

NOTE

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THE CANADIAN-AMERICAN PERMANENT  
JOINT BOARD ON DEFENCE, 1940-1945

1. This report consists basically of an article entitled "The Canadian-American Permanent Joint Board on Defence, 1940-1945", by the Director of the Historical Section, A.H.Q., which was published in International Journal, Vol. IX, No. 2, Spring 1954. A copy of the Third Draft of the article is attached as Appendix "A".
2. This article had its origin in a doctoral thesis on Canadian-American military cooperation during the Second World War written by Colonel Stanley W. Dziuban, U.S.A. Colonel Dziuban wrote his thesis while employed in the Office of the Secretary of Defense in Washington. He had full access to documents relating to wartime cooperation with Canada, and as a result produced a draft which contained a great deal of information heretofore unpublished. He applied for Canadian clearance through the U.S. Section of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence.
3. When the matter was considered by the Department of External Affairs and the Department of National Defence in Ottawa, it seemed evident that no very effective objection to publication could be made on grounds of military security. Accordingly, Canada in due course concurred in the suggestion of the U.S. Section of the P.J.B.D. that the wartime Recommendations of the Board, and its "First Report", be declassified. Colonel Dziuban was given the clearance which he requested.
4. It appeared, however, that it was undesirable that the first information concerning the more confidential aspects of Canadian-American wartime relations should reach the Canadian public through a private study published in the United States. Accordingly, the Department of External Affairs proposed that the Director of the Historical Section should write a short article on the wartime activities of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence. This was done, and the article was published in the spring of 1954, anticipating any publication by Colonel Dziuban.
5. The version of the article attached to this report differs from that finally published in certain particulars. First, some final editorial changes were made before publication. Secondly, as a result of a ruling by the Minister of National Defence, specific references to decisions by the Cabinet War Committee made on particular dates were eliminated and more general statements attributing these decisions to "the Canadian



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Government" were substituted. It <sup>is</sup> ~~has been thought~~ desirable to preserve the original draft for purposes of reference. The dates of meetings, however, and other related details, must not be referred to in documents intended for publication unless and until formal clearance is received from the Sovereign or the Governor General.

6. The following additional information is set down for reference, chiefly in connection with the sources of information for the article. Page references are to the draft included as Appendix "A".

Page 3. Since the publication of the article General H.D.G. Crerar has called attention to the fact that he was involved in contacts with the U.S. military authorities somewhat earlier than his conversation of December 1937 with Mr. Armour. He has lent the Historical Section his personal file on the subject, which has been photostated.

The facts, as recorded in this file, are not entirely in accord, in details, with General Crerar's recollections (see memorandum of telephone conversation with General Crerar, 27 May 54). The papers indicate that on 11 Oct 37 Colonel W.W.T. Torr, the British Military Attache in Washington, wrote General Crerar (who then held the rank of Colonel and the appointment of Director of Military Operations and Intelligence at the Department of National Defence) inquiring whether there was any hope of his "taking a bit of leave and coming down here for a few days visit this month". Colonel Torr suggested that Colonel Crerar "might be interested to meet some informed U.S. Army people quite unofficially".

Colonel Crerar placed Colonel Torr's letter before the C.G.S. and asked permission to make a personal visit to Colonel Torr. He was given "Leave with permission to travel abroad" and applied for, and presumably received, leave to travel at public expense by private motor car. He arrived in Washington on 18 Oct 37 and left there on 21 Oct.

Colonel Crerar's report to the C.G.S. on this visit, dated 30 Oct 37, indicates that he had extended conversations with Colonel Torr, dealing particularly with the U.S. defences of Puget Sound, which Torr had recently had an opportunity of visiting. The Canadian Minister, Sir Herbert Marler, arranged a courtesy call upon the U.S. Chief of Staff, General Malin Craig; this was done in spite of the fact that Colonel Crerar explained to Sir Herbert Marler that he was in Washington "on a personal visit and not in any official capacity". Colonel Crerar as a result had on 19 Oct "a very pleasant half-hour's talk on non-military subjects with the Chief of Staff". General Craig invited him to write to him personally "if at any time some matter arose in which he could be of assistance".

Colonel Crerar also had brief contacts, chiefly social, with other U.S. Army officers, notably Major-General Embick, Deputy Chief of Staff, and Colonel Adna Chaffee, who was in charge of the Budget Division of the General Staff. Pleasant relations were established with these officers, but Colonel Crerar's report does not indicate that he did any actual official business with them. His visit therefore may be regarded as purely informal and



exploratory, and as preparing the way for the official contacts established a few months later.

The documents referred to in the foregoing paragraphs are contained in General Crerar's file "Liaison with Military Attache and Air Attache, British Embassy, Washington" (photostat copy in possession of Historical Section).

Page 4 (top). The staff conversations in Washington in January 1938 are described in reports by Major-General Ashton, 25 Jan 38, and Commodore Nelles, 22 Jan 38 (copies in possession of Historical Section, 112.3M2009 (D22)).

Page 4 (bottom). Major-General T.V. Anderson's visit to Washington, 15-16 Nov 38, is described in his report to the Minister, 23 Nov 38, of which a copy is in possession of the Historical Section (000.4 (D 14)).

Page 6 (top). The information concerning Mr. Keenleyside's visits to Washington in May 1940 derives chiefly from Mr. F.A. McGregor, one of Mr. King's literary executors and the custodian of his papers. Mr. McGregor confirmed on 9 Feb 54 that there were no visits by Mr. King to Mr. Roosevelt between the outbreak of war in September 1939 and April 1940; and there were he thought few if any telephone conversations. Both in March 1937 and November 1938 Mr. King stayed at the White House when in Washington. The dates of Mr. King's visits to the President in April 1940, Mr. McGregor said, were: Warm Springs, 23-4 April; Washington, 29 April.

Page 7 (top). The report of the Canadian representatives on the staff conversations in Washington in July 1940 has not yet been found. The account here given is based upon that presented to the Cabinet War Committee at its meeting of 17 Jul. Canada was represented by Brigadier Stuart, Capt. Murray and Air Commodore Cuffe.

Page 8. Langer and Gleason, The Challenge to Isolation, is the best account of the origins of the P.J.B.D. in print, being based upon the Moffat diary as well as the records of the U.S. State Department. Although Colonel Dziuban's manuscript states that Mr. Roosevelt's invitation to Mr. King was sent by telegram, Mr. McGregor, probably with Mr. King's diary before him, definitely confirmed that the invitation was telephoned. Mr. McGregor read the present article in draft and accepted it as an accurate statement of the facts as he knew them.

Page 9. "It appears that ... Mr. Roosevelt took the initiative ..." See The Challenge to Isolation, 704 (passage based on the Stimson and Moffat diaries).

Page 12 (bottom). The details of the Board's meetings are taken from a paper evidently written by Mr. H.L. Keenleyside, entitled "The Canada-United States Permanent Joint Board on Defence, 1940-1945", apparently written about the end of 1945



and intended for publication, though not published. A copy was lent to the Historical Section by External Affairs and copied for Historical Section files. The details of the meetings were checked against the journal of the P.J.B.D. held by the Directorate of Military Operations and Plans, A.H.Q.

Page 19 (middle). The statement concerning the attitude of Canadian members of the Board to the Alaska Highway derives from Mr. Keenleyside's paper, as does also the statement at the top of page 20 concerning division "along service lines".

Page 20 (middle). With respect to the U.S. procedure in approving Recommendations of the P.J.B.D., items in the files of the Department of External Affairs suggest that in fact Recommendations did not normally go to the President. If they were accepted by the War and Navy Departments, this was considered sufficient. See, for instance, Teletype WA-4792, Keenleyside from Hickerson, 28 Sep 43: "... The United States Government has also approved the Board's 32nd Recommendation. The War Department's approval was communicated to me in a memorandum dated September 9th. The Navy Department's approval was contained in a letter dated September 24th." (External Affairs file 703-40 C, Part Two, extracts in Historical Section, 322.019 (D52)).

Pages 20-21. The information concerning Canadian action on the 29th Recommendation was compiled and supplied by Mr. W.E.D. Halliday of the Privy Council Office.

Page 21. The statement concerning Canadian doubts with respect to the "Crimson Project" (26th Recommendation) derives from the record of the meetings of the Cabinet War Committee of 28 May, 12 Jun and 1 Jul 42. For the work done at the various stations on the North-East Staging Route, see Canada Year Book, 1945, 705-12.

Pages 22-6. This account of the most serious controversy in which the Permanent Joint Board on Defence became involved during the war is an attempt to reduce an extremely complicated and rather unpleasant series of events to simple and publishable terms. It is the present writer's impression that Colonel Biggar had some responsibility for the difficulties. The correspondence between him and Mayor La Guardia is on file HQS 5199-W-1-B, Vol. 1. A comment on this controversy by General Pope is attached as Appendix "B". See also General Pope's contemporary memo, 31 May 41, in A.C.G.S. office file (Hist Sec, 112.11 (D 1)). He got the impression that the U.S. representatives really wanted, not only "strategic direction", but tactical command.

Page 26 (bottom). General Pope states that Mr. Hickerson, the Secretary of the U.S. Section of the Board, considered the Canal project so foolish that he avoided having it routed through the Board.



Colonel Dziuban's manuscript makes much the same statement.

Page 27. On air reinforcements for Alaska, see enclosures to Hitchins to Stacey, 22 Oct 52 (Hist Sec).

Page 28. The paragraph beginning "Summing up" was contributed by Mr. R.H. Macdonnell of the Department of External Affairs, the former Secretary of the Canadian Section of the P.J.B.D.

Page 29 (bottom). The paper here quoted was written by Mr. Macdonnell and is dated 6 Feb 47. A copy is on file HQ TS 1225-P1-1.

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Director Historical Section.

THIRD DRAFT

THE CANADIAN-AMERICAN PERMANENT JOINT  
BOARD ON DEFENCE, 1940-1945

Colonel C.P. Stacey

I

The history of Canadian-American relations is the story of a progress from hostility to alliance. The two countries' dealings with each other fall naturally into four periods. The first was an era of war, ending with the Treaty of Ghent in 1814. The second was a period of stress and strain, ending with the Treaty of Washington in 1871. The third was a time of increasing tranquillity and cooperation. The fourth, in which we now find ourselves, is characterized by close association amounting to actual alliance. This final period may be said to begin with the organization of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence in August 1940.

The Permanent Joint Board on Defence was an experiment in international organization and an innovation in both Canadian and American external policy. It was formed at a moment of desperate peril, and could perhaps scarcely have come into existence in any other circumstances. It was nevertheless from the beginning boldly denominated by its creators "Permanent". Today, fourteen years later, it is an established and important element in Canadian-American relations and in the defensive organization of the West.



During the Second World War the Board necessarily worked in secrecy, and to date little information concerning its proceedings has been published. But the story can now be told without damage to the public interest, and the aim of this article is to present a brief factual statement accordingly. It is based upon records held in the Privy Council Office, the Department of External Affairs and the Department of National Defence.

## II

During the years of growing tension in Europe and the Far East which followed the outbreak of war in China in 1931 and Hitler's seizure of power in Germany in 1933, there was a gradual and very limited military rapprochement between Canada and the United States. That it took place at all was due to a common sense of danger; that it was so limited was the result of the inhibiting conditions of the time and the desire of both countries to avoid commitments.

In 1936-37 the Canadian Government launched a modest programme of rearmament. It was of course apparent that the United States had a vital relationship to Canadian security. Canada was almost equally important from the American viewpoint. But the approach to this problem on both sides of the border previous to the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939 was necessarily halting.



Personal contacts between the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Canada provided the basis for such progress as was made. It appears that the first discussion took place in March 1937 when Mr. King visited Mr. Roosevelt in Washington. At that time (Mr. King told the House of Commons on 12 November 1940) there was some mention of the possibility of meetings between Canadian and American staff officers to discuss problems of common defence. In December 1937 the U.S. Minister to Ottawa, Mr. Norman Armour, made an opportunity of mentioning the matter to the then Director of Military Operations and Intelligence at National Defence Headquarters (Colonel H.D.G. Crerar). He said that it was much in the President's mind, and suggested the desirability of somewhat closer contact between the U.S. War Department and the Department of National Defence. ("Somewhat closer contact" was a diplomatic euphemism, since at this moment there was no contact whatever.) Mr. Armour said that he was thinking of discussing the matter shortly with Mr. King, and may have done so. At any rate, concrete developments soon followed, in the form of conversations in Washington between the two countries' Chiefs of Staff on 18-20 January 1938.

These conversations were conducted with a secrecy which raises a smile today. The Chief of the General Staff (Major-General E.C. Ashton) left Ottawa one day, the Chief of the Naval Staff (Commodore P.W. Nelles) travelled separately the next. In Washington the Canadian Minister took steps to prevent their ranks



or connection with the Department of National Defence "from becoming known even in the Legation". The Chief of Staff of the United States Army (General Malin Craig) and the Chief of Naval Operations (Admiral William D. Leahy) came to the Legation and the four officers discussed problems both general and particular. The topic most especially dealt with was the defences of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and detailed information on them was exchanged.

During the summer and autumn of 1938 the European situation grew worse, and Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. King exchanged public assurances concerning their countries' military relations. In August Mr. Roosevelt made the famous speech at Kingston in which he declared that the United States would "not stand idly by" if Canada was threatened; and a few days later Mr. King at Woodbridge spoke of Canada's "obligations as a good friendly neighbour" to the United States. In November the new Chief of the Canadian General Staff (Major-General T.V. Anderson) visited Washington and had discussions with General Craig and other American officers under somewhat less oppressive conditions of secrecy than those of ten months before. In the same month Mr. King, visiting Washington to sign a new trade agreement, again discussed defence with the President.

The relations thus established were to develop under the influence of still more threatening



common danger in 1940. In the nature of things, however, the first result of the outbreak of war in September 1939 was largely to suspend such contacts. For a time Canada and her neighbour went separate ways. The United States, though clearly sympathizing with the Allies against Hitler, stood neutral and hoped to avoid involvement. Canada, on the other hand, declared war on Germany one week after the United Kingdom, and began to build up forces overseas to help resist the aggressors. Liaison between President and Prime Minister did not entirely cease (one remembers Mr. Roosevelt's telephone call, recorded by Mr. Hull, to inquire of Mr. King whether the British declaration of war on 3 September involved Canada or not). But after the outbreak there was no face-to-face discussion between the two men until April 1940, when King visited Roosevelt at Warm Springs and later in Washington. By this time the German invasion of Denmark and Norway had ended the "phony war", and the situation abroad was becoming increasingly alarming.

The following month brought a worse crisis and closer Canadian-American contacts. On 10 May Germany invaded the Low Countries, and within a fortnight the Allies had suffered a disastrous reverse. Steps were taken to enlarge the Canadian forces. On 23 May the War Committee of the Cabinet, answering an appeal from London, resolved to send every available R.C.N. destroyer (there were only four in immediate readiness) to help protect Britain. It decided to inform the United States that Canada's Atlantic coast had thus been stripped of naval defence. Mr. King accordingly sent Mr. H.L. Keenleyside



of the Department of External Affairs with a personal message to Mr. Roosevelt. Mr. Keenleyside, in fact, appears to have visited Washington three times during May, each time as a personal envoy of the Prime Minister to the President.<sup>1</sup>

As the campaign in Europe moved rapidly towards its tragic end, alarm in North America grew. On 14 June the Acting Minister of National Defence (Mr. C.G. Power) reported to the Cabinet War Committee that concern was being felt for the security of Newfoundland. No large-scale attack was considered likely, but raids were possible. Measures were in train for action in the island in cooperation with the Newfoundland authorities (small Canadian ground and air forces moved there shortly); but Mr. Power recommended, and the War Committee agreed, that there was an immediate need for staff talks between Canadian and United States officers on the problems involved in the defence of the Atlantic coast. The same day Mr. King approached President Roosevelt on the subject through the American Minister, Mr. J. Pierrepont Moffat. On 27 June Mr. King had further communication with Mr. Moffat, and that evening he told the War Committee that the President had requested that Moffat should, as a preliminary, confer with Canadian defence officials on the agenda proposed for staff conversations. The Minister would then go to Washington and report personally to the President.

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Keenleyside was to be Secretary of the Canadian Section of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence throughout the war period. For a time he was its Acting Chairman.



The consequence of this was staff conversations in Washington which began on 12 July, Canada being represented by senior officers of the three services. The discussions dealt primarily with two matters -- the urgency of the United States providing Canada with military supplies in the present stage, and the facilities that could be arranged for U.S. forces in the event of American intervention. At first the Canadians found the American officers not particularly concerned with the former question, but they subsequently came to realize its importance and were very willing to assist.

In the meantime, formal military contacts with the United States were developing. In February 1940 the first Canadian service attaché, an R.C.A.F. officer, had been appointed to the Legation in Washington. On 26 July the Cabinet War Committee approved in principle the desirability of stationing military and naval attachés in Washington. United States agreement having been obtained, the appointments were made in August.

By mid-August, then, the situation was that military liaison between Canada and the United States had been considerably improved, but no permanent machinery for consultation existed. Public opinion in both countries had been deeply stirred by the collapse of France, and there was widespread anxiety for the security of North America. The time was ripe for a further advance. At this moment Mr. Moffat reported to his Government that in Canada "even elements formerly hostile to close connections with the United States were joining in bringing pressure



on the Prime Minister, and that Mr. Mackenzie King, while personally satisfied with the recent staff talks and most reluctant to embarrass the President, thought something more would have to be done. It was suggested that a personal interview with the President might be helpful."<sup>2</sup>

This report appears to have reached Mr. Roosevelt on 16 August. It would seem that the President immediately picked up the telephone and spoke to Mr. King at his summer home near Ottawa. He told him that the following day he would be attending military manoeuvres near Ogdensburg, New York, and invited him to join him there. Mr. King accepted and next day drove to Ogdensburg accompanied by Mr. Moffat. The evening was devoted to long discussions. Mr. King spent the night on the President's train. On the 18th the two statesmen issued to the press the now celebrated statement announcing the formation of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence. Mr. Roosevelt had been accompanied by Mr. Stimson, the Secretary of War, who took part in the conversations. Mr. King had no other Minister with him. No service officers participated on either side. The discussions had ranged over a wide area. The President described to Mr. King the negotiations in progress between the United States and the United Kingdom on the question of destroyers for Britain and island bases in the Western Hemisphere for the United States,

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<sup>2</sup> William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, The Challenge to Isolation, 1937-1940 (New York, 1952), 704. The authors had access to Mr. Moffat's diary, one of the few authoritative sources on the origins of the P.J.B.D.



of which King had already been informed by Mr. Churchill. Roosevelt promised Canada certain guns and other vital equipment.

It appears that on the question of military relations between the two countries Mr. Roosevelt took the initiative, and that it was he who proposed the immediate creation of a joint Canadian-American board. Since this was evidently the direction in which Mr. King's own views, and the articulate public opinion of Canada, had for some time been tending, the Prime Minister accepted at once.

Although the Ogdensburg "press release", given out by Roosevelt and King on 18 August, has often been published, it may be worth while to quote the text again here:

The Prime Minister and the President have discussed the mutual problems of defence in relation to the safety of Canada and the United States.

It has been agreed that a Permanent Joint Board on Defence shall be set up at once by the two countries.

This Permanent Joint Board on Defence shall commence immediate studies relating to sea, land and air problems including personnel and material.

It will consider in the broad sense the defence of the north half of the Western Hemisphere.

The Permanent Joint Board on Defence will consist of four or five members from each country, most of them from the services. It will meet shortly.

What makes this release of special interest is the fact that it constituted the only formal expression of what came to be called the Ogdensburg Declaration. The



point is often made that the celebrated Rush-Bagot Agreement of 1817 was not a treaty, but only an exchange of notes. The Ogdensburg agreement was not even that. No paper was signed, and the release remained the basis of the new Board. Canada published its text in her Treaty Series and included it in an order in council. The United States regarded it as an executive agreement not subject to ratification by the Senate, and it was never submitted to that body. No international arrangement of comparable importance has ever been concluded more informally.

On 20 August Mr. King reported to the War Committee on the Ogdensburg discussions. He had had no opportunity of consulting the Committee before his interview with the President, and it seems likely that he did not know in advance precisely what proposal Roosevelt intended to lay before him. It was doubtless for this reason that he arranged that the order in council ratifying and confirming the agreement should state specifically that it was in accordance with government policy as approved "on many occasions".

The President and the Prime Minister had agreed that the Board should be composed of two national Sections, each comprising a Chairman, one officer from each of the three armed forces, and a representative of, respectively, the Department of External Affairs and the Department of State, these last to act as secretaries of their Sections. When the appointments to the Board were announced, as they were immediately, it was noted that the Chairman of each section was a civilian: for the American



Section, Mayor F.H. LaGuardia; for the Canadian Section, Colonel O.M. Biggar, a distinguished lawyer who had served in the First World War. It seems at least possible that the rather markedly civilian aspect of the Board, and in particular the placing of the secretariats in civil departments, may have reflected Canadian views; although the fact that the United States was still neutral may have influenced the President in favour of this arrangement. The sources of the decisions on the composition of the Board must be conjectural, but one is struck by its similarity to the International Joint Commission, the highly successful organization created by the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909.

The Board was not intended to be, and has never been, an executive body. In his exposition to his Cabinet colleagues Mr. King emphasized that its duty would be to study and to recommend. Action, if any, upon its recommendations would be a matter for the two governments.

The announcement of the Board's formation met with remarkably unanimous approval on both sides of the border. There was really no effective criticism from any quarter, and it was clear that the President and the Prime Minister had accurately estimated the state of public opinion on the question.

### III

The Board was organized, and set to work, with a speed which reflected the tension of the moment. Mr. King desired that it should meet as early as 22 August. This was not achieved, but it actually did hold its first meeting on 26 August, in Ottawa. Mr. Roosevelt had met



with the United States members two days earlier and presumably gave them his views as to the policies they should pursue.

Membership in the Board was not a full-time occupation. The service officers who were members held other appointments. One example may be cited. When the original Canadian Army member, Brigadier Kenneth Stuart, left the Board in the spring of 1941, he was replaced by Brigadier M.A. Pope, who was then Assistant Chief of the General Staff. In due course, Brigadier Pope was promoted Major General and appointed Vice Chief of the General Staff. In March 1942 he went to Washington as representative of the Cabinet War Committee, and he remained there as Chairman of the Canadian Joint Staff when it was formed later that year. Still later he returned to Ottawa as Military Staff Officer to the Prime Minister and Military Secretary of the War Committee. But he remained Canadian Army representative on the Permanent Joint Board throughout.

Meetings of the Board were normally held in Canada and the United States alternately, the most usual meeting places being Montreal and New York. But it frequently met in areas of military significance with which it was concerned. Thus, on 13, 14 and 15 November 1940 it met successively in San Francisco, Victoria and Vancouver; on 27 September 1942 it met in St. John's, Newfoundland; and in July 1943 sessions of the 40th meeting were held on board the S.S. Princess Norah en route to Alaska, and on an aircraft between Winnipeg and Ottawa.



The Board's basic procedure was to present formal Recommendations to the two governments. Thirty-three such Recommendations were made during the war. To publish them in full would be impracticable within the bounds of the present article, but it is worth while to list them as an indication of the Board's scope and achievement:

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1     26 Aug 1940     Complete exchange of military information between the two Sections of the Board, each being free to convey such information to its government.
  
- 2     26 Aug 1940     Strengthening defences of Newfoundland, measures to include increasing Canadian garrisons and preparing bases for U.S. aircraft; also installation of port defences.
  
- 3     27 Aug 1940     Strengthening the Maritime Provinces, including defences at Halifax, Sydney, Gaspé and Shelburne; improvement of aircraft-operating facilities; and preparation in Canada and U.S. of strategic reserves for concentration in the Maritimes if required.
  
- 4     27 Aug 1940     Arrangements concerning allocation of material mentioned in the Board's Recommendations; such material not to be used for any other purposes.



- 5      27 Aug 1940      Communications between Newfoundland, Maritime Provinces and other portions of Eastern Canada and the U.S. require to be examined (railways, water, roads, and air); additional commercial airways essential.
  
- 6      27 Aug 1940      The service members of the Board to collect and exchange information on production of military equipment in their respective countries.
  
- 7      27 Aug 1940      The service members of the Board to proceed at once with preparation of a detailed plan for the joint defence of Canada and the United States and keep the Board informed of the progress of the work.
  
- 8      11 Sep 1940      That U.S. initiate as expeditiously as practicable such portions of increased defence of Newfoundland (2nd Recommendation) as fall within limits of bases now being acquired by U.S.
  
- 9      4 Oct 1940      That Canada recommend that German prisoners from the U.K. be not sent to Newfoundland for incarceration, as this might constitute a military hazard.



- 10 14 Nov 1940 That to implement recommendation in the Board's First Report, suitable landing fields be provided on route across Canada between the U.S. and Alaska.
- 11 15 Nov 1940 That an aerodrome be constructed at Ucluelet (Vancouver Island).
- 12 17 Dec 1940 That a war industry member be appointed to the Board by each of the two governments.<sup>3</sup>
- 13 20 Jan 1941 That each government constitute a single authority, clothed with necessary powers, to be responsible for safety of navigation through the Sault Ste. Marie Canals and St. Mary's River, and to cooperate in this matter as required.
- 14 21 Jan 1941 That most urgent priority be given provision of facilities for at least one U.S. squadron of patrol planes at Halifax and one U.S. squadron in Botwood area (Newfoundland).
- 15 16 Apr 1941 That Canada provide increased aviation fuel storage capacity in Newfoundland; U.S. to assist with priorities.

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<sup>3</sup> Approved, but not implemented, as the object was attained through other organizations.



- 16 17 Apr 1941 Arrangements for improvement of railway communications in Newfoundland.
- 17 29 Jul 1941 That Canada construct an air base in the vicinity of North West River, Labrador, providing specified facilities as quickly as possible (Goose Bay).
- 18 29 Jul 1941 That U.S. proceed with installation of underwater defences in the Argentia-Ship Harbour area (Newfoundland).
- 19 29 Jul 1941 In view of Far Eastern situation, completion of both Canadian and U.S. sections of the airway to Alaska now very important.
- 20 30 Jul 1941 Road communications in Newfoundland -- U.S. and Canada to be given right to construct and maintain such roads as each individually requires.
- 21 10-11 Nov 1941 Principles applying to maintenance, upkeep and servicing of facilities provided by the government of either country for occupation of the forces of the other.
- 22 30 Dec 1941 That U.S. and Canada now authorize commanders named in Joint Defence Plan ABC-22 to effect arrangements necessary for common defence.



- 23 30 Dec 1941 That Canada and U.S. consider advisability of arranging a meeting of representatives of U.K., Canada and U.S. to make recommendations for coordinating the entire aviation training programme to be conducted in Canada and U.S.
- 24 25-6 Feb 1942 That a highway to Alaska be constructed following the general line of the existing airway.
- 25 25-6 Feb 1942 R.C.A.F. to make further study of danger of air attack on Sault Ste. Marie area; Canadian Army to assign a heavy anti-aircraft battery to this area, to serve under operational command of Commanding General, Sault Ste. Marie Military District, Michigan.
- 26 9 June 1942 That airfields in Canadian territory be constructed to improve ferrying facilities across the North Atlantic (North-East Staging Route).
- 27 6 Jul 1942 That Canada and U.S. eliminate or suspend, for duration of the war, customs formalities, etc., interfering with the free flow between the two countries of munitions and war supplies and of persons or materials connected therewith.



- 28 13 Jan 1943 Principles governing post-war disposition of defence projects and installations built by U.S. in Canada.
- 29 24-5 Feb 1943 Arrangements for expeditious completion of the airway from U.S. to Alaska.
- 30 1-2 Apr 1943 That U.S. and Canada appoint a joint board of officers to report on proposal to utilize non-rigid airships in anti-submarine activities in Eastern Canadian waters.
- 31 6-7 May 1943 Principles governing defence, maintenance and control of airfields on Canadian territory (U.S. normally to be responsible where airfield is used principally or exclusively by U.S. forces; Canada to be responsible in all other cases unless some special arrangement has been made).
- 32 24-5 Aug 1943 Application of 31st Recommendation (airfields for which each country responsible listed).
- 33 6-7 Sep 1944 Disposition of defence facilities constructed or provided in Canada by U.S. or in U.S. by Canada..



All these 33 Recommendations were unanimously approved by the Board. The members did not reach decisions by voting - which would scarcely have been practicable in such an international body - but by discussion which proceeded until a basis was found on which unanimity could be achieved. Naturally, the two Sections, and individual members of them, were not always equally enthusiastic about every Recommendation. For example, some at least of the Canadian members were not convinced that the Alaska Highway would have great military value; but in view of the importance which their U.S. colleagues attached to the project they did not oppose it. This project had in fact received President Roosevelt's blessing before it came to the Board at all; and the Canadian Government had in effect committed itself, by granting approval for a survey, nearly a fortnight before the Board made its Recommendation. This calls attention to the fact that not all the Board's recommendations originated within itself. The 31st, for example, had its origin in a decision made by the Canadian War Committee on 24 February 1943. After discussion in the Board, and amendment to meet U.S. views, it emerged as a Board recommendation. Thus the Board served as a convenient channel through which one government could make its views known to the other, and mutually satisfactory arrangements could be worked out.

It was of course always possible for the two national Sections to hold separate meetings and reach agreement within themselves in advance of full meetings of the Board. In spite of this, people in a



position to know record that divisions of opinion in discussions within the Board seldom occurred along strictly national lines. More frequently, the division tended to be along service lines; thus, on one issue, Canadian and United States army officers might be found united in argument with Canadian and United States naval officers; or the service members of both nations might find themselves on the opposite side of a discussion from the civilian members.

Procedure for approving the Board's Recommendations naturally differed in the two countries. Mayor LaGuardia reported direct to the President, with whom the power of approval lay. There are indications, however, that Recommendations were not invariably submitted to the President. Canadian procedure tended to be more formal. The Canadian Section of the Board reported to the Cabinet War Committee, over which the Prime Minister presided; and the power of approval lay with that body. Its normal procedure was to seek the comments of the Chiefs of Staff before taking action on Recommendations.

Virtually all the thirty-three Recommendations received the approval of the two governments. The Canadian Government did not actually approve the 29th Recommendation, a detailed scheme for completing the North-West Staging Route. On 3 March 1943 the War Committee deferred action on it owing to doubts concerning supply of materials, etc. Plan "A" for the task, which was included in the Recommendation, was shortly superseded by new U.S. proposals known as Plans



"B" and "C", which the Committee accepted; thus, though the Recommendation was not formally agreed to, the work was done. The War Committee also refrained from approving the 30th Recommendation in the form submitted, but informed the Board that it did not object to the appointment of such a board of officers (to report on the use of non-rigid airships) as the Recommendation had suggested.

Occasionally there were reservations as to the mode of execution of a Recommendation. Thus, with respect to the 26th, concerning the chain of airfields known as the North-East Staging Route or "Crimson Project", the R.C.A.F. and the Canadian Government had many doubts as to the practicability and value of the project, which was on an enormous scale; nevertheless the War Committee on 12 June 1942 decided to approve the Recommendation since the U.S. considered it so important. However, after careful consideration, it was further decided that, while Canada would cooperate fully, in the light of the commitments which the country had already undertaken the costs of the new aerodromes and facilities would have to be borne by the United States. The United States agreed; but although much was done in Greenland and at The Pas, Churchill, Frobisher Bay and Southampton Island, the tremendous scheme was in fact never carried to completion.

In addition to its thirty-three formal Recommendations, the Board also submitted to the two governments, on 4 October 1940, a "First Report" (which was also the last report, as this procedure was not followed afterwards).



This contained detailed recommendations for improvement of defences on both the Atlantic and the Pacific. It was approved by the Cabinet War Committee on 10 October 1940, subject to one reservation as to desirability of a highway which had been recommended between Terrace and Prince Rupert, B.C.

#### IV

Following the line indicated in the 7th Recommendation, the service members of the Board prepared during the war two Basic Defence Plans.

The first of these was the "Joint Canadian-United States Basic Defence Plan - 1940", usually called "Basic Plan No. 1". This plan, dated 10 October 1940, was designed to meet the urgent needs of that moment: in particular, the situation that would arise if Britain were overrun by the Axis or the Royal Navy lost control of the North Atlantic. It also took account of possible aggression by "an Asiatic Power".

This Joint Plan allocated tasks and responsibilities as between the forces of the two countries in these contingencies. The Plan itself merely stated what required to be done without specifying how it was to be done. The question of higher direction of the operations was not definitely dealt with until the spring of 1941. The service members of the Board then drafted a "Joint Operational Plan No. 1" specifically intended to implement Basic Plan No. 1. The Canadian



service members accepted on 15 April a version of this plan which vested the "strategic direction" of the two countries' land and air forces in the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, subject to prior consultation with the Canadian Chief of Staff concerned. ("Strategic direction" was briefly defined as "the assignment of missions and the allocation of the means required to accomplish them".)

The matter was complicated by the fact that the service members were simultaneously working on a second Basic Defence Plan intended to meet the changing aspect which the war then presented. This was known as "Joint Canadian-United States Basic Defence Plan No. 2" and was usually called "ABC-22". Staff conversations between the United Kingdom and the United States, to which Canada was not actually a party, had now resulted in a plan known as "ABC-1" meant to provide a basis for action in the event of the United States entering the war. The new Canadian-U.S. plan was ancillary to ABC-1; it was thus designed to meet a situation in which the United States and the Commonwealth would be partners in a war whose object was to defeat the Axis, and not merely to prevent the Axis from conquering North America. The provisions of ABC-22 concerning command led to the most serious difference of opinion between the two national Sections of the Board that took place during the war; but the difficulty was due in part to simple misunderstanding.

The American view, naturally enough, was that Canada should as part of the new plan concede the strategic direction of her forces to the United States



in the same manner as the service members had agreed should apply to Plan No. 1. The Canadian Section of the Board, and the higher authorities to whom it reported, were not prepared to do this. The Canadian Chiefs of Staff were ready to accept U.S. strategic direction in the circumstances visualized in the 1940 plan, which as explained above was a defensive plan designed to meet the desperate situation which would arise if Nazi Germany were in complete control of Europe including the British Isles. They saw no need for accepting it in the circumstances envisaged in ABC-22. This plan, they pointed out, was essentially offensive, designed to meet circumstances in which the primary object would not be to defend North America but rather "to assist in the destruction of the enemy in any part of the world where Allied Forces may be sent to operate". North America was not a theatre of operations or likely to become one. Accordingly, the Canadian Chiefs of Staff on 22 April 1941 strongly advised "against the acceptance by Canada of any proposal giving the United States unqualified strategic control of Canadian Armed Forces" under the conditions assumed in ABC-22.

The matter was discussed by the Cabinet War Committee on 23 April 1941 in the presence of Colonel Biggar and the Chiefs of Staff. It was pointed out that the concession of "strategic direction" would give the United States supreme command over Canadian forces in Canada. The Committee's decision, which was further clarified at another meeting on 27 May, was along the line recommended by the Chiefs of Staff: namely, that under Basic Plan No. 1 it



might be necessary to accept U.S. strategic direction, subject to the determination of higher war policy by the governments of the two countries; but that th<sup>is</sup> was undesirable in connection with Basic Plan No. 2.

Unfortunately, in the correspondence that followed between the Chairmen of the two Sections of the Board, the distinction between the Canadian attitudes on the two plans was not made as clear as would have been desirable. There was a rather uncomfortable exchange. Mayor LaGuardia wrote to Colonel Biggar on 2 May, "I fear we are getting dangerously apart", and added, "It seems to me that it is far better to trust to the honor of the United States, than to the mercy of the enemy". Colonel Biggar replied that he fully appreciated the necessity of reaching cordial agreement, but that LaGuardia's letter had disturbed him. "Canada", he wrote, "is all out in the war: the United States is not -- yet. The time is therefore a very unpropitious one for it to be suggested that Canada should surrender to the United States what she has consistently asserted vis-à-vis Great Britain". Later in May the matter was cleared up. Although "Joint Operational Plan No. 1" was never finalized - probably because "Basic Plan No. 1" to which it referred was now recognized as obsolete - the Americans knew that, subject to the qualifications that have been mentioned, Canada had been prepared to accept U.S. "strategic direction" under the conditions envisaged in it. On the other hand, the final version of ABC-22 did not concede "strategic direction" to the United States. The basic passage ran, "Coordination of the military effort of the United States and Canada shall be effected by mutual cooperation, and by assigning to the



forces of each nation tasks for whose execution such forces shall be primarily responsible."<sup>4</sup>

After the Japanese attack in December 1941 ABC-22 was formally placed in effect, first against Japan, a little later against Germany and Italy. Thereafter, with the two countries engaged in all-out war as allies, direct military liaison between their Chiefs of Staff tended to become more important and the functions of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence somewhat less so. The Board met often during 1942; from then on meetings became less frequent, and recommendations less frequent still.

V

Needless to say, many matters were discussed in the Board without becoming the subject of formal recommendations. Undoubtedly advice was frequently given by individual members as a result of these discussions. Thus the Board's scope was actually wider than the formal recommendations alone would indicate. On the other hand, some matters which the Board might have dealt with were in fact handled through other channels. For instance, it never made a recommendation on the Canol project in the North West Territories. Some aspects of Canadian-American military cooperation never came within its purview at all. Among these were the formation and administration of the First Special Service Force, a unit in which Canadians and Americans

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<sup>4</sup> ABC-1 and ABC-22 are both published in Pearl Harbor Attack: Hearings before the Joint Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack... (Washington, 1946), Part 15.



served together, and the arrangements made in 1945 for the Canadian Army Pacific Force. These were not matters primarily related to the defence of North America.

It is emphasized above that the Board was a purely advisory body with no executive functions. Sometimes however this fact tended to be concealed as a result of executive action taken by members of the Board when acting in other capacities. It sometimes happened too that the acquaintance between members of the Board was used to accelerate executive action. There was an example of this at the beginning of June 1942. At this time the Japanese threat to the Aleutians had become evident and the U.S. authorities were anxious for the R.C.A.F. to provide immediate air reinforcements for Alaska. When it seemed to them that the measures which had been ordered were not entirely adequate to the situation, Lieut.-General Stanley D. Embick, the U.S. Army Member of the Board, telephoned Air Commodore F.V. Heakes, the R.C.A.F. Member, invoking ABC-22 and asking him to arrange for quicker action. As a result the Chief of the Air Staff ordered two R.C.A.F. squadrons to move to Yakutat at once.

One more point is worthy of mention. It appears that at Ogdensburg Mr. Roosevelt referred to the need of the United States "for naval or air bases at such places as Yarmouth or further eastward along the coast of Nova Scotia".<sup>5</sup> Such bases in Canada were never obtained, nor does it appear that the matter was ever formally discussed in the Board. It is fair to assume that the American members discovered that, while Canada was willing to concede

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<sup>5</sup> The Challenge to Isolation, 704.



large facilities to the American forces on her territory, she was not prepared to think in terms of leasing bases as Britain had done. This discovery came very soon, for at the Board's fourth meeting, on 10 September 1940, Mayor LaGuardia offered to make a public refutation of press reports that the U.S. was seeking bases in Canada. He did so next day in characteristic terms ("This is a Defence Board, not a real estate board").<sup>6</sup>

Summing up, it seems possible to distinguish at least four different ways in which this very flexible instrument called the Permanent Joint Board on Defence was used. It served as a testing ground for ideas which one side might wish to try out on the other (and presumably not all of these were found mutually acceptable). It was used as a negotiating body, with the advantage of combining diplomatic and service membership. It provided an effective means of collecting and exchanging information, a commodity always in demand and not always easy to find. Finally, the Board or its members were able to expedite action, to obviate delays, and to see that the pressure of competing problems, on one or both sides of the border, did not deflect attention from projects of importance.

## VI

The work of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence during the Second World War fully justified its

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<sup>6</sup> William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, The Undeclared War, 1940-1941 (New York, 1953), 169, says of the Board, "Its report, approved by the President on November 19, 1940, recommended against the acquisition of American bases in the Dominion, but urged the Canadian Government to build at once facilities which could be used by United States planes and ships in the event of an attack on Canada". This presumably refers to the Board's First Report (see above); but that Report makes no reference to the question of American bases in Canada. It is possible, of course, that the American Section of the Board may have referred to the matter in a covering letter.



creation. It provided an early instance of effective inter-Allied military cooperation which was encouraging as an example and valuable as a model. It certainly afforded the United States a useful precedent in its dealings with other American nations, which was followed in the United States-Mexican Joint Defence Commission, agreed on in December 1940 and finally established early in 1942, and the United States-Brazilian Joint Board for Northeast Brazil, set up in December 1941.<sup>7</sup>

As for the Board's effectiveness as an agency in Canadian-American relations, it is no doubt true that most if not all of the work it did could have been carried on through more traditional channels - by the normal procedures of diplomacy and direct military liaison. But it is doubtful whether without the Board the objects would have been attained so rapidly and with so much mutual goodwill.

In 1947 an official of the Department of External Affairs who was in a good position to form a judgement in the matter attempted an evaluation of the Board's wartime work. He came to the conclusion that where it had made an almost unique contribution was in providing a forum for exchange of views characterized by frankness, mutual confidence and dispatch. The Board had the special advantage of bringing together in one body in an atmosphere of informality not merely the representatives of two countries but also representatives of the civilian and the service viewpoints. Within the Board

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 600-3, 605-8.



there was normally very frank and open discussion. Even where there were serious differences of opinion, the problems were examined in an atmosphere of harmony and confidence with ample appreciation of the other side's difficulties. "The members of each section", wrote this official, "on going back to their respective Capitals are in a position to influence thinking and bring forward the points of view held by the members from the other country. This is what makes it so difficult to measure the influence which the Board has exerted, since much of that influence is the intangible outgrowth of the discussions in or out of meetings. It is safe to say, however, that no such results could have been achieved had the Board not existed." The fact that from the beginning the Board enjoyed exceptional prestige contributed to these results.

Cooperation -- particularly, perhaps, military cooperation -- between two proud and independent nations, one of which has a dozen times the other's population and wealth, is never a simple matter; occasionally it is sure to be difficult. Under these conditions, the more informality and mutual understanding which can be projected into the machinery of consultation, the better. That the Board had proved itself is indicated by the fact that neither country showed any tendency to abandon it after the conclusion of the Second World War. On 12 February 1947 the two governments issued a statement on the continuance of military cooperation between them which emphasized the importance of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence and incidentally reaffirmed an underlying principle



which it had always observed: "all cooperative arrangements will be without impairment of the control of either country over all activities in its territory". Since that time the Board has continued to function as a valuable and indeed vital element in the pattern of Canadian-American relations.



COPYEdificio Espana,  
Avenida de Jose Antonio 88,  
Madrid.

25th March, 1954.

Your ref:  
Hist.8-12-0 (D Hist).

My dear Stacey,

Thank you for your letter of the 1st March and for its most interesting enclosure which I have read with great interest. As I wired you this afternoon, it fetched up after your deadline of the 15th March, and though through some inadvertence it was delayed on its short route to me, it still came too late for me to send you any comment in sufficient time for your purposes.

2. May I say in the first place that you have produced a very useful and readable article and one which should be greatly welcomed by our public opinion. I hope, too, that you will be able to beat the corresponding American article to the wire. Reading it has brought back old memories and possibly I might be able to add a word or two of gossip which might be of interest and which might stand you in good stead on some future occasion. I deal with this in the succeeding paragraphs: -

### 3. The Establishment of the Board

When the Board returned from its air trip to Alaska in July, 1945, External Affairs staged a dinner in its honour at the Country Club. The Prime Minister attended and made one of his charming and interesting informal speeches. What he said was quite in line with what you have written on pages 8 and 9, but there is a little point regarding the drafting of the press release which might amuse you. Mr. King then told us that the President said that "Naturally we shall have to make a press announcement of some kind and just how do you think it should run?" Mr. King said he had replied verbally, whereupon the President said "Let's each have a try." Eventually, the President's version, which was scribbled on the back of an envelope, was agreed to by both. I suppose it was typed, but the point is that it was hastily scribbled on the back of an envelope.

4. It amuses me to remember that all the time I was on the Board, Folio No. 1 of the P.J.B.D. file was a mere newspaper clipping from the Ottawa "Journal", and this constituted our basic authority.

### 5. Strategic Direction

This matter of strategic direction, which you deal with on pages 23 and 24 was, so far as my experience goes, the most serious difference we ever had. It began

Colonel C.P. Stacey, O.B.E.,  
Director Historical Section,  
Department of National Defence,  
OTTAWA.



in April in Montreal, if I remember well, and was continued in Washington from May 27 to May 28th a month afterwards. Captain Forrest Sherman, who afterwards became Chief of Naval Operations, once told me that there was a difference of opinion in the United States Joint Planning Committee which was even worse than our "Montreal disagreement".

6. I remember that tragic Washington meeting. We met in one of the U.S. Government's big public buildings during a particularly warm spell. We began shortly after nine in the morning, broke off for lunch in a cafeteria upstairs and then sat right through, without dinner, until about 10 o'clock in the evening. To make matters worse, the air-conditioning system was turned off at about 6.00 o'clock, and we often wondered if our American friends were subjecting us to a special form of heat treatment. In any event, after prolonged wrangling, our two civilian Secretaries, namely, John Hickerson and Hugh Keenleyside, came up with a formula which appeared to gain acceptance. On this, I so well remember the "Little Flower" banging the table and saying "Now that this has been approved, let's hear no more about it".

7. I felt myself in a most difficult position, for I was the "new boy" on the Board, having so lately followed Ken Stuart. The resolution was dangerous to a degree and why the other Canadian Service members ever allowed themselves to accept it, I could never understand. I, however, called out to the Mayor for one moment, please. I said I found myself in a most difficult position, - I was the new boy. I had been told that the Board never voted, but, on the contrary, reached its conclusions by unanimous agreement. In my judgement, the formula produced by the two civilians was essentially and basically wrong. While I still know very little about the Board and its procedures, there was something that I did know and that was the minds, not only of the Canadian Chiefs of Staff, but also of the Canadian Government. And, I continued, I knew that our Chiefs of Staff would never advise the Government to accept this proposed recommendation, and I also knew the Government would not approve it without such a recommendation. Having said this, I felt that I would have to go along with my other Canadian colleagues, but with great reserve and with this definite warning as to what fate lay in store for the recommendation.

8. We never heard of it again.

## 9. Canol

Jack Hickerson once told us that he thought the Canol project to be such a fool idea that he did



not have the heart to route it through the Board, which he held in such warm regard.

10. Acceleration of Executive Action

I once arranged over the telephone with Clayton Bissell, who was in Washington and I in Ottawa, to lend him a million and a half ft. B.M. of lumber which we were holding in Newfoundland, and this in the space of exactly eight minutes!

11. These little bits of gossip may interest you. Whether it does or not, let me again congratulate you on having written such an interesting and informative article.

Yours sincerely,

Sgd Maurice Pope