

Supply—National Defence

Mr. Churchill: Why not build on the foundation that you have, rather than try to change everything? If it is change for the better, fine; but if it is just change for the sake of change then that is stupid and silly, and I am afraid the minister is going along that path.

He uses these big words—integration and unification. We had unification in the second world war. Combined operations—what was it other than unification—the navy, army and air force working together under one commander? How many examples do you require of combined operations, which is unification of fighting forces? You don't have to put everybody in the same uniform. They will work together without that, as they have shown in the past.

• (9:50 p.m.)

Mr. Peters: Mr. Chairman, I had no intention of speaking during this debate until I heard the minister's speech tonight. I think something should be said about some of the remarks he made, and that the Canadian public should be told the truth, which has not been done very often in the matter of defence. They have a right to know whether or not their sons, and daughters in some cases, who go into the services will get a fair break, and whether or not they have been getting a fair break.

The minister said a number of things tonight that I think are not accurate. First, we have not really reduced expenditures for defence. For this year the amount is up approximately \$24 million, and for the 1966-67 year, the estimates for which I hope will come before us shortly, the amount is up \$11 million. Surely these represent increases.

It is also a fact that we do not have enough soldiers at this time to make up a fighting force. We heard some talk of supplying a group of soldiers—whatever you call 10,000 soldiers, and I was in the air force so I am not familiar with these army designations—but I understand it is impossible to accumulate 14,000 to make up a division, with its reserve forces. If that is true, why in hell are we spending one and a half billion dollars? I am not sure that we should not make a greater reduction in this regard—after all we are enjoying a peacetime period.

It has been generally agreed across this country that Canada should play a peace keeping role. Certainly the Prime Minister has highlighted this fact over the years. We should have a peace keeping force that is mobile, integrated and able to travel to any

[Mr. Hellyer.]

part of the world, composed of men trained and equipped as well as any force in the world; but apparently this is not possible. Certainly we are not doing that. It is true that we have well trained personnel, but we do not have them in quantity to provide a peace keeping force. Because of the small foot we have in the door of NATO we have a few outdated ships, aircraft that are obsolete and early warning systems that are being closed down before we have paid for them.

In this country we really have not got any defence at all and the general public should be made aware of the fact. I am in complete agreement with the minister that he has done a number of worth-while things, but I am not convinced that integration, putting all service personnel into the same uniform, is the answer. I certainly think it is time that we did something about over-staffing at the top, and I think probably we should do a great deal more in that respect.

I agree with the remarks of the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre who said that the minister is not a rubber stamp. It is also fair that we warn the minister that it is not good enough for him to look to the rabble behind him who thump their desks at every opportunity. It is unwise for the minister to seek support for the acceptance of his new policies in the fact that the service vote went mostly Liberal. I have a friend who was a scrutineer in connection with the service vote during the last election. It would be very interesting to have one or two of those scrutineers appear before a committee to find out exactly what happened with respect to the service vote. I suggest that the minister and a great many members of this house would probably be shocked as soon as this information came to light.

Mr. Nielsen: I doubt it.

Mr. Peters: I give a certain number of members credit for not knowing the facts in this regard. I am sure they would not respond to the minister's remarks in the way they do when he speaks about the morale of the services if they knew the facts. When you have a dictatorship and there is only one name on the ballot, if you are going to vote at all you vote for the person named. I do not think the minister should take too much credit or place too much reliance on that majority of Liberal servicemen's vote, when talking of the acceptance of his integration policy. He should not use that support in his attempt to obtain the leadership of the Liberal Party, which would probably mean the