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Vimy or Vichy?

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Vimy or Vichy? Well, it was all a long time ago and someplace overseas. It's easy for a busy minister of defence to get mixed up.

We hope John McCallum was more careful with his balance sheets, when he was a banker, than he has been with his history lately, in his defence job. First, he said he'd never heard of the Dieppe raid. Then, in the course of trying to explain that what he meant to say was that he had heard of Dieppe but hadn't much thought about it, he added something about other Canadian battles and mixed up Vimy - a principal Canadian slaughterhouse of World War I - with Vichy, capital of the stooge state set up in the parts of France not occupied by the Germans during World War II.

A politician, the saying goes, can survive anything but ridicule. Mr. McCallum is gasping and floundering and in grave danger of sinking in the stormy seas of public mockery. Too bad he has no functioning search-and-rescue helicopters to come and save him.

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