

Our Defense Alliance Upheld

THE significant fact in the defense debate in the House of Commons is the failure of the Opposition to offer any alternative to policies being followed by the Government.

Liberal leader Pearson's no-confidence motion criticized delay in determining air defense policy; but his remarks fully documented his conviction that the transition to the age of missiles creates many problems that cannot be resolved immediately.

The crux of the matter is that the defense of North America is indivisible; that the defense of the free world must rest upon free alliances.

Prime Minister Diefenbaker last night reiterated the point that this must include defense production, and the House of Commons backed up his view by a vote of 175-42.

Mr. Pearson spoke of a "genuine interdependence" in Canada's defense relations with the United States. In his accusation that Canada has begun to accept lend-lease from the U.S., he is out of touch with reality both in his thinking and his terminology. Joint defense in North America rests upon the NORAD agree-

ment, and the machinery of consultation for this purpose was specified in the Canadian note to the U.S. of August 29, 1958. As a practical matter, each country contributes to joint defense to the extent of its capacity. This is genuine interdependence, though the partners are far from equal in capacity.

Mr. Pearson argued that NORAD should be amplified by an agreement on defense production; Mr. Winch, speaking for the CCF, argued that it should be linked with NATO. Neither cared to test opinion by calling for rejection of NORAD itself.

Significantly, the abandoned Arrow aircraft has no supporters in Parliament. Mr. Pearson called its successor, the Bomarc missile, a "makeshift." Perhaps it is, in the sense that the chiefs of staff committee that turned thumbs down on the Arrow may do the same for the Bomarc and other weapons, in due course. Defense Minister Pearkes frankly accepted this possibility, and there the matter stands.

Mr. Pearkes added a footnote to the Arrow controversy when he revealed that six months of intensive effort failed to find either buyers for the Arrow or alternate

orders for Avro Aircraft Company.

North American defense rests upon a working partnership between Canada and the United States. This is a new fact in world politics. It neither humiliates Canada, nor makes this country a satellite. Whether it works or not will depend not on Canada alone, but upon the United States as well.

Meanwhile, the verdict of Parliament is clear. Canada intends to shoulder its responsibilities in this task, which is as it should be.

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