

*Supply—National Defence*

time is the one hundred ships in commission in the navy when our objective is reached.

I fear that it will not be possible adequately to fulfil and maintain these commitments within the limitations now governing our forces, that is the limitation of 115,000 service personnel by 1954. I believe it will be found either that the commitment must be reduced or the number of personnel increased, or we shall run the danger once again of inadequate support for our forces when they are engaged in operations.

Before stating my reasons in detail for this criticism, I think it is interesting to take a general look at our military commitments in terms of those of other countries, particularly of the United States. As I said, at this time I am making no criticism of the size and the extent of our commitment. But I think it does help us to keep a sense of perspective when we are discussing national defence just to look at the extent of the commitment of our ally. I realize also it is not strictly accurate to say, because another country has a population ten times that of our own, that we should necessarily, therefore, be able to put forth an exactly proportionate war effort, that is one-tenth of theirs, because there are many other factors which intervene. But when we are comparing population figures, it does seem to me it is an indication of the proportional effort of the two countries.

When we are considering this matter then, we find that the United States, with a population approximately ten times that of Canada, has as its goal of serving personnel in the armed forces—I understand that is what we would call active forces and does not include the national guard—3,500,000 men. According to my understanding they expect to reach that goal this year. Our active service personnel on a strictly proportionate basis would be one-tenth of that number or 350,000. Now, I have said that a strictly proportional relationship may not be possible because the United States has admittedly a more developed economy, but in terms of serving personnel it is an indication. We must bear in mind the fact that our goal is 115,000 service personnel by 1954; that is, our target is something less than one-third of what it would be if we were to achieve a goal on a basis exactly proportionate to that of the United States. And that in three years' time.

Then, Mr. Chairman, for the purpose of a detailed consideration of whether we can meet our commitments within the target strength of 115,000 service personnel, it is interesting to compare our effort and

strength in the last war with our announced commitments and proposed strength under the present program. If you will remember, Mr. Chairman, during the recent war Canada had five divisions in the field as a fighting force, three infantry divisions, two armoured divisions and two independent armoured brigades. Taking the equivalent of three brigades per division, that is either infantry or armoured brigades, and the equivalent of a brigade of artillery, one might say roughly that you had four brigades per division or that five divisions would give you the equivalent of twenty brigades plus the two armoured brigades which would make twenty-two. In making this comparison, I think it is only proper to bear in mind, of course, that there were reconnaissance regiments, as well as corps troops, who actually did fight although they were not included in any of the divisions or independent brigades.

I believe it would be a fairly generous estimate, and would form a fair basis of comparison, instead of taking twenty-two, the strict mathematical computation, to say we had the equivalent of thirty brigades within our five divisions and two independent brigades when we include reconnaissance, corps and army fighting troops. During the war of 1939-1945 to maintain a fighting force equal to thirty brigades took 495,804 men. Then three brigades, which is our present commitment, on the same basis would take approximately 49,580 men to maintain them. That figure of 49,580 would mean that the army alone would require a strength of nearly half the total planned strength of 115,000 which is to cover all three services.

Actually there has been an announcement that it is the intention of the government, with respect to the brigade for Europe, to rotate that brigade on a basis which the minister outlined. You cannot, therefore, just look for a brigade for Europe. Leaving out altogether the necessity of reinforcing either the brigade for Korea or the brigade for Europe, should hostilities occur there, we are committed to that rotation of the force. I believe I am correct in saying that at no time during the last war were we ever committed to a policy of complete rotation of service personnel. Since we are going to have to rotate the brigade in Europe, it would automatically follow that in fairness some provision will have to be made for rotating the brigade in Korea. You cannot, therefore, just take a figure of three brigades. It seems to me you have to take a figure of

[Mr. Fulton.]