

*Supply—Health and Welfare*

the armed forces which could be, through a departmental arrangement, put at the disposal of the civil defence authorities.

These are questions which parliament certainly has not been informed about. The provinces may have been told about them, but we certainly were given no indication of what went on at the meeting with the provinces a month ago. There is to be a meeting in October, and that will follow the transfer of ministerial responsibilities on September 1. What is going to be discussed at that meeting? I believe that it would have been advisable for the government to give to the public at once, or at least at the earliest possible moment, the report which was made by General Graham. The minister at one time indicated, I thought, that he would make that report available, and then he took the position later that it was a privileged document, prepared while General Graham was still serving in some capacity in the government service, and on that account it was not in the public interest to make it known.

There are exceptions to privileged documents, and if General Graham, who had made a tour throughout the country and talked to civil defence people and examined the situation from every angle, had positive views, those views contained in that report should have been made available to this parliament. If the government persisted in not making it available, then I think the minister at some time earlier in the session should have given us the broad outlines of the government's reaction to the recommendations contained in that report. The minister was invited by me on at least four occasions during this session to give a statement to the house on civil defence, but I was reminded every time by the minister that that would be done in due course. I think his favourite phrase was, "High priority is being given to these things." I am sure he will agree with me that "high priority" did not mean high information, and the result is that we do not know tonight any more than we did a year and a half ago what the government's policy in the matter of civil defence is.

We do know that there is going to be a new distribution of functions. We do know there is going to be one minister who will have the responsibility of announcing policy and of playing the role of co-ordination; but beyond that I submit to the minister, with respect and with understanding of his difficulties, that whoever is to blame we are no further advanced as to what the government policy is in civil defence matters. We know that the government will pay a little more to the municipalities, but I am not talking

about that. I am talking about the kind of attitude the government takes about the importance of civil defence.

What steps can be taken to protect the individual in the face not only of the manned interceptor but the I.C.B.M. and the like? What can be done to mitigate the dangers of radiation? The minister spoke of shelters and that these are now within the economic reach of the average citizen. I point out to him that there are studies in his department which will show that this was available two years ago. They show that shelters could be built at an economic level which would not be burdensome on a great number of individuals in Canada. Now the minister says that a further study is being made of this phase of the problem.

In the state of New York they have arrived at a decision on this matter. The governor of New York has a definite view as to what can be done by way of individual shelters, and I do not know how valuable this further study is going to be. If the minister feels in the light of his special knowledge that there must be further study made about the uses of private shelters, one cannot quarrel with him; but if there is going to be a study as to the feasibility and economical circumstances attending shelters, what is the government's policy? Is it going to build shelters? Is it going to make these available to the public in certain concentrated areas, or are individuals expected to build these shelters themselves? Is there going to be any requirement made by the government as to shelters in public buildings? Is there going to be any suggestion made to the provinces that in respect of matters coming within their constitutional competence they should take steps to see to it that shelters are provided, perhaps even as a matter of compulsion as is thought of in New York?

These are the kind of matters that the minister has not spoken about to the house. I know he will find it very difficult to give a comprehensive statement tonight because of the great and absorbing interest of all members in this subject at the present time. I fully realize that, but I can say to the minister that if that is the situation it is because the government did not take advantage early in this session of announcing its new look in the matter of civil defence. I hope the minister will not take amiss what I say. I do not blame him entirely for this, but because he is the minister of the moment who is shouldered now with the responsibility in so far as his estimates are concerned, I do not know to whom else I can throw my dart.