

Labour Crisis in Aircraft Industry

in 1958 Canada placed contracts in the United States to the value of approximately \$55 million, but the net value of business placed was reduced to \$10 million, primarily as the result of the termination of the Astra and Sparrow programs and decreases in some older contracts for aircraft equipment. In the same year, the United States placed \$40 million worth of contracts in Canada. I suggest that instead of advancing this as an instance of the kind of utilization of each other's defence production resources the hon. minister talked about, this statement is a public declaration of the failure of the government to get for Canadian industry a fair proportion of defence production orders.

So I submit, in answer to the second question "What has happened to the Canadian defence industry?", the answer is obvious: the industry is in great jeopardy. A large section of the industry, apparently, if nothing else is to be done, is now going to be dismantled. Canadian technicians are being thrown on the street, with the best alternative for many of them to seek employment in a foreign country.

Mr. Speaker, this is no answer to the grave question that we are debating this afternoon. It is a question of the employment and income of Canadian workers; a question of the survival of a substantial section of Canadian industry. Yes, even more, a question of the survival, as we know it, of the basic sovereignty of the Canadian nation. In the statements of the Minister of Defence Production and the Minister of National Defence there is no compromise. In order to sweeten the statement of the Prime Minister last Friday, he made the announcement that early next week the Minister of Defence Production would make full information available to the house in this connection. I suggest that the announcement is a dud. It has fallen with a dull thud this afternoon.

How are we going to share in the production of the Bomarc missile, the production for which the CF-105 has been exchanged? We are going to make a tremendous contribution, according to the Minister of Defence Production. He says:

I am pleased to point out that as a result of production sharing efforts a Canadian company has been selected for the production of wings and ailerons for the Bomarc missile. The present value of this contract is \$1.7 million.

Surely this statement by the government indicates that the United States has in fact answered a flat but emphatic "no" to the requests of this government for an adequate sharing of defence production.

What is to happen to our skilled technicians? We do not know. They are apparently going to be added to the half million

[Mr. Argue.]

or more unemployed at present in this country. They are to be put out on the street in the winter time, when unemployment figures are the highest in the peacetime history of this country since the end of the war. The Minister of National Defence has talked to us this afternoon, but all he has given to those people is sympathy. I know they need sympathy. They need all the sympathy they can get, but they would be much happier if the hon. minister had announced a program to put them back to work in their own field.

How long have we talked in this country about the necessity of taking action to make certain we keep within our borders, so far as possible, highly trained Canadian citizens who have been educated in our universities? The government say they realize the importance of this. The Minister of Labour (Mr. Starr) realizes the importance of it. As has already been said, he is making a speech. I do not know whether he has made it or not, but it is marked "For release p.m. Monday, February 23, 1959". Here is what he says. I wonder if he discussed this with his colleagues in the cabinet? I wonder if this has had the approval of the government? The Minister of Labour states:

I wonder if many of us realize how important it is that Canada today must have the highest level of industrial skill in the world?

Persons with the highest level of industrial skill are out on the street looking for work. They are out on the street unemployed because the Prime Minister, the leader of the Minister of Labour, has deemed that it shall be so. The Minister of Labour says:

I am not a pessimist. But I will say this. Unless we achieve a really high level of industrial skill in this country our present way of life cannot survive.

I think I might interpret that to mean that unless there is employment for the highly skilled Canadian in this society, there will be no future life for this government and for the Conservative party. The hon. minister was not short of words to repeat, emphasize and underline the same idea, he went on:

I do not want to be dramatic. But Canada, of all countries, cannot afford to live in a world where she will not have the skill and technological know-how to hold on to what she has got.

We need the political know-how in this country apparently to hold on to the skill that we have. But the Minister of Labour says that Canada cannot afford to live in a world where she will not have the skill and technological know-how to hold on to what she has got. That is the statement of the Minister of Labour, and I think that is probably the greatest indictment that will be