

NORAD—Canada-U.S. Agreement

We regret that in what may be a matter involving life and death for many of our people and indeed for hundreds of millions of the world's people the Prime Minister should have injected political notes and overtones. We feel that he was not doing the cause any good when he resorted to that procedure. We were awaiting with considerable anticipation the speeches that we thought were to be given by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Smith) and the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Pearkes) because they are the two members of the cabinet who are most directly involved, being responsible for matters of this kind.

After the election we heard that our Secretary of State for External Affairs had made a trip down to Washington in order, according to press reports, to receive a briefing on what was happening in the world today; and we heard, according to other press reports, that General Partridge appeared in Ottawa not so long ago to give our Minister of National Defence a briefing on what was happening in defence matters in the western world. The people of Canada were hoping that their first major speeches in this house on defence matters would provide much of the information that they had gleaned—and in the opinion of many, that they apparently had to glean—rather regrettably, in another country or from the nationals of another country. We had hoped that they would have been adequately informed by the senior officials of their own departments and would not have had to be briefed by United States officialdom.

We maintain that there is nothing that is as harmful to our defence as is a misinformed or uninformed Canadian public. One of our strongest weapons of defence is the conviction of our own people that everything that can possibly be done in these matters is being done. However, after listening to the debate yesterday and today—and I am sure the people of Canada upon reading *Hansard* will have to agree with me—I feel that very little has been done to inform our public. Our public will be as confused as are many members of this house; and many of us have no hesitation in admitting that we are very much confused indeed.

The hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Herridge) some time ago described this whole problem of NORAD as Canada's greatest crossword puzzle. After two days of debate, it appears that not only is it a crossword puzzle but that in the interval several of the essential pieces of that crossword puzzle have been lost, and there does not seem to be any hope that the pattern can be established. The intent of my remarks today is

to make, on behalf of this group, one final appeal to the Prime Minister to clear up so many of the uncertainties which have existed in the past and which exist today to a greater extent than ever.

The Prime Minister gave one version yesterday. He attempted to build a nice little nest. We were hoping for a nest of security into which all of us might climb, as we have so often done on other occasions in the history of the Canadian parliament. However, that nest has been considerably fouled up by the several speeches that have been made. As recorded at page 995 of *Hansard* the Prime Minister said:

For this purpose the agreement puts these forces under the operation of a single joint headquarters, of which the senior official is a United States air force general and his deputy is a Canadian air marshal.

He refers here to the agreement putting these forces under the operation of this joint headquarters. Yet the Minister of National Defence indicated very clearly that there may well not be any forces. Hence we are left in the dark on that score. As reported on the same page of *Hansard*, in referring to his meeting with General Partridge the Prime Minister said this:

We reviewed as well their problems and the plans they formulated to meet the changing circumstances,—

I should like to ask the Prime Minister this question. Who formulated the plans? Then, of course, to that confusion we have added the confusion of the Minister of National Defence who indicated that there may not be any plans since he said that plans cannot be formulated in a matter of a few days and that there is nothing more now than there has always been, namely continuous consultation. I presume he was going back as far as the Ogdensburg agreement when he referred to continuous consultation. However, we are then told by the Prime Minister that the plan is for maximum effectiveness on a moment's notice.

Surely, if there are no forces, if it is only a matter of consultation, how can we take the Prime Minister at his word when he refers to "maximum effectiveness" and "on a moment's notice" and "under the command of a single joint board"? The Prime Minister adds to the confusion when later on he says that this command will have powers which he describes and on page 996 of *Hansard* of June 10 he says:

I have seen these commanders, I was impressed with them, and I feel that the Canadian people and the people of the United States can have confidence in them. Over and over again they underlined the fact that the role of NORAD is defence, not attack; that its objective is defensive, not aggressive. It