

have indicated, in respect of professional consultants being hired by the government, that I ordered a reduction this year of 10 per cent over what was predicted; and we have accomplished that.

Mr. Crouse: Those are not the recommendations I made to you, sir.

Mr. Chrétien: The hon. member asked me about consultants' fees and I said that, included in that item, were the Manpower training transfer payments to the provinces.

An hon. Member: You are not listening.

Mr. Chrétien: What about the payments made in respect of veterans' allowances amounting to \$516 million? What about CIDA grants in the amount of \$481 million? What about municipal grants in lieu of taxes, amounting to \$76 million? What about grants to international organizations, in the amount of \$36 million? We have to meet those contractual obligations, and no one is suggesting to us that we should not. I could carry on and on. For example, we are spending 8 per cent of the total budget of the government for national defence. I see the hon. member for Victoria (Mr. McKinnon) in his seat. I would like him to tell me if he would want us to cut the defence budget even more. He is the official critic of the opposition with respect to national defence. Should we cut the \$2.432 billion we are spending for national defence?

Mr. McKinnon: Madam Speaker, the minister has asked me a question and I should like to answer.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order, please. The hon. member will have an opportunity to participate when the minister has resumed his seat.

Mr. McKinnon: He has asked me a question, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Chrétien: I hope I will hear that the hon. member wants us to cut that expenditure.

Mr. McKinnon: You could cut out the \$11 million the department has paid two American companies for a study it does not intend to use.

An hon. Member: That is \$11 million; think about it.

Mr. Chrétien: It is \$11 million of a budget of \$2.432 billion.

An hon. Member: What's \$11 million?

Mr. Chrétien: I do not know about this case; I will investigate it. But the hon. member knows that is not hurting the real expenditures for national defence. This is the background on which we are working.

I would like hon. members to be precise about these so-called cuts to programs. They should stop speaking from both sides of their mouths. If they want us to make cuts, they should advise us where we should make them. We have to meet the budget. We get the funds, and we will defend our expenditures. I do not like this business of members of the official opposition and other opposition members asking for more money, then the Leader of the

Government Spending

Opposition asking us to cut expenditures, when the only precise thing he can refer to is the opening of the Mirabel airport at Montreal.

An hon. Member: You have just heard two examples from two members.

Mr. Chrétien: Hon. members are talking pure nonsense. I would like them to be precise about these cuts, because people expect a better effort on the part of opposition members; they expect them to be more precise and to suggest more concrete things. At least the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. McKenzie) makes no bones about it; he wants us to put everything under government control, without any more room for private enterprise in the market place. That is his position. I do not agree with him, but at least he stands by his words and is not speaking from both sides of his mouth.

Mr. McKenzie: I rise on a point of order, Madam Speaker. I never made any such statement. The minister referred to the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order, please. The hon. member is not in his seat.

Mr. Chrétien: I am terribly sorry. I am sure you do not want to be referred to as that hon. member and I am sure he does not want to be referred to as you. I apologize.

Mr. Woolliams: I have to agree with that statement.

Mr. Chrétien: I will make sure I do not refer to the hon. member for the other riding in Winnipeg. Madam Speaker, I should like to speak for a few minutes on the other aspect of the resolution. The Leader of the Opposition did not mention anything about it; he suggested that other members would refer to the Wilson commission. We received the report from that commission a few months ago. I am glad to report that we are on the verge of a final decision by cabinet in that regard. Some 95 per cent of the recommendations are absolutely acceptable to me and are likely to be acceptable to my colleagues in the cabinet. A final decision of the cabinet will be made within a few weeks. Following that, a bill will be drafted by the Department of Justice. The commission has worked very effectively in this area for many months and has made all sorts of very far reaching recommendations which have to be analysed by the government. These recommendations were presented to the House of Commons in the month of May.

Mr. Baldwin: In April, if not in March. You got them in March and we got them in April.

Mr. Chrétien: I do not have the precise date, but I will try to find it. It was quite late in the session. Both you and I are wrong on the date; it was actually April 14. The legislation will be available as soon as possible. I have had occasion to discuss some aspects of this report with the Auditor General and I am quite confident that when the whole process is completed the Auditor General will be satisfied with the bill I will introduce in this House. I said, when this report was tabled in April, that I hoped the government would be able to make up its mind before the end of the year. I am satisfied the government will have made a final decision by the end of the year and that long