

Supply—National Defence

Air Force so they can explain why that plane did not suit them, why a plane which was not suitable for them in Viet Nam would nevertheless be suitable for the Canadian air force. The least the minister could do would be to refer these important questions to the Defence Committee which has been given such a high rating by many newspapermen as a body that is doing great work. If the committee were given these questions to consider it could, I am certain, do a lot of good for the Canadian taxpayer and perhaps in the long run for the defence of Canada as well.

Item agreed to.

Defence Services—

15. Operation and maintenance and construction or acquisition of buildings, works, land and major equipment for the Royal Canadian Navy, the Canadian Army, and the Royal Canadian Air Force and \$1,850,000 for grants to the town of Oromocto, \$1,382,244,000.

Mr. Lambert: There are just a few remarks I should like to put on the record together with some figures in connection with purchases of major equipment and the funds provided for this purpose.

We have heard some stories about the trend in the procurement of major equipment for the forces. The minister has told us he is greatly worried about this trend. He is not the first minister to be concerned about it. As a matter of fact, when I went to the Department of National Defence in 1957 this question was exercising the minds of the then minister and of his advisers, the continuing fall in the percentage of moneys which could be allocated to the purchase of new equipment.

I believe the minister was a member of the Defence Committee in 1960 when the minister of defence of that day indicated that, if a sharp reversal did not take place in the foreseeable future, between 1970 and 1975 there would not be one dollar left with which to buy equipment. People worked on this problem. Any effort the minister can make toward this end will, of course, gain him the commendation of the house. But let us not leave anyone under the impression that this is a new-found principle.

Let us examine the figures. I base my comments on the items in the estimates of the present year and past years. In the year 1962-63 the sum of \$309,581,627, was spent by the three services on construction and the procurement of major equipment. In 1963-64 the amount was \$282,448,395. In the estimates for 1964-65, really the first estimates which

the present minister has had completely under his control the amount available was down to \$225,838,000.

In 1965-66, although the expenditure forecast was just under \$140 million for the R.C.A.F. the amount actually spent was something less than \$88 million, and while the total forecast expenditures amounted to \$263,135,000 a study of the actual expenditures shows that only \$211,146,000 was spent. The estimates for 1966-67—I beg the indulgence of the committee for going into the next estimates—show a forecast of \$297,631,000.

• (5:20 p.m.)

These figures show that in 1962-63, when we had a dollar worth at least 10 per cent more than it is now, we spent more money on major procurement for the forces. By and large I would say that the construction side was about the same. I note there is some \$26½ million in construction this year. The minister should tell us what the main projects are on which money has been or is being spent in the year 1965-66. The figures are \$71,500,000 for the navy, \$52,200,000 for the army and \$87,446,000 for the R.C.A.F.

Mr. Hellyer: With respect to procurement for the navy some of the major equipment items involved the construction carried on of the Mackenzie class ships, the St. Laurent class conversions, the Restigouche class conversions, advance equipment for the refit of H.M.C.S. *Bonaventure*, conventional submarines, some advance expenditures on the DDH destroyer helicopters, drawings and engineering testing, mechanical and engineering equipment, some small boats and miscellaneous.

Mr. Lambert: With regard to aircraft there is \$21 million listed.

Mr. Hellyer: Yes. That is practically all for helicopters, the CHSS-2 which is being operated from the ships and which is part of the weapons system.

Mr. Lambert: Does this represent the *Voyageur* or are the *Voyageur* and the *Buffalo* in the future?

Mr. Hellyer: This item does not include the *Voyageur* or the *Buffalo*.

Mr. McCleave: I should like to ask the minister a question arising out of extensive remarks he made regarding minesweeping, as recorded on pages 1562 and 1563 of yesterday's *Hansard*. I take it that what the minister was saying was that the minesweepers