

*Supply—National Defence*

might easily demand supplies from one nation or another, and the failure to standardize might, in a period of crisis, spell the difference between victory and defeat, at least in any area where that problem had arisen.

But when we come to what follows in the statements of the Minister of National Defence, it seems to me that we find that atmosphere of continuing unreality which has surrounded all his statements since this crisis became acute a year ago. The Minister of National Defence, with justification, speaks with pride of Canadians in uniform. He is not alone in feeling that pride. I am sure every member of this committee shares that pride; and many members of the committee have been proud to be included amongst those who wore the uniform of this country on different occasions. But there is a difference between expressing justified pride in the Canadian armed forces and what they do, and giving the people of this country an impression that is not in keeping either with the facts as they really are or with the gravity of the situation with which we are confronted. Following up his reference to standardization, the Minister of National Defence said yesterday, as reported at page 2867 of *Hansard*:

... a good many months ago we decided to standardize our equipment—not right across the board but generally—with United States-type equipment.

It was not a few months ago, Mr. Chairman, that it was announced that this decision had been made; it was two years ago. It was two years ago that the Minister of National Defence announced, in a speech to a service club—and may I interpolate that that seems to be the place where most statements of policy are now enunciated—that it had been decided to standardize with United States equipment, particularly in relation to rifles, machine guns and equipment of that kind. Some time went past and we found that, instead of manufacturing rifles and machine guns of the .300 calibre during the period which had elapsed, government arsenals were manufacturing shotguns and sporting rifles which were being sold through the ordinary trade channels at a time when we were so greatly in need of equipment of this kind. That was one of the things which make it so difficult to be sure that any one of the glowing statements at any time has actually been carried into effect at some later date. There may be explanations. Yesterday the minister gave a great many explanations why a number of things had not happened that some people thought might have happened. But he then went on, after his reference to

[Mr. Drew.]

the position a few months ago, and he said this, and I am quoting from *Hansard* again:

It so happened that we had the armament equipment for practically five divisions in mobilization stores, equipment of the latest type in use at the end of the second world war. We were probably unique in that respect.

I wonder what Stalin, or the men in the Kremlin, would say if they read *Hansard* forwarded to them by their representatives here in Ottawa. I wonder what they would think about Canada being unique in the fact that it has armament equipment for practically five divisions in store. Russia with 175 divisions in the field, and with another 175 divisions ready to be put in the field at any time, and ready also to supply China, Poland and other countries with the equipment for many divisions, and yet we are unique in that we have equipment for five divisions of a type which we were not able to use.

If that is the standard of the kind of information we are getting, then it is time that every member of this house of every party applied new tests to the statements which are given as to the ability of this country to meet any emergency which might arise. This emergency has not just arisen in the past few weeks. This emergency is one which has been foreseen for several years in increasing measure, and it should be recalled by every hon. member of this house that even if by some happy miracle we were to learn that tomorrow peace, full peace, had been declared in Korea, the necessity for preparations of this kind would not be diminished by one cent, by one gun or by one tank, by one ship, or by one aircraft. This preparation had commenced before anyone dreamed that South Korea was going to be attacked on June 25, so far as there is any evidence on the record.

The Atlantic treaty was signed long before June 25 of last year. Preparations were being made to combine the forces of the free nations for the defence of freedom and to build bulwarks of strength behind which freedom could be maintained against the threat of one great aggressor. That situation has not changed. The very fact that Korea has happened makes it clear that there can be other Koreas in other parts of the world, and that this preparation must go on. Therefore we must measure everything that has been done in the light of the fact that preparation has been going on for some time, and we must therefore see how far we have gone in meeting even the minimum basis of the requirements for a threat of that nature.

If this is the kind of threat which the Prime Minister has said it is, if it is the