



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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CANADA'S DEFENCE PROGRAMME

A statement by Mr. George R. Pearkes, Minister of National Defence, in the House of Commons on July 2, 1959.

... While I realize that in the time at my disposal I cannot cover all facets of defence, it is appropriate now to make some general remarks on our defence thinking. There are a number of factors that must be considered in introducing these estimates. The requirements deemed necessary for defence today will almost certainly be outmoded a few years from now. This, of course, is not solely a Canadian problem; it is a problem facing every country today. In our endeavours to solve it we should be ready and willing to consult with our partners in Europe and on the North American continent.

We must also be prepared to take advantage of our collective agreements so we can provide a better and more lasting peace within our economic limitations. By co-operating with our allies we are able to have an integrated, balanced force among all the allies, rather than attempting to have a balanced force within each nation. It has been obvious for some time that no country can stand alone or can plan its defence in isolation.

This is particularly true of Canada. Our geographic position and our varied interests require us to take part in collective defence. Therefore, when planning a defence programme we have to take into account many considerations, such as the changing threat which is brought principally by rapid developments in the technological field, particularly in the area of offensive weapons introduced into the armament inventory of a potential enemy, and also the very long time required to develop and produce modern defensive weapons systems and the ever-increasing costs of research development and production.

A full appreciation of the concept of modern war, which might come without warning, requires our forces to be trained, equipped and immediately ready for operations. Gone are the days when a protracted period of time might be devoted