

## NATIONAL DEFENCE

## NATO—INQUIRY AS TO CANADIAN CONTRIBUTION OF CONVENTIONAL FORCE

**Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque):** I have a question for the Minister of National Defence, Mr. Speaker. Before I ask it, perhaps I might have the indulgence of the house while I point out that this is the 25th anniversary of the beginning of the physical liberation of western Europe. I think it is fitting we should recall the great sacrifices which have been made so that we can continue to enjoy the democratic system of government to which we all subscribe.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. MacLean:** Arising from the statements made by the Prime Minister yesterday, in which the right hon. gentleman rejected the position of the United States Secretary of Defence and the British Minister of Defence on the grounds that Canada's reduction of its NATO force applies to its nuclear commitment, may I ask whether this implies that no reduction is planned in our so-called conventional contribution to NATO?

**Hon. Léo Cadieux (Minister of National Defence):** First, I should like to join with the hon. member in paying homage to fallen Canadians on D-Day. I might also say that the Department of National Defence is represented by the Chief of Staff at the ceremony which is taking place in France.

As far as the question is concerned, I have indicated that in my view we are not reducing the conventional capability but we are restructuring the force. We think that in going along with the policy directives which were given by the ministers to the military committee we are complying with the general wish expressed by NATO to have more flexible forces. I do not think the question itself leads to any other interpretation.

**Mr. MacLean:** Is the house correct in assuming it is the position of the Government of Canada that a reduction in NATO's conventional forces would lower the nuclear threshold but that Canada's reduction applies only to our nuclear role?

**Mr. Cadieux (Labelle):** No, Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is anticipating, again. I do not think we have indicated what the air role will be. The possible reduction in nuclear capacity with the brigade is minimal. I would say. The loss of the Honest John is about the only thing concerned.

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

## NATO—RESIGNATION OF CANADIAN SENATOR FROM COMMITTEE

**Mr. Thomas M. Bell (Saint John-Lancaster):** A supplementary question to the Prime Minister on this NATO business. Has the Prime Minister yet been able to find a replacement for Senator Lang who resigned from the NATO committee saying that the government's NATO position was petulant, amateurish, dangerous—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

## STAFF OVERTIME AND COMPENSATORY LEAVE PROVISIONS

**Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East):** Since I believe that by courtesy, and perhaps by rule, we should not direct questions to the Speaker of the house, may I direct a question to the President of the Treasury Board who is also, I understand, a member of the Internal Economy Commission? For up to three years, now, members of the staff of the Parliament of Canada have not been paid in respect of overtime, or been given time off in place of overtime, nor, because of the nature of their work, have they been given holiday time. May I ask whether any decision has been reached with regard to payment in respect of overtime and loss of holidays?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I suggest to the hon. member it might not be proper to depart from the well established custom. The hon. member knows that this kind of question can be directed to the Speaker in writing in the usual way, and I assure him that I will be pleased to look at the matter on his behalf.

[Translation]

## CANADIAN CONFEDERATION

## QUEBEC—SUGGESTION THAT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HOLD REFERENDUM

**Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put my question to the Prime Minister.

Since the Quebec premier has announced that a referendum would be held next October, would the Prime Minister consider the advisability for the federal government of holding at his own expense a referendum in