

defence involves arms and ammunition, but there is an increasing attitude toward soft defence, or the use of defence for paramilitary purposes. This is where Summerside has a lot to offer. The Government should keep Base Summerside open, not because it is a military base but because it is a base of operation for other related activities such as the patrolling and policing of the fishery. That is not a military operation but it is an operation that can be carried out with extreme competence by the military.

Base Summerside is an admirable site for expanding those activities. Most countries do not even know that we have an exclusive economic zone. Those that do, don't care. As the years go by we will need greater reconnaissance patrolling and surveillance of the EEZ. We have in Canada engineered, designed and produced an excellent aircraft, the de Havilland-8 with its Maritime configuration, to replace the outmoded trackers when they are finally put to rest. They can be based at Base Summerside for that surveillance purpose.

Third, we know there will be a need for increased patrolling for illegal immigration of supposed refugees to this country. We will need more patrols for that purpose.

We will need an expansion of our search and rescue operations, which again is a paramilitary activity, and for which Base Summerside is admirably suited.

Another function for that base should be for environmental protection. If ever there was an area in need of increased activity, it is the whole area of environmental protection. The House will know that in western Europe, Scandinavia, and North America, there is a growing covert activity of dumping toxic wastes into the sea. That must stop. It is such a vast area to patrol that we need more surface ships and certainly more patrol aircraft.

I have discussed six combined alternate uses for Base Summerside. Yet the short-sighted Conservative Government sitting opposite wants to shut it down, blindly, without planning ahead and realizing that just as certain as I am standing here this morning, some seven years down the road a Minister on that side of the House will stand up to announce the expansion of a certain existing base or the establishment of a new base to carry out one or all of these extended responsibilities, at a greatly

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inflated cost. We already have the facility at Base Summerside to fulfil those functions.

The Government owes the people of Summerside, the people of Prince Edward Island, the courtesy of at least putting Base Summerside on hold until moneys are available in the future to proceed with the expansionary measures I have mentioned. If the Government closes this base, I can assure the House that the Town of Summerside will die. I am not trying to exaggerate or be extreme. There are no alternatives. There is no private sector alternative.

Prince Edward Island is not exactly on the Windsor-Québec City corridor. It is nowhere near the Golden Horseshoe. It is nowhere near Montreal, Toronto or Vancouver. It cannot attract the private sector activity that would come near paying those wage rates, even if it did relocate to that part of the province.

At a time when ACOA is being cut back, when regional development grants are being cut back, and when unemployment insurance regulations are being tightened to the point at which very few people will qualify, the Government is essentially telling the people of Prince Edward Island, by closing down Base Summerside, that it does not care if it puts the whole of P.E.I on welfare. That is not good enough.

I implore the Minister of National Defence (Mr. McKnight) and other Ministers responsible for those agencies and activities I mentioned, that I know will have to be increased, to meet and find solutions to this problem so that that base can stay open and the people of that part of Prince Edward Island, that part of Canada, can continue to live and enjoy their environment and their way of life as Canadians and Islanders.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I will recognize the Hon. Member for Halifax West (Mr. Crosby) after the Hon. Member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Walker).

• (1230)

Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, it is always an important time for Members to discuss items such as borrowing legislation and borrowing resolutions from the House because it gives us an opportunity to review what the Government is trying to do. Of course every time we go looking for money or set out a Budget, we are in fact spending a lot of money on