

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

year ago, and since this is a picture which is general across the country today, is the government planning to introduce measures in the near future to stimulate the economy and prevent unemployment from increasing further?

**Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister):** All the government's policies are designed to that end.

**Mr. Hees:** As this is the kind of answer the Prime Minister has been giving me for over a year now, during which period unemployment has been steadily increasing, would he please take the question seriously and stop laughing at the unemployed?

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**NATIONAL DEFENCE****REQUEST FOR STATEMENT RESPECTING  
BASES IN MARITIMES**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Digby-Annapolis-Kings):** I have a question for the Minister of National Defence. In view of reports in today's press can the minister inform the house what changes, if any, are being considered involving Canadian forces bases at Summerside and Greenwood?

**Hon. Léo Cadieux (Minister of National Defence):** I did announce some time ago our intention to phase out the Neptune aircraft and that in consequence we would have to redeploy the Arguses. We are doing so; we are leaving three squadrons at Greenwood, putting one in at Summerside and another at Comox. In order to maintain the operational capacity of the base at Summerside we are moving the search and rescue unit from Greenwood to Summerside, hoping in this way to achieve our aim and establish an efficient military operation while arranging that almost all areas share in the over-all reductions we have to make.

**Mr. Nowlan:** I should like to ask the minister whether he will extend the same courtesy and consideration to the people of Nova Scotia as he did to the people of Prince Edward Island by undertaking to meet a delegation from Nova Scotia to discuss the merits of this move.

**Mr. Cadieux (Terrebonne):** I have not been requested to receive a delegation from Nova Scotia, though I would gladly accept such a request. As far as the decision we have reached is concerned, I do not know that we could revise it.

[Mr. Hees.]

**Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West):** A supplementary question to the minister of defence. Is the positioning of the search and rescue squadron in Summerside designed to help find and rescue this government?

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Halifax):** I have a further supplementary question for the Minister of National Defence. In view of the importance of his announcement, involving the transfer of one service from one air base to another, would he find an early opportunity, either in the house or before the standing committee, to make a statement in connection with this base consolidation or reorientation program, which gives rise to a lot of uncertainty and concern in Halifax?

**Mr. Cadieux (Terrebonne):** The situation is this. The base at Greenwood will stay at a level of over 2,100 service and civilian personnel. This represents a reduction of around 250. A similar reduction is taking place at Summerside. The over-all base consolidation arrangements are far from settled.

I hope the hon. gentleman will accept the fact that these decisions are taken very reluctantly, but we have to be realists and what I am trying to do is to preserve bases, to have the load shared by as many bases as possible even when faced with the unfortunate decision to reduce the number of personnel.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Forrestall:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for that and we do accept his assurance, but could he go one step further and indicate whether the naval base at Shearwater is in any way involved or could conceivably be involved in this movement, or subsequent movements that might come about in the ensuing months?

**Mr. Cadieux (Terrebonne):** No; it would be premature for me to say anything about Shearwater. We have no plans to reduce the operations there.

**Mr. Nowlan:** As a supplementary following the minister's answer to my first question, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask whether he has already received a protest from the premier of Nova Scotia about this move; and in view of the fact that unification was sold to the country on the basis of cost and efficiency—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.