

*Supply—National Defence*

state of affairs in the Department of National Defence with a cloak of generalities.

Listening to the Minister of National Defence I could not help but be reminded of gifts under the tree at Christmas time. They are very beautifully wrapped, with nice colourful ribbons and bows, and on the package are the words "Do not open until Christmas". The only difference between those beautifully wrapped gifts marked in this way under a Christmas tree and the statement of the minister last night is that his beautifully wrapped package on national defence policy and affairs bears the label "Do not open at any time". We are expected to accept this beautiful package, this picture, this wrapping and are not to be given the real facts, the real circumstances, the real answers and the real explanations.

● (12:50 p.m.)

The minister and his staff must have worked very closely on his statement. There is a strange but in my opinion understandable relationship between the speech the minister made last night and a recent talk delivered by one of his assistants, perhaps his chief assistant, in Montreal. I do not know how many members of the House of Commons read the *Montreal Gazette*. I read it every morning. I hope that once those who do read it have read the editorial page they turn to the comic page. If they do they will occasionally find most interesting information. I did yesterday. On that page, three columns away from the comic strips about Mrs. Fitzs, Mary Worth, Little Lulu, Li'l Abner and Steve Roper, there was a report of a speech made in Montreal to the Westmount Rotary Club by one whom I presume speaks with authority, Mr. William Lee, special assistant to the Minister of National Defence. According to this report on the comic page, Mr. Lee outlined the work of a committee which studied all types of conflict Canada might face. The recommendations of this committee led to far reaching changes in the defence structure. Mr. Lee, the special assistant, is a man of knowledge and has a marvellous personality, I know. In the article I find these comments:

It was unanimously agreed that the unlikeliest type of war Canada would face would be an all-out thermonuclear conflict. The possibility of such a holocaust seems remote since it would be useless to all nations. Also in the event it should come about, Canada would play a very minor role in the conflict.

This led defence experts to think of Canada's role in small insurrection wars, with possible escalation to Korean war proportions.

[Mr. Winch.]

We realized that we needed a very mobile and diversified armed force. Integrating our forces seemed like a good answer.

You know, that is quite a statement. Mr. Lee having made that statement in Montreal to the Rotary Club, we then heard the statement by the Minister of National Defence last evening. After comparing the statement by the special assistant with the statement of the Minister of National Defence, I can only come to the conclusion that the minister is trying to go in opposite directions at the same time. That is quite a feat if he can get away with it. In religious circles it is called hell-dodging. You go to a different church every week or every month in the hope you can enter heaven.

This is exactly what the Minister of National Defence is trying to put over in the House of Commons right now. As a matter of fact, he has been doing it very successfully in the past. The Minister of National Defence has been getting away with what I call an attitude of ebullient extrovertism and doing it very successfully. However, he cannot do that in this new parliament of Canada. We want the facts; we want explanations, not generalities. It is most interesting to read what Mr. Lee had to say and then read what the minister said last night in view of a question asked of the Prime Minister on orders of the day today about negotiating our way out of a nuclear role. I take it when that happens, as was promised in the house some three sessions ago, we will renegotiate our position in NATO.

What was the answer just an hour or so ago from the Prime Minister? Our position as a nuclear power, equipped with nuclear weapons, was being renegotiated, and he said that was referred to last night in the statement by the Minister of National Defence. The minister was kind enough when he started speaking to send over to our group a copy of his speech, which he read word for word. I should like to quote from his statement, page 1418 of *Hansard*, as follows:

The introduction of the dual capability for our strike attack squadrons in Europe is continuing and will be complete later this year. At that time our six squadrons in Germany will be fully operational in the non-nuclear attack role as well as in the nuclear strike role.

What happened to that promise some three sessions ago to negotiate ourselves out of the nuclear role? What was the meaning of the Prime Minister's statement in the house today that negotiations were under way, according to the minister's statement? What the minister told us last night was that he was continuing to completion the nuclear operational