

National Defence Act Amendment

Paris for discussions with our allies. There was so much work involved in this first effort to establish a collective defence alliance in peacetime that the government decided to appoint a permanent chairman, chiefs of staff. This relieved me of responsibility for the army and Lieutenant General Guy Simonds became C.G.S. But it didn't give me any direct authority over the chiefs of staff. They remained directly responsible to the minister, Mr. Claxton. I was expected to rely on my powers of persuasion to "co-ordinate" the services.

This led almost immediately to a critical dispute about the stationing of our army brigade group in Germany. We easily reached agreement that our air division in Europe should be stationed in the U.S. zone and supplied by the U.S. supply system. But General Simonds insisted that the army brigade group should be stationed with the British forces and get its supplies through them. All the rest of us in the chiefs of staff committee believed that the brigade should be near the R.C.A.F. contingents and that they should both be supplied through U.S. channels. This would have been more reliable and certainly more economical. But General Simonds took his stand on tradition and sentiment, and his plan was adopted.

General Simonds insisted on going to negotiate himself with the war office in London. He got an assurance of British support, but there was no written agreement of it and no details were spelled out. Within a few years the U.K.'s financial troubles and shortage of manpower landed us all in difficulties. Its supply system fell below NATO standards; the brigade group was affected; NATO authorities asked Canada to augment the inadequate British supply system. In short, the arrangement never was satisfactory: It still leads to friction and uncertainty. But it just shows what can happen when one service is allowed to follow its own desires instead of doing what is best for the overall defence effort.

We need one single armed service, under one supreme chief of staff, in one uniform. We need to organize our armed forces in the form of task forces designed for their particular jobs—at home or off the coasts or in Europe or with the United Nations. They should each be given the strength they need for their particular job at a given time. They would have no fixed establishment with rigid ladders of promotion, as the three services have now. They would all come under one system of administration. By this means—and only by this means. I believe—the taxpayers' legitimate complaints of extravagance, duplication and waste can be removed and Canada can start to get real value for its defence budget.

Mr. Dinsdale: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. McNulty: Certainly.

Mr. Dinsdale: I wonder whether the hon. member has read the most recent statement of General Foulkes on the question of unification, which appeared last year in the *Ottawa Journal* under the heading, "General Foulkes asks where integration went wrong." He seems to have changed his mind considerably since that 1961 article.

[Mr. McNulty.]

Mr. McNulty: I did read that article, and I think the hon. member for Brandon-Souris (Mr. Dinsdale) and myself would be very pleased to have General Foulkes as the first witness before the defence committee as soon as we can get this bill through the house and into the committee.

An hon. Member: No, we want the minister first.

Mr. McNulty: Members of the house have discussed at some length this particular issue in regard to our national defence policy. During the interim supply debate from October 31 to November 15, 1966, there were 204,641 words spoken and recorded on 241 pages of *Hansard*. Certainly this is not a surprise measure. The government announcement to reorganize the Canadian armed forces was made on March 20, 1964. I quote from page 19 of the white paper on defence:

Following the most careful and thoughtful consideration, the government has decided that there is only one adequate solution. It is the integration of the armed forces of Canada under a single chief of defence staff and a single defence staff. This will be the first step toward a single unified defence force for Canada.

That passage in the white paper has been quoted before. Members of parliament have thoroughly discussed this subject and the special and standing committees on defence have had 81 meetings, where in 2,300 pages of committee evidence were recorded the thoughts, advice, reports and criticism of 103 witnesses, retired and serving officers, civilians, and so on. The Minister of National Defence has been accused of not giving sufficient information to the house regarding unification. The facts refute this accusation. The minister of National Defence or the associate minister appeared before the committee on 63 occasions. The minister himself answered 857 questions.

Mr. Churchill: How many dealt with unification?

Mr. McNulty: More information on defence has been provided to parliament through committees in the past three years than at any other time in the history of Canada. I appeal to all members of the house to give this bill second reading and move it into the defence committee where we can hear expert witnesses, some against and some for unification of the armed forces, where we may question, probe and seek the advice of top military and civilian personnel.