

Supply—National Defence

be justifiably proud that we have been first in recognizing the significance of the technological age in which we live and its impact on military organization.

Mr. Churchill: Mr. Chairman, we have just heard the most bombastic speech by a Minister of National Defence ever uttered in this chamber, I think, since the days of Sir Sam Hughes.

Mr. Hellyer: You will remember that.

Mr. Churchill: I did not hear that interruption from the other side; I am willing to listen if you wish to repeat it.

When the minister opened his 45-minute speech tonight he said that he had been subjected to buckshot attacks on him during the course of this debate. Well, it certainly found its mark. He has been irritated by those pellets, as he showed tonight when he was stirred into activity. All day Friday when we were discussing defence policy he sat in his place smug, complacent, without any worry at all. Then over the week end the radio, television and press reports began to come in and he started to get worried.

When the attack continued today and the ineffectiveness of this minister was shown up by everyone who spoke on this side of the house, he decided to get his speech writers busy. Instead of giving us a speech earlier today he waited until 8.30 tonight to make his defence, and a very poor defence it was indeed.

It seems to me—and I hope the minister learns a lesson from this—that had he on Thursday night of last week given us some of the particulars that he has been forced to give tonight, it would have been very helpful to the debate. Tonight he attempted to answer some questions. He left most of the questions unanswered, and when he did not have a satisfactory answer he declaimed with a very loud voice to the claue of admirers behind him and made attacks on the member for Calgary North, who for unavoidable reasons is not here tonight. I hope the hon. member for Calgary North will have an opportunity to reply to these unwarranted attacks upon him.

Then this bombastic minister told us in the early part of his speech that he was not a rubber stamp minister. I do not know what he thought of his colleague of former days, Mr. Claxton. I do not know what he thought of Mr. Campney.

Mr. Hellyer: They were good ministers.

Mr. Churchill: I do not think anyone would accuse General Pearkes of being a rubber stamp minister, and certainly not the hon. member for Calgary North. But this minister is not a rubber stamp minister: He is the boss. I suggest that now he has a chief of staff who is a rubber stamp and does everything that this minister says.

What I objected to in 1963 and 1964 was that he did not continue the council that would advise the minister, the heads of the navy, the army and the air force, plus the chief of staff, about military matters. He abolished that council and made it just advisory. He appointed a supremo, a chief of staff to run things. Now he is running everything himself. He is not a rubber stamp minister, but somebody in the department is now a rubber stamp, and it must be the chief of staff.

● (9:20 p.m.)

This is the conflict between two men that I said would happen, from experiences that they had in England many years ago. This wonder boy of national defence—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Churchill: —has gone back.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Churchill: This wonder boy in the opinion of the Liberal party has gone back to a system thrown out 60 years ago in Great Britain. Talk about being up to date, nobody is further out of date than this particular minister.

Mr. Nielsen: And out of step.

Mr. Churchill: He is a bombastic individual and he will go on spreading messages that have little foundation to the Canadian people.

Mr. Nielsen: He talks a lot.

Mr. Churchill: He talks about other countries, and how they are admiring what he is doing. This is right from the horse's mouth. He is the one who has heard these other people on the subject. None of the rest of us has heard this from other countries. Where does this information come from? Why do they not tell us that we have the most marvelous minister that ever happened.

Our opinion is, on this side of the house, that we have the poorest Minister of National Defence that this country has ever seen. I think he is all bombast and no action. Tonight he did not answer the questions posed to him from this side of the house. What