

Supply—National Defence

interest and your kindly assistance in having this decision of the Department of National Defence altered. Would you not, Mr. Prime Minister—I think you are part Irish, as I am—also take some interest in these descendants of the Irish who are living in this area?

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Chairman, I wonder whether my hon. friend could give me a few more particulars about this message with which he seems to be so familiar?

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Chairman, I was going to make the appeal to the Prime Minister, too. We take such a great interest in peoples all over the world and yet right in our own country we have a situation that exists adjacent to Valcartier camp that just cannot be justified. I am not going into the detail at this moment, except to say that the hon. member for Québec-Montmorency said this afternoon, "All is well. I get the votes, and everybody is satisfied". Because of the desire of the Prime Minister to get the facts I am going to place them before him in abbreviated form and give him also the source of the information. I begin by referring to the issue of the Quebec *Chronicle-Telegraph* of February 17.

Here is an area adjacent to Valcartier camp in which there are 25 families who have been there for several generations. They received peremptory notice within the last few months, and certainly it appears since the election when the hon. gentleman was able to get the votes, that this land was to be taken over by the Department of National Defence. The hon. member for Québec-Montmorency made the statement this afternoon that all was well and nobody was complaining. I have already placed on the record the views of certain of the people involved in this move. The Prime Minister was communicated with. These people gave up trying to soften the adamant attitude of the Minister of National Defence and the Associate Minister and made the appeal to the Prime Minister of Canada to look into this matter. A protest was organized in Shannon and a petition was sent to the Prime Minister. It was duly acknowledged. One of the letters was actually answered, this article says, by the Associate Minister and in part it read as follows—and this was a letter to Joseph Griffin:

After the "most careful consideration" the department had come to the conclusion that there was no practical alternatives to the expropriation plan announced by the government.

"The training exercises to be carried out in the enlarged camp", noted the minister's reply, "necessitate access to the area north of Pinky Mountain

through what we might term "The Shannon Corridor".

That was a statement thoroughly resented in this area:

No top level official of the defence ministry has bothered to go to Shannon to hear the views of those the government is planning to dispossess of a heritage.

These people are just being told, "Get out of here. Away with you. We are going to give you the proper value for your land". The associate minister today spoke as if something beneficent on the part of the government was going to be the result; the government was going to treat these people right in what they would pay them. That is not what they are asking for; they are asking to stay on their land. This article says that no top level official of the Department of National Defence has bothered to hear the views of those the government is planning to dispossess of a heritage. That is what it is, a heritage.

I ask, Mr. Chairman, in what other part of Canada where people have lived for generations would you get other than the strongest resentment when they were ordered to get out of the area because the army had decided they were going to save a few dollars on this program, and these particular 10,000 acres were to be taken over? This article continues:

The people of Shannon know their village is doomed.

All I have to say is that they ought not to know that. They ought to know that the first responsibility of parliament is to preserve and protect the freedom and rights of individuals. That is what we are here for. Then the article says:

But they are awaiting that doom with arms folded and in a mood of resignation.

The hon. member for Québec-Montmorency says, "I get the votes".

Mr. Laflamme: I never said that.

Mr. Diefenbaker: That is no answer to this question. These people as late as February 17 made a strong complaint about their treatment in this connection. The article says:

They are prepared to fight for what they consider to be a wholly unwarranted and arrogant invasion of their rights.

I use their words and say that what has taken place is unbelievable, namely that we should be met by a solid wall of contemptuous silence toward a situation like this on the part of both these ministers. Further, Mr. Chairman, the article says:

"Money", snorted one elderly Shannon resident. "What's money? My father lived here and his