

Supply—National Defence

Mr. Pouliot: I will ask Kamloops to keep quiet until I look after him.

Mr. Fulton: Talk sense and I will keep quiet.

Mr. Pouliot: And he shall not remind me that he is in the house at the present time, because I will think of him in due course.

Mr. Fulton: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pouliot: I am glad my hon. friend says hear, hear; it shows he is improving. I am speaking in reply to what his leader has said.

Mr. Fulton: You are not doing a very good job of it.

Mr. Pouliot: Well, if that is the judgment of a Tory, I am satisfied.

Mr. Fulton: You always did have a single-track mind.

An hon. Member: Better than two tracks going in different directions.

Mr. Pouliot: I may have a single-track mind; but I am on the main line, while my hon. friend is on a siding—with dead-freight cars.

Mr. Fulton: The Temiscouata railway has been the main line ever since the C.N.R. took it over.

Mr. Pouliot: The Temiscouata railway is the best railway in America, compared to my hon. friend himself.

I will not be personal, because I like the hon. member for Kamloops—but I also like my peace, too, especially when I am speaking about the remarks made by the leader of the opposition. I want him to understand my point of view, and I am sure he will.

Let me take this opportunity to congratulate him and to tell him what progress he has made in politics since he has been a member of the House of Commons—and I say that sincerely, and with respect and esteem.

Coming to the discussion of the matter before the committee, I would stress to the hon. member the fact that it is the function of this committee to check expenditures; it is not to go deep into the strategy of the Department of National Defence and its staff. This, sir, I contend should be secret policy that must not be advertised, as is American strategy, which is published in every American newspaper, and broadcast over all radio stations throughout the world. That cannot help in the defence of the great country that is the United States of America. So much is this true that our great neighbour could be spied upon from the Antipodes precisely because of the fact that the news items the leader of the opposition is so

eager to get publicly may be the best information to any possible enemy.

This is so much the case that I remember very well the time when conscription was discussed in the house, immediately after the resignation of the late Colonel Ralston, the then minister of national defence, who said there were weak points in the allied army in France, and insisted so much on that that the information was given to the German command, with the result that they rallied all their forces for a supreme attack in northern France, an attack which cost countless lives of American and Canadian soldiers.

The hon. member who is leader of the opposition, and the hon. member who is chief opposition critic, both of whom are men of military experience, must be aware of that fact. Perhaps they have never thought of it, perhaps they have never put the two ends together; but they must remember what was said by the former minister of national defence, and the statements that were broadcast by the press and by all the Tory speakers. Those statements were put on the wires of the news agencies and spread throughout the world. They were known to the spies we had in the country and to the intelligence service of the enemy. They could draw conclusions.

It must be remembered that it is precisely on account of the untimely and uncalled for statements of that former minister of national defence in the house about the weaknesses of our army that the American soldiers and Canadian soldiers were killed in such numbers in the last days of the war.

Mr. Pearkes: Who was that minister?

Mr. Pouliot: I am speaking of the former minister of national defence, Colonel Ralston.

Mr. Pearkes: Oh.

Mr. Pouliot: Just after his resignation.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Chairman, I do not wish to interrupt the hon. member, but is he referring to the attack that was known as the Battle of the Bulge, which was directed against American troops? I must confess I find it difficult to understand how that is related to any statement made by the late Colonel Ralston.

Mr. Pouliot: Well, I will explain it by the A-plus-B method to the hon. member.

Mr. Fulton: That will be simpler than anything you have done before.

Mr. Pouliot: And I am sure he will understand. The hon. member, who is an encyclopaedia of bellicose warfare, and who knows everything about the three branches of the