

*Supply—Privy Council*

of the kind we are operating for the government of this country against any form of nuclear blast, there would be protection against nuclear fall-out, and presumably that is the reason we are taking the steps we are taking. Yet I have seen a report from the head of the department of physiology in the University of Minnesota as part of a study commenting on the Rand Corporation studies and on the civil defence policies of the United States, to the effect that if there was a "real nuclear war"—I do not know what he means by a "real nuclear war"; presumably it is one where there would be attacks followed by attacks; that is presumably what we have to expect—it would be necessary to stay in a shelter for a year if the lethal effects of fall-out are to be avoided. This gives some idea of the nature of the problem we are dealing with on this sunny spring afternoon in this committee of the House of Commons. We on this side of the committee know the agony which is involved in trying to decide what to do about it, though perhaps we are not as intimately associated with these matters as are some people on the other side of the house. There are too many variables, as the hon. member for Peterborough has said, and as I have repeated this afternoon, for us to be able to ensure finality in any policy with regard to this matter.

The only finality will come if we fail in our policy of peace and get into nuclear war. That may well be final. Therefore, the only protection is peace. But I should like to emphasize, as my friend the hon. member for Essex East has emphasized, that while there cannot be any finality in policy or decision it does seem to us on this side that somehow there have to be priorities of protection established.

The Prime Minister has mentioned the fact that we cannot have equality in this matter except in principle and I do not quarrel with that nor does the hon. member for Essex East. There cannot be equality of safeguards or of safety in a matter of this kind but there will have to be priorities established. Indeed in the present policy of the government a priority has been established. The priority that has been established is that if you have the resources yourself as an individual, and if you have the facilities, if you live in a house where there is a possibility of doing this, you can, if you can afford it, give yourself some protection against fall-out. That leaves it up to the individual, with encouragement and support, up to a point, from the government. But surely there must be some more collective approach than that to this problem. If we have to have priorities is it not desirable to add to the individual priority—and I do not think we

should take away from the individual the right to do what he can for his own protection and that of his family—a priority for children established by our collective action under which there will be some degree of assurance of survival of the children of the nation. If we could have that kind of action through collective shelters on a basis of co-operation among federal, provincial and municipal governments, is that not the kind of priority which would be justified through ensuring the survival of our children?

I do not know how it could be worked out. I do not have that information, and I do know something about the difficulty. But let us add to whatever priority we are giving, by the very nature of our society to the individual who can do these things with government support and encouragement, some kind of collective priority to the one element of our population whom we would, I should think, especially desire to have survive in this kind of situation. Perhaps this would be a principle upon which we could extend our activity in the future.

There are one or two other points which I feel should be brought to the government's attention. We have pointed out before that it is essential that stockpiles of food and materials be secured at strategic sites, where they will be accessible in times of disaster, if shelters are to be of any value. I do not know whether anything has been done about that yet.

This has also been pointed out by many hon. members on this side. A national system of automatic warning must surely be worked out. Does that not mean having individual units installed in individual dwellings in a way that they could be activated from a central emergency headquarters? It seems to me that is the only kind of warning which would be adequate in the missile age.

There is also the idea of dispersal, of evacuation. The Prime Minister has told us this afternoon that the policy of the government in respect of civil defence and emergency measures is now based on the twin principles of shelters against fall-out, and dispersal and evacuation. We were of the impression on this side—and the Prime Minister's statement rather indicates that we were wrong—that the principle adopted by the government now was the principle of fall-out shelters and not dispersal or evacuation. It has been pointed out, I believe, that the United Kingdom up until the last year or so based its policy on the construction of shelters, but has now reintroduced the idea of evacuation and survival. I do not wish to delay this item but if the Prime Minister could reassure the committee on that point by telling us that the government has indeed now based its policy