

1960.01.29

SECRET

- 4 -

10. The Cabinet agreed,-

(a) that invitations be extended to the provinces to have their representatives attend the inaugural meeting of the Provisional National Committee on the Centennial in Ottawa on February 8th, 1960;

(b) that it would be inadvisable for the Federal Government to circulate a checklist of suggestions on the content of the centennial celebrations but that at the outset proposals should be invited from the delegations; the draft agenda to be amended accordingly; and,

(c) that it would be desirable for the inaugural meeting to be held in public at the start when opening statements were made and thereafter the meeting would decide whether or not it would meet in camera.

Replacement aircraft for CF-100; press comment

11. The Prime Minister said there had been a leak to the press on the matter of a replacement aircraft for the CF-100. This problem was being actively studied at the official level and in December it had been on the Cabinet agenda but not discussed. The press story would undoubtedly give rise to questions which would be embarrassing.

12. During the discussion the form of a possible answer was discussed briefly. There had been several stories over the past few weeks and months. It would be desirable for the government to reach a decision on the matter soon.

13. The Cabinet agreed to consider next week the question of a replacement aircraft for the CF-100 for R.C.A.F. air defence operations in Canada.

Appointment; Auditor General
(Previous reference Jan.25)

14. The Cabinet approved the appointment of Mr. Andrew Maxwell Henderson as Auditor General of Canada, effective March 1st, 1960.

(An order in council was passed accordingly;
P.C. 1960-114, Jan. 29.)

United Nations; Presidency

15. The Cabinet agreed that Canada should support the representative of Ireland at the United Nations, Mr. Boland, for the Presidency of that organization.

Cabinet Meeting

1960.02.04

SECRET

- 2 -

Improvements in air defence;
replacement aircraft for CF-100 in Canada
(Previous reference Jan. 27)

1. The Minister of National Defence said that, since the summer of 1958, the Chiefs of Staff had been working on a direction from the Cabinet Defence Committee to investigate and submit proposals for "any additional interceptor aircraft of a proven developed type that may be required in lieu of the CF-105".

The Soviet Air Force had in service today, a jet bomber force of over 1100 aircraft which would have a useful life for some years to come; they constituted a threat to North America in the early 1960's. The United Kingdom and the United States planned to use supersonic interceptors for a time. Analyses showed that the CF-100 Mk. V was no longer operationally satisfactory against the present Russian bomber threat and it was impracticable to modify it to carry a nuclear air-to-air missile. The Chiefs of Staff had confirmed the continued need for the operation of interceptor aircraft in Canadian airspace.

General Kuter, Commander in Chief of NORAD, had recommended an air defence plan which included the withdrawal of the present nine CF-100 squadrons, commencing in 1960, and their replacement, to be completed by 1962, by six squadrons equipped with supersonic aircraft capable of carrying air-to-air nuclear missiles. This plan was being studied by the Chiefs of Staff.

The Chief of the Air Staff had investigated possibilities and methods of obtaining a limited number of supersonic interceptors to replace the CF-100, commencing late in 1960. Amongst those considered was an all-weather version of the F104G but such an aircraft, even if it could be manufactured soon, which it could not, would not be compatible with the SAGE environment and therefore would be of little use in the defence system of North America. However, it was learned that the United States Air Force would consider making available to the R.C.A.F. sixty-six F101B all-weather aircraft by re-equipping U.S.A.F. squadrons in less critical areas with a shorter range aircraft. The F101B was the most suitable U.S. aircraft available to replace the CF-100. Delivery could start in July, 1960 and be completed in March, 1961. Having a greater operational capacity than the CF-100 and being capable of carrying a nuclear air-to-air missile, these aircraft could be deployed in five squadrons of 12 aircraft each, replacing the present nine squadrons of 18 aircraft, thus reducing the manpower and operating requirements. The total cost of 66 F101B's, including spares, ground support equipment, weapons, training equipment and construction, was estimated to be approximately \$180 million. A cost-sharing arrangement with the U.S. might be possible and payments might be spread over a period of years.

The U.S.A.F. were anxious to transfer as many of their defence commitments in Canada as possible. as

SECRET

- 3 -

In general, the conclusions were that the CF-100 was no longer operationally satisfactory to deal with the present bomber threat, that for some time any attack on North America would probably include manned bombers as well as ICBM's, that it would be prudent to provide interceptor and BOMARC weapons to assist in the defence of the deterrent for the next three to five years and that, in addition to this role, a limited number of supersonic fighters were needed for identification purposes and to exercise the warning and interceptor system.

The Chiefs of Staff had concluded that, if satisfactory arrangements could be made, a small number of aircraft should be procured from the U.S. On their advice, the Minister recommended that negotiations be entered into with the U.S. Defense Department to procure 66 F101B's, either through a cost-sharing arrangement or by Canada assuming the responsibility for the manning and maintenance of certain U.S.A.F. installations in Canada; the results of these negotiations to be reported to Cabinet in due course for consideration.

An explanatory memorandum had been circulated, (Minister's memorandum, Feb. 1, - Cab. Doc. 34/60).

2. Mr. Pearkes added that it was the belief of the Chiefs of Staff that a bomber threat would exist until 1965. C-in-C NORAD's estimate was until 1970. Mr. Pearkes agreed with the Canadian Chiefs' view. A decision had to be reached soon on his recommendation because comments on NORAD's latest defence plan could not be long delayed. The CF-100 was really out of date now.

3. The Prime Minister said that the first question raised by the proposal was whether, having regard to the decision to cancel the CF-105 and the traditional Canadian position against accepting mutual aid, the government could agree to an arrangement under which the United States would pay a share of the cost of equipment to be used by Canadian forces.

4. During the discussion the following points were made:

(a) A cost-sharing arrangement for these aircraft, despite its advantages, was politically intolerable in all the circumstances.

(b) On the other hand, a decision to acquire F101B's from the U.S. without payment or on a shared basis could be defended on the ground that they would be used to defend the deterrent. However, to try to justify such a decision in terms of these aircraft being acquired as a replacement for the Arrow would be impossible.

(c) A reasonable case for purchase could be made on the basis that the aircraft would help to strengthen North American defence for a time, at much less cost than the Arrow.

SECRET

- 4 -

(d) The F101B should have been considered as an alternative to the Arrow long before the decision to cancel the latter aeroplane was taken. To this it was said that the version of the F101B now being discussed was a different machine to the F101B of two or three years ago.

(e) Apart from the difficulties of acquiring these in the face of the Arrow decision, the R.C.A.F., with only 66 aircraft, would have very little effectiveness against a Soviet bomber attack. Regardless of the nature and extent of the defences, many bombers would get through. Instead of obtaining any more interceptors the other elements of the R.C.A.F. should be strengthened.

(f) Canadians did not worry too much about U.S. expenditures in Canada for the defence of North America. If the U.S. wanted to provide more interceptor defence, let them do it. But if the government obtained U.S. aircraft now for the R.C.A.F. it would be laughed out of court.

(g) If it were accepted that there was no need for defence against the manned bomber, then the BOMARC programmes should be cancelled and the radars dismantled.

(h) After a good deal of thought and with some trepidation, the United Kingdom had formally announced that there was no defence against the present threat. The public response had been wonderment that it had taken the government so long to find out.

(i) The dilemma was simply this. If no more interceptors were supplied, the U.S. might well take over this form of defence in Canada with all that such a course implied for national sovereignty. On the other hand, to acquire the F101B's, as had been proposed, would be most embarrassing in the light of all the statements made in connection with the Arrow.

(j) A final decision was not necessary immediately. All that was required was authority to discuss the proposition outlined by the Minister with the U.S. NORAD's recommendation was only the recommendation of a field commander and what the U.S. government felt about it was not yet known. Agreement to discuss, however, implied a willingness to have the CF-100's in Canada replaced with F101B's. If the decision were not to re-equip, then the CF-100 squadrons should be disbanded quite soon.

(k) Adding more BOMARC's to the air defence system would be easier to justify than buying interceptors.

(l) Whatever the decision was to be, it had to be taken in the interest of the nation's security, no matter how painful that might be, and not for

SECRET

- 5 -

(m) It was doubtful if a decision not to replace the CF-100 squadrons would make a nullity of NORAD.

5. The Prime Minister added that he did not see how he could swallow what he had said following the cancellation of the Arrow. He and the Minister were responsible. If other aircraft should now be acquired to protect the national security, perhaps it would be possible to do it if some changes in personnel were made.

6. The Cabinet postponed decision on the proposals of the Minister of National Defence for discussions with the U.S. government to ascertain on what terms it might be possible to arrange the replacement of the R.C.A.F.'s CF-100's in Canada.

R.B. Bryce,
Secretary to the Cabinet.

Cabinet Meeting

1960.02.06

SECRET

- 2 -

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-101B'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.