

Oral Questions

clarify certain questions. I want to ask the Minister whether the \$50 million to cover the cost in 1985-86 is already in the Defence Estimates, or in this new money? From where will the 1,200 military personnel be transferred? Will this require the purchase of more Leopard tanks and other support materiel?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the questions concerning cost, if the Hon. Member will refer to yesterday's press release he will have the answer. The measures will cost \$50 million in the first year and about \$100 million per year when the full complement has been transferred to Europe. I would think that the Hon. Member would be the last one to suggest that we should fly in the teeth of all established courtesy and make a statement publicly, with respect to this additional deployment of troops in order to fulfil our NATO commitments in Europe, without first having discussed the matter with, and having informed, the Ambassadors of our NATO allies. That took place yesterday. It was not until about 1.30, or thereabouts, that the matter was made public. Pre-distribution of the release was made to himself and his opposite number in the NDP. I really think he has nothing to complain about with respect to the manner in which the announcement was made.

PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, the Minister did not answer my question. I asked him if this is new money or whether it is in the existing Estimates. He chose not to answer. I want an answer on that question.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hopkins: Mr. Speaker, we are living in an open Parliament. We should have the answers. Can the Minister assure this House and all Canadians that no purchase of new equipment to which we have already committed ourselves will be adversely affected, and will the Minister put back into the Estimates, now that he is doing something about—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Hon. Member has put two questions in his supplementary, and I suggest that is enough.

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the equipment, I believe that the answer is in the affirmative. I will make doubly certain of that, however, and be in touch with him. With respect to the financing of the move, I have asked officials in the Department to determine what resources can be identified there in order to—

An Hon. Member: Do you know?

● (1440)

Mr. Nielsen: I hear a heckle across the way indicating that I do not know. I would invite the Hon. Member, if he were to have the responsibility of a Department with expenditures of some \$10 billion, to identify at once where each dollar for each

howitzer comes from. Where those resources cannot be identified within departmental references, yes, it will mean new resources.

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[Translation]

AIR TRANSPORT

PREOCCUPATIONS OF LES GENS DE L'AIR DU QUÉBEC

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport.

We have been informed that the Minister has promised to look into the concerns of the Association des gens de l'air du Québec.

Could the Minister confirm, here in the House, that he will look into the matter of job transfers from Montreal to Toronto and ensure that Francophones are given a fair deal by Air Canada? What is his schedule for completing this investigation and when will the Minister be ready to submit his report?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, yesterday we met with the Gens de l'air du Québec, and we gave them the assurance that we were going to approach Air Canada and take the necessary steps to ensure that both aspects of the question are considered. We are asking Crown corporations to be viable, but we must also consider principles such as bilingualism. I believe this is something the Government is anxious to maintain.

In evaluating the matter concerning Air Canada, we shall consider all aspects and take the time the corporation, the Gens de l'air and the Government will need to negotiate and formulate the best possible response to a matter which I think the Opposition would do well to consider very carefully.

AIR CANADA—FRANCOPHONES

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, we want to know when the Minister is going to meet his commitments. The matter of jobs being lost requires urgent attention, and fair treatment of Francophones by Air Canada is fundamental to maintaining our national unity. When is the Minister going to complete his investigation?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, bilingualism is not something that is going to disappear during the weeks it will take us to submit a report. We are going to give the House a full report as soon as we have the assurance that all parties have been consulted and that Air Canada has been acting without ulterior motives.