

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: Does this section ratify some things that have already been done?

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: It does not change anybody's will, does it?

Hon. Mr. Claxton: No, sir. I do not think it represents anything that has been done. On the other hand it is in conformity with arrangements regarding salvage that have been worked out by representatives of the United Kingdom, ourselves and other parties concerned.

Hon. T. A. Crerar: Honourable senators, we are indebted to the Minister of National Defence (Hon. Mr. Claxton) for coming to us this evening and outlining the new National Defence Act, which, once it becomes law, will apply to all our armed forces. I am sure no one will disagree with the principle of the bill which we have under consideration tonight. It is an effort to bring our defence laws, so far as they relate to the management and handling of the armed forces, up to date. The need for such a measure was clearly illustrated by the reference the Minister made to the existing law which will be replaced by the new legislation. He has given us a substantial outline of the purpose of the bill.

I do not intend to discuss any of the details of the measure, but only to express my agreement with the principle it contains. I am sure that this house will take advantage of the suggestion of the Minister, that he would welcome a close examination of the bill. After the careful consideration which it has received during the past two years, I have no doubt that we will find it, on the whole, a very desirable piece of legislation to pass.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Lambert: Honourable senators, with reference to Part III of the bill, relating to the Defence Research Board, may I ask the Minister whether the chairman of that board is directly responsible to him, or stands in some subordinate relationship to some member of the general staff? I ask this question because the Defence Research Board is a new feature in the national defence organization in this country, and I should think that one of the particular requirements in connection with it would be a complete freedom and independence from any of the factors which sometimes apply to other branches of the armed forces.

Hon. Mr. Claxton: The chairman of the Defence Research Board reports directly to me. He is appointed by the Governor in Council. One feature in Canada which I think is unique among all the countries of which I have knowledge, is that the chairman of this board, far from being subordinate to anyone except the Minister, is given the

status of a Chief of Staff. He sits as a member of the Chiefs of Staff Committee. Also, for the purpose of securing co-operation and co-ordination, the three chiefs of staff are members of the Defence Research Board. In this way we secure complete inter-relationship between the defence services and the Defence Research Board. This is important because the services must be research-minded, and also unless the board is closely related to the work of the armed forces it might become rather academic. In this field I think we have achieved a closer relationship than I know of in any other country.

I should add that in the Defence Research Board we have not only the three chiefs of staff, but also representatives of civilian industry, the universities, and the president of the National Research Council. From my experience over the past two and half years I can assure this honourable house that not only is there the closest relationship between the armed forces and the Defence Research Board—because they are members of the same team—and between the National Research Council in all its activities and the Defence Research Board—because they serve the same government—but that a close relationship is maintained with the universities and with industry. I think one will find, on comparing this organization with those that exist in other countries, that there is a closer degree of integration and a more effective responsibility in Canada than elsewhere.

Hon. Mr. Davies: May I ask the honourable Minister a question relating to section 45 of the bill, which relates to educational institutions? As I understand it, the Royal Military College has now become a college for the three services. What will be the policy of the department as to the appointment of the Commandant of the college? Will it alternate amongst the three services?

Hon. Mr. Claxton: Yes, it will alternate amongst the three services. The present Commandant of the Royal Military College at Kingston is Brigadier Agnew, who will be replaced at the end of his term by a nominee, subject to my approval, from one of the other services. Royal Roads is set up on exactly the same basis as the Royal Military College, Kingston. There for the first time an air force officer, Group Captain Millward, has replaced a naval officer, Captain Rayner, on the rotation system.

Our hope is that our cadets, going through these two service colleges, living and working together, having satisfied the same entrance requirements and doing the same training during the academic term, will get to know