

*Supply—National Defence*

less than a year ago are completely ruined. The minister says he is going to bring about a significant qualitative improvement and operational capability in our armed forces. He is going to completely ground our air force.

**Mr. Hellyer:** Are you talking about that plane you bought when you were in the government?

**Mr. Horner (Acadia):** The minister makes some snide remark about the Avro Arrow. Certainly he made a great fuss when he was on this side of the house but he did not tell us the whole story. The Defence Committee ascertained that the decision to cancel that plane had been made in 1956 but because an election was imminent the government failed to declare itself. It failed to say the air force had rejected it in 1956. The government failed to take any action on the air force's decision because an election was imminent.

**Mr. Hellyer:** Nonsense.

**Mr. Horner (Acadia):** This all came out in evidence and it is in the committee's report. I believe it was General Foulkes who appeared before the Defence Committee and put this information on the record. The minister can make some smart remark and then go back into seclusion in his department but he has led the Canadian public down the garden path with regard to defence expenditures.

What else did the minister say? He said that war between the NATO powers and Russia was remote. Did he tell us what is happening to NATO and the whole question of our NATO alliance? This matter was quite prominent in the 1963 election campaign, at which time the minister had great ideas and great vision. Did he tell us in his speech that France has said that the NATO powers will be out of there? Did he tell us the Canadian force in France is the only one permitted to take photographs over France today and that the United States is not? Did he tell us what is going to happen in NATO in the years ahead? Did he tell us how Canada can better serve the NATO alliance? No, Mr. Chairman, he dealt in generalities. Two years ago when the minister took over the department I am sure he would have had all the answers. He has found that answers do not come so easily today.

● (5:40 p.m.)

The minister went on to say that there are political difficulties in Europe not yet resolved. That is the way he summed up the trouble in NATO. He went on to say that

[Mr. Horner (Acadia).]

NATO is still of continuing importance to Canada's security. No one denies that, but how best can Canada play its role in this regard? Did he say that we must maintain a nuclear force in NATO, which was a prominent question a few years ago? No, Mr. Chairman, he did not. In fact, he said that the concept of Canada's defence force must be one of mobility, which seems to be a key word of our present minister. He is going to ground the air force with the CF-5's, the Freedom Fighters, so that our defence force will not be very mobile. This question is one of the most important that the opposition can point out to the government in the coming session.

Let us examine our defence estimates. Let the minister produce the savings which he predicted he would make two years ago. Let us examine this tri-service defence force which we are building to see whether or not it is feasible, whether or not any real savings are produced and whether or not something can be done to bolster the morale of our Canadian forces. There is certainly no question that it is at its lowest today.

Quite apart from the air force, what has the minister done with the navy? As the hon. member for Calgary North pointed out, 20 to 25 per cent of our naval ships are tied up in dock with no men to man them. Is the minister building a completely new fleet? He has ordered a few new ships but he has no real program in mind for the navy. Some one in this debate has already said that the navy has gone, that the minister has completely grounded it. Perhaps that is closer to the truth than most naval men would like or be able to admit.

We must continue to examine these estimates with thoroughness. After all, we are living in a democratic country and members of parliament and the government move with the wishes and desires of the people. One role an opposition can play is to continue to investigate conditions and government thinking in the hope that the public will arise and say to the government that we should have some action. That is what we must do in this debate. We must continue to point out that the government has led the Canadian public down the garden path regarding defence expenditures and the mobility of our defence force.

We all remember the great things the government said we were going to do. I remember that I was a member of the Defence Committee when it visited Europe. One