

Mr. Carmichael has expressed to me his belief that industry can help by developing additional skills and training facilities.

10. What is being done about the standardization of material and component specifications?

Answer:

During the first and second world wars the Canadian forces generally used equipment of British design, some of which we made and some of which was obtained from Britain. Seventy per cent of the vast supplies of materials we made was used by other countries. This Hyde Park Agreement of April 1941 accelerated the movement towards the integration of the industrial and economic potentials of North America. Generally speaking, it is not economical for us to make many items of equipment just for our own needs - the run is too small. We must devote our productive capacity to those things which we can do best and exchange our surpluses for things we need. This implies interchangeability, which in turn requires standardization.

We all know that during the war delays which seemed almost endless were caused by our producing weapons to British design and to British component and material specifications. We had to make major adaptations. A major achievement of Canadian skill was the adoption of British design radar to North American standards.

Altogether, war-won experience taken together with our position as a great manufacturing and trading nation gives Canada a vital interest in standardization. Just as important as the Standardization of the design of weapons, perhaps more important, is the standardization of screw-threads, electric and electronic parts, metal components, and the like.

Apart entirely from defence considerations, standardization of these matters would reduce costs and promote trade. Standardization of this kind has been pressed forward during the last thirty years by the Canadian Standards Association, supported by the Canadian Arsenals Limited, representing the Armed Forces. The main target has been screw-threads. I am glad to say that we are close to an agreement on a standard screw-thread.

Progress is being made with regard to other similar matters. Nothing is being left undone to press forward work in this field.

11. What progress is being made in the standardization of weapons and equipment types?

Answer:

Because of our close relations with Britain and the United States, Canada is vitally interested in standardization of design. There is no obstacle in Canada. But as you know, this is not easy to bring about. Much as one would like to do it, no one is going to scrap serviceable rifles in order to adopt the .300 calibre and the rimless cartridge. In the Canadian Army we have a complete schedule of the weapons in respect of which we are prepared to adopt American designs.

When and how this can be done is being worked at; while it can't be done easily, it can't be done too quickly.