



PRESS RELEASE

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
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Following is the text of a joint announcement by the Governments of Canada and the United States, which is being issued simultaneously in Ottawa and Washington at 2:30 P.M. EST, Thursday, April 8:

Because of the possibility of aggressive air attacks against North America, the Canadian and United States Governments after the Second World War continued the cooperative arrangements for the defence of North America which had been brought into effect during the war. Since that time, there have been established in both countries fully manned radar screens for the detection of a potential enemy, and installations for interceptor aircraft and anti-aircraft weapons. At all stages, planning has been carried on between the two countries on a joint basis. Consultations and cooperation at all levels have been constant and completely satisfactory.

For some time now, the Canadian and United States Governments have been appraising the air defence system to define the steps required to strengthen our defences in the light of recent advances in the destructive capabilities of atomic weapons against targets in our two countries.

For the past four years, work has been going on at high priority on the construction of a large and costly radar chain which is required not only to detect enemy bombers but also to control fighter aircraft engaged in the task of interception. This radar chain is known as the Pinetree Chain.

Long before the Pinetree project was approaching completion, the military planners of the two countries were engaged in an intensive study of what further steps might be desirable and practicable. In October 1953, a team of military and scientific advisers representing both countries recommended that additional early warning should be provided by the establishment of a further radar system generally to the north of the settled territory in Canada. The report of this team was considered by the Chiefs of Staff of each country later that month. At a meeting in Washington in November 1953, the Canadian representatives informed the United States authorities that the Canadian Government was prepared to proceed immediately with the necessary surveys and siting for the proposed new early warning radar system. This work is already well advanced.

There are many difficult problems to be solved in establishing this additional early warning system in the Canadian north. The system will extend over thousands of miles and its survey will involve the examination of a great number of possible sites. Much of the ground is inaccessible except by tractor train and helicopter. In many areas, extreme temperatures are confronted for several months of the year. Many technical problems, including the interference of the auroral belt with electronic devices, have had to be overcome. In overcoming the various technical problems involved the United States Air Force is working closely with the Royal Canadian Air Force.

It is obviously just as important to have early warning of aircraft approaching target areas in North America from over the sea as from over Northern Canada. For this reason, the United States Government is extending the early warning barrier across the north-eastern and north-western seaward approaches to North America. The Alaska radar system is co-ordinated with those in Canada and the continental United States, and the development of airborne radar is well advanced.

In addition to these measures of common concern, both countries are working continuously to improve the air defence installations in the vicinity of the major target areas. Here too, cooperation between the United States and Canadian air defence commanders is close, and unidentified aircraft are investigated by the most immediately available interceptor force, whether Canadian or American.

The defence of North America is part of the defence of the North Atlantic region to which both Canada and the United States are pledged as signatories of the North Atlantic Treaty. Thus, the cooperative arrangements for the defence of this continent and for the participation of Canadian and United States forces in the defence of Europe are simply two sides of the same coin, two parts of a world-wide objective, to preserve peace and to defend freedom.
