

*Supply—National Defence*

the Canadian people against enemy action in time of war, and to take measures to reduce loss of life, to afford medical and other assistance to the civil population, and to mitigate the property damage that may be caused by such enemy action.

The type of civil defence that is perhaps best known—because of the part it played in the United Kingdom in the last war—is the protection of cities against air attack, the provision of medical, nursing, hospital and other assistance to aid the victims of air attack, and measures to deal with fire and other property damage.

This, however, is only one illustration of the type of work that falls within the general scope of civil defence. It includes planning for advance warning of attacks in liaison with the armed forces, for emergency food and welfare measures, and for protection of industrial plants and other essential facilities against sabotage. It has many other aspects with which I will deal in the course of my remarks.

It will be clear, I think, that on one boundary of its functions civil defence is related to the operations and responsibilities of our defence forces. Both civil defence and the armed forces are designed to afford physical protection to the people and property of the nation. However, the function of civil defence stops short of the actual military operations that would be required to deal with any direct attack in force on Canadian territory. That is the function of the navy, army, and air force. Civil defence is, in a sense, defence behind the lines, rather than on the lines of action—if any place can be said to be “behind the lines” in a modern war. Civil defence and the armed forces must, however, in many cases work very closely together.

In another aspect of its work, civil defence fits in with the operations of the R.C.M.P. and other police organizations dealing with subversive activity within the country. Civil defence is concerned with sabotage and the overt actions of enemy agents directed at the civil populace or at essential facilities. It is, however, primarily the function of the police to deal with espionage and other threats against internal security. The two functions overlap and clearly must be co-ordinated with one another.

I mention these points, and this relationship to the work of the armed forces on the one hand and to that of the police on the other, to emphasize that civil defence is simply one part of the general national organization that has to be established in times such as the present to deal with the dangers that would arise if war should occur.

In a broad sense, the national preparations fall into three parts: preparations to defend the country by military action; preparations to defend the people and the nation behind the lines; and preparations to deal with espionage and subversive elements.

It is the central sector of these preparations that we term “civil defence”.

From the very nature of modern warfare and of modern weapons, it would be impossible, even using all the resources and manpower we might have available, to provide anything like complete protection for the civil population through civil defence. Safety is something that can only be relative in a world such as ours. Moreover, what can in practice be done must fall still further short of what in theory we could do.

Civil defence, industrial production, the armed forces and other essential national services will, in time of war, make competing demands on the manpower and production of the country. In time of war both manpower and production fall far short of the demands placed upon them. Priorities have to be established, and even needs of high importance have to be provided for to an extent less than we would wish.

The people of Canada would be the last to feel that the needs of civil defence, the protection of their own persons and property, should be provided at the expense of the striking forces of the country on which victory or defeat must ultimately depend. The armed forces must and will come first in time of war. For this reason, plans for civil defence have to be made with constant regard for the claims on our resources that will be made by the navy, army and air force.

Plans and preparations must also be made in the light of the best estimates that can be formed of the probable localities where danger will be greatest. It must be apparent that in a country of this size, with a widely scattered population, many of our people live in areas that can be regarded as almost entirely immune from air or other enemy attack. In such areas emphasis should be on mutual aid civil defence programs rather than on protective measures.

On the other hand, there are cities and particular localities which by reason of the activities carried on within them, or because of other factors which give them special importance, must be regarded as probable targets if any attack is to be expected. These considerations mean that while civil defence should concern every Canadian citizen, the need for active civil defence measures will not arise to the same degree in all localities,