

Plea Made By Hellyer For Action

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Ottawa, Feb. 23 — Only immediate Federal Government action can prevent a national tragedy as a result of cancellation of the Avro Arrow program, Paul Hellyer (L, Trinity) told the Commons today.

He said the Government and the country were faced with a choice between national development or national disaster.

"The Government has cancelled one great Canadian project," the Liberal defense critic said, "it must present at once some alternative plan if the situation is to be saved."

To Mr. Hellyer the Liberals gave the honor of moving the adjournment of the regular business to debate the crisis created by the Arrow decision.

Prime Minister Diefenbaker, noting that no one has a monopoly in feelings for fellowmen, welcomed the opportunity to discuss the subject.

The debate will be a one-day affair, dying tonight without a vote when the Commons adjourns for the day. But other opportunities are coming, the first of them Thursday, when an external affairs debate is scheduled.

Unfortunately, Mr. Hellyer's speech reads much better in Hansard than it sounded in the Commons. It did not get the debate off to the dramatic start many persons expected.

As the public galleries were filling, someone in the north gallery behind the Speaker shot a paper dart airplane of the kind dear to the heart of schoolboys down into the Commons.

Mr. Hellyer said the problem facing the Government, Parliament and the country is great. Is Canada to grow, prosper, develop and blossom into a great industrial giant or is the clock to be turned back?

"We not only have to talk big and speak of a great vision," he added "but we must act accordingly. Surely the vision of Canada's future is not a vision of our young scientists and engineers marching two by two to the nearest border crossing point."

"Canada is a land of great resources and the greatest of these is the skill of our people. We dream of a great new country. We want to compete with the world and to do so we must have the technological basis on which to build and expand."

Much of the Opposition criticism crystallized around this argument that the Government's decision, without a project to replace the Arrow, would drive irreplaceable scientific and engineering teams into the United States.

Mr. Hellyer said representatives of U.S. firms arrived in Toronto Saturday to start a telephone campaign to sign up the brightest minds on the Avro team.

Ridiculing the new contract worth \$1,700,000 under which Bomarc components will be made in Canada, Mr. Hellyer said Canadians knew how to make tails and wings 20 years ago. And the \$1,700,000 wouldn't pay the unemployment insurance for more than a few days for the people laid off.

Most speakers made much, too, of the fact that today is the 50th anniversary, marked with appropriate ceremonies at Baddeck, N.S., of powered flight in Canada.

Waving the stamp which marks the occasion, Mr. Hellyer recalled that it shows the original Silver Dart and two supersonic jets, similar to the CF-105 Arrow heading for the wild, blue yonder.

If the Government can't save the present critical situation, it should reprint the stamps with

Arrow-like jets diving into the ground, he advised.

The Toronto MP even quoted a speech to be made later today by Labor Minister Starr. Mr. Starr's text of a speech to a convention here emphasized that Canada, of all countries, cannot afford to live in a world where she will not have the skill and technological know-how to hold on to what she has.

Young Canadians since the Second World War, he said, have found it fashionable to stay in Canada instead of flocking to the United States. They want desperately to stay in their own country, Mr. Hellyer said, but they have to live and they have to have opportunities to create and develop.

"Are we now going to pull the plug again?" he asked.

He said workers in Canada's defense industries couldn't be expected to live in a state of uncertainty, from week to week or month to month never knowing when their jobs would be pulled from under them.

The Government had often spoke glowingly of the need for secondary industry, Mr. Hellyer recalled. But it put the electronics industry in jeopardy just when it was beginning to compete in world markets.

And Canada can't compete in the world unless it holds the people required to develop new products, people with skills which cannot be built up overnight.

He cited hardship cases of which he has personal knowledge, cases created by the Arrow decision.

"One man came out from England with his two children aged 12 and 14," he said. "He has a house on which he pays \$90 a month on the first mortgage and \$35 a month on the second."

"He has a car on which he pays \$100 a month. His gas bill amounts to \$22 a month; his telephone bill \$5 and his light bill \$8. How can he possibly prevent personal tragedy by drawing unemployment insurance?"

From the Conservative rump benches just behind him came an interjection: "He will simply have to sell his car."

Mr. Hellyer: "An honorable gentleman has commented that he will just lose his car."

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Joseph Habel (L, Cochrane): "He will lose everything."

Mr. Hellyer: "He will indeed lose everything and the honor-

able gentleman who first interjected made it sound a matter of no account."

For the 12,000 to 14,000 Avro families and the additional 10,000 to 20,000 families affected by layoffs in allied industries, the Government decision was cruel, heartless and incredibly shortsighted, he said.

Mr. Hellyer said the Government seemed to be flying in the face of experts who believe the inventory of Russian bombers to be greater now than ever and who believe the Russians will have between 1,000 and 2,000 bombers capable of hitting targets in North America even in the mid-1960s when Mr.

Diefenbaker said Friday, the missile will become the major threat.

The opposition military critic said the Commons should know more about the Bomarc which the Government is favoring over the Arrow. Will it give Canada some semblance of security or can Russian bombers fly around them, over them or under and, by jamming their electronic control gear, through them?

Who is right, he asked, on the need for manned interceptors, the Government or the experts?

He noted the Conservative Government had scrapped the CF-100 Mark VI which had been designed to bridge the gap between current aircraft on the CF-105.

Mr. Hellyer also questioned Mr. Diefenbaker's cost figures for the arrow suggesting they looked as if they had been picked from a hat.

The Government should have negotiated replacement contracts with the United States before cancelling the Arrow work, he continued. The Administration should have consulted the company; tried to work out some replacement work to salvage the billions of dollars investment in plant and technical skills.

Had there been consultation an infinite variety of possibilities could have emerged. To Mr. Diefenbaker's questions, he suggested that NATO countries might have bought the Arrow after its full abilities had been demonstrated in squadron service. He suggested some Arrows might have been traded to Britain for nuclear submarines bolstering both countries' defenses.

Mr. Diefenbaker said there was no chance of selling the Arrow to NATO countries.

He also questioned Mr. Hellyer about cancellation of the contracts for the USAF's F-106. But the Liberal MP said this aircraft, compared to the CF-105 was like comparing a horse and buggy and a car. They weren't designed to do the same job at all.

Consultation with the company could have produced, he suggested, orderly slowdown and discharge of the workers. The possibility of building new aircraft for the air division overseas could have been considered. Manufacture of missiles and other defense equipment could have eased the impact.

"Surely," he said, "the Government has been considering these questions for 18 months. Has it reached any positive decisions yet? If not, why not?"