

Supply—Health and Welfare

Mr. Winch: Mr. Chairman, it was my understanding that an agreement had been reached by all parties of the committee on the date of prorogation, and the time. Every member in this committee has the right to speak as often and as long as he wants, and in view of the fact that apparently we are now a long way behind our schedule—

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): No.

Mr. Winch: Yes we are—I would like to suggest that if there are party members who feel they have so many things on their chests which they have to get off, then I would like to ask if perhaps now is not the time to set a new target date unless those who reached the agreement abide by it.

Mr. Regnier: Mr. Chairman, I cannot let the opportunity go by without speaking on the matter of civil defence. The point I am interested in is human survival. I have been listening to the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Health and Welfare, and I have had a lot of satisfaction in the knowledge that they have been thinking about this problem. According to the Prime Minister's statement we have at least one shelter, and that is the government. But I am a bit surprised by the hon. member for Essex East in the way he talks now about action, shelters and so on, when on August 31, 1955 government experts were here in Canada, one coming from NATO, and a Dr. Alvin Groves from Nevada, and others, when they pointed out to the government of that day that the time to act was now, and now was August 31, 1955. However, when they left office they had done nothing at all.

I am also delighted that the minister talked about shelters and not about evacuation. I do not believe in evacuation, because there will not be time for it. I still remember the occasion of a terrible snow storm in Winnipeg on November 18, 1958 when schools were closed and funerals were cancelled. Where could we have gone that day if an attack had come? There was no way of leaving Winnipeg.

I have in my hand a map of the city of Winnipeg and surrounding district taken from the Winnipeg telephone book. The map outlines civil defence rules and illustrates points of evacuation for each area. The people of the municipality of St. Vital, a community of over 20,000 persons, are directed to go to St. Pierre where there are not more than about 200 homes. How could 20,000 people be accommodated there? This community is approximately 35 to 40 miles away which would not be far enough and is east of Winnipeg, the direction of the prevailing winds.

[Mr. Martin (Essex East).]

Following the testing of a nuclear bomb in 1954 it was stated by an eminent professor that radiation contamination would extend 200 miles distant from the central point which would cover an area 20 miles wide. It would be impossible to escape a bomb. A shelter on the site of a dwelling is required. We do not know where the bombs will fall. If you were in a shelter 10 or 15 miles from the point at which the bomb fell you might be safe.

I believe we should encourage every Canadian householder to have his own shelter, and these should be not too expensive. They should be suitable for use in civilian life to store preserves or canned goods or for use as a root house. We may have to live in such shelters for a few days in the event of attack.

Russia may attack in winter. It must be remembered that Russia won the battle of 1812 in large part because of cold weather. Perhaps Hitler's defeat by Russia was due more to cold weather than to Russian arms because frozen soldiers are not capable of fighting with success.

Notwithstanding the great advances made in civil defence I feel a certain degree of apprehension about the situation in the country. Canada should follow the plan adopted by Sweden. That country has spent more than \$200 million on shelters and civil defence. Every person in Sweden knows where he is to go in the event of war and even knows the house in which he will be billeted. Civil defence training is compulsory in that country. In view of the danger that is facing us we should resort almost to conscription in order to defend ourselves.

I have received a letter drawing to my attention an article of some interest on this subject entitled "Washington through Canadian Eyes" and bearing date July 7, 1959. It reads, in part, as follows:

In case you missed it, a congressional committee has unveiled the gruesome details of what a nuclear attack on the United States would mean: 50 million or more dead, fire storms such as the world has never seen, 20 million seriously injured, most cities reduced to rubble, etc., ad nauseum.

But interesting for Canada is the fallout pattern from the southeastern corner of British Columbia, also probably catching Calgary, roaring over the Niagara peninsula and cutting through the industrial heart of Canada, through Windsor, Hamilton, Toronto, hitting Montreal and much of Quebec and swooshing through New Brunswick. Canadian cities close to the United States border, like Windsor, would likely be destroyed.

Presumably the North American air defence would be able to shoot down some of the vehicles (manned bombers or ICBM's) carrying the nuclear bombs, thus having them descend on Canadian cities and towns with unpleasant results for us.

The one clear point made during the hearing: civil defence measures could save millions of Canadian lives. The human race is not going to be wiped out by a nuclear war, and if there are