

When the agreement was originally signed and debated in the House of Commons during May of 1958 the Conservatives accepted both an active and a passive defence role for Canada within the new structure; but, according to one commentator, tried to put NORAD in the "most politically palatable terms," by calling it an "operational control" rather than a command, and by attempting to link it closer to NATO.²

The Liberals adopted much the same position as the Government, but were more outspoken concerning the desirability of obtaining concessions from the U.S., as well as incorporating NORAD into NATO. McLin feels that Mr. Pearson "endorsed this course with a vigor that is explicable only by the fact that they (Liberals) were out of office, and free of the responsibility of having to try to convert it into fact."³ The attitude probably stemmed from the Fourth National Liberal Convention in January 1958 where the party considered the defence of North America as the primary responsibility for Canada, but also expressed the desire to link NORAD to the command structure of NATO.

The CCF, on the other hand, were opposed to NORAD from the outset and voted against the agreement during the initial debate. The party's attitude remained consistent for the remainder of the time it existed as a party. Hazen Argue (party leader) stated in March, 1960 that Canada was not an effective partner in NORAD as no consultation was possible with the U.S. in such a relationship. The monies saved from opting out of NORAD would be better spent on assistance to the developing nations and for peacekeeping purposes.⁴ Needless to say, the party voiced strong opposition to the Canadian acquisition of the Bomarc system. In August 1960 at the 16th National Convention of the CCF a resolution was passed stating that Canada should withdraw from NORAD since it did not provide for the effective defence of Canada and it meant Canada could not pursue an independent foreign policy. Despite the fact that the Canadian Labour Congress opposed this policy in 1961 (see Chapter II) the founding convention of the NDP went on record to the effect "that Canada should at once terminate the NORAD agreements."

While the NDP was asking the Government to withdraw from continental defence, Mr. Diefenbaker in early 1961 made it quite clear that the policy was not going to change. "There are those...who clamour for Canada to renounce its defence agreements with the United States, to withdraw from NORAD...We should not be wise to act on such advice...Canada's interests are promoted by staying in the circle to which it belongs."⁵ Similarly in his first major speech as Defence Minister Mr. Harkness stressed the need to rely upon alliances.⁶ While support in principle was given to NORAD emphasis on disarmament tended to reduce Conservative interest in the defence relationship with the U.S.

During the early years of NORAD the Liberals, with Mr. Pearson in the forefront, were pressing for inclusion of U.S. Canadian defence under NATO, and on April 7, 1960 the Liberal leader suggested that if this was not possible "then we should re-examine our whole attitude towards North American defence in its present establishment."⁷ During the August