

National Defence Act Amendment

own experience I believe the continuation of this system would be detrimental to the force and to the people in it.

I should like to commend to members of the committee the evidence given by the Judge Advocate General who has operated an integrated branch longer than anyone else in this country. In his evidence he pointed out the difficulties which arise in operating an integrated branch with representatives of three separate services.

Mr. Churchill: That is the legal branch only.

Mr. Hellyer: That is the legal branch. May I say that from my own experience the same problem arises in every other integrated branch. Even in respect of recent senior promotions the problem of service representation was one which had to be taken into consideration. Certainly there are some jobs which must be filled by experts from a particular specialty. There are many more which should be filled by the best qualified staff officers available, and it should not be of significance from which branch they come. Until we have a single service in identity and identification we will always have tugging and pulling for additional representation from one service in competition with other services.

● (5:20 p.m.)

The other side of this coin relates, of course, to career opportunity. The more staff jobs that are opened up to qualified people from all specialties the more opportunity there will be for employment for gifted people who want to progress, who are well motivated and have the necessary qualifications. Therefore there will be broader employment opportunities and consequently greater chances for the kind of person who should be advanced and should have greater responsibility in an integrated force of this kind.

Next let me refer to adaptability of change, and this is related to the other two. When roles and missions change, and this will be of interest to my hon. friends in the New Democratic Party, it will be much easier to meet government requirements with a single force. Let me stop at this point and assure hon. members that there is no intention to change roles and missions at this moment beyond what has been publicly stated. This can be clearly set out, but I am stating to my hon. friends in the N.D.P.—heaven forbid that they should ever form a government—that it would be much easier to change these

roles and missions within a single service than it would be with three separate services. I have put some examples on the record earlier as to why this would be the case and I do not think it necessary to repeat them this afternoon. However, it certainly would be easier to change these roles if the question regarding rank structure on a single service basis was not allowed to play too important a part in the political considerations within a department when decisions are being made, and I use that word in its narrow sense.

My comments now relate to the demands of modern warfare and these are related to changes in roles and missions. It is very difficult to foresee what future requirements will be. At the moment there is no intention for Canada to develop a space force although as hon. gentlemen may or may not know, we have some people who have been acquainting themselves for some period of time with the problems involved in space travel. If any future government decided it was in Canada's interest to develop a space capability, a single service would lend itself more readily to the formation of units and organizations to carry out that particular mission than would otherwise be possible. I can assure hon. members that with three separate services there would be an interservice battle as to whose mission this was going to be. With a single service this would not make any difference because the best qualified people would be eligible to change list and participate in the development of a new role of that kind. Those are some of the considerations.

Perhaps I could briefly deal now with some of the myths that have been raised. One relates to the question of the uniform, and I believe this has been effectively answered. I think this is one of the less important areas for consideration if one looks at it in perspective over a long period of time. Of course this is one area in which there is a great deal of emotion involved. That is inevitable. At the same time it should be clearly understood that what one might refer to as an "instant uniform" is impossible. We have made preparations for user trials this year of a limited quantity of uniforms. These uniforms will be worn by a number of members of the armed forces to ascertain how they stand the wear and tear of military life and whether they are generally acceptable. If subsequently they are considered acceptable or acceptable with some modifications that will be the time to make a decision to provide them to the services. Once that has been done the whole