

ADDRESS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE  
ON DEFENCE (1966)

By Rear Admiral W. M. Landymore, OBE, CD, RCN

## "Unification"

My last appearance before you took place on 23rd June. On that occasion I opened my briefing with the statement,—“It is a great privilege to have been invited to appear before you”—About three hours after the session began your Chairman brought the meeting to a close with this expression of thanks—“We would like to thank you for your brief and for answering our questions. We would like to wish you, in all sincerity, the very best of good fortune and continued success, and I know we would all hope, in this Committee, that in some way, we can be of assistance to you in your task”.—Precisely nineteen days later the Minister asked me for my resignation.

In “Backstage in Ottawa” dated 20th August in *Macleans Magazine*, an editor had this to say concerning my appearance before you on the 23rd June; I quote,—“But according to several men who were present it did not include criticism of, or even direct reference to, the unification programme. This was Landymore’s big chance to make his point in public with perfect safety and propriety—he was answering questions before a Committee of Parliament and no one could have faulted him for speaking his mind in candor.”—unquote.

You will recognize at once that everything in the quote is not quite right. You will find in the minutes that in referring to naval matters, I said morale is bad—that there is a great deal of unrest amongst officers and senior men, that I didn’t agree with unification, that there was reluctance in the navy to accept unification, that identity is most important as far as servicemen are concerned, and that sailors dislike khaki uniforms. This may not have been enough for the Ottawa Editor of *Macleans* but I’m afraid it was rather too much for the Minister.

Nevertheless, I find it interesting that he assumed a service witness before this Committee could speak with perfect safety and propriety. I submit, gentlemen, that the main factor causing my compulsory retirement was my frankness in answering your questions, at a meeting which would be reported publicly, as my answers to you clearly indicated a disparity between my views on unification and those of the Minister. So much for safety—so much for propriety—so much for candor.

But so that there can be no doubt in your minds on the sequence of events, of that period, I was not compulsorily retired because I made statements to the press. On the 12th July the Minister informed me I would be compulsorily retired, and I reported this fact to the Chief of the Defence Staff, to the Chief of Personnel and also informed the Chairman of the Defence Committee on the 12th July. I made no statement to the press until 15th July. In other words neither the time I spoke to the press nor what I said were factors connected with the Minister asking for my resignation, and when on 12th July I wouldn’t co-operate by offering my resignation, he told me I would be compulsorily retired. No one in the Department has bothered to make this clear. I presume, because it was easier to allow the public to think my press statements were the reason the Minister retired me, and not the real reason.