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The Chairman: Thank you very much, Mr. Golden. Mr. Brewin, do you have a question?

Mr. Brewin: Yes, I did not expect to be called on so early so I am not ready to go into it right away. Mr. Golden, as I understand the remarks you have just made, the problem in defence matters is a selection of priorities; you cannot have everything, and if you select one thing it may mean that you eliminate another. Is that a fair statement?

Mr. Golden: Eliminate or downgrade, depending on possibilities.

Mr. Brewin: Yes, eliminate or downgrade something else. There is one part of your written paper that I find difficult to understand and perhaps you could go into it a little more fully. That is on page 2, paragraph 3:

In other words, Canada should play a role in defensive measures considered important by the United States, even if our assessment of the necessity of such measures should be at variance with that made by the United States.

If I understand that, supposing we came to the conclusion that the Bomarc missile or SAGE system of defence against manned bombers was no longer useful, and that was our view, and if the people in the Pentagon or the American government said, "We think it might have some marginal utility and we have plenty of money to spend on these things and we want to continue it", would you say that in those circumstances Canada should choose as a priority, a system of defence that it thought was obsolete but some American authorities thought should be continued?

Mr. Golden: It is a question of degree, Mr. Brewin. I think that in any black or white case it would be very simple. If Canadians were unanimously of the view that a certain defence system made absolutely no sense at all, then I would expect Canada to fight vigorously to have those views adopted by the United States. But in my limited experience it is seldom that these cases are so clear, and the point I was trying to make is that in those cases where it is not clear, we should always bear in mind the very heavy responsibilities which the United States bears which we do not, and we should seek to accommodate ourselves provided no essential Canadian interest is thereby lost sight of or abrogated.

Mr. Brewin: Does the difficulty with that not arise out of your opening remarks, that we cannot do everything? By assumption, if the Canadian Government takes a certain course that is not essential or required, but by reason of being persuaded by a contrary view of the American authorities it decides that it would like to accommodate the American point of view, by so doing is it not excluding the doing of something which in its conviction is necessary and may also be useful as far as the United States is concerned?

Mr. Golden: Well, this is quite possible. The point that I am making is that within the context of North America, and within the context of Canadian-United States relations, I feel that these matters deserve priority attention and more flexible response than would be the case in any other meaningful defence role that we might choose.

Mr. Brewin: You would not agree, then, that the most essential part of sovereignty is not, perhaps, questions of territory or matters of that sort, but the ability to make up your own mind, according to the best of your own judgment, what actions you are taking for your own security within the limitation of your own means?

Mr. Golden: I do not argue with that. It is the question of the application of that principle that gives me concern. I do not argue with that statement at all. Independence today, unfortunately, in my judgment, is not quite as simple as that categorical and very lucid statement that you just made.

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Mr. Brewin: But you do say, after all, that Canada should play a role in defensive measures considered important by the United States, even if our assessment, of necessity, should be at variance with that made by the United States. What I am trying to suggest is that in this field we should consult fully with the United States, and if we come to a contrary conclusion, should we not stick to our own conclusions if we want to claim to be a sovereign state?

Mr. Golden: Well, I really cannot add anything to what I said earlier: I agree with your statement and I think it is in the application of it that the difficulties arise, and I believe that within the context of these Canadian-American relations it just becomes that much more difficult.