

Supply—Defence Production

in Canada, there is a possibility that we are going to repeat the same mistake that caused some bitter discussion in this house about the CF-100 program. I should like to suggest that mistake was a failure to integrate our military and civilian needs in our Canadian aircraft production policy.

I said previously that by the very nature of things, and it is a matter of record, the military demands for aircraft have been largely responsible for the periods of rapid development in the aircraft industry in all parts of the world. The aircraft is a relatively new invention which came into its own during world war I, made comparatively slight progress between world wars I and II, and has come into its own as a means of transportation since the end of world war II largely as a result of the stimulus during that world conflict.

However, Canada has a very unique opportunity. Perhaps Canada, the U.S.S.R. and the United States are unique in this respect, in that their civilian transport needs provide a real basis for rapid and widespread development of aircraft production. Canada particularly, as an underdeveloped, youthful nation, has an almost unlimited demand for air transportation.

During recent months our shortsightedness in this regard has become increasingly evident. With the demand that has arisen in connection with the development of the north, arising from the construction of the distant early warning radar screen there, we have been made painfully aware of the fact that we have not geared our domestic aircraft industry to supply our own civilian domestic needs. As I look at the program for aircraft development outlined in the annual report of the department, as I examine any other reports that are available, such as the reports of the Department of National Defence, for example, I see no evidence that an attempt is being made to overcome this earlier deficiency in our aircraft program.

Admittedly it is difficult to develop a fighter aircraft that has flexibility of function. The Mosquito aircraft to which I referred, which became the jack of all trades during world war II, was perhaps unique in this respect. So far as the CF-105 delta fighter is concerned, which is being designed for the exclusive purpose of bringing Canada up to date in her fighter defence role, I can readily see there is no possibility of adapting it to civilian uses. That, however, does not remove the possibility—

The Deputy Chairman: On a point of order, I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but in his own interest I think I should point out to other hon. members in the house who
[Mr. Dinsdale.]

sit in his locality that at this end of the chamber we are getting very loud noises from the loud speakers, and it is not very clear.

Mr. Dinsdale: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is impossible to adapt the CF-100 and the CF-105 to civilian uses. However, there must be some way in which the resources of Avro Canada, which has built up such extensive facilities in a relatively short period of time, can supplement its purely military function with some kind of civilian function so we can have a more balanced production level.

The minister referred to the necessity of holding back on the production of the CF-100 until such time as the CF-105 comes into production, and that has been the story down through recent years as a valiant attempt has been made to keep in a fully operational state the excellent production facilities, the engineering skills and the engineering personnel that have been developed by Avro Canada. I recall there was an early experiment in this regard as Avro became reactivated after the war, and Canada went so far as to produce a flying prototype of a jet liner, the first jet liner to fly, in anticipation of the jet transport age which is now upon us.

I can recall, for example, the general manager of Avro Canada at that time, a Mr. Walter Deisher, speaking before the Empire Club in Toronto back in 1946, expressing high hopes that Canada would be ahead in the pioneering of the jet age. That was a very visionary approach to the future of aircraft production in Canada, and I felt it was an approach that was heading in the right direction when you think of the nature of our Canadian geography and the peculiar transportation needs that we have on this continent. However, for inexplicable reasons, after the jet liner prototype was produced and had flown successfully, the whole project was dropped, after an expenditure of some \$8 million had been made.

I recall at that time, too, that there was some statement to the effect that T.C.A. would be requiring this jet liner, though no specific orders came from T.C.A. The only order forthcoming came from a United States company, the National Airlines of the United States of America. Because the project was dropped that order, of course, could not be filled. That was an attempt to integrate military and civilian needs, and so far as I can see it was definitely the type of aircraft program that Canada required. We have suffered because of our failure to continue development along that line.

Today all the major air lines in all the countries of the world are on the threshold of moving into jet liner transport. We have