

*Supply—National Defence*

must use atomic weapons, whether they are so-called tactical or strategic. It is very difficult to draw the line.

These are the words of the NATO commander in chief, General Norstad. They apply, presumably, to all the forces under his command.

On March 5 last the commander of the Canadian brigade was visited by a correspondent for the *Globe and Mail*, and these words were attributed to Brigadier Cameron: Our defence plans—

Presumably these are Canadian defence plans.

—are based on the nuclear weapon.

But I assume that the Canadian brigade has now no nuclear capability. I have no reason to believe, the minister can correct me if I am wrong, that it has any authority from the government to use such weapons if it possessed them. I would be grateful if the minister would clear up these very important points about the relationship of our Canadian forces in Europe to the use of nuclear weapons which General Norstad, the commander of NATO, says are absolutely essential for the effective operation and defence of these forces.

I apologize again to the committee, and I appreciate its patience, but I should like to close by saying a few words about what I think are some of the principles which should guide Canadian policies on defence at the present time. The minister dealt with some of these this morning. I certainly have no dogmatic view on matters so complex or matters concerning which, as I have already indicated, we in the opposition have not the access—I do not complain about this—to all the information which the minister has. I do not know all the answers, but I should like to get as much information as possible upon which, as a Canadian, I can base my answers to these questions.

In the first place—I believe, I have said this already more than once in my statement—I believe in collective security as strongly as I ever did. But I am worried about collective security becoming more and more continental and less and less Atlantic. I believe this should be the foundation of our policy, as indeed the minister indicated it was in his statement.

I believe in the strongest possible support for a permanent United Nations peace force to carry out United Nations decisions, to police armistice settlements, as he said in his statement this morning, and patrol danger areas to prevent small conflicts deteriorating into large wars.

Pending agreement at the United Nations for such a permanent force, and there are

great obstacles there in the way of this development, I see no reason at all against, and many reasons for, following a course by which Canada could negotiate with other middle powers for the organization and equipment of such a force, based on a treaty relationship, which force would be made available to the United Nations on request by an assembly decision. I believe that as an integral part of our defence policy appropriate Canadian forces should be trained and equipped for such international peace preserving service as this.

I believe that for this purpose perhaps we should have a brigade group which would be entirely airborne, air transported with all its equipment in an emergency. Certainly, the R.C.A.F. would have a big new part to play in that kind of development. Furthermore, I think that land and air forces should continue to be made available to NATO as part of a collective, and I hope it will be a genuinely collective effort.

Having said that, I should like to add that in my view NATO strategy and planning must be made effective in a way which gives its members enough strength in Europe to defend western Europe against an aggression without having to rely on every occasion on massive nuclear retaliation by the United States, the effect of which, as I said, would be to convert every limited war into nuclear suicide. I believe Canada should insist—perhaps insist is too strong a word—Canada should do its best to bring about the acceptance of NATO strategy and strength based on a balance of collective forces to which each NATO member makes a fair contribution, and for which each accepts NATO control and authority over its forces through the NATO command. I feel that this control and command should be extended over the whole NATO area. I know, as well as the minister knows, the difficulty in bringing that about, but I believe it is an objective which we should keep pressing to achieve.

I believe Canada's continued participation in NATO forces in Europe should be under continuous examination in the light of the progress made in achieving this objective. As long as our present forces remain in Europe they should know the role that they are to play in an agreed and acceptable strategy, and they must be given the most effective equipment with which to play it. It was for this reason we on this side were gratified to hear the minister say this morning that the government had decided to re-equip the air division. I am not in a position to comment on whether this new equipment is the best that could be obtained. I do not even know exactly what the purpose of the air division will be. The minister