

*Supply—National Defence*

Canada's political responsibility as a member of a nuclear-armed alliance. NATO is a nuclear-armed defensive alliance, which dare not be otherwise as long as it is confronted by a nuclear-armed potential opponent. NATO may become less dependent upon nuclear weapons, but the alliance must continue to possess nuclear weapons in the absence of controlled disarmament and as long as hostile forces have them. Its policies must envisage that in certain circumstances such weapons would be used against aggression. A share in the responsibility for these policies is a necessary concomitant of Canada's membership in NATO. One cannot be a member of a military alliance and at the same time avoid some share of responsibility for its strategic policies.

Having accepted the responsibility for membership in a nuclear-armed alliance, the question of nuclear weapons for the Canadian armed forces is a subordinate issue. It depends on how we can most effectively contribute to collective strength.

I agree with that statement, but our contribution to NATO defence has the capability of being nuclear armed, still is nuclear armed and will remain nuclear armed so far as we can see into the future. However, on February 18, the Prime Minister in reply to a question had this to say, as reported on page 1440 of *Hansard*:

Mr. Churchill: I have a question for the Prime Minister which will require a very short answer. Is the Prime Minister going to fulfil his promise to negotiate Canada out of its nuclear role?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): As my friend the Minister of National Defence indicated last night—it was too bad my hon. friend was not listening carefully—we are at present doing just that.

On the one hand, we are negotiating ourselves out of our commitment so far as nuclear arms are concerned, and on the other hand we are retaining equipment to carry nuclear arms, which equipment is armed with nuclear arms. The whole situation is very confusing. These statements, which appear on the face of them anyway to be completely contradictory, do not do anything to remove the confusion in the minds of Canadians. If this whole collection of statements can be rationalized a rationalization should be made so that we, as Canadians, know where we are in this matter.

The White Paper, to which I should like to refer once more, has this to say on page 22 with regard to the air force:

During the decade, we propose to give increasing emphasis to the provision of aircraft for direct support of our ground forces. We anticipate that a high performance aircraft will be available to provide sufficient flexibility for any task we might undertake from ground attack to air surveillance. These versatile tactical aircraft will possess adequate radius of action to allow rapid deployment from Canada to bases overseas. This will permit squadrons to be stationed in Canada or Europe as required.

[Mr. MacLean (Queens).]

Now, what is this long range tactical aircraft? Is this the one to which we have already committed ourselves? Is this the CF-5 they are talking about? We have already learned that this aircraft, although it was purchased as a close support aircraft, is very limited in its radius of action. I do not know what the radius of action is, but various figures have been quoted, all of them under 200 nautical miles. I do not believe by any stretch of the imagination that that aircraft lives up to the picture that was painted for this future aircraft in the White Paper, if this is the one they are talking about. If it is not the one that is meant, the minister should tell us when it is planned to acquire the aircraft spoken of in the White Paper.

I now turn, Mr. Chairman, briefly to one more aspect of defence. This is an aspect which is not of direct concern to the professional soldier, but it should be of great concern to the Department of National Defence, to the minister and all members of the government, in common with the members of any government. It has to do with the effect of defence expenditures on the economy of various areas of the country. The Atlantic Provinces Economic Council has recently made a study with regard to the effect of defence expenditures in the Atlantic provinces. Those provinces are especially vulnerable from an economic point of view to any changes contemplated so far as defence policy is concerned. The introduction to this study quotes from a study recently prepared for the Parliamentary Committee on Defence. It quotes this statement:

• (8:00 p.m.)

Defence spending can, to cite a few of its possibilities, provide an important stimulus to the level of business generally, or in a particular geographic region; reduce unemployment; maintain or advance technical competence; lead to important new inventions and improvements in the non-defence area; stimulate foreign trade; and increase capital investment.

This has been a vital side effect of defence expenditures in recent years. A great deal of the research done in the United States for defence purposes and space projects has had a very important technological fall-out, as it is expressed, as far as civilian production and invention is concerned. In this day and age where only a wealthy country can undertake the design, development and production of highly sophisticated and costly armaments there is a widening gap between such a country and its smaller, less developed neighbours. Canada has an important problem to face in this very field.