

National Defence

the result we have obtained from that expenditure, and what is actually to be done in terms of defence with this enormous sum of \$2,100 million.

We have had a statement which conveys to the members of this house the suggestion that, in spite of difficulties, all is well. We have had no indication of weaknesses that every hon. member of this house knows perfectly well exist. Only a short time ago we read of the statement of Mr. Churchill in the House of Commons in Great Britain in which he said without any reservation that things were far from satisfactory. He pointed out where the weaknesses lay. He showed where they were short in equipment of various kinds and he pointed out the dangerous deficiencies of their armed forces. He pointed out that Britain had been stripped bare of units ready to go into the field. He placed no veil of secrecy around the information which, in Great Britain, they believe that the house and the people have a right to expect at all times.

Britain's air minister is dissatisfied with the situation. He has not hesitated to say so. May I, in fairness, point out that this is not something that has simply happened with a change of government in Great Britain. There has been in Britain a frankness with regard to the situation which is a challenge to every member of this house. They do not say that they cannot tell where their divisions are, where their brigades are or where their air force is located because it might help the Russians. They tell the house and they tell their people what the situation is. As a result, the people are ready to support what is being done.

Make no mistake about the fact that the people of Canada want effective defence. Make no mistake about the fact that the people of Canada will back this government in the preparation of real defence. But the people of this country want to know what the money is being spent for. They want to know that we are really getting defence, and they want to have some assurance that we are not wasting millions of dollars under the plans which are now being put into effect.

Canada's Minister of National Defence is dissatisfied with nothing. For him everything is for the very best in the very best of all possible worlds. Why should it not be? This is a dream world of his own invention. Thus far, this parliament has no adequate report on NATO from either the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Pearson) or the Minister of National Defence. What happened at that conference, which was heralded as the meeting of minds, as a great turning point in history, is still just as

uncertain to us as it was before those two ministers spoke, except for the information which we have received from the newspapers. I should qualify that statement. It is more uncertain, because up until the time they spoke we thought we could rely on the responsible newspapers that had reported on the conference. But now we even have those statements placed under some shadow of doubt, and we are left with very little that is certain, except that we know that the Secretary of State for External Affairs agrees that there was a statement made to the effect that in 1952 there were to be 50 divisions in an adequate state of battle readiness, something that we know is preposterous. The Secretary of State for External Affairs has also answered his own question. He wanted to know where this figure of 100 divisions in 1954 had come from. He gave that to us. Why should he be so greatly surprised that we have used the figure that he says we all knew? A few days ago in one breath he raised the question about the 100 divisions, and then immediately afterwards he said it was a matter of common knowledge that we were discussing a figure of somewhere between 80 and 110 or 115 divisions. If that statement is correct, then it is a matter of common knowledge that they were discussing figures which would give us the mean figure of approximately 100 divisions. If we are considering the possibility of 110 or 115 divisions in 1954, surely it is not too much that this house should be told how we would meet a commitment of 100 divisions in 1954. We still have no real information on that matter.

The Minister of National Defence has added nothing to our knowledge. In his review yesterday the Minister of National Defence gave us no information that has not already been available to the people of this country through the press or over the radio. The Minister of National Defence yesterday did not even deal with the fundamentals of defence. For years it has been recognized that the whole basis of defence preparation in this country is the non-permanent force. It has been recognized that the permanent force—yes, and our gallant active force in Korea—are in there as men doing a full-time job, but that the basis of our whole defence organization in this country is the non-permanent force. Yet yesterday, about that non-permanent force not a word was said that would really tell us what is being planned in order to prepare this great foundation for all the real defence organization that this country has built up over the years.

Yesterday the Minister of National Defence said that the policies as stated on February 5 last year have not changed. If that is so, there