



wing aircraft on a job in the sub-Arctic not more than six or seven can be counted on as being serviceable at any given time.

One of the matters in connection with the mid-Canada line still under consideration is the level of medical and hospital facilities which will be available to personnel manning the line. Senior officials of our department are now conferring with officials of the Department of Health and Welfare on the prospect of constructing several hospitals at two sites in the Hudson's Bay region. If constructed, these hospitals will be so located as to provide services to Eskimo and Indian communities in the area as well as to mid-Canada personnel.

It is very encouraging to note that to date progress on this vast construction project, in spite of all the hazards and difficulties, has been maintained at the planned rates. There is no reason to believe thus far that the line will not be finished on time though of course in a project of this type and magnitude new problems and new construction difficulties may intrude themselves at any time.

Last June I informed the House of Commons that as of May 31 of this year contracts to the extent of 32.6 million dollars had been let in connection with the mid-Canada line. By the end of August the total value of contracts let and committed exceeded 90 millions of dollars. At the present time the figure stands well over one hundred million dollars.

I have endeavoured in the short time at my disposal to give you a few of the highlights of what is involved in this great new unprecedented construction project now being carried out in our north country -- the mid-Canada early warning line. It is a wholly Canadian project as a research, financing and construction.

As I mentioned at the beginning, this line will form part of a vast, costly and extensive continental air defence system planned and developed jointly by ourselves and the United States -- for the better protection of us all.

To those who say that we in Canada should go it alone in this matter and to those who say we should let the United States take on the whole project, I would respectfully point out that the project is for the benefit of both countries and it is only due to the accident of geography that most of the installations must, of necessity, be on Canadian soil. Its purpose is for the joint defence of both countries and indeed, as I have already said, for the defence of NATO as well -- just as much so as anything being done in Europe itself. And that is why Canada and the United States have planned and undertaken the project jointly.

In that connection I would like to say how much I appreciate the close friendly co-operation, the sense of mutual understanding and common purpose which have characterized our relations with our neighbour throughout this matter. I sometimes think that if the same close and friendly relations generally which exist between our two countries could be universally applied in the field of international relations there would be no need for such projects as I have been discussing with you tonight. Unfortunately, as yet at any rate, we must all take this imperfect world as we find it. But at the same time we must do our best, in our time, to improve world relations and world conditions to the end that a third world war may be avoided -- a war which would almost certainly lead to the destruction of us all.