

Mr. NUGENT: Perhaps they could devote themselves to cleaning up some of the errors that have already been committed?

Rear Admiral LANDYMORE: That might be very productive employment.

Mr. NUGENT: Now, sir, I have been given to understand from the Minister and from some of the supporters of unification that they feel there is some urgency about bringing it about. You have given us some very cogent reasons why there should not be urgency. Is there any reason that you can think of or that you have heard of that unification must be proceeded with swiftly and at once?

Rear Admiral LANDYMORE: None at all.

Mr. NUGENT: There is no reason at all?

Rear Admiral LANDYMORE: None that I know of.

Mr. NUGENT: None that has been brought to the attention of this Committee either.

In answer to Mr. Forrestall's questions this morning about the state of morale, the recruiting problems and the feeling of uncertainty among the officers in the Navy, would I be correct in drawing the inference from your testimony this morning that the mere suggestion of unification is such that you have the fear that many officers would retire quickly just at the mere mention of the word and that you felt it necessary to intervene to try and reassure the men in order that we would not have too sudden a departure of officers from the service?

Rear Admiral LANDYMORE: Yes.

Mr. NUGENT: Would you be able to give us any idea or have you thought about what percentage of officers, if they were given the choice—which you say would be fair to them if this unification legislation came in—would probably not go into the new service?

Rear Admiral LANDYMORE: As I pointed out this morning, because of the undertaking to me I have no way of gauging that figure accurately. I would have felt from my contact with officers that the percentage of officers who feel trapped by this thing is very high indeed in the Navy.

Mr. NUGENT: There would be a certain number, I suppose, who have reached that stage in their careers where they have to put up with almost anything because it is too late now to change careers?

Rear Admiral LANDYMORE: I think if a full pension was given there would be no question about those people remaining, no matter how difficult the situation outside might look for them. I think they would be more than prepared to take the risk. I am sure a great number of them, whether that happens or not will leave anyway although I think it would be grossly unfair under those circumstances to let them go.

Mr. NUGENT: In my opinion your testimony, then, would amount to this—and correct me if I have judged it incorrectly—that if unification is brought in the only way we are going to have a chance of keeping anything like the necessary number of officers to make the Navy effective is to keep them there by giving them no choice, holding them by as much force as we can legally exert?