

*Alleged Lack of Government Leadership*

It will be necessary, therefore, at this meeting in May, for Canada to give consideration to this matter and we will, in co-operation with the nations of NATO, undertake a clarification of our role in NATO defence plans and disposition.

We are united in NATO. We have never and will never consent to Canada breaking any of her pledged words or undertakings.

I underline that.

It is at that meeting where there will be reviewed the entire collective defence policy, that we shall secure from the other member nations their views, and on the basis of that we will be in a position to make a decision, a consistent decision, first to maintain our undertakings and second to execute, if that be the view, the maintenance of our collective defence. In the meantime the training of Canadian forces in the use of these weapon systems can continue.

Now, I say to the House of Commons this. After that meeting we shall bring this matter before parliament clearly, definitely and finally. I want to make that clear. There is no suggestion of any underhand agreements being entered into.

I summarize now the views that I placed before the house on this question. First, with regard to bringing nuclear warheads on Canadian soil, we will continue to negotiate with the United States so that they will be readily available in case of need. This means that our security will be assured while at the same time we will be doing nothing to increase the nuclear family. Second, in that reference I made to negotiation, there was no prejudice in that. I referred to the fact that negotiations were being conducted. There was no secrecy about that. I did not go into the facts in any way because those negotiations, in so far as agreements are concerned in connection therewith, naturally could not be revealed and are confidential. I point out that Secretary of State Rusk in his conference said this in connection with the negotiations, and I quote:

These are matters which have been discussed with the Canadian government in private talks and I would suppose that these private talks would be resumed.

It is the intention of the government to carry on these talks. It should be pointed out that some proposals already have come from the United States government. With regard to the question of nuclear warheads for Canadian forces in Europe, the Nassau declaration stated in paragraph 6, dealing with action which may be taken to bring about multilateral nuclear forces within NATO:

This could include allocations from United States strategic forces, from United Kingdom bomber command and from tactical nuclear forces now held in Europe.

This proposal for multilateral nuclear forces in NATO went much further than any previous proposal and is one upon which

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

discussions are already under way in the NATO council as to whether tactical forces such as Canada's would be included. This whole new development will be under intensive study and preparation for the NATO ministerial meeting. I have already pointed out that in the meantime the training will take place.

Now, sir, I am not going to go again into the question of the United States having issued the document which it did. However, there are one or two references I intend to make to it, and then pass on to some other questions. I repeat that the issue of that statement on January 30 was an intrusion into Canada in a political subject, and a controversial one, that cannot be excused by mere words. In the course of that statement challenges were made of several statements I made, all of them matters of opinion. We have not yet come to the place in the fellowship and freedom of nations when the views of any one of them in matters of opinion must be the views of any other one belonging to that group.

I just want to refer to one, and that was with regard to the Bomarc. I have stated that the Bomarc was simply a part of the plan for North American defence and was not to defend Canada. That is not its purpose, but in its statement the state department said two Bomarc B squadrons would protect Montreal and Toronto as well as the United States deterrent force. Well, we installed these Bomarcs and the decision to do so, as part of a ring to protect the nuclear strike force, was announced in September, 1958.

What about the changes in between? What is the position of these things today? On the one hand the department of state says they will defend Montreal and Toronto, that they are effective today; but on the other hand, on January 31 it was reported that defence secretary McNamara suggested that Bomarc missile squadrons have only limited usefulness even against manned bomber attacks. Are they going to continue with them? Yes, they are going to continue them, and the reason given was because the United States government has already paid for them. That does not sound as if their defensive properties are very high today, simply because they have been paid for already.

Earlier the defence secretary told the United States committee that a general review of United States military strength shows that the continental interceptor force is vulnerable because it has no modern protection against missile attacks. Intercontinental missile attack is the great danger today, and this is what I say.