

*Interim Supply*

justifiably be presented to the people for decision. Indeed, it criticized the minister's speeches for making the darkness even thicker and for his conclusion that unification logically follows from integration. The editorial concluded that the risk of plunging the country into a general election on an issue that not even the Minister of National Defence can make comprehensible would be one of the most incoherent acts of political fumbling that the country has ever known. This is a position with which many people in Canada would agree. Indeed, the minister is not certain where we are going nor in what direction we are heading.

On November 8 the *Ottawa Journal* pointed out in an editorial that from the inception in 1964 of the government's plan to unify the armed forces it had no fundamental objection to that intention, however vaguely it might have been spelled out in the white paper. The editorial writer goes on to suggest that perhaps a country in Canada's position should unify its defence forces not only for economy but for efficiency. However, he objects to the arrogant methods now employed by the government in refusing to send the unification bill to a committee prior to second reading in the house. He goes on to suggest that the opposition would understandably have liked to have some basic reasons why the government is set upon unification as a logical conclusion to integration. He points out that there is widespread demand for such an examination of unification. It was right to seek an expression of principle before going into detail but, that being refused, the decision should not withhold second reading for too long. If the minister is adamant, then perhaps we should let the bill come forward for second reading if in the final analysis this is the only way in which we can obtain the necessary information.

On November 5 the *Ottawa Citizen* in its leading editorial saw fit to take members of parliament to task for wasting time on what the editorial writer described as emotional and irrelevant matters during the debate concerning unification of the armed forces. The editorial went on to say:

Unfortunately, most of the debate during the past few days has been limited to character assassination, the role former admirals are or are not playing in partisan politics, and similar wholly extraneous issues. The legislation now introduced offers parliament an opportunity to redeem itself, to lift the debate above the vulgar level hitherto pursued, and to discuss questions that are of genuine concern to the nation.

23033—625½

• (9.10 p.m.)

On November 8 the *Ottawa Citizen*, while supporting the minister on the constitutional principle that the examination of details can only take place after approval is given in principle on second reading, pointed out that the house was master of its own procedures and that there had been occasions in the past when the subject matter of a bill was referred to a committee after first reading. The editor felt there would be some merit in sending this particular bill to the committee on national defence in view of its complexity and because it has aroused such widespread criticism and complaint. He went on to point out that if the minister was confident of his case he should have asked the defence committee to consider immediately the subject matter of the bill.

In the *Toronto Globe and Mail* of November 7, 1966, an editorial writer expressed the view that the opposition parties in the House of Commons will have a vitally important part to play in consideration of the minister's bill. The editorial mentioned the willingness on the part of the Conservatives—here again they are taking a bit of a whack at our efforts—to let this debate be led down the by ways of bitterness. This has been overcome. The issues with which we are now trying to deal are primarily those of principle.

In the editorial the writer calls for a most thorough and public discussion of the implications of the minister's bill to show the valid and urgent reasons the matter should be referred to the defence committee prior to second reading. The editorial questions the curious pledge written into the legislation which allowed an officer or man to serve, except in case of emergency, in a combat environment similar to that for which he had enlisted. It says that there are indeed a number of very valid and serious questions about the merits and otherwise of this particular bill.

The *Toronto Telegram* of November 5, 1966, generally agreed with the government's unification policy but took exception to the proposed new designation of the armed forces which it felt should be the "Royal Canadian Armed Forces." It objected to the minister's attempt to assuage the sensibilities of some of the present service personnel by allowing them to retain their old rank designation. What the editorial writer was attempting to present to his readers was the need for a detailed examination at this particular time and not after approval in principle.

The *Toronto Star* of November 2, 1966, editorially regretted the political fun that was