

National Defence Act Amendment

great deal of responsibility at top level for the working out of policy in this field. I should like to deal first with what he had to say about the roles. At page 1323 I put the following question to him:

May I put it to you this way: As I understand it, it is your view that unification of the services makes no sense as long as we continue with the roles that we have at the present time.

Mr. Moncel replied: "That is right". The evidence continues:

Mr. Brewin: For example, if I may draw you out with a few examples, if you have an army brigade group in Europe as it is now integration is meaningless or, indeed, harmful, because it creates disturbance in that it does not make any useful contribution to what we are doing in our brigade group now?

Mr. Moncel: Not "integration".

Mr. Brewin: I meant to say "unification". I am sorry.

Mr. Moncel: Yes. Who are you going to unify it with?

Mr. Brewin: Precisely; and is not the same true of the air division?

Mr. Moncel: Precisely.

Mr. Brewin: I suppose one could go through some of the other roles. The anti-submarine role of the navy—how are you going to integrate that when it is basically a naval role?

Mr. Moncel: That is right. I just do not know the answer to it. This is why I fault it here.

Mr. Brewin: But I understand you also to say that if for various reasons, partly political and partly military, you decide that it is necessary to concentrate on this sort of intervention force then unification begins to make some sense?

Mr. Moncel: Yes.

Mr. Brewin: Therefore, the real choice that we have to make, as a nation, and that we are responsible for making in Parliament, in the matter of making sense out of unification, is whether we are going to continue the roles that we have or concentrate on this mobile intervention force?

Mr. Moncel: Yes.

I went on to deal with the question of his own view, that it would be a risk to switch to a single force. Then at page 1324 we find the following:

Mr. Brewin: May I go back to this question of the different roles? Would you agree, General Moncel—in fact, I think you already have—that this—

That is the choice of roles.

—is partly a political consideration.

Mr. Moncel: Entirely a political consideration.

In my view, Mr. Chairman, this reveals the essence of the matter which is facing the house today. General Moncel put his finger on precisely the real issue. However much it may be obscured by the discussion of unification, the real issue is that unification makes

sense if the concentration is to be on a single mobile force which will be available for peacekeeping and other activities, but if the present roles are to be continued then it does not make sense.

We do not find fault with the government because we oppose unification; we do not oppose it. We think unification is a forward looking and wise policy. However, we believe it is a forward looking and wise policy only if the logical base for it is established, namely the roles which are appropriate to Canada's position in the mid 1960's and 1970's, and not those roles which may have been appropriate in the late 1940's or 1950's. This is precisely the point which has been ignored by the minister. In ignoring it, in my opinion, he destroys the real basis upon which he could appeal to the country and to the members of the armed services themselves and obtain their wholehearted support for unification.

General Moncel said something else which I think the minister prefers to brush aside as easily as he can. General Moncel said—and I am paraphrasing his evidence but I believe I am doing so accurately—that if we were to build up a truly mobile force an added expense would be involved. I should like to read from the evidence at page 1322:

Mr. Brewin: General Moncel, I wanted to ask you to elaborate a little on the White Paper. I think you said that it had two major defects, as you saw it, and I wonder if I understood at least one of them, correctly. The White Paper contemplated the maintenance of the existing commitments that Canada was involved in, or, the existing roles—I think that is a better word than "commitments". "Commitments" implies that you have agreed to do it indefinitely; a "role" is something that you are doing. Now, as I understand it, the White Paper proposed the maintenance of a series of existing commitments—the brigade, the air division, the anti-submarine forces, the air defence, and so on; and it proposed continuing those without any apparent change and certainly with no early, or definite change. It also proposed, as I understand it, the creation of a mobile force, this intervention force, or whatever you want to call it.

Do I correctly understand you to say that if we are going to do all of these things this would involve a budget in excess of two billion dollars a year?

Mr. Moncel: Yes, sir.

Mr. Brewin: So that if you are going to accept a ceiling on the budget of, say, what we have now, which is approximately \$1.5 billion, something has to give?

Mr. Moncel: Precisely.

● (6:40 p.m.)

Mr. Brewin: You have to make a choice on whether you are going to expand your mobile role or cut out some of the other roles. Is that correct?

Mr. Moncel: Yes. This is the alternative.