

*Supply—Civil Defence*

the question of compensation which he raised in the committee has been considered in the interval but no official decision as between treasury and the provinces has been reached.

The hon. member raised the question of evacuation a few months ago. I discussed this matter in the committee and there are certain comments I should like to make. As my hon. friend knows, these matters are discussed with NATO and with the United Kingdom. We now believe that our civil defence should be based on the development and testing of plans for the orderly evacuation of the main urban areas in our country should the possibility of attack on such areas by nuclear weapons appear to be imminent. Our military authorities have now advised us that it must be anticipated in any major war that the North American continent would be attacked with high-yield nuclear weapons with little if any warning.

Accordingly our civil defence policy must be so designed as to ensure the survival and safety of as many of our population as would be possible in the event of nuclear attack on this country.

In arriving at this decision it was necessary to take into account a number of factors such as the nature and yield of enemy weapons which could be delivered, the degree of warning to be expected, the density of population of the country, in particular the probable target areas, and finally transportation and other resources waiting for survivors.

It may be assumed that in any major war we would not likely be the scene of primary vital air battles. No doubt a number of enemy aircraft carrying nuclear weapons for delivery on targets in the United States and Canada would fail to reach their targets or be shot down over our country. We have to take all these things into consideration. Under such circumstances the bombs carried by those enemy aircraft would almost certainly be delivered against our larger cities as targets, what might be termed second choice targets, or jettisoned and detonated almost anywhere in the country.

On the other hand, we have certain advantages as compared with other countries. We have only a limited number of cities and we have wide spaces. The two problems which face us are, first, how to ensure the survival of our population in the large Canadian cities in the face of high-yield nuclear weapon attacks against them and, second, how to provide the whole population with protection against radioactive fall-out resulting from the use of nuclear weapons.

The policy of evacuation undoubtedly is a gigantic one. We are certainly—and when

I say “we” I mean all of us—far from reaching the stage of perfection in the execution of its technique. But it has been advocated by the United States government, whose problems of evacuation are more difficult than ours, and by other countries, and there is now a gradual shifting of the emphasis from shelter in the direction of evacuation.

All available experience and tests show that, whilst it is difficult, it is a feasible thing to do, particularly for the smaller centres. It is unlikely that complete evacuation can in all cases be achieved prior to the initial attack, owing to the limited amount of warning available. However, since most of the enemy's targets are most likely to be in the United States, there is reason to hope that there would be at least an opportunity to continue the evacuation of some target areas in Canada for a few hours after the initial attack on North America has begun.

In any future conflict the problem, of course, is one of survival. The first few days of nuclear warfare would be the worst. If we could survive these few days we might possibly survive the conflict itself. So, because of these things, the considerations of NATO and so on, we have decided that plans should be developed for the evacuation of the following areas in our country: Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa-Hull, Windsor, Niagara Falls, Halifax, Vancouver, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Quebec city, Saint John, New Brunswick, and Victoria. It is a gigantic job; it has already been begun. All that I am saying is a reaffirmation of the tests that have been carried out.

My hon. friend in the committee, I thought made a very helpful suggestion, which we have taken into account, when he referred to the question of progressive evacuation. I can tell him after considering what he said that it is likewise our view that a wholesale evacuation of the entire population of a city after the alert is sounded is not necessarily practical or necessary. Instead we have planned for what he has described as a progressive evacuation. In other words, if it should become evident that there was a general deterioration in the international situation that suggested the probability of attack, that would be the time to move out parts of the population not absolutely necessary to the life of the community, people like the mothers, the small children, the sick and elderly people.

I have discussed in the committee, and there is no need to go over, all the various phases which would be attached to the concept of progressive evacuation, phases A, B, C, and D. I would not want the house to be

[Mr. Martin.]