

*Canadian Forces Act*

come from Korea now, from the men who are serving there and from the members of the religious organizations who have visited Korea, as well as statements emanating from various auxiliary services, to show that there is a need of welfare services of the kind to which Canadian troops were accustomed in the first and second great wars. Up to the present moment we have had no satisfactory answer from government sources.

The parliamentary assistant has read to us a statement made by the minister yesterday and recorded on page 1056 of *Hansard*. It concludes with this sentence:

So far I am informed by the officers who have been there that they do not believe more can be done under the circumstances.

I feel that is far from clear—"under the circumstances". Perhaps nothing more can be done for the troops under the particular arrangements that have been made. I would say that, with the assistance of the auxiliary services, much more can be done. We do not need to take the time to argue the value of the auxiliary services. They proved their value in the first and second wars. I feel now that there is some policy emerging that is directed towards dispensing with the auxiliary services plan in connection with the Canadian army. I believe that is quite unsound.

So far as I can see from my own experience, and as every veteran of the first war knows, the auxiliary services were of immense importance to the men serving in France and Flanders. It is not a question of the terrain or the difficulty of serving conditions. Many veterans will recall that on the road to Passchendaele ridge there was an auxiliary service chap with his assistant, sheltered in a miserable dugout, serving coffee to the weary soldiers returning from the front. Nothing in Korea or anywhere else could equal the conditions that existed at that time. In the second world war the auxiliary services proved this tenfold. They were the most effective means of maintaining morale that I saw overseas. As I mentioned yesterday, I do not believe the job can be done through the regular army arrangement. I have been a welfare officer in a regiment, and I have commanded a regiment without auxiliary services. The moment I obtained an auxiliary services person with his supplies the whole picture changed.

Without an auxiliary services person you are obliged to appoint an officer in charge of welfare, and assign to him an N.C.O. or perhaps one or two other ranks. In the course of time that officer, who is trained for a military type of duty rather than welfare duty,

is required for other duties. After all his training for military matters, he should not be posted to welfare work which can be done by a person not trained in military matters. I believe it is a waste of trained officers to assign them to welfare duty. That is exactly where the auxiliary services fill the need. They provide people who do not require military training. Yet they provide people who are thoroughly experienced in man management or in personnel work. I have not seen a finer type of personnel work done than that which was done by the auxiliary services people during the second world war. It does not matter which group it was, whether it was the Legion, the Knights of Columbus, the Salvation Army or the Y.M.C.A., a highly trained, first-class type of man was provided for service in the field.

Their work was of great importance. No one who has served in the field can overestimate the importance of morale in a regiment. It may seem strange to people who have not had that experience, but it does not take a great deal of assistance from an auxiliary service to build up morale within a regiment. It may be simple things that are provided, but they are certainly appreciated by troops who suffer greatly from boredom, exposure, loneliness and things of that nature. The auxiliary services clearly fill that gap.

Have we reached the stage in policy making with regard to the Canadian army where we are not to provide auxiliary services through these well-tried sources? Have we reached the stage where it is all to be done under army personnel? If so, are we training any army personnel for welfare work? I think we are not, and I think we would be wrong to do it, because army training should be directed towards preparing men to fight and to supply the people who are fighting in the field. Yet we have available volunteers from the auxiliary services, and we should use them.

I again press the point that we should have from the government some explanation as to what the policy is in connection with the auxiliary services for our armed forces. I maintain—and I am sure that every veteran knows this—that they are absolutely essential. We do not need to carry it to extremes. It is not a question of mollycoddling the troops. I am opposed to that sort of thing. Soldiering has to be a rough life, and soldiers have to live a hard life. But there are a few things that can be done without too much expense, and without cluttering up your army with a lot of equipment, to ease the problem of the people who are serving in the field. Anything that I say should not be interpreted