

*National Defence Act Amendment*

it through the house one way or another before ending his career. In one of the statements which he made during consideration of that he devoted only 3½ pages to a discussion Minister of Transport is approaching its completion.

If I could be sure that the passage of the bill before us will bring to an end the career of the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Hellyer), I might take a different view. Perhaps one of the assistants of the minister sitting behind the press gallery could send down a note and tell me what is the future of the minister, and if the passage of this bill will promote a change in his occupation. I think that the opposition should have such information at its disposal. It might change our attitude with regard to the minister. As a matter of fact the parliamentary secretary to the Prime Minister indicated last night that the minister will not continue forever in his present position but might become the prime minister. These words are recorded in *Hansard*. I wonder whether the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) has been advised of this sinister plot that is going on behind his back conducted by his own parliamentary secretary. This is what shook me last night.

Although we do not have any information regarding the future of the minister, we have his bill before us, the crown of his career, which may wind up what he has been doing in national defence. Perhaps that is why he is pressing on with it at present. He does not wish to subject the principle of that bill to an investigation by the committees on national defence or external affairs, to see whether we are following the right course. This is one of the most important bills that has ever been placed before us. I intend to oppose it, just as I opposed the bill which brought changes to the administration of the Department of National Defence and set up a supremo in the person of the chief of staff. I do not like the idea and I hope it can be changed in the future.

Similarly I am now opposing this bill and I join my colleagues in pointing out its errors. Although we have heard hon. members saying that this subject has been debated and that now is the time to complete the debate, I say that this is the first opportunity we have had for a debate on the subject of unification. We have talked about integration and we have exposed the fact that the minister has misled the house by providing incorrect information or by not providing it at all. However

[Mr. Churchill.]

we have not had the opportunity to debate the subject of unification. This is the first opportunity we have had to study it at length, because until the bill was presented to us and until we heard the minister's speech on it we did not know with any exactitude what the minister meant by unification. On earlier occasions we tried to get that information from him, but we failed. Time and time again I asked him whether he would give us a definition of unification but he would not do it. It is only now that this subject is placed before us, and we intend to examine it with the greatest of care.

Mr. Speaker, may I call it seven o'clock.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret):** The house will now suspend its sitting until eight o'clock.

SITTING SUSPENDED

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SITTING RESUMED

The house resumed at 8 p.m.

**Mr. Churchill:** Mr. Speaker, just before the supper hour, which was of no advantage to me, I was making some introductory remarks. I should like to continue them now. However, I should like the assurance of the minister that he has his brain trust in the gallery behind the press gallery, equipped with their suitcases, documents and writing pads, in order that they can keep an account of what is going on here and pass to the minister or to the members of the press contradictory items of information. If they are present, perhaps we can continue.

I was talking about the minister's presentation on December 7, and I made one slip. I said that in the 19 pages his speech covered he devoted 15½ pages to telling us things that had already been placed before us. My slip was that, during the course of those remarks, he dealt with a single unified force, something which had not been drawn to our attention on any previous occasion. I was going to criticize him for that omission in days gone by when we had the defence committee operating. Incidentally, the minister has been afraid to summon the committee during the last seven months, in view of the disclosures that would be made at that defence committee.

The minister did not tell the committee or the house about his ideas with regard to a single, unified force. This idea has now been disclosed in the bill before us and in the speech the minister made on December 7. I