

only such temporary rights or status as are agreed upon by the appropriate authorities of the two countries in authorizing the projects, tests or exercises".¹⁷

3. By implication, the "Agreed Minute" of June 14, 1951¹⁸ indicated the willingness of the U.S. Government to obtain the prior consent of the Canadian Government for special operations in Canada of the U.S. Air Force, since it specified the channel to be used by the U.S. Government when requesting permission to make use of facilities in Canadian territory —

(a) "for the deployment of atomic weapons (both without and with their nuclear components)",

(b) "for the conduct of operations involving the use of such weapons", or

(c) "to overfly Canadian territory with such weapons."

4. The Agreed Minute was not designed, however, to do more than afford a record of procedures which had been developed on an ad hoc basis for the mutual convenience of the two governments. It did not go further because it had become apparent that there were certain requirements held by each government to which the other could not agree. The U.S. Government was unwilling to enter into any agreement which would appear to qualify the right and responsibility of the President of the United States to make the decision that atomic weapons should be used. The Canadian Government for its part could not agree to surrender the right to decide whether or not Canadian facilities should be used for atomic strikes in any particular situation.

5. The agreed procedural arrangements governing clearance of flights of aircraft of the U.S. Strategic Air Command over Canadian territory where the movement of atomic weapons is involved were set out in detail in Schedule B (Top Secret) of Order-in-Council P.C. 2307 of April 17, 1952. These procedures do not appear to be directly relevant to the "use of atomic weapons over Canada".

6. The problem of storage of these weapons on Canadian territory was raised, as General Foulkes has pointed out, in relation to Goose Bay. On October 15, 1951, the United States authorities were informed that the Canadian Government had no objection to a proposal that a unit of the U.S. Air Force be permanently stationed there for "the operation and maintenance of a storage site at Goose Bay for the support of the Strategic Air Command operations from that base." It was clearly understood at the time that these storage facilities were for special weapons.

7. It will be noted that the agreements relating to special storage facilities and to clearance of special flights are both connected with strategic air operations. The proposals now anticipated are apparently connected rather with the operations of the air defence system. It seems that the U.S. authorities are prepared to make plans and preparations for the use of atomic weapons in a defensive role "over Canada" and by Canadian forces — while restricting custody of the weapons to U.S. forces, as required by U.S. law.

8. This may well be a major step towards the creation of an integrated weapons system for North American defence, which we had already become convinced was essential and urgent. An integrated weapons system, however, would hardly be practicable without a greater measure of integrated planning than exists at present. The proposal seems certain, therefore, to raise politically important problems of control and cost-sharing which have not so far had to be faced in so direct a form.

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¹⁷ Voir/See Volume 12, Document 973.

¹⁸ Voir/See Volume 17, Document 699.