

*The Address—Mr. Pearson*

such that no one knows where the matter stands. I call to witness as impressive evidence of this confusion and, indeed, as one cause of it, the statements of the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Pearkes) himself. Before the estimates committee of this house on July 4, as reported on page 325 of the minutes of that committee, the minister said:

There are, however, important factors necessitating the continued use of manned interceptors in the air defence system for many years, indeed—

And I repeat this:

—indeed for as far as we can see into the future.

Apparently the minister could not see as far as September. Certainly at that time in July before the committee the minister visualized the Royal Canadian Air Force interceptor squadrons on this continent being re-equipped with Arrows, when he said, as reported at page 338 of the minutes of the estimates committee on July 7:

Some time this fall—

That was last fall. I continue:

Some time this fall—

Not March 31, 1959—

—the government must reach a decision as to whether or not it is going to go ahead with the CF-105 or look elsewhere for the type of aircraft which can carry out the function which the CF-105 was developed to carry out. That decision will have to be taken some time this fall.

That is when it should have been taken. I go on:

I am convinced, in my own mind, that we are still faced with the threat of the manned bomber, and that with the developments which we believe the Russians are doing in perfecting, or improving, their manned bombers—we understand that the Russians are building manned bombers—an aircraft of the CF-105 type will be required.

Having just said, I think the day before, as far as he could see into the future it would be required, then for some reason or other the minister's timing and his views both changed. As far as timing is concerned all we know is that nothing has happened. As far as his views are concerned, according to the Vancouver *Province*, the minister told an audience in Chilliwack on October 17—I will be glad to send him the newspaper reference if he would care to have it—that the CF-105—this was only October—had outlived its usefulness before it was fully developed.

There was, however, another double reverse play on November 25 when the minister told reporters that he agreed with the conclusion of Air Marshal Slemmon that the air force would require a manned interceptor for some years to come. That could only mean the CF-105 or an United States machine for which the Canadian plane would be scrapped, and the minister indicated at that time he did

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not think very much of that alternative. Perhaps the minister's change of heart in October and his confusion in the matter go back to the Prime Minister's statement of September 23, which certainly made the minister's observations in July to the parliamentary committee meaningless and misleading. I suggest the Prime Minister have a good look at it.

On this September date the Prime Minister issued an important, if somewhat cloudy, statement on the revision of the Canadian air defence program. Included in that statement was this paragraph:

The government has concluded that missiles should be introduced into the Canadian air defence system and that the number of supersonic interceptor aircraft required for the R.C.A.F. air defence command will be substantially less than could have been foreseen a few years ago,—

And then, these words:

—if in fact such aircraft will be required at all in the 1960's, in view of the rapid strides being made in missiles by both the United States and the U.S.S.R.

The Prime Minister in September said that it was doubtful whether those aircraft will be required at all in the 1960's. The Minister of National Defence told a committee of the House of Commons that they will be required in the future as far as he could see. The Prime Minister's statement went on to say that the government would not put the CF-105 into production at this time but would not discontinue its development—and I quote:

—with the international outlook as uncertain and tense as it is.

It is very hard indeed to believe that this current tense international situation was responsible for such an ambiguous and merely delaying decision, especially as, according to the Prime Minister:

Even under the best of circumstances (the CF-105) will not be available for effective use in squadrons until late in 1961.

That same September statement announced the termination of the contracts for the development of the fire control system and the missile system which were to be part of the CF-105, and announced their replacement by United States equipment.

This September statement, though ambiguous, was widely and naturally interpreted as the end of the CF-105, a lingering death, if you like, but a death. It caused uncertainty, bewilderment, disappointment and the loss of some experts to the United States of America. It also caused the deputy commander of NORAD, an air marshal of the Royal Canadian Air Force, to intervene in November in the matter, in vigorous public defence of the CF-105, and take strong issue with the policy that had certainly been read into the government statement. I wonder what would have