

National Defence Act Amendment

the word "quarrel", with those who oppose this bill. Let no one misunderstand the motives which have prompted the opposition. We have two genuine points of view and for the moment they appear to be irreconcilable. This situation is not new to parliament. Sooner or later we have to make a decision on this bill and then get on with the job at hand.

I have purposely refrained, Mr. Speaker, from entering into the subject of the debate because, as chairman of the defence committee, I feel it is my most important duty, if this bill ever does come before us, to help resolve the differences during the clause by clause study in committee. I have a duty to see to it, within that framework, that when the unification bill is returned to the house it contains all the essential safeguards necessary from the point of view of both the serviceman and the national interest. I have the duty to see that it reflects to the greatest degree possible a balance of the opinions and experience of the members of the committee.

I happen, of course, to support the government strongly on the principle of the bill, which is all that is before us now. This is a matter, as I have said, of personal judgment. For the reasons I have outlined, and in particular in the interests of the services, I urge the house to rise and shine, to use a service expression, and take a vote on this matter as quickly as possible. We should either get this bill approved in principle or get a new government. If the bill is approved, then our task is to get our heads together and, using all our intelligence, skill and experience but in particular all our good will, to do what is expected to us in committee by making this the best possible bill to meet our nation's needs.

Mr. M. W. Martin (Timmins): First of all, Mr. Speaker, may I be permitted to congratulate the hon. member who has just resumed his seat upon the manner in which he made his speech, although I cannot agree with the content of it. I hope the minister was listening closely and will take the attitude of the hon. member as an example. I am sure if he did so he would expedite the passage of this bill through this house.

In so far as the major principle of the bill is concerned, I can do no better than to endorse heartily the excellent speech delivered by the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. Winch) yesterday. Rather than repeat the remarks made by that hon. member, I think my time might be better spent in trying to give some advice to the minister, for whom I used to have a great deal of admiration. I had a

[Mr. Groos.]

great deal of sympathy with the alleged objectives of his integration bill as it was introduced in the house and publicized across the country.

I think back, Mr. Speaker, to the first time I saw the minister and that goes back some years now, long before I was a member of this house. I recall that at that time the minister was a very youthful, newly appointed associate minister of national defence. He was being heralded as the young, white hope of the Liberal party. He was particularly heralded because he was the first minister the Liberals had appointed from the city of Toronto in many years. Mind you, Mr. Speaker, there was no lack of qualified members from that particular region. I recall a very distinguished member of the other place who was a Liberal member in this house for a number of years. Almost everyone in Ontario wondered why he was not chosen to fill a cabinet post. Possibly the major reason was the fact he was a little hard to handle. I recall that when he was a cabinet minister in the Ontario government they tried to push him around so he promptly resigned his cabinet post. The federal Liberals did not want the same thing to occur again. Finally they decided that the best thing to do was to try to bury him in the other place. This move was not really successful because today he is one of the most vociferous and hardest working members of that chamber.

I recall having breakfast on many occasions with the present minister back in the days when he was a member of the opposition. I remember the many discussions we had at that time. I must say that the first impression I had of the minister continued for some time. I recall the night he was called in as a last minute replacement for a guest speaker and created a tremendous impression. After all, he was young, he had stature and good looks and he did make a very good impression.

I believe this impression started to fade at the time we attended the NATO conference. I thought at that time that the minister, then a member of the opposition, made use of his position for purely partisan purposes and did not really play the game the way one might expect. Of course, the reason is easily understood. The minister was ambitious. Now his ambition has been partially fulfilled at least by his appointment as Minister of National Defence. I might say that at the time he embarked on the program of integration, which has somehow become unification, he