

Oral Questions

who is surprised and upset by that is his brother who is working down there.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: I think that the family should stand up and turn back that "dirty yankee money", right now!

Some Hon. Members: Answer the question.

Mr. Mulroney: We have put in place—

Ms. Copps: The Schefferville lackey.

Mr. Speaker: A supplementary question.

Mr. Axworthy: After that tirade, what could one say?

Some Hon. Members: Then sit down.

Mr. Axworthy: We do have a lot to say. I do not like to correct the Prime Minister, but the last time I made a speech, I predicted that the Tories would fall 10 percentage points in the polls, and that has come true.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

APPEARANCE OF CANADIAN NEGOTIATOR BEFORE
PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg-Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. Seeing that the Prime Minister has refused to answer the first question, will he answer this question?

Mr. Shields: We want Tom.

Mr. Axworthy: Three weeks ago he gave a direct commitment in the House that Simon Reisman, the negotiator, would appear before a parliamentary committee. Can he now answer the question? When will Mr. Reisman come before that parliamentary committee so that Parliament and the Canadian people know what the Government plans to do in its deal with the United States?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend says that we have dropped 10 points in the polls. Better now than during an election campaign.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Axworthy: Wait until the next one.

Some Hon. Members: More, more!

Ms. Copps: It is a bottomless pit.

Mr. Rossi: Canadians will remember you.

[Translation]

Mr. Mulroney: Don't get excited, Mr. Rossi.

[English]

Mr. Reisman will be available an appropriate time.

Mr. Axworthy: When is appropriate?

Mr. Mulroney: The Hon. Member says "when is appropriate?" As soon as the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Fort Garry and the Leader of the Opposition are in the House on the same day.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

TURKEY—TRANSFER OF CANADIAN FIGHTER AIRCRAFT

Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Associate Minister of National Defence. Last December the Secretary of State for External Affairs promised to look into the gift of 20 CF-104 Starfighters to Turkey and halt the transaction "if it would increase tension in the area". Will the Associate Minister of National Defence tell the House why the Embassy of Greece has not been contacted about this matter for two months, especially since Greece still contends that this gift is "changing the balance of power in the Mediterranean"? I read in the newspaper just today that its request for one-half of these planes had been turned down.

● (1430)

Hon. Harvie Andre (Associate Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member will know that when the CF-18s were destined for Europe in 1981, in keeping with NATO policy, we made an offer to the three southern-tier countries—Portugal, Greece and Turkey—of surplus CF-104s. Only Turkey responded to that request. We are honouring a commitment in which all NATO partners are involved.

When Greece expressed some concern about the balance, we acknowledged that, in fact, it is necessary to be even-handed and that some of the assistance granted to these southern-tier countries by NATO countries has been less than even in its impact. As a result of that, we are engaged in discussions with Greece to provide it with spare parts and engines for its aircraft, plus other equipment, in order to strengthen its capabilities, since it is an important part of the NATO deterrence.

At the officials level in Brussels, and in Athens, in fact, very amiable discussions are ongoing now.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

COST OF UPGRADING AIRCRAFT

Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant): Mr. Speaker, I sincerely hope that the Government realizes that what it is doing may very well be heating up an already very volatile political situation, in view of the fact that we also have 600 Canadians in Nicosia.

Will the Minister tell the House why his predecessor said last year that the cost to the Canadian taxpayer for the upgrading of these Starfighters would be approximately \$6