

National Defence Act Amendment

from its army. It would seem, however, that the present government does not care to take cognizance of this lesson of 400 years historical standing and is planning to make the same mistake as was made during the period of Philip II, thus putting naval and military organization back at least four centuries.

These are some of the thoughts I have had on the question of unification and the bill before us. There are one or two other arguments which are set out in an excellent series of newspaper articles written by the publisher of the *Winnipeg Free Press*, Mr. R. S. Malone. The former colonel makes his points so eloquently and well that I would not presume to try to improve upon them and I ask the indulgence of the committee to put one or two of his conclusions on the record. Mr. Malone was the author of a series of articles which appeared on the editorial pages of the *Winnipeg Free Press* during August, 1966. In the course of preliminary articles in the series he drew attention to two or three of essential errors in the program of unification now being undertaken by members of the government. In one of these articles toward the conclusion of the series he wrote:

It is considered by many qualified observers that by sacrificing regimental spirit and identification Canada will lose far more than she can gain in dollar economies or efficiency by forcing integration down to the level of combat units, either army, navy or air force.

● (6:10 p.m.)

As indicated in the earlier articles, England, although adopting a degree of integration after a serious study of the factors, has stated that regimental identification of combat units will be preserved as an absolute essential to morale.

Recently New Zealand has also considered this subject and come to the same conclusions regarding combat units. In a white paper this year—

That would be 1966.

—it states that while they accept the fact of unification of such facilities as supply, personnel, administration and other support areas and standard procedures, in supply depots separate identities will be retained in the combat units.

The same situation exists in the United States where an increasing effort is now being made to create and expand on regimental identification. To quote the U.S. Secretary for the Air Force, "men have functioned most effectively as members of an identifiable group. The spirit of unity . . . of brotherhood . . . is enhanced by tradition, pride in one's organization and by a distinctive uniform which is a mark of membership.

The value of esprit de corps cannot be measured with precision. No price tag can be placed on it, yet we all recognize its intrinsic contribution in the quality of our armed forces. It is the heart of the true fighting force.

We should not tamper with that precious esprit de corps, that sense of identification, by immersing it in a vast agglomeration of a single service."

As I have said, Mr. Chairman, these points are made in what I and many others consider to be a profound series of articles on the question of integration and unification. I know that the minister himself considered it a profound and reasoned series of articles, although obviously he and Mr. Malone take different points of view. But I felt it valuable to place one or two contributions from Mr. Malone's editorials on the record and in the context which I have offered them because I think they state the case for retention of individual identity at the combat level far more eloquently than I could do myself.

That brings me to an allied subject which I presume is covered under the aegis and umbrella of the debate in which we are involved at the moment. I want to say one or two words about the area of our international commitments which is inextricably tied to our defence posture, defence planning, and defence deliberations in this committee. With respect to the change in our defence system and the make-up of our armed forces being contemplated by members of the committee, I would ask whether or not this country, in the view of the Minister of National Defence and of the government, is embarked on a path for Canada of professional neutralism? If we are embarked on such a path are we sure we are right in going in that direction?

The question of collective security in the world and of our commitments under collective security accords into which we have entered must be paramount in our consideration and reasoning as we address ourselves to this proposed legislation. It seems to me that the legislation as drafted and proposed envisions some kind of world where there will never be another conventional war, at least not one in which Canada will be involved. It seems to me that it takes for granted that the era of war in the classical sense, in the historic sense, war as we have known it so painfully in the lifetimes of all of us in this committee, has come to an end, and the only kind of war with which we may be confronted in the future is one of two types, either a total thermonuclear holocaust which will not permit of any kind of protracted hostilities, or a type of brushfire war, the type of police action war in which many of our troops and units have been engaged in recent years under the flag of the United Nations.

I hope that if we make that decision, sir, we will have considered all the possibilities for the future. I hope we are possessed of a