

National Defence Act Amendment

of National Defence says that it will be a great thing for Canada, that it will create a force to serve Canada in the future.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Chatterton: Why do hon. members opposite not support the minister and make a speech? Are they afraid?

An hon. Member: Let us bring it to a vote.

Mr. Chatterton: They are trained seals. Why does the Prime Minister not make a speech?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Let us take a vote and then we will find out who has support.

Mr. Chatterton: That is the old, arrogant attitude of the minister—we know we are right so let us vote. That has been the attitude of the hon. member for Victoria (B.C.) as well as the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra. Why does the Prime Minister not stand up and say where he stands?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Let us vote on the matter; that is the attitude of democracy.

Mr. Chatterton: Surely this house is entitled to hear from the Prime Minister of Canada—

Some hon. Members: Time up.

Mr. Chatterton:—and leader of the government as to where he stands on the question of unification, a matter which a great number of people in this country feel could affect the very future and sovereignty of this nation. Why is the Prime Minister not in the house listening to the speeches? May I call it six o'clock.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Chairman: Order. I would ask hon. members for their customary indulgence, so that I may read the different questions to be debated at the time of adjournment tonight.

It is my duty, pursuant to provisional standing order 39A, to inform the house that the questions to be debated at the time of adjournment tonight are as follows: the hon. member for Villeneuve (Mr. Caouette): Public buildings—Ottawa—inquiry as to contracts for demolition; the hon. member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow): Housing—inquiry as to possibility of meeting economic council

target; the hon. member for Charlevoix: discontinuance of passenger service between Quebec and La Malbaie.

[*English*]

Mr. Sherman: Mr. Chairman, my constituency could not be described as a military constituency or one that has a direct economic interest in the ramifications of the bill under consideration at the present time, but I should like to participate at this point in the debate to emphasize one or two matters that I think are important. I also wish to prevail upon the indulgence of the committee in order to move into an allied area and say one or two things which I think are of equal importance.

With respect to the unification aspect of the present bill, if the various regiments and corps of the army are intended to survive the unification procedure I wonder whether it is possible to make the assumption or to reach the conclusion that the mere disappearance of the army as a service will not make much practical difference to those serving in it. The permanent nature of the army's subdivisions, corps and regiments means that a soldier's first loyalty is to that subdivision to which he belongs—his corps or regiment. His loyalty is there, and this is why soldiers have been known to attempt every trick and to use any procedure in the book to avoid being posted to another unit.

However, I suggest that the disappearance of the navy and the air force as separate entities compares with the disappearance of the army as a separate totality is a very different matter. Sailors and airmen are going to be deprived of a permanent institution to which they feel a loyalty of their own. If this were the case with the army it might be possible in the end to overcome this weakness by building up a single loyalty on the part of all three services to the new combined service that is proposed. However, one questions the possibility and the likelihood of that being done if the individual corps, regiments and units of the army continue to exist. The soldiers will continue to have a sense of belonging to the artillery, the Black Watch, the Royal Engineers and so on, and within these groups they will feel at home. The sailors and the airmen will have nowhere to feel at home; they will be permanent outsiders and their morale is bound to suffer.

● (6:00 p.m.)

This could be avoided, theoretically, by widening the army's corps structure to include all three services. Thus, all gunners