

*Routine Proceedings*

feel pretty sorry for myself, only to find that that member's car is still there.

• (2015)

That is an inspiration for anybody. Then there are my mates. I mentioned the hon. member for Brandon—Souris and the hon. member for York—Simcoe who I believe is around here this evening and who is my other neighbour.

Both of them are on the government side but that does not prevent us from having a civilized chat about the world in general to compare our difficulties, our successes and failures as members of Parliament. That after all is really what makes life bearable in this place.

We get no sympathy from the outside. I am not saying that we take sympathy from each other. I think that is an aspect without which life would be almost unbearable in the job.

Concerning the same member I have to remember a highlight in this House when we had the Voyageur Canada exchange program. Young Canadians were allowed to exchange experiences with each other. Young members of my constituency from Newfoundland travelled to Newmarket and around Ontario. In some cases it was the first time that they had been away from home. They made new friends and witnessed new experiences. To me it was a great highlight.

It was also a great highlight to have participated along with other members in the Canada 125 unity tournament that took place. I am still in the process of getting a videotape of that for one of the gentlemen in my riding who organized it. I have not promised him that I will get one but I am almost certain I will in the next couple of weeks. It is almost there.

I have been here for a relatively short time. It has been four and one-half years. I have to remember that the Canadian Forces in that time has gone through tremendous turmoil as an organization and as an institution. The business of the cold war which was very much in vogue when we came to this place is now over. The business of defence planning is as tough on the government as it would be for the opposition. We are at a crossroads in history. We are out of the rut of the

standard planning, if I could call it that, where we know who the enemy is and what his capabilities are and can guess at his intentions.

We do not have a recognized enemy any more. We cannot look at their capabilities. We cannot figure out their intentions. There is no identified enemy right now. We are in that part of history where we are not quite in whatever is going to take the place of the cold war which is over. It is very much like at the end of World War II. It took about four to five years before the Iron Curtain came down and we got into some kind of a planning groove which kept us going for some 40 years.

I do not know when we are going to reach a point where we will be able to do that planning. It appears that peacekeeping is very much in vogue but it too has had its difficulties and this has caused, in the case of the Canadian forces, certain grief. It has caused the minister grief particularly at a busy time in her life when she was running for the leadership which she won. It was an unfortunate part.

This in no way, shape or form has detracted from the tremendous pride that all Canadians have in their servicemen and servicewomen. The standards that they maintain on the sea on land or in the air and anywhere in between, whether it is regular forces or reserves, is second to none. Their reputation is best judged by other countries. Ask any country. Certainly in NATO and in any part of the western world and indeed in some of the countries behind what used to be the Iron Curtain they will tell you that Canadian professional military people will stack up with any and are better than most if not all.

Nothing that has happened here in Question Period or in debate has meant to detract from the tremendous pride that we have in our men and women in uniform. I know that I speak for all sides of the House when I say that.

These are difficult times. We now have 4,500 Canadians, young men and women, deployed in 17 different parts of the world. When we first came to this House we had about 1,500 in about seven or eight places. I also want to mention some of the goals I had when I arrived here. I suppose my main goal was to serve my constituents to the best of my ability.