

NORAD—Canada-U.S. Agreement

is continually being evolved. He also questioned the fact that last year I had said there were a number of plans. Of course there are a number of plans; there may be a number of different situations arising, all of which may have to be met at any time. Of course we have a plan upon which we can work today, but it is by no means the final plan which will eventually be agreed to by the governments of both countries.

The hon. member who has just sat down wanted to know why we did not bring this note before the house last October. He gave the answer himself—the note had not been completed, it had not been worked out, and what is the use of bringing a half-baked scheme before parliament and taking up the time of the house before it is completed?

The Leader of the Opposition asked a number of questions earlier today and he was concerned this evening about the exercises to which he referred as "fail-safe" exercises. This is the code name given to certain exercises which are carried out in order to test the strategic air command of the U.S. air force. They are carried out at very short notice and the bombers of that force take to the air on a definite course which has been pre-arranged, armed and equipped as though they were carrying out an operation of retaliation, but before they have reached a given point at which they are to get further orders they are instructed to return to their bases.

I have stated over and over again that the bombers of the strategic air command of the United States fly over Canadian territory only when permission has been obtained and the routes have previously been described. It would not be possible for the United States to test their strategic air command by this particular form of exercise if permission to fly over Canada had been previously obtained. Therefore, all these flights have taken place in other directions than across Canada. Never once has the United States asked permission from Canada to carry out this particular form of exercise over our skies. I am, furthermore, confident that they have not done so because our radar system is sufficiently efficient for us to have been able to pick up unidentified aircraft had they been flying over this country.

I can therefore assure the Leader of the Opposition that none of these "fail-safe" exercises have been carried out over Canadian territory or through Canadian air space. The Leader of the Opposition also asked questions about exercises carried out by the aircraft of the United States air defence command and whether they fly

across the international boundary. I interjected to say that the arrangement which exists today is exactly the same as that which existed during the regime of the previous government. I would refer the hon. gentleman to the remarks of the then minister of national defence, the Hon. R. O. Campney, when he was replying to the then member for Winnipeg North Centre, Mr. Stanley Knowles, as recorded at page 1506 of *Hansard* for February 21, 1957. A question had been asked by Mr. Knowles as to a permit given to the United States jet planes with nuclear weapons on board to fly over Canadian territory, and I quote Mr. Campney's reply as follows:

Mr. Speaker, perhaps I should make a short statement on the implications of the United States statement as far as we are concerned. It should be clearly understood that the weapons dealt with in the Washington announcement are to be deployed within the United States. Nevertheless, as we all know, the air defence of Canada is closely related to the air defence of the United States. As a result of this there has been the fullest consultation, as I mentioned, between the two governments concerning the possible use of these new air defence weapons.

The principle weapon about to be brought into use by the United States which has implications for Canada's air defence at the present time is an air to air rocket launched from interceptor type aircraft. Such Canadian interests as may be involved in the use of these weapons have been fully taken into account in the course of the consultations which have taken place between the two governments. As I said earlier, the Canadian government shares the view of the United States government that continuous improvement of the continental air defence system is very essential.

That is quite an interesting remark in view of the debate; however, I continue to quote:

It is a fact that the nuclear air defence weapons which have been developed will improve that joint defence capability. It is also clear, I think, that use must be made of the best means at hand to deter and if necessary to repel aggression.

Coming now to the specific question asked by the hon. member, I think it must be noted that the use of the weapons under consideration by the United States, which as I have said are supplemental and not to replace existing weapons, will be confined to situations of grave emergency.

There is no question of their use in other circumstances, only in circumstances of immediate danger would there be any question of aircraft armed with these weapons flying over Canadian territories. I may say that arrangements have been made for very close consultation in that event, that is in the event of grave danger or emergency. The Canadian authorities have satisfied themselves that the safety hazards involved in the use of these weapons are not great, and that safety devices to prevent premature or accidental discharge are entirely adequate. Exactly the same arrangements exist today as were described by the former minister of national defence.