

NORAD—Canada-U.S. Agreement

it, as meaning that the commander of NORAD can move reinforcements across the border to meet operational requirements and that this power would be at his discretion. We have had a good deal of discussion in the house as to whether United States aircraft carrying nuclear weapons can cross the Canadian border and, if so, under what conditions. It has been made clear in the house by the Prime Minister and by the Minister of National Defence that on every such occasion permission has to be secured from the Canadian government.

Mr. Pearkes: May I raise a point there? The Prime Minister indicated this afternoon that in defence United States aircraft armed with weapons can cross our border. I have invariably stated that when United States air force bombers require to cross the border they have to get prior permission. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Pearson) knows perfectly well that arrangement existed when his government was in power. There has been no change whatsoever in any way.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, if this agreement means anything there has indeed been such a change because there was no such agreement when we were in power and therefore no such general permission was given to a United States commander in chief of an integrated command to move his forces across the border to meet operational requirements as is specifically set out in this paragraph that he has the authority to do that. We are not talking now about the atom bombers of the strategic air command; we are talking about aircraft under the command of NORAD.

Mr. Pearkes: You were confusing the issue by referring to the fact that I had said they had to get prior permission for the bombers to cross over.

Mr. Pearson: All I ask the minister is whether, when aircraft under the control of NORAD cross the border armed with atomic missiles, and interceptors can carry atomic missiles, the authority given in the exchange of notes requires the qualification given by the minister when he said that aircraft carrying atomic weapons can cross the border only after permission has been obtained in each case.

Mr. Pearkes: That question was always asked with respect to the strategic air command bombers. It was never asked with reference to the air defence of this country.

Mr. Pearson: If in the past this question has always been asked with respect to strategic air command bombers, I am asking it now with regard to United States aircraft under NORAD crossing the border in accordance

[Mr. Pearson.]

with this paragraph of the agreement which has been signed by the two governments.

Mr. Pearkes: The regulations are exactly the same as they were when the Liberal government was in power.

Mr. Pearson: That may be a satisfactory answer to the minister but it is not going to be a satisfactory answer to parliament or to the country. While, of course, I accept without qualification the statement made by the government that this permission has to be obtained in each case, now we are told that it applies only so far as strategic air command bombers are concerned and is subject also no doubt to the qualification the Prime Minister made this afternoon in respect to the forthcoming arrangement in regard to tanker refuelling planes. While that is undoubtedly the case, it is unfortunate that this is apparently not recognized by people across the line who should know exactly what is the situation and who should not in their statements mislead the public as to what is that situation. There is other evidence, but I refer specifically, for instance, to an article in the *U.S. News and World Report* of May 2, 1958 written after an interview with General Thomas S. Power, commander, I believe, of the United States strategic air command. This article has been given great publicity and it would be useful if it could be denied by the government in so far as Canada is concerned in a debate of this kind. Under the heading "Action Over Arctic" there is the following:

From bases far to the north, in Alaska, Labrador, Greenland—

From bases far to the north in Alaska, Labrador, Greenland, this strategic air command which has been referred to—

Mr. McPhillips: You gave them to them.

Mr. Pearson: That interjection does not indicate that my hon. friend knows very much about this situation. If he did he would know that the bases in Labrador to which I am referring were handed over to the United States by the United Kingdom government under a 99-year lease before Newfoundland and Labrador became part of Canada. Perhaps it was a very wise thing for them to do in the circumstances of that time. I continue with the quotation:

—there are frequent, dramatic flights. Sometimes the distant early warning line, the DEW line, across northern Canada and Alaska picks up approaching objects on its radar screens that cannot be readily identified. SAC bombers are then sent roaring towards the Russian frontier. They know their destinations and targets. They carry atomic or hydrogen bombs, with the nuclear war-head detached from the remainder of the missile. They fly to a prearranged point. If by that time