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*L'ambassadeur aux États-Unis
au secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures*
*Ambassador in United States
to Secretary of State for External Affairs*

TELEGRAM 289

Washington, February 20, 1956

TOP SECRET

Reference: Our despatch 2047 of Dec 21/55.¹⁹

INTEGRATION OF OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF THE CONTINENTAL AIR
DEFENCES OF CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES DURING PEACETIME

The Joint Staff have given us a copy of a telegram they sent to Ottawa dated February 16. We are sending you the text for your convenience. In connection with this you may wish to refer to paragraph 35(h) of record of the meeting of consultation attached to our despatch under reference. The following is the CJS signal mentioned: Text begins:

1. Following is the text of a memorandum received from Secretary U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff "Paragraph one. In their continuing study of military measures essential to the strengthening of the air defences of the North American continent, the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff have considered the desirability of peacetime integration of operation control of the continental elements of the Air Defence Systems of Canada and the United States, including the continental portions of the warning systems. As a result of their examination of this subject, the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff have approved in principle the need for such integration of operational control.

2. The United States Joint Chiefs of Staff consider that it would be desirable to reach agreement in such areas as the composition of subordinate forces, the assignment of tasks, the designation of objectives, and the authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission of providing air defence for Canada and the continental United States. Operational control in this respect would not include such matters as administration, discipline, internal organization, unit training and logistics.

3. In order that the necessary details of such an arrangement may be developed at an early date, the Joint Chiefs of Staff have directed the undertaking of immediate studies in this field. In taking this action, the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff are fully aware that any studies made unilaterally on the subject in the United States will be without substance if not responsive to Canadian views.

4. With this in mind, the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff request the views of the Canadian Chiefs of Staff Committee on the desirability of integrating in peacetime the operational control of the continental elements of our two air defence systems. Suggestions on the best procedure by which combined study and planning in that direction might be undertaken also are solicited. Text ends.

¹⁹ Voir/See Volume 21, Document 307.