

*Supply—National Defence*

**Mr. Pearson:** It seems to me that the minister has been responsible for a masterpiece of understatement when he informed the committee that if in the future there should be a naval attack on Canada it would not be similar to that of the Japanese submarine which fired one shell at a lighthouse and managed to hit the British Columbia coast.

**Mr. Winch:** It missed it.

**Mr. Pearson:** Yes; it missed the lighthouse and hit the coast. We know something about the nature and the scale of what a submarine attack would constitute in the future from what we have read about the success of the United States in developing a nuclear powered submarine. The very magnitude of the achievement of the United States in this field and the claims that have been made by the United States for that achievement in respect of this nuclear powered submarine must cause us to worry about the threat to our security from that kind of attack from an unfriendly power. We are indeed terribly vulnerable to attack by sea at the present moment.

The minister mentioned the fact that there was now a submarine from the decks of which missiles could be fired. There is one submarine which I believe can fire nuclear missiles of the Polaris type not from the deck but from well below the surface of the sea. Although I am certainly not an expert in these matters, I suppose that constitutes an entirely new problem in security. I understand that this submarine and other atomic powered submarines can remain submerged for long periods of time and that it is extremely difficult or perhaps impossible to detect them through the ordinary methods of detection. I know that those methods have improved greatly since world war II. I know that the minister cannot give us the details with regard to that matter, but from the point of view of national security surely it is important to know whether sonar and something called NORAD are reasonably effective in relation to the kind of naval threat to which we are exposed at the present time.

I am informed that that threat has not yet taken the form of atomic submarines possessed by the Soviet union. I know, as does the minister, that the Soviet union has many hundreds—perhaps more than four hundred—of modern ocean-going submarines; and in the course of time, if not at present, they will have a submarine which would be the counterpart of the *Nautilus*. We are therefore faced with the possibility of a form of attack on this continent and on the continent of Europe which might be more difficult to detect and to counteract than an attack even from the air. I therefore wonder

whether our methods of defence or our methods of detection are effective against this kind of threat or whether we are spending our money on a form of naval protection which was certainly effective a few years ago but which may not be effective in terms of present circumstances.

This, of course, is another aspect of the general dilemma that we face. As I ventured to say yesterday, the United States, a great power, cannot afford to take any chances and is obliged to secure every sector of the defence front whereas a country like Canada, which must be more careful in the allocation of its smaller defence expenditures, must give consideration to this matter in a way which is not done by a great power. I therefore ask the minister—and I have no desire to ask him to go into details because I know that would not be proper—whether he can give us a reasonable assurance that these methods of detection and destruction of submarines which I have mentioned are effective enough to warrant the continued expenditure of extremely large sums of money for the construction of ships which would be the vehicles for this detection apparatus.

I was reading—indeed I mentioned it yesterday—the testimony of Admiral Rickover. In emphasizing the character of this particular menace he has said that the best way of destroying the new type of submarine was through another submarine. We are not likely to become involved in that kind of protection and destruction unless we can work out some kind of arrangement on an exchange basis which would make it unnecessary for us to spend the amount of money which is required for that kind of submarine. If in fact that is the way to destroy submarines in the future through other submarines, can we be sure that the money we are now spending on our anti-submarine warfare is being effectively spent?

**Mr. Pearkes:** I should not like in any way to minimize the problem which has been presented by the Leader of the Opposition. It is a real problem and one which is causing our naval staff the most serious consideration. It is the one problem upon which the Royal Canadian Navy is now concentrating. It is the major role of the Canadian navy to protect our shores against submarines, and for that purpose all their efforts are being devoted to improving the type of equipment, the training and the efficiency of our ships and our aircraft and the crews which man them. We are getting a great deal of co-operation from the Royal Navy and from the navy of the United States in that they make available to us submarines which