

Supply—National Defence

to ask. As a member of the House of Commons, a Canadian citizen and a citizen of British Columbia I want to ask the minister how the defence policy of the government, with its reliance on Bomarc installations in the United States, even if they are close to the Canadian border, is protection for Canadian cities, towns and villages running up to the Arctic circle?

I should like to ask the Minister of National Defence if he is prepared to say, without violating security, that a Bomarc line on the United States side of the border from Ontario to British Columbia can, in the case of any invasion, protect the northern part of Vancouver island, Prince Rupert, Terrace, Lethbridge, Regina, Peace River, Saskatoon or whatever you will. So far the Minister of National Defence, with the exception of saying that there will be Bomarc installations at two locations, one in Ontario and one in Quebec, has not told us what the protection will be in the other parts of Canada.

I know, and I am not breaking any confidence because I have seen it in half a dozen magazines, that there is a Bomarc line just below the 49th parallel, but how does that tie in with the protection of our country? I say that Canada is more than Quebec and Ontario. I accord all honour to Quebec and Ontario but as a member from British Columbia I am very much interested in that province and I know that the Minister of National Defence is too. It is pretty hard for a member of the opposition to speak on this matter but I do want to say that I do not think the minister has taken the house into his confidence as much as he should have. He has not given us as clear a picture as we should have as to defence policies and the protection of Canada if aggression takes place.

I hope, and this is all I will have to say about the matter, that the minister will perhaps be able to open up his mind and his heart a little bit more and give us a little more information so that we will have a better understanding of what is actually taking place in Canada in order to try to alleviate the misunderstanding as to why there are Bomarc installations in eastern Canada but nothing in central and western Canada, the misunderstanding as to why the most modern is for NATO and the obsolete for Canada. I should like him to explain if he can that under government policy we are not just the defence area of the United States and, in the event of war, the graveyard.

Mr. Pearkes: Mr. Chairman, in my opening remarks yesterday I did my best to explain briefly and as concisely as I could the policy regarding the defence of Canada. Canada is a

[Mr. Winch.]

member of the western alliance. The overriding concept of that alliance is to prevent war. We believe that by having powerful forces of retaliation, and I do not attempt to say that this is a good solution for all time, we will make it quite obvious to any potential enemy that it is not worth while starting a war because the power of the west will strike back and will be so devastating in its effect on that country.

In order to have that power of retaliation effective it must be kept secure and in order to keep the power of retaliation secure and also to provide a degree of protection to our own population and the cities of Canada we have established first of all an extensive warning line stretching from the Atlantic ocean across the north of Canada to the Pacific, and that line is duplicated by other lines closer to the populated areas. They will give warning not only to our cities to take measures of protection but, more important, to get the SAC bombers off their bases.

The potential enemy realizes that and realizes that his chances of really carrying out a sudden attack on the SAC bases at the present time, thereby destroying the power of retaliation before the bombers can get off their bases, are extremely remote. Then also as part of the deterrent we have various, shall I say, zones of defence as far north as it is possible for the interceptors of the R.C.A.F. to go, working in conjunction with United States air force interceptors under the command of NORAD. As I said before, those bombers that get through that zone of interception will then come within the range of the Bomarc stations which consist of a series of interlocking stations, two in Canada and the balance in the United States close to the border of Canada but all interlocking so that the whole of the air space from the Atlantic to the Pacific within their range is covered.

In order to make that more effective, and in order to provide the control which is necessary for the interceptors and Bomarcs, we established additional radar stations, pushing them farther north so it will become possible for the interceptors to operate farther north than they can today. We are introducing gap fillers between the stations of the Pinetree line so some aircraft, trying to dodge the radar screen and sneak in at low level, will be picked up.

We are linking all this up with certain communication centres known as the SAGE environment which is an automatic system of transporting information received and translating it again into instructions to the aircraft or the missile so that they may be effective.