

*National Defence Act Amendment*

program will require a cycle of perhaps four or five years.

The suggestion has often been made that we have some secret arrangement to change our roles and missions in order to provide for peace keeping only. I think this myth has also been satisfactorily answered. The white paper stated that the best way to perform peace keeping roles was to extract from fully equipped and trained operational forces those elements required to meet the existing circumstances. That was the policy expressed in the white paper and it is the policy today. It has been re-examined by our staffs at least twice since the white paper was written and it has been found to be still valid. Forces designed for peace keeping only have a very narrow capability. Forces designed, equipped and trained for what one might call conventional fighting have a very wide range of capabilities from conventional war participation right down to peace keeping activities.

The suggestion that Canada cannot meet its commitments is not true. Again evidence has been provided the committee which indicates specifically that we can meet our commitments to NATO, NORAD and the United Nations and that we have been keeping our commitments and are now keeping our commitments. Whatever our commitments are in the future we will be able to continue to meet them on behalf of this country. Certainly, so far as most of our commitments are concerned, they are being carried out as effectively and in most cases more effectively than has been the case previously.

Let me now deal with the hybrid myth. The suggestion is made that the men of the new single service will be expected to do all jobs and will have to be Jacks-of-all trades. That is absolute nonsense. The men in the combat arms will still specialize in exactly the same way they have in the past. In the support services, I submit there will be wider areas of employment available to the men and women because the work they will perform will not be limited to a single environment. They will perform this work in various environments and therefore this will increase the avenues of opportunity. This will increase the opportunities for our servicemen to serve their country in a wider sphere.

The suggestion has been made that we will have to resort to compulsory service to maintain this kind of force. I think this is absolute nonsense. Many things attract people to service in the armed forces including the desire to serve their country, the desire to learn a

[Mr. Hellyer.]

trade, the desire to travel overseas, and to make friendships which last throughout their whole lives. There is a wide variety of motivation. We are gratified by the number of people who want to join the armed forces and we are sure that once this bill is passed and the public controversy surrounding it dies down there will be an increase in the number of young people waiting to join the armed forces. The latest statistics show that recruiting this year is appreciably higher than for last year and the year before during the same period.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I can only repeat some of the admonitions expressed to the committee by members of the serving staff. Earlier I indicated to the committee that we accelerated stage two because we found we could not complete stage one until we knew what the command structure was going to be like. We are now in precisely the same situation in so far as the future is concerned. We must know what the personnel structure will be and we have to know whether the men and women of the armed forces will be managed in three personnel streams or one. This is fundamental to future planning. There are many questions which cannot be answered or resolved by any amount of staff work until the answer to that fundamental question is known. The request of the serving staffs, the people who are charged with the responsibility of getting on with the plans of reorganization, is that parliament now indicate its intention.

● (5:30 p.m.)

The passage of this bill does not mean instant unification. The passage of this bill is a statement of the intention that the ultimate goal is a single service and all the men and women in the forces will be managed in a single personnel stream. This must be known in order that the kind of detailed staff planning required can proceed on an orderly basis. This was first stated in the white paper and reiterated before the committee. It is part of the total cycle. It is not being done in haste, not overnight, but over eight or nine years in total. The first two stages in the first three years were authorized by a previous act of parliament. It is true that much of the continuation of the integration process could be completed without this bill. It is true that many more benefits could still be obtained from the integration process minus legislation to create a single service. It is equally true, and I want to make this point as forcefully as I can, that there are some problems which