

*Supply—Health and Welfare*

enough bomb shelters and other civil defence equipment available, several million Canadians might be saved from nuclear death. Public apathy caused by the overwhelming enormity of the concept of nuclear war is the greatest obstacle to overcome.

I agree with that statement. Public apathy is indeed the greatest obstacle to overcome and I might say parliamentary apathy must also be overcome. I have not heard a worthwhile speech from members of the Liberal party or the C.C.F. group on this subject. We must realize the danger confronting us and acquaint the public with the full facts of the situation. The Canadian people require leadership. We must bring home to the people the seriousness of the situation. The money spent on civil defence would then be willingly contributed to by the taxpayers.

**Mr. Weichel:** Mr. Chairman, I am sorry to come in at this time but for some months I have had some comments prepared relating to these estimates and I shall detain the committee as briefly as possible.

In rising to speak on the civil defence items in the 1959-60 estimates of the Department of National Health and Welfare, I want to compliment the Minister on the progress he has been making since civil defence has been assigned to him and, in particular, on the co-operation he has been able to receive from the provincial governments. Much of this is due, I feel, to the minister's practice of taking provinces into partnership by calling them in for conferences with him. He has had conferences with the provincial civil defence ministers last October and again in April this year, the first time the provinces have been called in to Ottawa on civil defence problems since 1954. My understanding is that a third conference, when the new reorganization is complete, is scheduled for this autumn in a continuation of this general policy of achieving a thorough understanding with our provincial partners.

In reading over the new proposals I note with particular interest that one of the existing peacetime emergency services which the army would direct in such damaged areas where they are commanding re-entry operations is the provincial and municipal fire services. This is of particular interest to me as only a few weeks ago I was at the head table of the annual banquet of the firefighters' union in the province of Ontario which was held in my riding's largest city, Kitchener. I am very proud of the fact that my county of Waterloo has long been one of the leaders in civil defence and particularly in fire civil defence. My home county of Waterloo, which comprises three cities and Preston, was the first county in all of Canada where the fire departments in

the entire county are united in one short-wave radio network where the dominant city's fire department can sound the sirens and call out the firefighters in every municipality in the entire county by using their shortwave radio network system, and so unite all the fire departments in any fire emergency to work under one unified radio command. Seventeen fire departments with over 400 firefighters are organized in this Waterloo county mutual fire aid plan. It is so well developed, under the leadership of Fire Chief Kenneth Putnam of Kitchener, who is also this year's president of the CAFC, that they have their own county fire training grounds and an active educational and social organization that meets monthly.

The co-operation that civil defence has received from the county of Waterloo is typical of the co-operation the minister receives from the Ontario government which has developed the largest civil defence organization in any province in Canada.

Let me summarize my views on the reorganization of civil defence as announced in this house a few weeks ago by the Prime Minister, and followed by the recently published civil defence order of 1959, namely 656. I think the new proposal makes sense. Under this Canada should look forward to a sensible and realistic organization of our people to meet an emergency we all hope we will never have to face.

**Mr. Peters:** I should like to say a few words on this matter as I think it is a very important subject. I was surprised that the minister did not ask for permission to table the full text of his presentation because I think it is very important that we do know exactly where we are going in this matter of civil defence and of the change that has been made in it. I was also surprised to note he said that before 1953 the attitude was against evacuation and now it is toward evacuation. I should like to ask him how he thinks we are going to evacuate even a city the size of Ottawa when we cannot even get the traffic out of the city for several hours at rush hour periods? Therefore, evacuation seems to me to be an impossible situation. I think the civil defence department should work from the knowledge that we cannot evacuate a major city. If anybody doubts that all he needs to do is to go down to Wellington street at 5.30 at night and see for himself or go to Yonge street in Toronto at 5.30 at night and have a look at the situation. I think it is a physical impossibility to evacuate. These are people who are walking out of their offices and getting into cars. Just imagine what would happen if some woman wants to take a budgie bird