

Canada's defence capabilities to be improved to meet commitments

The Canadian Cabinet has agreed in principle that the Canadian Armed Forces should be able to meet and sustain their commitments in an emergency and to further expand their capabilities, Defence Minister Gilles Lamontagne told the fifty-first annual meeting of the Canadian Defence Associations held in Ottawa, January 13.

This policy decision will mean that more emphasis is to be placed on Canada's "total forces" and on the ability to exploit the full potential of both the supplementary and primary reserves, said Mr. Lamontagne. The decision was reinforced by the allocation of an additional \$20 million in 1984-85 specifically for increased readiness and sustainability. This will provide for a gradual improvement of Canadian defence capabilities and force levels to sustain Canada's national undertakings.

The minister re-emphasized that "the purpose of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is peace". He stated that the fundamental historical and geographical factors behind Canadian defence policy has not and will not change. The greatest threat to Canada's survival will continue to be the danger of a nuclear exchange between its neighbours. Thus the Canadian Forces must continue to contribute to the effectiveness of NATO to prevent a world war as well as participate in international peace-keeping efforts.

While "the challenge which the Soviet Union poses to Western democracies continues unabated", he said, "the logic of deterrence remains unassailable for it has given us 37 years of peace. Canadians must be helped to understand that this legitimate policy of deterrence, along with our positive efforts towards mutual and balanced arms reductions, provides the best hope of maintaining the peace which we enjoy".

Mr. Lamontagne then focused on the "gut-issue" of Canadian defence which, he said was "the level of forces which should, and can, be maintained to ensure the credibility of our contribution to deterrence".

Focus on conventional forces

In his address to the meeting, Chief of Defence Staff, General Ramsey M. Withers, concentrated on the need for conventional forces which he said were "a major element of effective deterrence



Defence Minister Lamontagne (right) during a visit of Canadian Forces in Europe.

and a determinant of the level of the nuclear threshold".

General Withers outlined a force development plan for a gradual increase in the sustainability of the Canadian Armed Forces and the establishment of long-term objectives for them. He indicated that Canadian commitments can only be met by a "total force" consisting of both regulars and reserves, "all parts of a single structure, tasked to carry out wartime operational and support missions".

In peacetime, priorities must be given to Canadian Forces Europe, the ocean-going Navy, and the aerospace defence forces. But, there are other missions, he said, where reserve forces can form the basis of Canada's military response — such as the defence of North America on land and in coastal waters or the protection of vital ports. Necessary personnel, equipment and supplies must be identified for each mission to ensure that assigned forces will remain effective and viable, said General Withers.

General Withers indicated that the Department of National Defence is examining the creation of a supplementary ready reserve to be made up of trained personnel, who retired in the past five years and would be immediately employable on call-up "to ensure that the peacetime posture of the Canadian Forces (is) backed by the preparations and resources — human and material — necessary to permit current commitments to be met in conventional combat".

Duty-free shop opens

The first duty free shop established on the Canadian side of the Canada-United States land border has been officially opened in Emerson, Manitoba.

Minister of National Revenue Pierre Bussières, along with Solicitor General of Manitoba Roland Penner, took part in the opening ceremony.

The duty free shop program will promote the sale of domestic goods; offer a service to the travelling public with significant levels of savings; create direct and indirect employment; and encourage private sector operation of these shops with an emphasis on the small business community.

The Emerson duty free shop now employs 12 people and will eventually have more on its payroll.

The business which will be generated will be significant to the community — for instance, more than 700 000 travellers pass through Emerson and the neighbouring US centres of Noyes and Pembina each year, and it is anticipated that 15 to 20 per cent of eligible travellers will make a duty free purchase, averaging about \$20 each.

The national duty free shop program is expected to generate more than \$80 million annually when fully implemented over the next few years.

Unique fish found in Nova Scotia

The Acadian whitefish, last reported in 1925 and feared to be extinct, has been discovered alive and well in Millipsigate Lake, near Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, reports the *Canadian Press*.

A small population of the whitefish, one of the few fish species unique to Canada, was found in the lake by a team from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the National Museum of Natural Sciences.

The species was known previously to exist only in the lake and the waters of the Tusket River in Yarmouth County, Nova Scotia.

Recently featured on a Canadian postage stamp, the species was thought to have been destroyed by dams and acid rain.

Little is known of the history of the species. Other waters in southern Nova Scotia will be explored to determine whether other populations exist beyond the waters of Millipsigate Lake.

Canadian Forces