

the heading "aircraft expansion". This is one of those press releases. I do not say the minister is responsible for it, but somebody is. Certainly the minister is partly responsible for it. It is one of those things fed to the Canadian people about that time which tended to soothe them to sleep with regard to the government's war effort. This is the part to which I call attention:

Duties in Canada previously allocated to the British supply board have been vested in the Department of Munitions and Supply. The department will now place orders direct for the British government. This arrangement is expected to expedite the placement of orders for British requirements and generally speed up the production of munitions of war in the dominion. Canadian industry is being geared up to meet Great Britain's needs.

I have no objection at all to that paragraph. I believe it contains a fair statement of the objective at that time. Then the statement goes on to say:

In announcing the appointment of Mr. R. P. Bell, prominent business executive, to the executive committee of the Department of Munitions and Supply, Hon. C. D. Howe intimated that many difficulties in the supply of aircraft had been overcome. Mr. Bell's responsibility will be that of coordinating the entire aircraft production throughout the dominion, and accelerating the output of the aviation industry. Mr. Bell is serving without remuneration. He commences at a time when the Canadian Aircraft Industry has responded splendidly to the emergency created by the inability of Great Britain to ship components under the terms of the joint air training plan.

That is quite a tribute paid to the industry by the minister at that time. It continues:

This response has been such that the larger part of the programme, which covered two years, has been compressed into a one-year plan.

Mark this sentence:

Elementary trainer planes are already being produced on a mass production basis.

I wonder whether that was a correct statement of the position—"a mass production basis." Of course I quite realize—

Mr. HOWE: What does the hon. member mean by a mass production basis?

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I am asking the minister what he means by a mass production basis. It is a quotation from his statement.

Mr. HOWE: Yes, but the hon. member says it is not on that basis. We shall have to have an agreement on that.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I wonder whether that was a correct statement for the minister to make, having regard to the facts as they existed at that time, and especially

as they existed with respect to some of the planes, the elementary planes—trainer planes—the minister had in mind.

Mr. HOWE: Elementary training planes have never been behind schedule.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I never said they had. This does not say anything about schedule; it says they were being produced on a mass production basis. That means to the people of Canada a large production basis.

Mr. HOWE: How large?

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I do not know. The minister stated that, but he did not enlarge on his statement. His remarks continue:

Engines for other planes have been ordered from the United States to replace those to have come from Great Britain, and Canadian plants are now turning out training and service planes, bombers and fighters, as fast as modern industrial practice permits.

That may be true with regard to training and service planes, but I am just wondering, and I ask the minister, whether it is true that they are turning out bombers and fighters as fast as modern industrial practice permits. If he means modern industrial practice in Canada, then of course that does not mean much. But it was intended, I think, to lull the Canadian people into the thought that we were getting bombers and fighters in substantial numbers every week and every month. I suggest that that was not a true factual statement, that it was intended only to keep the people quiet and to prevent them from asking questions.

As the minister stated on Wednesday last, the general manager of Federal Aircraft was Mr. Moffett, chief aeronautical engineer of Canadian Vickers Limited. I do not know this gentleman and I would not wish to say one word to injure his reputation in the slightest degree. I would have no reason for saying this, and I would not have referred to him had not the minister done so. But this is clear: After public criticism and press criticism became apparent following the minister's return from England earlier this year, Mr. Moffett was replaced by Mr. Newman, of the Canadian Pacific Railway company.

In August, 1940, the minister gave Mr. Bell the choice of remaining as president of Federal Aircraft Limited or continuing as director of aircraft production. Since the retention of the former post would probably have meant his transfer to Montreal, Mr. Bell elected, as I understood the minister, to re-