

The Budget—Mr. McKnight

actions that are required to curb the debt that is faced by this country.

Like all Canadians, the men and women in Canada's Armed Forces and their civilian colleagues accept that they have a role to play in the broader strategy intended to bring the deficit down and restore our economic health. Because it is their lives' work to provide security to this country, they share the concern of all Canadians of the immediate and present danger inherent in the ever-growing national debt we face today.

I am sure it bears repeating again what my colleague, the Minister of Finance, said when he talked about what this Government had inherited in 1984, and what we have done to correct it and the actions that we now find necessary to set it right.

I would like to expand somewhat in the time allowed to enunciate the contribution that the Department of National Defence has made to the national effort to reduce the deficit in Canada. Mr. Speaker, \$2.74 billion of the projected spending over the next five years has been removed from the budget from the Department of National Defence. As some colleagues would know, when you project that over the 15-year planning period, that is a total of \$22 billion plus in the planning timeframe.

The Department has cancelled the plans to provide nuclear propelled submarines, additional long range Aurora aircraft, the battlefield night observation equipment, additional CF-18s, the unmanned airborne surveillance and the target acquisition program.

We will purchase smaller quantities of equipment to outfit the countermeasure training vessels. We will purchase fewer northern terrain vehicles, army radios and CF-5 avionics. We will postpone the procurement of light armoured vehicles for the militia, and put on hold the acquisition of the main battle tanks. The North American Defence Modernization Program will proceed as planned, as will the research into territorial and air space surveillance. The two phases of the frigate program, so important to Canada's security, will continue. As well as the modernization of our tribal class destroyers, we will acquire a new ship-borne aircraft as we

identified earlier. The countermine sweepers for the naval reserve will continue to be constructed.

This Government started in 1984 to rebuild the capability of Canada's Armed Forces. We will continue to rebuild that capability. As the Minister of Finance identified, we will immediately examine the alternatives to ensure that our naval forces are able to make an effective contribution to the maintenance of our national security.

We will continue to re-organize our land forces and we will set up a new regional command structure. In particular, we will continue to concentrate on the requests for peacekeeping whenever Canada can contribute to the peaceful resolution of disputes around the world.

As other Members know, over the last months no fewer than 1,500 of Canada's men and women who serve in the military have served in peacekeeping operations around the world in the last 12 months. This is something that all Canadians are proud of but in particular those men and women who have the opportunity to serve Canada and bring about peace and security in the world.

The Canadian Forces will also concentrate on the collective security and defence in Europe. We will continue to seek security within that alliance. Our commitment to NATO is unwavering and that, sir, has brought about the longest period of peace in Europe in the last 200 years.

We will continue to increase our reserves. It will be at a slower rate than identified, but with the commitment to using total force concept it will be necessary to continue to create reserves around this country.

What has happened is that financial restraint will require us to find some personnel savings so that we have room for other expenditures. As I have noted, the reserves will grow at a slower rate. There will be a slight reduction in our civilian and military personnel over the next five years. As we move to reduce military establishments, employment reductions will be necessary.

As some Members will know, perhaps from having participated in station closures over the last number of years, the workforce adjustment program of this Department has been recognized as one that has compassion, that understands the need, the sensitivity and the change that takes place when these stations and bases must be reduced.