

personnel and financial commitment of the defence program. Over the years, there has been some consolidation in these areas, but I believe that our present infrastructure is still larger than is needed to support our operational forces, and for that reason some further consolidation of these support facilities could achieve cost savings without impairing our operational capability. For that reason, I intend to make recommendations to Cabinet within the next few months concerning a better balance of support capability to operational capability, which will increase proportionately our combat capability relative to our infrastructure and support facilities.

I believe honourable members will agree that these decisions are of far-reaching significance for the Canadian Armed Forces and for Canada and, in fact, for the NATO alliance. Our national commitment to the protection of Canadian sovereignty and to the preservation of freedom has been reinforced once again by the decisions taken by the Canadian Government. There is every reason to believe that these decisions will boost the morale of the Canadian Armed Forces and will increase still further the pride Canadians have in the dedicated and capable men and women who serve Canada in our Armed Forces.

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