

*Supply—National Defence*

more like five brigades which we shall have to be able to maintain on the basis of the commitment the minister has laid down.

On a comparative basis—and although this I admit is not strictly accurate nevertheless it forms a basis on which to judge—taking the figures as to what it took to maintain that number of brigades during the 1939-45 war, to maintain five brigades or their equivalent at this time would take approximately 80,000 men. That is, I repeat, for the army alone.

When we come to the air force, a similar comparison is even more startling. It has been announced that our program calls for 40 squadrons. During the last war, at its peak, according to official figures which I have been given, the air force had the equivalent of 78 operational squadrons. That figure was reached in 1943. At that time, again according to the official figures, the air force's maximum strength was 209,803. Here, of course, comparisons are perhaps even more difficult to make; but I think that a comparison should be made for the purpose of discussion.

During the last war we had a number of bomber squadrons. I understand that we are to have no heavy bomber squadrons under the program now envisaged, so that one would have to make adjustments for that differential, as a bomber squadron takes a much higher proportion of men than does a fighter squadron. The official air force figures show however that even with the bomber squadrons overseas only approximately one-third of the air force personnel overseas was engaged in bomber activities. We therefore do not need to weight the comparison too heavily as a result of the fact that this time we eliminate the bomber squadrons. On the basis of a straight mathematical comparison, if there were 78 squadrons at the peak of strength, and a total of 209,800 men to maintain that number of squadrons, therefore 40 squadrons—again on a straight mathematical basis—can be said to need 117,000 men. That is for the air force alone.

Let us for the purpose of argument make a heavy cut because there are to be no bomber squadrons under the program that is now envisaged. Suppose you want to take a third off that figure. That still leaves between 75,000 and 80,000 which might be considered as being required to maintain that 40 squadrons, unless we are to say that the use of manpower during the last war was excessively prodigal. There are, of course, other reasons why the comparison must be carefully made. We are going to have only 11

squadrons overseas at this time, whereas a large portion of our effort last time was in Europe.

But, Mr. Chairman, we are committed to keeping 11 squadrons in Europe under this program, and again, since the intention has been announced of rotating army personnel in Europe, I can only presume that, in fairness, the same intention would apply with respect to air force personnel. You are therefore committed to an 11-squadron force in Europe on a rotation basis; so that even if it is necessary to be extremely careful in making your comparison between these figures and the figures of the last war, because of the absence this time of a bomber effort, nevertheless your figures are weighted back again because you are committed to maintaining a substantial part of your force in Europe on a rotational basis.

Taking then the mathematical calculations alone, one would have a figure of some 190,000 men for the army and the air force, on a comparative basis. Giving it then all the care and the weight which must be attached to the fact that our effort is not as all-out at the present time as it was in war-time, nevertheless I think it is quite safe to say that the ceiling of 115,000, if it is not going to be exceeded—and I would certainly think that it will have to be exceeded—would certainly have to be stretched to the limit to maintain the commitments to the extent outlined for the army and air force alone; and the figures that I have given take no account of our naval effort.

In this connection I think we should also consider the physical problem of actual reinforcements. We have to bear in mind the fact that our men are fighting a war in Korea. For international political purposes it may be called police action or it may be called the restraint of aggression. It makes no difference what political name we give to it; to the men on the spot it is a war; and by anyone dealing with the problem of maintaining that force and reinforcing that brigade, it must be dealt with on the basis of a war. One is therefore surely entitled to look, and should do so, at the figures of the last war for some basis of comparison. Official figures for a comparable theatre can be found in the figures of casualties during the Italian campaign during the last war. I think that Italy would be a more comparable theatre than northwest Europe because of the factors of disease and so on, which would be more nearly similar in the case of Italy and Korea than they would be in the case of northwest Europe and Korea.