

Supply—National Defence

guns. Progress has been so favourable that the United States order has been greatly expanded. The Longueuil plant was not suitable for an order of that size and we therefore put a combined order in the Sorel plant, once the order was expanded. We were using the staff of Longueuil on that particular gun and it seemed logical to use the facilities available rather than creating new facilities.

The forging capacity of the Sorel plant is still larger than could be used even on the expanded order of three-inch guns and we hope to put at least two other guns into the same plant. By subcontracting, the combined plant might handle even further business. This is a simple arrangement to balance the productive facilities available in the two plants. There is no forging capacity at Longueuil; they simply have finishing machinery. The Sorel plant has more forging capacity than finishing machinery. By combining the two we get a better operation and we serve the purpose of the arsenal by having a nucleus that can be expanded into a major gun organization.

Mr. Drew: Have any similar orders been placed with other arsenals or weapon plants owned and operated by the government?

Mr. Howe: Our shell production is concentrated at the Lindsay and Quebec arsenals. As we require more shells we are pushing machinery from the arsenals into other private plants. In that way the arsenals are serving the purpose for which they were created, to keep our tooling up to date and to provide a nucleus for the expansion of the shell production.

Mr. Drew: Has anything been done at the small arms arsenal in Toronto?

Mr. Howe: That is a nucleus for the electronics industry. This industry in the last war was largely subcontracted from Research Enterprises. The operations at Research have been contracted into smaller space, but the nucleus of all the work done in the last war was preserved. In this emergency we have taken on large electronics orders which are being handled through Research Enterprises. In fact a plant suitable for assembling one type of equipment for which we have a large order, in contrast to a small order last time, is being built in the Toronto area. Research Enterprises is again providing a nucleus for at least a part of the radar work that is being carried out all over the country.

Mr. Drew: I was referring to the small arms arsenal.

Mr. Howe: There again we have the nucleus for the building of small arms. We are tooling up there now for two new weapons

and are considering starting plants outside. The tooling we are doing at Long Branch will, if the orders grow, be moved out into other plants. The production of small arms can be expanded from the Long Branch plant into private industry.

Mr. Drew: The right hon. minister said that the toolings would be moved out. Does he mean designs and patterns or will the tools themselves be moved out?

Mr. Howe: Certain tools will be moved out, but I meant more particularly the technique for tooling. A new gun requires a completely new set of tooling. That is worked out at Long Branch, and some of it is used there, but we can also dilute it and send it out to other plants in order to provide new tooling at those points.

Mr. Drew: Have orders actually been placed under which the full capacity of the Long Branch plant for .300 calibre rifles and machine guns is being used?

Mr. Howe: There is no production of .300 calibre rifles and machine guns because that is not a standard weapon at this time. Until a decision is made as to what will be the standard weapon to produce in Canada we will have no orders for the .300 calibre guns.

Mr. Drew: I am referring back to a statement made a few minutes ago by the Minister of National Defence that a decision had been made to standardize this weapon. Do I understand now from the right. hon. minister that no order has yet been placed for the production of the .300 calibre rifle or machine gun?

Mr. Howe: No.

At six o'clock the Speaker resumed the chair and the house took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

PRIVATE BILLS

On the order:

The house in committee on divorce bills Nos. 111 to 114, 119 to 129, 132 to 146, 149 to 168, 170, 171, 178 to 187.

Mr. Speaker: Is a motion necessary at this time? I believe the motion was made the last time these bills were considered. I do not believe any bills have been added since that motion was made, so I believe the order should be the house again in committee.