

The Address—Mr. Drew

publicity directed toward this remarkable piece of extravagance, it was finally scaled down by different stages to 14,500, which some people would think would be a fairly adequate supply of service forks of that kind, particularly when one remembers that these figures include a great many people who were having their meals in their own establishments.

Then there was the very interesting order for 29,630 large aluminum teapots. These are one-and-one-half imperial quart aluminum teapots, which are bought in bulk at \$2.97 each. One cannot help wondering if the habits of the Canadian armed forces have changed in recent years.

Since November 20, 1950, it is stated that clothing orders alone have amounted to some \$142,150,000. The total strength of the three armed services just exceeds 100,000, which works out to approximately \$1,400 for every member of the three services. That is not, of course, the amount which has been spent to provide uniforms for each of the members, because the department did estimate that the average cost of the kit of a soldier, sailor or airman is about \$390. That seems high enough in itself, but the figures also show that orders are out of all relation to the number of those now in the services, or for the target figure of 115,000 which has been set for 1954.

As an example of how some of these orders are made up there is the fact that 15,000 raincoats have been ordered for the Canadian Women's Army Corps. We are told that there are six C.W.A.C. officers on full-time duty. Then, of course, it was explained to us the other day that the reserve is being kept in mind in the placing of these orders. Even if in this instance it was the reserve they had in mind, there are just over 900 officers and other ranks in the reserve. This does seem a fairly generous supply of raincoats.

Orders for rugs seem to be on a similarly free and easy basis. In less than two years the Department of National Defence has ordered \$839,903 of rugs and carpets, which would provide approximately one square yard of rug or carpet for every two members of the active service.

We are still waiting to hear the details about the disappearance of the railway siding at Petawawa, as well as the theft of carload lots of refrigerators, stoves and other equipment. We are still waiting to hear details of the thefts which occurred in camps right across Canada during the past year.

Now, I do not know that it has any relationship to these disappearances, but there is one interesting item, a single entry, in one

list under the heading "packaging of plumbing fixtures" at a cost of \$147,232.

These are only a few of the figures which demonstrate the kind of extravagance which has been unchecked by any action of this government. When I say "unchecked", let it be remembered that, although the evidence that was made available to the committee which sat last spring was fairly limited, it was pointed out that this order for teapots was out of all reason; but by the time it was discovered the order had already been filled. These items are small, perhaps, in themselves, or from the standpoint of over-all expenditure; but they demonstrate beyond question that any system of supervision which permits this sort of thing is a system under which many millions of dollars can be wasted.

The suggestion that these matters were dealt with by the report of the special committee on defence expenditure is hardly worthy of any member of this house. The fact is that the opportunities for examination by that committee were severely limited. An opportunity to examine into the thefts at Petawawa was rigidly denied. But what is more important is the fact, which every member of this house knows but the public perhaps does not generally know, that the only report which can be presented is the majority report; and it should be remembered that the minority even brought in its report and excluded its members from any whitewash in regard to these inquiries which had been conducted.

This government has largely destroyed the effectiveness of the committee system established by this parliament for the examination of government expenditure, by permitting and in fact encouraging the use of a majority of government supporters on those committees to deny any real opportunity to conduct effective inquiries.

There should be an inquiry and it should be started immediately—not some time several months from now, but within the next few days, or certainly within the next two weeks. But this house has learned that there can be no assurance of a real inquiry under a committee of the house appointed by the present government. If the government really want an inquiry, then let them appoint a committee with powers similar to those of the special committee appointed last year, and make it a joint Senate and House committee. If they will do that and appoint Senator Crerar as the chairman of that committee, or some other senator who has demonstrated the kind of impartiality that he demonstrated, then the report of such a