

NORAD—Canada-U.S. Agreement

I should like to think—and I think I have some evidence to make the statement—that if this matter had come before us after the election we would have acted in the way that I have suggested; we would have given this document the kind of consideration to which it was entitled; we would have worked out with the United States an agreement based on it and we would have brought the agreement to parliament before NORAD was set up, especially in view of the fact there was no emergency, as we saw it, which required this change at that particular time. Indeed, there had been developments in the field of air defence, arising out of ballistic missiles, which counselled caution and counselled the most careful kind of consideration. I suggest to my right hon. friend that this agreement did not get that kind of consideration at the meeting that he called to consider the matter.

Then the other reason given for acting in the way in which the government acted was that this is merely an extension of NATO, that it was a NATO agreement, that it was already provided for in NATO. I will come back to that matter a little bit later because I shall have something to say about it in detail. I also have the same books, the same charts and the same maps that my right hon. friend mentioned in the house this afternoon. I also have one or two other documents.

Whatever should have been done, the fact is that after NORAD was set up by an order in council appointing one of our air marshals as deputy commander and establishing his salary, then the government went to work to negotiate—I do not know whether or not this was an afterthought—an agreement with the United States government. The matter certainly had been brought into the House of Commons. There was every indication, certainly on the part of the opposition, that an agreement of that much importance would be very wrong indeed without that kind of governmental understanding behind it, namely an exchange of signed notes between representatives of the two governments. So last summer or last autumn negotiations began for the conclusion of this exchange of letters.

I cannot help but wonder—and I have had some experience in negotiating these documents—why it took ten months or almost ten months, I think it was, to negotiate an exchange of notes of the character of those which we have before us today in connection with this resolution. I cannot understand why the government initially refused our very reasonable request to submit this exchange of notes to parliament for consideration. It seemed to me to be a rather strange procedure that when this exchange of notes was finally signed it was tabled in this house

as part of a speech of the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Smith) on the address in reply to the speech from the throne and that in that tabling no parliamentary approval was sought. Indeed when we brought this question up at that time as to whether there would be such a discussion and approval we were told that would not be done because it was not necessary, because it was part of the North Atlantic Treaty Pact.

Hence I come back to this particular argument concerning which the Prime Minister had so much to say this afternoon. There is no difference of opinion between us on the fact that NORAD has undoubtedly a connection with NATO. There is no question about that. Every military arrangement by two NATO governments or three or five NATO governments must have some connection with NATO because of article 5 and article 3 of the NATO pact which my right hon. friend quoted. There is no argument about that matter at all. But my hon. friends opposite went much farther than that. For some reason or other—perhaps to obscure the bilateral character of the agreement; perhaps because they were a little bit sensitive about the reaction in the country to the placing of part of the R.C.A.F. under a United States commander; or perhaps for some other reason—they went out of their way to emphasize that this headquarters was an integral part of NATO because it was made responsible to the Canadian and United States chiefs of staff who, in their turn, wearing different hats, are the Canada-United States regional planning group of NATO. However, the effort to create the impression that NORAD was a part of NATO in that organizational sense is not likely to succeed. Indeed, the Minister of National Defence went rather far this last November when he indicated that this combined headquarters and the forces under it were a NATO force. If you refer to the agreement itself you will find this paragraph:

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization will continue to be kept informed through the Canada-United States regional planning group of arrangements for the air defence of North America.

It states that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization will be kept informed of these arrangements. That is not the important part of the connection between the command and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; it is in the sense of responsibility to and authority from NATO headquarters that NORAD has no organic connection with NATO at all. The commander and the deputy commander were not appointed by any NATO agency; they have no authority under NATO and they are not responsible to NATO, and