

Canadian Forces Act

much for us now under very adverse conditions. I wish to add my voice to this appeal.

Mr. Clarence Gillis (Cape Breton South): Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 21, an act respecting the Canadian forces, is a very important measure and will have a great influence on the future of the services. It has not very much to do with the question we are discussing at the present time because the bill makes no provision whatsoever for recreational facilities. This subject is not new to the Department of National Defence because I brought the matter to their attention last June and was assured that I had been wrongly informed. I know I was not wrongly informed because I know the source of my information is 100 per cent reliable. From last June to the present time approximately five and one-half months have elapsed, but in the meantime the Department of National Defence should have done something about it.

There is no reason in the world why the Department of National Defence could not have had accurate reports from that section of the world. They have numerous reliable personnel there to get reports from. To try to influence the country by sending clergymen of different denominations to the Korean front not to bring back a report to the House of Commons and the Department of National Defence, but to make public statements in the press as to what they saw and did not see there, was not a good way to handle the matter. It has not settled anything, and that is very well demonstrated by the discussion in the house this afternoon. The problem is still there.

I am disappointed with the bill in that it does not recognize that as a very important part of our national defence services in so far as the troops in combat service are concerned. You are going to have to face up to that question again with the 27th brigade in Europe. If we are going to take young men, seventeen, eighteen and nineteen years of age, from their homes, put them in uniform and have them live under the conditions that they are living under in Korea while in combat, and then when they come out of the lines provide their own means of recreation, you are going to get the kind of repercussions we have had in the press in the last month or two to the effect that Canadian service personnel are behaving badly. It is human nature; it is only what you can expect. It is not half as bad as I would expect, having lived a little of that kind of life myself but never having been caught.

If I were the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of National Defence and this were brought to my department I would say: "Who knows the most about the problem? The

[Mr. Ross (Souris).]

people who handled it in the last war, the Legion war services." That organization could be assembled on very short notice. It was not very costly to the country. They could put the organization in the field very quickly to provide the kind of recreational facilities that are needed. That service is designed to give advice. You will find that young men, either in Europe in the 27th brigade or in the Korean forces, want someone to whom they can go for advice. It is all right to say that you have the padre. He is only one man. If there is an institution with a Canadian emblem on it, with personnel who have training in that field and who are there to guide and advise the young soldier, it prevents an awful lot of difficulty. This bill should carry some provision along these lines. If you do not need it you do not have to use it. If it is necessary to use it, the provision is there to be used. It is not hard to pick an organization in this country today because Korea and Europe are a continuation of the thing we went into in 1939. It was never finished, and we had no right to start dismantling the necessary machinery.

This afternoon an hon. member made a proposal that I did not agree with. Perhaps he did not mean it the way I understood it. I want to be charitable. He said: there are benevolent funds, army benevolent funds, navy benevolent funds and air force benevolent funds. He suggested that those funds might be made available, on agreement with the services concerned, to provide recreational facilities in other parts of the world.

Mr. Green: I do not think he said that.

Mr. Gillis: The hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra shakes his head. When I started to make my remark I said it was possible I misunderstood him.

Mr. Green: I think he meant that they would be helpful in relief matters.

Mr. Gillis: That is the unfortunate part of the spoken word. It is not what is in your mind that counts; it is what you say, and the interpretation that can be placed upon it.

Mr. Green: You must have been talking to somebody else.

Mr. Gillis: I was sitting right here and I was listening very carefully. I said I hoped that that was not what he meant. It may be construed as meaning that by somebody reading *Hansard*. If that is what he meant I am opposed to it, and I think the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra is opposed to it also, because he and I sat on the same committee, the canteen committee, when the matter of a benevolent fund in the services was discussed.