

*Supply—National Defence*

permit the reference of divorces to the courts could appeal to this court of domestic relations.

In connection with this particular bill, I agree with the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart in that I think I can read into the bill some evidence of collusion. I read the evidence in connection with this bill quite carefully when I realized it would be coming up tonight and I find that what happened here is very unusual.

Section stands.

Progress reported.

**Mr. Speaker:** It being nine o'clock the house will resume the business that was interrupted at six o'clock.

**SUPPLY**

The house in committee of supply, Mr. Beaudoin in the chair.

**DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE****Defence forces—**

245. To provide for the defence forces of the navy, army and air services and defence research and development, and to authorize total commitments for this purpose of \$3,831,270,000 including authority notwithstanding section 29 of the Consolidated Revenue and Audit Act, to make commitments for the current year of \$1,924,170,835 and commitments against future years of \$1,907,099,165 against which commitments it is estimated that actual expenditures in 1951-52 will not exceed \$1,595,050,000 of which \$183,050,000 will be provided from section 3 of the Defence Appropriation Act, 1950, as supplemented by item 246, \$1,412,000,000.

**Mr. Drew:** Immediately before the committee rose at six o'clock we were discussing the use of the small arms arsenal outside Toronto. Certain questions were directed to the right hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce—I will wait, Mr. Chairman, until I can hear my own words.

**The Deputy Chairman:** Order. I would ask hon. members who are behind the curtains to remain silent.

**Mr. Drew:** Questions had been directed to the minister—I do not propose to continue, Mr. Chairman, until it is possible to be heard in the chamber.

**The Deputy Chairman:** Order. Perhaps I should remind hon. members that the jurisdiction of the chairman extends not only to the chamber but also to the lobbies. If they do not wish to resume their seats and listen to the debate, I would suggest that they go to other quarters.

**Mr. Drew:** I shall start again. I was saying that before we rose at six o'clock certain questions had been directed to the Minister of Trade and Commerce in regard to the use being made at the present time of the small

[Mr. Hansell.]

arms arsenal outside Toronto. I do not know whether the minister is to be here this evening, but it would have been helpful in view of the nature of the discussion that took place. However, the Minister of National Defence is here. I took down the exact words of the Minister of Defence Production in answer to a question in regard to the production of the .300 calibre rifles and machine guns at that plant, which is equipped to produce rifles and machine guns. These were his words:

There is no production of 300 mm. rifles and machine guns because that is not a standard weapon at this time. Until a decision is made as to what will be the standard weapon to produce in Canada we will have no orders for the 300 mm. guns.

The minister referred to 300 mm. rifles, but I am sure that was in error; it should be .300 calibre rifles and machine guns, because we were discussing rifles and machine guns, and also the fact that there were .303 calibre rifles in this country at the present time. This indicates one of the difficulties with which we are confronted in discussing these estimates. In the *London Free Press* of May 3, 1949, the Minister of National Defence is quoted as saying at Detroit on May 2 of that year:

Canada has decided to abandon the rimmed cartridge .303 calibre rifle her troops used in two world wars for the rimless cartridge .300 type which is the American army service rifle.

That was a positive, definite statement of a decision, announced by the minister primarily responsible for the type of weapons which will be used by the defence forces of this country. That was just over two years ago. Therefore it was a matter of both surprise and concern when the members of this house learned earlier this year that the plant which is tooled up to produce rifles and machine guns, and which has produced very large quantities of rifles and machine guns, was not in fact making those arms for the Canadian armed services; but that whatever else it was doing, it was making shotguns for sporting purposes for sale through ordinary civilian channels. More recently this subject has been under discussion in the public accounts committee. On May 1, 1951, the deputy minister of national defence was being questioned in regard to the type of rifle that was to be adopted for the Canadian forces. Certain questions and answers indicate that there was no doubt as to what was under discussion, and no doubt as to the answer. At page 246 of the proceedings of the public accounts committee I find these words:

**Mr. Fulton:** Has it been decided to adopt the .300 as a standard rifle for the Canadian services?

**The Chairman:** Would you mind repeating your question, Mr. Fulton? There is a great deal of noise in the room.