

*National Defence Act Amendment*

half the whole force comes into contact with the enemy. In the air environment, except for naval air personnel, only a very small percentage will be exposed to enemy action.

Because of this factor the vast majority of naval personnel must be young. The maximum age would not exceed 45 years, except in exceptional cases. About half the army must be young, with the maximum age of those who fight not greater than 45 and, preferably, if practical under 40. The other half of the army—support personnel—could serve effectively until 55, if physically fit. In the R.C.A.F. the upper limit on operational personnel should be about 45 for air crew, and in some cases, fighter pilots for example, the upper limit should be much lower. The rest of air force personnel could well serve to age 55 without affecting operations adversely.

Under unification there will be strong arguments to have a similar upper limit across the board. This means that for more than half the armed forces personnel the upper age will be either too high or too low, depending on the point of compromise. Unification under these circumstances is uneconomic and may lead to operational difficulties.

Rank structure and promotion are also affected by environmental differences. The navy requires a higher percentage of higher ranks for men than the air force or army. The reason for this is that a ship will normally, under emergency conditions, operate in three watches. Each part of the ship, because of compartmentation, requires chief or petty officers in charge. Under unification the obvious course, though not the correct one, will be to have all ranks at all levels pooled between environments. This will inevitably lead to the air force and army having more N.C.O.'s than they need, and the navy fewer than it needs.

Again this affects pay structure, privileges for rank, and so on. The navy needs a pay structure which makes the pay scale heavily weighted for rank, and less for professional qualifications. The R.C.A.F. needs a pay structure which leans heavily toward higher pay for trade and less for rank. The operational units of the army—infantry, armour, etc.—should have pay scales based more on rank than trade, while their support services should be paid more for trade than for rank.

• (9:50 p.m.)

Under unification this flexibility, I suggest, is bound to disappear. While putting everyone on a single pay structure might be from an administrative point of view advantageous

[Mr. Forrestall.]

and make sense in terms of theoretical economy and efficiency, in practice it will fail. The best condition for the navy is for men of equal rank and trade to be paid the same. This is not necessarily so in many of the other environments.

Time is beginning to run out, and I do not want necessarily to be the last speaker on his feet this evening. May I simply point out to the minister that in its present form this bill will mean hardship to those in the environment with which I am most familiar, the navy, and will be resented. In fact it is resented now. It is not understood. No sincere effort has been made fully to acquaint them with its ramifications. The minister knows how they rebelled during his trip last fall. He is aware of the difficulties being faced.

At some point in the very near future, Mr. Speaker, and hopefully before this debate comes to an end—and he need not occupy 65 pages in doing this—the minister must stand up and point out to these men what the government intends to do. Are we about to give up our national sovereignty? Are we about to disband the navy? Does the minister no longer see any role for it?

Are we about to shut down and let the United States move in. I have heard a lot of rumour, much of it confirmed to me by one source or another, about certain logistic capabilities of the United States defence structure to move into this country and to take over our bases and defence forces. I do not like this. I do not think we have to spend 10 or 12 per cent of our gross national product on our defence structure, but I do not see anything wrong with spending 5 or 6 per cent. We spend somewhere in the order of 5.2 per cent now. I do not think we have to walk away from our country and simply turn it over to somebody else to defend for us.

I hope the minister will at some point find the occasion to reassure everybody in the Atlantic provinces about the government's intentions, basically because of the economic impact of the bill. There will always be a navy, albeit maritime command or whatever it is he chooses to call it. But we hope it will not be something less than its present structure.

In closing, I repeat that we in the Atlantic provinces cannot afford to lose the economic benefit of the military pay and allowances of those in this area who spend their funds on local supplies and provisions.

**Mr. Jack McIntosh (Swift Current-Maple Creek):** Mr. Speaker, before the supper hour