

## NORAD—Canada-U.S. Agreement

the course of the discussion. It is true that when the request was made the other day for a debate of this kind on this specific subject, to be brought before the house in the form of a resolution and not as part of the speech from the throne debate, the Prime Minister suggested that we desired to have such a debate—I am not misquoting him, I think—to show our opposition to the exchange of notes.

He welcomed it because, as he said at page 243 of *Hansard*, we would find out from this kind of debate exactly where the members on this side of the house stood. It is quite clear where we stand. We have not asked for this discussion, in order to show our opposition to the proposed agreement on continental defence, not at all. We have asked for this debate so we could find out exactly what was involved in this agreement and the manner in which these notes were exchanged. Only after we receive that kind of information can the house make the decision which it should make in the light of the facts.

I would suggest that a discussion of this kind could have two other advantages. If this is a good agreement, made within the spirit of NATO and embodying the principle of collective defence and strengthening the idea of collective security, then there are advantages to having parliament formally declare its support for this agreement and not to allow the matter to be left in the confused condition in which it has been for a good many months. The other advantage is that that confusion will be cleared up, in part at least, by the discussion we will have this afternoon.

**Mr. Green:** Of course, you caused the most of it.

**Mr. Pearson:** I hope that this afternoon I shall be able to convince even my hon. friend that the source of the confusion, the contradiction and the ineptness with which this matter has been handled has been on the other side of the house. The way in which this matter has been handled since the first press conference last August when the announcement was made to the people of this country might be characterized, if we were not dealing with such an important matter, as a comedy of confusion and contradiction. Perhaps the high point was reached the other day in the other place when the leader there, in answer to a question, did not recognize that the agreement had even been tabled.

Now having criticized the government for the procedure which was followed or lack of procedure which was followed, what should have been done? In trying to answer that

question I hope to deal with some of the matters raised by my hon. friend when he discussed the procedure which was followed by the previous government in connection with this matter up to June 10, the anniversary of which date my hon. friends are celebrating with such great and understandable enthusiasm this afternoon. Surely the right procedure, and the one which has been normally followed over recent years in regard to matters of this kind, was to have had an arrangement of this importance considered by the cabinet defence committee. The Prime Minister has underlined the importance of the arrangement this afternoon. He has made us more aware than we ever were before of the importance of this arrangement, especially by the document he tabled and read to the house.

Surely, therefore, the proper procedure would have been for the cabinet defence committee of the Canadian government to have given consideration to it. Then after consideration by the cabinet defence committee the matter should have come before the full cabinet for decision. Then an agreement between the governments of the United States and Canada, embodying the principles under which this headquarters should act, should have been signed. After the agreement was signed between the two governments it should have been tabled in the House of Commons to afford the kind of discussion and decision which we will be taking this afternoon. After these steps had been taken NORAD should have been put into operation. This was the procedure followed in regard to the original North Atlantic pact, and in regard to our sending under that pact of forces to Europe.

However, this procedure was not followed in the case of NORAD. We know now what was done. NORAD was set up at once. The Prime Minister, indeed, has indicated this afternoon that after one discussion in the cabinet an order in council was passed immediately merely appointing a Canadian air marshal as the deputy commander of NORAD and fixing—this was the only concrete bit of information in that order in council—his salary. This was all that was done last August. Then there was a press conference during which the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Pearkes) announced this important development to the world; that is all we were permitted to know about it until we raised the question in the house last autumn.

It has been stated, indeed it was stated by the Prime Minister this afternoon, that the arrangement reached last summer was a provisional arrangement, an interim arrangement. But there was no mention of the interim or provisional character of this arrangement when the statement regarding the