

Committee on Defence Expenditures

We are forming a brigade in Europe, and we are going to have to supply replacements for that brigade. From time to time we need replacements in Korea. If we are going to have an adequate defence program, then one of the first things we must do is to recognize these small difficulties and they are only small when compared with the whole defence expenditure. They have to be ironed out.

The man in the ranks who will do the fighting, the man who leaves his home, who leaves security and a job, the man who leaves his family, is entitled at least to contentment of mind while he is in the service. These irritations ought not to be brought to his attention from time to time, when he receives letters from home.

This may mean stepping up our defence expenditures. I say that because I do not want the members to go into the committee just for the purpose of conducting a witch hunt to see what they can cut off, how they can embarrass someone politically in respect of a contract, or the like. In some instances expenditures may have to be stepped up.

I should like to stress another matter, one which was discussed yesterday afternoon by the hon. member for Lethbridge (Mr. Blackmore). I refer to the necessity for assistance to Britain. Looking at our whole defence program, let us not forget for one moment that, in the program we are building up today, Britain is one of our main outposts. If anything happens in Europe, she will suffer the first shot; and unless we can relieve the economic difficulties of that country, as part of our defence program, we will have missed the boat.

Many people in this country and many sections of the press held the view that, with the defeat of the Labour government in Great Britain, Utopia was at hand, that they had reached the millennium. Anyone with any sense knows that is not true. Over there is an island on which there are 45 million people, with resources sufficient to look after about 20 million. I do not care what government is in office in England, the problem is still there.

Britain is our main outpost. Any money we lend to Britain over a long term, as suggested by the hon. member for Lethbridge, is in my opinion insurance in connection with our defence program, and the most important expenditure we could make. Anyone who reads the press today over there must feel pretty bad. In one paper I pick up I see this heading, "Churchill cuts cabinet size." That may look all right, but to me it is just the barometer of what will happen all along the line—more austerity, standards must go

down, "tighten your belt". There is no reason we should live in luxury while those who are conducting our defence across the water must dig deeper in the kitchen, and further reduce their standards.

We owe them something. Not only do we owe them something in this defence set-up, but we owed them something in the last war. They depleted the whole nation, tore their resources to pieces and liquidated their holdings so that they might make a maximum contribution—and they did make it.

I pick up another clipping, and I am convinced that the millennium is not here yet. This one says, "United Kingdom houses to be colder this winter." That is not very encouraging. Should we expect our main outpost to shiver more than they did last winter?—because they were pretty cold last winter.

I pick up another clipping, which indicates how they are reducing their standards all the time, so that they may build up their defences. This clipping says, "Britain has repaid \$470,200,000 on Canadian loan." That money could very well have been used in Britain to provide a little more food, warmth and shelter. I am saying this only because in my view the committee should give it some thought. If we are going to talk about defence expenditures, if we are going to see whether our defences are adequate to meet the threat indicated in General Eisenhower's summary of the strength of the enemy we may have to fight some time, then I think our contribution cannot be measured in terms of dollars and cents. It has to be looked at from the point of view that people placed in our strategic position must consider it as our duty to do something to assist Britain in building defences, so that she may assist us if and when a showdown comes. I say this because in my view it should be considered in the committee.

Then, we realize that it is proper to have sufficient manpower in the services. It is all very well to have a lot of slogans on paper. But when one stops to think for a moment he realizes that in the last war the greatest contribution made toward defeating Hitler, and all that he stood for, was the one made by the productive capacity of the North American continent. If it had not been for United States and Canadian production in the last war we would have had a much worse time. What are we doing about it? Is our productive capacity being properly organized and utilized? I do not think it is. I think we are falling down badly so far as the production of basic steel is concerned, and steel is the main foundation of our whole defence program. We are falling down pretty badly in comparison to the expansion that is going on in the