

Given this situation, the Government believes it would be irresponsible to ignore such a threat, particularly when it is technically and financially practical to defend against it. For these reasons, the Government will, of course, have to continue to co-operate with the United States in the defence of the continent against bombers.

There are those who would like to think that, by keeping to ourselves, we in Canada could avoid both becoming a target in our own right and being involved in an attack on the United States. Apart from any obligation we might feel to contribute to the defence of North America, this view ignores the fact that Canada is located geographically along the main path which any Soviet - and indeed Chinese - attack against the United States would be likely to follow. Even if there was no intention of attacking Canada, there would always be the possibility that an accident or miscalculation would result in nuclear weapons coming down on Canadian territory, as well as the danger from fall-out resulting from nuclear explosions over targets in the United States.

Apart from this, it is difficult to imagine that in attacking the United States an enemy would allow Canada to remain as a willing - or even unwilling - asylum for the United States population as well as a reservoir of food, arms, electric power and industrial capacity.

We cannot prudently do otherwise than assume that a potential attacker would expect Canada to be sympathetic to the United States and thus likely, in the event (God forbid) of a nuclear attack, to lend assistance if we were capable of doing so. He would never believe he could ignore this possibility, and I think he would be right. Now I must say that my own view is that the dangers of aggressive war are remote (perhaps one could say unlikely), but no government is worthy of the trust given to it by the people of the country which it serves if it does not realistically examine the situation in the world in which it finds itself, and we have had within the last six months at least one situation that must have caused any government to realize that there are some precautions that it must take in its own security interests.

There are, of course, several ways in which Canada could play a useful part in North American air-defence arrangements. One possibility would be for us to provide from our own resources the portion of the continental air-defence system which needs to be located in Canada. This would be a very large portion of the whole and would necessitate an outlay of financial and personal resources which we believe to be beyond our capacity.

Another possibility would be to leave the entire burden for North American bomber defence to the United States, but give them unlimited access to Canadian air-space and Canadian bases for both training and operational purposes. This would keep the cost to Canada to a minimum but it would tend to erode our sovereignty as well as any influence we could otherwise have on the development of air-defence policies - policies which would inevitably have a significant impact on us.

A third possibility is to share the task of North American bomber defence with the United States on an appropriate basis. This co-operative approach is the one which has been followed in all our defence relations with the United States since the beginning of the Second World War, and, in the view