

Re-establish Civilian Control Is Ottawa Defense Aim

By HAROLD GREER

Shortly after John Diefenbaker became prime minister in June, 1957, he was asked by Defense Minister Pearkes and by the chairman of the chiefs of staff committee, Gen. Charles Foulkes, to approve a scheme providing for closer co-ordination between the RCAF and the U.S. Air Force in North American air defense.

Specifically, the proposal was that a joint air defense command be established at Colorado Springs, Col., for the purpose of creating a system of integrated operational control of the air defense units in both countries. Mr. Diefenbaker was asked to tell the United States that Canada was willing when he saw Secretary of States Dulles in Ottawa on July 28.

The prime minister did tell Mr. Dulles. Four days later, Ottawa and Washington announced the new arrangement and Air Marshal Roy Slemon (until then RCAF chief of staff) went to Colorado Springs as deputy commander of NORAD, which was activated Sept. 12.

From that point, Canada embarked on an integration policy which many Canadians, to judge from the public debate since, fear will lead to complete subordination of Canada's defenses to U.S. control and of Canadian foreign policy to U.S. interests.

There are two reasons for what occurred in the summer of 1957. One is strictly political: Gen. Foulkes wanted to keep his job and Air Marshal Slemon wanted a new one.

Gen. Foulkes is a shrewd, brilliant, persuasive man, long experienced in the ways of Ottawa. He has been the Government's chief military adviser for eight years and was chief of the army staff for six years before that. Not only does he know more about Canada's military establishment

than any other man alive—and therefore invaluable to a new ministry—but he also knows how to handle politicians.

Yet Air Marshal Slemon at 53 had already been head of the RCAF for four years. A dynamic, talented, ambitious officer, he was the obvious man to succeed Gen. Foulkes, who, presumably, was going to retire some time. Certainly he was not the kind of man the Government wanted to lose at a time when air defense was becoming the central, and most expensive, military problem before the country.

The NORAD proposal, with Air Marshal Slemon as deputy commander, was therefore an answer to a very awkward problem facing the prime minister.

The second explanation for Mr. Diefenbaker's decision is that, on the available evidence,

he assumed the matter was routine and uncontroversial.

Close co-operation and communications already existed between the RCAF air defense command and the U.S. continental air defense command. It had long been accepted in both countries that the air defense of Canada and the United States had to be thought of as a single problem. Negotiations between the military authorities, according to government records, had obviously been going on for some time with the approval of the previous Liberal defense minister, Ralph Campney. It appeared that they needed final approval just when the general elections had intervened.

NORAD therefore seemed to be simply a formal recognition of the co-ordination which already existed and a sensible way of preparing for the integrated operational control which would obviously be needed in the event of an attack or an emergency.

So routine did Mr. Diefenbaker consider the matter that, with the exception of Mr. Pearkes, he never consulted his cabinet colleagues. He never told the Department of External Affairs (Mr. Diefenbaker was then his own foreign minister) and he never made a memorandum of the verbal agreement he gave to Mr. Dulles.

It was some time later that it became apparent that the issue had strange aspects. As External Affairs Minister Smith was to admit to the Commons estimates committee, neither he nor his department knew anything about NORAD.

The prime minister discovered that when Canadian diplomatic officers had asked the military what was going on, they were told it was a military secret. He heard Liberal Leader Lester Pearson claim that the previous government never had

any intention of approving the arrangement as it stood when the Liberals left office.

Most important, Mr. Diefenbaker discovered that Canada had agreed to integrate with the United States on a concept of air defense (as its was subsequently called in the formal exchange of notes) which, if it meant anything at all, meant either substantially increased effort and expenditures by Canada on air defense, or substantial financial and military subsidies by the United States.

Canada, moreover, had entered into this position without knowing what it would get in return and without knowing how the costs and responsibilities were to be divided.

Since then, informed officials in Ottawa say the government has had two defense objectives: to re-establish civilian control over the military, and to get back, as best it can, what it gave away in the NORAD agreement.

In practical terms, integration of continental air defenses means nothing more than extending northward the electronically-controlled grid of radar, manned interceptors and ground-to-air guided missiles now becoming operational throughout the United States.

The essential difference, according to expert military opinion, between this system and what Canada has used up to now is that there is little or no requirement in it for the long-range (2,000 miles) interceptor, capable of flying beyond the range of the ground control system and searching out aircraft with air-borne radar.

The United States has never felt the need, as Canada has, for interceptors of this type and there will be no Canadian requirement, it is argued, once the SAGE control and computing system covers Ontario and

Quebec as far north as James Bay.

The Canadian Government has accepted this concept in principle, and, to a considerable extent, in practice.

It has already decided to build two bases of Bomarc guided missiles, to beef up the Pinetree radar umbrella, and to install the SAGE system. Negotiations are currently under way with Washington to get the United States to pay the lion's share of the cost. The Bomarc bases, missiles and SAGE will come to \$264,000,000; the Pinetree additions and improvements will probably cost at least \$50,000,000.

It has launched a campaign to abandon the Avro Arrow and it is discussing with the U.S. Government the conditions and terms for introducing the F-108 into the NORAD system

as the standardized interceptor in three or four years time.

The F-108, which will have a speed of 2,200 miles an hour and a range of 1,000 miles, is still in the development stage, but Ottawa has been promised that its program will be hastened.

Finally, it can be said on the best authority that the government is prepared if necessary to turn all, or nearly all, of the role of manned interceptors in continental defense over to the United States, with Canada assuming responsibility for operating the radar warning and control systems and possibly the Bomarc missiles.

This eventuality is defended in cabinet quarters on the ground that a truly integrated system requires an allocation of roles and responsibilities on an international rather than a national basis.

Canada depends on collective security for its defense, this reporter was told, and if it is wrong to have U.S. fighter squadrons based in Canada then it is wrong to have Canadian squadrons based in West Germany.

The prospect therefore, is for a Canadian dependency on U.S. military power unprecedented in Canada's history.

Second of a series.



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Shrewd, persuasive.



Air Marshal Slemon

Dynamic, talented.