

*Supply—National Defence*

and their wants. This should mean as much to the nation as to the serviceman.

An important area of neglect covers fringe benefits, not to soften the hardness essential in a fighting man, but those such as other nations provide in housing conditions, medical benefits for dependents, and re-employment on termination of service.

Steps should be taken to ensure the lessening of the major and minor anxieties of those overseas, concerning their dependents. Any serviceman deserves this. Neither should separation cause financial penalties. Such items, and others, point to a need for improved machinery so that the lower ranks can voice their dissatisfactions, outside those of military efficiency, without being penalized as troublemakers. It must be remembered they are the only large group of individuals who lack all means of collective representation in our modern society.

Canadian servicemen have always welcomed their Minister of National Defence overseas or in Canada. We were always proud whenever our minister would visit us. As Canadians we hoped and trusted that all would be well. But today, when visiting in the Trenton area and many other parts of Canada, our minister is not hailed as the Minister of National Defence; he is named "Mr. Termite" of National Defence.

**Mr. Hellyer:** Mr. Chairman, on assuming the portfolio of Minister of National Defence it was tempting indeed, to follow the easy route; to be a rubber stamp minister, going along unquestioningly with the tired old pattern of defence in this country.

This would have meant pouring more of the taxpayers' money into purchasing additional follow-on nuclear bombers; to continue to play the numbers game by pouring countless dollars into creaking 20 year old world war II ships that contributed no real operational capability to western defence and, worse still, could contribute little or nothing if any sort of war broke out; to permit the overwhelming proportion of the Canadian army to be equipped only to training scales; to continue with inadequate sea and air transport; and to continue with inadequate modern equipment particularly for tactical mobility.

The opposition says that we have a lot of second hand questionable equipment in our forces. I would remind hon. members I did not buy the nuclear bombing Starfighters; I inherited them. I did not buy the atomic

Honest John rockets; I inherited them. I did not buy the famous Bomarc missiles; I inherited them. I did not buy the Voodoo anti-bomber interceptors; I inherited them. In fact, I inherited the whole conglomerative mess that had built up through years of apathy through years of ministerial "rubber stamping"; through years of lip service to civilian control; through years of failure to analyse what a country like Canada really needs in the field of defence—needs based on the realities of today and the probabilities of tomorrow, and not just the traditions of the past.

What was the policy of three years ago? The strike role had been adopted for the air division in Europe. Hundreds of millions of dollars had been spent on equipment and training, but there were no atomic weapons available and there were no plans to rectify the situation.

The navy was sailing a fleet which included a large number of obsolete second world war frigates. Commodore Plomer described them pretty well in his magazine article. They were costly to operate and to refit, but there were no plans to take them out of service. The capability of the air transport fleet to lift fighting units was hopelessly inadequate. The C-119's, the logistic workhorse of the time, were virtually worn out and maintenance costs were skyrocketing. There were no plans to do anything about it.

The brigade group in Europe had no armoured personnel carriers to give protection to the infantry. It was one of the best brigade groups in Europe—probably the best. Yet it was one of the only ones in the front line without armoured personnel protection. The brigade had to go on exercises in open trucks and, worse still, would have had to go into battle in that manner in the event an emergency developed.

**Some hon. Members:** Shame.

**Mr. Hellyer:** Because of delays and procrastination the Bobcat could not have been brought into service in time to be a realistic solution. The balance of the Canadian Army in Canada, three quarters of the whole army, was not equipped for war. It had training scales only.

Hon. gentlemen might be interested to know that for years mortar batteries in Canada were limited in their regular training because of ammunition restrictions. The committee might also be interested to know that winter clothing was scaled for issue only to one