

Mr. CLARENCE GILLIS (Cape Breton South): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggarr (Mr. Coldwell) and the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) have placed before the house the opinions of this group with respect to social security and most of the other matters arising out of the speech from the throne, but there are a few observations which I should like to make.

First, I want to join with those who have preceded me in paying tribute to the two members who moved and seconded the address. They made excellent speeches. There is, however, something I wish to point out in that connection. It arises from the statement which was made particularly by the hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Gershaw) and others that the mover (Mr. Harris) and the seconder (Mr. Hallé) of the address represented in this house the armed forces. I do not think that statement is correct, and I draw attention to it advisedly. Both these hon. gentlemen were elected by constituencies in Canada and sent to this house to represent their respective constituencies. They became members of the armed forces later on, and to classify them as giving voice to the opinions of the armed forces is not correct, for they have no mandate to speak for the armed forces and can express only their own opinions; and being members of the government party they are morally obligated to express the opinions of the government on any matters pertaining to the armed forces. I say that not because of any antagonism to these two members themselves. I listened to their speeches and heard them eulogize—and rightly so—the educational programme which the government is carrying on in the armed forces. They also drew attention to many other matters which were favourable to the government.

I know that the members of the armed forces both in Canada and Great Britain have definite opinions upon the question, for instance, of rehabilitation, and they have definite grievances with respect to legislation now in existence and affecting them at the present time. The members of the armed forces cannot be represented in this house unless the government is prepared to change the elections act to permit the armed forces both overseas and in Canada to nominate and elect their own candidates to this house, with a mandate from the armed forces on matters pertaining to them and their future. Until such time as that is done, I do not think anyone has the right to create the impression, consciously or unconsciously, that some particular member or members exclusively represent in this house the armed forces. We pay

[Mr. G. K. Fraser.]

tribute to those two members themselves for the fact that they are in uniform and recognize the fact that a greater contribution to winning the war is necessary than merely lip-service. They have demonstrated that they are prepared to make their maximum contribution to winning the war.

I have taken this position, Mr. Speaker, and I have taken it advisedly. If I am elected to represent a constituency in this house, that is a big job at the present time, and any member who comes here and tries to do that job is going to have to work at least sixteen hours a day. On the other hand, if I feel that my maximum contribution can be made in the armed forces and I decide that that is where I am going, that is a full-time job also, and anyone who undertakes to do the two jobs can do neither one of them well. With all due respect to those who are in uniform, I think a decision should be made one way or the other as to whether they belong here or in the service, because no man can do both jobs. It is done in England, some will say. It is all right in England, because the armed forces in Britain are in the front line, and when you are in London or in any other part of England you are at the front.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): Many members of the armed forces are in the British house every day.

Mr. MITCHELL: The hon. member for Cape Breton South would not suggest that these two hon. gentlemen should resign their seats in this house?

Mr. GILLIS: That is entirely up to themselves. I am merely pointing out that either one of these jobs is a full-time job, and when you try to do both one of them suffers. I know this statement may not be popular, but I make it in passing and I am not particularly anxious whether it is popular or not, if it is correct. I think it is correct, and I am prepared to make it. I do not intend to allow anyone to create the impression that certain things are being done that are not being done. Definitely, the forces require direct representation in this house; and as far as this group is concerned, it is prepared to give it to them. I would welcome in this chamber men, who I know have definite ideas with respect to the future and the things they are fighting for, sent back after a free election, to put forward their programme. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, from conversations and correspondence I have had with them, that we of this party would see eye-to-eye with them on almost everything. Until that is done, the illusion is not going to be created that the