

Supply—National Defence

a substantial extent. If we are going to have efficient and effective armed forces, we must retain unit spirit; we must retain opportunity for promotion; we must retain opportunity for competition. Otherwise I am afraid the Canadian armed forces are going to decline in efficiency, to degenerate in effectiveness, rather than move forward along the lines that were first contemplated when Hon. George Pearkes set this machinery in operation.

Mr. Brand: I have just a few remarks to make, Mr. Chairman, particularly with regard to the morale problem in the armed services. My comments are not made as a result of information I have received from various assistants. I am speaking now at the request of many members of the armed forces who have approached me personally and expressed their concern about the way things were going in the armed forces today. They themselves offered to me what I thought might be solutions to these problems. If I may be presumptuous, perhaps I could suggest to the minister what the solutions might be.

Primarily, I should like to refer to jet pilots in the Royal Canadian Air Force. I placed question No. 419 on the order paper, which read as follows:

What are the numbers of R.C.A.F. jet pilots under the age of 28, who have retired voluntarily from the R.C.A.F. in each of the following years—

The years mentioned were 1957 to 1965. I think the figures are most interesting. You will notice that in the year 1957, only 4 retired. In the following years there were 3, 1, 8, 7, 6 and 8. In the year 1964, there were 26 who retired. These are highly trained specialized members of the Royal Canadian Air Force who retired voluntarily. They are young men, still under the age of 28. In the year 1965 there were 27 who retired voluntarily. There must be a reason for this. The reason they retire under the age of 28 is that in order to get a job in civilian aviation in the United States, where most of them have gone, they have to be under the age of 28.

I spoke to many of these pilots and asked them why they were leaving the Royal Canadian Air Force. The first thing they said was they liked the Royal Canadian Air Force; they enjoyed the life. However, they were concerned about the security of their tenure. Many pilots had been retired by the minister, at the minister's orders, as I understand. These pilots wondered whether they could get

[Mr. Dinsdale.]

a permanent commission in the force. They never received a positive answer. They did not know whether they were still going to be pilots when they were in their thirties.

If they were let out of the air force when they were in their thirties, what would happen? They would be out in civilian life with no job, and there would be no job for which they were qualified. They would be too old to go into the field of flying passengers for large air lines, unless they were exceptional. The average man is just too old for this work. He has had tremendous training which I understand costs, if I heard the minister correctly, between \$200,000 and \$250,000. If we lose to the United States 26 pilots, each of whom was trained at this cost, then we have lost \$7½ million or more to the United States.

When I heard that they did not have training which they could use in civilian life, I asked these pilots what they felt should be done. They had what I thought was a very good solution. They suggested that perhaps their training could be tied to a university, which it most certainly is in the type of work they do in the aeronautical engineering field, and while they were training with the air force they could receive a degree from some affiliated university.

Then, if these men were retired at an early age from the R.C.A.F. they would have a degree with which they could approach prospective employers and obtain a job in this manner. There is a precedence for this in the armed forces colleges which grant degrees in engineering and so on. I feel the idea has some merit, Mr. Minister, and I should like the ministry to look into this matter, and particularly to discuss it with the men who are thinking of leaving. Perhaps these discussions would be most revealing.

When I heard the associate minister refer to the increased number of voluntary releases over the past few years from all the forces, and attribute this to increasing opportunities for employment in the country, I began to wonder if that was not more the type of statement a person would make on the hustings before an election campaign. It seems to me that directly tied with that statement is the opposite one that by virtue of their training they are unable to get employment in civilian life.

Today we heard the associate minister say there are increased re-employment opportunities. I have talked to members of the Royal Canadian Navy and the Army and I have