

institutions to determine what is going on with regard to the mistreatment of prisoners in Canada at this time?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Pierre Goyer (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I have nothing to add to what I have said already. Inquiries are under way. I should like to complete my previous reply to the hon. member by saying that if legal proceedings are instituted against the prisoners, I trust the provincial authorities who are directly responsible will provide them with legal counsel, or that the Law Society of Upper Canada will attend to it. If, on the other hand,—not that I expect it to be the case—the prisoners are without legal counsel, we will take all the necessary steps to ensure that their rights are respected in court.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: The Chair will allow the hon. member for Skeena to ask the last supplementary question. The question period expired four minutes ago but we have gone beyond our time because of supplementary questions.

DETENTION OF INMATES IN ISOLATION AT COLLINS BAY

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): The supplementary question I wish to ask the Solicitor General relates to his statement a moment ago that no disciplinary action is being taken against any of the inmates who were presumably involved in the riot at Kingston. With respect to the seven inmates who were transferred from Millhaven on the night of May 12, I believe, to Collins Bay penitentiary, where they are now being held in isolation or, in other words, in the hole or in the dungeon, does the minister not consider that to be a form of punishment?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Pierre Goyer (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that, immediately after the disturbances in Kingston, there was not enough room for some inmates and we had to make use of all other premises available. The choice was not ours, but that of the inmates. Up to now, no disciplinary action has been taken against the inmates and, recently, considering further disturbances were expected—

[English]

Mr. Peters: You are not allowed to be dishonest.

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.

Mr. Peters: Just because you are a minister, you cannot lie here.

Mr. Hees: Just watch him try.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Orders of the day.

National Security Measures

• (12 noon)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY S.O. 58—ALLEGED NEED OF DEFENCE POLICY TO DEMONSTRATE WILLINGNESS AND CAPACITY OF CANADA TO CONTRIBUTE TO WORLD PEACE

Mr. J. M. Forrestal (Dartmouth-Halifax East) moved:

That in the opinion of this House the government, having reduced our defence capacity by erosion of our NATO commitment, reduction of our active and reserve forces, and mismanagement of our material and supply requirements, has downgraded our armed forces and led to a questioning of our credibility by our allies.

This House therefore urges the government to declare a defence policy that will clarify the role of our armed forces at home—with particular reference to our north and aid to the civil power—and which will demonstrate our willingness and capacity to contribute to world peace by honouring our alliances.

He said: Mr. Speaker, in the few minutes available to me today, virtually on the eve of the production of the first white paper on defence policy in some years, I wish at the outset to pay some tribute and compliment to the members of the Canadian Armed Forces, particularly in light of the role they played in our society in the communities of Quebec City and Montreal, and in our nation's capital, during the crisis last fall. It was a tangible thing which brought them to the attention of the Canadian people more than did any other single event in recent years.

While that was a tremendous job I also wish to pay tribute to the normal work they do and which Canadians, by and large, never hear about. I wish to pay tribute to their professionalism, dedication and skill. As long as we are served by men of the skill, competency and professionalism that I have noticed in our Armed Forces, Canada will be well served, and our Minister of National Defence (Mr. Macdonald) will be well served. Having said that, I wish to put as quickly as possible some basic and general comments on the record.

When talking about a defence policy or structure for Canada, the basic consideration we must keep in mind is that a threat does exist. The setting up of Nato and of our other alliances was in response to a recognition of that threat. Today, simply because time has passed, and because the nature of society has changed to some degree, it would be unwise for us to conclude that the nature of the threat has changed to such a degree that we might consider it no longer exists.

This period of apathy, stemming from familiarization with peace at home and the non-involvement of Canadian forces in active warfare, could lead us into a state where perhaps many would not consider the threat to be as real as I continue to believe it is. The white paper is going to be produced against the background of a defence budget freeze, without any indication that the freeze will be lifted. Indeed, there are acceptable levels of argument to indicate that the freeze will not be lifted.