

Supply—National Defence

of the Liberal members talked to the then Minister of Defence in the British government. He asked him whether Canada would not best serve world peace by having a mobile force and the Minister of Defence in the British government immediately said "Yes, we would love to have you join in a mobile force and help bring about peace in Indonesia". Well, we did not go there. Neither did we go to Viet Nam. The only real effort we made was in Cyprus, and in the statement of the minister when he introduced his estimates he did not even mention Cyprus. One of the speakers in this debate has mentioned that the only real effort we are making today is against the white Rhodesians in Africa, and this is not taking too much of a military effort.

I should like to see more participation in this debate by Social Credit members who are forever showing their interest in expenditures of government, especially wasteful expenditures. I think now is the time for every member of parliament who has the interests of the taxpayer at heart to speak. There are many projects in my constituency, as I am sure there are in the constituency of the hon. member for Red Deer who interjected in this debate, on which I should like to see the government move. But time and again the house has been told by the government: "We are sorry but money is not available".

We were told that money was not available when we asked the government to increase the old age pension to \$100 a month. The big hue and cry raised by the government was that money was not available. Yet in this department we see wasteful expenditures, \$215 million to buy an aeroplane that is not airworthy, \$3.5 million per annum to maintain Bomarc missiles which were practically obsolete when they were built, \$175,000 each to train 500 pilots who were forced into retirement—you can do a little multiplication there, Mr. Chairman—13,000 men voluntarily retired, and now \$65 million to be spent by the government to urge members of the forces to re-enlist. I would ask members on both sides of the house to look at these figures and to ask themselves whether this is value for money spent.

Are we doing what the Canadian taxpayer wants us to do? I am sure that if these expenditures were fully examined and knowledge of them made available to every taxpayer—taxpaying time will be rolling around pretty shortly—every taxpayer who sends in his form at the end of April will say

to himself: One fifth of this tax money will be going to the Department of National Defence which is protecting me from becoming wealthy. That is about the size of it, Mr. Chairman, because any army which moved into Canada today would find no resistance. Our armed forces strength is down to an all-time low. Their morale has completely gone. Its aeroplanes are no longer airworthy. Ships are not manned and the infantry has no manpower either. So where are we? Why are we giving this department one-fifth of the taxpayers' money? I would ask that this information be made available to every Canadian citizen.

If any minister of the present government has failed, has hoodwinked the public and led the public down the garden path, it is this Minister of National Defence. I remember when he stood up in the house and lambasted the then government about the cancellation of the Avro Arrow. He said it was a terrible thing, knowing all the while that it was not and that the decision was made back in 1956. He lambasted the government about nuclear weapons. Now this government is dropping them. He told the public he would save them a fortune with the amalgamation of the three services. Is he saving them a fortune, Mr. Chairman? The last five years' estimates have already been put on record by the hon. member for Calgary North. Some \$1,500 million a year has been spent, only 12 per cent of which going to the procurement of new weapons. So where is the housekeeping saving? It is just not there.

The Deputy Chairman: Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but the time allotted for his speech has expired.

● (5:50 p.m.)

Mr. Pugh: Mr. Chairman, may I introduce a slight change of pace. I want to deal very shortly with a problem that I think is extraordinarily important and which has been going on for a long time and should be cured. I refer to the soldiers' votes in federal elections. I wish to comment first about the ballot itself and, second, about the publication of service votes.

My understanding is that the ballot is secret but because the man's name appears on the sealed envelope containing his ballot men in the armed services feel that their vote is known when they vote. I have talked with a good many of them and they feel that their vote is known. I think we should assure them that we have honest people looking after this