

Supply—National Defence

Mr. Goode: May I point out to you, Mr. Chairman—

The Chairman: Order.

Mr. Goode: —that the leader of the opposition is criticizing the minister, but he did not find it necessary to remain in the house while the minister was making his statement.

Mr. Drew: That, Mr. Chairman, was a tawdry and smart-aleck remark, unworthy of any hon. member in this house. I have done what perhaps the hon. member has not done: I have read every word of the minister's statement. I have been following this subject with a great deal of attention, and I perhaps will indicate that I am aware of some of the details before I sit down. Before any suggestion is made that every member of the opposition has not spent every hour in this house, may I ask the hon. member to look at the front ranks of the government benches and see how many cabinet ministers are here while we are discussing the allocation of hundreds of millions of dollars of the people's money.

Mr. Riley: Don't get mad.

Mr. Drew: Now, Mr. Chairman, the item to which I was referring was an item under the heading of "materials and supplies, \$60,189,708". The next item is "acquisition and construction of buildings and works, including acquisition of land, \$24,147,000". Then the next detail, as it is called, is "major procurement of equipment, \$110,954,383". Now, that is the detail that is given in that case. In other details which bring that total for the naval services up to \$277,754,980, there is no more real detail than that. Then we come to the army, and let us take as an example some of the items that are called details.

Materials and supplies, \$201,432,075.

Acquisition and construction of buildings and works, including acquisition of land, \$75,526,500.

Then here is another item, as an example only:

Major procurement of equipment, \$198,930,650.

Then we find the various totals of the so-called details for the army amounting to \$667,609,100.

Then under the heading of "Air", we have further so-called details:

Materials and supplies, \$101,087,385.

Acquisition and construction of buildings and works, including land, \$193,570,310.

Major procurement of equipment, \$406,167,927.

Those are samples of the kind of detail that is given to explain this one item that we now have before us, amounting in itself to a total of \$1,412 million. We are not dealing alone today with the assurance of adequate

defence equipment. We are dealing with something that is in itself imposing upon the people of Canada one of the major problems that this country is going to be called upon to face. In the words of the Minister of Finance himself the people of Canada, along with the people of other nations, have before them two great concerns at this time: the pursuit of peace and the problem of inflation. In the pursuit of peace we are being called upon, through the vote of this committee, to supply not merely \$1,412 million but, according to the statement issued by the Department of National Defence, \$1,879 million during this current year. That pursuit of peace is something that is naturally going to engage the attention of the people of this country and it is something that should engage the attention of the members of the House of Commons in the most minute detail; because we are not going to defend freedom merely with dollars. We are not going to be able to defend freedom unless we make sure that we are going to be able to carry the load. In addition to taking such steps as are necessary to defend the dollar that is going to be used in this large quantity to defend our freedom, we must also be sure that, here as elsewhere, no unnecessary dollars are being spent.

I know there are those who will immediately say that when we make a demand for more information than we are getting, we are simply repeating a demand that has been made over and over again. But no matter what may have been true before, no matter what justification there may have been for urging greater detail in the past, that justification need hardly be pleaded at a time that the Minister of Finance has seen fit to place side by side with the pursuit of peace or, to use the other term, the preparation for defence, the problem of inflation itself. When we consider what measure of information we should require, I think that the strongest evidence we have of the need for more detailed information than we have yet had is furnished by the Minister of National Defence, and was furnished yesterday, as may be ascertained by anyone who was not here by a careful reading of *Hansard* for that day.

In his statement with regard to standardization, the Minister of National Defence said, as reported at page 2867 of *Hansard*:

I also exceedingly regret the failure to have more standardization.

That regret undoubtedly will be generally shared. That regret is one which undoubtedly should also cause us a great deal of concern at this time, recognizing as we do that the common activities of the Atlantic nations