

If you are asking whether I think those factors are realistic, I have to put on my operational commander's hat and say that I have some doubts about the veracity of some of those statistics.

The important point to remember here is that any future war will be fought with the forces in being. There simply will not be time to recruit and train the additional hundreds of thousands that we did in World War II.

Reinforcements to Europe will be ferried over by ship. Canada's maritime commitment to NATO involves, by the use of our destroyers and long range patrol aircraft, keeping the Atlantic sea lanes free of enemy ships and submarines so that allied ships carrying reinforcements and supplies can reach Europe.

According to Admiral Timbrell, retired commander of maritime command, in order to fulfil our maritime role adequately, we need 36 destroyers, of which we currently have 23, with only 20 operational; we need 12 minesweepers, of which we have none; 10 submarines, of which we have three; four supply ships, of which we have three; 36 long range patrol aircraft, of which we have just purchased 18, and four of them will be on the west coast; 40 short range patrol aircraft with an antisubmarine warfare capability, of which we have none; and 40 helicopters, of which we have 33 for military tasks. These figures indicate that we should be doing more. The government protests that it is doing more, so let us have a look at what it is doing.

We are supposed to be buying six new patrol frigates to replace our six oldest destroyers, but we are already two years behind schedule on that purchase. Beyond that initial six, the government has no plans as yet to replace the rest of the fleet. Even with the destroyer life extension plan now under way, unless there are new orders placed, by 1992 we will be down to 15 destroyers and in 1996 we will have a 10-ship navy, the four DDH-280s and the six frigates.

In addition to this downgrading of our destroyer force, the government has no plans to buy any minesweepers and no plans to increase the size of our submarine force. Our LRPA or long-range patrol aircraft purchase is at an end, and there are no plans for additional purchases. New short range patrol aircraft are on the books for a future purchase, but no definite arrangements have been made. I would heartily recommend that some reading be done of the danger, in a high technology field with a small force, of purchasing planes as technologically advanced as the LRPA or the F-18, as the costs soon run away with the entire budget for a service, if one is not careful. That is what has happened with the LRPA and will happen with the F-18.

This brings me to the last aspect of our NATO commitment which concerns 1 Canadian Air Group based in West Germany. Currently it operates with three squadrons of CF-104s which will be replaced by the new F-18A. What is interesting about this commitment is that we have repeatedly used the NFA purchase to impress our NATO allies with our qualitative upgrading. However, at the moment, there are no definite plans to replace our low level air defence equipment, which currently consists of vintage 1940s Bofors anti-aircraft guns

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and blowpipe missiles. This equipment is so inadequate that *Financial Post* writer, Robert English, was forced to conclude:

—our bases can only be defended if the enemy gives us lots of warning, picks a sunny day and promises to fly slowly.

The ridiculous part of this is that while we are committing an expensive and technologically advanced aircraft to the front line defence in Europe, we have no way of protecting those aircraft. Chances are, in the event of war, our F-18As would have a rather basic difficulty: their own airfields would be untenable and unusable.

Therefore, while the listing of our manpower and equipment commitment to western Europe may look respectable on paper, what it actually comes down to is that we have insufficient manpower, inadequate and outdated equipment, and are spreading ourselves too thinly. While this may appear to be a Canadian problem, it actually is more far-reaching than that. Because we are a member of an alliance, other nations are depending on us. If we are unable to perform our roles adequately, we become a liability to the NATO alliance. I do not believe for a minute that we can carry out the commitments we have made.

The tasking of our military with several roles is not based on any military appreciation of the situation. Military men know that we have a ludicrous scenario in front of us. Rather, this whole plan is the result of political and economic factors. Whether or not we are making a solid contribution to the alliance is not important to this government; rather, we must make a good showing. In order to show our faces in international circles, we must at least look as if we were doing something to protect the western world's interests.

But there is another side to this as well, and that is, we are not fooling anyone. As Nicholas Stethem told the Senate committee:

The nature of the international diplomatic beast is such that no one will say Canadians have let the side down. They are going to say nice things if we make any effort at all.

A fine example of this was the comment made by Sir Jack Harman, DSACEUR, at this year's conference of defence associations. He was talking about our 4 CMBG in Europe when he said:

Indeed, our senior officers in ACE are unstinting in their praise and consider it to be the best formation of its size in Europe.

Notice that he said, "of its size". You can read this as meaning "Why isn't it bigger?"

In the final communiqué issued after the May, 1981, Defence Planning Council ministerial session, recognition was given to "situations outside NATO's boundaries" which may "threaten the vital interests of the west". While extending NATO's boundaries was not considered to be the answer, the NATO ministers decided that individual countries may decide, in order to protect their vital interests, to deploy forces outside the NATO area. The U.S. rapid deployment force (RDF) was given as an example of such a force.