

*National Defence Act Amendment*

million people is just outrageous. We had hoped that the budget would be reduced by at least one third, but it is not the case and I want to point out to the minister that we are a little disappointed in that respect.

• (8:20 p.m.)

That situation may be due to the purchase of airplanes, mainly those we use for military training. I know that in my area, for instance, there is a centre where all day long they play with those small toys worth a million dollars apiece. When you replace 140 of those toys because they are a little worn out, at a cost of \$140 million, we can imagine that the military budget is going to go up as the minister mentioned. I would not repeat that word, had the minister not used it but he spoke about waste in the Department of the National Defence. I think that we suspected it for a long time. In his statement, the minister said that there had been some waste, and I am confident that he will try and stop such waste so as to save in that respect.

What we really need, in brief, is an army to protect this country, not an army of which two or three battalions could fight abroad, for foreign interests. We do think and the people in general feel that we need an army in order to protect this country.

Canadian citizens are ready to pay for their own aircraft, but what they do not accept today is the fact that, after 20 or 22 years, namely since the last war, they still have to pay the costs of training and the travelling and living allowances of Canadian soldiers stationed in Europe and all other countries. In fact, they are wondering what a poor little country of 20 million people like Canada is doing there.

Mr. Chairman, I suggest it would be preferable to direct our dollars and our energy toward peace production rather than try to thrust peace upon people by force of arms. I believe that if we earmarked 50 per cent of the military budget for production, in order to give food to people in starving countries, we would be doing something useful.

Now, we cannot all be of the same opinion and, as I said a while ago, a soldier speaks like a soldier, a civilian like a civilian. That is why I admire the minister who defended his own cause in this house and defended it well. This does not prevent us from having our own opinion and from wishing that we may, some day, think more about feeding

[Mr. Gauthier.]

the people, for the sake of peace, instead of thrusting peace upon them, by force of arms.

I wish that day to be the nearest possible, I wish that the minister would think about organizing the army so as to provide protection for this country itself and that he would earmark the difference of millions of dollars to feed the people of this country first of all and then have them benefit other countries that are in need.

[English]

**Mr. Olson:** Mr. Chairman, my first remarks at this stage of proceedings on Bill C-243 are to commend the standing committee on national defence for the great deal of work they did in examining in detail, with the benefit of expert witnesses, the provisions laid out in the bill. I do not pretend to be familiar with all provisions in the bill, as it is now or before it was amended, because this was a specialized study undertaken by a number of competent members in this house. While it is obvious that there is not full agreement among members, it seems to me that they have performed a useful service to parliament and to Canada by making their examination.

I rise tonight to express some opinions respecting Canada's role in international affairs politically and militarily. We in this party have long advocated that there ought to be far closer liaison between the Department of National Defence and the Department of External Affairs. I do not suggest that the ministers or supporting staffs of these departments do not co-operate. I do suggest, however, that the policies of the two departments ought to be more co-ordinated than in the past.

If we are to talk intelligently about Bill C-243, which is designed to bring about a new structure for our armed forces, we ought first to discuss what the purpose and role of those armed forces will be. In this day and age I suggest that that purpose is completely tied to our foreign policy. I suggest, as has been said before, that Canada through obligation or choice, whichever term one wishes to use, occupies a unique position in world international relations. As the minister said a few moments ago, there is so much military power in the hands of the super powers that it is not likely either one will deliberately embark on a war calling on both sides to use all the power they have. As a result I think that Canada ought to use its resources in manpower and material in some way to keep the peace of the world. I had not intended saying