

*Defence Purchasing Board*

confidence of the Canadian people not only in their government but in the institution of government as such. If there was even a scintilla of truth in them, why, then, we ought to be out. What should be done to a man who scatters that kind of garbage through the press of the country at a time like this? I feel very strongly about it.

As to my hon. friend's last question, the minister has just said plainly that the particular engine to which reference is made is sold to the British government at exactly the same price as it is sold to the Canadian government after making allowance for sales tax and freight. If that is so, of what importance is it to us whether the aircraft engine manufacturer in England chooses to have a Canadian agent to run his business?

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): It is none of our business.

Mr. DUNNING: It is our business merely to get a fair price. The way in which the manufacturer does his business is no concern of ours so long as we get a fair price; and, as the minister pointed out, this particular concern appointed agents in Canada as long ago as 1928 and have the same agents to-day. Should we take the view that we would not buy their goods because they had a Canadian agent? From my point of view, I prefer to see people abroad, doing business in Canada, operate through Canadian concerns. I believe it is good business for Canada, provided always that we do not get stuck on the price as a result; and in this instance, as the minister stated, the price at which we get the goods is the same as the price paid by the British government in England, after making allowance for sales tax and freight.

Mr. COLDWELL: About which there has been a good deal of controversy in Great Britain. Perhaps the British government is paying too much for these aeroplanes.

Mr. HOWE: We value your opinion on that.

Mr. COLDWELL: I said perhaps; I do not know.

An hon. MEMBER: "Perhaps."

Mr. DUNNING: There is too much "perhaps."

Mr. MARTIN: Why say these things?

Mr. POWER: Why not have the courage to say what you mean?

[Mr. Dunning.]

Mr. COLDWELL: When a commission is paid to Canadian firms and we could obtain the articles without having to pay the commission, we ought to buy them without that commission. With regard to what has been said in reply to the hon. member for Vancouver North, it seems to me that there was an innuendo. When statements of the kind published in the *Winnipeg Free Press* appear in newspapers, I submit that the hon. member for Vancouver North, or anybody else, is justified in rising in his place and basing some questions upon such statements, coming from a newspaper which is known throughout Canada as a Liberal publication and a supporter of the government of the day, and the editor of which, as is pointed out, is on the Rowell commission.

Mr. GOLDING: Did the editor write the item?

Mr. COLDWELL: No, but the editor is on the Rowell commission, and the paper supports the government of which the minister is a member. While it is true that the editor does not write these articles, at the same time the editor does take responsibility for such articles as appear in his newspaper. Indeed, if an article appears and is libellous, the editor and publisher of the newspaper is sued, as well as the author. I do not think we need generate any heat about these things.

Mr. DUNNING: If men's honesty is being attacked one can expect them to resent it, and the Minister of National Defence has every right to resent it.

Mr. COLDWELL: I quite agree, but when it is said that attempts are made to sabotage the department, I know nothing of such attempts. We are not attempting anything of the kind, but we are trying to bring to the attention of the house matters in connection with the department, so that if later on it is important that the people of Canada should have every confidence in the department and what it is doing, we may be sure that confidence will be justified. I think we are fulfilling our function as a part of the opposition in trying to ensure this.

Mr. MARTIN: Does not the hon. gentleman think that, in view of the general discussion on these matters, and our desire to preserve the strength of this parliament, the hon. member for Vancouver North might have asked the minister his view of the article