

Interim Supply

of National Defence on that particular statement, he agreed with it. His reply is found on page 1973 of *Hansard*, where he said:

Mr. Speaker, all members of this government agree with the statements made by another hon. member of the government.

If the Minister of National Defence agrees with that kind of statement, how can he justify expenditures of this kind on things like the Bomarc, presumably on the Lacrosse, and on other aspects of continental defence which are increasingly under question in Washington as being of no value at all for defence. This is the kind of thing, which gives us every right to move a vote of no confidence in the defence expenditure policy of this government. This is the kind of thing which leads us even now to insist that this whole question of defence policy should be re-examined from the very foundation. Perhaps the minister even now will do his best to make that possible in the committee which is being set up, restricted though its terms of reference may be. Perhaps the minister even now in this committee will say something to justify the expenditure of millions of dollars on this kind—if you can call it that—of defence.

Until he can do that and do it convincingly—which is not going to be very easy in the light of the evidence we are getting every day—we will support this motion as an indication of no confidence in the defence expenditures and defence policy of this government.

Mr. Argue: Before a vote is taken I want to make it clear that we in this group will support the motion for precisely the reason given by the Leader of the Opposition, namely that we have no confidence whatever in the defence policy of this government. We feel, and feel very strongly, that Canada today by and large is spending \$1,600 million on a defence program for obsolete weapons, obsolete equipment, and that is an expenditure that is a sheer, fabulous waste of money. We think it is not only a waste of money but it is bound to lull the Canadian people into a sense of false security, certainly any of them who may put some credence in the statements of the Minister of National Defence. We feel that a great part of these hundreds of millions of dollars should be diverted from the Department of National Defence—any expenditures such as this—to the economic assistance of the emerging nations in the world.

If that were done we feel convinced that we would get a far greater degree of security for our nation, and for others believing in our type of system. We believe that before

the defence committee that is being established there should be a full, complete and unfettered inquiry into defence policy; that there should be no endeavour, as there will be undoubtedly, to prevent the committee from making recommendations that would clear up the defence mess into which our country has been plunged. The most disturbing feature, I think, of our whole policy is the complete reliance of the government on the United States defence program. We are the tail on the United States defence policy. We are in the hip pocket of the United States on defence policy. We are called a partner, but we are not a partner. We are not a partner in policy. We are not a partner in basic discussions. We are merely the errand boy for the United States in this defence program.

The government does not even know from day to day what United States defence policy is. They are not informed. Apparently they do not even listen to the radio to hear the reports that are coming forward. What is the announcement now? The announcement is that the United States is going to reduce its own expenditure from \$420 million to \$50 million on the Bomarc.

Mr. Speakman: Who told you?

Mr. Argue: Who told me? It was not the Minister of National Defence. He is not in the know. He has not been informed. This announcement was on the radio this morning, and I think there is every indication that this is the thinking, the likely policy, in the United States.

The Minister of National Defence told us on a former occasion that the United States would be putting some \$70 million into the Canadian section of the Bomarc defence system. We are being left high and dry, obviously, if the United States expenditures are cut from \$420 million to \$50 million, if we had originally expected \$70 million as our share in this development. This government promised that Canada would be able to hold its head high. We would have an independent policy, and that where our policy was associated with the United States we would be an independent partner with a substantial voice in defence policies.

We are not being consulted. Obviously, the government is not being consulted. The government is not even being informed of the very tremendous changes in the United States defence system. It is obvious that Canada is merely waiting to follow the statements of policy that emanate from the United States from time to time. This, for Canada, is a very degrading position. We not only stand defenceless today because of the policy of the