

Defence of Canada against direct attack

As has been said many times, if a war should come, the government believes that the best place to defend Canada would be as far away from our shores as possible. Consequently, everything we do for the collective defence is done for the defence of Canada herself. But to make that possible, we must do what is feasible to make this continent secure from attack.

Russian medium bombers of the B-29 type could reach pretty well any part of North America on a one-way trip and, under certain conditions, reach some parts of North America and return. This being the case, it is quite likely that in a general war Russia would launch bombing attacks against North America either with atomic or conventional weapons.

There is no way of making a continent of seven million square miles impregnable or impenetrable with a kind of aerial Maginot line. Radar and fighters, combined in a heroic team, won the battle of Britain; but despite the heavy concentration of air defences in that small area, many enemy aircraft got through.

To meet the possibility of air attack, our services are working in close co-operation with the United States. A screen of stations with the latest and most powerful radar apparatus is being built, connected with a network of communications and backed up by squadrons of fighters. The American and Canadian chains will be linked together to form a single system, of which about one-quarter will be in Canada.

If the question is asked why this radar and fighter defence is not already fully operational, it is because the radar, the type of communications selected and the aircraft - the F-86 Sabre and the CF-100 Canuck - have only recently been developed and have not yet been produced in the numbers required. As fast as aircraft can be produced, regular and auxiliary fighter squadrons will be manned and equipped to war strength. In the interim, the R.C.A.F. has mobile radar sets and Vampire and Mustang fighters.

To supplement these air defences the army has a large stock of heavy anti-aircraft guns to be manned by active and reserve force personnel.

In addition to attack by air, it might be possible for an enemy to land airborne troops by a surprise attack on an airfield or by parachute. To meet this possibility the Canadian army has a specially-trained airborne brigade group. For much the same purpose the United States has similar but larger formations. It is noteworthy that none of these formations was moved to Korea because they were specially trained and earmarked for this particular type of continental defence.

In support of the regular forces and to take action to prevent sabotage are the reserve forces as well as the R.C.M.P. and other police.

In continental defence the navy is responsible for the protection of coastal sea lanes and shipping against enemy action, including mines, and for the vital task of keeping our harbours and approaches open. Ships and