

Supply—National Defence

there for questioning as to whether it is desirable to have this second line of early warning stations as well as the D.E.W. line. I believe that originally the mid-Canada line was started as a sort of stop-gap to give additional warning to the "Pinetree" stations, until such time as the D.E.W. line was fully developed.

We are told in the estimates that Canada is spending \$100 million this year on the mid-Canada line, and spent somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$50 million last year. That is a great deal of money, and one is forced to ask whether it is essential to have these two early warning lines. True, you may say you are giving warning in depth. One can understand the advantages of that, but the time element comes in and it is not a matter of hours now; it would be really a matter of minutes from the time a hostile force might be picked up by the mid-Canada line and reported to the control elements, wherever they may be, to the time you could expect to get interceptors off, or to get the remainder of the strategic bombing force away with a warning which can only be a matter of a few minutes, since the mid-Canada line is so much closer in than the D.E.W. line in the north. Therefore I hope the minister, when he replies, will be able to point out to the committee the necessity for that particular line.

Of course no warning line is of any value unless it can be backed up by interceptors, and while the white paper would indicate that there are some 21 squadrons available for the defence of Canada, the minister painted a more realistic picture of that force this afternoon when he pointed out that at the present time there are only nine regular squadrons which are equipped with a plane which is efficient for its role at the present time, namely the CF-100. I presume they are equipped now with the mark V, or are soon to be equipped with the mark V, but that the auxiliary squadrons have not been able to carry out the role.

If my interpretation of the minister's words this afternoon is correct it would seem that the majority of the auxiliary squadrons are not to be equipped with operational aircraft but are to be equipped with the T-33 jet training planes, and it appears to me, from what I could gather from the minister's words that their role is to be more that of providing reserve pilots rather than as operational units. If that is not a clear interpretation of the minister's remarks I hope he will clear up that point. Therefore it would seem to me that of the 21 squadrons referred to in the white paper we have to rely at the present moment solely on the

nine squadrons of the regular air force equipped with operational planes, and we have another three squadrons being developed.

One must also query the wisdom of, perhaps I might almost use the word, "stockpiling" of the CF-100. The *Montreal Gazette* today carried the statement that 510 mark IV CF-100's had already been produced and that there were another 115 mark V's. Well, for nine squadrons quite obviously 510 CF-100 planes, which it is said cost somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$500,000 each, seems to be, as I say, stockpiling a large number of these planes. Quite obviously when the original order was placed it was the government's intention to equip the auxiliary squadrons with these CF-100's, and for that reason a larger number of aircraft were ordered than would appear to be necessary now.

I am not in favour of discontinuing the airplane production industry here. I think it is something we have to develop and maintain. In those periods of changeover from one type of equipment to a more modern type there is always the danger of equipment being turned out which before it leaves the assembly line is obsolescent, and I am afraid that is the case at the present time with the CF-100's which will be turned out. No doubt the CF-100 mark V, with its greater power, would be of value to combat any enemy bombers coming to this country in the near future, but its period of usefulness must be rapidly passing. The CF-105 will no doubt bridge that period until the time the guided missile is ready and available.

I have frequently wondered whether we have not rather limited the airplane production industry in asking them to develop a limited number of a type of plane. As has been indicated, there is a great shortage and there is a great need for more transport planes. I believe that the A. V. Roe Company, which has been making the CF-100's, did start a jet transport plane industry which was cancelled at the time of the Korean war.

The Deputy Chairman: Order. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but it is my duty to tell him that he has exceeded his time, unless the committee is willing to give unanimous consent.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Deputy Chairman: The hon. member may continue with unanimous consent.

Mr. Pearkes: Thank you. I was wondering whether it might not have been possible to encourage a transport industry at the same time we were encouraging the construction of interceptors and CF-100's. Whether or not it is possible for Canada to dispose

[Mr. Pearkes.]