

*Supply—National Defence*

in Germany, for instance, can be spent anywhere in Canada, or anywhere else for that matter. One finds as a result that the services on army bases are, by no stretch of the imagination, equal to the services that are made available to personnel in air force bases. This seems a small item possibly to bring forward at this time, but it was important to people in the camps that I had the privilege of visiting.

Another important matter I wish to raise in regard to army camps is that personnel used as employees in these stores are largely from the local area. In other words, they are nationals of the locale in which the camps are situated. In the case of the R.C.A.F. PX stores, usually a member of the serviceman's family was employed. Therefore there is a double benefit to be had from this change that, I suggest, might go to the benefit of people living on Canadian army bases on the continent.

I also learned that very few in the ranks of the officers had available certain services. This was of equal importance to wives of servicemen. For instance, I know that it was not possible for them to enjoy the convenience of, shall we say, automatic washing machines or dryers. A few machines in isolated cases are available, largely as I understand, only to senior officers. This was a complaint from the junior officer branches in both the army and the air force. I think it would be very easy, unless it has already been done, to make available the services I have suggested to people on these camps, if the proper organization steps from headquarters in Ottawa were taken.

I bring that particular phase of my intervention to a conclusion, and I simply say to the minister that in regard to stores facilities if he could see fit to bring about the changes I have suggested it would increase the pay particularly of army personnel in camps on the continent. It would result in lower prices and in a greater degree of station services than under the present high priced structure. The services operated under the Maple Leaf name are not necessary. I think the minister might have his officials look into this aspect of things on the continent.

There is one other thing that I learned in the course of the debate that I have not heard the minister thus far refer to. Because the points in regard to weaponry have been dealt with I will not waste the time of the committee. However, I say this to the minister in regard to our position in national

defence, and in regard to our purchases of weaponry from the United States: I do not want the minister or anyone else to misconstrue my words in this regard, but we must understand where we stand in international affairs. We are beside the largest and most powerful nation in the world; we cannot deny that. Certainly if difficulties arose we would hope that our communication would be as close and as warm as ever. At the same time I must say to the minister and to the members of the committee that there is no reason that we have to be dictated to by any particular individual in the Pentagon with regard to Canadian policy.

● (7:10 p.m.)

I think back to those times when defence policy became such an important issue that the minister debated it more than he has debated it at this time. I should like to inquire from him whether he is aware of the change, because of the fact that the military is so closely related with external affairs. I would ask him if at any time he was aware of direction being given from Washington in regard to weaponry they wanted Canada to acquire. Is the minister aware that at any time any officer felt it was necessary for Canada to participate in international defence matters? Was any pressure being brought on the Canadian government at that time in regard to its foreign policy and its association with the Organization of American States? That is important to know in the light of what has occurred in the last few weeks, and in the light of an apparent acceptance of the fact not too many years back that the American authorities did bring pressure to bear on the press of this country in regard to the way a certain election campaign would be conducted.

I wonder whether any of this information was available to the minister at that time? Was it the policy of his party to use this in connection with the political position they were taking then? This seems to be an important matter in the consideration of our defence policy at the present time.

We are not here to play politics, as one of my colleagues said earlier in the evening. We are here to determine in the interests of the Canadian taxpayer whether this money is being spent wisely. At the same time, I say my previous remarks are closely relevant in this regard. Is there even one United States authority which has been dictating any policy for the Canadian government to follow? If so, surely we are big enough and have enough