

One way to destroy the effectiveness of parliament is for an incoming government to act in that way toward an outgoing government. To do so is to break with a tradition established over generations and, regretfully, we have to deplore this action by the present government. Whether or not the government in the early part of 1957 had arrived at a written cabinet conclusion with regard to the cancellation of the Arrow program I do not know, because none of us ever examined those conclusions. However, we have the authority of the chief of staff for saying that this was the advice which was given. Yet hon. gentlemen opposite failed to take action because of the fear of an election. So they saddled the Canadian people with these tremendous expenditures, knowing all the time that the cost of these airplanes had jumped from \$2 million to \$8 million per copy, and knowing also that the requirement had dropped from 400 planes to 100 planes. They had that knowledge, but they did not want to take action; they did not want to tell the people the truth. They saddled us with the problem and then, throughout 1957 and 1958 they condemned us in the harshest terms for our bold and decisive action with regard to the Arrow program.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** After 18 months.

**Mr. Churchill:** I wish I had time to remind the house of some of the words the Minister of National Defence used in those debates—how he condemned that great gentleman who was then the minister of national defence, Mr. George Pearkes, for his actions on that occasion. It is a shocking record which, eventually, we may have to bring forward to show just what the attitude of the present Minister of National Defence was when he was in opposition, and when he was so irresponsible.

I said I hoped the subject I was introducing would develop a lively interest, and I am sure there are members on the other side who would like to take part in this debate. I do not wish to deprive them of the opportunity. In any case, there are many on this side who will have additional information to lay before the house, so I will conclude by moving, seconded by my hon. friend from Oxford (Mr. Nesbitt):

That all the words after "that" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

"This house regrets the widespread confusion, unrest and damage caused by the government's piecemeal pronouncements concerning abandonment of defence projects such as, in particular,

(1) the cancellation of the general purpose frigate program,

(2) the cancellation of the conversion of R.C.A.F. station Penhold for jet training, and

(3) the contemplated abandonment of other defence establishments, and deplores that such steps

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have been and are being taken without seeking the views of or awaiting recommendations from the special committee on defence."

**Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East):** Mr. Speaker, until a few moments ago it was impossible for all hon. members to know what grievance was being raised by the official opposition on this supply motion. As you will understand, sir, it is therefore impossible for us at this time to comment on the subject by the use of direct quotations from newspapers or from the evidence presented thus far to the special committee on defence. However, it does not make a great deal of difference to us that we are not able to do so.

In my opening remarks on behalf of this group may I say I regret very much that the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. Churchill), in presenting something which I would have supposed would have been based on principle, made use of so many "I's". There were so many "I's" that I started to wonder whether he was and is the only member of the defence committee of the House of Commons. He has also seen fit, for reasons best known to himself, to convey what may or may not be the conclusions to be drawn from the evidence which has been presented to the House of Commons committee on defence. However, I do want to say that I agree in part with the hon. member, who has introduced a want of confidence amendment to a supply motion.

It has been my privilege to be a member of two defence committees of the house in the past 10 years. The first one was a special committee on defence that dealt wholly and solely with the estimates of the department which had been referred to the committee by the house. At that time the hon. gentleman who is now Minister of National Defence (Mr. Hellyer) was an opposition member. I can remember questions being asked of the then minister of national defence, Major General Pearkes, and the military authorities day after day in our meetings and we could not get any answers. This question was a matter of policy; that question was a matter of security. I still have a vivid memory of the man who is now Minister of National Defence being aroused and irked that the committee could not get the information it desired.

Today we have another committee of the House of Commons on defence which was set up, not to deal with the estimates but with policy, a committee which was given a great build-up by both the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) and the Minister of National Defence. I find there is no difference in the situation between trying to get information from the present Minister of National Defence and the situation when the present minister