

THE NATIONAL DEFENCE COLLEGE

The conception of a college to be attended by senior officers both of the armed services and the civil service was a bold one when the National Defence College was established in Kingston, Ontario, in 1947. Since that time five classes of students have spent approximately a year each in the College attending lectures and considering together in syndicates and discussions the problems of defence. Defence, for this purpose, is taken in its broadest sense to include, besides military tactics and strategy, questions of economics, politics, diplomacy, and ideology. When the College was founded, similar institutions already existed in London and Washington; but none had been established in countries of Canada's stature, and there was some doubt whether the relatively small and hard-pressed military and civil services of Canada would be able to support an ambitious institution of this kind, even though the numbers at the College were restricted to thirty. Nearly a hundred and fifty graduates of the College in Ottawa and elsewhere in Canada, as well as in Canadian military and diplomatic establishments abroad, are beneficially perpetuating the collaboration they first experienced at N.D.C. or are otherwise exploiting, in their respective spheres of government activity, their increased understanding of various phases of Canadian and international problems. In an emergency this increasing pool of persons trained for defence planning would be available. The results so far make it clear that the experiment has been successful. There has been no difficulty in getting cabinet ministers, generals, ambassadors, senior civil servants and academic experts not only from Canada but also from the United Kingdom, the United States, and other countries to deliver three or four lectures a week. The smaller number of students has proved advantageous in that, although it is large enough to provide the necessary variety of experience, it enables discussions to be less formal and participation broader than in a larger institution of the kind.

Exchange of Visits

The establishment of defence colleges in other countries indicates the value of the idea. Such colleges have recently been set up or are planned in a number of Commonwealth and NATO countries, and the exchange of visits with some of them has been an interesting part of the N.D.C. programme. The Imperial Defence College in London, which was founded in 1923 and was the first institution of this kind, has been a host each year to the N.D.C. on its visit to the United Kingdom, and a party of I.D.C. students makes a tour of Canada each year from the East Coast to the Yukon. A regular visit to the National War College in Washington has also become an annual event in the N.D.C. programme. During this visit the students from Kingston attend lectures and take part in discussion with the American students. In July 1952 the College was visited by staff and students from the Institut des Hautes Etudes de la Défense Nationale de France in the course of their North American tour. On this occasion lectures were given in French on important aspects of Canadian defence by students of N.D.C. There was something peculiarly appropriate in this visit by Frenchmen to Fort Frontenac, where the National Defence College is situated, as the fort was established in 1673 by Count Frontenac and has been a military establishment ever since. The French visitors were able to see part of the stone foundations of the fort built by LaSalle in 1675, which have recently been uncovered to form part of a rock garden in the parade square of Fort Frontenac. Visits were also made by parties of N.D.C. students to the Defence Study Centre in The Hague, to the National Defence College of Greece at Salonika and to the Italian Centre of Higher Military Studies at Rome.

The objectives, composition and academic methods of the College were described in *External Affairs* of October 1950, and will therefore not be repeated. In the present article particular attention is directed to what might be called "on-the-spot" studies, that is, the tours which supplement the general programme.