

*Supply—Privy Council*

with a problem unprecedented in the sense that we have never had to face it before, and unprecedented also in the horrible possibilities involved in it. It is well, I think, that he should have done this in order that we may in this house and in the country be aware of the realities of the situation which faces us at the present time.

He has not only indicated the necessity of planning against this horrible eventuality, but he has also indicated that such planning is taking place. I have had some association with that planning in other years. Nothing could be much more important in the realm of government than to carry it forward; and while we all shrink from the possibility that these plans might have to be used, it is well that we should know about them in general terms—and that is the only way we should know about them, because no one in this committee wants to ask questions with regard to details which would contravene security.

The fact is that the plans with which some of us on this side were associated until a short time ago must be considered now, as in some respects at least, out of date. I presume the government and its advisers are aware of the developments which have made them out of date.

The Prime Minister has divided them into broad categories; plans for carrying on civil government in the emergency of nuclear war and—perhaps this is an aspect of the first category and not something to be repeated separately—plans for such things as the control and censorship of the press, radio and communications in time of war or war emergency. As far as these latter matters are concerned, those plans were drawn up a good many years ago after the second world war, and I suppose they have been kept up to date. All arrangements were made so they could be put into effect in those days, and I am sure that is true now, at a moment's notice. All details had been worked out so far as possible.

But the other plan, the far more important plan, for carrying on civil government itself in a time of nuclear warfare must, I am sure, have been altered in recent years because of the great increase in the capacity for destruction of weapons that could be launched against us. I have no doubt that the increase in this vote is for the purpose of altering, elaborating, and perhaps in some respects changing the nature of these plans, and as such I think this item should receive our support.

When I talk about an increase in destructive capacity in the last year or two which may have necessitated changes in plans, I need only say to the committee—and this shows what we should be up against

were it to happen—that it would be possible now to drop one bomb or to launch one missile carrying as much destructive capacity as all the bombs or missiles dropped in the second world war by all the armies of both sides. If half a dozen of them were dropped on Canadian soil it makes one almost despair of the possibility of carrying on any form of government. We should not, of course, yield to that kind of despair, and for this reason plans are being made to deal with even that kind of emergency.

The Prime Minister has also mentioned plans for the restoration and rehabilitation of our country after that kind of attack. It is also wise to plan for that. Here again one almost falls into despair at contemplating the work of rehabilitation and restoration that would be required if this should ever happen. Nevertheless, as I have said, we have to plan for these things, and it is well that we should know what we are facing. I think the Prime Minister's remarks this morning are—perhaps "welcome" is not the right word—but perhaps it is as well that we should have had the opportunity of hearing them.

I should like also to suggest that those who are engaged on this essential work should keep in close touch with other governments, such as those of the United Kingdom and the United States, who are facing this problem and who have done perhaps as much as, if not more work than we have been able to do and who have greater resources for that purpose, so that we may benefit from their planning and from their experience. So far as experience is concerned, the United Kingdom had more of this, unhappily, than any other government on our side during the last war and they learned a great deal during that war.

When I was exposed to some of these bombing situations in world war II—and at times I was more uncomfortable than I was in the first world war—I learned to appreciate and admire not only the fortitude of the people of London but the way in which the government there had planned against that kind of emergency and were able to put those plans into effect. Of course that is all changed now, but I know they are changing their plans, too, and I am sure we are keeping in close touch with them.

Of course it is possible to make even the best plans which do not always work out in practice. Members of the committee will forgive me if I cite a personal illustration of this. At the beginning of the last war I was stationed in London when war was declared that fine September Sunday morning and the world changed. All arrangements had been