hanged in Regina nearly 110 years ago today has become a truly historic figure in this country. He profoundly affected the course of events in his time and continues to do so today, in 1995 as we talk about him in this House, since his memory and his efforts to defend the rights of Canada's francophones and Metis live on in our hearts and in our history. That man was Louis David Riel.

The story of Louis Riel is one of famous speeches, of noble resolutions to support human rights and of battles that made him the hero of many generations of Metis and francophones and of the entire population of Manitoba.

As you know, Louis Riel was convicted of high treason on August 1, 1885. He was subsequently sentenced to death and hanged on November 16 that same year, at the age of 41. Those are the facts, but what did this man do to be accused of high treason? What did he do to incur this conviction and punishment? The reason we are still talking about the case of Louis Riel today, after so many years, is that many people still feel he was the victim of a miscarriage of justice.

To this day, the Canadian government has never challenged the verdict of guilty pronounced against Louis Riel, despite all the manipulation around his trial. Now that the values on which the judicial system at the time was based have changed, it is high time the Canadian government made a symbolic gesture by agreeing to revoke the conviction of Louis Riel.

Many people, and I am one of them, believe that the injustice done to Louis Riel, which continues today, arose from the very nature of the charges brought against him. Even in this House, the memory of Louis Riel has given rise to many discussions and to several unsuccessful attempts to do justice to this remarkable man, in the light of the extremely positive judgment passed by history.

I am referring, for instance, to the bills tabled in September 1983 and March 1984 by the Progressive Conservative member for Edmonton East, William Yurko, the purpose of which was to

pardon Louis Riel. The memory of the Metis leader did not share the fate of the two bills which died on first reading. In December 1984, the NDP member for Regina—Lumsden, Les Benjamin, made another attempt, also unsuccessful, with a bill to revoke the conviction of Louis Riel.

On November 28, 1985, the present Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of the Environment and member for Hamilton East spoke out in favour of a review of the conviction of Louis Riel. She said in this House, and I quote: "Mr. Speaker, we are now in November and one hundred years have gone by since the hanging of Louis Riel. I now ask that this Conservative Government exonerate the victim of the conspiracy of another Conservative Government". The hon. member for Hamilton East went on to say, and I quote: "Louis Riel, who died unnecessarily, deserves to be exonerated by the Government and recognized as a victim of wrongdoing".

(1845)

The search for justice is irrepressible, hard to put down as we would say, since, in 1987, the present member for Kamloops—Shuswap tabled a new bill to revoke the conviction of Louis Riel for high treason. This bill, along with the motion tabled in November 1989 by the New Democratic member for Comox—Alberni, Robert Skelly, to recognize Louis Riel as a Father of Confederation, shared the unfortunate fate of previous attempts.

The memory of Louis Riel was finally honoured on March 10, 1992 by this House, when it adopted a motion by Conservative minister Joe Clark to recognize the unique and historic role of Louis Riel as founder of Manitoba and his contribution in the development of confederation.

The motion was to the effect that the House also take note, and I quote, "That the Metis people of Rupert's Land and the North Western Territory through democratic structures and procedures took effective steps to maintain order and protect the lives, rights and property of the people of the Red River".

With this motion of March 10, 1992, the House also took note that, in 1870, under the leadership of Louis Riel, the Red River Metis adopted a list of rights and that, based on this list of rights, Louis Riel negotiated the terms for the admission of Rupert's Land and the North Western Territory into the Dominion of Canada. These terms of admission today still form part of the Manitoba Act. In addition, the House took note in adopting this motion that, after negotiating Manitoba's entry into Confederation, Louis Riel was elected three times to the House of Commons.

More importantly still, the House took note that, in 1885, Louis Riel paid with his life for his leadership in a movement which fought for the maintenance of the rights and freedoms of the Metis people. This was a clear affirmation, with no hint of criticism of the deeds of Louis Riel, quite the contrary. Lastly, the motion noted that since the death of Louis Riel, the Metis people have honoured his memory and furthered his purposes in

their honourable striving to have us respect the rights for which he so dearly paid.

A little closer to home now, the current member for Saint-Boniface, the riding in which the body of Louis Riel is buried, would go even further and would demand that we recognize the Metis leader as one of the "Fathers of Confederation".

If Louis Riel has remained a hero for so many generations of Quebecers and Canadians, it is because of the reasons listed earlier and officially recognized by the House of Commons. This House must be consistent in its own decisions and admit that it cannot recognize Louis Riel's role as founder of Manitoba and his contribution to the development of the Canadian Confederation, while still tolerating that his conviction for the offence of high treason stand.

Riel was not convicted of murder, theft or vandalism. He was convicted of high treason. But how can a traitor later be recognized as the founder of one of the provinces of the country which convicted him? If he was even guilty of any crime, might I suggest that he was probably convicted of the wrong indictment for the wrong motives. We must therefore do him justice and revoke the conviction of high treason which continues to taint his memory.

This is not rewriting history. This is simply repairing, in the light of historical facts themselves, an injustice done to Louis Riel. We must avoid giving the issue our attention only when it is convenient to do so, given popular opinion on the matter. By the same token, we must also avoid glancing selectively at the life of Louis Riel, retaining only the points which would allow us to make a hero out of him. Louis Riel cannot at the same time be both traitor and hero.

As long as this historic paradox is not eliminated, members from all parties, perhaps even Reform members, will rise in this House to ask that we put an end to it. I am hopeful that, some day, justice will be done for Louis Riel. As we know, this issue goes far beyond ideological and partisan considerations.

On February 28, the president of the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Rights Association, Mr. Gregorovich, sent a letter to every MP, asking them to support this bill. As Mr. Gregorovich pointed out, this legislation does not seek to grant a posthumous pardon to Louis Riel, but simply to strike down the conviction of high treason.

(1850)

It is in that spirit that I ask for the unanimous consent of the House, so that this bill can pass second reading and be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Is there unanimous consent of the House to pass the motion tabled by the hon. member for Verchères?

Adjournment Debate

Some hon. members: Yes.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Order. There is not unanimous consent. Resuming debate.

Since no other member wishes to take the floor, and since the motion will not be put, the period provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired and the item is dropped from the Order Paper, pursuant to Standing Order 96.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

SMALL BUSINESS

Mrs. Dianne Brushett (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business in its research paper and report on barriers faced by women business owners concludes that banks and lending institutions promote a double standard in their lending practices. This report points to a higher loan refusal, higher interest on the loans acquired and greater differential between capital applied for and capital accessed for women when compared with men who own businesses or male-female co-owned businesses.

The prejudice on the part of the lenders does not match up to the reality of the women in small business. Because of careful attention to detail, careful planning and tenacity, women are known to have a higher success rate in business start up and lifespan than men.

The CFIB as part of its research polled its 85,000 membership. It found that of the nearly 11,000 responses, 68 per cent were male who owned a business, 25 per cent were co-owned but only 6 per cent were solely owned by a female. These numbers in and of themselves mean very little until compared with the exploding number of women entering solely owned proprietorships.

Since 1981 the number of women owned businesses has nearly doubled from 323,000 to 639,000 in 1994. Current projections place the number of women business owners at 680,000 by the year 2000. This is not a fad that will end with the women of this country being silenced by the pistol whipping of bankers. It is a revolution born out of necessity being a response to changing family structures and an increasing sense of independence.

Adjournment Debate

What is needed is either a change in attitude by the money lenders to accommodate this projected rapid growth, an increase in the number of banks and credit unions which cater exclusively to the needs of women entrepreneurs, or an intervention by government to ensure equality.

It would appear from the CFIB report that in spite of the inroads accomplished by women during this century, the banks have refused to wake up to modern realities and still consider women a bad loan risk even before they apply. This is a handicap that must be eliminated if small business is to continue to be the main engine driving our economy and if Canada is to continue realizing its full growth potential.

In the face of this apparent discrimination, what is the minister prepared to do to ensure a level playing field for the sector of our business community which is proving itself to be self-sustaining and very successful?

Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the question.

The growth of entrepreneurship in the Canadian economy has been remarkable over the last decade. The number of self-employed women has also grown at over three times the rate of business formation by self-employed men. Today there are more than 600,000 self-employed women, representing over one third of all self-employed in Canada.

Women entrepreneurs tend to be more reliable credit risks since they are less prone to go out of business than men. They should therefore be considered more dependable from the perspective of banks.

Despite this, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business study, to which the hon. member referred, indicated that women continue to face greater obstacles to financing than men.

A recent study by Statistics Canada suggests that while there is no systemic discrimination against women entrepreneurs, they tend to operate businesses in higher risk sectors. In those sectors both male and female entrepreneurs face substantially similar obstacles to financing.

Let me give some concrete examples of what the government has done. The Federal Business Development Bank is committed to helping women. About one third of FBDB loans are made to businesses with 50 per cent or more female ownership. FBDB designs seminars and conferences especially for women; 500 women attended these last year.

The government has been improving access to financing for small business. Lending under the Small Business Loans Act has increased by more than four times in the last two years. We are pressing the banks to increase lending to small businesses. They have taken some steps to improve their services to small business. We will continue our efforts to ensure all entrepreneurs have easier access to financing so they can start, grow and prosper.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Pursuant to Standing Order 38, the motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24.

(The House adjourned at 6.57 p.m.)

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(Clause 1 agreed to.)	10925
(Preamble agreed to.)	10925
(Title agreed to.)	10925
(Bill reported.)	10925
Motion for concurrence	10925
Motion agreed to.	10925
Motion for third reading	10925
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(Clause 3 agreed to.)	10927
(Clause 4 agreed to.)	10927
(Clause 5 agreed to.)	10927
(Schedule A agreed to.)	10927
(Schedule B agreed to.)	10927
(Schedule C agreed to.)	10927
(Schedule D agreed to.)	10927
(Schedule E agreed to.)	10927
(Schedule F agreed to.)	10927
(Clause 1 agreed to.)	10927
(Preamble agreed to.)	10927
(Title agreed to.)	10927
(Bill reported.)	10927
Motion for concurrence	10927
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Motion for third reading	10928
(Bill read the third time and passed.)	10928

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Mr. Bergeron	10934

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