

**Mr. Nielsen:** But as my colleagues from French Canada are aware, in emotional times such as these, the language of one's mother tongue expresses them more adequately.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill):** Mr. Speaker, forty years ago this morning, what Field Marshall Rommel predicted would be the longest day of the Second World War began on the beaches of Normandy. The Allied invasion of Europe, otherwise known as D-Day, or Operation Overlord, had begun.

Today, not only on behalf of my caucus but also, may I say, on behalf of a generation yet unborn on the day of that invasion of the beaches, I would like to pay tribute to those Canadians who were there on that historic morning, and to those who followed them. Let us remember with gratitude and with praise the courage of all and the sacrifice of the many, and join our hearts with the families, friends and comrades of those who died, who were maimed, or who were captured. We will remember them.

It is important to remember. A society that cannot remember, that has no respect for history, that lives only in the present moment without concern for past or future, is a society doomed to shallowness and to destruction. But remembering must be a way into the future as well as into the past. Therefore, let us not be captive to images of war which our memory of that great invasion naturally brings to mind. For in the next war there will be no soldiers and sailors and airmen going off to war, some to die, some to return, all to be remembered for their sacrifice and bravery. There will only be the instantaneous destruction of hundreds of millions of human beings, men, women, and children, and the complete breakdown of civilization as we know it, not to mention of the planet itself, due to the heinous environmental damage that a nuclear war would cause.

● (1420)

Therefore, let us be captive instead to the images of individual courage, national planning, international co-operation and human community which all went into the success of the invasion and the war effort in general.

As individuals let us match the courage and self sacrifice which we so rightly honour today with a willingness to sacrifice our own lives for the cause of peace and human future. For war is not the only opportunity to fight for peace. We can fight for peace in peacetime, each in our own way, by being true to our deepest insights about the tragedy and futility of war, and acting on them.

As a nation let us put our hearts and minds together once again as we did at that time, and build a purposeful economy designed to serve the common good and the hopes for the future which so many who served had when they came back, and which so many young people today have for themselves and their families.

As a member of the international community let us recall what nations are capable of when they work together for a

common goal, and never cease in our efforts to get the world to redirect the vast resources, both material and human, now sinfully directed to mutual overkill, from death to life, in a common struggle against poverty, disease, pollution, and the roots of war.

#### *D-Day*

Finally, let us all remember that beyond our identity as Canadians we have an identity as human beings, all members of the same human family, with a common home, the planet earth. Let our loyalty not only be to Canada but also to all our fellow creatures and creation itself. Let us long for and work for the day when we shall all truly beat our swords into ploughshares, our spears into pruning hooks, when nation shall not rise against nation, nor shall we learn war any more.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. J.-J. Blais (Minister of National Defence):** Mr. Speaker, I want to join briefly with my colleagues and thank them for the testimony they have given on this most memorable day. All over Canada sentiments will be advanced much like the sentiments that were expressed by the Minister for External Relations (Mr. Pepin), by the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie), and by the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen). People will recall this most dramatic day in their lives, and they will remember the events of 40 years ago when they were young, tough, and courageous. They will remember D-Day.

Soldiers, airmen, and sailors will all have memories of that crucial day when Canada and its allies stormed ashore to secure a foothold on fortress Europe.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, our soldiers, our airmen and our sailors will all have vivid memories of that crucial day when Canada and her allies stormed ashore for a foothold on fortress Europe.

[*English*]

The sailors of the destroyers *Algonquin* and *Sioux* will see in their mind's eye their guns firing on the Juno Beach defences. The airmen of the RCAF will see again the cratering of German gun positions, or the fighter sweeps to keep the Luftwaffe at bay. And soldiers from a dozen regiments, English and French, properly identified in the House this afternoon, will perhaps live again the tension before battle, and call to mind friends who did not make it as they slugged through the German defences.

[*Translation*]

But June 6 does bring to mind more than the anniversary of the most important landing in history, a landing in which 15,000 Canadians took part, Mr. Speaker. It was as well the day when was launched what was later to be called the war of liberation, the rescue—by singularly dedicated troops—of the European civilization which the Nazi invaders were on the verge of obliterating, the beginning of the end of the human disaster that was World War II.