

*National Defence Act Amendment*

the policies of the minister, or against unification. He said they were all off beam and that he would set the record straight.

I have a lot of admiration for the witnesses who came before the defence committee to give evidence, Mr. Chairman. I have had the privilege of studying much of the evidence given, having read the reports of the standing committee so as to inform myself on this question. I attended meetings of the committee and was present when Air Chief Marshal Miller gave his evidence. I was especially disturbed by the remarks of the hon. member for Kootenay East about Air Chief Marshal Miller, who gave evidence that was acknowledged by all who heard him to be sound.

I should like to refer to an article in the *Globe and Mail* for Wednesday, March 22, which quotes some of the evidence of Air Chief Marshal Miller, and which is as follows:

Air Chief Marshal Miller told the committee that unification, while it might well be the end result of integration would not at present be timely, that more time was needed for the orderly development of the integration process. "I felt that a lot of careful planning was necessary and probably time to educate people was required before the next step of unification". Implementation of the bill could seriously demoralize the forces if it were rushed, the loss of personnel so far had been bad for the forces—

Then he closed by saying that some key men have left.

The hon. member for Kootenay East seemed to throw cold water on the testimony of this witness, so I should like to read what Charles Lynch had to say about it. Charles Lynch characterized him as a most impressive witness. According to his article in the *Ottawa Citizen* for Wednesday, March 22:

Of all the witnesses to oppose the armed forces unification bill, Air Chief Marshal Miller is by far the most impressive. His credentials render unthinkable any attack on his motives—

I should like the hon. member for Kootenay East to reconsider his remarks in light of the statement of one who takes an unbiased position, Charles Lynch. According to Charles Lynch:

His credentials render unthinkable any attack on his motives, and render difficult any reflections on his professional judgment by either Mr. Hellyer or members of his current military entourage.

Later in his article Charles Lynch goes on to say:

Despite the outward loyalty of the current team of top officers to Mr. Hellyer and his program, and despite the call of the current defence chief, General Jean Victor Allard, for speedy unification, there can be no doubt that there are grave misgivings inside national defence headquarters,

and beyond that in the various services and commands.

There is anguish right at the top of the military structure about the rigid positions that have been assumed, creating the impression, as set out in the bill, that the land, sea and air arms of the forces are going to be obliterated.

The simplest solution, and the one that most likely would have been adopted had rigor mortis not set in as stiffly as it has, would be to amend the bill in a way that would preserve the army, navy and air force identities within the proposed unified structure.

With the material I have before me, Mr. Chairman, I have tried to nail to the cross the statements made by the hon. member for Kootenay East in his attempt to discredit Air Chief Marshal Miller, whose testimony was above reproach. He had no motives other than to speak the truth. I may tell the minister and also the hon. member for Kootenay East that my reading of the testimony given by people who were unbiased has convinced me that they, in turn, were speaking from the depths of their own consciences and in the best interests of the people of Canada.

There are others, including the minister, who have had more military experience than I, or more association with military forces. Nevertheless let me tell the minister, in justification of my position, that once I was a corporal. Indeed I became a sergeant and was promoted to lieutenant. I was with the 2nd A.M.R.—Alberta Mounted Rifles—as well as in the Canadian reserve for a couple of years. I was also with the Canadian Officers Training Corps for three or four years. All in all I had an opportunity to learn something, though grant you not too much, about military life. I have the feeling that because of their training in the army and the type of work they are expected to perform in the defence of Canada, those in the army are not suited to be members subject to transfer to the navy or air force, especially, against their wishes.

• (9:10 p.m.)

Also, personnel enlisting will not be able to join the air force, army or navy, which at present are separate services with a long tradition of growth over the years. All countries have separate services, therefore there must be some merit to their separate existence. When we join hands working with the forces of other countries, we fit in with their patterns of working. Other countries have separate forces. The minister intends to obliterate our three separate forces and bring in their stead one unified force. The effects of this must be looked at objectively.