

S. O. 21

I call upon the Minister responsible to get the B.C. Government to the negotiating table and to stop penalizing claimant groups for that Government's insensitivity.

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CANADIAN ARMED FORCES**EXCEPTION TAKEN TO MEMBER'S COMMENTS**

Mr. W. R. Bud Jardine (Northumberland—Miramichi): Mr. Speaker, exception must be taken to the comments of the Hon. Member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke (Mr. Hopkins) concerning the Government's efforts to reverse the harm inflicted on the Canadian Armed Forces and the damage done to Canada's image since the 1960s. Since when are press reports considered substitutes for official party or government policies? When he referred to three newspaper articles, the Hon. Member implied that they contained mention of, to use his words, promises and commitments. These words are nowhere to be found in direct connection to anyone involved with the Government.

The Hon. Member conveniently cites a real growth percentage figure in the defence budget for the period between 1980 and 1984. When real growth in the late 1960s is calculated, it shows that Liberal Governments had an abysmal track record. In the early years of the Trudeau administration, the defence budget was frozen outright for three years. The effective strength of the Armed Forces was cut drastically. Our NATO effort was halved. The percentage of the defence budget dedicated to capital acquisitions was in the low teens.

Now Canada's stock with its NATO allies is at an all-time high. This is a direct result of this Government's efforts. Unfortunately, it is the Hon. Member who suffers from amnesia. It is he who is in a fog, and it is he who should bear the shame for his Party's neglect of our men and women in uniform.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**NICARAGUA—CRITICISM OF UNITED STATES SUPPORT FOR CONTRA FORCES**

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, I did not heckle the President of the United States when he was here as our guest on Monday but I want to tell the President today that I totally reject his policy on Nicaragua and Central America.

● (1410)

The revolution in Nicaragua was not, as the President alleged, the result of the East-West struggle, the struggle between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, but rather the result of

50 years of Somoza dictatorship, exploitation, and corruption. That was the basis of the Sandinista revolution. It is unfortunate that the U.S. Government does not understand that. How much better if the U.S. helped this small country with its economic development rather than destroying it through Contra forces.

We welcome foreign leaders in this country to discuss national problems, but when we disagree with them we should say so at the proper time, directly and formally.

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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION**PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS**

Mr. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to say that this past week the Standing Committee on Justice and Solicitor General tabled its report on the review of the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act. I think it is important for a number of reasons, is in the spirit of open government and freedom of information, and has long been a platform of the Progressive Conservative Party.

The report makes 108 recommendations dealing with shortcomings in both Acts and in their administration. It stems from a belief that all Members of Parliament, indeed all Canadians, would agree that open government is good government, and that while Canadians expect their right to privacy to be fully protected, they also want their Government to be open.

The report proposes that the waiting period for information be reduced and that application fees be eliminated. It will prohibit the unauthorized use of social insurance numbers, and it will mean that all exemptions for information will be discretionary and subject to a significant injury test. I believe the report is a landmark in opening up government institutions and it should receive careful consideration by all Members of Parliament.

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AGRICULTURE**INCOME TAX ACT—PROVISION AFFECTING OFF-FARM INCOME**

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, at this time of crisis in agriculture most farm families have at least one person earning off-farm income to help pay for farm losses. This off-farm income is often required simply to stave off immediate bankruptcy.

The Conservative Government was elected in part on a commitment to make some changes to Section 31 of the Income Tax Act to allow more than \$5,000 of farm losses to be written off against off-farm income. That is one more Tory election promise unfulfilled. I call upon the Minister of