

Supply—National Defence

[Translation]

—This was a military expression to show that if these people were not relocated, they would be in a danger zone when there was long-range mortar, arms and cannon fire practice.

Now, in accordance with the recommendations of civilian personnel and of the director general of properties, and after representations of our officers, we do not believe this community can be kept in that spot because it is dangerous.

On the other hand, we are ready to consider any suggestion.

When the hon. member says there are some lots near by that we could use, he forgets that in all this, the enlargement of Camp Valcartier must be so arranged as to form a whole area for practice and exercise of our soldiers with long-range arms.

I am sure that neither the minister nor I would be unwilling to consider any suggestion which might satisfy the people of Shannon.

As far as I remember, it is quite correct to say that to date, a preliminary investigation has been held and that following representations a second one was launched. During the second one, the military were asked to explain why they needed these pieces of land. It was then, perhaps, that the hon. member found that the military had inquired not into the advisability of expropriation, but into the necessity for them to include those grounds in the expropriated area because they lay within the danger zone.

I trust these explanations will satisfy the hon. members. I am sure no doors have been closed; in fact we are willing to consider any suggestion which might be made. I feel the crux of the matter lies in that it is dangerous for the people of Shannon to stay in the fringing area.

I am willing to obtain once more detailed information and pass it on to the hon. member as soon as I have it. I am also willing to study how best we can reconcile the interests of the Department of National Defence and of the people concerned.

[English]

Mr. Schreyer: Mr. Chairman, I accept the minister's reply in the spirit in which it was offered but I have a specific follow-up question. Is it correct to say that negotiations are still continuing with the property holders in the area and that the land is still registered

in their names, that is to say, that the land is not yet vested in the Crown?

[Translation]

Mr. Cadieux (Terrebonne): I understand that when expropriation was decided on, these properties were included in the expropriation and that, consequently, they are expropriated.

Negotiations are currently in progress between representatives of the Department of National Defence and the persons involved with a view to reaching an agreement and setting a price. I believe that is the situation.

[English]

Mr. Schreyer: Mr. Chairman, that is a very interesting point. I am not sure what the past procedures are that have been followed by this department but I am disappointed that a procedure is not being followed by which negotiation with the owners as to price could take place first. Apparently the department has filed a plan of expropriation in the land titles office and subsequently commenced negotiations with these owners. It seems to me that a genuine attempt should have been made to negotiate price and reach a settlement before any resort to expropriation took place.

[Translation]

Mr. Cadieux (Terrebonne): Mr. Chairman, that procedure is used for a very simple reason: in such cases, speculation must be avoided. If the Department of National Defence were to announce in advance that 60 square miles of land are to be expropriated and then tried to negotiate prices before filing its expropriation plan, prices would go up of course and expropriation would no longer be possible.

But I feel one must presume that the Department of National Defence is not out to rob property owners by offering unacceptable prices. That is the first thing one must accept, in my opinion.

[English]

Mr. Churchill: Mr. Chairman, I should like to ask one or two questions on the same topic. For what type of range practice is this extra land required?

[Translation]

Mr. Cadieux (Terrebonne): Mr. Chairman, I thought then that it was for the training of a battalion with long range modern equipment including long range mortars.