

war, stating that a manned U.S.S.R. bomber over North America would only be possible if the Russians were crazy. They said, that of course, this is not the case.

As I said, we live in a missile age. A manned bomber attack would involve a couple of hours' transport from bases in Europe or the U.S.S.R. to North America. The important thing is the means of detection. If the attack were detected a matter of hours before it actually happened, targets in the American strategic arsenal would be removed and the defence prepared. Suppose, however, that the Russians did attempt a first strike. They have not now, and are not likely to have in the near future, the means of destroying the American retaliatory power. Swift retribution destroying the U.S.S.R. as a civilized community would follow even a successful first strike. A first strike capability cannot prevent a retaliatory attack in which all the cities of the U.S.S.R., and the strategic bases would be wiped out. This has been recognized both in the United States and the U.S.S.R.

Brian Cuthbertson, writing in "Canadian Military Independence in the Age of the Superpower," published in Toronto in 1977, says, at page 81:

—it appears fairly certain that Soviet strategy sees only a small role for the long-range bomber and for the U.S. anti-bomber defence has become a strategically redundant role.

That is really saying in round-about language what I have been trying to say. It is a waste of money because it has no purpose from the military point of view. He goes on to say that the United States plans to reduce its present 405 interceptors to 212 F-106s by the mid-1980s. At page 87, he refers to the strategic redundancy of anti-bomber defence.

● (2042)

Mr. James Schlesinger, who was the United States Secretary for Defence, visited Ottawa in September, 1975. That was for the express purpose of consulting about Canada's role in the alliance. He saw the then minister of National Defence, the hon. member for Winnipeg South (Mr. Richardson), and the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau).

According to the report which I have, dated September 27, 1975, he played down the Soviet bomb threat and urged Canada instead to beef up its forces and equipment in Europe. To use his own words, well equipped ground forces in Europe would be the most illustrious contribution Canada could make to western security.

In 1977, Mr. Cuthbertson wrote about the weaknesses of NORAD in the following words. He referred to the vulnerability of its installation to destruction by missiles, its poor capability in the detection of low level flights and lack of capability against bombers launching missiles outside the interceptor range.

These circumstances demonstrate that the defence of North America depends upon maintenance by the United States of a retaliatory force, either in fixed sites, ICBMs, which may become vulnerable—they have not yet, but they may—or in submarines equipped with missiles which are not now, and are

*The Budget—Mr. Brewin*

not likely in the foreseeable future, to become vulnerable. This submarine-based force exists and is not likely to be substantially reduced by technical changes for many years to come.

It is suggested by some that the Russian development of the backfire bomber has changed all this. The Russians presently have 50 backfire bombers in commission, according to the International Institute of Strategic Studies Military Balance for 1978-79. That is not a great many.

They lack intercontinental range, but with a compatible tanker force can be refueled in flight. It would not be correct or fair to say they could not reach North America directly. They are also capable of flying below radar detection. Cuthbertson suggests that when employed with a tanker force, they would have a "peripheral role". However that may be, there are two main defences: the first is the same as the defence against any manned bomber, namely the impossibility of destroying an effective retaliatory force and therefore the assurance that the use of such bombers would provoke a retaliation which would destroy the U.S.S.R. as a functioning society. The second is that efforts could be made to improve the detection capacity of defence forces in North America.

It is sometimes said that Canada's commitments under NORAD, while strategically useless, are justifiable on political grounds. When this question of the political grounds is pressed, it appears that the political ground is the view that the United States desires the continuing of NORAD and of the Canadian contribution to a fighter anti-bomber.

There is no evidence to support this. Indeed, the view expressed by Mr. Schlesinger is exactly the opposite of this, as is the down-grading of the American interceptors to a secondary role.

When pressed for positive evidence, neither the former minister of National Defence nor the present President of Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen), who was then Secretary of State for External Affairs, could give any basis whatever for their statement that the United States was anxious that the NORAD arrangement be continued. Indeed, the former minister of National Defence in the committee on external affairs, said that his belief was based on a conversation with an unnamed person at NATO and was not supported by any documents or evidence whatsoever. The same is true of the similar claim asserted by the then Secretary of State for External Affairs, now President of Privy Council. It would indeed be a strange surrender of Canadian judgment if we were to be governed in our views of policy by a non-existent, non-proven political view that the United States desired Canada to maintain this role, in view of their own actions and their own words and the clear indication that an anti-bomber is strategically redundant in their eyes.

It is to be noted that I have concentrated my remarks on the defence of North America and not on the need for air protection for our troops committed under NATO in Europe. We, in this party, fully recognize that whatever we may think of NATO, Canada is committed and Canadian troops are committed to that theatre. We must give them all necessary support. However, it does not appear that what is needed to strengthen NATO is a provision of sophisticated fighters by