

*Supply—National Defence*

even earlier than 1963, I do not know what it could be.

When a Prime Minister who has the responsibility for implementing policy says that a policy not yet implemented is wrong and is a mistake and that a further agreement is required in order to pursue this mistaken policy but still insists on pursuing it, then I submit this is the most ridiculous defence policy the country has ever seen. I would ask the house to consider that situation in the light of the fact that this decision, thought to be a mistake, to accept such weapons made Canada another nuclear country, contributed to the further proliferation of nuclear weapons and branded Canada as a hypocrite in the councils of the world at a time when we hoped that Canada might have had some status in bringing conflicting powers to the negotiating table. I am sure that in the ideological struggle between communism and democracy as we know it one of the greatest weapons we can have is our reputation for integrity. Instead of protecting that reputation we are pursuing a policy of hypocrisy.

The Prime Minister has been most enlightening in answering questions as to when we are going to negotiate out of nuclear arms. However, to complete the picture on the nuclear weapons policy the government decided to implement the mistaken policy of June, 1963, and made another agreement in order to implement it even though it was aware that it was not only mistaken but that the nuclear weapons were useless. The Prime Minister promised to negotiate us out of this agreement. This is now February, 1966. Yet in a most offhand manner the Prime Minister has indicated that we are going to get around to negotiating out of nuclear arms. I want to ask the Minister of National Defence whether he feels that nuclear weapons are useful in Bomarc and whether or not he is chided from time to time by his colleague, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, for cutting the feet from under the Department of External Affairs in its attempts to use Canada's influence in negotiating treaties or agreements limiting the proliferation of nuclear weapons. I wonder also whether the Minister of National Defence can justify any amount of money now being spent in connection with the purchase, maintenance, use or storage of nuclear warheads for Bomarc.

Does the minister have the ear of the Prime Minister a little more closely than the

[Mr. Nugent.]

rest of us and can he tell us that there is to be an early decision by the government of Canada to get rid of these useless weapons and adopt a defence policy based on common sense so that Canada will be restored to the position where it can talk honestly about nuclear weapons and the desirability of not having them spread further? It would be a common-sense step to get rid of these useless weapons, the acquisition of which rendered our voice futile and hypocritical.

I wanted to say a word about the integration of our armed forces, particularly with reference to morale, but other members have covered this subject adequately. I am curious, however, about the vast sums of money that this policy was supposed to save. The minister has stated that it has saved money without impairing efficiency. Perhaps my book-keeping is not up to the minister's standards but I cannot see that there has been in fact any lessening of defence spending.

Since morale is a very important factor in relation to efficiency and in view of the fact that morale has declined in our forces, it is apparent that in fact there has been a considerable lessening of efficiency. Perhaps the minister at some time when he is replying to questions in this regard will spell out how he reconciles the total amount of money spent now compared with the amount spent before this campaign was commenced with his statement that we are spending less on the armed forces. In this regard he should be reminded that the navy is only about half as operational now as it was and that the latest decision to buy the F-5 aircraft is just as controversial as the ill-fated decision to buy the Arrow. The more we hear about the F-5 the less common sense there seems to be in purchasing it. I can only conclude that no matter how much it is improved the decision to buy it will be a mistake. I expect the Prime Minister to get up in the house and say, as he did in respect of the Bomarc, that the government has made a mistake in its decision to buy this plane. I hope the Prime Minister will be able to defend the decision to purchase this aircraft, a decision which has alarmed everyone in this house and in this country.

Perhaps the minister in his reply might also explain the Prime Minister's statement at the time we accepted nuclear warheads on the excuse that there was a billion dollars tied up in equipment. At the time I thought the Prime Minister was going to