

*National Defence Act Amendment*

Hon. members will remember that a certain piece of evidence of one of the senior officers in the army was tampered with to meet the current needs. How can the minister be surprised now to see that we do not accept all he tells us without reservation? Furthermore, he accused an admiral, Admiral Landymore, of having betrayed his country. He accused him of treason and then presented his excuses. Nevertheless, he has left this admiral, a high ranking military officer who gave his best for many years, under a cloud—that of treason. How can the minister today be surprised to see that we do not accept all he tells us without reservation? It seems logical to me that we should ask ourselves whether he tells us the truth. We are justified in adopting this position by recent events.

Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that the minister has no reason to think that we are acting otherwise than according to our conscience.

We heard him say the other day that he was trying to carry this plan into effect because he was convinced that this was in the best interest of the country.

• (9:30 p.m.)

On the other hand, on the basis of the evidence given by experts, by people who know our armed forces, we are convinced of fully performing our duty by refusing to let the bill pass before we get all the required evidence or information.

There are, in my riding, people who occupy very enviable positions in society—I am speaking of lawyers, even judges—who held high ranks in the armed forces during the last war. All those with whom I have discussed unification unanimously agreed that some degree of integration, of unification can take place, for instance, with regard to medical, legal, supply, mechanical repair services, etc. However, as far as the air force, the army and the navy are concerned, they think that those who served in the armed forces generally believe in keeping their own identity.

It is in the light of this information, Mr. Chairman, that I urge the minister to reconsider his position, because I think he is going astray.

Every year, I take part in the ceremonies on Armistice Day, November 11. We find in those ceremonies the evidence that servicemen prize the uniform in which they served. In fact, very few are those who do not wear their uniform for those ceremonies on November

11. It is noticeable how sailors stick together, as do infantrymen and the other members of the armed forces, while the airforce boys join together to share memories on feats of arms when they were at the front.

Mr. Chairman, our soldiers do care, even in peace time, for the uniforms in which they served. This means that the minister does not recognize, or want to recognize the requests of those who served in our armed forces, that he still insists on getting them all to wear the same uniform, to gratify his own wishes, his own ego. To my mind, there is no other explanation for his attitude.

I am surprised, Mr. Chairman, at the reluctance of the Liberals, mainly those from Quebec, to take part in this discussion and to raise objections, particularly with regard to clause 6 of Bill No. C-243, for this clause is the equivalent of conscription. After seeing the Liberals make their campaigns on the conscription issue for 25 years, it is odd to see to what degree they remain silent on a matter they talked so much about, to scare the people.

However, after thinking it over, Mr. Chairman, there is practically no reason for being surprised, if for instance one goes over the position taken by the hon. members opposite during the 1962 and 1963 election campaigns when they went around the province of Quebec in particular promising their constituents that they would oppose nuclear weapons.

Yet, only a few months after their coming to power, we saw them rise to a man to indicate that they were in favour of nuclear weapons which they had denounced so vigorously during the election campaign.

But they had been elected. They had what they were looking for: power. And when they are in office, their attitude is somewhat different from what it is when they sit in opposition or during an election campaign.

It may also be advisable to remind my friends opposite that in 1942, they devised that plebiscite in order to evade their obligations. Because, as you surely remember, Mr. Chairman, some people claimed to be strongly opposed to conscription in the province of Quebec.

You also remember that during the campaign preceding the plebiscite, the fathers of my good friends opposite, at least some of them, campaigned for the negative side in the province of Quebec, whereas in the rest of the country, other Liberals were campaigning for the other side.