

*Supply—Privy Council*

With regard to the government in the event of war, may I say that I have listened with interest to suggestions that have been made arising from a statement which I placed before the house to the effect that I would be in the same position as other Canadians in the event that war came. That statement was made after full consideration had been given to the matter by those associated with this whole problem.

We have a number—half a dozen—of defence locations where government will have its place. We are not going to concentrate the members of government in any particular one. When it was originally bruited or rumoured that there was a place for government there were many, including the press, who stated that the leader of the nation should not be there, that he ought not to ask others to do that which he himself would not undertake. Arrangements were made whereby in the shelter at 24 Sussex street, which is identical in form and construction with those that we suggest for Canadians across this country, whereby there would be provision for co-ordination of government among the half dozen places to which it will disperse.

We are not going to have our key people in government and in the civil service concentrated in any one place. Otherwise all chance of giving leadership and administrative control to the nation might be lost by one direct hit. Some will stay in Ottawa and other places close to Ottawa will house various ministers and their departments. Full arrangements have been made, that there will be co-ordination which will assure not only the continuation of leadership to the various elements that must necessarily be considered but as well within the base itself. I want to emphasize that fact.

I believe, and I think it is fair to say, that in the last year and a half or two years more work has been done effectively on behalf of civil defence in this country than in all the preceding years. There is no question about that. We have brought about an organization in every part of this country. The hon. member for Essex East was fair enough to say that no matter what is done in this regard it can be subject to the luxury of criticism. I point out that the organization headed by Mr. Curry and those associated with him has been diligent, has given of its best and has brought about in co-operation with municipal authorities and others across the country a unity of purpose that was lacking in the past.

The responsibility, as was said by the hon. member for Peterborough, of the emergency measures organization is to co-ordinate planning for wartime emergency not only among federal departments but with the provinces and through them with the municipalities.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

Planning in federal departments is progressing satisfactorily, with a better comprehension of functions that will have to be performed under emergency conditions. Greater attention is being given to detailed planning, both at the national and regional levels. Key officials have been designated and trained and plans prepared for the quick relocation of a small core of government personnel outside Ottawa as well as near each provincial capital city in time of emergency. I could give the records in this regard showing what is being done in that connection province by province, if it were desirable.

Facilities are now available in the Ottawa area that allow, as I said a moment ago, for the relocation of these essential elements of government. In addition, construction of permanent regional emergency government facilities has progressed on schedule and it is expected that the first four of these headquarters will be completed this summer with others being available early in 1963. In the meantime, interim facilities in all provinces have been made available on national defence establishments.

Then we come to the question of communication, which is most important. An adequate communications system has been provided to ensure continued contact with federal regional headquarters and with all provincial governments.

Emergency orders in council and regulations, required for the continued operation of government in wartime, were tested during exercise Tocsin B and further progress is being made in improving these and correcting overlapping of authority and responsibilities wherever such things occur. The basic authority required to operate in an emergency is provided under the War Measures Act, under which orders were purportedly made, but in each case it was clearly written across the order in question that it was for exercise purposes only. In other words, it was simply the carrying out of the technique rather than the application of the act itself.

Mention was made of the fact that a committee was set up last year on the War Measures Act in relationship to the bill of rights. When it is suggested that we ought to have set up that committee this year, I again point out that for weeks and weeks we have been held up more than I believe to have been necessary or understandable, and it has not yet been possible to bring this matter and several others of major importance before the house.

The basic authority, as I said a moment ago, is under the War Measures Act. The suggestion was made that in the United Kingdom they require something similar. I understand that is not so. The only reason for the War