

calls for. I suggest that first of all the minister ought to admit at least to himself that there is widespread misgiving in Canada with respect to the effective production of aircraft. Whether or not it is justified, let us first of all realize that that widespread misgiving does exist. Let us admit that it is true.

We cannot expect anything else, because we must remember that there are men working in those factories who have contact with people outside. People engaged in those industries are people who know at least something about the matter. The minister may refer to street rumours, or anything he likes, but the fact remains that that feeling persists. It could not help persisting when we consider that the Minister of National Defence for Air is quoted as having said in Montreal:

"Unfortunately I do not know why it has not been possible to produce these planes on schedule, and I am not in a position to judge the delay" he said. But one exasperated officer had told him the other day, "There are some manufacturers who are either damn fools or damn liars."

When statements like that, and others one might quote, come out, it is understandable that the man on the street may have misgivings. I want to suggest to the minister, too, that the people who are concerned about this matter are not people who are seeking to destroy Canada; they are people who are seeking to save Canada. I wish the minister would give close attention to that fact.

The other day the minister spoke about his duty. I believe he has as conscientious a sense of duty as any hon. member in the house. But we, too, as members of the House of Commons, have a duty to perform. We have a duty to the taxpayers, the people who before this war is over will have to shoulder the tremendous burden of taxation to finance the war. We as their representatives have a responsibility to them.

This morning I received a letter from a returned soldier who is in receipt of a pension of \$15.20 a month. He tells me he proposes to put \$5 a month of it into the purchase of war savings stamps. Am I to write and suggest to that man that that is a good idea, unless at the same time I can assure him that I know every dollar he is sacrificing is being used to the best possible advantage? I cannot do that. May I remind the minister, too, that we have a responsibility to the men in the fighting services.

Most hon. members will recall the shell shortage of 1915 in Great Britain. They will remember that Mr. Lloyd George and Lord Northcliffe, who began the campaign to reveal that shell shortage, were maligned from one end of Great Britain to the other. But we know now that they were right, that there was

in fact a shell shortage and that thousands of British soldiers lost their lives because of the lack of ammunition in the last war. The fact that a member, newspaper or some other organization seeks to ascertain the facts or to criticize the government is not an indication that they are lacking in patriotism. It is an indication that they are seeking to serve their country in the best way they can.

I do not think anyone in the house would for one moment argue that the production of aircraft is an easy matter. The task of production must be tremendous. Any person who over-simplifies or under-estimates the task with which the minister is faced is not being fair to the minister, to the government or to himself. What we want, first of all, is that the minister be frank with us and place before us an outline of the vast department he heads, to see if together there is not some way, through suggestions, proposals or amendments to proposals, by which the set-up can be made more efficient than it is at the present time.

Last fall I came in contact with some of the people working at the Malton plant, owned by the National Steel Car Corporation of Hamilton. They drew to my attention certain disconcerting facts, some of which I placed before the house last fall. I pointed out at that time I had been informed by men working in the plant that there had been a labour turnover of some seventy-five per cent to ninety per cent, and that in six months 900 men had quit their jobs in the plant. I pointed out that there had been some serious accidents in the plant—and there have been accidents since that time. I placed those facts before the house, but to the best of my knowledge nothing has been done.

Because of my interest in the matter scores of letters have come to me from people who have worked in the plant or are working there now. I made it my business to go to Toronto and talk to some of them. We have no other way of getting information. The minister may have it, but we have not. We can only place the facts before him, as we have done; that is what I want to do. For instance I am informed that the contract for Hampden bombers was given early in 1940, and my information is that up to the present only some twenty wing assemblies have been completed; that at Montreal up to two weeks before Christmas only 21 wing assemblies had been completed, and that at that time the work had to be shut down because of the lack of certain articles. Then there is the information I have with reference to the production of Avro-Anson planes. The other day the minister said the first one had been flown, but not delivered. The minister's information