

*Supply—National Defence*

be told that the cost was too great, that it was an expensive aircraft and that because of the huge sums involved the government could not recommend proceeding with it. Never at any time was it clearly and categorically stated whether the decision was in fact strictly a military one or an economic one or a combination of the two.

However, we had a clear indication that manned interceptors would not be required and that they would in fact be replaced in the Canadian defence concept by the Bomarc missile and that we would place our reliance on that missile. Events which have taken place since then certainly lead us to wonder about the rightness of that decision. We have to go back and examine the decision in the light of events which have taken place since then.

At the time the Prime Minister entered the house we stated that we did not have the facts and information on which to judge. Information was not made available to us and we had to accept the word of the Prime Minister and of the Minister of National Defence that it was no longer required. We did, however, object very, very strenuously to the way in which the decision was announced, the fact that it was done brutally, with callousness, and that thousands of people were laid off work without any notice or consideration whatsoever. We complained bitterly to the government which had made a decision of this importance without having planned in advance any alternative. The announcement which was made today to re-equip the air division could have been made at the same time if the government had applied itself to the problems which it had to face, and if it had spent the time last fall giving effective consideration to serious problems instead of half the ministers spending their time circling the globe making friends and influencing people in other countries.

It is necessary for us to look at the evidence which has been made available to us since the announcement on that Friday morning in February. We have to call in witnesses. We do not have direct evidence from our own government. We have to call in witnesses to decide whether in fact the manned interceptor is still required in the concept which this government has no later than today told us it still subscribes to, a concept of protecting the deterrent presently in the hands of the strategic air command of the United States of America. If this government subscribes to the theory of protecting that deterrent, it has also told us it subscribes to the theory espoused by the United States of defence in depth, the North

American defence in depth. If it does not subscribe to that theory it would have told us today.

Are manned interceptors required within the United States concept? Yes. Who are the witnesses we call in? Well, we have a wide variety of witnesses. The first witness we call is Air Commodore J. A. D. McCurdy. I would like to read a paragraph from the *Globe and Mail* of May 22, 1959, which is as follows:

The man who 50 years ago inaugurated powered flight in Canada, Air Commodore J. A. D. McCurdy, today said the manned fighter aircraft will continue for some years to come to have a place in warfare.

Of course, the minister may reply that Air Commodore McCurdy has not been active in military affairs for a number of years and that this is just his expression of personal opinion. Then we have to call other witnesses, and the next witness is General Partridge, retiring commander of the North American Air Defence. He is reported as having said this, as recorded in the *Toronto Telegram* of May 5, 1959:

We must not only maintain the defences against bomber attack which we have today but we must also improve those defences so we can counteract a supersonic attacking force.

We must continue to have an interceptor force capable of intercepting anything which flies in our direction . . .

Our present intelligence estimates are that . . . in a few years they (the U.S.S.R.) will have a supersonic rather than a subsonic bomber force.

A supersonic bomber force to be met at the first stage of the defence in depth by manned interceptors. By what manned interceptors? The obsolete CF-100?

What other witnesses do we have? We have as witness Air Marshal Slemon. Air Marshal Slemon—he was the only witness who was available to us at the time the decision was announced in this house—is reported as having said at Colorado Springs:

For as long as we can foresee we must have an effective defence against attack in space—from manned bombers or other weapons travelling in the earth's atmosphere.

For this purpose we must have both manned interceptor and ground-to-air missiles.

In "fringe areas" of the defence system—and Canada was a fringe area—there was a need for long range interceptors to engage hostile invaders as far from populated areas as possible.

That is Air Marshal Slemon.

Another witness, General Curtis Lemay. This report appears in the *Ottawa Citizen* of April 22, 1959 where General Lemay is quoted as having said:

Our ballistic missiles have not yet demonstrated the type of reliability or accuracy which is required to ensure the most effective use of the relatively small yield warheads which they carry.