

essential to our system. But inadequate parliamentary control is a snare and an illusion, and that is what I fear we have at the present moment.

I am not putting blame on any particular party. Many industrial societies are experiencing the same difficulty. We must have estimates with sufficient particulars. If I may borrow some judicial language from Chief Justice Duff and use it in a different context, he said there must be intelligibility of allegation; if people are asking for money from taxpayers they must allege with intelligibility, with understandability, what it is they propose to do with the money.

I want to take as an illustration of this general proposition the discussion of the national defence estimates—I am looking at the 1977-78 estimates. Under the heading "Defence" is contained a large and vague reference on the basis of which we are asked to vote away millions—in fact we get close to billions eventually—for such a thing as air defence forces. The program description is: "The maintenance of air defence military capability to safeguard Canadian sovereignty and independence". And so on. Well, Mr. Speaker, we are all in favour of safeguarding Canadian sovereignty and independence, but when we are asked for substantial sums of money we want to know how the plans proposed will in fact defend our sovereignty and independence, and that is what is lacking at the present time.

We all know there is plenty of discussion going on now about the proposed purchase of 130 to 150 fighter planes at a cost of \$2.34 billion in 1977 dollars. It is generally thought that taking into account inflation and the changing value of the Canadian dollar, that sum will probably be inflated to around \$4 billion. At this stage, of course, I am not discussing the merits of the proposal. I am asking whether there has been adequate scrutiny, and I say there has not.

● (2122)

We are in danger of being asked at some time in the future to approve this huge expenditure which some of us, including myself, consider to be a waste. It will be a fait accompli. We will not be asked to approve in advance. Estimates which come after the money has been committed and spent do not allow parliament an adequate opportunity to approve or disapprove. Approval after the fact is coerced, especially since there is a parliamentary majority.

There has been no accountability to parliament with respect to this matter. The original announcement—and I intend to go into this—came from the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Danson), and I will just summarize it. It was made on March 18, 1977. The minister said that the cabinet had authorized a commission, which came to be known as the Manson commission, to inquire into which of several purchases of up to over \$2 billion should be made. What did the Department of National Defence say? They said that the money had been spent. The Manson commission brought forward a short list, and that is presently being discussed. That has been done only at considerable expense, and naturally so.

### *Parliament*

At no time has this item appeared in the estimates. At no time has there been any adequate statement about the strategic thinking behind this, or about its purpose, or about the reality, if any, of a threat. Indeed, General Dextraze, then the chief of staff, referred to the threat of manned bombers as a remote possibility. There were no reasoned, intelligible reports on the matter.

So the matter has gone on. Time and again the minister has said in very general terms that we have to do this because of our obligations to our allies. He never tells us what our obligations are. Most of us who have looked into NORAD and NATO know that there is nothing which calls for us to do this. This is our own choice, but that choice is not being made by the Parliament of Canada. It is not being made for the people of Canada. A choice may be made at some stage in the future, but it will be made by the cabinet.

To bring this matter up to date, I asked my office to phone the Department of National Defence today. My office was told that these expenditures which have been made do not appear to be in any estimate. If they are in any estimate, they are so well buried that no one can find them.

That is the situation we are in. In the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence I tried to get a statement regarding capital expenditures. We were shown a graph covering 1978 to 1993 showing how this \$2 billion is proposed to be spent. We were also shown other commitments dealing with such matters as our patrol frigates. We were told that we would have to get capital equipment to police our waters. Parliament has never been given a choice as to which of these two roles is more important.

Other countries have managed to get away from this kind of thing. Just this year, 1978, the Senate of the United States called for amendment of the arms control and disarmament act. This would require certain action on the part of the director of the agency involved. When anybody prepares a legislative or budgetary proposal requiring estimates concerning nuclear weapons to be acquired or requiring any estimates for total programs in excess of \$250 million or any annual program costing more than \$50 million—since the United States is a much larger country than ours the figures involved would be larger as well—reports must be made and details set out. The director involved must state the impact of proposed requests, and that is part of the law.

I want to read what Senator Clark said in dealing with a proposal for what was known as an enhanced radiation warhead, which is known colloquially by a different name. Senator Clark said this:

—arms impact statement is fully justified, for it demands of the Executive a thoughtful and reasoned analysis of the over-all significance of the weapon under consideration.

Mr. President, the requirements of the law are clear. Before we appropriate money for a system, we must know what that system will do. We must have this impact statement. The lack of this alone, it seems to me, justifies withholding Senate approval at this time.

Mr. President, beyond these procedural questions are fundamental questions involving our commitment and interest in arms limitations—