

*National Defence Act Amendment*

**Mr. Hellyer:** I thought my hon. friend was discussing the policy of six months' notice.

**Mr. Churchill:** Yes, that was not written into the act. What was done was done at pleasure. The minister has written this policy into the bill. All sorts of barrack-room lawyers in the services, with as much ability as anybody in this chamber, will soon discover the flaws in the act.

The minister now appears to be relying on General Moncel; yet a few days ago he dismissed him as a person to whom we should pay no attention. He checked the general out of the service when he had another six years of valuable, experienced service to give to our defence establishment. Obviously the minister adjusts himself to situations. Last summer General Moncel was useless. In this debate the minister said, in so many words, "Ignore General Moncel's advice". Now he says that before General Moncel left the service he favoured the six months' notice policy. In answer to that I can only say that in General Moncel's time the section authorizing that policy was not in the act. It has been written into this bill. I continue quoting from General Moncel's evidence:

We went through this argument in great detail when we had the difficulties with the pilots and the rest of them and we had to buy their services.

As Terence Robertson said in the article I quoted the other night, the minister threw out 500 pilots, disrupting the air force, to show the air force, the service which had been most opposed to unification, that it must not in any way resist the government. According to Terence Robertson, after the 500 pilots were thrown out resistance toward the government subsided in the air force. Having denuded the air force of pilots the minister then had to buy back their services to fill existing needs. As General Moncel says, this is wrong. The general went on to deal with the pilots.

I am talking about men in the services and the proposal that they be enlisted for an indefinite period. The expert advice of Admiral Landymore and of Generals Foulkes and Moncel is that this is not a good idea. I support the hon. member for Calgary North in asking the minister to strike out the word "indefinite" and to leave the subsection as it was before.

I hope the minister will give us examples of co-operation during our debate on this bill. I hope he accepts some of the advice offered to him instead of continuing his pose of resisting suggestions. This is the minister who has said that every member of every chiefs of staff

committee in the world is wrong that only he is right. He has tried to build himself up in Canada as the one who knows, as the only authority on defence matters. He has made himself *de facto* prime minister because the Prime Minister has abdicated in his favour.

I suggest that the hon. gentleman revert to his proper position and show some sense of co-operation in this house. As a first step I suggest he strike out this word "indefinite". I do so for the reason I have mentioned, to enable him to show some measure of co-operation. In the second place I suggest he do it because he has not put forward any real argument in support of retaining this word in the bill. Under the old act he has in effect a fixed term of service with a policy of giving six months' notice. Why cannot that be continued so as to avoid saddling the next minister of national defence with a situation which may be embarrassing and perhaps impossible?

• (12:40 p.m.)

The dangers have been pointed out. If this change is introduced the men in the services may very well get together in large groups, give their six months' notice and then be in a strong bargaining position in that they will be able to say they will get out unless such and such happens. I think this is quite wrong. In my opinion a fixed term of service with the flexibility the minister already has is satisfactory. I hope the next minister of national defence will not be saddled with this proposal. I take my seat making a firm request to the minister to accept a suggestion from this side of the house, and then we might proceed to consider the other clauses of the bill in a very agreeable frame of mind.

**Mr. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, I should like to speak on the same subject for a few moments before the minister replies. At the present time, as I understand it, service in our forces is on a voluntary basis. It will remain on a voluntary basis until this bill is passed. After that service becomes compulsory. I say it will be compulsory because of the word "indefinite" referred to by my hon. friend from Winnipeg South Centre. I should like to read the explanatory note again.

The amendment to subsection (1) is consequential on the amendments made in clause 2. At present men are enrolled in the Canadian Forces for fixed terms of service. The amendment to subsection (2) would authorize their enrolment for indefinite, as well as fixed, periods of service.

Service at the present time is voluntary. But once this amendment is passed the men will be serving under a one-way agreement. I