

Supply—National Defence

disregard it at our own peril. If we persist in disregarding it much longer it will, in my opinion, be disastrous.

Mr. Lambert: I should like to say a few words at this time in connection with some of the things which were said yesterday by the minister and by the Leader of the Opposition. I myself was very appreciative of the detailed review which the minister made of the present defence situation, and pleased to hear that the government was taking certain positive steps in connection with our defence policy, steps which I think we were expecting. Some people had expected them, unfairly I think, much sooner, not having the knowledge of the facts which the government possesses and not appreciating all the difficulties and implications of such decisions.

However, the purport of my remarks goes to one of the basic concepts of the defence not only of this country but of the whole Atlantic community. The minister indicated yesterday his grave concern about the relative positions of weapons of offence and defence, indicating that in so far as missiles are concerned the ICBM with a nuclear warhead seems at present to have some years' lead over weapons of defence. And he indicated further that perhaps the use of force as an instrument of policy to settle man's differences may no longer be valid.

Yes; I think we may consider that absolute force as an instrument of policy to settle man's differences may no longer be valid, but I have not seen any reference to limited forces using more conventional weapons. I know this is a problem which has been raised by a number of people in the past, but yesterday the Leader of the Opposition referred to effect of nuclear attacks. We have seen statements made by the office of civil defence and mobilization, or civil defence, in the United States that the explosion of 48 nuclear bombs would have a devastating effect on that country. But surely this concept of absolute defence, and this recognition that the offence at the moment has predominance over defence, are known by those who may be opposed to the free world. This is not a one-way street. And in the light of this particular conclusion would it not be possible for us to become involved in some side effort, some limited military action and, once having been committed, find ourselves without the appropriate weapons with which to conduct it effectively?

This applies not only to Canada but also to the United States and to Great Britain with regard to the development of nuclear missile weaponry at the highest level and the elimination of what might be considered

conventional weapons, though that, it is true, is a very relative term. If you have invested all your money in elephant guns you are not going to be able to go out and shoot effectively small game; your weapons are of no use to you. I would like to have heard the minister tell us what the thinking is with regard to this particular problem.

The Leader of the Opposition indicated that he felt we had made no reassessment of our defence policy. But surely there has been a change in concept. When the hon. gentleman was a member of the government surely he felt that a change was taking place in defence concept, and this change is reflected in the changes that are taking place in our own defence structure. It will be recalled that prior to the NATO alliance in 1959, and in fact prior to the Korean conflict, our military establishments in this country were of a very limited nature. Since then our increased military requirements in so far as aircraft are concerned, and even perhaps the subsequent cancellation of the Arrow program, have reflected the changes brought about by technological developments. The Leader of the Opposition felt there was some danger that we were developing a concept of "fortress America", as I think he called it, as against the Atlantic concept. But I put this to him. Was not the Atlantic concept, though a much larger area of defence, based upon the situation up to 1949, and would he not agree that in the 10 years which have intervened we have witnessed a marked change?

The hon. gentleman spoke about the position in October 1957, and I am wondering whether that might not have started a stampede in thinking; whether it might have caused too great an emphasis to be placed upon certain types of development. At any rate, these technological changes have brought about this conception of fortress America within the framework of the Atlantic concept. I think the hon. gentleman will agree with me that at the time of the Atlantic concept in 1949 and the years immediately following, the North American continent, in so far as its own defences were concerned, constituted possibly one of the least defended areas in the world. What is relevant is that this fortress America is the result of an evolution within the Atlantic concept, a very necessary one in the light of technological developments. For this reason I feel that his criticism or doubts as expressed yesterday are not as valid as they might have appeared to be.

Yesterday some quotations from newspapers were read with respect to an alleged defence muddle. It seems to me, without getting into personalities or anything of that