

Within this general framework, we have had to take cognizance of the high cost of maintaining a meaningful Canadian contribution in these areas in circumstances where the pace of technological development carries with it increasing hazards of obsolescence. We have, therefore, embarked on a programme which is designed to improve the flexibility and mobility of our forces and to lead to the progressive integration of the three armed services. The substance of that programme was set out in our Defence White Paper of 1964. Its object is to ensure the most effective use of our military resources in relation to the three basic elements which I have just mentioned.

As far as the future is concerned, there are a number of uncertainties looming on the horizon which we shall need to take into account and which will have a bearing on the balance we strike, at any given stage, in meeting our responsibilities in the North Atlantic area, in North American continental defence and in peace keeping under the United Nations.

In Europe, there has been a welcome improvement in the capacity of the Western European members of the Alliance to assume a greater share of the responsibility for the common defence effort. The Alliance is also engaged in a comprehensive defence review. While that review is still in progress, the results could have a bearing on the nature of the role of Canadian forces in the Western European theatre over the longer term. I want to make it quite clear, however, because there has been misinterpretation of the Canadian position in some quarters recently, that, in the absence of durable political settlements, we regard the continued participation of North American land and air power in the defence of Western Europe as both vital and inescapable. That is the position of the Canadian Government, although we cannot, of course, afford to shut our eyes to the implications of other points of view that are being put forward.

In North America Canadian defence, co-operation with the United States goes back nearly a quarter of a century, to the historic Ogdensburg Declaration of 1941. This co-operation was further consolidated in 1958 with the establishment of the North America Air Defence Command. Like yourselves, we are constantly reviewing how we can most effectively contribute to continental defence arrangements, given the declining threat of the manned bomber and the uncertainties surrounding anti-missile defence.

As regards peace keeping, Canada has been a major supporter of that conception as it has evolved in the United Nations over the past two decades. We look upon the evolution of that conception as reflecting the will and determination of the world community to work towards a peaceful and securely ordered world. We think it is both right and useful for the United Nations to be able, with the consent and at the invitation of its member states, to interpose its presence in situations of conflict or potential conflict - to hold the ring, as it were, until longer-term solutions can be worked out at the political level.

Canada has participated in every peace-keeping operation undertaken by the United Nations since 1948. We have set aside standby forces within our military establishment, to be at the disposal of the United Nations at