

is the United States Strategic Air Command. If the NATO line were violated, if our Alliance were attacked, it is the great power of the Strategic Air Command which would have to deliver the decisive blow to the enemy.

It is clear to us, therefore, as I am sure it must be clear to all other NATO members, that any weak point in the protective line surrounding this main retaliatory force will not only be a threat to the Strategic Air Command but also to the very security of the Alliance as a whole. The Canadian Government has accepted as its main task on the North American continent to cooperate as much as it can in the maintenance of this defensive ring around the Strategic Air Command. Given the territory which needs to be covered, you will appreciate that the ensuing responsibilities call for very considerable efforts and for equally large financial expenditures on our part. Most of you are no doubt familiar with the extensive network of air defence arrangements which we, in conjunction with the United States, have considered it necessary to build in the north. Although the establishment of these radar warning systems has confronted us with major difficulties and posed challenging problems, once the decision was taken that they were essential to the defence of the free world, we were determined to carry these programmes to a successful end. With the generous assistance of our neighbour to the south, we have succeeded in building up an effective protection for this northern side of the NATO area which is of benefit not only to the North American partners of the Alliance but to their European members as well.

These remarks about our defence policy would not be complete without a reference to the Canadian mutual aid programme. Since its inception in April 1950, the Canadian mutual aid programme has resulted in the provision of military assistance to eleven of our NATO allies, to an estimated total value of \$1,275,000,000. The elements of this programme take many forms, and range from the transfers of equipment to assistance in air training. As Mr. Campney, our Minister of National Defence, stated at the last December Ministerial meeting, we propose to continue, within the limits of our resources and continental defence requirements, this kind of programme for as long as it can be shown to be of effective assistance to our NATO partners.

While we continue to be aware of the vital importance of maintaining our guard in the military sphere, we have become equally convinced that the earlier cohesion and sense of purpose which prompted the nations of the Atlantic community to come together was perhaps not so strong, and that it is now time to give practical meaning to the many articles of the Treaty which envisaged a community bound together, not only by a common defence organization, but also by effective political, economic and cultural ties, and by the tangible promotion of conditions of stability and well-being.