

**editorial**

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## NORAD Policy Clear (as Mud) Following Commons Debate

The Commons debate on NORAD has no doubt cleared up any misapprehensions which members of Parliament may have had about NORAD placing Canadian fighter squadrons in the position of being ordered into an attack because someone down at NORAD Headquarters in Colorado Springs (General Partridge, USAF, or Air Marshal Slemon, RCAF) believes an air attack is under way. The NORAD commander-of-the-moment, the debate revealed, is not ordering an RCAF scramble—he is asking RCAF Air Defense Command at St. Hubert's to join battle.

It was not made too clear in the Commons debate if the RCAF commander at St. Hubert's has authority to grant or refuse the NORAD request for aid on his own, or whether he must first consult with Ottawa. Maybe he should flip a coin!

We're quibbling, we realize. No doubt a conference will be called to work all this out when the time comes.

Another touchy point cleared up during the NORAD debate was the circumstances under which USAF Strategic Air Command bombers will be allowed to fly fully armed over Canadian territory. Here again, we're all right. Each such sortie can be made only after permission is granted from Ottawa.

Personally, we would have liked the Opposition (or dedicated Government members for that matter) to have gone a step further and secured some assurance as to what precautions are to be taken against accidental dropping of a bomb or a crash when permission is granted for a SAC sortie. Safety nets perhaps!

With an accurate flight plan it might even be possible to warn all residents of the fly over area in adequate time.

With these and other minor points of uncertainty, the NORAD debate was definitely reassuring. Now then, who's on first?

## Anniversary for a World Beater

Airline passengers throughout the Western world will no doubt be happy to join the Vickers-Armstrongs (Aircraft) Ltd. and Rolls-Royce Ltd. in marking an aviation milestone this month—the tenth anniversary of the first flight of the turbo-prop Vickers Viscount series.

One would be hard pressed to find an aircraft which has made a more favorable and lasting impression on the traveling public in the mushrooming of commercial air transport which followed the end of the Second World War. Operators have indicated their approval by pushing Viscount orders within an ace of the 400 mark as the anniversary date nears.

The degree to which Vickers-Armstrongs and Rolls-Royce have fulfilled their obligations to the air transport industry over the years is evidenced by the number of airlines which have placed repeat orders for Viscounts and by the fact that 10 years later the world's first turbo-prop airliner remains without serious competition along its operational routes.

With all those who have enjoyed the Viscount service which Trans-Canada Air Lines introduced in North America, we'd like to add our word of congratulations on a job well done.