

*National Defence Act Amendment*

work in co-operation with the forces of our allies, all organized on a navy, army and air force basis. Many people believe that even if the proposed Canadian Armed Forces organization was a better one for Canada than the organization we have had, on a theoretical basis—and none of these experienced people have conceded that to be the case—we could not work effectively with the forces of our allies. This is another very serious disadvantage, so far as this proposed move is concerned.

Our support in United Nations peace keeping activities is a very important feature of our defence policy. It must be realized that the United Nations, because of its composition, cannot intervene between the two great powers, the Soviet union on the one side and the NATO Alliance on the other; but it can, with the co-operation of these powers, arbitrate the disputes of smaller countries to prevent them from spreading.

Many people in Canada, and members of the N.D.P. are good examples, believe that United Nations peace keeping activities should be our only or main military contribution. I am sorry to say, as I indicated earlier, that the government seems to be moving toward that point of view. That position disregards the fact that the general peace is really kept by NATO and that the United Nations can deal only with small countries. This is unrealistic, I submit, because no one can foresee what kind of forces may be required by the United Nations from time to time. The needs of the United Nations for peace keeping forces can really only be met by a well balanced navy, army and air force with good transport capability.

From the point of view of each of these three main objectives in respect of Canada's defence policy, which I outlined, the proposed unification will place them in a worse position to meet our responsibilities. In fact it will place them in a position in which we will not be able to meet our responsibilities adequately.

These are all reasons for the dropping of this bill by the government, or for defeating it here in the house. I should like to make one or two comments about the minister's speech of December 7. Although he spoke at great length, he did not provide one good reason during an hour and forty five minutes in support of unification as an essential or necessary program. He did not give one good reason to show that it was either militarily or financially better than the system under

which we have been operating. In my submission he did not provide one single reason to support this policy.

Let me first of all deal with the defence council which was referred to by the minister and recorded in *Hansard* at page 10822 of *Hansard*. The minister sought to give the impression that although integration had gone into effect, until he had been in control of the situation for some time the defence council was a completely ineffective body. He said as reported on page 10823:

● (9:00 p.m.)

The role of the defence council forecast in 1964 has been fulfilled during the whole period of detailed planning on the unification process and this body has in fact become an active and decisive forum for the formulation of policy.

In the 29 months since defence council was re-activated in July, 1964, it has had 90 meetings dealing with matters covering the whole range of defence policy. For the 29 months preceding July, 1964, it met on four occasions.

Apparently the aim of that statement was to persuade the members of this house and the general public that under his predecessor the defence council was completely inactive, hardly ever met, and that there was no co-ordination in the department. Nothing could be further from the truth. The minister is very fond of using half truths in order to create a completely false impression. The minister was referring to formal meetings of the secretary, the assistant secretary and various other individuals, to take minutes and things of that sort. It is true that in this sense meetings were held very seldom to deal with formal matters. But the effective defence council, in other words the Minister of National Defence, the Associate Minister of National Defence, the chairman of the chiefs of staff, the chiefs of staff of the navy, army and air force, the deputy minister and the chairman of the National Research Board, during all the time I was minister of national defence met regularly every Monday morning in my office. We went over all the matters which were of concern to the Department of National Defence as a whole and obtained the views of the heads of the three services, the deputy minister, and so forth, in regard to these matters. We very frequently held other meetings during the week. This was a fully effective means of co-ordinating the activities of the Department of National Defence. The attempt made here to convey the impression that there was no co-ordination of the Department of National Defence and that the defence council in effect never met, is completely wrong.