



## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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THE CANADIAN SERVICE COLLEGES

An address by Hon. Brooke Claxton,  
Minister of National Defence, at the  
Opening of Royal Military College,  
Kingston, on Monday, September 20, 1948.

The opening of any educational institution is always a great occasion. That this is generally appreciated is shown by the attendance here of heads of universities, the Chiefs of Staff and Chairman of the Defence Research Board, other high ranking officers, outstanding members of this community and particularly graduates of R.M.C.

There is here today also a tie with the foundation of the College in 1876 in the person of the oldest living graduate and the only survivor of the original class of 1876, Major-General A. Bowen Perry, C.M.G. As Number 13 on the College roll, 72 years ago he began here his distinguished career of service and we are happy and honoured to have him with us. At the Royal Military College at Duntroon in Australia I saw the grave of his classmate, Major-General Sir W.T. Bridges, K.C.B., C.M.G., who founded Duntroon. I also saw the Lafferty Cup for athletic competition which Duntroon won in 1938 and which one day you must bring back to Canada.

This is a rebirth as well as the opening of a new educational institution. Until its work as a cadet college was suspended during the war, a total of 2,788 students were numbered on its rolls in these old historic buildings. More than 2,500 saw service on battlefields in every corner of the world. Many gave distinguished service to their country in other ways, in war and in peace.

We renew here a great tradition marked by the resumption of the roll of numbers of the cadets. The last in 1942 was #2828; the first today at Royal Roads is #2829.

I have spoken of tradition. It is something to which we instinctively aspire and which we treasure in our most honoured institutions. You may remember the students' notice board of a western university on which there was this notice, "It is a tradition that freshmen will not walk across the campus. This tradition will begin next Monday". Real traditions are born of steadfast endeavour, and what we want to see here is that all the good and hard-won values that R.M.C. hands down to its newest recruits are cultivated and cherished. The generations of cadets to come will be deeply affected by what you do now.

You are here to continue your education. Education means a good deal more than the acquisition of a skill. Any intelligent person can be taught law, or medicine or military science. This, however,

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represents but a small part of education. A high degree of specialized knowledge can be useless or even dangerous unless its owner is taught to apply it in the interests of the community. In other words, education must bring with it a sense of responsibility as a citizen. That is why we believe good officers must first of all be good citizens, useful and respected members of their community.

Today the need for good officers is obvious. Every newspaper brings word of tension and uncertainty. To a greater degree than ever before in peacetime, we in Canada recognize the necessity of having armed forces. On that account, we are spending today more than ten times as much as the average in the ten years before the Second World War and our active forces are seven times as large. That victory has not brought peace is to be deplored, but it is perfectly evident that we cannot meet the situation merely by deploring it. War is not inevitable but neither is peace certain, and until it is, no self-respecting country, particularly one with the record as well as the resources of Canada, can afford to ignore her defences.

The nature of modern war has not yet changed nearly as much as the more fanciful writers and journalists have said, but it has changed and is changing. Applied knowledge has opened new horizons of defence and attack.

To give you some idea of the complexity of modern weapons, I may tell that not long ago we bought a single gun which cost \$600,000. Invention, engineering and industrial skill have multiplied man's striking power many times since the First Great War. In an average division there is one motor vehicle for every four men, one wireless set to each ten or twelve. Soldiers competent to handle such weapons require inspired leadership but it must be more highly trained than ever before. More than half the members of all the services are highly trained specialists and tradesmen.

The Armed Services now include a complex of educational institutions and training establishments. Here in Kingston we have the National Defence College where senior officers and civilians study security problems in relation to other aspects of national policy. Here also is the Staff College where officers have special training in the various duties of command. Across Canada there are schools for each of the twelve Corps - infantry, armour, medicals, engineers and so on. There are corresponding schools for specialists and tradesmen in the Navy and the Air Force. Why, we even have nursery schools and primary schools for the children of service personnel at isolated centres.

Every year we send a considerable number of officers back to the universities for postgraduate work, a total today of 186. Another 276 officers and men in the three services are attending universities as undergraduates.

It is not surprising that we should lay special emphasis on the training of officers. We emphasize this more, I believe, in Canada than in any other country because we know that we cannot have a large standing army and our personnel in the active and reserve forces must be qualified to act as the nucleus for the administration and training of very much larger forces should the necessity arise.

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There are several sources for officers. We have carefully worked out arrangements whereby university students are trained for commissions both in the Permanent and Reserve forces. Similarly, selected men from the ranks are trained either at the Service Colleges or universities. A number of vacancies have been kept for veterans who are completing their education at the universities. There are also flexible arrangements whereby candidates may achieve the same standards by training at local headquarters combined with practical work at the various corps schools.

In all these arrangements every one of the universities of Canada is co-operating in the most helpful and constructive way. They are doing this because they regard it as a work of national service and I would like to express to them the appreciation and thanks of the government.

As the war neared its end the question arose as to what should be the role of R.M.C. and Royal Roads in the post war establishment. There were many alternatives and different views and the matter was studied by the government and the Services for many months. In December 1946, as Minister for the three Services, I was charged with the responsibility of unifying the Department and as far as possible co-ordinating the work of the Services. The government felt that the fact that combined operations under unified command was necessary to win the war was a lesson which must be applied in peacetime. You can imagine that this gave a rather wide field for operations. There was a great deal to be done. I felt that it was desirable that any cadet college training men for the defence of this country should be on a tri-service basis, that the segregation of services into compartments should not be started at the age of 17 or 18. If officers of the three Services got on a first name basis from the day of their entering their cadet schools, there was more hope that they would be on speaking terms when they became admirals and generals and air marshals. After a good deal of consideration by the service chiefs and myself, I appointed as chairman of an inter-service committee, Air Vice Marshal Stedman, C.B., O.B.E., who since his retirement had taken a very active interest in the work of Carleton College. Air Vice Marshal Stedman and other officers visited the officer training establishments in England and the United States. This committee and myself also received helpful representations from representatives of the R.M.C. Club.

In consequence, the Stedman Committee reported to me and with the Chiefs of Staff and other officers, we worked out the arrangements under which R.M.C. and Royal Roads are opening today.

We are hopeful that they will, with the other plans to which I have referred, produce the highest type of officer and the best kind of citizen.

In entrance requirements, curriculum, conditions of work and every other respect, both colleges are on the same basis. Together they are known as the Canadian Service Colleges.

For the first two years the courses will be the same at both and will be the equivalent of the first two years of an Arts course at a university with additional engineering subjects. At the end of two years cadets going into the executive and marine engineering branches of the Navy will go on for special naval training. All others will proceed to finish their course at R.M.C. where the curriculum and standards will be arranged to give the equivalent in general education of an Arts degree, as well as the standard required to enter the fourth year in engineering

at a university. Men electing to enter the technical branches of the active forces and having the required qualifications will be taken on strength at the end of their third academic year and will be sent to the universities to obtain the degree most closely related to the work of their service.

All cadets from both colleges will do practical work with their services during the summer months on exactly the same terms as the students doing summer work under the C.O.T.C., U.N.T.D. or Flying Cadet Plans.

In this way we believe it should be impossible for a cleavage to develop between the officer products of the Service Colleges and those of the universities. There should be a healthy emulation between them. They should learn to know and like each other. The products of the two groups of institution, the Service Colleges and the universities, should march in the ranks of the active forces and reserves in step and in harmony with each other.

Moreover, the fact that both groups, those from the universities and those from the Service Colleges, will be trained with active force personnel at one or other of the Corps schools and Service establishments across the country will have the advantage of mixing up men of every race and class and part of Canada. The advantage of this was particularly emphasized at Valcartier where I saw active and reserve officers and cadets and men of both languages instructing and learning in two languages throughout the period of their summer training. It was one of the best possible demonstrations of the partnership of the two races.

Since my appointment I have emphasized the importance of a knowledge of both English and French to all Canadians, but particularly those in the armed forces. Obviously an officer possessing both languages has an advantage in exercising leadership and command, in getting along with his fellows in peace or war, in access to additional knowledge and in work as liaison officers, military attachés and the like. Accordingly, French and English are both compulsory subjects at both colleges for the first three years. That, however, is not enough. I urge staffs and cadets to see to it that by one means or another they learn to speak both languages fluently before the end of their course.

In all the work at the Service Colleges we shall set high standards. The only thing more expensive than education is ignorance. We want to have nothing second rate about our armed forces. They cannot be large and so they must be good, and how good they are will depend on the quality of their officers. The quality of the generals of the future, the success or failure of our armies, should they ever have to be used, depend on the quality of the young men I see before me today and on the training that they receive here and in the services afterwards. You may remember the saying attributed to Wellington, "I don't know any bad regiments: I only know bad commanding officers."

Having visited virtually every naval, military and air establishment across Canada during the past eighteen months, I want to tell you that I have been impressed with the quality of the officers and men in the forces today.

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The qualities required in the soldier today are very different from those when Napoleon Bonaparte is reported to have said: "The worse the man, the better the soldier. If soldiers are not corrupt, they ought to be made so"; or in the saying of Bernard Shaw: "When the military man approaches, the world locks up its spoons and packs off its womankind". Our establishments at Halifax and Esquimalt, at Borden and Barrieffield, at Trenton and Centralia, are establishments where you will find all the amenities and relationships of a good community. Our purpose is to train good citizens because they make the best soldiers.

Here too I would like to emphasize that there should never be a dividing line between civilians and members of the armed services. All are citizens, all owe a duty to the country, all serve the country in one way or another. Members of the active forces serve Canada all the time and in a special role and as such should receive the respect and support of their fellow citizens.

On the other hand, you sailors, soldiers or airmen must never lose sight of your solidarity with all your fellow-Canadians - after all, civilians are indispensable. You are soldiers in their service. Your greatest aim must be to strive for the time when men of different nations work together in security so effectively as to make your existence unnecessary.

The qualities we seek here are the qualities sought by all good teaching establishments. We shall insist on thoroughness and industry to achieve high standards. But more than this, we shall expect you to show and develop qualities of character over and above those usually expected of men of your age. The qualities of the good sailor, soldier or airman are all the qualities of the good citizen and in particular the essentials of leadership, high morale and courage.

While we want citizens of broad culture and soldiers of high professional standing, we must never forget that the greatest need and the highest quality is the quality of leadership, that imponderable thing which comes from the exercise of responsibility, from physical and mental vigour, from the determination to exercise your will, from the practice and habit of command, and from a sense of dedication to a high purpose, the service of Canada.

We shall expect you to have a high morale. Morale comes from pride in your college, your service and your country and faith in yourselves; it comes too from the knowledge that you belong to a unit capable of a good job. Morale is really the result of efficiency and it is built up when everyone does everything just as well as he can and knows that he is going to succeed. Morale produces and is the product of success.

And courage is developed as a combination of all these things; it really comes more than anything else from successful exercise in effort, from graduating from one thing to another, so that success comes almost to be an inevitable result of a long repeated habit.

These qualities can be cultivated by anyone but they are best developed in a society of like-minded people of perfect physical fitness, good character and high purpose, who are working together in bonds of confidence and mutual respect and spurred on by enthusiasm. These qualities never result where there is fear and uncertainty and division. They will not result from unrecognized disciplines the reports of which, although usually exaggerated, have brought discredit on the names of some institutions. Those will not be tolerated here for a second. Let there be no mistake about that. The discipline here will be the discipline of the

services and the college and not of a clique or a class. What we want here is good training and hard work to meet the highest standards of private conduct and public responsibility.

You are indeed fortunate to be starting in what should be a great teaching institution, something more than a successful experiment in work and service together. Your work and careers here lie ahead of you. Yours is the future, I envy you your youth because you have more years than I have left to serve our country. I wish you luck.

Brigadier Agnew, it is with a very great sense of pride and responsibility that I re-open this old college and with it these new avenues of opportunity. As a soldier and ex-cadet you know the best traditions of the past. I am confident that you and those working with you and the cadets, building on these traditions, will bring this great old institution to even higher standards of service. It is a great opportunity. I am sure that you will meet it.