

*Supply—National Defence*

No doubt the development of a wide range of very sophisticated military aircraft in the United States, to cite one example, puts the aircraft industry in that country into a position of great advantage over its competitors in other countries, whose aircraft industry does not have large defence contracts to feed on, which enable it to develop new processes techniques and advances.

Between 1951 and 1956 expenditures on national defence in Canada rose from \$1,100 million to a high of \$1,800 million. Since then defence spending has declined somewhat, to an average of about \$1,600 million for the first five years of the current decade. A great deal of this expenditure has been for equipment, and in some industries these contracts do have a tremendously important impact.

In 1960 defence expenditure in certain industries was as follows: Defence contracts accounted for 89 per cent of the production of the aircraft industry; in the electronics industry 41 per cent of the production depended on defence contracts; twenty-five per cent of the ammunition and explosives produced went to defence contracts, which also accounted for 21 per cent of the shipbuilding industry and 19 per cent of the instruments industry.

So that you have a situation in which industries are very vulnerable to fluctuations in defence policy and defence spending. In the Atlantic provinces you have a situation where the economy is even more sensitive to and dependent upon defence expenditures than is generally true for the rest of the country.

I should like to quote one further extract from this study, which is to be found at page 9:

The importance of defence to the regional economy is far greater than has been traditionally supposed. More people are employed in the defence industry than in any of Atlantic Canada's primary industries or the construction industry. Employing 41,164 civilian and military personnel, defence activities ranked fifth in total employment behind services, trade, manufacturing and transportation and utilities. In 1961 Atlantic defence employment almost exceeded the employment figure for forestry and fishing combined.

You will realize, Mr. Chairman, that we in the Atlantic provinces are extremely conscious of the impact of defence expenditures and defence policy. We hope that the minister will achieve his objective of applying a larger percentage of the expenditures on national defence to the re-equipping of our forces, and we in the Atlantic provinces hope that further steps will be taken to stimulate the supplying of defence requirements from our

area of the country, so that unemployment can be reduced at the same time as the defensive posture of our country is improved.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Régimbal:** Mr. Chairman, I did not intend to intervene in this debate because I was satisfied that most of the points one could bring to the attention of the committee at this time had been raised quite adequately by various members of the opposition. I am a newcomer here but it seems to me that the rules of politeness have their place in the house just like anywhere else. Usually, politeness requires one to listen when another speaks.

Unfortunately, my experience over the past three days has been quite to the contrary.

If it is the duty of members of the opposition to express their doubts and fears as representatives of their respective constituents, it seems to me that consideration of the estimates should be just as important a debate as any other and should be taken just as seriously.

I feel that the last three days have proved the contrary beyond any doubt. The members on the other side of the house may wonder why the debate lasts so long. They need not worry, we are only starting.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Régimbal:** Mr. Chairman, we will prove, once and for all, that the opposition has an essential role to play. We represent the majority of Canadian voters. Consequently, the opposition's point of view must be taken into consideration by the government, and in particular by this minister. We had a good example when the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pickersgill) listened, spoke and took notes.

What has happened since this debate started? We are getting absolutely nowhere. I feel this is quite irregular and I ask the minister to take part in the debate. As long as he does not, he has a good chance of staying where he is now.

Let us see what happened. Speeches have been made in the last few days: he does not listen. Questions are asked: he makes no attempt to answer. Definite charges are laid: no reaction. Concrete suggestions are made: no interest is shown. Doubts are expressed: no action is taken. He is attacked: he smiles. He shows no intention of replying in an intelligent manner; if he intends to reply, let him do so without delay. The efficiency of weapons is being questioned: he shrugs his