

It is not the intention of the U.S. government to declare Goose Bay surplus to U.S. requirements. They intend to retain the base."

On the same day, January 21, 1971, the same minister announced publicly that negotiations had commenced between Canada and the United States for renewal of the base lease which expires on December 5 this year. I have repeatedly questioned the minister during the past 13 months. The answer has always been, "Negotiations are continuing". Yet, Mr. Speaker, there was a statement made in Washington on March 15 of this year by Major General Joseph R. DeLuca, United States Air Force budget director, to the effect that the Goose Bay air force base is to be phased down.

It can be readily recognized that there has been uncertainty among the residents of this area ever since it first became known that the lease was being renegotiated. That uncertainty is even greater now because of the statement made in Washington and the uncertain future that faces these people. They have been suspended, or I could say paralyzed and they are very right in demanding some assurance from their government as to what the future holds for them.

There are approximately 8,000 people in the Goose Bay-Happy Valley area. Many have spent their lifetime there. The American government has no right to treat them this way, and the Canadian government has no right to allow the American government to do it. The base is the economic lifeline of this area. If the Americans are planning to withdraw, Canada should be ready to move in and follow up the recommendation made more than two years ago by the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications, namely, that its strategic position on the north Atlantic makes it an ideal location for a reopening of defence operations there.

I do not have time to repeat all the arguments which I presented to this House 14 months ago. I am just demanding that the government give some assurance to these people. If the spokesman for the government is planning to stand in his place and give an extended version of the previous answer, that negotiations are continuing, I suggest that he save his breath and go home now. I am not interested in international negotiations. At the same time, I do not expect the government to blurt out details of negotiations that have not been concluded. However, the people of Goose Bay and Happy Valley are interested in their future and the government should recognize the fact that they deserve an answer and an assurance in this regard.

The spokesman for the Secretary of State for External Affairs might say that his business is to be concerned with the intricacy of negotiations. The Minister of National Defence might say his business is the defence of our country. However, I would point out that hon. members opposite who form the government must have an interest in people. The future is suspended for 8,000 people in my constituency. No one is telling them anything. I hope I will receive more in the way of an answer than I have as a result of my probings in the past 14 months.

Mr. J.-R. Comtois (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, it is appreciated that the hon. member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador (Mr. Peddle) has a natural concern for the future of opera-

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tions at the base at Goose Bay because this base represents a very substantial element within his constituency. The agreement covering the leasing to the United States Air Force of certain facilities at Goose Bay was entered into on December 5, 1952. This agreement was for a term of 20 years and is due for renewal by December 5 this year.

The hon. member is aware, as we are, that the United States is exercising certain economies in its defence budget. In recent testimony before the United States Senate Committee on Appropriations, a military official informed the committee as follows:

The Strategic Air Command basing structure will be modified during fiscal year 1973. McConnell Air Force base, Kansas, is being transferred to SAC from Tactical Air Command. Glasgo Air Force base, Montana, will be reactivated as a contractor-operated installation assigned to SAC. Goose Air base, Nfld. is programmed to phase down.

In recent weeks the member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador has addressed questions to both the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) and the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Benson) concerning the future of Goose Bay and the United States involvement there. He has been informed on each occasion, and as recently as April 26, as reported at page 1651 of *Hansard*, that negotiations are under way on the future of United States operations at the base and that when additional information is available it will be provided to him.

Like most governments today, the U.S. government is concerned about costs, and in this particular instance about the cost which the operation of the base at Goose Bay represents. They therefore are exploring with us the possibility of adjustments to the present arrangements which might reduce the costs. Service to service discussions are continuing but it will probably be a little time yet before the outcome is known.

HEALTH—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON PROPOSALS TO COMBAT ESCALATING CARE COSTS

Mr. P. B. Rynard (Simcoe North): Mr. Speaker, on April 20, 1972, I asked the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Munro) whether in view of the deep concern over the Minister's statement that we could not afford the bill for health care, and the statement that there was a scandalous waste in Canadian health services, he would make a statement to the House so that parliament might know what the real facts were.

That there has been a galloping increase in health care costs from 1963 to the present there is no argument. In 1959, the total health bill amounted to \$1,290 million. Ten years later, in 1969, the total health bill was \$4 billion. Medical services now cost about \$200 per person per day, and it is estimated that in ten years time the cost will be more than \$600 per person. If anything is needed to demonstrate the incompetence of governments to operate business successfully it is, surely, this admission of almost complete failure to operate efficiently in the health care field.

An attempt is now being made to operate on the basis of about half the number of general practitioners needed, making it impossible for general practitioners to under-