

Mr. HOWE: I had them on my desk when I was making my address.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): According to the clerk's notation they were tabled on the twenty-sixth.

Mr. HOWE: I gave them to a page boy; I cannot trace them after that.

On January 31 I wrote to the firms saying that on my return from the United Kingdom my attention had been called to recommendations signed by six firms with some experience in the manufacture of aircraft or components, which must of course receive careful consideration. I said that a thorough study of the situation was being made at once; that I was confident they would not make recommendations without being exceedingly sure of their ground, and that I would like their prompt written reply to the following questions. Now, I think these are reasonable questions:

1. Will the taking of the steps recommended, in your opinion, accelerate the production of Ansons in Canada, and, if so, to what extent?

In other words, would we get the planes quicker by following the procedure they asked, or would we not? I had to know that. I want planes as quickly as I can get them.

2. On what facts do you base your opinion in this regard?

3. As one of the contractors holding a sub-contract for this production, what guarantee can you and your group give as to a date when substantial deliveries of Anson planes will be made, provided your recommendations are adopted?

It is no trivial matter to disband a company with commitments as large as Federal had, amounting I suppose to many millions of dollars, perhaps fifteen or twenty millions. To wipe that company out with a stroke of the pen and say, "The company is gone; now someone else pick this up," I felt would not further the matter much. It would take a manufacturer six weeks to pick it up; we had a drafting staff of about fifty and a total staff of double that number.

Mr. MacNICOL: Why were plans not brought from England after the fall of France, instead of taking time to draft them here?

Mr. HOWE: Plans were brought from England, but as I tried to explain they involved Whitworth threads, English standards, and for large-scale production here it is not easy to get English threads and standards. For that reason we had to redesign to adapt them to Canadian standards. At the same time the air force said that to make the Avro-Anson their ideal twin-engine trainer they wanted extensive changes in de-

sign—a roomier cockpit in order that proper instruments could be put in, and several other changes.

We were not starting to design the plane from the beginning; we were taking the English plans and trying to make the necessary modifications for production here.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I will help the minister further: Did they not go a long way further than that and make continuous changes in the design?

Mr. STIRLING: And a different engine?

Mr. HOWE: Yes, we had a new engine mounting to put in, which meant new piping all through the plane and involved a complete redesign.

I think those are fair questions. Here is the reply, and I would ask hon. members if, having these replies, they would have done anything other than what I did.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Would it not facilitate matters if it was understood that the whole of the three letters should go on *Hansard*?

Mr. HOWE: Very well; I will ask that all three letters go on *Hansard*. I am now referring to the letter dated February 5, signed by five of the six contractors; apparently one dropped out. I have read the first question in my letter of January 31; this is the answer:

Our opinion is as expressed in our recommendations of January 7, that the Anson project can be expedited in the manner outlined. As to the degree of acceleration which could take place, we have not sufficient information before us to answer this question with a proper degree of accuracy. A further complete study of the present production plans of the Federal Aircraft, Limited, and the de Havilland Aircraft of Canada, Limited, would be necessary before the tempo of this acceleration could be ascertained.

That is vague, to say the least. Then to the next question,—“On what facts do you base your opinion in this regard?”—this is the answer:

The fact that the principal contractors of the Anson programme believe a change would be beneficial.

I think a fair question would be, beneficial to whom? Then this was the answer to question 3:

No guarantee of delivery dates can be given by the contractors, as no schedule has been supplied by Federal Aircraft Limited showing when the raw materials, A.G.S. parts, proprietary articles, castings, forgings, finished parts which are to be supplied by Federal will be available.

On the strength of those answers I ask the committee if anyone would be justified