



## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 59/35

### CANADA-U.S. MUTUAL DEFENCE

Excerpts from a speech by Mr. George R. Pearkes, V.C., Minister of National Defence for Canada to the National Defence Transportation Association, Seattle, Washington, October 12, 1959.

I have been asked to speak today about Canada-United States mutual defence. I will open my talk with a few remarks about Canada's international position. We Canadians find ourselves situated between the two most powerful nations on earth, the United States and the Soviet Union.

The implications of such a geographic location are obvious, but in spite of the difficulties that arise from time to time between Canada and the United States, we have acquired a certain maturity which leads us to believe that our problems can all eventually be worked out. I feel that this maturity which I have mentioned can be attributed in part to our connection with the British Commonwealth of Nations which brings us into intimate contact with countries spread throughout the four corners of the globe.

Canada and the United States are today closely associated in their efforts to achieve peace through the instrumentality of peaceful negotiations. We cannot accept as inevitable the thought of a world devastated by a nuclear conflict - yet we cannot deny that possibility. We realize this fact and we know that we must maintain sufficient military strength to deter any aggression, while at the same time, through the medium of diplomacy we must endeavour to establish the necessary foundation for international confidence. May I say that the recent efforts of your President in the pursuit of peace are greatly appreciated by all the free peoples of the world.

Our two countries have joined together to share in the defence of North America. We are also joined within the framework of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. We have taken these measures because for the first time in history the nations on the North American continent are exposed to the possibility of a massive attack.

Canada by herself cannot provide a complete defence in a modern war. The United States of America, strong and powerful as she is, cannot on the North American continent defend herself effectively without Canadian co-operation and without defence facilities on Canadian territory. Our close relationship makes it natural that we should join in an alliance for we have a common heritage of freedom and a common aspiration for peace.

### Intimate Collaboration

The origin of this intimate collaboration in defence which exists between our two nations at the present time can be traced to the Ogdensburg Declaration which established the Permanent Joint Board on Defence in August 1940. This Board is still an important element in Canadian-United States relations and in the defence organization of the West.

At the end of hostilities in 1945, the United States Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy forwarded joint letters to the Canadian authorities requesting that the co-operation for defence which had existed throughout the war should continue in peacetime. The Canadian Government readily agreed to these arrangements and the Canadian Chiefs of Staff were authorized to initiate defence planning for the defence of North America with the United States Chiefs of Staff.

With the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in April of 1949 it was decided that the defence of the North American part of the NATO area would now become the responsibility of our two countries and would be guided by the Canada-United States Regional Planning Group.

Another important development which I would like to mention is the establishment of the Canada-United States Ministerial Committee on Joint Defence which was announced in a joint statement in July of last year by President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Diefenbaker. The function of this Committee is to consult on any matters affecting the defence of our two countries and to exchange information and views at the ministerial level on problems that may arise with a view to strengthening further the close and intimate co-operation between our two countries. We are, therefore, jointly responsible for the land, sea and air defence of North America.

### Advance Preparations

Should our efforts to prevent the outbreak of a war fail, all of us in the United States and Canada realize the ghastly consequences which would result if a nuclear attack were launched against this continent. It is only sensible, therefore, to prepare in advance the measures which would have to be taken if a major war were to commence suddenly.

You may be interested to hear something of the steps which have been taken in Canada in this field. We now have ready facilities from which a central corps of the Government can carry on outside of Ottawa under conditions of nuclear war even if there is serious radioactive fallout in this area. What we have tried to do in my country is to plan an organization which will preserve some degree of governmental and economic organization during the initial period of a nuclear war. The purpose we have had in mind has been to decentralize as far as possible.

Recent studies of the probable economic situation arising from conditions of a nuclear attack indicate that the problem of providing and distributing essential commodities for both military and civilian purposes would be critical and complicated. It would be necessary to have not only an organization with clear unified control over supplies of all types, but one that could be decentralized not only to regional but, if necessary, local areas.

In the uncertain conditions to be expected as a result of a nuclear attack, it is considered that the flexibility and widespread distribution of transport would be of major importance in helping us to survive and reorganize the economy. No one can foresee what part of our transportation resources will be left in an operating condition following a nuclear attack on this continent. Decisions will have to be taken promptly and any doubt as to where authority lay would result in serious delay and confusion. It is necessary then that we plan in advance of such a contingency in order to have unified control of all types of transportation in an emergency.

#### Transportation Problems

I would, for a moment, like to refer to some of the problems involved in the different forms of transportation which would be brought about with the outbreak of a war.

Civil aviation is subject to some government control in peacetime and the switch-over to a complete system of security control which would be required in an emergency should not present too much difficulty. The main task during the survival period will be the preservation of aircraft, airfield equipment and operating personnel. Plans for the use of air transport after the initial period of attack will be based on the principle of pooling resources in the national interest.

I might point out that a nuclear war will pose some serious problems with respect to aircraft operations. Aircraft may become contaminated with the radioactive residue by flight through the radioactive cloud or by fallout descending upon them.

Aircraft contaminated in either way may be refuelled, rearmed and flown without undue hazard to the ground crews or aircrew. If time permits and the aircraft is not needed for immediate operational missions, simple wash down with water will remove a large portion of the contamination.

In looking at the matter of water transport, allow me to begin by saying that deep sea shipping is a world-wide enterprise and basic plans are now being developed in co-operation with the Planning Board for Ocean Shipping under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

We realize that with the opening of hostilities, a considerable quantity of ships moving in the Atlantic or Pacific may have to be diverted to Canadian anchorages until the situation is clarified and the surviving port's capacity assessed. Any snips in probable Canadian target areas would have to be evacuated and directed to a safe anchorage. An organization for receiving and dealing with ships seeking refuge in Canadian anchorages and with ships evacuated from Canadian ports is being built up within Canada at the present time.

Great Lake shipping may prove vital for internal transportation and must be preserved. In this connection, control planning will take into account the preservation of the canals and locks facilities on the St. Lawrence Seaway. It will also be necessary to develop measures aimed at preventing, as far as possible, the blocking of canals and narrow channels by sunken ships.

Expert knowledge in railway operation will also be required in the event of war. The principal task of governments in this respect will be to guide the railways in the development of plans for the preservation of railway equipment. For instance, it will likely be necessary to evacuate railway equipment from target areas as soon as warning is received. Moreover, bomb damage may cut the railway system in a number of vital places. An important part of the strategic position which must be assumed could possibly involve construction or extension of sidings in localities clear of target cities and also construction of belt lines joining together the lines radiating from major cities to enable railway communication to be maintained after bomb damage has occurred. In other words, we must be prepared to take action to protect railway equipment and put surviving railway facilities to work on priority tasks.

During World War II we realized the essential role that road transportation played in the defence of this continent. One example which I might cite was the construction and use of the Alaska Highway. In any future war our road transport systems will be vital to our security.

There has been a great deal of progress and co-operation in understanding the mutual problems between our countries regarding the necessity of preparedness in the field of transportation.

There have been regular exchange visits between transportation representatives of the Office of Civil and Defence Mobilization and Canadian Civil Defence authorities together with attendance at each other's transportation forums and study groups.

I have only touched on some of the problems involved in defence preparedness in the transportation field. Looking at the overall picture of mutual defence we must all agree that the collaboration which has existed between our countries during the past two decades has indeed been great. There are, and in all likelihood, there will continue to be some weak points in the structure of our partnership but in no sense do they threaten the strength of our unity.

The aims of the United States and Canada - the ideals of the American and Canadian peoples are by tradition basically the same and it is hoped that they will remain so. I trust that in our relations with each other on this North American Continent we will see the development of even greater strength and still more confident mutual understanding within this unique association of our two nations.

S/A