

*Supply—National Defence*

outlined it this morning, but certainly it will require a good deal of study. It seemed to me to be an entirely new purpose for the air division, attack support, a very important purpose indeed in the defence of western Europe, a very onerous task for the air force. I think the decision, notwithstanding what the minister has said, should have been made months ago, but it is better to have made it now than to have postponed it further because surely it has become clear to all that the air division, in its present form and with its present equipment, the F-86, was not in a position to discharge effectively the kind of task it would have been called upon to discharge.

This is no reflection on what is perhaps the best body of airmen in Europe. This is a reflection, rather, on the speed of events and it shows how quickly equipment can get out of date. Certainly the air division in Europe is second to none in any air force for skill, courage and determination of its men. It deserves, and I hope it is receiving now, a clear-cut role, which perhaps we can discuss, and the best means of playing that role.

Then, next what should the relationship of Canada be, in my view, to continental air defence? It seems to me that if Canada is to continue to subscribe to the theory of defence in depth against manned bombers, we should not deceive ourselves that this is going to be an effective defence for the Canadian people and Canadian soil. Let us not delude ourselves. This would be Canadian association with a defence deterrent which is a United States deterrent so far as this continent is concerned, except in so far as we are contributing to the early warning system.

If we are to continue to take part in this form of continental defence, surely the Canadian squadrons for that purpose must be re-equipped with the latest planes. It is not fair, it certainly will not be fair in the months ahead to ask them to take their full part in continental air defence armed with CF-100's alongside United States squadrons armed with the latest type of interceptor, eventually perhaps the F-108.

If, on the other hand—although there is no indication of it in the minister's statement this morning—the government should consider leaving this particular form of continental defence to the United States, and giving the R.C.A.F. perhaps another and more Canadian part to play, surely the government should insist that the United States interceptor squadrons be based far enough north to permit contact with the enemy long before he reaches Canadian industrial areas and populated areas.

[Mr. Pearson.]

The minister said this morning, and I agree, that we should continue to take some share of the responsibility for the existing early warning systems while those systems are considered to be effective. However, we should leave the development of B.M.E.W.'s—ballistic missile early warnings—as we should leave the development of anti-missile missiles, to the United States. I gather from the minister this morning that he would not disagree with that statement. I think this development is not in our particular economic sphere.

I would go further, however, and say that whenever the United States desires facilities or rights to operate on Canadian soil for defence purposes which are deemed by the United States government to be essential and not by us to be undesirable though not essential, at least as a Canadian effort; I believe in these circumstances that we should give the United States those rights as part of this partnership about which the minister spoke, as is done in the United Kingdom and as was done in the case of the D.E.W. line. But only in each case after we have worked out an intergovernmental agreement which reserves all Canadian rights of sovereignty and political control.

We were able to do this when we negotiated the D.E.W. line. We discussed at that time the desirability of making this an all Canadian effort and taking full control of it. However, it was decided that that was not a good thing to do in view of the speculative character of the effectiveness of this line. But if the United States felt it was essential we agreed they should be given the right to do it and we would make our contribution to the other line. But the right to go ahead would be governed by a political agreement which was made at that time and which as the minister knows reserves every right of Canadian sovereignty and ultimate control. While I would be the last person—because I believe in collective security—to refuse any member of the Atlantic alliance any facility which they claim to be essential for collective security and require to use on our territory and which we do not wish to do ourselves; while I believe we have no right to refuse that kind of thing in that kind of emergency, nevertheless on every occasion we should make sure that through political arrangements between the two governments on the highest level Canadian rights are safeguarded and protected.

I would go further than that. We should do ourselves all of the things in our country we possibly can and that we think are necessary for continental defence. This is not an easy problem because the United States is a great power with world interests and world responsibilities. The United States cannot