

Fair Shares on the Defense Effort

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Much of the controversy over the Arrow fighter abandonment has shifted, and rightly, to means of finding alternative employment for laid-off Avro and Orenda workers. Here is a large pool of skills of the kind Canada must have if she is to keep any worthwhile foothold in the rapidly expanding scientific and technological fields industry has now entered.

Thinking should not be solely or even mainly in terms of military production, either. That, as we have been drastically reminded, can land us in a jolting let-down even in a period of cold war tension. The same thing would happen if and when a measure of East-West disarmament is eventually agreed. Our sights, therefore, must be set on new lines of production for peaceful purposes. Such production would not only be independent of defense orders but would benefit most from the kind of expenditures a reduction of the arms burden would permit.

The immediate problem is how to tide over this part of our aircraft and related industries and their labor forces until the big shift to other types of production can be planned and phased in. Time must be bought, and one way

to buy it is to have some American—actually Canadian-American—defense orders placed here, with the U.S. footing most of the bill. For every weapon so produced the U.S. would be getting the lion's share of defense insurance, so why should it not pay the lion's share of the premium?

As a member of the free world partnership, Canada has an obligation to contribute to the common defense. But neither by miscalculation, meek acceptance of the monopolistic results of U.S. industry's Washington lobbying for defense work, nor from excess of pride should Canada assume a bigger share of the burden than is properly hers. Yet we have just learned that we are to pay one-third of the cost of Bomarc bases, the new Pinetree warning line and their equipment, while only two-thirds of the cost falls on a neighbor 10 times as populous, many times richer and with far more at stake materially than we have.

A more equitable deal on the joint North American defense effort would provide work quickly for our laid-off technicians while gaining time and freeing funds to further research and expansion in areas less vulnerable to such shocks as the Arrow decision.

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