

munities of Yellowknife, Inuvik, Whitehorse, Frobisher Bay, Fort Smith, Hay River and Churchill within the next month to meet and talk with young people coming out of the high schools.

Under this program, initially these young people will go to Cornwallis in Nova Scotia to follow whatever trade they choose. They will be trained in groups and ultimately will move back to the north if they so wish. I believe this is an exciting program that will accomplish a lot of things and will provide an opportunity to develop expertise on the north within the armed forces. It also gives the young people of the north an opportunity to have a career in the armed forces. Following their training and service, many of them may leave the armed forces and use their skills in some other capacity in the north.

There are also other areas in which the armed forces can participate. For example, over the years the Ranger Corps has been a very successful operation. It was developed at the end of World War II and has been kept together primarily by a number of very dedicated officers of the armed forces. However, with Northern Command it seems to me the Ranger Corps should be expanded so as to use the talents and knowledge of northerners for surveillance purposes and to assist the military.

Another area that I hope the minister will take a look at is the use in years to come of young Canadians from the south as part of the armed forces team working during the summer months in the Canadian north carrying out a number of projects. For example, following the end of World War II the United States government abandoned all of its equipment along the Canol pipeline. This has been a disaster in terms of the amount of debris that is scattered along the line. I do not think that at this stage the civilian authority is in a position to divert funds to employ people to clear the area, but this might well provide an opportunity for a number of young Canadians to work on such a project over a period of time. It would enable them to see something of the north while providing a very useful service.

Development of canoe routes and preservation of historical sites are two more endeavours for our young people, under the direction and supervision of the military forces, which would enable them to perform a very useful and functional role in the north in years to come. I suggest that the talents of our young people could also be used in the building of emergency airstrips along, for example, the Mackenzie River valley.

● (4:30 p.m.)

At the present time there are landing strips at certain villages near mining or oil developments. It seems to me that with the increase in tourism in the north, particularly those coming in small aircraft, it is desirable that we have these emergency strips along the Mackenzie River so that in the event of trouble aircraft operators will know they are not far from a landing strip. This could be accomplished in a very simple way by employing groups of young people to work on these airstrips after being trained in the south. It would provide young Canadians with an opportunity of seeing something of the Canadian

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north, and at the same time allow them to serve a useful purpose.

I have indicated that we welcome the armed forces presence in the north. In certain areas there can be a conflict with civil services in terms of engineering projects or aircraft services in relation to search and rescue work. I believe the Canadian north will be a much richer place because of the presence of members of the Canadian armed forces and their families. I am personally very happy to have had the opportunity of participating in this debate, and I wish the armed forces great success north of the sixtieth parallel.

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley): Mr. Speaker, I, too, have great pleasure in taking part in this debate and in seconding the motion of the hon. member for Dartmouth-Halifax East (Mr. Forrestall). This motion will give us a brief opportunity on this Friday afternoon to bring attention to our armed forces and some of the problems the minister faces as we move into the 1970s.

Without re-reading the motion we have before us, let me say to the minister—who is in the House at the moment, although he may not stay until the end of the debate—that had I spoken before him during this debate I would have suggested that many men in the armed services who have experienced many internal battles, including the battle of unification and others, were apprehensive about the appointment of this minister. They were apprehensive because of statements he made about the armed forces before he became Minister of National Defence.

Many of these armed forces personnel know the history of other ministers of national defence, some of whom, it can be suggested, manipulated the role of the armed services. The climate has not been too healthy or constructive. Since the minister assumed the portfolio these apprehensions and concerns have been diluted. Members of the forces, along with parliamentarians, are prepared to give the minister more time before making a decision. We will wait until we see the white paper on defence which was supposed to be placed before Parliament before now.

The minister said earlier that he had some difficulty in communicating any thoughts to myself. I can readily understand that, because at times I think the minister has difficulty in formulating an original thought, let alone communicating it to any hon. member, even this member who always has a receptive ear. I have always been in support of most service operations and I am waiting to see what this new Minister of National Defence is prepared to do.

The purpose of this motion is to articulate some of the concern felt by members on all sides of the House about the emphasis to be placed on defence policy as we head into the 1970s. It was suggested that during this debate the opposition would have an opportunity to put forward a blueprint on national defence. I think this is a rather naïve suggestion. The minister seems to take some satisfaction from the remarks of the hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Roberts) and the hon. member for Green-