

*Supply—National Defence*

of the armed forces of Canada under a single chief of defence staff and a single defence staff. This will be the first step toward a single unified defence force for Canada.

The query in the minds of Canadian people, and I think in the minds of the men serving in the forces is, what are the additional steps? How far are these steps going? What is meant by a "unified defence force for Canada"? If it means co-ordination of all three services at every possible level into a well balanced fighting force, with the elimination of duplication in our administrative commands, that is fine with me and I think it is fine with most Canadians.

However, Mr. Chairman, if it means doing away with tradition, with the three separate services and the many other things that create morale and esprit de corps, I have very grave doubts about it. The White Paper no doubt was aware of these intangible elements with regard to integration but they were given short shrift in the White Paper. It says:

Two objections are given as reasons why integration should not be undertaken. First, that morale or "esprit de corps" is weakened, and second, that competition is diminished. Neither of these objections will stand against careful scrutiny.

But I believe the proof of the pudding is in the eating and we can gain by experience in this matter. As has been said by various other members of the committee, morale in our defence forces is low. There is a great wastage of skilled personnel from all three services and the explanation that this is due only to competition from civilian occupations is not the full answer, because Canada has been equally prosperous on previous occasions and the existence of this type of competition has not previously, to this extent at least, caused the low morale that exists in the services.

In addition, Mr. Chairman, all Canada is not prosperous. The Atlantic provinces are not prosperous; they still have a high unemployment rate. This is a part of the country with a long and honourable tradition of service in the armed forces. I am sure there are enough unemployed people in the Atlantic provinces alone to fill the gap in the armed forces, if this career was still attractive to them.

We have the situation where only a short while ago pilots, highly skilled and highly trained men, were prematurely discharged from the R.C.A.F. because it was said that we had a surplus of aircrew. It should be

remembered that training aircrew to operational level is an extremely expensive procedure. It costs many, many thousands of dollars to train one pilot. Now we are understaffed as far as aircrew and technicians in all three services are concerned. Many of our armed units are under strength. We have the situation where some of the ships in the navy are not operational because of the lack of crew. I believe the minister said that the remaining destroyer escorts carrying helicopters are more effective than were all the destroyer escorts which we had in operation without helicopters.

This would be true, Mr. Chairman, if you gauged the situation against conditions of a quarter of a century ago. No doubt one of our destroyer escorts of today with a helicopter is infinitely more effective than were our destroyers a quarter of a century ago. But the world is not standing still. As capability in defence matters increases, so does the problem increase and the responsibilities in respect thereof. The problem of anti-submarine warfare is greatly increased.

● (7:50 p.m.)

In the past, submarines were short range attack weapons. They could not attack shipping, which was their only target, without exposing themselves to counterattack. They had to approach very close to a ship in order to attack it, and thus made themselves vulnerable targets.

In this day and age we are not talking about the submarines of world war II; we are talking about a highly sophisticated, nuclear powered, nuclear armed strategic weapon, the role of which is not to attack shipping necessarily but to stand offshore, hidden in the sea somewhere and, while submerged, launch missiles at centres of production or population. This tremendously increases the problem of anti-submarine warfare. I feel it is certainly very unsafe to assume that any potential enemy that we may have will be as unfortunate in its minister of national defence as we are. We can assume therefore that any potential enemy is making advances in the techniques of waging war.

What we need, Mr. Chairman, are some clear statements, simple statements, that are not in any way ambiguous with regard to our defence situation, not only with regard to integration but other important matters. For example there is the question of nuclear arms. Where do we stand on this issue? The White Paper has this to say:

The question of nuclear weapons for the Canadian armed forces is subordinate to that of