

CANADA



**AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA AND THE GOVERNMENT  
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA CONCERNING THE ORGANIZATION  
AND OPERATION OF THE NORTH AMERICAN AIR DEFENCE COMMAND  
(NORAD)**

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*The Ambassador of Canada to the United States of America to the Secretary  
of State of the United States of America*

CANADIAN EMBASSY, WASHINGTON, D.C.

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SIR,

I have the honour to refer to discussions which have taken place between the Canadian and the United States authorities concerning the necessity for integration of operational control of Canadian and United States Air Defences and, in particular, to the study and recommendations of the Canada-United States Military Study Group. These studies led to the joint announcement of August 1, 1957, by the Minister of National Defence of Canada and the Secretary of Defense of the United States, indicating that our two Governments had agreed to the setting up of a system of integrated operational control for the air defences in the continental United States, Canada and Alaska under an integrated command responsible to the Chiefs of Staff of both countries. Pursuant to the announcement of August 1, 1957, an integrated headquarters known as the North American Air Defence Command (NORAD) has been established on an interim basis at Colorado Springs, Colorado.

For some years prior to the establishment of NORAD, it had been recognized that the air defence of Canada and the United States must be considered as a single problem. However, arrangements which existed between Canada and the United States provided only for the co-ordination of separate Canadian and United States air defence plans, but did not provide for the authoritative control of all air defence weapons which must be employed against an attacker.

The advent of nuclear weapons, the great improvements in the means of effecting their delivery, and the requirements of the air defence control systems demand rapid decisions to keep pace with the speed and tempo of technological developments. To counter the threat and to achieve maximum effectiveness of the air defence system, defensive operations must commence as early as possible and enemy forces must be kept constantly engaged. Arrangements for the co-ordination of national plans requiring consultation between national commanders before implementation had become inadequate in the face of a possible sudden attack, with little or no warning. It was essential, therefore, to have in existence in peacetime an organization, including the weapons, facilities and command structure which could operate at the outset of hostilities in accordance with a single air defence plan approved in advance by national authorities.