

Interim Supply

question and the white paper does not answer it. I have reason to believe that the principle behind this whole thing is to see that we do not fight again.

Mr. Laniel: This has nothing to do with unification and integration.

Mr. Bigg: It has everything to do with it. If we are not going to have a force, integration is meaningless. What is the use of talking about unification if we are not to have a fighting force? In 1962 the opposition demanded every detail of our understanding with the United States. When we refused to give every detail they said it was contempt of parliament. Hon. gentlemen opposite knew what those details were. They knew perfectly well.

In 1962 it was impossible for Canada to have control over the nuclear weapons which we were going to be using. They were under the control of the president of the United States. If hon. gentlemen opposite did not know it, the leader of the opposition at that time, now Prime Minister, knew it, and my right hon. friend from Prince Albert knew it. The McMahon Act of the United States provides that the use of atomic weapons owned and operated by Americans rests with the president of the United States and that he may not share that responsibility with anybody. It was impossible for us to accept atomic weapons on Canadian soil without a change being made in that act. Well, the act has not been changed yet. We now have atomic weapons in Canada. The atomic warheads on the Bomarc can be fired only on the orders of the president of the United States, and Canada is no longer boss in her own house. Would the hon. member like to ask a question or is he glued to his desk?

Mr. Laniel: Would the hon. member care to tell me which government took the decision to build the Bomarc bases for weapons on which there were to be nuclear warheads?

Mr. Bigg: I am glad the hon. member asked that question. The defence of a country today cannot be decided from hour to hour. If we did not plan ahead we should not be able to do anything.

Mr. Laniel: You call that planning? I don't.

Mr. Bigg: I happen to be an artillery officer and I know that the Bomarc is not entirely useless without atomic warheads. The Bomarc can be an effective weapon against conventional bombers.

The agreement we made with the United States had not been "firmed up" to the last details. The most important detail had still to be settled, as hon. members know. It could not be settled without agreement by the United States to bring about a change in the McMahon Act. We certainly allowed the Bomarc stations to be built. They are still there and the weapons have atomic warheads now. Should we have accepted them holus-bolus regardless of the situation? It was a great statesmanlike act.

But what has happened with regard to Canadian sovereignty? The meeting which the Leader of the Opposition was to have had on May 3 was never confirmed. The present Prime Minister did not go to see the President of the United States and demand Canadian sovereignty in this area. We allowed the United States to build bases in Canada. Hon. members opposite have accepted atomic warheads to be fired only under United States orders. We allowed them to build bases but we would not accept atomic warheads on Canadian soil without an arrangement for dual control, and if I had to make a decision today I would make exactly the same decision as was made at that time. How can we tell what might have happened if my right hon. friend who now leads the official opposition had been allowed to go to the United States and help make a decision which would have retained sovereignty for Canada?

The Chairman: I must advise the hon. member that the time allotted to him has expired.

Some hon. Members: Question.

The Chairman: Shall the resolution carry?

Mr. Churchill: No.

Mr. Forrestal: Mr. Chairman, perhaps at this point in the debate it might be useful to review what is going on across Canada and examine what the reaction has been to the minister's bill and to the stand the opposition has taken during the last eight or nine days while we have been considering the question of unification in the course of a debate on interim supply. How are the editors of daily newspapers in Canada reacting to events in the house in connection with this matter?

I wish to touch briefly on the contents of 10 or 12 editorials, perhaps more if time permits. These have been extracted from leading newspapers across Canada. Since the constituency of Halifax is one of the areas most vitally