

The Address—Mr. Lamontagne

the Premier of Quebec is quite naive. Let's ask him the question: how important will his small, modest and efficient army be? What will be its role? And its budget? We now know one thing for sure; if Mr. Lévesque is already toying with the idea of a Quebec army, then his statement is clear: he is talking about independence and separation.

Anyway, it is a very troubling statement and given the contribution of our past and present armed forces, an insulting one. Has he forgotten all the veterans who gave their life in combat so that Mr. Lévesque could display the freedom of speech he now enjoys, a freedom unequalled in any other country of the world and that he is using to demolish his own country?

Does Mr. Lévesque realize that it is a Quebecker, like him, who is Minister of National Defence and that two of the last four chiefs of staff are native sons of Quebec? General Jean Victor Allard and General J. A. Dextrase have both held the highest post in the Canadian armed forces. The present deputy chief of staff is also a Quebecker. Right now the highest ranked woman in the armed forces is a Quebecker, she is Anne-Marie Bélanger, a colonel, who is director of women personnel. Quebeckers have their rightful place in the armed forces and they have had in the past, just as they have today, an enviable reputation, and I wonder why Mr. Lévesque is insulting them.

To demonstrate the importance of the armed forces in Quebec and in Canada, I will just mention that Quebec now has 39 marine cadet corps offering naval training to some 2,500 young people, and that there are some 8,000 young people in the 109 army cadet corps. There are also 86 air cadet squadrons, with 6,500 youths. In Quebec, this program will cost the defence department over \$5 million this year, not counting the great support given by bases. I also want to mention the military contribution to the Summer Youth Employment Program, which represents an investment of some \$1,800,000 for approximately 10,000 man-weeks of valuable training and work. And everyone knows about the Katimavik program for the youth. All this means that Quebeckers have a large part of our armed forces' participation.

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Let us see now very briefly what national defence brings to Quebec on the equipment side. The military training, operations and support facilities are of necessity very significant. Right now our lands in Quebec are worth some \$160 million. The total estimated value of the equipment in Quebec is \$1.3 billion. These investments are on a constant increase from week to week. Their operation involves a sizeable budget. Looking at personnel management expenditures, both military and civilian, the figure exceeds \$275 million, mainly salaries. Operating costs are \$29 million for facilities, and \$87 million for large equipment such as ships, vehicles and radars. During the last fiscal year, the net operating cost of national defence

establishments in Quebec topped \$393 million. Not many corporations spend that much in our province. Orders for defence material awarded to the Quebec industry are a source of even greater fallout. Last year, the Department of National Defence purchased roughly \$334 million worth in Quebec.

In short, the Canadian armed forces are a major economic asset for Quebec, an incomparable training and education asset for young Quebeckers, an important source of new technology and research. That is still a peacetime army at the service of the people of Canada.

I would like to refer again to the news article from the *Canadien Press*, and I quote:

Premier Lévesque added that a sovereign Quebec would take over the military equipment on Quebec soil and reduce its cost while at the same time make it more efficient.

Madam Speaker, I ask Mr. Lévesque whether he intends to take over all of those assets paid for by all Canadians? Once again, if that is his intention, then that is because he intends to carry out his dream of independence. Indeed, I will have in the appendix, Madam Speaker, all the figures for investments and expenditures by the Department of National Defence in Quebec to show in the final analysis that DND represents a major asset in Quebec and I, for one, as Minister of National Defence, do not intend to let those assets go to anyone but the Government of Canada.

Another issue that was mentioned in the Speech from the Throne was the purchase of the new fighter aircraft. I would like now to deal with the contract for the NFA. In awarding the contract, we had to work hard to protect the balance of payments and the balance in Canada's economic exchanges. And we succeeded. We also had to get the most economic benefits for Canada. A lot of deals were made favourably but that purchase worth \$3 billion from the United States is an investment that will result in \$3,260 million worth of economic fallouts for Canada. We also had to choose the best plane to be able to meet our commitments for the defence of the sovereignty of our Canadian territory as well as our collective commitments to our NORAD and NATO friends. The choice of the F-18 was undoubtedly, following elaborate technical studies, the best fighter to meet all the required criteria. A fair distribution of industrial benefits was also among the main objectives of that contract. We should remind ourselves here that it was the Government of Canada that built the Quebec aeronautical industry and we want to continue to support and expand that industry to make it an advanced industry in the two major central provinces.

We also wanted to ensure that Quebec would benefit as much as possible from our choice. We saw to it that benefits for Quebec would be at least the equivalent of those that could have resulted from the project which was rejected. This is what we did. If we take into account only the sales and purchases elements of the economic fallout, which gives the best idea of the financial aspects of an activity, the program proposed by