

*Supply—National Defence**(Translation):***POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT****ONTARIO—INQUIRY AS TO PURCHASE
OF GASOLINE FOR SCOOTERS**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Azellus Denis (St. Denis): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Postmaster General a question? Is the minister aware that there is a gasoline price war on in Ontario, and that gasoline prices are down 16 cents a gallon? If so, does he intend to take advantage of this situation to lay in a supply of gas for use in his American "scooters"?

(Text):

Hon. W. M. Hamilton (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, to one of the most remarkable questions that has ever been asked in this house, I can only say no.

INQUIRY FOR RETURNS**INQUIRY AS TO COMPLIANCE WITH ORDERS
OF THE HOUSE**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillin-gate): Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether I could ask the Secretary of State if he would, on Monday or Tuesday, indicate to the house which orders of the house have not yet been complied with and how soon we may expect them to be complied with, in view of the nearness of the end of the session.

Hon. Henri Courtemanche (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, I will do that with pleasure.

SUPPLY

The house in committee of supply, Mr. Rea in the chair.

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

Royal Canadian Air Force—

221. Operation and maintenance, \$546,991,000.

Mr. Parkes: Mr. Chairman, just before the house rose last night the Leader of the Opposition asked for some information regarding the procedures which had been followed to enable the government to reach a decision as to the plane which would be selected to re-equip certain squadrons of the air division of the R.C.A.F. in Europe. I explained briefly last night the procedure and the methods which had been followed. I should like to repeat that today and elaborate a little so as to give the Leader of the Opposition all the information I have at my disposal.

It will be recalled that the F-86 had been in operation in Europe for some time, and it was therefore becoming obvious that sooner

[Mr. Nowlan.]

or later this aircraft would have to be replaced. About a year and a half ago a committee of experts in the R.C.A.F. was set up to investigate the various alternative planes which were then in existence or which were even on the drawing boards at that time.

That committee of experts has been carrying out examinations ever since that date. It has been a continuous exercise in which every possible endeavour has been made to ascertain the most suitable aircraft to be employed by the air force. Of course a final decision could not be reached until early this year, when the exact role which the air force would be required to carry out in Europe became clearer.

The committee of experts repeatedly reported to the chief of the air staff, who kept personally conversant with every examination and test made. The chief of the air staff kept me informed periodically as these examinations and evaluations were continued. He also kept the chiefs of staff committee informed of their progress.

Gradually certain types of aircraft were eliminated by the R.C.A.F. because they did not meet the operational requirements which were set out. All examinations made by the R.C.A.F. experts were based purely on military and operational grounds. As the R.C.A.F. was reaching a conclusion, meetings of the chiefs of staff were held almost daily on this matter so there could be combined recommendations made by the chiefs of staff committee.

Subsequently those recommendations were submitted to the cabinet defence committee. When they were submitted to the cabinet defence committee, and in fact before they had been submitted, the closest touch was maintained with the officials of the Department of Defence Production; and while the recommendations from my department were based entirely on military and operational grounds, the Department of Defence Production officials also took into consideration the various matters connected with the production of these types of aircraft, the way in which they could be produced here in Canada, and went into details regarding costs, etc., of the different types which were under examination. Finally, after the cabinet defence committee was prepared to make a recommendation to cabinet as a whole, the matter was considered by cabinet as a whole.

It might be of some interest to hon. members opposite to know some of the types of aircraft which were examined. I will just mention a few of them. Actually nearly 20 or more types of aircraft were given an examination of some kind or another, but