

United Kingdom government as to whether we can produce certain chemicals for their account, and, if so, under what conditions and at what cost. We investigate that, and no doubt someone has explored the matter of manufacture of chemicals on the prairies. It is also possible that the financial part of the transaction did not appeal to the British government; I cannot say; I have no personal knowledge about that, but I make the statement on the theory that so many press dispatches must have had some basis in fact, though I have no idea what the basis was. I have made this statement in the house at least three times.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Take the cordite plant which is being built near Winnipeg. That is being built for the account of the British government, is it not?

Mr. HOWE: Yes.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): That is a D.I.L. operation, is it not?

Mr. HOWE: Yes.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): In ordinary circumstances the material that will be produced at that cordite plant near Winnipeg will have to be transported to the Atlantic coast and shipped overseas. That is the intention?

Mr. HOWE: Yes.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): That plant could have been constructed more efficiently on the Atlantic coast, but it was established in Winnipeg absolutely for local considerations.

Mr. HOWE: Not at all.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I have it right from a member of the Manitoba government that they pressed for it and got it.

Mr. HOWE: I deny that absolutely, though I do not deny that they pressed for it. I had nothing to do with that plant, but Mr. Harold Crabtree, who had the responsibility, and his board of directors reported to me that this was the economical location for it.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Certainly I would be impressed with anything Mr. Crabtree said; make no mistake about that. I do not think he would say it unless he believed it, and he would not believe it unless he had some practical basis for that belief. I want to make that statement right here and now. But I do know that pressure was brought to bear upon the government to build that cordite plant, or some other kind of industrial plant, in Manitoba in order to help relieve the unemployment situation in Winnipeg; and there is nothing wrong about that. But if you are going to use one province or one com-

munity in that way you must have regard to other communities. Until very recently less than four per cent of the government contracts were let in the maritime provinces. That does not include contracts the Dominion Iron and Steel company of the time at Sydney had for the account of the British government, which kept them busy one hundred per cent; but it was only with the greatest difficulty that contracts were obtained for execution in the maritime provinces, where they were needed very badly, for material that was to be shipped overseas. Just take the situation in Amherst, about which we will hear a little more after we have had the minister's report in regard to Avro-Anson production. During the last election the minister went down there. I have not the story directly, but my colleague has it; he knows what the minister said.

Mr. HOWE: Went where?

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I will have to qualify that; it was either the minister to whom I am speaking now or one of his colleagues. It may have been the late Mr. Rogers, but whoever it was he promised the people of Amherst during the last election that the Amherst plant of the Canadian Car company would be used for the purpose of assembling Anson planes.

Mr. HOWE: My colleague who has been referred to is no longer with us, but I can say this, that at the time of the last election there was no suggestion of any kind that Avro-Anson planes would be built in this country, or any thought of building them. The idea of building Avro-Anson planes dates from June last. That was the first time we ever thought of it.

Mr. BLACK (Cumberland): I do not want to hold the minister responsible—

Mr. HOWE: Better not quote dead men.

Mr. BLACK (Cumberland): All I am asking, and all the people of Amherst are asking, is results. There was a commitment made by the minister by a telegram—an old method of campaigning which I would not attribute to him—which was read at a large political meeting. I have not the wording of that telegram, but the meeting was held I think early in March, a year ago, and that telegram made a commitment to the town of Amherst.

Mr. HOWE: What commitment?

Mr. BLACK (Cumberland): That aeroplanes would be built in the town of Amherst.

Mr. HOWE: Not Avro-Ansons, though.