



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

CANADA

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 69/8

THE RELATION OF DEFENCE POLICY TO FOREIGN POLICY

Excerpts from an address by Prime Minister Trudeau to a Dinner of the Alberta Liberal Association, Calgary, April 12, 1969.

... Our decisions of last week in the area of foreign policy, in the area of our defence policy and the announcement we made about NATO... are very important and very far-reaching. They are far-reaching in terms of time and in terms of space. In terms of time because, when you make a decision to reorient your foreign policy, it will last for quite a while. Our last reorientation lasted, I suppose, a generation. It is important in terms of space, too. In Canada, the foreign policy we shall embark upon will concern every Canadian, rich or poor, Easterner or Westerner. It will concern our allies in all parts of the world, our friends, those who believe in the same principles as we do.

Our foreign policy, the one we are defining for Canada, is also very important for another reason. Our defence budget as you know is one-sixth of the total budget. That's a lot of money - \$1,800 million for defence. And it's a lot of money especially when you realize that it's accompanied by a great deal of uncertainty on the part of Canadians. There is a tendency in the past few years, when more money is needed for housing or more money is needed for anti-pollution schemes or more money is needed for social welfare legislation, for every form of expenditure in Canada (a project here, a research grant there), on the part of individuals, on the part of institutions and on the part of provincial governments, to say to the Federal Government "Spend less on defence, you'll have more for this other worthwhile project" -- whether it be education or health or housing or urban growth. There is a tendency on the part of all Canadians to say "Take it away from defence, you will have more money for the worthwhile things" -- implying, I suppose (and this comes, as I say, from many institutions, and even from provincial governments), that the money we spend on defence is not well spent.

Now this may be so, and if it is so, it is important that we correct it. It is important that we realize that the sixth of our national budget which is spent on defence is not an expenditure which is accepted as justifiable by a significant proportion of the Canadian people -- and even the military themselves. I cut out a clipping on April 8, a Canadian Press story, saying that at least 40 per cent of the graduates of the Canada's military colleges leave the armed forces at their first opportunity -- 40 per cent of all those who are being trained at the taxpayers' expense to become the élite, the cadre, of our armed