

8. I drew attention to our programme of re-equipping the Brigade Group in Germany and indicated that we were giving high priority to its completion. This programme includes, for example, a substantial number of new reconnaissance vehicles, some new counter-mortar radars, a large number of new wheeled vehicles, and completion of the stockpiling of certain kinds of ammunition.

9. I pointed out that our reserve forces would be enhanced through improvements in training facilities and increased training intensity, and that we intended to continue the training of reserve personnel with the Brigade in Europe.

10. I announced that we had decided to participate in the 1969 exercise of the NATO ACE Mobile Force (Land) in the northern regions of Norway, as we had done on two previous occasions. We shall be providing a battalion group for this exercise, and we shall at this time also practice the strategic air and sea operational deployment of the unit to Norway.

11. Finally, I stated that we had deferred the final decision regarding our planned 20 percent reduction in the number of aircraft in the Air Division in Germany. I might add that, in private discussions with several of my NATO colleagues, I learned that Canada's reassurance regarding the Air Division was particularly appreciated.

12. To clear up one or two misconceptions about the Air Division, I should like to remind you that the CF-104-equipped squadrons are dual-capable, and we have available now in Europe stocks of conventional ordnance for these aircraft. They are capable of making an effective contribution to the strategy of flexible response adopted by NATO a year ago. This is a conception that we support in principle and one that we have catered for in our committed forces. The Canadian Air Division is among the finest in NATO, and I should not hesitate to stand it beside any such formation in the world. Our CF-104 pilots, supported by the whole of the complex organization of the Air Division, have repeatedly taken the honours at NATO training competitions. The same applies to our ground forces in EUROPE — there are none better. When I spoke in Brussels, I mentioned that our military forces are all professionals, and I assured our allies that we are maintaining them at their high standard of equipment, training, and operational readiness.

13. On the defence side, the main purpose of the meeting two weeks ago was to reaffirm alliance resolve, in the aftermath of the Czech crisis, to stand together against aggression directed at any of its members, and to consult on specific measures being taken to ensure that the necessary defences are maintained. Canada joined with the other members of the alliance both in reaffirming this intention and in maintaining and improving Canada's defence contribution as I have outlined to you.

14. While I am before you, I should like to say a word or two about Canadian security in relation to NATO. The major threat to the security of Canada and the Canadian people comes from the prospect of an intercontinental