

\$1,775,000,000 for defense but where are we going?

NOWHERE AMONG NATO nations does defense bumble along in such a purposeless manner as in Canada. Surely if there is no real need for defense the spending of \$1,775 millions is almost a crime at the expense of the taxpayer.

For nowhere in the latest White Paper does Defense Minister Campney even attempt to crystallize policy, the threats facing Canada, the defense commitments and the degree of readiness and efficiency of our armed forces.

The lack of such explanations would lead one to believe that a great hoax is being perpetrated at the expense of the Canadian people. And this line of thinking is being given solid and most vocal support by certain retired military leaders who question the fantastically expensive DEW and Mid-Canada early warning radar lines, the purpose of the CF-100 and the CF-105, the lack of conscription and decision.

Can the accusations of these generals be true? Only silence meets their accusations. Is it a silence of security or is it a cloak of secrecy covering indecision, confusion and ineptness?

The Defense Minister has allowed the public to know that the bulk of releases from the RCAF continue to be non-voluntary "largely for reasons of inefficiency and unsuitability for further employment or training." After how much training and how many years of service is a man deemed inefficient? Or is this just a polite way of saying there's no room for advancement?

Is this the inefficiency which has resulted in the RCAF being unable to meet

its NATO CF-100 commitment? Or was this at a higher level?

After many semi-public pronouncements we are finally told that Canada is to build the Sparrow air-to-air missile. No doubt the many millions spent on the Velvet Glove program are not completely written off. But how long before the new missiles are in production and in service?

So far no contracts have been let on the Sparrow, yet it's in service already with the U. S. Navy and the Falcon air-to-air missile has been in service for some time with the USAF's CF-100 counterpart the F-89H. Is this another program of too little, too late or too old?

If four of the RCAF's Sabre squadrons are to be recalled from Europe and be replaced with CF-100s, what is the purpose of the remaining Sabre squadrons. What is their future? Former Defense Minister Claxton termed them "not well suited for the air defense of Canada."

What effective North American defense is there today in a mere handful of CF-100 squadrons which have neither the missile armament or speed of the superior USAF equipment of which even American staff chiefs are publicly critical.

The USAF has abandoned the requirement for a supersonic long range all-weather interceptor while the CF-105 has yet to be born, yet almost \$100 millions has been spent on designing and tooling for the project

The taxpayer could well recommend that if the Government doesn't know where it's going on defense it take the \$1,775,000,000 and put it toward national health, education and highway projects.