

Interim Supply

accuracy of long range intercontinental ballistic missiles and because the SAGE-Bomarc installations are fixed installations they are indeed very vulnerable to missilery. The United States decided to pause for a fresh look; but not our government, which decides to go blindly on down a road leading to nowhere without giving any satisfactory explanation as to where they expect to wind up.

We believe, Mr. Chairman, that this is not good enough. If the minister would tell us that he was going to continue a complete policy of air defence, that would be one thing. If he told us he was going to re-equip the air defence squadrons and that in addition to that he hoped that the Bomarc B would be successful so that it might be used as the second line of defence, we could at least see the logic of that policy, whether we agreed with it or not. But why, at the present time, the minister refuses to tell us whether or not he intends to re-equip the air defence squadrons, while at the same time telling us that he does intend under any circumstance to continue with the installation of the SAGE-Bomarc system, it is to us a matter of complete mystery.

We repeat, Mr. Chairman, that as far as we are concerned, the SAGE-Bomarc installation by itself is ineffective and a waste of the Canadian taxpayers' money. Not only does it protect too small a part of our nation, but it is far too vulnerable to attack by enemy missiles. It is vulnerable not only to attack by intercontinental ballistic missiles; it must be remembered that one ICBM direct hit on one of these bases would wipe out the base completely and provide an air corridor through which any number of enemy bombers might fly. The bases are also vulnerable to air-to-ground missiles, missiles carried by attacking bombers; and these missiles could be launched some hundreds of miles out in advance of reaching the Bomarc bases. The Bomarc missile and the SAGE system would not be able to differentiate between attacking dummy missiles and the real thing, and they would of necessity be fired one after another and once the half squadron has gone there would be nothing left to defend our cities and the approaches to the North American continent. All would be gone; the corridor would be open and the bombers would fly through.

These overriding considerations, Mr. Chairman, are of the greatest importance. But in addition to this the missile itself has not been proven satisfactory from a technical standpoint. And so we on this side of the house take the view that, first of all, we have had no assurance that the missile will ever be

[Mr. Hellyer.]

effective. It is small comfort to us to be told by the Associate Minister of National Defence that it took 80 tests before the Bomarc A became operational and that undoubtedly after as many tests the Bomarc B will reach the same stage of effectiveness. This is no comfort whatsoever.

Even if it should become operational, and we repeat that we are not the least bit convinced that it ever will, we still say that with the government's present half policy toward air defence this expenditure makes no sense whatsoever and is a complete and utter waste of the Canadian taxpayers' money. Time and the time again we have raised this subject in the house. Every time the minister has given us some bland assurance that he has confidence in the missile. The minister feels that ultimately it will be successful. After all, he says, there have only been seven tests and quite often it takes many more than this before success is achieved. We wish that we could be as optimistic as he, but we are not.

Mr. Chairman, let me read some of the comments which have been made. After the sixth test questions were raised, and I have here an article which appeared in the *Ottawa Citizen* of February 2, 1960 entitled "\$6 million start made on nearby Bomarc site. Cabinet ignores failure." This article goes on:

The sixth straight fizzle of the Bomarc B missile, the type that will come to Canada in 1961 has not slackened government plans to build launching bases near North Bay and Mont Laurier.

Then the next sub heading is "Tenders called", and it continues:

Tenders have been called for concrete work estimated to cost \$6.2 million for first-stage construction of the base 100 miles northeast of Ottawa while questions are being raised in the commons about the Bomarc's worth.

Questions are still being raised, and still the cabinet refuses to act. Still the cabinet ignores failure. This cabinet seems to have something in common with the Bomarc B in that after a repeated series of failures it still does not realize that it is incompetent to do the job.

Then after the seventh test this report appeared in the *Ottawa Journal* of March 8, 1960:

PM says not suspending Bomarc plans.

Furore in the commons yesterday over the second straight failure of a Bomarc B test missile led Defence Minister Pearkes to protest that "we are losing all sense of proportion in this matter".

Mr. Chairman, let me ask you, are we losing all sense of proportion? This weapon is the one on which the government has hung the whole air defence of Canada. This is the only weapon in the government's plan to defend the Canadian nation against air attack either by manned bombers or by missiles. Yet we are told by the minister that