

Oral Questions

concerns the same type of symbolic legislation in Atlantic Canada, that is, the Maritime Freight Rates Act and the private study the Minister commissioned to review that Act. Has the Minister received the protest of four provincial Ministers of Transportation about the narrow terms of reference, very narrow timeframe, and lack of public input to this study, and what does he intend to do about this?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, my information is quite different. I understand two Atlantic Provinces have agreed, one has remained neutral, and one has disagreed. Be that as it may, my hon. friend is so busy in other files these days that he may not be fully acquainted with the fact that we now have memoranda of understanding with all four Atlantic Provinces under which, among other things, we try to do joint planning. The studies and review of the nature indicated by my hon. friend are the type of thing we try to do together, namely, attempt to spend as well as we can the hundreds of millions of dollars in support the federal Government gives to the Atlantic Provinces in matters of transportation. This is so normal and so desirable that I am sure my hon. friend would not want to disagree with that, because it is in the best interests of the Atlantic Provinces.

Mr. Nowlan: Madam Speaker, I think the Minister has been pretty busy too these last few days and weeks on many matters from air to land and Crow to sea. I think if the Minister checks his files he will find my information is correct. I understand that the 1982 agreement for upgrading secondary roads in Atlantic Canada has a proviso for joint consultation and planning, but the Minister's decision was unilateral.

REQUEST FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley-Hants): Madam Speaker, to allay the fears in Atlantic Canada of businesses which are just on the margin and will not be able to succeed if that subsidy, internal and external, is taken away or reduced, will the Minister assure the House and Atlantic Canada that, regardless of the consulting firm's recommendations, there will be public input from those affected before any further action is taken?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I will be exceptionally short on that. Yes, there will be consultation at least with the Governments of the Atlantic Provinces.

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CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

STATUS OF RESERVES

Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Defence if I can interrupt his briefing of the other Minister on the Frigate Program. Madam Speaker, the reserve forces in Canada are in very desperate shape for both equipment and

manpower. What is the Minister doing to improve the situation?

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Minister of National Defence): Madam Speaker, I do not think the Hon. Member has the same information as I have. During the last couple of years we have in fact increased the budget for the reserves. We are giving them new equipment and we have integrated many reserve units with some of the operations of the regular force. I do not remember which western media were referring to this matter last week, but I think they were saying that they were very glad about what was being done with the reserves and that there was a great improvement over the last two or three years. I have that from some of our reserve officials, too, who are very happy with what we are doing. We could do more and more will be done, but at the moment I think there has been great improvement.

Mr. McDermid: Madam Speaker, hardly anything has been done for them, so they are most grateful for anything given to them. The spirit is high in the reserves but only because of the people involved, not because of their equipment or because of what the Government is doing for them.

MOBILIZATION PLAN

Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown): Madam Speaker, for two years the Minister has promised a mobilization plan for the reserves. Where is it? When are we going to see it?

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Minister of National Defence): Madam Speaker, I am very glad that the Hon. Member admits that the morale and spirit in the reserves are very great. I realized that when I visited some of the reserve units recently. As far as the mobilization plan is concerned, it is always developing. It is therefore more or less a fact at the moment that we have one. Obviously there are many issues in the mobilization program that we cannot make public, because you do not make all the information on these things public. But if the Hon. Member or some others are interested, I can ask my Department to give them a briefing on what we do in case of a general mobilization.

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FINANCE

STUDY OF CAPITAL GAINS TAX

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Economic Development who will recall that at some time he had something to say about capital gains tax, and we now have before the House a related proposal under the ISIP Program. I was wondering if he would be doing a study in his Department on this Program and will he be referring it to a Standing Committee or a Special Committee of this House so that we can look into the