

Interim Supply

morale, instead of it dropping to the lowest ebb it has ever been in my experience in this country.

Mr. Hellyer: You refuse to answer the question.

Mr. Hees: May I ask the minister a question. Has he any other questions?

Mr. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, I see the hon. member for Elgin is in his seat, and I am glad because a few moments ago he made reference to a question which had been asked by one of the members on this side. He replied "See the white paper". I interjected and said that the hon. member did not even know what was in the white paper. If that sounded like a derogatory reply, it was not intended in that way.

Mr. Roxburgh: Oh, no?

Mr. McIntosh: No. You do not know what is in the white paper either. A great many Canadians do not know what is in the white paper.

For the hon. member's information I should like to read him the first line of the section headed "Conclusion":

In this paper no attempt has been made to set down hard and fast rules for future policy and development.

Hon. members opposite have told us that all the answers are contained in this white paper. From the introduction section to the conclusion, this white paper is very vague, as it was intended to be.

Having mentioned the introductory section, I think hon. members opposite should listen to one part of it, as well as to the objectives. I think they would be better informed if they read the white paper. If they did, they would prevail upon their minister and make him realize he has put us in an impossible position, as many speakers on this side have said, from which we cannot back down. If we did, we would be the laughing stock of the country, and the minister would put his policy of unification, or amalgamation—I do not care what you call it—into effect.

In other words, we would not have armed services. Many people have said that we would have a glorified police force, but I doubt very much whether it would even be that. One hon. member even mentioned that its members could be considered as mercenaries. Is this the position into which hon. gentlemen opposite want to put the members of our armed forces? Do they want them to be called

mercenaries, or to be referred to as a glorified police force? I do not think they do.

The reason hon. gentlemen opposite support the minister at this time is that they do not know the facts any more than we do. I should like to read to them what is said in the introduction to the white paper, and then perhaps they will have second thoughts:

Many of the basic principles that govern Canada's defence policy are constant because they are determined by factors, such as geography and history, which are specific. Others, such as the nature and the magnitude of the threat to peace and security and the development of weapons and weapons technology, change rapidly and drastically. Therefore, defence policy must adapt itself to such changes, while principles remain constant.

That is not happening today under the new policy of the minister, Mr. Chairman. We are afraid that these principles are not going to remain constant. The white paper continues:

That is why it is desirable for the government not only to provide for defence changes when they are necessary, but to keep the public informed of the nature of and the reasons for the new policies.

That is precisely what we are now trying to get the minister to do.

This can be done through White Papers on Defence—

I have told hon. members what is in the white paper.

—debates in the House of Commons—

This is what we are engaged upon now. This is our job as members of parliament representing the people of Canada. We are trying to get information from the minister through debate. Third, it can be done through—

—discussions in parliamentary defence committees—

The minister will not let the bill go there.

—and in many other ways.

The white paper then sets out the objectives:

The objectives of Canadian defence policy, which cannot be dissociated from foreign policy, are to preserve the peace by supporting collective defence measures to deter military aggression;—

If we have not got the forces to support our alliances, then what good are our forces? Our allies certainly do not want policemen, and I am also certain they do not want mercenaries. I continue:

—to support Canadian foreign policy including that arising out of our participation in international organizations, and to provide for the protection and surveillance of our territory, our air-space and our coastal waters.