

- 4 -

few years can produce total destruction, but the defence against these weapons is a different story and that causes us great concern. This is one of the matters to which all members of the alliance must devote a great deal of attention.

As has already been announced, the Defence Research Board is working with the United States authorities in solving some of these problems of defence against ballistic missiles. These are problems in relation to tracking ballistic objects in and beyond the atmosphere. Some progress has been made in the field of detection of missiles, and a comprehensive communications system is being installed to give warning of the approach of the ballistic missiles. These detection stations to which I refer are not located in Canada, although Canada is providing facilities to assist in the communication and passing on of the information. It is expected that by 1961-62 a reliable detection and warning system will be in operation on the North American continent, but this is only one aspect of the problem.

The major question to be answered is how to intercept the ballistic warhead and destroy it before it reaches its target. This is a research and development project of very great technical and financial proportions, as these missiles will be travelling at several thousand miles an hour. The whole question of locating, tracking, intercepting and destroying the missile must be accomplished within the time of flight of the missile which may be as short as 15 or 20 minutes. The United States have given this project first priority and are putting a great deal of effort and money into a programme of defence against missile attack, but it appears unlikely that a satisfactory means of intercepting and destroying the missile will be accomplished within the next few years. In consequence, there may be a period between the time when the ICBM is available to a potential enemy and the time when some defence against the ballistic missile is possible.

As present there is no defence against the missile after it has left its launching pad, and several years may elapse before such a defence is operationally practical. Therefore this gap in our joint defence must be considered most carefully in our defence planning and in the steps we are taking to ensure our survival if unfortunately we are forced into war during this interval.

In view of the consequences of nuclear war the world is perhaps approaching the stage when the use of force as an instrument of policy to settle man's differences is no longer valid. It is hoped that some other means than armed conflict will eventually be found to settle international disputes. To this end we have demonstrated our willingness to lend assistance in order to help reduce tension in potentially explosive areas, thereby preventing the exploitation of force as an instrument of policy. Our troops assigned to the United Nations Emergency Force and to other peace-preserving teams are continuing examples of our interest in this direction.