

country into a false sense of security. All I am asking the minister and the government to do is to set their house in order before it is too late.

Mr. HOWE: I have listened with a great deal of interest to the speech of the hon. member for Weyburn. I think he again misinterpreted my remarks of yesterday. I was not bitter against the people who want to know; I was bitter against the people who without knowledge make statements that undermine public confidence; all the difference in the world. There is no statement about aircraft production that I am not prepared to make to this committee. I told the committee that; I said I had a confidential report and would lay it on the table, and I do not know any question that can be asked about the aircraft industry in Canada to-day that I am not prepared to answer.

The criticism to-day arises largely from the fact that in the past I have been giving data on aircraft production, perhaps looking further ahead than I should have looked if I had had a more realistic view of what Canadian industry could produce. My hon. friend the leader of the opposition rather chided me for saying on July 10 or 12 that we would be producing a certain number of aircraft a month early this year. On what did I base that statement? I based it on what at that time we planned to produce. We had made a very careful study of the industry; we had gone to see all the plants and said, "What do you need to carry out this programme?" They said, "We need so much floor space." We said, "Very well, we shall have that checked up, and if that appears to be necessary for that production, we will arrange for financial assistance to provide it." We were working then on a campaign which we thought would produce planes at the rate mentioned by the leader of the opposition, I think 360 planes a month. That was all arranged. As I have repeatedly said, the difficulty has been that our plants have not been standing up to their estimated production. For example, we estimated that Fairchild would be producing 30 Bolingbroke bombers a month early this year. I had in mind perhaps March. They are not producing anything like that.

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): What is the reason, lack of material?

Mr. HOWE: It is just lack of ability to produce, as far as I can see. We have had experts there, the best we can get, and they all say they should do better, and they will do better next month. If it were an industry

that had been producing for years—but this is a mushroom industry, we have no background on this industry.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: How about Malton?

Mr. HOWE: They have had all the orders they can fill since this war started. We have had experts there to find out why they are not turning out more planes. They are making a great number of components and some day the planes will come out fast.

Mr. COLDWELL: Does the minister not think that the big labour turnover in Malton is a factor?

Mr. HOWE: Certainly it is. It is a reflection on something.

Mr. COLDWELL: Can the minister tell us why there is such a large turnover?

Mr. HOWE: I cannot. We have been trying without success to find out the reason. In 1936, there was practically no aeroplane industry in Canada; I suppose it was employing less than one thousand men; to-day it is employing twenty thousand.

Mr. MacINNIS: Did the minister approach the employees at Malton to try to get their point of view?

Mr. HOWE: No, I have enough trouble approaching the management.

Mr. MacINNIS: They are an important factor in the industry.

Mr. MacNICOL: Is Federal Aircraft a small plant or a large plant? How many are engaged in it, and where is the plant?

Mr. HOWE: It is a very small operation on Delorimier avenue in Montreal; I suppose they have at the most 250 employees. It is largely a pilot plant; as they design anything they go and build it. It is a check plant for the design, and it has been represented to me that as such it is well worth while. It is carrying out a small manufacturing operation which will be useful in the entire programme; it is a small shop for fuselages and certain parts.

My hon. friend mentioned certain things that I can explain at once. He mentioned that the Boeing plant in Vancouver had to stop manufacturing wings. The reason was, in the original arrangement for the air training plan, Britain was to supply Anson planes less wings, the wings to be built and installed in Canada. We arranged accordingly with the Boeing plant in Vancouver to build the wings. When Britain stopped shipping Anson planes to Canada, there was no place to use the