

Supply—National Defence

Some two years ago surveys were started with a view to the lengthening of the runways of that airport but nothing has been done. I believe that from a civilian point of view we are all right with the present aircraft that come in there. From a service point of view, and this is my only justification for raising the problem now, I think it would be to the advantage of the Department of National Defence to press for the extension of the runways of that airport so that troops which may be brought into or taken out of Camp Gagetown can be moved in the largest aircraft flying today. I am thinking especially of an emergency situation.

The minister in his remarks mentioned the Defence Committee. I would take the liberty of concurring fully in what he said. I have served on that committee since 1963. I think that of all the committees of the house this one fulfils its purpose to best advantage. It has been an excellent committee and has been well staffed. The member who chaired it last time, unfortunately from the Liberal point of view, went down to defeat. He was an excellent chairman and a good friend. I suggest to the minister that the Defence Committee should begin its work as quickly as possible. I hope that as soon as the estimates of the department are through the committee can proceed.

I was interested also in the minister's discussion of the reserve force. I do not know whether the minister is aware but two or three years ago when there was a drastic reorganization of the reserve force its morale dropped severely. I speak with some knowledge since I have long been interested in the reserve force and served in it for some 25 years. I have always maintained my interest in our defence establishment. He mentioned that General W. A. B. Anderson was to head the reserve force and this will be welcome news. General Anderson is an excellent officer and the reserve force deserves to have the leadership of such a man.

I have only one more point to mention and it has to do with education. It may seem as though I am digressing slightly but I assure you I am not. My own profession is teaching and I have taught many children of members of the armed forces. One of these youngsters told me that in 12 years of schooling she had gone to 15 different schools. This is no fault of the Department of National Defence. The exigencies of service demand that a man be moved on very short notice. The unfortunate

part is that we have ten different systems of education in this nation today. I have seen teachers in Oromocto who have taken 10 or 15 minutes for lunch and have spent the remainder of their lunch hour attempting to help children who through no fault of their own had fallen behind as a result of their parents moving from province to province. While we must admit that education is a provincial matter, and you, Mr. Chairman, as a member of that time honoured profession realize this, I think that the sooner we achieve some uniformity in the field of education in this nation, the better. We know that the province of Quebec is very jealous of its rights in this field but if we can achieve uniformity in education we will be achieving something of great benefit to this nation.

I concur in the statements of the hon. member for Calgary North and others who have referred to the problem of morale in our forces and the fact that it is at a low ebb today. I hope that for the benefit of our nation and the benefit of our services this will change. I know that what the minister is trying to do he is doing in all sincerity. I have the highest regard for the minister personally and I know he believes in what he is doing. I submit that if he can bring up the morale of our forces more quickly it will help to achieve the objective he is seeking, that is, to have one of the finest military forces in the whole world.

Mr. Lambert: Mr. Chairman, speaking on the first item of the minister's estimates on this second day of the debate I do not believe one has to apologize in any way for the time that is being taken. After all, the minister must realize that his estimates have not been considered since 1964 and a great deal has transpired in the meantime. Certainly the minister and his staff have been very active in getting across to the people the fact that a great deal has been done in the department, that they were moving and that there was a certain spirit of dynamism in the department. The only point is that no explanation has been offered to the house.

I may say that I was disappointed in the minister's statement on Thursday evening. As a matter of fact, the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre compared it with statements made by the minister in previous years. There was a great similarity, and there was a sort of Tweedledum and Tweedledee attitude between the minister and associate