

*The Address—Mr. Drew*

The over-all disproportion between expenditure and result can be illustrated in one case in this simple manner. During the current year Canadian taxpayers will be called upon to pay substantially more in taxes than they did during any year of the last world war when we had more than a million men and women under arms. What are we getting for it? That is what we have a right to know. That is what every member also has a duty to find out.

If as a result of the discussions during this session we can finally dispel the verbal smoke screen set up by the Department of National Defence and begin to receive statements upon which we can rely, then possibly this unnecessary second session may serve some useful purpose. Canadians have been told that we have developed the finest anti-tank gun in the world, that we have the world's most advanced anti-submarine vessels, that we have the world's most powerful jet engine, that we have the world's best all-weather fighter, that we are ready to play our part along with the best forces from other lands to meet any threat that may come.

Canadians will be glad to claim any real achievements which Canadians have the right to claim. In two world wars Canadians have shown that in whatever service they wore uniforms there were no more efficient and effective men and women in the world. That has been proved in the air, on land and at sea. It is unworthy of their great achievements and their valour, to say nothing of their sacrifice, that the people of Canada should at any time be lulled into a state of complacent optimism by boastful statements unrelated to the facts.

Three years have passed since we were told we were starting our rearmament program. The Korean struggle is now in its sixteenth month. Where are the anti-tank guns? Where are the anti-submarine vessels? Where are the aircraft using the world's most powerful jet engines? Where are the all-weather fighters in actual service? Where are the armed forces ready to go into action for which so much money has been spent? True, we have naval units with superb personnel. That service is in fact the most advanced, although it still has many unexplainable deficiencies in equipment.

It was air power, however, that was to be the core of our defence effort. Half of our expenditure was to be on that branch of the service. What have we in actual fighting squadrons today? When the time comes for teams to play in any league, it is the teams that can play that really count, and not the teams that are still being talked about. In a

recent series of responsible and, I believe, unchallengeable articles appearing in one of the most reliable newspapers in this country, it was stated unequivocally by their military writer—and he is an exceedingly competent military writer—that as of October 1 there are only two fighter squadrons ready to go into action.

The situation in regard to the land forces is equally uncertain. Figures of recruiting mean very little in themselves. They mean next to nothing in the case of the reserve forces unless we know how many of those enlisting actually trained at camp during the year. There again one of the great difficulties, in understanding what the situation is, is to be able to interpret at any particular time the explanations given by the Department of National Defence. As a reason for not using the highly-trained airborne brigade at the time we were called upon to accept a share of the responsibility in Korea, we were told in this house—and in that way the people of Canada were told—that the defence requirements of the north made it unwise to send the airborne brigade out of Canada. Now at a time when the dangers have certainly not diminished, the airborne brigade is being sent out of Canada with no trained airborne brigade to take its place. If the explanation for not sending the airborne brigade was valid in the first place, what is the reason that we do not need a trained airborne brigade at this time? It is such contradictions as these that make it difficult for the members of this house and for the people of Canada to know what is fact and what is fancy.

These are only some of the reasons why there should be the most detailed and comprehensive examination of the real state of our defence forces. It is to build up those forces that the bulk of the heavy taxes now being collected by the government are to be used. The speech from the throne indicates that an opportunity will be afforded to discuss national defence early in the session. It has been indicated by the statement in the speech from the throne that measures will be placed before the house dealing with the dispatch of the 27th brigade to Europe, although that should—and I hope it will—provide an opportunity for the most detailed discussion of national defence. I have raised this subject today because I do not think that the examination of this matter should wait for any future date when legislation limited to a particular purpose will be before the house. Once again I make the request that without waiting for the termination of this debate, a committee of this house be set up to examine defence expenditures and all related