

*National Defence Act Amendment*

are really debating nothing. It is something like medicare, we will merely pass this measure to gain influence and for window-dressing.

● (9:10 p.m.)

So I say to the minister, first, it is not saving the nation money, and second, it is demoralizing the army. He may say, as did Air Chief Marshal Miller, that he cannot predict whether or not there will be less recruits. But I cannot believe that a man will join a force in the belief that he will serve at sea, and end up as a footslogger in the jungles. The minister denies now the charge that he cannot get the necessary recruits for the air force and the navy. I say the minister is a failure.

Tonight we are making history because when the present government occupied this side of the house—and I believe this is the very seat the minister occupied—the defence policy of our government was attacked and we were defeated. At that time the hon. member for Medicine Hat and other members in his party, which was much stronger at that time, voted with the government and turned out the Conservative government on account of its defence policy.

If ever there was a climax and a mess created by the Liberal party and the Liberal government, it is that government's policy on defence. I will remind the government that its record in that regard is consistent tonight, and in looking back at the history of that party with regard to military affairs I should like to hang an albatross around their necks. I am referring here to the scandal of Hong Kong. It was a week before Christmas when the Liberal government sent our ill equipped force there. I should like the minister to visit one hospital in Calgary and to look at some of the human wrecks who are there now as a result of the decision taken by those great experts on defence, the Minister of Transport, the Minister of National Defence and the Prime Minister, all Liberals. This is the albatross I would hang around their necks when they speak about defence matters. What I am saying may seem a little tough, but it is true and true facts cut deeply.

The hon. member for Medicine Hat says we should not debate this subject any further. Yet I am still convinced that in working together with our neighbours we can keep peace and security but, as the late President Kennedy said, we cannot negotiate from a weak position. We can never negotiate from

fear but we must not be afraid to negotiate: A weak force means we would be negotiating with other nations from fear. If we allow ourselves to be weakened, the communists will run all over us. That is no way to secure peace. The policy of appeasement has failed in the past and we have seen the loss of freedom which it has brought about.

I should like to conclude with the words of Winston Churchill when he spoke about defence, with reference to world affairs. He made the speech at Harry Truman's birthday party. At that time the western world was afraid of the Russian communists, just as now it is apprehensive about China. Let us hark back to those times. I do not remember the exact words which Winston Churchill used, but he said in effect that the United Nations, which he hoped to be the majestic centre of world security, has been reduced to a mere cockpit where ancient states and mighty nations hurl reproaches and recriminations at one another to prepare for what would seem a third world war. He said at that time that Russia dreads our friendship as much as our hostility. Then he offered a solution. He said that that is why he believed in strength, and that in working together as friends we can save the world. He said that if the iron curtain were lifted so that millions of good hearted human beings on either side could have free intercourse one with the other, the 14 men in the Kremlin who control millions of good hearted people would soon be undermined and peace and security would be ours.

I direct these words to the minister because I believe that in bringing about unification of our forces against the opinions of our military experts and of experts all over the world—because nowhere else is it being tried out in the face of such opposition—we are weakening Canada's endeavours to maintain peace and security in alliance with the western world.

I make one appeal to the minister, and I think it is a worth-while one. I ask him to reconsider his position on unification. The Prime Minister said in Calgary that it will take a few years before unification is brought about. He, the Prime Minister said he had some doubts about unification, after having heard the statement made by the deputy minister. Surely if it is the responsibility of the Prime Minister not only to govern this country but to work for the safety and security of the world, then the Minister of National Defence should cease to be so arrogant and should withdraw unification from the bill.