

*Supply—National Defence*

special note is the fine work of the Royal Canadian Air Force air-sea rescue organization which, with the assistance of the navy and the public spirited co-operation of civilian aircraft, ship operators and others, has added another very successful year to its proud record of life saving.

The Royal Canadian Air Force is also responsible for the building of the mid-Canada line, one of the greatest construction projects ever undertaken in Canada and one that, apart altogether from its defence implications, is dramatically contributing to the opening of the great Canadian north.

The mid-Canada line and the D.E.W. line, as the committee know, will form part of a warning system anchored on the "Pinetree" stations already in operation, all linked together by a vast complex of communications. The "Pinetree" system itself is being strengthened by additional stations. On both the D.E.W. line, being built largely by Canadian contractors working for the United States air force, and the mid-Canada line, being built by Canada, admirable progress is being made. These are projects of great difficulty and magnitude—costly, but we believe worth the cost. For they will buy us time—time to get the big United States deterrent force of bombers with their nuclear weapons winging away on their missions should the need arise, time to get our defences activated, time to prepare our people for impending attack.

Another purpose of this system is to alert our sister NATO nations if the Canadian north should be chosen as the first point of any attack. It is hoped that in the near future the early warning system of North America will be linked with an early warning system in Europe, to which NATO is giving high priority, thus forming an integrated comprehensive early warning system covering the whole of the NATO area. These warning lines cannot—I want to be very frank about this—buy us absolute protection. Their searching beams are not steel barriers. In a determined attack some enemy planes would run the gamut of the defending fighters and many lives would undoubtedly be lost. But these lines will nevertheless contribute very materially to NATO air defence plans generally and to Canada—United States effectiveness in particular. In defence terms any enemy invasion of our northland is of immediate concern to every Canadian, but—and this we should not forget—I think it is of equal concern to the citizens of the United States. Realistic policy for continental air defence requires the closest co-operation between our two countries.

Let me assure the committee, there is the closest co-operation. Our defence plans are

closely integrated. Our relationship is a friendly one, founded on mutual respect and full understanding of each other's particular rights and interests, and dedicated to the defence of our common continental home against present, indisputable and continuing grave dangers.

Both of the new northern lines are rapidly approaching completion. The United States is now recruiting civilian technicians, for the most part Canadians incidentally, to assist in manning the D.E.W. line for the initial period. Recruiting and training of civilian technicians will shortly begin to assist the Royal Canadian Air Force service men, already trained, in manning the mid-Canada line.

May I turn now to the Canadian army. I can advise the committee that the note of change that is evident in air force plans applies with equal force to the army. Indeed, for all the services, the changing shape of our defence problem requires constant re-examination of our defence plans and organizations.

For many months a number of the most senior officers in the Canadian army have been examining the organization of field formations that would best meet Canada's needs in the light of our commitments, both present and possible, and under conditions of either so-called conventional or nuclear warfare.

The army has also been closely following recent reviews of army organization in the United States, the United Kingdom, France and other countries which are intended to take account of new weapons and conditions of war, and the army has had observers at large-scale NATO divisional tests in Europe.

It is generally accepted that, in the use of ground forces, we must work toward a greater degree of flexibility and increased mobility. In particular, practical assessments are being made by the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Canadian army of those types of aircraft that would be most suitable for rapid deployment, supply, and support of Canada's ground forces.

As the committee knows, Canada for some time has had a mobile striking force of three battalions of infantry with supporting arms and services, largely trained as parachutists and transportable in C-119 aircraft, known as flying box cars. The established role of this force has been to deal with possible small diversionary raids in the Canadian north.

Experience gained in exercises indicates that parachuting in the Canadian north is not an entirely satisfactory way of getting troops on the ground. Accordingly, we are giving more attention to the development of