

Supply—National Defence

equipment, but we must keep abreast of developments in warfare taking place elsewhere in the world.

Mr. Groos: Mr. Chairman, I am certainly not going to take up more than two or three minutes of the time of this committee because I want to see the estimates passed. I will have plenty of opportunity to speak on matters of defence when this year's estimates come before the committee. I do wish to make a few remarks because of the very interesting words that have been said in the house today. We are speaking of matters of broad policy concerning defence when we speak on this section of the estimates. We have heard a lot of talk today about the morale of the armed forces, but we have heard a lot which is in my opinion nothing but hot air.

• (4:10 p.m.)

As far as morale in the armed forces is concerned, I like to think I am still able to keep in touch with some of the services and their activities. In my own riding there is a large naval base and I have many naval friends. We also have a fairly significant army base in Victoria. From the discussions I have had with servicemen in recent years I realize they are unquestionably going through a very difficult time. But I do not believe this is by any means all due to the minister or the policies he has introduced since becoming minister. Of course, some of the policies the minister has introduced have contributed to these difficulties, because change always does, particularly change within the armed forces.

However, Mr. Chairman, I believe most servicemen agree that the time had come when change was necessary. I also believe most servicemen agree that these changes are in the best interests of our nation. To begin with, what the minister has done in recent years by these changes is that he has given a sense of purpose to the personnel of the three services, and they appreciate this. When we are talking about morale we must remember that it is not made up of just one thing, and I believe it is wrong to claim that all the troubles besetting the services today are due to integration. This is part of the difficulty but only a small part.

I wanted to recommend to the government that they pay re-engagement bonuses because I think the lack of re-engagement bonus was contributing to the difficulties of re-engagement. I was very pleased to hear what the associate minister had to say just now about

re-engagement bonuses. I think this step will be received very well by the armed forces. I might say I would have preferred the re-engagement bonuses to have been larger because I believe the savings will be out of all proportion to the cost involved. The saving is not just in dollars, but in the effort that has been spent in training persons who would have stayed in the forces had they been given a little more financial encouragement to do so.

This financial encouragement is now being offered to them to remain in the services. The financial outlay and expenditure of effort in training a serviceman is far higher than the average member of this house visualizes. In my humble opinion the cost of training any serviceman in his first three-year engagement would be well in excess of \$15,000. Therefore to offer him \$1,000 to re-engage for another five years will constitute a great saving and I think this step will be very much welcomed by the men in the armed forces.

I said I would only speak for two or three minutes, Mr. Chairman, and I intend to keep my word. In conclusion I should like to urge the minister and this government to press on with their plans for integration. For reasons of adventure and patriotism, young men today are just as keen to serve as they ever were. I want the minister to press on to conclusion with his plans for integration and then to stabilize the situation so we will no longer be faced with continuous change and the unsettling effect this has upon service personnel. I should like to assure the minister that the service personnel in my part of the country are behind him in what he is doing.

[Translation]

Mr. Allard: Mr. Chairman, last night I listened carefully to the statement made by the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Hellyer). He made a point of describing the policies of his department and the efforts made to complete the integration of our armed forces.

On the latter score, according to the minister, integration has produced satisfactory results up to now. We will wait until this unification program is completed before passing a definite judgment on its value and effectiveness.

But I will deal today with the military role of Canada and what would be a more realistic Canadian policy in this regard.

Indeed, what must be Canada's military role? Last night, at the beginning of his speech, the minister laid down two principles