

*National Defence Act Amendment*

strip to separate Israel and Egypt. Of course, prior to that we had the Korean war, but that was hardly a peace keeping effort. It was a full blown war. If Canada's armed forces are converted exclusively to a police force function, it means that we lose our influence as contributors to peace keeping forces; we lose our influence as a middle power. This influence has been built up over a number of years during the course of Canada's history, largely because of the nature of the contributions Canada's armed forces have made in world conflicts in this generation. We had no political objectives; we had no desire for military aggrandisement or political aggrandisement. Our sole objective in participating in the world wars of this century has been the preservation of our free way of life.

Our contributions have been made at tremendous cost of Canadian lives, Canadian manpower and Canadian resources. This contribution was made without any ulterior motive whatever. It was on this basis that we have been able to serve in the United Nations councils as a middle power, accepted by both sides in the power struggle that has gone on in the world since the end of world war II. In addition, we are going to lose our moral influence. While this is intangible, I would submit that it has been the source of Canada's strength in the United Nations and in other military and international organizations. The moral factor of Canada's willingness to serve without any nationalistic desires or objectives of her own has been important.

Once we convert our armed force to a glorified police force, we have to depend on somebody for our security. It is not good enough, Mr. Speaker, to say we cannot defend ourselves in any case in the face of the threat of nuclear weapons and a global conflict. This gainsays the main issue, the issue that is the number one priority, and that is the security and defence of our own shores. This is the fundamental function of our armed forces. If we reduce our armed force to a police force, then we automatically surrender a substantial part of our sovereignty and we come under the military aegis of our powerful neighbour to the south.

If we are under the aegis of the United States in any shape or form, if we surrender our military sovereignty, it would be just as disastrous as surrendering our economic sovereignty, a subject which is racking the government at the present time. It seems to me there is an inconsistency in policy in this respect. This denotes a general confusion at

the level of government policy which has produced so much uncertainty across the nation.

In so far as our major obligations to NATO are concerned, and no doubt the minister will be discussing this in the defence committee, I fail to see how a unified force, particularly a single service force as it is conceived by the minister, will fit into the structure of our obligations under the NATO organization. Perhaps the minister can see it, but the rest of us cannot see it. We are proceeding at this reckless, breakneck speed even before NATO has determined the force requirements that will be necessary in the future. As I understand it, the minister, in reports following NATO meetings, has not yet been informed that there have been any decisions concerning what the NATO forces requirements will be. In spite of this, we are proceeding with this radical, structural reorganization, in the direction of the single force which obviously will make it impossible for us to continue to meet our obligations under the NATO treaty.

I should like to move on to another subject with which the minister has concerned himself recently, other than service unification. He has been making statements on urban policy, and his philosophy in meeting the problems of urbanization is the reverse of his philosophy in meeting the problems of defence organization in the face of a rapidly changing society, technological revolution and so forth. The minister favours decentralization and dispersal. He is afraid that centralization, the trend toward bigness, the trend toward monolithic unity, which is the natural trend in the sort of world in which we live, is contrary to the best interests of a rationally organized urban community and will foster problems of social confusion and social disorganization.

● (9:30 p.m.)

I agree with the minister in his concept of meeting the obvious problems of urbanization in the urban communities across Canada, and I would ask him to apply the same philosophy to the concept of armed forces organization, where he insists you must have solidarity always. Certainly firing anyone who disagrees with unification, or monolithic unity, is not the way to get a rational and intelligent defence force.

With regard to the three services in the armed forces, I am not so much concerned about the uniform problem or the rank problem. Regardless of how loudly the minister declaims that this concept will become the model for armed forces around the world and