

Newfoundland, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald):

That the report of the royal commission on CN operations in Newfoundland, now in the hands of the Minister of Transport, be tabled in this House forthwith.

Mr. Speaker: Presentation of such a motion for debate, pursuant to Standing Order 43, can be done only with the unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF LEADER OF OPPOSITION IN
GRENADA

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Before beginning the question period, I know that members would want to joint with me in welcoming a visitor from a fellow country in the Commonwealth, the beautiful island of Grenada. The Leader of the Opposition of that country Dr. Maurice Bishop, is here, being received by members of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association at a luncheon event today, and is now in our gallery.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

INCREASED CAPITAL BUDGET—COMMITMENTS TO NATO

Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. As the Prime Minister will know, Canada's capital budget for our defence program will increase during the current fiscal year by \$100 million, or 2.8 per cent in real terms. All of that increase, as the Prime Minister also knows, is going to replace equipment in the Canadian armed forces and is not at all the result of any increased commitment to NATO.

Can the Prime Minister tell the House of Commons whether supplementary estimates will be brought down for increased expenditures by the Department of National Defence as a result of any commitments made by Canada at the NATO summit conference?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is, of course, not correct in implying or even in stating that money spent by the government in national defence is not for NATO purposes. On the contrary, a great deal of the commitments made to NATO will

be commitments which will be followed up through this expenditure and through this federal budget of, presently, some \$4.1 billion, to be increased as the Leader of the Opposition says. There is no plan for supplementary budgets.

● (1417)

I would explain to the Leader of the Opposition that the commitments we have taken are the same as those of the other 14 NATO countries—13, I think, because in this particular case France has not subscribed to the commitment—and it is to adhere to the conclusions of the long-term defence planning program put forth by NATO which had been discussed by our Minister of National Defence with other ministers about ten days ago. Every leader, including myself, indicated their acceptance of these conclusions. It does not call for new expenditures beyond the ones to which the hon. Leader of the Opposition just referred. I would point out to him that these are very substantial new commitments and they are going to proceed at an increased rate of something around 3 per cent in real terms for the next several years.

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, so that I clearly understand that answer and the country understands it, the Prime Minister is saying that Canada entered into no new commitments to NATO at the meeting just concluded.

My supplementary question will deal with another aspect of the Prime Minister's recent activities outside of the House of Commons. It deals with the discussion of Soviet-Cuban involvement in Africa. The conference is to take place next Monday in Paris. Would the Prime Minister tell the House of Commons whether Canada was invited to attend that conference and to participate, as a natural extension of Canada's role in the UN Security Council and, if we were invited, why did we decline to attend?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, once again the preamble to the question gives an incorrect impression. There are increased expenditures; indeed, 12 per cent in real terms to capital expenditures in the armed forces and about 3 per cent over-all. Many of these new expenditures will be for NATO purposes. On the question, Mr. Speaker, the answer is that we have not been invited.

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Prime Minister could tell us whether the Government of Canada sought or intends to seek the opportunity, as an extension of its Security Council responsibilities, to participate in that meeting in Paris.

Perhaps while he is answering that question the Prime Minister could also indicate to us whether it is his intention, as the leader of the government who went to the United Nations and Washington and made statements that were not discussed previously in the House of Commons, to come before the House of Commons, as is the normal practice, and to make a report in a statement on motions to the House indicating exactly what new undertakings were made by himself on behalf of Canada, and to allow some discussion of that matter in this House.