

Supply—National Defence

Most important of all from a cost point of view is the fact that cost in relation to effectiveness has gone up substantially instead of decreasing. We are spending the same amount of money as we were in past years but we are not getting anything like the return in effective military units. I have called attention to the situation in the navy where the number of fighting vessels has declined to little more than half what it was when the minister took over. I have referred to the situation in the army and the air force.

● (12:20 p.m.)

The minister has attributed the severe losses of trained personnel and the difficulty in securing recruits to good economic conditions. He blithely says, "The reason we are having trouble keeping people in the forces or recruiting them is that conditions are so good under this beneficent Liberal government." That is complete nonsense. We have had good economic conditions in Canada previously but we never had the losses from the armed forces that we have experienced during the past two to three years.

So far as recruiting was concerned, in the past a high proportion of the people who enlisted in the armed forces did so because their parents or friends were members of the armed forces and encouraged them to join, but because of the state of morale in the forces at present no such urging is taking place. There are very few members or ex-members who will advise their sons and other young relatives to join the forces. That is one of the main reasons that recruiting is difficult and losses of trained personnel have been so heavy. It is not due to good economic conditions, although no one will argue that good economic conditions do not have some effect. Recruiting has always been slow when economic conditions have been good but it is not a major factor or anything like a major factor.

In order to try to correct the situation the minister is talking about pay increases and bonuses for men who re-engage. We also hear that requirements for entrance to the forces have been lowered. In addition, sea-going pay of \$15 a month extra has been put into effect, this for people who in the past joined the navy because they wanted to go to sea. Of course navy personnel are glad to get it but they actually laugh at the minister for thinking he has to provide special sea-going pay in order to encourage people to join the navy. The question immediately comes to mind, what will be the effect of this on costs?

[Mr. Harkness.]

The minister is constantly talking about saving money and cutting down on costs but these increases in pay, bonuses and special sea-going pay will increase personnel and administrative costs.

The lack of morale in the armed forces is, of course, much greater in operational units and commands than may appear to be the case to the minister at national defence headquarters. He would get a much better idea of the dissatisfaction that exists if he would go to an operational command, secure the views of the men there and answer the questions of a cross-section of officers and other ranks in that command.

In his speech last night he indicated that a further integration of maritime command and R.C.A.F. maritime command took place in January, and I understand that at Halifax considerable unrest exists as a result. That would be a logical place for the minister to visit in order to find out the actual situation. However, he must be aware of the serious morale situation because he found it necessary to send an air vice-marshal to Trenton to try to sell his integration program to the personnel there and to try to stop the flood of withdrawals taking place. I am told this senior officer tried to field questions for over an hour after his speech extolling integration but the officers and other ranks did not buy what he was trying to sell.

I now turn to some questions with regard to integration and re-organization of staff at national defence headquarters. In 1964 the minister gave the defence committee an outline of the planned organization or reorganization, which is to be found in a chart at pages 140 and 141 of committee report No. 5, for June 4, 1964. This chart shows, in addition to the chief of defence staff, an assistant chief of defence staff. Then the staff is broken down into four main components or branches: First, the chief of operational readiness, with a deputy; next, the chief of personnel, with a deputy; next, the chief of logistics and engineering, with two deputies; and then a comptroller general, with one deputy.

I put a question on the order paper asking for the names and present appointments of all the officers of the rank of major general or equivalent rank and above and on February 7 I received a reply which appears in *Hansard*. This reply does not show anyone holding the appointment of chief of operational readiness or the appointment of deputy chief of operational readiness, nor does it