

## Item: 19406

**Title:** Improvements in air defence - Replacement aircraft for CF-100's in Canada

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Improvements in air defence;  
replacement aircraft for CF-100's in Canada  
(Previous reference Feb. 4)

1. The Minister of National Defence, using a map, informed the Cabinet on the location of interceptor and BOMARC squadrons in Canada and indicated the depth of the defences these weapons provided. The coverage of this form of defence was governed by the location of the Pinetree stations and the warning lines. If, several years ago, it had been physically and financially possible to have situated the Pinetree radars further north, this would probably have been done and the BOMARC and interceptor bases consequently would have been further north too. The expected range of the BOMARC "B" was between 400 and 500 miles, that of the "A", about 150 to 200 miles.
2. Mr. Pearkes also read a copy of a letter sent to the U.S. defence authorities, when the Pinetree stations were first being installed in August, 1951, recording the understanding of the Canadian Government that the conclusion of the agreement for a one-third: two-thirds cost-sharing arrangement in no way implied that Canada was to be regarded as a recipient of aid. Perhaps a cost-sharing arrangement for the F-101E's could be regarded in a similar light.
3. The Prime Minister said that a committee of the Ministers who were members of the Cabinet Defence Committee plus Messrs. Churchill, Harkness, Nowlan and MacLean should meet to consider the proposal and make recommendations. If the Committee reported that security demanded the acquisition of these aircraft, then that would have to be the decision. To purchase them, however, would cause great difficulties. It would place him and the Minister of National Defence in impossible positions. On the other hand, failure to re-equip would be bad for the morale of the R.C.A.F. He thought the public had been convinced of the wisdom of the government's decision to cancel the Arrow. To obtain other aircraft now in the face of statements that the threat of the manned bomber was diminishing and that the day of the interceptor would soon be over would be most embarrassing unless a reasonable explanation could be given. Additional BOMARC's in Canada might be an alternative. The Committee should first examine carefully what had been said publicly by himself and other Ministers about cancelling the Arrow and, in the light of that, consider what was possible. In any event, the safety of the nation should be the paramount consideration no matter what the consequences. He had been against cancelling the Arrow but had been persuaded otherwise.
4. During the brief discussion it was said that, even though a logical, reasoned case might be made for obtaining the F-101B's, such a decision could not be explained to the public. The repercussions of telling CINCNOAD that Canada was not prepared to re-equip the CF-100 squadrons would not be too great.
5. The Cabinet agreed that a Committee consisting of the members of the Cabinet Defence Committee, other than the Prime Minister, together with Messrs. Churchill, Harkness, Nowlan and MacLean, review and report on the proposals of the Minister of National Defence for authority to discuss with the United States various possible arrangements for re-equipping on a smaller scale, the air defence force of the R.C.A.F. in Canada.