

## NORAD—Canada-U.S. Agreement

numerous than could be dealt with by the squadrons of the R.C.A.F. under the command of the air defence commander at St. Hubert, the commander in chief NORAD could and would send United States air force fighter squadrons to assist the R.C.A.F. in their task of intercepting these bombers.

I see several ways in which this assistance might be given. The commander in chief NORAD might instruct the officer commanding the R.C.A.F. at St. Hubert to direct all the Canadian planes against a certain group of hostile bombers which were attacking, let us say by way of illustration those which were moving down through the Mackenzie basin. As to another group which might at the same time be attacking across Labrador, the commander in chief at Colorado Springs could say that he would look after that group with United States air force squadrons.

In such instance the R.C.A.F. commander would direct those planes which were perhaps originally going to engage the bombers over Labrador to divert and go to the Mackenzie valley. It must be remembered that from the time the interceptor takes off from its airport until it actually becomes ready for engagement, it is under constant direction from the control system of the Pinetree line which is directing that aircraft, so that it approaches and changes its route according to the changes of route taken by the hostile planes. Hence it is in constant touch with command headquarters at St. Hubert.

Another situation might be such that the commander in chief of NORAD would say to the commander of the air defence command of the R.C.A.F. that NORAD would place a certain number of specified squadrons under the operational control of the commander of the air defence command at St. Hubert. In other words he would make available to the commander of the R.C.A.F. certain United States squadrons which could be employed as and how the commander of the R.C.A.F. saw fit.

That seems to me to be the sort of control which is exercised by the NORAD commander during an engagement. It should be appreciated that the R.C.A.F. squadrons are, as it were, front line troops. They are the first which would engage any hostile bombers coming over Canadian airways, and they would be assisted by the United States air force squadrons if the task before them was greater than they were able to carry out.

**Mr. Pearson:** May I ask the minister a question?

**Mr. Pearkes:** Might I suggest that as a number of questions have been asked, I might

[Mr. Pearkes.]

be given an opportunity to answer the questions which were asked yesterday. Then if I have time I shall be only too pleased to endeavour to answer any others.

I do not know whether that statement has cleared up the situation but I have tried to explain it in as simple language as possible, in the way I see that operation being carried out.

Another question which was asked by the Leader of the Opposition was with regard to the effectiveness of NORAD. He asked me if I would deny certain press reports and rumours which had been spread indicating that perhaps in some quarters there was not at NORAD the degree of co-operation which is considered to be desirable.

Of course I am not in a position to report directly on the behaviour of the commanders of another country. However, I should like to report emphatically and definitely that when General Partridge was here he was loud in his praise of the ability, talents and conscientiousness of Air Marshal Slemon, who is his deputy there. Furthermore, Air Marshal Slemon spoke in enthusiastic terms with regard to the co-operation he had received from the various members of the staff at NORAD. He said that when General Partridge was away he was in supreme command, and his authority was recognized and accepted without question. He went on to say that he received full co-operation from the subordinates who would under those circumstances be under him.

I recall very clearly a remark he made. He said, "These are dedicated men who are working for the defence of the North American continent". He went on and used these particular words: "They no longer regard themselves either as Americans or Canadians, as army, air force, navy or marine officers. With that evidence I feel that it is possible for me to deny the suggestions which have been made that NORAD is not working effectively. If we have had reason to communicate with NORAD officially or with General Partridge on a more personal basis we have always received immediate and courteous replies. I have absolutely no reason to believe that NORAD is not functioning effectively.

The hon. member for Essex East asked whether it was not true that the United States will concentrate on missiles and that manned aircraft will be operated by Canadians only. Of course that is not true; the Americans are manning piloted aircraft today which, if an emergency arose, would be available to assist the Royal Canadian Air Force, and as far as I know it is the intention of the United States to continue to man piloted