THE SEARCH FOR CONTINENTAL SECURITY:

The Development of the North American Air Defence System, 1949 to 1956

By

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the development of the North American air defence system from the beginning of the Cold War until 1956. It focuses on the political and diplomatic dynamics behind the emergence of these defences, which included several radar lines such as the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line as well as a number of initiatives to enhance co-operation between the United States Air Force (USAF) and the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). This thesis argues that these measures were shaped by two historical factors.

The first was several different conceptions of what policy on air defence best served the Canadian national interest held by the Cabinet, the Department of External Affairs, the RCAF and the Other Government Departments (OGDs), namely Transport, Defence Production and Northern Affairs. For the Cabinet and External Affairs, their approach to air defence was motivated by the need to balance working with the Americans to defend the continent with the avoidance of any political fallout that would endanger the government’s chance of reelection. Nationalist sentiments and the desire to ensure that Canada both benefited from these projects and that its sovereignty in the Arctic was protected further influenced these two groups. On the other hand, the RCAF was driven by a more functional approach to this issue, as they sought to work with the USAF to develop the best air defence system possible. Finally, the positions of the OGDs were shaped by more narrow priorities. For example, C.D. Howe and the Department of Defence Production sought to use these joint radar projects to build up the Canadian electronics industry. Canada’s air defence policy in the 1950s, therefore, was a compromise between these various conceptions of the national interest.
The other major influence on this process was the attitude of the Truman and Eisenhower administrations towards continental air defence. This dissertation will argue that most of the measures to improve the security of the continent emerged because of the efforts of the United States, but at the same time, the Americans’ level of interest in these defences varied greatly over this period and ultimately were not sustained. Moreover, both these administrations had to overcome opposition from the USAF’s senior leadership, which preferred an emphasis on the offensive nuclear forces of the Strategic Air Command (SAC) over improved air defences. This dissertation thus makes an important and original argument that contributes to the scholarly literature on the Canada-U.S. defence relationship during the early Cold War.
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Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction

On September 11, 2001, Islamist extremists launched terrorist attacks against targets in Washington D.C. and New York City. These attacks not only had an impact on the United States, but on the Canada-U.S. defence relationship. This has been partially due to strains created by disagreements between the two countries over America’s response to the attacks including the U.S.-led “Global War on Terror,” and Canada’s opposition to the invasion of Iraq in 2003. However, what has been more significant is that these attacks have triggered an increased interest, on the part of the U.S. government, in the defence of the continent and the security of their homeland as evident by the formation of Northern Command (NORTHCOM), the upgrading of America’s air defences, the deployment of fighter aircraft over U.S. cities, and the creation of the Department of Homeland Security. This greater attention has been particularly significant for Canada because it created a situation in which security has moved up the bilateral agenda, and Canada has become perceived as part of the approaches to the American homeland.

1 NORTHCOM is an American military command that was created on October 1, 2002 to provide for the “command and control of Department of Defense (DoD) homeland defense efforts and to coordinate defense support of civil authorities.” Its area of responsibility “includes air, land and sea approaches and encompasses the continental United States, Alaska, Canada, Mexico and the surrounding water out to approximately 500 nautical miles. It also includes the Gulf of Mexico and the Straits of Florida;” U.S. Northern Command, <http://www.northcom.mil/about_us/aboutus.htm> (September 2, 2006).
2 The deployment of jet fighters over American cities has been part of a larger effort known as Operation Liberty Shield; Department of Homeland Security, Press Release Operation Liberty Shield <http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapppress_release/press_release_0115.xml> (July 20 2006)
This situation is an unusual one for Canada, since for most of the period after the Second World War the United States was not seriously interested in continental defence. Instead, successive U.S. administrations relied on the offensive forces of the American nuclear deterrent, and alliances such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to contain hostile threats overseas. Nevertheless, Canada’s current security situation is not unprecedented, as in the 1950s, the U.S. sought Canada’s help in preventing attacks from Soviet strategic nuclear bombers. In this period, the Truman and Eisenhower administrations requested that Canada co-operate in the construction of early warning radars on its territory including the Pinetree Line that formed part of the U.S. Permanent Radar System, the Mid Canada Line that was constructed at the 55th Parallel and the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line, which was constructed in the Arctic. Moreover, both countries moved from the development of joint defence plans to approving recommendations from the Permanent Joint Board on Defence (PJBD) that facilitated improved co-ordination between the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and the United States Air Force (USAF). In other words, what the Americans were asking from Canada was that it participate in the air defence of the continent. The development of this defence system has been the subject of a number of academic works by scholars such as Joseph Jockel, James Eayrs and David Cox, but none of these academics had access to the primary documents that have become available after the end of the Cold War.

5 It should be emphasised that this Ph.D. dissertation will focus on development of active air defences in North America, not passive ones. Thus, this study will not examine civil defence efforts in the 1950s.
Consequently, there is a need for a study that uses these new sources to provide a more complete understanding of the political and diplomatic dynamics behind the emergence of these air defences in the 1950s.

This dissertation argues that this air defence system was shaped by two historical factors. First, on the Canadian side there were different conceptions of what air defence policies best served the Canadian national interest held by the Cabinet, the Department of External Affairs, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and the Other Government Departments (OGDs) namely Transport, Defence Production and Northern Affairs. The second factor was the disposition of the attitude towards continental air defence adopted the Truman and Eisenhower administrations. The result, by the late-1950s, was the emergence of a limited air defence system that both countries could live with given the uncertainties of the nuclear age. The United States got the security it wanted while Canada, despite claims by some scholars, did not become an American protectorate or satellite.7

The Cabinet and External Affairs’ Conception of the National Interest

Throughout the 1950s, there were many disagreements over air defence policy in Ottawa. These debates were not over whether or not Canada should side with the United States in the Cold War, but over what form this support should take, and how far it should go in developing an air defence system with the Americans. At the heart of these policy


7 Such works include: James Minifie, Peacemaker or Powder-Monkey: Canada’s Role in a Revolutionary World (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart 1960); Lewis Hertzman, John W. Warnock and Thomas A. Hockin, Alliances and Illusions: Canada and the NATO-NORAD Question (Edmonton: MG Hurtig, Ltd.,
debates was what approach to air defence best served the Canadian national interest, but
this question has never been explicitly addressed in the scholarly literature. In order to
address this issue, this thesis will take an original approach. I argue that Canadian policy
was a compromise between these several different conceptions of what approach to air
defence best served Canada’s national interest and that these conceptions must be
understood if Canadian policy is to be properly studied.

One of the most important of these conceptions was that of the Cabinet of Prime
Minister Louis St. Laurent. Like any government, its primary goal was in getting re-
elected and to accomplish this objective, St. Laurent and his ministers had to strike a
balance between different priorities. On one hand, they had to work with the U.S. to
defend North America from the Soviet Union. Moreover, these ministers had to balance
this effort with other priorities including Canada’s social programs and its contributions
to NATO. It should be noted that St. Laurent government’s policies differed greatly from
his predecessor, William Lyon Mackenzie King, in terms of the resources it allocated for
peacetime defence spending due to the start of the Korean War in 1950. Nonetheless,
there were still limits on what St. Laurent was prepared to spend on the Canadian armed
forces.

These political considerations were further shaped by the perception that the
Canadian people would not support a significant U.S. military presence on Canadian soil
in peacetime, and would oppose too close a defence relationship with the Americans.
These feelings were encouraged by criticism of the government by the opposition parties
in the House of Commons. For example, the socialist Cooperative Commonwealth

1969); John Warnock, Partner to Behemoth: The Military Policy of a Satellite Canada (Toronto: New
Federation (CCF), and the pro-British Conservatives were critical of the Liberals for being too close to the United States. Furthermore, the press, which was mainly Tory and pro-British, was always lurking in the background to criticize the government’s defence policies. As a result, St. Laurent’s Cabinet was careful to limit public disclosure of American built and operated military installations on Canadian soil, and attempted to minimize the publication of the air defence agreements with the United States for fear of a negative public reaction. One commentator at the time, B.S. Kierstead, noted that “the sensitivity of the government, its almost secretive attitude, and the behaviour of some officials when the subject was mentioned all suggested a fear that Canadian public opinion on this matter was less understanding than official opinion.”

On the other hand, the Cabinet actually had little to fear politically in this period, as they easily retained power in 1949 and 1953 federal elections. This was the period of a strong Cold War consensus in Canada that favoured an effective military effort to support Canada’s allies and to help defend Western Europe. This was even the case in Quebec because of the fact that pre-Quiet Revolution French Canada was fiercely anti-Communist and that Canada was no longer just part of the British Empire, but was

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9 In his memoirs, Claxton was highly critical of the press coverage of this period. “Unlike politicians, newspapers never explain, never correct and never withdraw. Newspapers are the most irresponsible of all the agencies having to do with public affairs.” He added that a politician would not survive a year, if they made as many errors in that time as the Globe and Mail’s editorial page did in a week. Claxton Memoirs, Claxton Papers, Vol. 221, 860.

10 B.S. Kierstead, *Canada in World Affairs, September 1951 to October 1953* (Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1956), 174. He was also critical of Canadian nationalist sentiment arguing that countries in Europe with far stronger traditions of nationalism had accepted a far greater U.S. military presence on their soil than Canada.

11 For example, the Liberal Party won 193 seats in the 1949 election, to 41 for the Conservatives and 13 for the CCF. Dennis Smith, *Rogue Tory: The Life and Legend of John G. Diefenbaker* (Toronto: Macfarlane Walter & Ross, 1995), 179-80.
supporting the Western alliance in the Cold War.\textsuperscript{12} There was little evidence that Canada’s role in the development of the North American air defence system or even its support of U.S. foreign policy was that unpopular with Canadians.\textsuperscript{13} In fact, the State Department believed that the Canadian public was more supportive of joint defence measures than Canadian officials admitted, and were often irritated when their Canadian counterparts used public opinion as an excuse for why they could only go so far in developing this air defence system.\textsuperscript{14} Nevertheless, because St. Laurent and his ministers believed that they were allocating valuable resources to policy initiatives that would be ineffective in attracting votes, they worried about any potential political fallout. Therefore, it was these elite perceptions rather than any actual public opposition that influenced Cabinet’s approach to continental air defence.

Another conception of the national interest came from the Department of External Affairs. It was not opposed to working with the U.S. to improve the continent’s air defences and recognized the need to support the United States in the Cold War. However, despite these beliefs, the Department was often a source of opposition to the air defence measures proposed by the Americans and the RCAF. Part of this was a simply a reflection

\textsuperscript{12} Reg Whitaker and Gary Marcuse, \textit{Cold War Canada: The Making of the National Insecurity State, 1945-1957} (Toronto: University Of Toronto Press, 1994), 123-4. The fate of Hungarian Cardinal Mindszenty, who had been imprisoned and tortured by the communists in his country, encouraged such sentiments. Norman Hillmer and J.L. Granatstein, \textit{Empire to Umpire Canada and the World to the 1990s} (Toronto: Copp Clark Longman Ltd, 1994), 204-5. Nonetheless, Canadian ministers such as Claxton were quick to attempt to head off criticism of Canadian defence policy from Quebec. One such example was a letter sent to Quebec Premier Maurice Duplessis when the Premier criticized the potential stationing of radar sites in Quebec Provincial Parks. Claxton to Duplessis, February 27 1950, MG 26L, Louis St. Laurent Papers, Vol. 125, National Research Radar Personal and Confidential 1950 – 1952, LAC. For additional information on French Canadian attitudes to Canada’s post-war defence policies see Keirstead, \textit{Canada in World Affairs}, 148-9.

\textsuperscript{13} In fact, it can be argued that the only election in the post-war period in which foreign and defence policy played an important role was in 1963. In this election, the main issue was whether or not that Canada should fulfil its commitments to accept nuclear warheads from the United States. For more information see Smith, \textit{Rogue Tory}, 497–509; Hillmer and Granatstein, \textit{Empire to Umpire}, 262-4.

of the belief that was expressed before the Second World War by O. D. Skelton, the
Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, that: “Is it for the military staff to expound
policies? Is it not for the civil arm of government to lay down the schemes of policy and
liabilities, and then for the military to submit military plans accordingly.” These views
remained after the Second World War, as many officials in External Affairs believed that
Canada’s “senior officers lacked the type of training to deal with national security in a
nuclear age.”

External Affairs was also committed to maintaining its position as the main source
of expertise for the Cabinet on foreign and defence policy. As a result, when they advised
the government on the development of this air defence system, they took the political
concerns of their ministers into consideration. While it was not entirely clear whether this
was done just to preserve their influence in Ottawa or if was seen to be part of being an
External Affairs official in this period, political considerations were always a critical
factor when these officials advised the Cabinet on joint defence measures. However, there
was one other notable factor that influenced the conception of national interest held by the
Cabinet and External Affairs.

The Influence of Canadian Nationalism

This factor was Canadian nationalism and many ministers and officials of this
period including the Minister of National Defence, Brooke Claxton, and the Secretary of

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15 Eayrs, In Defence of Canada Vol. 3, 55-56. Civilian bureaucrats also often looked down upon their less
well-educated military colleagues, since “a Ph.D. conferred prestige a DFC did not.” Ibid, 66.
16 Claxton was strongly involved in the Canadian movement, which included the Association of Canadian
Clubs, the League of Nations Society, the Canadian League as well as the Canadian Institute for
International Affairs. David Bercusson, True Patriot: The Life of Brooke Claxton 1898-1960 (Toronto:
University of Toronto Press, 1994), 60. He also expressed concerns about the threat posed to Canadian
State for External Affairs, Lester Pearson, were influenced by these sentiments. These beliefs, however, have not really been examined in the scholarly literature. This lack of discussion is due to a number of factors including the reality that this elite nationalism of the 1950s was a milder form of the type that was emerged in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. In addition, these sentiments were almost never expressed in public. Indeed, while Canadian ministers and officials could be very vocal and demanding in official memos as well as during the negotiations with their American counterparts, there was rarely any public criticism of the United States or of American foreign policy in this period. Finally, it is only by moving away from a Canada centric perspective by examining discussions in both Ottawa and Washington that the influence of nationalism on Canadian policy can be understood.

The nationalist sentiments that emerged in this period were largely defensive in nature, and manifested themselves in a reluctance to allow U.S. personnel and installations on Canadian soil particularly in the Arctic. Concerns over American forces in Canada were partially the result of perceptions in Ottawa of the problems that occurred during the Second World War when Canada had co-operated with the United States to protect the continent. Some Canadian ministers and officials believed that they had been in danger of losing control of the Arctic when thousands of U.S. Army and civilian personnel had been sent north to build military facilities such as the Alaskan Highway.

sovereignty by the Alaska Highway in the early 1940s. Hugh Keenleyside Interviewed by Peter Stursberg in Victoria 28 August 1980 (Part II), MG 31 D 78 Peter Stursberg Fond, Vol. 35, Hugh Keenleyside, 17. Geoffrey Pearson pointed out that his father believed that you cannot be an effective actor on the international stage without having a “nationalist base,” or otherwise people would not take Canada seriously. Geoffrey Pearson, His Memories of Lester Pearson in an Interview with Peter Stursberg at the University of Georgia May 1, 1978, 6, MG 31 D 78 Peter Stursberg Fonds, Vol. 31, File 8 Geoffrey Pearson, LAC, 91.
Ultimately, this experience was not as bad as many thought at the time, and as will be seen in Chapter 3, the problems that did exist were resolved quickly. Nonetheless, the Canadian defence scientist, R.J. Sutherland, concluded that these problems “had a significant bearing upon Canadian policy and attitudes” in the post-war period.\(^{19}\)

Another factor that fuelled this view was an understanding that Canada’s claim to its Arctic territories was not that strong, since it was based on the discovery of the area by British explorers, the sector principle, and was primarily enforced through patrols by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).\(^{20}\) One Canadian official even warned in June 1946 “that Canadian sovereignty in all territories in the Canadian sector is unchallenged but not unchallengeable.”\(^{21}\) Moreover, St. Laurent’s Cabinet feared that it would face political consequences if the Americans threatened Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic in peacetime. These concerns existed because, both in the past and the present, Canadians have had a strong if inconsistent relationship with the North. They see the region as an area that was potentially very valuable even if it is of little real interest on a day-to-day basis. The Canadian historian, Shelagh Grant, observed that “Canada’s north provides an infinite challenge for historians who attempt to explain its mystique in terms of Canadian identity or government policies in terms of public opinion and political pressures.”\(^{22}\)

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\(^{20}\) The Sector Principle was first outlined in Canada by Senator Pascal Poirier in the Canadian Senate in 1907. It states that “each state with a continental Arctic coastline automatically falls heir to all the islands lying between this coastline and the North Pole, which are enclosed by longitudinal lines drawn from the eastern and western extremities of the same coastline to the Pole.” Gordon W. Smith, “Sovereignty in the North: The Canadian Aspect of an International Problem,” In *The Arctic Frontier*, ed. R. St. J. Macdonald (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), 214.

\(^{21}\) *Memorandum from Associate Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs Secretary to the Cabinet, June 24 1946, DCER*, Vol. 12, 1946, 1570.

\(^{22}\) Grant, *Sovereignty or Security*, xviii.
Another commentator, Franklyn Griffiths, has argued that Canadians have such a relationship because of the “intangible but vital links between the Arctic and the self image of Canadians as a people.”23 Sutherland also wrote that the development of the North “represents a fundamental Canadian aspiration, an important element of the national consciousness.”24 There have been some scholars who have argued against this view including Frank Underhill who complained that “the artistic cult of the Northern is, as a matter of fact, pure romanticism at its worst and bears little relation to the real life of Canada.” He added that most Canadians would prefer the good life in the big city rather than seeking “inspiration amongst rocks and winds.”25 Nonetheless, these ties were problematic for St. Laurent and his officials when a foreign power, like the United States, expressed an interest in this region. Consequently, the Cabinet was worried that the presence of U.S. forces and installations in the Canadian Arctic would become a political issue.26

These Canadian nationalist sentiments had another impact on Canadian policy makers, as manifested in a dream that Canada should resist too formal a defence relationship with the United States. For these individuals, Canada was a nation in the words of Escott Reid which had “not won from London complete freedom to make our own decisions on every issue - including that of peace and war - in order to become a

24 Sutherland, “The Strategic Significance of the Canadian Arctic,” 257.
26 These concerns were later realized when the voyages of two American vessels through the Northwest Passage, the super tanker, Manhattan in 1969 and the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter, Polar Sea in 1985 caused a great deal of political controversy in Canada. John Honderich, Arctic imperative: Is Canada losing the North?, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 4.
One of the most important reasons for the emergence of this nationalism was the influence of the man who supervised the creation of the modern Canadian foreign policy bureaucracy, O.D. Skelton, the Undersecretary of External Affairs from 1925 to his death in 1941. In the words of Norman Hillmer, Skelton “was determined to build a department that would be an instrument of a nationalist foreign policy,” which was a vision that he shared with his political master, Mackenzie King. Consequently, this nationalism—which was originally directed at the British Empire—did not go away with the decline of the imperial connection, but was redirected towards the United States. Just because Canada with the Ogdensburg agreement in 1940 “had committed herself to a permanent military alliance with the United States for the common defence of North America,” did not mean that Canadian ministers or their officials were going to sit back and be quiet allies of the Americans.

As a result, these sentiments surfaced when Canadian officials were faced with American demands that they concluded were unnecessary. Nationalism also explains why Canadian ministers and officials sought to minimize the presence of U.S. forces on Canadian soil, particularly when they opposed the granting of any long term rights such

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27 Quoted from Escott Reid, Radical Mandarin The Memoirs of Escott Reid (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 159.
29 Gordon T. Stewart, The American Response to Canada Since 1776 (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1992), 154. One reason why these beliefs were present in External Affairs was that many of the young officials who joined the Department in that period were nationalists before their entry into the civil service. It can be argued that this nationalism was a product of a generational change that began in Canada after the experience of the First World War although one historian has noted that it was the product of “a handful of English Canadians—academics, artists, Oxford-trained mandarins, and journalists [who] decided that Canada should officially lobotomize Britishness.” C. P. Champion, “Marriage of Minds: Isabel and Oscar Skelton Reinventing Canada” (Book Review), American Review of Canadian Studies 36, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 143(3).
as tenure to the USAF for their facilities on Canadian territory. Most importantly, it influenced Canadian ministers and officials during discussions with the Americans over the interception of unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace. The influence of these nationalist sentiments helps answer the question posed by a Canadian government report in 1951 of why do Canadians “often feel troubled about our relations with the United States when we approve the great developments in American foreign policy of recent years and recognize that Canada occupies a special and desirable position in the outlook of the American people?” Ultimately, these beliefs influenced Canadian ministers and officials’ conception of the national interest and greatly complicated Canada’s relationship with the United States.

It should be noted that these sentiments were partially balanced by other factors including positions advanced by the Canadian Embassy in Washington D.C. These reports were an often overlooked influence on policy, since the world looked very different from Washington than from Ottawa where Canadian concerns were often overemphasized. These views should not simply be dismissed as a case of “localitis,” when officials incorporated into their own thinking of too many of the views and prejudices of the country in which they are serving. Instead, it can be argued that service in Washington would allow an official to understand U.S. foreign and defence policies in their greater political and strategic context. One example was Hume Wrong who became more understanding of U.S. policy when he served as Ambassador to the United States from 1946 to 1953. Furthermore, many Canadian officials understood the limits of

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31 John English, in his biography of Lester Pearson argued that Wrong “had been in Washington a long time, and ‘localitis’ is a virus that affects many diplomats who serve so long in foreign capitals.” John English, The Worldly Years The Life of Lester Pearson Volume II: 1949-1972 (Toronto: Random House,
Canada’s independence. For instance, General Maurice Pope asserted in 1944 that for the Americans “the defence of the United States is continental defence, which includes us, and nothing that I can think will ever drive that idea out of their head.” However, while some Canadian officials were more pragmatic, most of them tended to overestimate the importance of Canada to U.S. policy makers. As one memo from External Affairs in 1945 argued, if Canada did not agree to grant the Americans post-war rights in the North then Canada would be exposed “to pressure from the United States that it might be difficult or impossible to resist.”

Both political considerations and Canadian nationalism, therefore, were important influences on Cabinet and External Affairs’ positions on continental air defence policy. It is only by understanding these conceptions that one can explain why Canadian ministers and officials encouraged the United States to fulfill its responsibilities as the leader of the “free world” and supported the presence of thousands of American troops armed with nuclear weapons in Western Europe while seeing no contradiction in attempting to limit the U.S. presence on Canadian soil. Consequently, their conceptions of the national interest differed greatly from that of the RCAF.

The RCAF’s Conception of the National Interest

For its part, the RCAF had a conception of the national interest that was centred on the development of the best air defence system possible within the confines of their available resources. The RCAF also embraced a functional and not a political approach to

1992), 60.
32 Memorandum from Under Secretary of External Affairs to Prime Minister, April 10 1944, DCER, Vol. 11 1944-1945, 1534-1535.
33 Memorandum by Secretary PJBD, June 20 1945, DCER, Vol. 11, 1944-1945, 1575-7.
the problem of continental air defence. Consequently, the RCAF was supportive of the idea that air defence was a continental responsibility to be shared with the United States, and quickly developed a close relationship with the USAF to carry out this mission. The relationship emerged in the late 1940s and the early 1950s and grew rapidly thereafter. Joel Sokolsky has described this “international fraternity of the uniform,” as an “almost trans-national, non-governmental set of institutional and personal ties, which can exist almost independently of governments. In this fraternity, allegiance is to the common goal and the military means of implementing it. The interpretation of the goal will very much reflect the interpretations of the leader, the American military.” 34

Aside from the common identity of airmen, and the fact that both air forces shared common cultural and linguistic backgrounds, the relationship emerged for several reasons. 35 First, was the fact that the USAF officers, unlike their Royal Air Force counterparts, treated their RCAF brethren as allies rather than as inferior colonials. 36 In addition, the relationship was built on a strong mutual respect, since the USAF saw the RCAF as a worthy partner for what Air Marshal Roy Slemon would later term the “‘mighty task’ of continental air defence.” 37 With the rapid rearmament of the Canadian military that took place after 1950, the RCAF had emerged as a modern air force, equipped with aircraft such as the F-86 Sabre and the Canadian designed and built CF-

34 Joel J. Sokolsky, “Exporting the “Gap” The American Influence, In The Soldier and the State in the Post Cold War Era, ed. by Albert Legault and Joel Sokolsky (Kingston: Queen’s Quarterly Press, 2002), 213. Sokolsky first noted this relationship in both U.S. and Allied naval officers who had attended National Command Course at the U.S. Naval War College in the 1950s; Ibid, 234. Claxton was also aware of these kinds of relationships when he noted in his unpublished memoir that sometimes Canada’s military leaders “might encourage our allies to ask for or expect more from us with the hope that this pressure would enable him to get a bigger share of the defence dollar devoted to his service.” Claxton Memoirs, Claxton Papers, Vol. 221, LAC.
35 In the 1950s, the RCAF was a strongly Anglophone institution. Eayrs, In Defence of Canada Vol. 3, 128-9.
36 C.P. Stacey, A Date with History: Memoirs of a Canadian Historian (Ottawa: Deneau, 1982), 256.
100 Canuck. The RCAF, for its part, saw their American counterparts as an excellent model for them to follow even taking into account the fact that the USAF as a bomber-centred air force dominated by the Strategic Air Command (SAC) and its “bomber barons” such as General Curtis Lemay while the RCAF placed its emphasis on fighter aircraft. Major General Leonard V. Johnson noted in his memoirs that the USAF “was a big and powerful cousin with whom we identified,” and that “the relationship gave the R.C.A.F. a partner, access to American communications, logistics facilities, equipment, training and know-how, and an identity as part of the big team.” 38 Senior USAF officers also found it easy to work with Canadian airmen such as Frank Miller. 39 Another factor was that both air forces were new organizations. The RCAF had been created in 1924, and had only gained its own Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) in 1938, while the USAF had become independent of the US Army in mid-1947. 40 Therefore, neither organization brought into relationship too much baggage from the past, which enhanced the closeness of the ties. It should be noted that there were limits to the relationship, since the RCAF maintained its own distinctive rank structure and uniform. Moreover, the relationship was a work in progress for much of this period and as will be seen in Chapter 4, some RCAF officers, including one CAS, Air Marshal Robert Leckie, remained suspicious of the Americans.

39 Blaire to Briggs, June 18 1954, RG 341 Records of Headquarters United States Air Force (Air Staff), Box 728-A Air Force Plans Project Decimal File 1942-1954, File OPD 660.2 Canada (14 Sept 45) Sec. 20, NARA.
Ultimately, supporters of North American air defence within the USAF and the RCAF saw the problem in the same way. It was military efficiency, not political factors such as sovereignty that concerned them. This common view of the air defence situation emerged at least partially due to the fact that many Canadian airmen such as Miller, Wilfred Curtis and C.R. Dunlap served in organizations with other USAF officers such as the PJBD and the Canada-United States Military Co-operation Committee (MCC). These bodies helped to manage the Canada-U.S. relationship, and in the case of the MCC was charged with the development of joint defence plans. Consequently, these individuals not only become interested in continental defence issues, but they grew to have a common understanding of the problem with their American counterparts. All of this is significant since Curtis and Dunlap both served as CAS while Miller later became the first Chief of the Defence Staff after unification in the 1960s. Finally, unofficial links were formed over the years including bonds forged on fishing trips to Labrador. In fact, the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee, General Charles Foulkes, had urged the RCAF to establish a fishing camp at Eagle River, Labrador to allow for officers from Canada and its allies to meet and discuss policy in a relaxed atmosphere outside the hectic atmosphere of their capitals. Of course, this meant outside of the supervision of their governments. The Americans would return the favour by inviting their Canadian counterparts down to golf in Puerto Rico in the winter.

Individual officers including Curtis also cultivated good relations with their American counterparts. Curtis later noted that he was on very good terms with his

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41 Sean Maloney, "General Charles Foulkes: A Primer on How to Be CDS" In Warrior Chiefs: Perspectives on Canadian Senior Military Leadership, ed. Bernd Horn and Stephen Harris (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2001), 229.
contemporary as head of the USAF, General Hoyt Vandenberg, who in Curtis’ words “would do anything possible for me.” In this period, the USAF thus emerged as the natural partner for the RCAF as both countries worked together, often behind the back of the Canadian Cabinet and External Affairs, to develop the North American air defence system. This reality means that it is important to understand this relationship and to not just characterize it as “Brassy Intrigue,” as some commentators have done. Indeed, it should be noted that the RCAF leadership was willing to support nationalist policies such as the creation of a Canadian aircraft industry when it served their conception of the national interest. Furthermore, while scholars such as Jockel and Richard Goette have done much work on the development of this relationship, more research needs to be done using newly declassified government documents.

**Additional Conceptions of the National Interest**

There were other groups within the civilian bureaucracy and the Canadian armed forces that had their own views of what policies on air defence best served Canada’s interest. The influence of these positions has not been fully addressed in the scholarly literature, and the most significant of them were that of the OGDs, namely the Departments of Transport, Defence Production and Northern Affairs. Throughout this period, the OGDs and their ministers engaged in bureaucratic turf battles to support their interests and often clashed with the American officials. For example, the desire to have

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USAF to have its fighters intercept unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace created conflict with Transport’s plans to regulate Canadian civilian traffic near the Canada-U.S. border. Transport’s officials felt there was no need for such measures and believed that the potential for accidents from collisions was too high. Consequently, this department only reluctantly accepted the PJBD Recommendations created to address this problem. Moreover, C.D. Howe and Department of Defence Production were focused on using these early warning radar systems to fuel the development of the Canadian electronics industry, despite some opposition from the USAF and even the RCAF. This department’s conception of the national interest was particularly important because of influence that Howe had in Ottawa. Finally, constructing radar lines in the Canadian Arctic meant coordinating operations with Northern Affairs, which attempted to regulate the U.S. activities in this area. Officials from this department were interested in utilizing American resources to help develop the region and were watchful to any threat to Canadian Arctic sovereignty and to the well being of the local native population.

The other two positions that need to be noted were that of the Canadian Army and the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN). These two services had a conception firmly centred on the bureaucratic interests of their service, and not surprising, saw the air defence role primarily in budgetary terms, as the more resources that were utilized for it, the fewer that were available for their forces. These services were primarily interested in developing their expeditionary capabilities, not in home defence. The RCN had no formal role in continental air defence and no real interest in acquiring one.46 The Canadian Army had

45 Richard Goette, Canada, the United States and the Command and Control of Air Forces for Continental Air Defence from Ogdensburg to NORAD, 1940-1957, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Queen’s University, 2009.
46 One example was in 1956 when the U.S. Navy requested that the RCN operate two picket ships as part of the Atlantic Ocean Extension of the DEW Line. However, the Chief of the Naval Staff replied that the
some interest in acquiring surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), as they had operated anti-aircraft guns during the Second World War and had retained responsibility for these weapons after the war, but its role in air defence remained limited. Moreover, many officers in the Army and Navy remained pro-British. The most important of these individuals was the Chief of the General Staff, General Guy Simonds, who was very critical of the both air defence effort and of American defence policy. But, in the end, despite these beliefs, neither the Canadian Army nor the RCN was a major influence on the development of the North American air defence system.

The primary reason was that both services were preoccupied in the 1950s with the reconstruction of their own forces, which had been rapidly demobilized after the Second World War. Moreover, the Canadian defence budget was large enough until the late-1950s to keep them relatively content. The Army got its brigade in Europe while the RCN was able to develop its anti-submarine warfare capability and retained its aircraft carrier. An important factor in allowing this situation was that the USAF was providing much of

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48 During his time as CGS, Simonds with help from the Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, Arnold Heeney, manœuvred with the British officials to position the Canadian brigade serving in Europe in the British sector despite the fact that the RCAF was located in the south of Germany in the U.S. sector. David Bercusson, “The Return of the Canadians to Europe: Britannia Rules the Rhine,” In Canada and
the funding for this air defence system, which helped to reduce the Canadian military’s burden of constructing these defences. It was not until development problems with the CF105 Avro Arrow—an expensive Canadian-only project— in the late 1950s that a serious conflict between the RCAF and the other two services arose over continental air defence. The Canadian approach to air defence, therefore, was a compromise between these different conceptions of the national interest. However, it should be emphasized that an equally important factor in the emergence of this defence system was the attitude towards North American air defence of the Truman and Eisenhower administrations.

The Influence of the United States

Although most scholars of the history of U.S. nuclear strategy and American foreign relations have overlooked the air defence policies of these two presidents, Truman’s and Eisenhower’s approach to continental air defence needs to be understood. Indeed, during the 1950s, virtually all the initiatives taken to defend the continent were the result of decisions taken in Washington by these two administrations. Under Truman, the Pinetree Line agreement was concluded and a number of measures to improve air defence co-ordination were approved. Moreover, the Eisenhower administration supported the development of the Mid Canada Line and the DEW Line. In fact, it will be argued that continental air defence complemented Eisenhower’s Cold War strategy because these defences would protect the United States from whatever Soviet bombers survived an American first strike. Although Eisenhower did not think that a nuclear war with the Soviet Union could be won in any meaningful sense, this approach to fighting

_NATO Uneasy Past, Uncertain Future_, ed. Margaret MacMillian and David Sorenson (Waterloo; University of Waterloo Press, 1990), 21-22.
the Cold War did allow his administration to deal with the uncertainties of this period while reducing American defence spending. Nonetheless, it must always be remembered that continental air defence was at best only a salient part of overall U.S. Cold War strategy in the 1950s. Indeed, Canadian ministers and officials tended to overestimate the amount of interest that their American counterparts had in the defence of North America, which fluctuated greatly over this period.

The main reason why was that U.S. strategy in the Cold War was offensively oriented. In this period, the Americans focused on countering the communist threat overseas through the support of alliances such as NATO or through the build up of strong offensive nuclear forces, namely its long-range and later intercontinental strategic bombers. These forces served to deter a Soviet attack on the U.S. and its allies through the threat of either retaliatory or pre-emptive nuclear strikes. Therefore, the USAF concentrated on building up SAC so it was capable of fulfilling this mission. Indeed, this focus served to create opposition to improved air defences because many officials and officers in the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and the USAF felt that allocating significant resources to these programs was potentially dangerous because it would divert resources away from the nuclear deterrent. The USAF’s conception of air power further caused it to be extremely critical of improved air defence measures. Consequently, both the Truman and Eisenhower had to address this opposition in their internal policy debates in Washington.

Another major factor on American air defence policy was the approach that these administrations took towards the Canada-U.S. defence relationship. Although Canada was a valuable and trusted ally and the Americans appreciated its support, it was only so important. Canada did not have the kind of special relationship that Great Britain had
developed with the U.S. during the Second World War nor was it vital to Western European security like West Germany or France. Furthermore, Canada lacked the strong Congressional lobby of the Republic of China (Taiwan), and it was not a country in crisis such as South Korea. Canadian officials did have a number of important contacts with their counterparts in Washington and had developed informal means of consultation with the Americans, but these could be easily disrupted particularly during the turnover of officials during transitions between presidential administrations. Indeed, the transition between the Truman and Eisenhower administrations was an important factor in the Canada-U.S. defence relationship.

Furthermore, U.S. policy makers only had so much time for Canadian affairs. One reason was the numerous debates that occurred in Washington over foreign and defence policy from the development of a proper peacetime military and intelligence establishment in the immediate post-war period to the role of the United States in NATO. The extensive bureaucratic infighting and disputes that occurred between the State Department, the DoD and the different branches of the U.S. military further complicated these debates. Canadian officials were well aware that the American system of government made “it very difficult to pursue, particularly in the short run, consistent and informed policies.”

The end result of all these realities was that Canada and its concerns received only so much attention.

The Truman and Eisenhower administrations’ policies were further complicated by the need to work with Congress in order to get appropriations for these radar systems approved. Indeed, the need to deal with Congress obliged American officials to make

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49 A Survey of Relations Between Canada and the United States, June 20 1951, 73/1223 Raymont Papers, Box 113, File 2511 A Survey of Relations between Canada and the United States, DHH.
certain demands of their Canadian counterparts to facilitate these appropriations. However, these requests created difficulties in the relationship because Canadian officials often resented the need to accommodate Congress.

Ultimately, the interest of the United States in continental air defence and the Canada-U.S. defence relationship was limited because military co-operation with Canada served largely functional and technical purposes, not broader geostrategic ones. The Americans were interested in using Canadian territory and air space for Arctic training flights and amphibious exercises, and wanted to build airfields, weather stations, and later early warning radar lines on Canadian soil. The USAF also desired the right to intercept unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace. However, there was no need for the United States to station forces in Canada for reasons of alliance solidarity or to reassure the Canadian government of U.S. support, as was needed for its NATO allies. For the Americans, defence co-operation with Canada was a means to end not an end itself. There was no real interest in having a presence on Canadian soil unless it served a purpose.

Chapter Outlines

The literature review that follows this chapter examines the existing scholarship and argues that due to a number of factors, including problems obtaining declassified government documents, there are many gaps in the historiography that need to be filled. I then briefly outline the major primary sources from Canadian and American archives that were utilized for this thesis. Chapter Three addresses the relationship between Canada and the United States from 1776 to the end of the Second World War. It discusses how the threat posed by the Axis Powers forced both countries to co-operate to secure North America through steps such as the creation of the PJBD. This chapter argues that despite
problems regarding issues of command and control and the U.S. presence in the Canadian Northwest, the relationship functioned well. In fact, I argue that some Canadian scholars have not only overstated the problems that occurred, but that newly discovered archival evidence about Canada’s purchase of the U.S. built military installations in the Canadian Northwest after the war demonstrates the need for a more nuanced understanding of this period. Such a perspective is also important because the wartime period, in many ways, served as a dress rehearsal for the post-war defence relationship.

Chapter Four discusses the period from 1945 until the first test of a Soviet atomic bomb in August 1949. Despite the limited interest in Canada in Washington, a peacetime relationship did emerge, although this process was not smooth. The main factor was an U.S. proposal for an extensive continental air defence system with early warning lines in the Arctic. This plan created a great deal of concern in Ottawa, which was made even worse because Canadian ministers and officials failed to directly confront their American counterparts on their level of interest in this proposal. This situation was resolved in December 1946 when U.S. officials made clear that the United States was not going to build such an air defence system, but Canadian ministers and officials continued to be overly suspicious of the American intentions. This reality existed despite the fact that the Cabinet and External Affairs were aware that the Truman administration had little interest in Canada-U.S. defence co-operation. Even the fact that the U.S. military willingly withdrew most of its personnel from the Canadian North in the late 1940s did little to change these Canadian perceptions, which continued to influence policy into the 1950s.

Chapter Five examines the first major steps that Canada and the United States took to defend the continent in the early 1950s. It begins by examining the development of the Soviet strategic bomber force and how these were interpreted in Ottawa and
Washington. It also discusses how the start of the Korean War in 1950 provided the impetus for the two countries to take the first major steps to defend the continent. Then, the chapter uses newly declassified files to provide a more complete picture of these measures, which were formalized as PJBD Recommendations between 1951 and 1953. Some of these recommendations such as 51/3 and 51/6 granted permission to the USAF and the RCAF to hold joint local air defence exercises and to reinforce each other’s forces in wartime. The Cabinet approved these recommendations fairly quickly, although only after a number of strict conditions had been attached. However, the negotiations to address the USAF’s desire to intercept unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace through recommendations 51/4 and 53/1 were much more difficult. Despite the interest of the RCAF in working with the USAF to develop the best air defence system possible, the resolution of this issue was complicated by the position of the Department of Transport and the influence of political considerations and especially nationalist sentiments on Canadian policy makers. In particular, External Affairs wanted to preserve Canadian control over its airspace even if that control was more formal than real due to a variety of factors including the dispatch of RCAF fighters to Europe. In addition, the U.S. air defence community did not have the support of the senior civilian and military leadership in Washington in order to force Canada to agree to their requests. This result was that this issue would only be resolved in late 1953 after the successful test of a hydrogen bomb by the Soviet Union.

Chapter Six focuses on the development of the Pinetree Line, which was a joint USAF-RCAF early warning system constructed on Canadian soil in the early 1950s. Despite the fact that the Cabinet and External Affairs were willing to both trade control over a Canadian built radar system for greater security and to accept a greater U.S.
military presence on Canadian soil when it approved this project, the negotiations to finalize this agreement were not smooth. One factor that caused difficulties was the USAF’s demand that it be given tenure at the radar stations that it would be funding, which upset nationalist sentiments in Ottawa. Nevertheless, the main issue was the insistence of the USAF and the State Department that an exchange of notes be used to formalize the agreement, and that this note be registered at the United Nations. This request created great difficulties for St. Laurent’s government because it meant that the opposition parties in the House of Commons and the Canadian public would become aware of the details of how this line would be constructed, which raised serious political concerns for Canadian ministers and officials. Canadian opposition to this demand was only overcome after months of difficult negotiations when Canada reluctantly accepted this form of agreement. But, even after these discussions ended, there were additional difficulties, which have not been detailed in the scholarly literature. One example was the disagreements over the procurement of Canadian electronic components, as C.D. Howe and the Department of Defence Production, with support from other ministers and officials, sought to obtain orders for Canadian firms. But they faced opposition from the Americans, who with some support for the RCAF, wanted to get the system operational as quickly as possible. Although the Canadians would eventually prevail, these negotiations resulted in much resentment in Ottawa that influenced the discussions over another set of installations, the Temporary Radar Stations Program. This effort was further plagued by a number of factors including opposition in Ottawa to additional U.S. military personnel on Canadian soil and a lack of interest in the project on the part of the USAF, which resulted in the stations’ construction being delayed.
Chapter Seven examines the intense debates in the United States over the expansion of the North American air defence system from 1951 to 1953 especially over whether or not the U.S. should construct the DEW Line in the high Arctic. Facing the proponents of improved air defences was the Secretary of Defense, Robert Lovett, who was not in favour of a greater air defence effort. The USAF’s senior leadership was also critical because of several factors including its conception of air power and its fears that SAC would be weakened in order to fund these additional air defences. While these disagreements would be partially resolved with Truman’s approval of the DEW Line, the end of his term of office and the coming to power of Dwight Eisenhower largely halted these developments. Indeed, Eisenhower’s desire to develop a new Cold War strategy meant that discussion of the air defence problem languished until August 1953. The transition between the Truman and Eisenhower administrations created additional difficulties for the informal systems of consultation between the U.S. and Canada, and resulted in a breakdown of communication between the two capitals. Eisenhower eventually decided to expand the air defence system, and this effort included the Mid Canada line as well as the DEW Line, if it was shown to be feasible. He began this program both in response to the Soviet test of a hydrogen bomb in August 1953 and because improved air defences complemented his new Cold War strategy. His administration, however, made this decision without first consulting Canada, which would cause some difficulties that will be outlined in Chapter Eight.

This chapter discusses how Canadian officials addressed the American request that additional early warning systems be constructed on its soil. Using newly declassified documents, it will be seen how the lack of communication between the two capitals when combined with different perceptions over how consultation for joint defence measures
should take place, led to confusion in Ottawa. But, I argue that once key ministers and officials such as Claxton and Howe understood that the Americans had made their plans without consulting Canada, they proposed building the Mid Canada line as a Canadian project even before formal discussions had begun with U.S. officials. This chapter then examines the debates that took place in Washington and Ottawa over the DEW Line. Ultimately, faced with an increased threat from the Soviet strategic forces, the Eisenhower administration decided to go ahead with this project, which triggered debates in Ottawa between External Affairs and the military over how to respond. The first step Canadian officials took was to fund and construct the Mid Canada Line as a Canadian project. In August, the Cabinet also gave approval in principle for development of the DEW Line; nonetheless, these decisions did not end the discussions in Ottawa because Foulkes intervened in the fall. He had come to believe that the problem of radioactive fallout in a nuclear war posed insurmountable difficulties for the continental air defence effort. Foulkes’ opposition was eventually overcome and Canada gave permission for the U.S. to go ahead with construction of the DEW Line in November 1954, although Canada would have to determine whether or not it would have a direct role in this system. Both countries also still had to negotiate the terms under which the line would be constructed, and Canadian officials were determined to get the best ones possible on the procurement of Canadian radar equipment, and on the rehabilitation of the DEW line sites after the system had been closed down.

Chapter Nine addresses the construction of the DEW Line. It outlines the discussions in Ottawa that took place over whether or not the RCAF should take up a formal role with this line as well as the efforts by Canadian officials and OGDs to maximize the benefits of this project for their particular conceptions of the national
interest. I conclude that the construction of the DEW Line went so well that even after the activities of certain U.S. contractors created some controversy, the Cabinet turned down USAF’s offer to take control of the DEW line in December 1956 because they were satisfied with the situation. This chapter will also discuss Canadian concerns about possible future air defence measures that existed despite the fact that American interest in these systems was actually declining. This shift in American thinking occurred because of a number of factors including the reality the U.S. strategy had remained offensive in nature as well as a realization that the era of the intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) was dawning. The result was that by the end of the decade, a truncated air defence system emerged to defend the continent. Finally, the conclusion, Chapter Ten will summarize all the major arguments and findings of this thesis as well as offering some lessons for how the Canada-U.S. defence relationship can be strengthened in the future.

Conclusion

This dissertation is an examination of the political and diplomatic dynamics behind the emergence of the North American air defence system in the 1950s. By expanding our knowledge of the policy discussions in Ottawa and Washington and of the bilateral negotiations behind the creation of this air defence system, an important gap in the literature will be filled. Indeed, this experience not only demonstrates the need to study developments in Washington, but illustrates the value of understanding the policy discussions in Ottawa in a dispassionate way because, despite the arguments of some Canadian scholars, Canada’s ministers and officials did have influence over the development of this defence system. This is not to say that Canada could have said no to
the Americans. In fact, the Canadians agreed to many measures such as the DEW Line that they would have greatly preferred not to have done. What it did mean was that the pressure that was exerted by the U.S. on Canada was simply the result of the reality that if anything was going to be done in this field then the Americans were going to have to take the lead. Indeed, since the first head of the U.S. Section of the PJBD, Fiorello LaGuardia, stated that Canada was the little brother in the relationship, it can be argued that sometimes the older brother needs to take charge. But notwithstanding this unequal and seemingly subordinate relationship, the U.S. was quite willing to make concessions to address Canadian concerns such as the granting preferential treatment to Canadian companies in the awarding of contracts during the development of the Pinetree and DEW Lines. Finally, Americans made relatively few demands on Canada, especially when compared to their Western European allies. Consequently, Canada’s experience with air defence offers a very important case study for today’s world because in the 1950s, Canada found a way to address the security concerns of the United States and to deal with the uncertainty caused by multiple conceptions of the national interest. The experience of the development of this air defence system thus offer lessons on how both countries can better manage this important relationship in a post-September 11th world.

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50 Goette, 13. LaGuardia’s exact quote was that Canada had a “pride and little brother attitude.”
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

One of the most important tasks of an historian is to engage the existing scholarly literature. This review will thus examine the scholarship on the development of the North American air defence system in the 1950s. I will begin by detailing a number of factors that have hampered the development of this field including the difficulties accessing government documents, the small number of Canadian air force historians, the limited sources on senior Canadian military officers and the minimal interest that U.S. scholars
have had continental defence. Then, I will discuss the handful of works from the Canadian perspective that addressed this issue in detail. I have started with these books and articles rather than the more general literature on the Canada-U.S. relationship and Canadian foreign policy because these more specific works form the core of what scholars understand about this air defence system in the 1940s and 1950s. In contrast, most of these more general studies only dealt with this issue in passing and thus are only a peripheral importance to this historiography. After scrutinizing these important works as well as some of the other books and articles that touched on the emergence of these defences, I will shift to the scholarship on Canada-U.S. defence co-operation during and immediately after the Second World War. I will conclude this section with a brief discussion of the general historiography on the Canada-U.S. relationship and Canadian foreign and defence policy.

I will then examine the handful of works that presented the American perspective on these air defences in this period. Again, I believe that it is important to focus on these books, since most of the literature that discusses U.S. foreign and defence policy during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations only briefly touches on continental air defence. I will also examine the scholarship on U.S. nuclear strategy during the 1940s and 1950s, especially those works that addressed the issue of preemption. This literature review will thus demonstrate that while there are many excellent works on this topic, there are many gaps that exist within the existing scholarship because of the factors discussed, particularly the reality that many documents were not available when these scholars did their research. Therefore, this chapter will conclude by examining the primary sources both published and archival that formed the basis of this dissertation.
The Literature on Continental Air Defence in the Early Cold War Period

Despite the significance of Canada’s involvement in the emergence of the North American air defence system in the 1950s, the scholarly literature on this topic is somewhat limited. One major reason was that the fourth volume of the official history of the RCAF, which was to have dealt with the post-war period, was a victim of the budget cuts of the 1990s and still has to be written. This cancellation not only has left a significant gap in the historiography, but as Richard Goette has pointed out, it meant that none of the background narratives, which the work would have been based on, were completed.\(^1\) Another factor limiting the development of this field was the difficulty in gaining access to American and Canadian classified documents from the 1950s. In general, it was only after the Cold War that many files have become available. Indeed, important resources such as the Raymont Collection at the Directorate of History and Heritage (DHH) at the Department of National Defence (DND), which will be discussed later in the chapter, only started to be opened after 1990.\(^2\) Moreover, security restrictions were often applied to collections of private papers of senior American and Canadian politicians and officials located at government archives. These issues have not only discouraged scholars from examining this field of history, but have generally limited those works that have been written. Thus, this lack of documents has meant that there are many gaps in the literature that need to be filled.

\(^1\) Goette, *Canada, the United States*, 33.
The small number of historians working in Canada on air force history has further
hampered the development of this field. This lack of scholarship is partially due to the
Canadian Air Force’s lack of attention to its own history, which was reflected in the fact
that plans for a ten volume Official History of the RCAF in the immediate post-war
period was shelved. It was only after the unification of the Canadian Armed Forces in
1968 when the new integrated history section under C.P. Stacey began to write the three
volume RCAF history previously discussed.³ This lack of interest of the Air Force in its
own history was not helped by the elimination of the RCAF Staff College during
unification. Fortunately this situation is beginning to change with the creation of the
Canadian Forces Aerospace Warfare Centre (CFAWC) and the emergence of a number of
young scholars such as Richard Goette. However, what was this reality had meant that
many of the books that have been written in this field including Brereton Greenhous and
Hugh A. Holliday’s *Canada's Air Forces, 1914-1999, The Armed Forces of Canada,
1867-1967: A Record of Achievement* by Donald Goodspeed and *A History of Air
Defence in Canada 1948-1997* by Don Nicks, John Bradley and Chris Charland, have
been written for a popular audience.⁴ These works are useful for providing an
introduction to this subject. Indeed, Stacey noted that Goodspeed’s work “was in great
part a picture book, very handsomely produced, but it also contains more solid history
than some reviewers were disposed to admit.”⁵ However, these works are primarily
descriptive in nature, and do not contain the kind of scholarly analysis that is needed.

⁴ Brereton Greenhous and Hugh A. Halliday, *Canada's Air Forces, 1914-1999* (Ottawa : Department of
Goodspeed (Ottawa : Directorate of History, Canadian Forces Headquarters, 1967); Don Nicks, John
Group, 1997).
⁵ Stacey, *A Date with History*, 256.
Furthermore, the focus of many writers on the controversy over the CF 105 Avro Arrow has distracted attention from other issues that the RCAF faced in the 1950s.6

This field, as well as Canadian military history in general, has further suffered from a lack of sources on senior Canadian military leaders of the post-war period including Air Marshals such as Wilf Curtis and Roy Slemon and Generals like Charles Foulkes. These men not only did not write memoirs, but they either did not leave any significant collections of private papers or these files have previously not been available to historians.7 The result is that has only been a limited amount of scholarship done on these figures.8 It also has meant that other than for classified official records and some short articles by Foulkes, most of the firsthand accounts available to historians have come from members of St. Laurent’s Cabinet such as Lester Pearson and from officials from the Department of External Affairs.9 This fact is particularly problematic, since many of these figures, such as George Ignatieff, were often unsympathetic to the views of their

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7 For example, the current files on Curtis are mostly about his post-military career although additional files have recently been made available to researchers. One officer who did write memoirs was Lieutenant-General Howard Graham, *Citizen and Soldier* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987).


military counterparts. All these factors have meant that the full story of the development of Canadian foreign and defence policy has not been told. Fortunately, this situation is beginning to change with Randy Wakeham’s proposed biography on Air Marshal Curtis.

Another issue is that many of the works in this field such as James Minifie’s *Peacemaker or Powder-Monkey*, Lewis Hertzman, John W. Warnock and Thomas A. Hockin’s *Alliances and Illusions: Canada and the NATO-NORAD Question*, Warnock’s *Partner to Behemoth: The Military Policy of a Satellite Canada* and Colin Gray’s *Canadian Defence Priorities: A Question of Relevance* were written in order to advocate changes in Canada’s policies rather as works of history. In addition, these works were written before the authors had access to the relevant documentation and were usually written from a strongly nationalist perspective that was extremely critical of U.S. foreign policy. Consequently, they are of limited use to scholars.

One final factor that hampered the development of this field was the limited interest in continental defence and in the Canada-U.S. defence relationship on the part of American historians and analysts. Besides the period surrounding the development of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) in the 1980s, for the most part these scholars have paid little attention to these defences. This reality is a reflection of the general lack of

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12 Whitaker and Marcuse, *Cold War Canada*.
importance that Canada and continental defence had in American Cold War strategy as
caswell as the limited interest in the United States about its defence relationship with
Canada.

Therefore, as a result of all these factors there are only a handful of scholarly
books and articles that have effectively addressed this topic. The most important is *No
Boundaries Upstairs: The United States and the Origins of North American Air Defence,
of British Columbia Press, 1987).} Jockel is a Professor of Political Science at St. Lawrence
University in Canton, New York and is one of the leading scholars in the field of Canada-
U.S. relations. This work, which was published in 1987, examined Canada’s role in the
development of the North American air defence system and the creation of the NORAD.
It is based on extensive primary research, including numerous documents obtained under
the U.S. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).\footnote{Other works from Jockel include “Old
Fears and New: Canadian and North American Air Defense,” In *Strategic Air Defense*,
ed. Stephen J. Cimbala (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc, 1989) and
“The Military Establishments and the Creation of NORAD,” *American Review of
Canadian Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 3: 1-16. He is also the author of *Canada in NORAD
However, there were many important
files that were unavailable when Jockel wrote *No Boundaries Upstairs* that have since
been declassified. Indeed, this dissertation will use these newly declassified sources to
build on Jockel’s account while discussing parts of this story that he could not with the
documents available. Such issues include the full story of the emergence of PJBD
Recommendation 53/1 and many of the policy discussions surrounding the DEW Line
both in Washington and in Ottawa, particularly in 1954 and 1955. Moreover, this thesis
will focus on the years leading up to the creation of NORAD and will examine certain
developments that Jockel did not, including PJBD Recommendation 51/3.
Another important work is the recently completed Ph.D. dissertation by my colleague from the Queen’s History Department, Richard Goette, entitled *Canada, the United States and the Command and Control of Air Forces for Continental Air Defence from Ogdensburg to NORAD, 1940-1957*. Goette’s work examines the Canada-U.S. defence relationship, primarily focusing on how issues of command and control were addressed by the American and Canadian armed forces during the Second World War and the early years of the Cold War. There is some overlap with my study, namely with his discussion of post-war joint defence plans and PJBD Recommendations 51/4, 51/6 and 53/1. However, Goette’s thesis focuses on the “functional” aspects of this issue rather than the “political” ones. His thesis, thus, did not discuss the diplomatic and political deliberations over these air defence measures. Instead, he provides a detailed examination of the development of command and control arrangements in the Canada-U.S. defence relationship that my dissertation does not address.

Another important scholar in this literature is James Eayrs with his *In Defence of Canada* series most notably *Volume 3 Peacemaking and Deterrence* and *Volume 4 Growing Up Allied*.¹⁶ These works represent one of the first attempts to examine the development of post-war Canadian defence policy from a historical perspective. In these two books, Eayrs examines the development of the RCAF in the late 1940s and the Canadian government’s policy on air defence in the 1940s and the 1950s. He also has many good insights into Canadian civil–military relations, although due to the nature of this work there is little coverage of policy developments in Washington. In fact, he generally exaggerates the level of interest that the U.S. government and armed forces had

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in its defence ties with Canada. These works are also somewhat dated because Eayrs did not have access to many government documents when he researched this work in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Moreover, Eayrs focused primarily on the early period of the development of the Canadian continental defence policy in the 1940s rather than what occurred later in the 1950s. Nevertheless, these works contain numerous insights into Canadian policy that are still valuable today.

David Cox’s Canada and NORAD, 1958-1978: A Cautionary Retrospective is another useful work. While he is a little overly suspicious of American policy towards Canada, he still makes an important observation about the link between continental air defence and U.S. nuclear war fighting capabilities in the 1950s. Indeed, this thesis will build upon Cox’s argument, and demonstrate that there was such a connection, at least from 1953 to 1955 during the Eisenhower administration.

There are a number of other scholars that have contributed to this field in the form of summary essays meant to introduce the reader to this subject. One example is the retired Canadian defence scientist, George Lindsey’s “Canada-US Defense Relations in the Cold War.” While such works do offer some interesting insights, they simply do not have the scope to provide for a detailed analysis of the development of this air defence system. Other academics have also discussed the development of the North American air defence system in some detail in books on other subjects. Notable examples include Andrew Richter’s Avoiding Armageddon: Canadian Military Strategy and Nuclear Weapons, 1950-63, Stephane Roussel’s, The North American Democratic Peace Absence

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17 Cox, Canada and NORAD.
of War and Security Institution Building in Canada-US Relations, 1867-1958, R.D. Cuff and J.L. Granatstein’s *Ties that Bind: Canadian-American Relations in Wartime: From the Great War to the Cold War*, Sean Maloney’s *Learning to Love the Bomb: Canada’s Nuclear Weapons During the Cold War* and David Bercusson’s biography of Brooke Claxton.\(^\text{19}\) Again, although these works provide a valuable perspective, because they addressed this area in works that were focused on other subjects, their usefulness to the literature on the development of the North American air defence system is limited.

Finally, there is a small but growing interest on the development and operation of the DEW Line. The leading historian in this field is P. Whitney Lackenbauer, and while he is yet to have completed a book on the DEW Line, he has presented a number of papers on the subject.\(^\text{20}\)

### The Literature on the Canada-U.S. Defence Relationship

While the focus of this dissertation is on the development of the North American air defence system in the 1950s, Chapter 3 and 4 do contribute to the historiography on Canada-U.S. defence co-operation during the Second World War and the immediate post-

Lindsey’s unwillingness to disclose his extensive knowledge of the Canada-U.S. defence relationship. Ultimately, he was man “who knew it all and would not tell.”


war period. Many works have been written on this subject including Colonel Stanley Dzubian’s *Military Relations Between Canada and the United States, 1939-1945*. This book, which was originally a Ph.D. thesis written at Columbia University, was published as a volume of the U.S. Army’s official history of the Second World War in 1959. While it is dated and has an inherent bias towards the American perspective because it was written by a U.S. Army officer, it does contain many insights due to the author’s experience in Canada-U.S. defence planning and his ability to gain extensive access to the pertinent American military files on the subject. Indeed, Dzubian suggested some new approaches to this topic especially on how to address the issue of the U.S. Army in the Canadian Northwest during the Second World War. However, not surprisingly, Canadian scholars have taken the lead in this field.

One of the best examples is Galen Perras’ *Roosevelt and the Origins of the Canadian-American Security Alliance, 1933-1945: Necessary But Not Necessary Enough*. Perras provides a good introduction not only to the emergence of this defence relationship, but the political and diplomatic aspects that made it possible, particularly the close ties between President Franklin Roosevelt and Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King. Another excellent study is K. S. Coates and W. R. Morrison’s *The Alaska Highway in World War II: The U.S. Army of Occupation in Canada’s Northwest*. This book is an indispensable guide to understanding the various projects undertaken in

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22 Stacey felt that Dzubian had gained access to records that would have not been available to an officer in the Canadian military working on a similar project. Stacey later suggested to the Canadian government that he should be allowed to write an article on the workings of the PJBD in the Second World War to stave off criticism in Canada that the first work on this subject was an American Ph.D. thesis. This article was duly written and published as C.P. Stacey, “The Canadian-American Permanent Joint Board on Defence, 1940-1945,” *International Journal* (Spring 1954); Stacey, *A Date with History*, 222, 281 Note 2; Goette, *Canada and the United States*, 41.
the Canadian Northwest by the Americans in the Second World War, and offers a sensible account of these developments. Both David Bercusson’s “Continental Defense and Arctic Sovereignty, 1945-50: Solving the Canadian Dilemma,” and P. Whitney Lackenbauer’s “Right and Honourable: Mackenzie King, Canadian-American Bilateral Relations, and Canadian Sovereignty in the Northwest, 1943-1948,” are also very useful studies. They both examined how Canada dealt with the U.S. military presence in the Northwest, particularly in the post-war period when Canadian ministers and officials had to balance this presence with the protection of Canadian sovereignty. In addition, they address how officials in both countries addressed the misunderstandings created by the Joint Appreciation in mid-1946. One other work that should be noted is Shelagh Grant’s *Sovereignty or Security: Government Policy in the Canadian North, 1936-1950*. It features excellent primary research on this issue both during and after the Second World War.23 Most of the studies on this topic, nevertheless, tended to overstate the level of interest that the United States had in Canada, and exaggerate the problem posed by the American military presence in the Canadian North during and after the war. Grant’s work is especially guilty of being too suspicious of American policy. As a result, there is a need

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for a more nuanced account of this relationship, which this dissertation will seek to provide.

There are other important books and articles that Canada-U.S. defence relationship that should be noted including Richard A. Preston’s *The Defence of the Undefended Border: Planning for War in North America, 1867-1939*. Preston provides an excellent introduction to both U.S. and Canadian military planning before the Second World War and the origins of this defence relationship.24 Furthermore, some of these works examine the PJBD including William R. Willoughby’s *The Joint Organizations of Canada and the United States*.25 Willoughby provides an excellent introduction to both the history and functions of the PJBD, and a very sensible discussion about joint defence planning. Christopher Conliffe’s “The Permanent Joint Board on Defense, 1940-1988” and David Pierce Beatty’s Ph.D. thesis are also useful.26 Conliffe provides an excellent short introduction of the history of the PJBD while Beatty offered useful insights on its internal workings in the 1940s and 1950s because he was able to interview many officials and military officers who had served on the Board in that period. Another excellent work is Jon McLin’s *Canada’s Changing Defense Policy, 1957 – 1963 The Problems of a Middle Power in Alliance*. Although it was published in 1967, McLin’s work is still valuable because it was one of the few studies that attempted to address the question of

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how Canadian policy makers determined what policies served the national interest.\textsuperscript{27}

Lastly, there is an extensive literature on NORAD and its implications for Canada. Aside from Jockel and Cox’s studies, these works include Ann Denholm Crosby’s \textit{Dilemmas in Defence Decision-Making Constructing Canada’s Role in NORAD, 1958-96}.\textsuperscript{28}

\textbf{The General Literature}

The Canada-U.S. relationship and Canadian foreign policy has been the subject of an extensive scholarship, which is too large to outline here. One of the more interesting works is John W. Holmes’ \textit{Life with Uncle: The Canadian-American Relationship}.\textsuperscript{29} This book, which was derived from a series of lectures given at Trinity College, University of Toronto, is particularly useful. He provides a keen insight into policy developments in Ottawa during the 1940s and 1950s because of his experience as an official in the Department of External Affairs during that period. Additional works of note include Norman Hillmer and J.L. Granatstein \textit{For Better or for Worse Canada and the United States into the Twenty-First Century} and Robert Bothwell’s \textit{Canada and the United States: The Politics of Partnership}, Holmes’ \textit{The Shaping of Peace: Canada and the

\textsuperscript{27} Jon B. McLin, \textit{Canada's Changing Defense Policy, 1957-1963: The Problems of a Middle Power in Alliance} (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1967). It is also valuable because he was given access to certain classified government documents very soon after Diefenbaker fell from power.


\textsuperscript{29} John W. Holmes, \textit{Life with Uncle: The Canadian-American Relationship} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981).
Search for World Order 1943-1957, Volumes 1 and 2 and Bothwell’s Alliance and Illusion Canada and the World 1945 to 1984.\textsuperscript{30} However, these volumes contribution to the literature on North American air defence is hampered by their limited coverage of this issue. Moreover, their discussion of Canadian foreign policy is heavily influenced by the “Golden Age” paradigm, in which Pearson and the Department of External Affairs are seen as men bravely serving the Canadian national interest (which is never really defined) while doing good. This view poses problems because it means that these works portrayals of Canadian officials are often not realistic. Indeed, the fact that political considerations and nationalist sentiments influenced Pearson and External Affairs is not addressed in any depth.

Finally, it should be noted that there is a literature on the development of Canadian defence policy in the post-war period that is much smaller due to the focus of academics on Canadian foreign policy as well as the lack primary sources on senior Canadian military officers previously discussed. For instance, Dan Middlemiss and J.J. Sokolsky’s \textit{Canadian Defence: Decisions and Determinants}, argues that Canadian officials did have choices in their relationship with the U.S. Moreover, Douglas Bland’s \textit{Chiefs of Defence: Government and The Unified Command of the Canadian Armed Forces}.

Forces provides a useful introduction to Charles Foulkes tenure as Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee.\textsuperscript{31}

The American Perspective

There are a number of books that have examined this air defence system that have been written by American scholars. While these studies are limited in number and, with the exception of Jockel’s works, focus almost exclusively on developments in the United States, they are still very useful. One of the most important is Samuel P. Huntington’s The Common Defense: Strategic Programs in National Politics.\textsuperscript{32} Although Huntington’s book was written in 1961, it has great value, as he was able through interviews to gain access to many of the internal policy debates on air defence in Washington in the early-to-mid 1950s. In fact, Huntington’s work was the first real attempt to study the development of this system. A Hollow Threat: Strategic Air Power and Containment Before Korea by Harry Borowski is another important study.\textsuperscript{33} Although the focus of this work was on the development of the Strategic Air Command (SAC), it does provide an interesting analysis of U.S. air defence policy up to the beginning of the Korean War. However, the best of these works is Kenneth Schaffel’s The Emerging Shield: The Air Force and the Evolution of Continental Air Defense 1945-1960.\textsuperscript{34} This is the USAF’s official history of America’s air defences both during and after the Second World War.


Schaffel’s work is very good although it tends to overstate the importance the air defence had in U.S. strategy in the 1950s. Moreover, only one of its chapters discusses Canada in any detail, and it focused on the creation of NORAD. Nevertheless, Schaffel’s study provides an excellent background of the American air defence policy in this period.

Other examples of this perspective include David Goldfischer’s *The Best Defense: Policy Alternatives for U.S. Nuclear Strategy from the 1950s to the 1990s*, Jack H. Nunn’s *The Soviet First Strike Threat: The U.S. Perspective* and Valarie L. Adams’ *Eisenhower’s Fine Group of Fellows: Crafting a National Security Policy to Uphold the Great Equation*. However, the fact that these works only discussed continental air defence as part of larger arguments, when combined with their lack of attention to Canadian developments, limits their contribution to the literature on the North American air defence system. Moreover, this lack of interest in Canada led to some weaknesses in their arguments. For example, Adams’ discussion of American policy and the emergence of the DEW Line in 1953 would have been greatly improved by including Canadian developments in her analysis. It should be noted that this perspective has been supplemented recently by additional works including *Continental Defense in the*

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Eisenhower Era: Nuclear Antiaircraft Arms and the Cold War by Christopher J. Bright. He studies the development and deployment of nuclear-tipped air defence weapons by the U.S. military and issues such as the pre-delegation of authority to American air defence commanders to use these weapons. Moreover, the U.S. Army’s Center for Military History has released a two-volume history of strategic and ballistic missile defences from 1945 to 1972.\(^{37}\)

One other work that should be mentioned is Melvin Conant’s *The Long Polar Watch: Canada and the Defense of North America*.\(^{38}\) While it is quite dated and the author did not have access to archival documents when he wrote the book for the U.S. Council on Foreign Relations in the early 1960s, Conant provides interesting insights on the Canada-U.S. relationship because of his extensive knowledge of Canada. Indeed, the Canadian scholar, Peyton Lyon, paid tribute to this work when he asserted that Conant sought to explain “the military facts of life, patiently and authoritatively, to his Canadian friends,” while “appealing to his fellow Americans for greater understanding and tact in dealings with their sensitive neighbors to the north.”\(^{39}\)

**The Scholarship on U.S. Nuclear Strategy**


There is also an extensive scholarship on U.S. national security policy during the
presidencies of Harry Truman and Dwight Eisenhower. This literature is too vast to
discuss here and ultimately generally pays little attention to the issue of continental air
defence because of the limited interest in continental air defence and the Canada-U.S.
relationship in the American academic community. Two works that should be mentioned
are Melvin P. Leffler’s *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, The Truman
Administration, and the Cold War* and Robert Bowie and Richard Immerman’s *Waging
Peace, How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy*. Both these works
provide an excellent introduction to both the foreign and defence policies of these
presidents and how their administrations developed policy. Nevertheless, one part of this
literature that needs to be discussed in some detail is the scholarship on U.S. nuclear
strategy in the 1940s and 1950s.

These works emerged in the early 1980s because of the availability of some
declassified U.S. government files as well as the willingness of certain former U.S.
officials and military officers to be interviewed. They are particularly valuable because
they discuss the strategic context in which these administrations, particularly
Eisenhower’s, made their policy decisions on continental air defence. This reality is all
the more important, since this dissertation argues that Eisenhower’s interest in preempting
a Soviet first strike influenced his air defence policies in the mid-1950s. Some of the key
works include Fred Kaplan’s *The Wizard’s of Armageddon*, Richard K Betts’ “A Nuclear
Golden Age? The Balance Before Parity,” Marc Trachtenberg’s *History and Strategy*,
Scott Sagan’s *Moving Targets: Nuclear Strategy and National Security*, David Alan

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Rosenberg’s “The Origins of Overkill: Nuclear Weapons and American Strategy, 1945-1960,” and Rosenberg and W. B. Moore’s “‘Smoking Radiating Ruin at the End of Two Hours’ Documents on American Plans for Nuclear War with the Soviet Union, 1954-55.” They all shed light on this grey area of U.S. policy during the Eisenhower administration. Gregg Herken’s Counsels of War and Campbell Craig’s Destroying the Village: Eisenhower and Thermonuclear War also provide interesting perspectives. Herken’s work is valuable, as it sheds light on attempts by certain American scientists and policy makers to develop a defensive strategy in the early 1950s instead of relying solely on the U.S. nuclear deterrent. In addition, Craig’s work is significant because of his contention that Eisenhower had concluded by 1955 that a general nuclear war with the Soviet Union would only bring disaster to the United States. Craig then argued that Eisenhower shaped his policies around avoiding such a conflict for the rest of his presidency.

41 Rosenberg and Moore, "Smoking Radiating Ruin at the End of Two Hours," 13.
43 It should be noted that the Bush administration’s interest in preventative war and preemptive strikes after the September 11 terrorist attacks led to a surge of studies that discussed preemption under Truman and Eisenhower. One such example is Lyle Goldstein, Preventative Attack and Weapons of Mass Destruction (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).
Primary Source Research:

Published Sources

While this dissertation sought to engage the existing secondary literature, most of its analysis was based on an examination of various primary sources. Some of these resources were published works including the *Mackenzie King Record*[^44] and the memoirs of senior American and Canadian politicians, officials and military officers such as Hugh Keenleyside, Maurice Pope, Arnold Heeney, Vincent Massey, Paul Nitze, James Killian, Robert Murphy and Omar Bradley.[^45] Other sources included various official histories. Some of these works such as Schaffel’s, Dzubian’s and *Ideas, Concepts, Doctrine: Basic Thinking in the United States Air Force 1907-1960 Vol. 1* by Robert Futrell were released to the public, but others were internal histories that were only later declassified.[^46] They include studies from the North American Air Defence Command (NORAD) and the RCAF’s Air Defence Command (ADC).[^47] Another example is the two-volume official history of the Department of External Affairs from 1909 to 1968.[^48]

[^44]: The *Mackenzie King Record* is the edited version of King’s private diaries. One example of this series was J.L. Pickerskill, *The Mackenzie King Record Vol. 1 1939-1944* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960).


The most important of these published sources are collections of documents from the U.S. and Canadian governments namely the *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS) series published by the State Department and *Documents of Canadian External Relations* (DCER) released by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). These volumes not only included many useful documents, but also helped in finding many important files in government collections.

**Archival Sources**

Indeed, the majority of primary sources utilized for this project were found in archives. These documents include declassified government files from the Canadian and American governments and militaries, as well as the private papers of important personalities of the period. In Canada, the main locations for these files are Library and Archives Canada (LAC) and DHH. However, other smaller institutions including the archives at Queen’s University and Trinity College, University of Toronto were utilized. These sources included documents from the Department of National Defence, the Department of External Affairs, and the RCAF as well as the minutes of meetings of the Cabinet Defence Committee, and the Chiefs of Staff Committee. This project also used numerous reports prepared in this period. One notable example was a series of short studies of Canada’s Foreign Relations from 1946 to 1952 written by the historian F.W.

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Study No. 126 (Montgomery, Alabama, USAF Historical Division Research Studies Institute Air University, 1954).

Soward for the Department of External Affairs.\footnote{Sowards’ studies were fairly widely distributed in the Department of External Affairs and can be found in many different files under RG 25 and in personal collections. One example is F.H. Soward, \textit{Canadian External Policy 1946-1952}, MG 31 E 46 Escott Reid Fonds, Vol. 7, File 16, LAC.} Supplemented these official collections were the private papers of numerous senior ministers and officials such as General (Retired) Andrew McNaughton, Lester B. Pearson, Brooke Claxton, Paul Martin Sr., C.D. Howe, R.A. MacKay and Douglas LePan. These collections were often particularly valuable, since they included documents such as the minutes of certain meetings of the PJBD that would not have been available otherwise.

There are two particularly valuable and unique sets of documents at DHH that deserve mention. The first is the Raymont Collection, which covers the activities of the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee and the Office of the Chief of the Defence Staff from 1944 until 1972. It contains a variety of files from the Chiefs of Staff Committee, the Cabinet Defence Committee and Foulkes’ official correspondence from 1952 to 1956 as well as numerous miscellaneous studies including Raymont’s study on the development of Canadian defence policy from 1945 to 1964.\footnote{Raymont’s study can be found in 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 137, File 3288 The Formulation of Canadian Defence Policy, 1945-1964, DHH.} The other set of documents is the Joint Staff Fonds, which includes documents from the Chief of the Air Staff, the Chiefs of Staff Committee, the Joint Planning Committee and the Canada-United States Military Cooperation Committee.\footnote{According to the finding aid “the exact provenance of this fond remains unknown, though its contents point to it originating with the Joint Staff. The fond constitutes only a portion of the original materials thought to have been created by the Joint Staff and kept in the same registry at National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ);” Dianne Therrien, \textit{Finding Aid to the Joint Staff Fonds} (Ottawa: Directorate of History and Heritage, 2002), 3-4.} These collections are highly important because they contains many files that otherwise would not have been available or that would have been scattered throughout the DHH collections. In addition, the archivists at
DHH have taken the initiative in declassifying many of these files, which makes them more accessible for scholarly research.

The other major archives for this project are located in the United States and are the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) II at College Park, Maryland, the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library in Independence, Missouri and Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library in Abeline, Kansas. From these institutions, this dissertation utilized documents from the U.S. State Department, the USAF, the JCS and the National Security Council. It also accessed documents from Truman’s and Eisenhower’s presidential collections as well as the private papers of several important officials including Stuart Symington, Dean Acheson, and John Foster Dulles.

Lastly, this dissertation benefited from a number already existing Oral History projects. Some of these interviews were conducted by Reginald Roy for his biography of General George Pearkes and are located at both the LAC and the University of Victoria archives.\(^{52}\) Another one is the collection produced by Peter Stursberg for his works on John Diefenbaker and Lester Pearson. These interviews now form part of the Peter Stursberg papers, which are located at the LAC.\(^{53}\)

**Conclusion**

While the scholarship on the development of this air defence system has been hampered many factors including the lack of air force historians in Canada, the restricted

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availability of classified documents, the minimal resources on senior Canadian military officers and the limited interest by U.S. scholars in this subject, books and articles have still emerged. They include Jockel’s *No Boundaries Upstairs* as well as ones by Goette, Eayrs and Cox and an extensive scholarship on the Canada-U.S. defence relationship both during and after the Second World War. There are also some works that discussed air defence policy in the 1950s from the American perspective in addition to an extensive historiography on U.S. nuclear strategy during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations. Nevertheless, the availability of newly declassified government documents from Canadian and American archives as well as the opening of numerous collections of private papers of senior Canadian and U.S. politicians and officials has meant that there is an opportunity to make an original contribution to this scholarly literature. Indeed, this dissertation will build on the solid foundation provided by Huntington, Eayrs, Jockel, Cox and Schaffel while discussing aspects of the development of this air defence system that they could not with the sources available to them. For example, these declassified files will provide a source base for an examination of how different conceptions of the national interest within the Canadian state and armed forces influenced their approaches to air defence. Moreover, these documents will allow for a more detailed understanding of the emergence of these defences—from why the USAF sought an exchange of notes with the Pinetree Line to the creation of PJBD Recommendation 53/1 to the development of the DEW Line. Finally, they provide a more complete picture of the creation of air defence policy in the United States during the Truman and Eisenhower administration. Ultimately, through an examination of these previously unexamined archival sources, American and Canadian decision making concerning continental air defence will be placed in their proper political and strategic
context and lessons will be learned about how the relationship can be improved in the future.

Chapter 3: The Canada-U.S. Defence Relationship to 1945

Introduction

In 1961, during an official visit to Ottawa, President John F. Kennedy asserted to the House of Commons that "Geography has made us neighbors. History has made us friends." While this sentiment from the President was probably genuine, the actual development of this relationship was much more convoluted. Indeed, from the War of 1812 to the American Civil War to the Alaska Boundary Dispute in the early 20th
Century, relations between the two countries were often contentious; however, it should be emphasized that all these difficulties were resolved peacefully. In fact, Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier even stated in the early 1900s that Canada did not take its militia seriously because the Monroe Doctrine ensured its security.²

This situation prevailed until 1917 when the United States entered the First World War. During this conflict, both countries became allies for the first time, but this cooperation was short lived, and with the armistice, they reverted to their pre-war patterns of behaviour. During the inter-war period, military officers in both capitals even planned for a war between the British Empire and the United States, although each side recognized that such a conflict was neither desirable nor likely.³ This situation only changed with the rise of the threat from Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan and the development of the close personal relationship between President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King. However, it would not be until the fall of France in 1940 that a defence relationship really emerged with the creation of the PJBD.

For the most part this relationship worked well although there were two areas that were particularly problematic. The first issue emerged because of the desire of certain American military officers to have command and control authority over the Canadian military units under the doctrine of “unity of command.” The other was the rest of the U.S. military presence in the Canadian Northwest from 1942 to 1945. This situation did

represent a problem for the Canadian government, but was not the crisis that some Canadian historians usually represent it. Indeed, many scholars not only exaggerate American interest in this region, but they overstate the response of the Canadian government when they assert that Canada acted with “toughness and skill to protect the national interest” in the North. Instead, the reality was that this problem was resolved through a combination of the limited steps that the Canadian government took in this period and the fact that the senior civilian and military leadership in Washington had little interest in the Canadian Northwest. In fact, newly found evidence shows that even the most significant step that Canadian officials took to address this issue, the purchase of the American-built facilities at the end of the war, was motivated by other factors namely the need to reduce Canada’s surplus of U.S. dollars.

The Origins of the Relationship: To 1917

While it is easy to take the Canada-U.S. defence relationship for granted, it is important to remember that up to the early part of the 20th Century, relations between these two countries were problematic. The reason was quite simple: Canada was part of the British Empire, and for most of this period, the Americans and the British were rival powers. Canada was invaded during the American Revolution and numerous times during the War of 1812. These conflicts were followed again by more problems during the

4 Hillmer and Granatstein, For Better or for Worse, 156. One scholar who particularly emphasized the threat to Canadian sovereignty was Shelagh Grant in her work Sovereignty or Security.
American Civil War when the British government dispatched 14,000 troops to Canada in
1861 after two Confederate agents were taken off the British steamer Trent by the U.S.
Navy in international waters. This incident was followed by a raid on St. Albans,
Vermont in 1864 by Confederate agents stationed in Canada, and attacks on British North
America by the Irish Fenian Brotherhood operating from American soil. Another issue
that arose was Unionist anger directed at Britain for allowing the construction of
commerce raiders such as the C.S.S. Alabama for the Confederate States of America,
which even led to suggestions that Canada should be given over as compensation for the
damage caused by such vessels to Northern shipping. John A. Macdonald even
conceived of Confederation as means to prevent the annexation of Britain’s Canadian
colonies by the United States.

The relationship continued to be problematic after 1867. For instance, there was a
war scare over the Venezuela Boundary Dispute in the mid-1890s. Relations were
further strained by the Alaska Boundary Dispute when Canadian territorial claims in
Alaska were rejected, at least partially due to President Theodore Roosevelt's statements
to the British that the U.S. was prepared to go to war over this issue. These incidents, as

5 Norman Hillmer and J.L. Granatstein, *For Better or for Worse*, 1-4; W.G. Hardy, *From Sea Unto Sea
Canada—1850 to 1910 The Road to Nationhood* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1960), 130-1. The
Fenians were a group of Irish Americans who hoped that by conquering British North America, they would
help free Ireland from British rule. For more information see Richard Gwyn, *John A, The Man Who Made

6 Hillmer and Granatstein, *For Better or for Worse*, 1-4.

7 Gwyn, *John A, The Man Who Made Us*, 434. Gwyn concluded that Macdonald even merits the title of
“Canada’s first anti-American,” as he was the first to raise this idea “to the level of his principal political

8 This war scare occurred when the Americans intervened in a boundary dispute between British Guiana
and Venezuela. After an exchange of notes and some threatening rhetoric by President Grover Cleveland,
the British government decided to submit the matter to arbitration. Hillmer and Granatstein, *For Better or
for Worse*, 28-30; Preston, *The Defence of the Undefended Border*, 125, 128. There were also many
disputes over fishing rights throughout this period. For more information see Stewart, *The American
Response to Canada*, 50-52, 86-88.
well as rhetoric about how it was the “Manifest Destiny” of the United States to dominate North America, led to a great deal of wariness in Canada about the Americans particularly in more pro-British circles, which was exploited by the Conservative Party in the 1891 and 1911 elections. The Canadian historian C.P. Stacey even asserted that “for generations … the United States came close to being regarded by Canadians as a ‘natural enemy.’”

It should be noted that the relationship did have its positive aspects in this period. For instance, the Alaska Boundary Dispute was followed by a number of diplomatic agreements that were spearheaded by the American Secretary of State, Elihu Root. These included the creation of the International Joint Commission in 1909 to regulate waterways on both sides of the Canada-U.S. Border. By the turn of the century, most Americans had lost interest in the military conquest in Canada, since they had concluded that Canada would eventually become part of the United States through peaceful means. There was also an informal acceptance in some corners of Canada that the United States was the unofficial guardian of the country. This view was symbolized by Laurier’s comment to Lord Dundonald, the new commander of the Canadian militia, in the early 1900s that Canada does not take its militia very seriously because it was under the protection of the Monroe Doctrine. As a result, although the British Imperial General Staff took an interest in the defence of the Canada-U.S. border, the Canadian

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10 For instance, following the War of 1812, Great Britain and the United States concluded the Rush-Bagot Agreement in 1819 that severely limited the size of the American and British Navies on the Great Lakes. In addition, the Treaty of Washington in 1871 resolved the various disputes from the 1860s. Preston, *The Defence of the Undefended Border, 13-14*; Hillmer and Granatstein, *For Better or for Worse*, 9-13.
government paid little attention to this issue. Nevertheless, the lack of a common defence problem when combined with the reality that the British Empire and the United States were not yet allies, meant that the prospect of a defence relationship between Canada and the United States was still distant.

**The First World War and the Inter War Period: 1917-1939**

This situation changed briefly in April 1917 when the United States entered the First World War. During this conflict, American pilots received training in Canada in the summer while Canadian trainees were instructed in Texas during the winter months. The U.S. Navy dispatched a small number of warships to help with anti-submarine patrols off the Canadian East Coast, and helped the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) establish a small seaplane base there. The Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, even suggested to the Canadian Under-Secretary for External Affairs, Sir Joseph Pope, “the whole of the United States government was of the opinion that the whole coast defence of the continent should be a matter of concern of both countries that we should as it were pool our defensive measures.” While nothing came of this, it is interesting that it was FDR who said this, considering his future role in the development of the Canada-U.S. relationship; however, after the war, the situation reverted to its pre-war condition.

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Without a mutual security problem, there was no need for a defence relationship.\textsuperscript{16} In fact, at least formally, both nations’ militaries regarded each other as potential enemies, although it should be noted that military planning in both countries took place with little political direction, and did not reflect the broader foreign policies of their governments.\textsuperscript{17} The American war plans, with the exception of those against the Japanese, were largely planning exercises and an effort to meet all possible military scenarios. Indeed, the U.S. neither wanted to fight the British Empire nor could see a good reason for doing so.\textsuperscript{18} However, because the U.S. Army was locked out of war planning for a conflict with Japan by the U.S. Navy and was discouraged from planning for operations overseas in Europe by the isolationist sentiment of the time, a war with the British Empire and Canada was the only serious contingency remaining. As the historian Richard Preston has argued “it is some ways easier to study war plans with an unlikely enemy then with a likely one” such as Germany, particularly when that opponent has a strong domestic constituency in the United States.\textsuperscript{19}

The Canadian War Plan, Defence Scheme No. 1 was taken more seriously at least by its creator Colonel Sutherland “Buster” Brown. He envisioned mobile columns attacking the Northern United States in order to delay an American invasion until British

\textsuperscript{16} It should be noted that Billy Mitchell did advocate a defensive alliance against Japan in the 1920s, particularly during his visit to Canada in 1923. For more information see Galen Roger Perras and Katrina E. Kellner, “‘A perfectly logical and sensible thing’: Billy Mitchell Advocates a Canadian-American Aerial Alliance against Japan,” The Journal of Military History, Volume 72, Number 3, (July 2008), 785-823.

\textsuperscript{17} For example, because of this factor, the plans’ lack of logistical planning, and the fact that they were kept secret from American diplomats until just before the start of the Second World War, the Rainbow series of plans were not useful for operations. Thomas Etzold, “American Organization for National Security, 1945-50,” in Containment: Documents on American Policy and Strategy, 1945-1950, ed. Thomas H. Etzold and John Lewis Gaddis (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 2.

help arrived. Nonetheless, despite his best efforts, he was not taken seriously by many in the Canadian military. One Canadian officer of the period, Maurice Pope, stated in an interview that he felt that Brown was “a madman,” who “should have been locked up.” Pope recalled that none of his colleagues at the Royal Military College agreed with Brown's thinking in the 1920s. General Andrew McNaughton, who became the Chief of the General Staff in the late 1920s, also rejected Brown’s ideas, and in 1931, the Canadian military formally discarded Defence Scheme No. 1. McNaughton even ordered that all copies of Defence Scheme No. 1 be burnt.

By the mid-1930s, the situation had begun to change, as the combination of an increasing likelihood of war and technological developments such as improved long range aircraft slowly brought home the reality that North America was no longer as secure as it had been in the past. As well, the excellent personal relationship between Roosevelt and King, along with the improved economic relations between the two countries, opened the door to a joint effort to protect the continent. But complications on both sides of the border meant that little progress was made until the Second World War.

There were many officials in the Roosevelt administration, including the President, who were interested in improved security ties with Canada, but there was also concern from such men as the influential Assistant Secretary of State, Sumner Welles, that such ties would be seen as the beginning of an alliance with the British Empire. This

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is turn would bring the administration into conflict with isolationist elements in Congress and the public who did not want the United States being involved in another major European war. Another problem for the United States was that although the U.S. Navy was in reasonably good shape with a large force of battleships, aircraft carriers and cruisers, the U.S. Army only had a force of 186,000 officers and men, and lacked modern weapons and an up-to-date doctrine. The U.S. Army Air Corps only had a small force of aircraft, many of which were obsolete. With defence commitments in the Philippines, Guam, Wake Island, Hawaii, Alaska, Panama and the continental United States, Canada was low on the American militaries list of priorities.

The policy environment was also complicated across the border in Canada. For example, the traditional close defence ties between Great Britain and Canada meant that the military’s focus was overseas in Europe, not on continental defence. Pope later stated that in the 1930s the Canadian military used “defence of Canada as a cover,” so they could prepare for the sending for an expeditionary force to Europe in the event of another world war. Moreover, many Canadian senior officers, including McNaughton, feared that defence links with the United States could lead to a "potentially dangerous" situation of Canada being caught up in an American war with Japan. Finally, the Canadian forces are using the Canada First Defence Strategy as cover to purchase hardware such as the C-17 transport, the Leopard 2 Main Battle Tank and the Joint Support Ship that will only be really useful in expeditionary operations.

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23 In 1935, Canada and the United States signed a trade agreement that included the reduction of tariffs on a number of products. Hillmer and Granatstein, Empire to Umpire, 129-30.
25 Ibid, 46.
26 Hillmer, Interview with General Maurice Pope, 1. This situation is not that different from today, as the Canadian Forces are using the Canada First Defence Strategy as cover to purchase hardware such as the C-17 transport, the Leopard 2 Main Battle Tank and the Joint Support Ship that will only be really useful in expeditionary operations.
27 Perras, Stepping Stones to Nowhere, 27. According to Pope, it was well understood within the Canadian military that the idea of preserving Canadian neutrality in a case of an American conflict with Japan was absurd, and in his mind such plans only existed to obtain resources for fighting in Europe. Pope estimated that Canadian neutrality would be violated within 30 hours of the outbreak of hostilities between Japan and the United States. This was in response to an assessment by General McNaughton that this event would occur within 30 days of the beginning of such a conflict. Pope, Soldiers and Politicians, 91.
military was struggling to cope with a period in which defence was a dirty word and their influence on policy was limited.\(^{28}\) The situation was further complicated by the position of the Department of External Affairs. Under the leadership of Under Secretary Skelton, the Department opposed any substantive efforts to conduct imperial defence planning with Britain;\(^{29}\) however, he and other officials within the department treated defence ties with the United States differently. An American official at the time noted that Skelton was "a man who has always been a friend of the United States and an advocate of more confident relations with us."\(^{30}\) Skelton and the department did not favour the creation of a military alliance with the United States, but they were supportive of staff talks and improved defence co-operation. He even stated in the late 1930s that Canada should put its "defence programme on a more realistic North American basis."\(^{31}\) As a result, the Canadian military and External Affairs tended to disagree about this issue. One example was an American request to send a group of B-10 bombers over Canadian territory to Alaska in 1934. While McNaughton opposed giving permission, as he feared that it would lead to a

\(^{28}\) Hillmer, *Interview with General Maurice Pope*, 1.

\(^{29}\) There are many different opinions about Skelton’s feelings towards the British. Norman Hillmer has argued that Skelton was more pro-Canadian than anti-British, and that Skelton’s “aim was national self-determination, the unfettered control by Canadians of their own destiny. His great concern, one shared with Bourassa and a new generation of English-Canadian nationalists, was that the emotional pull of the British connection clouded reason and hindered the development of a distinctive national sentiment; what was more, it might involve the country in a big war which would emphasize national difficulties rather than national strengths.” Norman Hillmer, *The Canadian Diplomatic Tradition,* In *Towards a New World Readings in the History of Canadian Foreign Policy*, ed. J.L. Granatstein (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1992), 13-14. However, Pope, who knew Skelton well, concluded that Skelton was “southern Irishman,” who strongly disliked England. Hillmer, *Interview with General Maurice Pope*, 1.


precedent that would make it difficult for Canada to remain neutral in a conflict between the United States and Japan, Skelton disagreed and the request was approved.\textsuperscript{32}

Another influence on policy was the position of the King government. While the Prime Minister had very good personal relations with Roosevelt, he still feared that Canada would lose its independence if it allied itself too closely with America.\textsuperscript{33} It was also likely that he was concerned that any defence agreement with the United States would erode his support with more pro-British Canadians. Indeed, King was a very cautious man who spent most of his career maintaining his centrist political position. The historian Adrian Preston has argued that King “remained in power ... on the basis of past associations (e.g. Sir Wilfrid Laurier); an uncommon grasp of the machinery and potentialities of party politics; and a very real sense of power manipulation.”\textsuperscript{34} Even his official biographer, noted that in “King’s tactics enabled him to secure and retain office – the indispensable first step. But King too frequently, stopped right there; and because he was reluctant to press on and try to realize some independent conception of the national interest, his policies slipped into the mire of pure expediency.”\textsuperscript{35} Ultimately, as James Eayrs asserted, for King the “welfare of the Liberal Party, welfare of the nation, were one and indivisible.”\textsuperscript{36} King was further preoccupied with the problem of Canadian rearmament and keeping the support of the French Canadian members of his party while

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid, 24. Another disagreement was on the nature of military planning. Skelton believed that it should only take place after the government had proposed “a scheme of policy and liabilities.” However, Preston argues that this would have meant that no planning could have taken place, since the governments of the period were not interested in military affairs. In the event, some planning was done. Preston, \textit{The Defence of the Undefended Border}, 228.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid, 36.


the war clouds in Europe grew more and more ominous. Therefore, he was not one to agree to increased defence ties with the Americans unless he believed that it was really necessary.\(^\text{37}\)

As a result of all these factors, little progress was made. There were staff talks in Washington in 1938 between the Chief of the Naval Staff, Commodore Percy Nelles, and the Chief of the Canadian General Staff, Major General E.C. Ashton, and their American counterparts, General Malin Craig, the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, and the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral William Leahy. However, these talks were hampered by the reality that neither party was really interested in making an agreement. What little that did take place was as a result of personal interventions by both Roosevelt and King. In 1936, FDR stated that the United States would not allow Canada to be occupied by a foreign power.\(^\text{38}\) He followed this speech up with another address at Queen’s University in August 1938, when he reaffirmed his commitment that: "The Dominion of Canada is part of the sisterhood of the British Empire. I give you assurance that the people of the U.S. will not stand idly by if the dominion of Canada soil is threatened by another Empire." King then spoke two days later at Woodbridge, Ontario in which he asserted that Canada has obligations to the United States to not allow its territory to be used as a base to threaten the United States. It should be emphasized that the PM added that Canada would improve its defences, “as we can reasonably be expected to make it,” which implied that Canada would be making the decision on how much it would spend to secure its territory.


\(^{37}\) Geoffrey Pearson later noted that for Mackenzie King foreign policy was “strictly subordinate to the domestic situation. If he did anything in the world which helped to create controversy in Canada then it would be forgotten at once.” Geoffrey Pearson, His Memories of Lester Pearson in an Interview with Peter Stursberg in Ottawa, May 22, 1978, MG 31 D 78 Peter Stursberg Fonds, Vol. 31, File 8 Geoffrey Pearson, LAC.

\(^{38}\) Preston, *The Defence of the Undefended Border*, 228.
In addition, he downplayed any talk of a potential military alliance between Canada and the United States. 39

Consequently, little of substance emerged. Roosevelt was interested along with the American military, the Department of the Interior and politicians from Washington State and Alaska in constructing a highway through Canada to Alaska. The U.S. even received interest in the project from the Premier of British Columbia, P.D. Pattullo. Nonetheless, Ottawa was not supportive mainly because King and his officials did not see a need for the highway, and they feared that its construction by the Americans through Canadian territory would pose problems for Canadian sovereignty. Furthermore, as Galen Perras has argued, Roosevelt's August 1938 speech, by seeming to be a guarantee for Canadian security, freed the Canadian military from most of its continental responsibilities, and allowed it to focus all of its efforts on sending an expeditionary force to fight in Europe. 40 Therefore, when war was declared in September 1939, there was no defence relationship. Canada could take some comfort from the belief that, if worse came to worse, the United States would help to defend North America, but the U.S. was still strongly isolationist and there was no security problem at that time that required formal co-operation.

The Beginning of the Relationship: 1939 to 1940

It should be noted that there were some minor positive developments in the defence relationship after the start of the war including an agreement that the U.S. Navy


40 Perras, Franklin Roosevelt and the Origins of the Canadian American Security Alliance, 47.
could use RCN facilities at Halifax, as long as it did not interfere with Canadian operations. In February 1940, the first Canadian military attaché was posted to Washington, and the American authorities co-operated in the purchase of several yachts from private citizens in the United States for the RCN. Moreover, there were some informal discussions about defence co-operation when Roosevelt met King in Warm Springs, Georgia in April 1940. On the other hand, when Canada was preparing to send a force to protect the cryolite mines in Southern Greenland, they were told to “stay the hell out of Greenland,” by the American Secretary of State, Cordell Hull. In addition, the combination of the Canadian public’s resentment of the lack of American involvement in the war, and strong isolationist sentiment in the U.S. meant that any significant co-operation was problematic. However, this situation changed drastically with the fall of France in 1940, when fears of what would happen to the Royal Navy if Britain were defeated, created urgent concern in Ottawa and Washington.

On May 18, King dispatched Hugh Keenleyside, an official with External Affairs, to Washington to meet with Roosevelt. At this meeting, the President raised the question of what would happen to the Royal Navy if Great Britain surrendered. He was particularly interested in gaining an understanding that the fleet would be transferred from the British Isles rather than have it fall into German hands. Roosevelt particularly

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41 Ibid, 52.
43 It should be noted that FDR complained to his Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau, that all King wanted to talk about was how he got just got re-elected, and it was only after two or three days that they began talking about the war. Perras, Franklin Roosevelt and the Origins of the Canadian American Security Alliance, 66.
44 Pope, Soldiers and Politicians, 144. Cryolite was an important for the production of aluminium. Unfortunately, the Americans, despite their opposition to the mission were tardy in sending forces to protect the mines. This was not done until April 1941. Stacey, Arms, Men and Governments, 367-70.
45 Keenleyside, On the Bridge of Time, 33; Bothwell, Canada and the United States, 19.
desired for King to act as a middleman, expressing American concerns as his own. This meeting was followed by a request by Hull for another meeting that took place on May 24. At this hour-long meeting between Keenleyside and the President and Hull, Roosevelt again raised the question of the possible fate of the British Fleet. However, while the question of the fate of the Royal Navy would only be resolved by the willingness of Great Britain to continue fighting, one result of these talks was that both countries began to address the issue of improving cooperation for the defence of North America.

In June 1940, King approached the new U.S. Ambassador to Canada, J. Pierrepont Moffat, requesting staff talks between the two countries’ armed forces. Moffat then contacted Washington recommending that such discussions take place, which occurred with great secrecy in July. The American military was already aware of the poor state of the defences in Canada and had been informed by their Canadian counterparts that if Great Britain surrendered then Canada would require U.S. assistance. Moreover, Keenleyside wrote in a June 1940 memo that a “specific defensive-offensive alliance was inevitable” between the two countries.

These feelings coincided with sentiments outside of government, most notably at a private meeting that took place at the Chateau Laurier on July 17 and 18. This gathering of academics, officials and politicians, including Brooke Claxton, Jack Pickerskill, R.B.

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46 Hillmer and Granatstein, *From Empire to Umpire*, 159; J.L. Granatstein, "Mackenzie King and Canada at Ogdensburg, August 1940," *In Fifty Years of Canada-United States Defense Cooperation: The Road from Ogdensburg*, ed. Joel J. Sokolsky and Joseph T. Jockel. (Queenston, ON: E. Mellen Press, 1992), 15. The three Canadian attendees at these talks, Brigadier Kenneth Stuart, Captain Leonard Murray and Air Commodore A.A.L. Cuffe, would later serve as the first service members of the Canadian Section of the PJBD. Secretary of State of External Affairs to Charge d’Affaires in the United States, July 10 1940, *DECR*, Vol. 8, 1939-41, 156; Keenleyside, 55; Perras, *Franklin Roosevelt and the Origins of the Canadian American Security Alliance*, 73. Unfortunately, these staff talks were largely inconclusive, although they did indicate that the Americans were interested in bases in Canada. Memorandum by Deputy Chief of the General Staff, Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff and Air Member, Air Staff, July 1940, *DCER*, Vol. 8, 1939-41, 161.

Bryce and Paul Martin, issued a “Programme of Immediate Canadian Action” that called for increased defence co-operation with the Americans. The document added that Canada’s independence would be damaged if it were obliged by the U.S. to co-operate rather than if Canada first approached them for assistance. While it is difficult to know how influential this meeting was, its activities were certainly known by both Skelton and King, and copies of the program later found themselves into the State Department files. Furthermore, newspapers in both countries including the Chicago Tribune, the Montreal Standard and the New York Herald Tribune were calling for the formation of a military alliance between the two countries.

Work also continued to take place behind the scenes. Ambassador Moffat stated in a memo to Washington that “there has been a growing public demand throughout Canada for the conclusion of some form of defence understanding with the US.” In addition, Roosevelt and Canada's Ambassador in Washington, Loring Christie, met on August 15 to discuss the possibility of the United States leasing bases on Canadian soil. However, it was on August 17 that the defining moment came. This event occurred when King, accompanied by Moffat but notably none of his advisors, was driven to Ogdensburg, New York to meet with Roosevelt. After a brief discussion between King, Roosevelt and the

48 Keenleyside, On the Bridge of Time, 48.
49 Ibid, 51.
51 Perras, Franklin Roosevelt and the Origins of the Canadian American Security Alliance, 74; It should be noted that the Chicago Tribune was owned by Colonel Robert McCormick a noted American isolationist and anglophobe.
52 Hillmer and Granatstein, For Better or for Worse, 133; Granatstein, “Mackenzie King and Canada at Ogdensburg,” 19; Stacey, Arms, Men and Governments, 337.
American Secretary of War, Henry Stimson, the two leaders agreed to what became known as the Ogdensburg Agreement.\(^{53}\) It stated that:

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.\(^{54}\)

Of particular interest was the extreme informality of the process, which was not a treaty or even an exchange of notes. It was also likely that King had concluded this agreement without discussing the matter with his cabinet, since he did not know what Roosevelt wanted to talk about when he travelled to the meeting.\(^{55}\) In addition, neither the Navy nor the War Departments in Washington were consulted on the creation of the PJBD.\(^{56}\) The agreement served the interests of both countries. For King, the Joint Board would not only ensure the defence of North America, but would assist Canada in its efforts to support Britain while not allowing too much U.S. control over Canadian

\(^{53}\) At the meeting, Roosevelt was interested in obtaining bases on the Canadian East Coast. However, King rejected such ideas, only agreeing to manoeuvres on Canadian soil. It should be noted that the U.S. Military actually had little interest in having bases in Canada, as they lacked the available forces to operate them. They also realized that the Canadians would not accept such installations on the West Coast. Perr, *Franklin Roosevelt and the Origins of the Canadian American Security Alliance*, 79. La Guardia would later deny that the Americans had any interest in American bases in Canada asserting in September 1940 that the PJBD was “a Defence Board, not a real estate board.” Quoted from I.R.N Ashley, *The Air Defence of Canada*, 74/649, DHH.

\(^{54}\) Keenleyside, *On the Bridge of Time*, 53. For another account of the creation of the board based on Mackenzie King’s diary see Pickerskill, *The Mackenzie King Record Vol. 1*, 131-139.

\(^{55}\) Keenleyside, *On the Bridge of Time*, 54. In his memoirs Paul Martin Sr. recalled how that there was a “spontaneous nature to the agreement,” and that their had been little discussion prior to its conclusion. Paul Martin Sr, *A Very Public Life, Vol. 1* (Toronto: Deneau, 1983), 267.

\(^{56}\) Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments*, 342.
policy.\textsuperscript{57} On the other hand, for Roosevelt, it would allow for the effective co-ordination of continental defence planning and provide a formal means to encourage the Canadian government to improve their home defences. Defence co-operation with the Canada would also enable the Roosevelt administration to improve the security of the Western Hemisphere, which in the days before Pearl Harbor was a very important focus for a country that was still strongly isolationist.\textsuperscript{58} Finally, it was one of the few positive steps that Roosevelt was willing to take before his third Presidential election in the fall of 1940.\textsuperscript{59}

The PJBD had both an American and Canadian section. The Chair of the U.S. Section was the former mayor of New York, Fiorello LaGuardia, while Colonel O.M. Biggar, who had served as the Judge Advocate General of the Canadian Army in the First World War, headed the Canadian Section. The board included six military service members as well as two secretaries: John Hickerson, a veteran U.S. foreign-service officer and an old Canada hand, and Keenleyside for the Canadians.\textsuperscript{60} While LaGuardia only limited military background as a pilot in World War I, he did have a very good relationship with Roosevelt, which was quite useful during the war. Biggar did not have such assess to King, but he was a well-respected lawyer, and handled the post well until his retirement in 1946.\textsuperscript{61} LaGuardia and Biggar were also able to establish an excellent

\textsuperscript{57} Hillmer and Granatstein, \textit{For Better or for Worse}, 141.
\textsuperscript{58} Perras, \textit{Franklin Roosevelt and the Origins of the Canadian American Security Alliance}, 121-122.
\textsuperscript{60} Hilliker and Barry, \textit{Canada's Department of External Affairs Volume 1}, 235; Cosliffe, “The Permanent Joint Board on Defense, 1940-1988,” 152. Hickerson was responsible for Canadian affairs in the State Department while Keenleyside, as already shown, was a senior member of the Department of External Affairs. Beatty, \textit{The Canadian-United States Permanent Joint Board on Defence}, 57.
working relationship, as they agreed to serve as joint chairman of the Board.\textsuperscript{62} The PJBD received a great deal of support from elite and public opinion on both sides of the border, but one person who was angered by the formation of the board was British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill. There was little he could do, however, as British weakness had led Canada into the arms of the United States.\textsuperscript{63}

The PJBD first met on August 22 in Newfoundland, and at subsequent meetings, it dealt with the defence of the East Coast and Newfoundland as well as numerous other subjects including the state of the defences on the West Coast and around Sault Ste. Marie.\textsuperscript{64} Ultimately, the PJBD functioned very well during the war, although most of its work was done in its early years. LaGuardia recalled “we would exchange views in the frankest and freest way in the interests of our common defence but we would not bind our governments.”\textsuperscript{65} No decision was taken by majority vote for as Keenleyside stated in his memoirs Canada “had to recognise American power; the Americans had to cater to Canadian sensitivities. Problems were discussed until unanimity was reached” and both governments approved most of the PJBD’s 33 recommendations.\textsuperscript{66} Consequently, for the most part, the defence relationship worked well, although as the war went on, it suffered from the reality that while the United States was waging a world war and Canada was

\begin{footnotes}
\item[62] La Guardia would later note in a letter in September 1947 to U.S. Secretary of State, George Marshall, that the issue of having a permanent chair of the board had been “intentionally left in Abeyance,” and that the joint chairmanship of the board was based on custom. \textit{La Guardia to Marshall}, September 10 1947, Papers of Harry S. Truman Official File, Box 13994, File OF 573 Permanent Joint Board on Defense United States and Canada, Truman Library.

\item[63] Hillmer and Granatstein, \textit{For Better or For Worse}, 143; Stacey, \textit{Arms, Men and Government}, 336-43.

\item[64] Churchill was angered by the agreement because he believed that the Canadians were moving into the American orbit. Ibid, \textit{From Empire to Umpire}, 160-1; Stacey, \textit{Arms, Men and Government}, 341; Eayrs, \textit{In Defence of Canada Vol. II}, 209-10.

\item[65] Claxton Memoirs, 947.

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only contributing to a greater Allied war effort. But this is not to say that the relationship did not have its problems.

The Relationship in Action: 1940 to 1945

Just because Canada had committed itself to a military alliance with the U.S. did not mean that it was going to be a quiet and complacent ally. The nationalistic sentiments that had led it to reject a formal imperial defence ties with Great Britain had not gone away with the events of 1940, and would assert themselves in its relationship with the United States. While Canada wanted and needed a defence relationship with the U.S., it wanted to retain its freedom of action, and it did not like to be taken for granted. These sentiments only increased after the American entry into the Second World War as the United States shifted from being a regional to a world power. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Canada ceased to be of great importance in American planning and became only one of its many allies, and Canadian officials recognized this fact very early after the American entry into the war. For instance, a memo written by External Affairs to the Prime Minister on December 22, 1941, noted that Roosevelt would have less and less time to do deal Canadian concerns and “Canada naturally loomed much larger in the American scheme of things when the President and both parties in the United States were thinking primarily in terms of continental and hemispheric defence.” Consequently, there was concern that in the Cabinet and External Affairs that Canada’s interests would be harmed, and that it would be increasingly taken for granted. The new Under-Secretary of External Affairs, Norman Robertson also wrote that the United States as a world power

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would now be using “more direct and forceful methods of exerting its influence,” whereas
before the war it had taken the approach of “pursing a fair and friendly policy towards its
neighbours.”

Another memorandum added “it would hardly be a satisfactory phase in the
development if having acquired our rightful place as a free and separate nation in the
British Commonwealth, we accepted something less than the equilvrent of that position in
our relationship with Washington.” Consequently, this period saw calls for Canada to be
more aggressive with the U.S. One official, Escott Reid, even asserted in January 1942
that Canada needed to act more like an adult in its relations with the Americans in order
to gain respect in Washington. Pearson later wrote in mid-1943 if Canada had a really
vital Canadian interest with the Americans that it needed “to go to the mat” with
Washington. This sentiment can be seen in the demands for a Canadian Military
Mission in the United States that were only met in 1942 with the creation of the Canadian
Joint Staff in Washington. It can also be seen with Canadian effort to obtain seats on
some of the Combined Boards that co-ordinated the Allied War effort as well as Canada’s

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69 Memorandum to from the Under-Secretary for External Affairs to the Prime Minister, December 22
1941, DCER, Vol. 9, 1942-1943, 1126; Cuff and Granatstein, Canadian-American Relations in Wartime,
105. Skelton died of a heart attack in January 1941; Hillmer and Granatstein, For Better or for Worse, 148.
70 Memorandum from the Assistant Under-Secretary for External Affairs, April 14 1942, DCER, Vol. 9,
1942-1943, 1136.
71 US and Canada Domination, Cooperation, Absorption, Jan 13 1942, MG 31 E46 Escott Reid Fonds,
Vol. 30, File United States and Canada 1942 - 1945, LAC.
73 The main reason for the delay was that the Navy and War Departments were opposed to the creation of
such a body. The Secretary of the Navy, Frank Knox, noted on July 21 1941 that the means of consultation
provided through the PJBD and the military attaches in Washington and Ottawa “are adequate to the present
needs,” which meant that “in the opinion of the Navy Department … the establishment of a Military
mission is unnecessary.” He added, “its establishment would offer a precedent for the establishment of
similar Military missions by certain other British-Dominions and by the American Republics.” The
Secretary of the Navy (Knox) to the Secretary of State, July 21 1941, FRUS, Vol. III, 1941, 130-131.
Moffat had also concluded that “Canada’s interest in the mission was largely psychological and that for
domestic reasons she attached importance to the title ‘Mission’ and to having constant interchanges
between our respective services rather than occasional meetings and … telephone conversations.” He added
that he had spoken to the Robertson about his concerns that “the Canadian request had never been made
very specific either as to personnel or as to the function of the Mission.” Memorandum of Conservation by
Minister in Canada (Moffat), September 25 1941, FRUS, Vol. III, 1941, 133-34.
complaints that it had been shut out of the discussions at the 1943 Quebec Conference. Indeed, Granatstein has argued that the Second World War produced a new sense of nationalism in Ottawa.\textsuperscript{74}

It should be noted that this nationalistic sentiment towards the United States was tempered by the recognition by some officials that Canada needed to understand the realities of its relationship with the Americans. One diplomat, Hume Wrong argued that “the business of running a grand alliance in wartime is too difficult to combine efficiency with constant respect for the status of each of the members of the alliance.”\textsuperscript{75} Pearson, in response to a memo by another External Affairs official, R.M. MacDonnell, also warned against having a policy that was either subservient or one that exhibited “truculent touchiness.” He argued that Canada must be careful not to complain too much to the Americans and that External Affairs should not send a note to the State Department “every time some Congressman makes a stupid statement about Canada.”\textsuperscript{76} Moreover, during the war the focus of this Canadian nationalism was still divided between Britain and the United States. Indeed, Vincent Massey, the Canadian High Commissioner in London complained that External Affairs was for too long “preoccupied … with flogging the dead horse of ‘Downing Street domination.’”\textsuperscript{77} It was not until the end of the war, with the decline of British power that the full energies of Canadian nationalism would be directed towards the U.S.

Another problem that surfaced in the relationship was the policy confusion that often existed in Washington during the war. Part of the reason was that because of

\textsuperscript{74} Granatstein, \textit{The Ottawa Men}, 123, 129-30; The historian Shelagh Grant, voiced a similar argument in her work. Grant, \textit{Sovereignty or Security}, 42, 50.

\textsuperscript{75} Granatstein, \textit{The Ottawa Men}, 127.

\textsuperscript{76} Minister in United States to First Secretary, March 21 1944, \textit{DCER}, Vol. 11, 1944-45 Part 2, 1406.

\textsuperscript{77} Massey, \textit{What's Past is Prologue}, 372.
divisions in the State Department and his own personal preferences, Roosevelt generally relied on informal advisors such as Henry Hopkins. One of these officials, Robert Murphy noted in his memoirs that “Roosevelt delighted in ignoring departmental procedures … preferring to work informally through men chosen by him and responsible directly to him.” At times, this situation served Canadian interests, since LaGuardia was close to Roosevelt. Indeed, this connection was very effective until FDR’s death in April 1945. But it was also a source of concern for External Affairs because it preferred to deal with the State Department as had done before the war.

The proliferation of temporary wartime agencies in Washington created further difficulties. As Stimson, Roosevelt’s Secretary of War from 1940 to 1945, stated in his diary: “The President has constituted an almost innumerable number of new administrative posts, putting at the head of them a lot of inexperienced men appointed largely for personal grounds and who report on their duties directly to the President.” He then noted that:

The lines of delimitation between these different agencies themselves and between them and the Departments [are] very nebulous. The inevitable result is that the Washington atmosphere is full of acrimonious disputes over matters of jurisdiction. In my own case, a very large percentage of my time and strength,

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78 Leffler, A Preponderance of Power, 27; Grant, Sovereignty or Security, 55.
79 In his memoirs, Murphy further remarked that he was told by Roosevelt before his mission to French North Africa that “if you learn anything in Africa of special interest send it to me. Don’t bothering going through State Department channels.” Murphy was later informed “that is the way he often operates.” Murphy then outlined that this was how he “became one of President Roosevelt’s ‘personal representatives;’” Quoted from Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors, 70. Another possible reason for Roosevelt lack of attention to the State Department was a crisis in the summer of 1940 when the diplomatic codes from the American embassy in London were handed over to an Italian spy ring by a clerk named Tyler Kent. He asserted that he was trying to keep the Americans out of the war. Gerhard Weinberg, A World At Arms A Global History of World War II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 156.
80 One example was in early 1944 when Hickerson had to admit to Keenleyside that the U.S. government had no exact record of when the President approved many of the PJBD’s recommendations. Hickerson added, “we do not have that neat precision which accompanies the Parliamentary system of Government, to say nothing of the streamlined War Cabinet version of it.” Hickerson to Keenleyside, January 1 1944, File 322.019 (D52) Defence Co-op between Canada & US Parts 1 & 3 – Extracts from Dept of External Affairs Confidential File NO 703-40C, DHH.
particularly of recent months, has been taken up in trying to smooth out and settle the differences which have been thus created.\textsuperscript{81}

In Ottawa, Robertson noted the problem of the “scattering of responsibility for United States foreign policy among a host of new agencies,” when dealing with the Americans.\textsuperscript{82}

Pearson added that the bureaucracy in Washington, was “built on temporary war foundations,” and as a result “often functions so badly and a lot of things are done which would never be done in a permanent, peacetime, well ordered civil service. It is true, I think, that a great deal of our difficulties arise out of inexperience and at times ignorance.”\textsuperscript{83}

Unity of Command: 1940 - 1942

There were two other specific areas of difficulty in the bilateral defence relationship. The first issue was the desire of some U.S. military officers to have command and control authority over Canadian forces in North America. This problem had been ignored when the first plan, Joint Canada-U.S. Basic Defence Plan No. 1, was finalized in October 1940. However, as it appeared more likely that Britain would not be defeated, the question of how much control would U.S. military have over Canadian forces after the United States entered the war soon arose. Indeed, when the Americans


\textsuperscript{82} Memorandum to the Prime Minister, December 22 1941, \textit{DCER}, Vol. 8, 1941, 1126.

\textsuperscript{83} Pearson added that most of the problems Canada had with the United States were on relatively on small matters, as the large matters are handled well. Minister in United States to First Secretary, March 21 1944, \textit{DCER}, Vol. 11 1944-45 Part 2, 1406; A more harsher perspective on these wartime agencies was given by the long-time American official, Paul H. Nitze, who in his memoirs described the head of one of these temporary organizations, Leo T. Crowley of the Office of Economic Warfare as “a thoroughly incompetent and corrupt individual” who “used politics and his political connections to further the personal ambitions of his former business associates.” Nitze, \textit{From Hiroshima to Glasnost}, 22. The American diplomat, George Ball, added that Crowley “knew nothing about the economic needs of our Allies and seemed quite indifferent to their problems so long as he avoided trouble with Congress.” George Ball, \textit{The Past Has Another Pattern: Memoirs} (Toronto: George J. McLeod Limited, 1982), 38.
asked for “strategic direction” over Canadian forces during the discussions over Basic Defence Plan No. 2, the Canadian government and military agreed this would happen if Britain fell. Nonetheless, this arrangement would not be acceptable if it was implemented when the United States entered the war and Britain had not surrendered. Indeed, Biggar asserted that Canada would "not surrender to the United States what she has consistently asserted vis-a-vis Great Britain.” When LaGuardia complained that “we are in the engaged in the grim business of joint defence against a possibly strong and ruthless enemy,” and “that it far better to trust in the honor of the United States, than to the mercy of the enemy;” Biggar replied that “Canada is all out in the war: the United States is not—yet,” and the time had not come to place Canadian forces under American command.

The stage was thus set for an extremely difficult meeting of the PJBD on May 27 and 28, 1941. Pope later recalled in his memoirs that, at the meeting, one American service member stated that “when the plan came into effect, should the Canadian Chief of the General Staff wish to move as much as a training unit from Manitoba to Ontario, he would be unable to do so without first having obtained the permission of the United States Chief of Staff.” Pope noted “clearly our American friends were launching an all-out offensive, and to us fell the less comfortable role of defending our positions.” As a result, the meeting adjourned without the issue being resolved. Fortunately, after a discussion at another PJBD meeting on June 3 and 4, the situation began to settle down.

The American Section, after being reminded by the State Department that Canada would

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84 Chairman Canadian Section PJBD to Chairman American Section, May 3 1941, DCER, Vol. 8, 1939-41, 205;
85 Chairman American Section PJBD to Chairman Canadian Section, May 2 1941, DCER, Vol. 8 1939-41, 204-5; Chairman Canadian Section PJBD to Chairman American Section, May 3 1941, DCER, Vol. 8, 1939-41, 205; Perras, Franklin Roosevelt and the Origins of the Canadian American Security Alliance, 81.
offer its full co-operation during a crisis, largely backed down. Moreover, despite a request to intervene from LaGuardia, Roosevelt decided to not pressure King to accept this arrangement.\(^87\) This experience reflected one of the enduring elements of the Canada-U.S. defence relationship. While some U.S. military officers and government officials would believe that Canada should agree to certain defence measures, these officers often found that they did not have the support of their senior civilian and military leadership in Washington. Therefore, both during and after the war, these individuals would often be forced to compromise with their Canadian counterparts.

By the end of July, both countries agreed to a definition of unity of command that would be implemented only when agreed upon by the Chiefs of Staff concerned or during an emergency. Under the Joint Canada-U.S. Basic Defence Plan No. 2, otherwise known as ABC 22, unity of command was defined as when one commander has the “responsibility to co-ordinate the operations of the participating forces of both countries … Unity of command does not authorize a commander exercising it to control the administration and discipline of the forces of the nation of which he is not an officer nor to issue any instructions to such forces beyond those necessary for effective co-operation.”\(^88\) It seemed that the problem had been resolved.\(^89\) But the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 changed the situation dramatically.

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\(^86\) Pope, *Soldiers and Politicians*, 164-5.

\(^87\) Perras, *Franklin Roosevelt and the Origins of the Canadian American Security Alliance*, 82.

\(^88\) Service Members Permanent Joint board on Defence to Chiefs of Staff Joint Canada-US Basic Defence Plan No. 2 (ABC 22), July 30 1941, *DCER*, Vol. 8, 1939-1941, 250. ABC stands for American British Conversations and was first used to label a plan “to provide a basis for action when (if) the United States exchanged belligerent neutrality for open declaration of war against the Axis. It was to this ‘ABC-1,’ in which Canada had no voice, that Canada and the United States constructed the ancillary ‘ABC-22.’” Ashley, *The Air Defence of Canada*.

\(^89\) A few years after these events, Pope asked one American officer why they were so insistent on this issue. He received the response that “our fellows were scared.” Pope, *Soldiers and Politicians*, 166.
With the American entry into the war, certain U.S. officers and officials quickly became interested in imposing unity of command for all forces on the West Coast. One result was an article that appeared in the *New York Times* on December 10, which claimed that defence arrangements on the West Coast were impaired by the fact that one commander did not have control over all the forces there. Canadian officials quickly realized that this story had been inspired by leaks from members of the U.S. Section of the PJBD and concluded “it is obviously an effort to stampede the Canadian government into agreeing to unity of command on the Pacific Coast.” One official added “I think we have the right to object very strenuously to the effort being made by the United States authorities to scare us into accepting their wishes by publication in the press of inaccurate and coloured reports.”

However, this leak was followed by a period of calm to the point that Pope, the Canadian Vice Chief of the General Staff, noted on December 20 that the Americans appeared to have settled down after the shock of the start of the war. The reality was quite different, as on January 2, LaGuardia wrote a letter to Biggar that requested unity of command for all forces on the Pacific Coast. Biggar replied the next day that the “unanimous view of the [Canadian] service members was that it would be inadvisable for this section to make any recommendation to that effect.” Pope added that it would be highly unlikely that that the Japanese would attack the West Coast.

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90 Memorandum for Mr. Robertson Unity of Command on the Pacific Coast, File 322.019 (D52) Defence Co-op between Canada & US Parts 1 & 3 – Extracts from Dept of External Affairs Confidential File NO 703-40C, DHH.
91 Memorandum from the Assistant Chief of the General Staff to the Chief of the General Staff, December 22 1941, *DCER*, Vol. 8, 1939-1941, 1145.
92 Chairman American Section Permanent Joint Board on Defence to Chairman Canadian Section Permanent Joint Board on Defence, January 2 1942, *DCER*, Vol. 9, 1942-1943, 1149-1150.
93 Chairman Canadian Section Permanent Joint Board on Defence to Chairman American Section Permanent Joint Board on Defence, January 3 1942, *DCER*, Vol. 9 1942-1943, 1150-1151.
added that even if the Japanese did so “it would be an irrational action.”

In addition, the British Chiefs of staff believed that there was no real danger from a Japanese attack on the West Coast. Consequently, in February 1942, LaGuardia and U.S. Army member on the PJBD, General S.D. Embick, dropped the matter, and the issue did not arise again during the war. In fact, Captain Forrest Sherman, the U.S. Navy member of the PJBD, when he heard from Pope that there was no chance of the United States gaining strategic direction over the Canadian military, replied “I suppose that defence relations between our two countries can best be assured on a basis of mutual respect and mutual confidence.”

One reason why the Canadians were successful in resisting the Americans’ request was that the U.S. Navy was not interested in having unity of command on the West Coast. On December 20, they asserted that the relations between its commander in Seattle and the Canadian military “left nothing to be desired.” The opposition of the Canadian service members to the proposal was also critical. Moreover, La Guardia and Embick did not have the support of the military and civilian leadership in Washington when they made their request. In fact, not only did Roosevelt again declined to pressure King on this issue, but Canadian officials suspected that General George Marshall, the Chief of Staff for the U.S. Army, was not that interested in the idea. After hearing that he

94 Memorandum from Chairman Canadian Section Permanent Joint Board on Defence to the Prime Minister, Jan 13 1942, DCER, Vol. 9, 1942-1943, 1151-1152; Memorandum from Vice Chief of the General Staff to the Chief of the General Staff, Southern British Colombia-Puget Sound US Request for Institution of Unity of Command, January 16 1942, DCER, Vol. 9, 1942-1943, 1158.
95 In fact, Pope noted to Keenleyside and Biggar that it is likely that they would not hear of this matter “for some little time.” Memorandum from the Vice Chief of the General Staff to the Chief of the General Staff, January 21 1942, DCER, Vol. 9, 1942-1943, 1159-1162.
96 Pope, Soldiers and Politicians, 166.
97 In fact, the U.S. Navy rejected this concept in the case of Alaska and Hawaii. Perras, Franklin Roosevelt and the Origins of the Canadian American Security Alliance, 84.
did not have the time to discuss this matter with his Canadian counterparts, the Canadian Section of the PJBD wondered if the situation on the West Coast was really that critical. They also believed that it was Embick who was really pushing for unity of command on the Pacific Coast. After one meeting of the Board, Pope, Biggar and Keenleyside discussed how Embick, who was a genuine believer in unity of command and facing a situation in the Pacific in late 1941 that “was in accordance with his worst fears,” felt that something needed to be done. As a result, the Canadians were able to successfully oppose the U.S. request.

Understanding the U.S. Military Presence in the Canadian North: 1942 - 1945

The other problem that surfaced was the U.S. military presence in the Canadian North. Although this situation was not the crisis that historians such as Shelagh Grant have portrayed it in the scholarly literature, it still needed to be addressed by the government. Canadian officials had always understood that Canada’s claim to its Arctic territories was weak because it was based on the sector principle and the areas' discovery by the British; however, it was not until the Second World War that this reality was a major issue. During this conflict, the region became important for the defence of North America, as the United States constructed a number of military facilities in this region, and a number of problems emerged.

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99 Canadian officials suspected that the December 10 leak possibly came from Embick or another likeminded officer. Memorandum for Mr. Robertson Unity of Command on the Pacific Coast, File 322.019 (D52) Defence Co-op between Canada & US Parts 1 & 3 – Extracts from Dept of External Affairs Confidential File NO 703-40C, DHH.

100 Memorandum from the Vice Chief of the General Staff to the Chief of the General Staff, January 21 1942, *DCER*, Vol. 9, 1942-1943, 1159-1162; Embick’s beliefs were due to his interest in continental defence. The historian Ronald Schaffer noted that Embick “retained the outlook of a coast artillery officer, conceiving of the continental United States as a citadel.” Ronald Schaffer, “General Stanley D. Embick: Military Dissenter” *Military Affairs*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (Oct., 1973), 90. Mark Stoler, “From Continentalism to
One issue was that, since the Americans were blessed with greater material and manpower resources than Canada, they were able to allocate more of them to projects in the Canadian North than the Canadian authorities would have thought necessary. Indeed, the American presence in this area was part of a “massive and rather incoherent expansion of US military presence around the globe,” that paid “little attention to fiscal sanity, local conditions or even America’s long term needs.” Consequently, some of these projects such as the Alaska Highway, which was used to transport 30 million tons of supplies, were of great use. On the other hand, the North East Staging Route or the Crimson Route, which involved the construction or several airfields in the interior of North America including at Churchill, Manitoba was in the end rendered unnecessary by the development of the base at Goose Bay, Labrador. The infamous Canol Program, which involved the construction of an oil pipeline from Mackenzie Wells to Whitehorse also cost tens of millions of dollars, and was scrapped at the end of the war. A comment from LaGuardia to Pope in reference to Alaska, on a tour in 1943, nonetheless, puts many of these projects in context. LaGuardia argued that these defence projects:

Had been done by reason of military necessity in the light of the situation as it existed some 18 months ago. It was insurance against a worsening of the position. If, however, during this period of time the situation had changed so much in our favor as to make the measures put in hand on too large of scale, he could only ask

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By 1943 the highway ran for 2451 kilometres and had cost 150 million dollars. Hillmer and Granatstein, *For Better or for Worse*, 155; Lackenbauer, “Right and Honourable,” 156.

This route was originally planned as a route for aircraft flying to Europe, however, it was never fully completed. In July 1943, the War Department reconsidered the project, and significantly scaled back construction. Hillmer and Granatstein, *For Better or for Worse*, 155; Memorandum for Senior US Army Member PJBD to PJBD, July 29 1943, *DCER*, Vol. 9, 1942-1943, 1279-1280, Dzubian, *Military Relations Between the United States and Canada*, 318.

Grant, *Sovereignty or Security*, 80-81, 133. It should be noted that one writer, Jim Lotz, has argued that the roads constructed for this project did help with future development in the North. Jim Lotz, *Northern Realities: Canada-U.S. Exploitation of the Canadian North* (Chicago, Follett, 1971), 64-65.
what the public opinion would have said if, instead of improving the situation had changed against us.105

The result was that by 1942 there were thousands of American military and civilian personnel at work in the Canadian North.

Unfortunately, the U.S. Army “tackled its assignments with vigor and singlemindedness often with less tact and attention to local sensitivities then officials in Washington would have wished.”106 An April 1942 memo from External Affairs noted that the U.S. had been showing “a not unusual wartime psychosis and impatience with any restriction … that would limit even momentarily the carrying out of American plans for the prosecution of the war.” In addition, the American government and “its various more or less independent agencies have recently shown a tendency in dealing with foreign countries to act first and seek approval afterwards if at all.”107 While both governments established the Joint Defence Construction Projects Panel in June 1942, it had little influence on the situation in the North because it was located in Ottawa. The result was that in 1942, the U.S. Army constructed seven airfields in connection with the Canol Program, an all weather road to Norman Wells from Fort Norman and a pipeline to Watson Lake without permission from the Canadian government.108 Even the U.S. Army Headquarters in Edmonton, as a joke, began to answer their phones “Army of Occupation.”109

105 Pope, Soldiers and Politicians, 220.
107 Memorandum for the Under Secretary of State of External Affairs, April 14 1942, DCER, Vol. 9, 142-1943, 1136.
108 Stacey, Arms Men and Governments, 385; Hillmer and Granatstein, For Better or for Worse, 155.
As a result, there was an increasing awareness in Ottawa that this presence might pose a problem for Canadian sovereignty in the region. In March 1942, King noted in his dairy a conversation he had with the British High Commissioner, Malcolm Macdonald that “the Alaska highway was less intended for protection against the Japanese than as one of the dangers of the hand which America is placing more or less over the whole of the Western hemisphere.” Even U.S. officials even admitted privately that the liaison system in the Canadian North was not functioning well due to “frequent changes in … personnel and fields of responsibility … [of the] four or five United States authorities … operating in the Northwest.”

Canadian officials gradually became more aware of the situation in the North. As Arnold Heeney, the Secretary to the War Cabinet Committee, noted in his memoirs, this process began very slowly. Most Canadian leaders and officials were preoccupied with the war effort in Europe and no one in authority in Ottawa was aware of the extent and nature of what the westerners had begun to call the ‘American occupation.’” However, In early 1943, Massey wrote in his diary after a conversation with a Hudson Bay Company official: “the Americans … have apparently walked in and taken possession in many cases as if Canada were unclaimed territory inhabited by a docile race of aborigines … It is true the work is all in aid of the war effort but it does not follow that Canadian sovereign rights should not be jealously safeguarded.”

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110 Diary Entry, March 21 1942, William Lyon Mackenzie King Papers, Diary, LAC, http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/king/index-e.htm. It should be noted that immediately afterwards King began to criticize the British government for Canada not gaining representation on the Combined Boards that managed the Allied war effort.

111 Dzubian, Military Relations Between the United States and Canada, 136.

112 Heeney, The Things that are Caesar’s, 71.

113 Massey, What’s Past is Prologue, 371.
It was only when Macdonald went on a tour of the North in March 1943 that the Cabinet was alerted to the situation. He would seem as an unusual choice for such a mission; however, he did have a close relationship with King, Robertson, Keenleyside, and Ambassador Moffat. In fact, King had met his father, future Prime Minister Ramsay Macdonald, in 1897, and the High Commissioner had known King since 1924. Jack Pickerskill later commented that no other diplomat had the access that Macdonald had with King. Finally, he was already aware of King’s concerns about this issue.

When he returned to Ottawa, Macdonald discussed the situation with Robertson, stating that he was “very concerned about the completeness of the American penetration and the absence of any apparent Canadian representation in the vast new territories that have been opened up since the war.” After the High Commissioner then spoke with King, the Prime Minister wrote in his diary “we are going to have a hard time after the war to prevent the United States attempting control of some Canadian situations.” On March 30, Macdonald addressed the Cabinet War Committee. As Macdonald later outlined in a memo to the British Dominion Secretary, Clement Atlee, the “Canadian authorities have too little influence on the shaping of these important affairs in Canadian territory,” and they had failed to properly supervise the Americans in the area. He added that U.S. officers were quite open on how the Northern airfields would be valuable for post-war commercial aviation and for “waging war against the Russians in the next world

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115 Macdonald described his father and Mackenzie King as “great friends;” Macdonald, *His Memories of Lester Pearson*, LAC.


crisis.” Moreover, he feared that the loyalty of Western Canadians to their country would be harmed by the American activity in the area and concluded that the United States “knew much more about this part of Canada than the Canadian authorities do, which is the most undesirable state of affairs.” At this point, it should be noted that both Massey and Macdonald’s assessments of the American presence in the Canadian North were problematic.

Massey was not only poorly informed of the true situation there due to his posting in London, but having previously been an “understanding and generous friend and interpreter of United States policy,” he had increasingly moved to being a critic of American power. He argued in 1942 that one of the biggest problems that would have to be addressed after the war would be American imperialism. Thus, while Massey’s perspective on the American presence in the Canadian North makes for a nice punchy quote, it is not that reliable. Moreover, High Commissioner MacDonald was a British Cabinet Minister and should not be treated as an honest observer either. He not only had been “treated with great incivility by one or two American senior officers who” had saw him as an intruder during a previous visit to the area in 1942, but he also had begun to express concerns about the United States. This concern was particularly over the air routes in the Canadian North and he urged the British Air Ministry to pay more attention to this issue. He added “I confess that I do not trust all the responsible authorities amongst

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118 King Diary, March 29 1943, LAC.
119 Macdonald, Notes on Developments in North-Western Canada, 267-271.
120 Notes on Developments in North-Western Canada, March 30 1943, DCER, Vol. 9, 1942-1943, 1569-70.
122 Massey, What’s Past is Prologue, 371.
our American allies, and I saw enough in the northwest to give me an unpleasant feeling that they will seek to use their power to gain control over these vital air routes.”

Ultimately, when the Canadian government began to consider how it would address this situation, it reacted cautiously. At the March 30th meeting of the War Cabinet Committee, King noted that the problem was “under active consideration” and that the appointment of a special commissioner in the area was something that needed to be looked at. One possible reason why this occurred was that the Cabinet had limited options about how to address the problem. Canada lacked the resources to take over these projects and withdrawing permission for the Americans to construct them would have created a crisis in the bilateral relationship. Indeed, there is no evidence that either of these options was seriously considered. However, another factor was that other assessments of the situation in the North were not as negative as MacDonald’s, including one provided by Keenleyside.

He discussed many of the problems facing Canada in the North, including the great disparity between Canadian and U.S. forces there, and that fact that Americans were in charge of Canadian civilian personnel. Keenleyside agreed with MacDonald that there was the danger that the Americans might claim post-war rights in the region and that the loyalty that Western Canadians felt to their government might be weakened. He then warned that by mid-summer there would be 46 000 US Army and civilian personnel in the area compared to 7 000 Canadian civilians and a few hundred RCAF personnel. While Keenleyside stated that concern was fully justified over the situation, he concluded that it was not as bad as MacDonald thought it was. In fact, Keenleyside argued that the

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123 Sanger, Malcolm Macdonald: Bringing an End to Empire, 237-8.
124 Extract from Minutes of the Cabinet War Committee, March 31 1943, DCER, Vol. 9, 1942-1943, 1566.
main problem was that the U.S. Army commanders in the field, operating on their prerogatives as commanders in a “zone of operation,” which Northwest Canada was, had done what they felt was necessary without consulting Washington. As a result, it took some time to convince these commanders that more proper procedures were needed. Moreover, in his mind, both the State Department and the War Department had taken sufficient action to deal with this problem. Keenleyside concluded his report by arguing that more publicity of Canada’s involvement in the Arctic was needed, and that a Canadian Northwest Commission should be appointed to supervise this region.126

On May 6, after much discussion, the government took action and appointed Brigadier W.W. Foster as the Special Commissioner for Defence Projects in Northwest Canada.127 Foster (soon to be promoted to Major General) was a veteran of both world wars and was close with both Robertson and Keenleyside.128 When he was appointed, Foster was informed that the “developments in the Northwest have now reached such proportions that special action has become necessary.” His responsibilities included maintaining contact with all U.S. senior civilian and military officials in the area, and making sure that all major requests were referred to the proper channels through the PJBD or External Affairs. He was also to arrange Canadian participation in these projects if it were seen to be useful or desirable.129 It was further suggested to Foster that he see that “Canada was kept fully informed of all developments … likely to have a post-war

125 Keenleyside, On the Bridge of Time, 72.
127 Order in Council, May 6 1943, DCER, Vol. 9, 1942-1943, 1584. Also see Lackenbauer, 157; Hillmer and Granatstein, For Better or Worse, 156; Hilliker and Barry, Canada’s Department of External Affairs Volume 2, 253.
128 Grant, Sovereignty or Security, 119, 135; Stacey, Arms, Men and Governments, 386.
129 Prime Minister to Special Commissioner for Defence Projects in Northwest Canada, May 20 1943, Vol. 9, 1942-1943, 1585-1586.
implication.”

130 Foster reported directly to Heeney, and as a result “a regular system of surveillance and reports” to the War Cabinet Committee was developed. 131 In the months that followed, the government began to both pay closer attention to publicity of wartime activities and to mandate that the U.S. Army would use Canadian construction companies and labour on work on the Northwest Staging route. 132 However, it was not until later in 1943 that Canadian officials sought to address the American present in the Northwest by purchasing the facilities that the U.S. had constructed in Canada during the war.

For example, a memorandum from Heeney on November 24, 1943 stated that one argument in favour of such a purchase was “the old (to my mind none the less valid) arguments – protection against anticipated pressure from Congress and American public opinion that the Stars and Stripes should follow the US dollar.” 133 Another memorandum from the Privy Council Office in December argued that “serious difficulties might arise as a result of pressures by interested groups in the United States with respect to post-war use and ownership of US defence projects in Canada.” 134 Fortunately Canada had built up a substantial surplus in U.S. dollars from its trade during the war, and was able to use some of these funds to pay for the bases. Consequently, in 1945, the Canada paid 123.5 million dollars to the U.S. for 28 airfields, 56 weather stations and various other installations. 135 Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that while the strengthening of Canadian sovereignty in their Northern territories was an important factor in justifying this

130 Granatstein, A Man of Influence, 121.
131 Heeney, The Things that are Caesar’s, 71-72. Heeney accepted this responsibility after a suggestion from C.D. Howe.
132 Grant, Sovereignty or Security, 122; Extract from Minutes of the Cabinet War Committee, March 15 1944, DCER, Vol. 11 1944-1945, 1417.
purchase, newly discovered evidence states that Canadian officials had another goal that was of similar if not greater importance, the reduction of Canada’s surplus in U.S. dollars. 

The existence of this surplus seems somewhat counter intuitive considering the fact that Canadian deficits of U.S. dollars first in 1941 and then 1947 and 1948 are much better known. In fact, a Canadian balance of payments crisis in 1941 was only resolved by the Hyde Park agreement under which the United States had pledged to purchase 200 to 300 million dollars in war material a year from Canada. However, the fact that this agreement had been successful when combined with large purchases of Canadian grain by the U.S. meant that by 1943, the Roosevelt administration had begun to express concern about the large amount of U.S. dollars that the Canadian government held. By late-1943, this balance had reached 649 million dollars. Therefore, the Canadian Finance Minister, J.L. Ilsley, and the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau, worked together to resolve this problem. One way they did this was for Canada to make large purchases from the United States and as Stanley Dzubian noted in his official history for the U.S. Army “fortunately, this large dollar expenditure was feasible and even desirable when Canada wished to assure control of the northern airfields.”

Additional evidence for this motive comes from formerly classified Canadian government documents from November 1950. In this period, with the increase of tensions between East and West and the onset of the Korean War, Canada was facing increased American interest in continental defence. As a result, the Panel on Economic Aspects of

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135 Hillmer and Granatstein, For Better or for Worse, 156.
136 Stewart, The American Response to Canada Since 1776, 176; Hillmer and Granatstein, For Better or for Worse, 145-147.
137 Dzubian, Military Relations Between the United States and Canada, 322.
Defence Questions was assigned to examine this issue. In early November 1950, Christopher Eberts, a junior official with External Affairs, wrote a memo on the subject of new U.S. installations in Canada. He argued that one result of what had occurred in the Second World War “was that after the war, when the Canadian government paid the U.S. government the cost price of these installations (in order to avoid any possible U.S. claim to future use of control of them), it had to pay a far higher price than would have been the case if it had itself been able to under take the construction.”

This draft provoked a response from a senior Canadian official, A.F.W. Plumptre. He argued that while he agreed with most of the memo, Ebert’s comment about the facilities was not fair, as the purchase of the U.S. installation had been done to reduce “unduly large” Canada’s holdings of U.S. dollars that had been built up after the Hyde Park agreement in 1941. However, when Eberts produced the final version of this report he did not make significant revisions. It was thus left up to Norman Robertson, then serving as the Secretary to the Cabinet and the Clerk to the Privy Council, to correct the record. At the meeting of the Panel on Economic Aspects of Defence Questions on November 14, Robertson asserted:

> From his recollection of events of the time, the second sentence of the first paragraph … [of Ebert’s Paper] that had been prepared did not fully reflect the reasons for the Canadian Government purchasing U.S. installations in Canada at the end of the war. While the desirability of Canada acquiring these installations

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138 Minutes of First Meeting of the Panel on Economic Aspects of Defence Questions, January 6 1950, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 104, File 2020, DHH; Maloney, Learning to Love the Bomb, 16-17. This committee, which had been formed to discuss “economic and fiscal aspects of defence,” and “economic questions arising from the North Atlantic Treaty and allied questions related to Canadian defence programmes,” had quickly become an interdepartmental forum to discuss Canadian defence policy and emerged as a sort of shadow Cabinet Defence Committee.


140 Memorandum to Mr. Eberts, November 10 1950, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5921, File 50209-40 Pt. 1, LAC.

had been a consideration, a more compelling one perhaps had been the desirability of reducing our reserves of American dollars.\footnote{Fourteenth Meeting on Panel on Economic Aspects of Defence Questions, November 14 1950, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 104, File 2020, DHH, 2; Memorandum to Mr. Eberts, November 10 1950, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5921, 50209-40 Pt.1 US Military Use of Facilities in Canada and Canadian Policy, LAC}

Therefore, Canada was successful in its efforts to protect its sovereignty in the Canadian North during the war. Certainly, the appointment of Foster was a good idea and the willingness of the Canadian government to pay compensation for the facilities that the Americans had constructed was an effective gesture that preempted Congressional interest in the Canadian North, and was readily accepted by the Americans.\footnote{Grant, Sovereignty or Security, 128, Dzubian, Military Relations Between the United States and Canada, 322. For example, in late 1943 Senators Owen Brewster (R Maine) and Richard Russell (D Georgia) after a tour of airfields in the North urged for the US Government to take official action to obtain} Canada, nevertheless, benefited from the fact that the Americans had no real interest in occupying the Canadian Northwest. Now it was true that many U.S. officers in the area expressed the view that these facilities would be extremely valuable for the post-war development of the region or a conflict with the Soviet Union. In addition, some officials and Congressmen did state some interest in ensuring that the U.S. would benefit from its investment in its overseas bases. However, neither the Canadian government, its officials nor some historians fully understood that unlike in Canada, many officials, military officers and politicians in the United States would openly state their policy preferences, even if they were not in a position to actually make policy. The reality in Washington was that there was little interest in the Canadian North. For the senior American government officials and military officers, the American presence there had simply been a means to an end of winning the war. Indeed, this was one reason why Foster’s appointment had been a success, as the Americans were interested in working with him to
simply their arrangements with the Canadian authorities.\textsuperscript{144} From the start of May 1944, the focus of U.S. Northwest Command was on demobilization. By March 1945 there were fewer than 2000 American military personnel in the Northwest.\textsuperscript{145}

**Conclusion**

After a long period of tension, conflict and occasional co-operation, Canada and the United States came together in the Second World War to defend North America. The emergence of this defence relationship was not smooth, since much tension existed between the two countries in the 1800s and the early part of the 20\textsuperscript{th} Century, especially during the American Civil War and the Alaskan Boundary dispute. Moreover, despite some defence co-operation in the First World War both nations continued to formally regard each other as enemies during the 1920s. By the 1930s, these views had begun to change and with new technological developments and the increasing threat from Germany and Japan, both countries began to take small steps towards the development of a defence relationship. Nevertheless, it would be only with the fall of France in the spring of 1940 and the creation of the PJBD that a formal defence relationship materialized.

For the most part the relationship worked well, although it was not without its difficulties. In fact, serious issues emerged, most notably over the issue of “unity of command,” namely under what circumstances U.S. military officers would have command and control authority over the Canadian military. This issue particularly emerged during the discussions over the joint defence plan, ABC-22, in mid-1941 and

\textsuperscript{144} Hillmer and Granatstein, *For Better or for Worse*, 156; Dzubian, *Military Relations Between the United States and Canada*, 317.

again after the United States entered the war in December 1941. Other difficulties occurred when the U.S. Army was deployed in the Canadian North from 1942 to 1945. These problems, which only became fully known to the Canadian government in early 1943, obliged King’s cabinet to appoint Foster as the Special Commissioner for Defence Projects in the Northwest. It should be emphasized that this problem was not the crisis that it has been portrayed in the historical literature. Instead, it was a story of how pragmatic measures by the Canadian government when combined with the limited interest that Washington actually had in the region allowed for the resolution of this issue. Indeed, when the Canadians government decided to purchase the facilities that had been constructed by the U.S. in the North, it was done not only to protect Canadian sovereignty in the region, but to reduce Canada’s holding of U.S. dollars. Ultimately, the overall effectiveness of the relationship was a tribute to the officials and officers who coordinated the defence effort, as well as to King and Roosevelt for creating institutions such as the PJBD to manage it.

The military co-operation that occurred during the Second World War would also set the tone for the future. As will be seen in the next chapter, after the war, the American government and military establishment would continue to make various requests and demands upon Canada related to continental defence. Although Canada was not of vital importance for U.S. security, there was still a need for new joint defence plans for the defence of North America, and for improved co-ordination between the two countries armed forces. This would only increase with the emergence of the Soviet Union as a threat. In addition, there was still a need for installations such as weather stations in the Canadian North that would have to be constructed, operated and supplied. However, these facilities posed particular problems for the conceptions of the national interest held by
both the Cabinet and External Affairs because of the significant expense involved in their
collection, and the possible threat they posed to Canadian sovereignty in the region if
they were built and operated by the Americans. Canadian ministers and officials had
learned certain lessons from the experience in the Second World War. The problem was
that they had not learned that the United States only had a limited interest in North
American defence and that the problems that had occurred during the war were easily
solved, but that Canada-U.S. defence co-operation potentially posed great difficulties.
Therefore, the wartime experience would influence Canadian policy in the post-war
period.

Chapter 4: The Years of Planning, 1945 to 1949

Introduction

Between 1940 and 1945, Canada and the U.S. worked together for the first time to
defend North America. With the end of the Second World War, both nations moved to
demobilize their militaries and reduce their military budgets. At the same time, they
began to take steps towards the creation of a peacetime defence relationship. However, this process was slow and was perceived differently in the two capitals. Although there was little sustained high level interest in defence ties with Canada in Washington, U.S. officials did want to maintain the co-operation begun during the war and the American military recognized the strategic importance of the airspace over the Canadian Arctic. On the other hand, the relationship was of great importance to Canadian ministers and civilian officials because it posed problems for their conceptions of the national interest. Indeed, they were influenced by both their concerns about the political consequences of this co-operation and nationalist sentiments. Moreover, the experience of the Second World War had led them to be wary of an extensive U.S. military presence on Canadian soil.

In particular, 1946 was a difficult year in this relationship. Some of the problems that occurred were created by American requests for facilities such as weather stations in the Canadian Arctic. However, the most important factor was the development, by the MCC, of a new appreciation of the strategic situation and an updated joint defence plan. While these documents did not reflect thinking amongst senior U.S. policy makers, inadequate communication between the two countries resulted in a great deal of alarm in Ottawa. Yet even after this situation was resolved in December 1946 and American interest in Canada continued to be low, Canadian ministers and officials such as Claxton, the Minister of National Defence, remained very concerned. Again the reason was political considerations and nationalist sentiments, not what was happening on the ground. Ultimately, what was striking about the period from early 1947 to August 1949

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was that despite the minimal U.S. interest in defence ties with Canada and the limited U.S. military presence on Canadian soil, the Cabinet continued to be worried even when they understood that Canada was not that important in U.S. planning. Ultimately, despite these concerns, the relationship was good. The joint military installations established in the Arctic in this period slowly became more Canadian, as additional resources and personnel became available and the Americans withdrew their personnel from the region. Thus, this was the state of the defence relationship when the Soviet Union detonated an atomic bomb in August 1949.

**The Immediate Post-war Situation**

The years from 1940 to 1945 had seen extensive military cooperation between Canada and the United States; however, after this conflict ended, both countries were slow to take any new measures to ensure that North America remained secure. Indeed, with the defeat of the Axis powers, there was no longer any direct threat to the continent. Instead, both governments shifted their attention to the demobilization of their militaries, and the reduction of their defence budgets. By June 1946, over 12.8 million personnel had been released from the U.S. armed forces.² The Truman administration felt that even with rising Cold War tensions, it did not have to increase defence spending due to its monopoly on atomic weapons. As a result, U.S. defence spending only reached 13 billion dollars in 1949 and American military capabilities accordingly suffered.³ One State Department official, Dean Rusk, even argued that by 1946, the United States “did not

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have a division in our army or air force that could be considered ready for combat,” and “such ships of our Navy that remained afloat were being manned by skeleton crews.”

Defence was not a high priority for the Canadian government either, as its primary focus was on spending money on social programs such as baby bonuses and aid to veterans. In fact, King announced to his Cabinet that the end of the war meant a return to “the old liberal principles of economy, reduction in taxation and anti-militarism.” He added that the government had to make a choice between social programs and increased spending on the military. It was thus not surprising King’s government reduced Canadian defence spending to 200 million dollars in 1947 with the result that, by 1948, the Canadian military had fallen to only 34 000 personnel. One of the few positive developments for Canada’s armed forces in this period was the appointment of Claxton as Minister of National Defence. A veteran of the First World War and a strong Canadian nationalist, Claxton sought to put his stamp on the Department even during the lean years in the late 1940s. He and his military advisors believed that their mission was to ensure that the core capabilities of the military should be maintained so that it could expand again in the future if the need arose. Consequently the focus of military planning was on increasing co-ordination between the services and improving the training of officers and reserve units to ensure that personnel could be rapidly mobilized. Since the RCAF was “to constitute a highly trained nucleus for a wartime force,” there were few resources

4 Dean Rusk, His Memories of Lester Pearson in an Interview with Peter Stursberg at the University of Georgia, May 1, 1978, 6, MG 31 D 78 Peter Stursberg Fonds, Vol. 3, File 17 Dean Rusk, LAC.
5 The Mackenzie King Record Vol. 4 1947-48, 6; Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 14.
6 Bercusson, True Patriot, 158, 169, 177-180.
7 James Eayrs noted that while “defence ministers in other allied nations were driven to resignation by the pressure, one was driven to suicide; Claxton was only driven by himself.” Eayrs, In Defence of Canada Vol. 3, 25.
8 Brian Buckley, Canada’s Early Nuclear Policy Fate, Chance, and Character (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2000), 65-68; Canada’s Defence: Information on Canada's Defence
available for any effective defences. Despite post-war plans for a force of eight squadrons, it was not until December 1948 that the RCAF was able to field a regular operational fighter squadron.\(^9\)

There were other reasons for the lack of interest in the defence of North America including that U.S. strategy emphasized the offensive. American officials believed that the only way to stop a Soviet invasion of Western Europe was through the use of strategic air power and atomic weapons. This was especially the case for the leaders of the United States Army Air Force (USAAF), as their focus had been on strategic bombing before the war. This interest had grown out of the desire of these airmen to have an autonomous service, which meant a focus on a role independent of the army and the navy as a means to achieve it.\(^10\) Moreover, there was a genuine belief in the effectiveness of strategic bombing as a war winning weapon that was promoted by writers such as Guiho Douhet and Billy Mitchell, and was developed at institutions such as the Air Corps Tactical School at Maxwell Field in Montgomery, Alabama. The result was that as Mark Clodfelter has argued “after finally achieving the holy grail of service independence in 1947, the Air Force had become America’s first line of defence in an anticipated general war against the Soviet Union. That defence was in fact an offensive, in which SAC’s bombers were the centrepiece.”\(^11\)

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\(^9\) Goodspeed, The Armed Forces of Canada, 219; Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 14, 39. This proposed post-war force included “two bomber-reconnaissance, two transport, one fighter reconnaissance, one air observation, and one photographic squadrons.” Colin Gibson, Air Power in Canada: An Address to the Empire Club of Toronto, February 28th, 1946 (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 1946), 6.


The reality that the Soviets did not have the military capability to directly threaten North America in the immediate post-war period further meant that continental air defence had a low priority in U.S. strategy. The Americans realized that the Soviets would eventually develop a strategic air force; however, intelligence reports assumed that it would not be for five to ten years. Consequently, when the USAAF’s Air Defence Command was formed in 1946, it had only “two fighter squadrons, a few radars and an organization of six numbered air forces, only of which two were active.” One officer even asserted that the purpose of the command was to provide scapegoats in case another Pearl Harbour occurred, since the War Department was not actually interested in taking “any affirmative action to provide such a contretemps.”

Another factor was that American policy makers were preoccupied by a number of more important issues than Canada-U.S. defence co-operation. These included the post-war debates about the structure of the American military, and whether it should be unified into one service or a separate air force should be created. Questions over force structure were particularly heated, as they involved the division of the defence budget. They were fuelled by inter-service rivalries that were especially fierce between the Air Force and the U.S. Navy over control of naval aviation and which service would be tasked with the delivery of strategic nuclear weapons. The Secretary of Defense, James Forrestal, wrote in his diary that the U.S. Navy firmly believed “that the Air Force wants to get control of all aviation,” while the “corresponding psychosis of the Air Force [was]


that the Navy is trying to encroach upon the strategic air prerogatives of the Air Force.”

Senior U.S. officials were further preoccupied with the development of an effective peacetime military and intelligence establishment. These discussions were particularly contentious over the authority of the Secretary of Defense due to concerns expressed by many both inside and outside of Congress that the position should not be too powerful.

American policy makers were further forced to grapple with the reality that Truman was largely unprepared for the responsibilities he assumed when he became President in April 1945, since Roosevelt had not kept him properly informed after he became Vice President. Furthermore, the efficiency of the State Department in this period left much to be desired. When George Marshall was appointed Secretary of State in early 1947, he was appalled at its inefficient and haphazard organizational structure. Furthermore, co-operation between the services and the State Department was limited, and JCS policy processes were difficult for those outside the armed forces to access.

For example, the Assistant Secretary of War for Air, Stuart Symington had great difficulty gaining access to JCS files. Indeed, Wrong noted to Pearson in November

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15 This debate was between those politicians and officials who wanted more efficient decision making in Washington and ones who favoured a more traditional approach that emphasized checks and balances so that no political institution was allowed to become too powerful. Michael J. Hogan, *A Cross of Iron Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945-1954* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 23-24.
1946 that the “you know very well the tendency here for the services to hold aloof from the State Department.”  

**Early Attempts to Establish a Peacetime Defence Relationship**

America’s political and military elite, therefore, had an only limited interest in Canada-U.S. defence co-operation. General Guy Henry, the U.S. Army member of the PJBD at the time, related in his memoirs that in his mind both governments were willing to let post-war defence co-operation die. He added that found himself “the guiding spirit of the US section,” to maintain what had been developed in the Second World War.  

This certainly was an exaggeration, but it does capture much of the general disinterest that existed among officials in Washington. In fact, in the immediate post-war period, many officials in the United States were urging the Canadians to take over American built facilities in the Canadian North, since they were eager to withdraw their forces from the area to save money. This lack of interest also can be seen from the position of the U.S. Section of the PJBD after the war. Despite the fact that the main connection between the Board and the American government had been the strong personal relationship between La Guardia and Roosevelt, which had been severed by the President's death, nothing was done to replace it. Therefore, the U.S. Section in the early post-war years acted without any real direct direction from the JCS or higher officials.  

Finally, most military planners envisioned fighting a potential enemy overseas, not in North America. Nevertheless,

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20 Wrong to Pearson, November 14 1946, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5750, File 52-C (S) Pt. 2,2 Canadian Post War Defence Relationship with the United States 1946, LAC.  
22 John W. Holmes, The Shaping of the Peace: Volume 2, 77, 277; Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 12.
some interest did remain in the U.S. government in Canada-U.S. co-operation, despite the fact that Canada was for the most part a side show for the Americans.23

For example, the U.S. military remained interested in bases in Canada and Newfoundland, and desired a good working relationship with the Canadian military. They saw Canadian territory and airspace as a convenient place to conduct Arctic amphibious exercises and aerial training flights. Moreover, because of awareness that “the Arctic rim of Canada stands on the approaches” to North America, the American military wanted to improve its knowledge of this region.24 Indeed, the JCS was well aware of the importance of the airspace over the Canadian Arctic for the defence of North America.25

Another important factor was the influence of various senior officials in the United States. These personalities not only included Henry, the other American members of the PJBD and the U.S. Ambassador in Ottawa, Ray Atherton, whose positions meant that they were naturally interested in improved defence co-operation with Canada, but several officials in the State Department, including the Under Secretary of State, Dean Acheson. These individuals would play a significant role in the discussions over Canada-U.S. defence co-operation in 1945 and 1946.26

There were other barriers to defence co-operation on the Canadian side as well. These included financial ones, as even minor American requests were major expenditures for the limited Canadian defence budgets of the period. Military co-operation in

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24. Memorandum to the President, September 28 1945, Papers of Harry S. Truman PSF Subject File 1940-1953, Box 150, File Canada-General, Truman Library.
26. Acheson had strong Canadian ties and was friends with a number of Canadian officials; however, he never really outlined the reasons for his interest in Canada. One commentator noted that “perhaps Acheson took it for granted that not only he but the United States had such as close relationship to Canada that it does not need discussion.” William Diebold, “Foreign Economic Policy in Dean Acheson’s Time and
peace time with the U.S. further clashed with the conceptions of the national interest of the Cabinet and External Affairs. Canadian ministers and officials felt that a close defence relationship would not be popular with the voters, and were concerned that they would have to allocate valuable resources to policy initiatives that would not only be ineffective in attracting votes, but could cost the government politically.

There also was a strong desire in the Cabinet and External Affairs that Canada should avoid any defence arrangements with the United States that would pose a risk to Canadian sovereignty. They had learnt certain lessons from the experience of the Second World War when thousands of American troops were stationed in the Canadian North. However, the memory of that experience was much worse than the actual reality, as many ministers and officials had quickly forgotten how easily this situation had been resolved. Consequently, they believed that any future U.S. military presence in Canada should be minimized. Fuelling these perceptions was a strong sense of Canadian nationalism, as those beliefs that had been previously directed at gaining autonomy from the British Empire were now directed southward. One official, Escott Reid argued that Canada had had not won independence from Britain in order to become an American satellite.\(^{27}\)

This sense of nationalism was enhanced by Canada’s relatively strong position in the period after the Second World War. In an internal history written for External Affairs in 1952, F.H. Soward noted that although Canada was deeply dependent economically and politically on the United States after the war, it was "less directly obligated to the United States than any other country in the free world."\(^{28}\) This reality can be seen from

\(^{27}\) Quoted from Reid, *Radical Mandarin*, 159.
\(^{28}\) Canadian External Policy 1946-1952, MG 31 E 46 Escott Reid Fonds, Vol. 7, File 16, LAC.
one U.S. planning document that stated that while Canada ranked eighth out of sixteenth in terms of its importance to American national security, it was sixteenth when its significance was combined with its need for assistance. Consequently, some officials were interested in having Canada assert itself in its relations with the U.S. in order to maintain its independence. However, despite this desire, there was a wary acceptance that Canada’s strategic realities meant that it had to have a defence relationship with the U.S. These sentiments were expressed during the discussions of the Advisory Committee on Post-Hostility Hostilities Problems, which was chaired by Norman Robertson. He noted in 1944 that the Canada-U.S. military relationship would continue after the war. General Pope further stated on the subject of the joint defence plan that he was “sure that the United States will ask us to revise it so as to have it ready to be put into effect when the next war comes,” and that “I do not think it will be possible for Canada not to accede to this request, nor do I think it will lie within Government policy to refuse to do so.” He added that for the Americans, “the defence of the United States is continental defence, which includes us, and nothing that I can think will ever drive that idea out of their head.” Robertson and Pope, thus, emphasized the need to maintain forces to ease U.S. concerns of Canada’s vulnerability.

There were officials who were less accepting of Canada’s defence ties with the United States, including Reid who asserted that Canada should not become a “client”

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Moreover, when the report was presented to Cabinet, King was not satisfied, since he believed that Canada was “too small and vulnerable to rely solely of defence arrangements,” and that the document should state that an effective international system of security was of critical importance to Canada. Nonetheless, the report was approved with the reservation that “the acceptance of this paper by the War Committee [of the Cabinet] would not imply specific commitments on the part of the government.” The final report stated that the “defence of Canada is vital for the defence of United States,” since Canada lies across the “shortest air routes from either Europe or Asia [it] has become of more direct strategic importance to the United States.” It warned that American military facilities in Canada would pose a potential problem for Canada’s freedom of action that had only been recently remedied by the purchase of American wartime facilities on Canadian soil. The paper called for the continuation of the PJBD, and the improved exchange of technical data with the United States. The document reflected the desire of Canadian officials and politicians for a defence relationship, but only so much of one as well as the lessons learned from the wartime experience. Along with its various analyses of the post-war world, Canada took one other step to protect its interests in its relations with the United States. This move was the appointment of General Andrew McNaughton, a strong Canadian nationalist, to succeed Biggar as Chair of the Canadian Section of the PJBD.

32 Memorandum by First Secretary, Embassy in the United States, June 29 1944, DCER, Vol. 11, 1944-1945, 1548.
33 Extract from Cabinet War Committee, January 8 1945, DCER, Vol. 11, 1944-1945, 1564.
36 McNaughton had been the Commander of First Canadian Army in Britain during the early years of the Second World War, and served briefly as Minister of National Defence during the conscription crisis of 1944.
Early Difficulties in Post-war Defence Planning

Therefore, as the Second World War came to an end, both countries faced the task of restructuring the defence relationship. Not surprisingly, problems soon arose, since Canadian officials were not that interested in joint defence planning given the fact that the threat to North American in the post-war period was almost nonexistent. Moreover, there was some suspicion in Ottawa of American intentions. For example, in April 1945, Reid argued in a memorandum that “does the United States expect that … Canada automatically become at least a belligerent ally of the United States,” in a future conflict. He added that no “self respecting” country should be willing to do this, and that it would be better that Canada gave up this right to an international organization than to the Americans.  

Canadian concerns only increased in June 1945, when at a meeting of the PJBD, Henry argued that the American and Canadian militaries needed to increase their levels of standardization in equipment, training and organization in order to improve the defences of North America. While these comments were prefaced with the remark that there were of a “personal and tentative nature,” Pope argued that they were not out of line with those views held by the War and Navy Departments.  

Indeed, there was some evidence that some American officials other than Henry were interested in closer defence ties with Canada. For example, the CAS, Air Marshal Leckie, informed MacDonald, still the British High Commissioner in Ottawa, of a meeting that he had with Atherton and the Deputy Chief of Staff of USAAF, Major

37 Some Problems in the Relations Between Canada and the United States, April 16 1945, MG31 E46 Escott Reid Fonds, File 16 Foreign Policy Department Policy Papers, 1951-1952, LAC.
38 I. Continental Defense Value of the Canadian Northwest II. Canada-United States Post-War Collaboration, July 28 1945, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 125, File 1315, Post Hostilities Problems Ottawa Advisory Committee Working Committee, DHH.
General Walsh. At this meeting, Atherton and Walsh argued that the RCAF should equip itself with U.S. weapons, since the defence of North America should be “treated as a unified system.” Leckie believed that this conversation as well as Henry’s comments were part of a larger effort that had been “deliberately conceived by ‘very high authorities’ in Washington and was being pressed at their instigation.”\textsuperscript{39} Moreover, Acheson had written to Truman in September 1945 that the President should use a meeting with King to encourage the Canadian government to standardize their military equipment with the Americans. Acheson believed that the war had proved that the U.S. was the arsenal of democracy and that such arrangements would strengthen the security of the continent. He also felt that such standardization would allow democratic nations to “speak with greater authority at the conference table,” because they would be more unified.\textsuperscript{40} But it should be emphasized that this interest was limited to a small group of U.S. officials interested in Canadian affairs.

The Canadian government did not respond positively to Henry’s initiative. They desired to maintain their independence of action and their links with the British Commonwealth, and they did not see the immediate military advantages of the standardization of Canadian and American forces, particularly given the limited threat to North America.\textsuperscript{41} Moreover, there was not enough interest in this issue in Washington for senior officials to press this matter with the Canadians. Thus, at the next meeting of the

\textsuperscript{39} Grant, \textit{Sovereignty or Security}, 172. For a detailed record of this meeting see “Report on American Pressure for a postwar continental defence alliance,” In Grant, \textit{Sovereignty or Security} (Appendix D), 282-285.

\textsuperscript{40} Memorandum for the President, September 28 1945, Papers of Harry S. Truman PSF Subject File 1940-1953, Box 150, File Canada-General, Truman Library.

\textsuperscript{41} Memorandum from the Assistant Under Secretary of State for External Affairs to the Prime Minister, July 18 1945, DCEER, Vol. 11, 1944–1945, 1575; Note on General Henry’s Statements on (a) Continental Defence Value of Canadian Northwest and (b) Canada—United States Post-War Collaboration for use by Canadian Section at Meeting of the Permanent Joint board on Defence to be held in Montreal, 4th
PJBD, McNaughton argued that Canada would only go ahead with this proposed standardization if the British were included. He added that this problem did not require urgent attention.\footnote{Willoughby, \textit{The Joint Organizations of Canada and the United States}, 126. A Survey of Canadian External Policy, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 3483, File 36-1946-52/1 Canadian External Policy 1946-1952 An Analysis by F.H. Soward, 69. Some of Henry’s ideas were incorporated into later PJBD recommendations.}

Canada’s reluctance to agree to closer defence ties also surfaced when PJBD moved to develop a set of principles to guide defence co-operation in early 1946. Indeed, a number of Canadian officials including Pearson, the Canadian Ambassador in Washington, were critical of these proposals. The Clerk to the Privy Council and the Secretary of the Cabinet, Arnold Heeney, further asserted that the PJBD’s “proposals go far beyond a working paper for the instruction of joint planners. They take the form of a basic security pact and contain a number of fundamental military obligations.”\footnote{Ambassador in United States to Secretary of State for External Affairs, January 29 1946, \textit{DCER}, Vol. 12, 1946, 1604-5; Memorandum from Secretary to the Cabinet to Secretary of State for External Affairs, February 1, 1946, \textit{DCER}, Vol. 12, 1946, 1606; Eayrs, \textit{In Defence of Canada Vol. III}, 345. For more information on these proposals see Jockel, \textit{No Boundaries Upstairs}, 15-17; Goette, \textit{Canada and the United States}, 150-4.} Consequently, the Board was forced to revise their ideas.

In this period, the American military also began to make various requests from the Canadians. Some of these were simple to address, since they did not include a significant U.S. presence on Canadian soil. But even the ones that required American personnel on Canadian soil, most notably the weather station program in the Canadian Arctic, seemed to be straightforward.\footnote{September, 1945, Sept 3 1945, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 125, File 1315, Post Hostilities Problems Ottawa Advisory Committee Working Committee, DHH.} In fact, one U.S. official assigned to those negotiations noted that the United States could operate and construct these stations; however, they “assumed that this would not be desired by the Canadian government in view of its general policy of...
retaining control of establishments in Canadian territory.” He added that the U.S.
government was intent on not interfering with Canada’s sovereignty. Robertson agreed
with this assessment, but noted that while it was true that the United States should not be
allowed to establish these stations on Canadian soil, Canada should not assume all the
costs of the programme either. In Robertson’s opinion, it was desirable that it exercise
control over the program while having the Americans provide the funds and personnel for
these stations. 45 After some suggestions from Major General Daniel Spry, the Vice-Chief
of the Canadian General Staff, Canadian officials began to develop a formula to balance
sovereignty with the need to secure the continent. The solution was “joint” programs in
which the Americans would construct and pay for the projects while Canada would retain
control and ownership of the facilities, and if possible, operate them with Canadian
personnel. 46

These requests still caused friction, as the Americans wanted them the Canadians
to agree to them very quickly. Ironically, this urgency had nothing to do with the Soviets,
but was because of fiscal realities, namely the desire of the American military to use
funds provided under the wartime defence budget. 47 For example, at a May 18 meeting on
this issue, one U.S. official warned that while funds were currently available, it was
impossible to state whether they would be in the future. However, the Canadian

45 Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Deputy Minister Transport, May 4 1946, DCER, Vol.
12, 1946, 1544.
46 Sovereignty in the Canadian Arctic in Relation to Joint Defence Undertakings, January 1 1946, DCER,
Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 – 2005), 17; Beatty, Canada-United States Permanent
Joint Board on Defense, 128. Wrong noted this reality to Robertson in June. Wrong to Robertson, June 12
1946, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5750, File 52-C (S) Pt. 2.2 Canadian Post War Defence
Relationship with the United States 1946, LAC.
representatives countered they would need time to examine the project and that one could not predict when the Canadian government would make its decision on this program.48

Another problem that arose was the negative attitude of Prime Minister King to increased defence co-operation. With the death of Roosevelt in April 1945, King had become much more suspicious of the United States without his friend in the White House. On May 9, 1946, he told the Cabinet that he believed that “the long range policy of the Americans [is] to absorb Canada … They are already in one way or another building up military strength in the North of Canada. It was inevitable that for their own protection, they would have to do that. We should not shut our eyes to the fact that this was going on consciously as part of the American policy.” He added that with the decline of Britain, Canada may have to submit to American domination.49 This position proved problematic for the relationship because of King’s influence on the Cabinet. Indeed, when PJBD Recommendation 35, which outlined how defence co-operation between the two countries would function, but did not specify how Canada’s sovereignty would be protected, was discussed by the Cabinet, King convinced his colleagues to not approve it. Instead, he argued that he should first discuss this issue with the British government before Canada made its final decision.50 King suggested this course because it reflected the beliefs and methods of a man whose time had passed. Furthermore, it served as an

48 Minutes, May 18 1946, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fond, Box 113, File Defence Collaboration with the United States – Generally Vol. 1, DHH.
effective delaying tactic, since neither King nor External Affairs had any interest in any sort of a centralized imperial foreign policy run from London.\textsuperscript{51}

The Canada-U.S. relationship would only become more problematic with the development of the first post-war defence plan. This plan had its origins at a November 7 and 8, 1945, meeting of the PJBD, when the U.S. Army and Navy members of the Board forwarded a request from the War and Navy Departments to revise ABC-22. On December 19, the Canadian cabinet agreed to this proposal “on the understanding that any new plans for joint defence would be submitted to the Government for decision” and in early 1946, both countries formed the MCC for this purpose.\textsuperscript{52} Unfortunately, as Joseph Jockel has noted, the American officers on the MCC were neither well connected nor informed of what was happening in Washington, which meant that they were working in a policy vacuum. Moreover, according to E.W.T. Gill, the Secretary of the Cabinet Defence Committee, there was only limited consultation between the Canadian committee members and their Service Chiefs, and in his mind, the MCC had emerged as a pressure group for increased defence expenditures.\textsuperscript{53} Further complicating this situation was the increasingly close ties between the American and Canadian militaries. This became an increasingly important development in the relationship for unlike during the

\textsuperscript{51} King was advised that he should inform the British of what Canada was doing and that Canada should co-operate with the UK “while ruling out scheme of exclusive Commonwealth defence arrangements.” Memorandum for the Prime Minister, May 2 1946, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, File 50218-A-40 Pt 1.2 Permanent Joint Board on Defence, LAC. There is some debate in the literature on King’s use of the British during this period. See Lackenbauer, “Right and Honourable,” 162; Bercusson, “Continental Defense and Arctic Security,” 155-56.

\textsuperscript{52} Colonel Robert Raymont, \textit{The Formulation of Canadian Defence policy Since World War II}, DHH, 31-32; Goette, \textit{Canada and the United States}, 149; MacDonnell to Keenleyside, May 4 1946, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, File Vol. 5750, 52-C (S) Pt 2.2 Canadian Post War Defence Relationship with the United States 1946, LAC. For more information see Memorandum for the Secretary of the Canadian Section of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence – Canada- United States, March 18 1946, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5750, File 52-C (S) Pt 2.2 Canadian Post War Defence Relationship with the United States 1946, LAC.

\textsuperscript{53} Jockel, \textit{No Boundaries Upstairs}, 21
Second World War when the Canadian military had supported the Cabinet and External Affairs in opposing the imposition of “unity of command” for all forces on the West Coast in early-1942, the post-war period was different. Indeed, the services, in particular the RCAF, had become increasingly sympathetic and supportive of American requests to improve the continent’s defences. The relationship between the two air forces was built upon common backgrounds and the increasingly similar views of the defence situation in North America. In fact, the RCAF’s representative on the MCC, Air Vice Marshal, Wilf Curtis, was a leading supporter of the new joint defence plan, and even wrote letters to American officials on the progress of discussions in Ottawa. However, it should be noted that the relationship was still developing in this period and that some RCAF officers, namely Leckie, remained suspicious of the Americans.

The Joint Appreciation

When the first Joint Appreciation for the Defence of North America was produced in May 1946, it had a much greater impact in Ottawa than Washington. The document argued that in a major conflict, a strategic bomber offensive would be launched against North America. The targets would be “nerve centres of executive, military and industrial control” and “concentrations of industry, transportation and communications essential to” war production, and would include attacks over the North Pole with atomic weapons as soon as the enemy had developed them. By 1950, “the offensive capabilities of a potential enemy … [would] assume menacing proportions,” and Canada and the U.S. would need

54 Ibid, 27; For instance, in November 1946, Curtis wrote to the Americans that the Canadian government had concluded that the Americans were overstating the threat posed by the Soviet Union. R.J. Diubaldo and S. J. Scheinberg, A Study of Canadian-American Defence Policy (1945-1975) – Northern Issues and Strategic Resources ORAE Extra-Mural Paper No. 6. Ottawa: Department of National Defence, December 1978, 79/697, DHH, 7.
to construct an extensive air defence system to counter this threat.\textsuperscript{55} The reality of this
document and the joint defence plan that followed was that they laid out an optimal
defence of North America, and did not reflect the priorities of the U.S. senior leadership
in Washington; nevertheless, this reality was not understood in Ottawa. This was partially
due to the failure of the State Department to provide a realistic perspective on the plan to
the Canadian government. As Jockel has noted, the State Department’s representative on
the MCC, J. Graham Parsons, should have conveyed to the Canadians that the United
States was not going to invest significant resources into an air defence system; however,
for whatever reason, Parsons failed to do this.\textsuperscript{56} One possible reason for this was that
Parsons had only been appointed to this position in March 1946.\textsuperscript{57} This silence also
reflected the problems of policy coordination in Washington that have already been
discussed.

Moreover, there was a failure in External Affairs in discerning a gap between the
appreciation and the reality of post-war defence planning in Washington. In 1946, the
United States was in the midst of cutting its defence budget from 42 to 14 billion dollars,
and this reality should have been perceived by the Department, or at least by the Canadian
Embassy in Washington. Nevertheless, this did not take place and the appreciation was
taken as official American policy.

Consequently, whereas in Washington the appreciation was approved largely
because the JCS did not pay much attention to it, great concern arose in Ottawa.\textsuperscript{58} In June,
Heeney wrote to the Prime Minister outlining how the appreciation stated that North America would be vulnerable to attack by the early 1950s, and that its implications were very serious, since the construction of such a defence system would require heavy expenditure. In Heeney’s mind “there is no doubt, from several points of view these developments will constitute one of the most difficult and serious problems with which the government will have to deal within the next five years.” He added that the Chiefs of Staff had recommended that the various unrelated requests for facilities from the United States be deferred for the time being. The memo concluded that Canada “will probably have to accept the U.S. thesis in general terms, through we may be able to moderate the pace of which plans are to be implemented.”

Seeking more information, Pearson spoke informally with Acheson and another State Department official, John Hickerson in June. Pearson stated that “while developments in the north were perhaps relatively small items in the defence plans of this country [the United States], they were for us, matters of great importance strategically and politically.” Acheson and Hickerson were sympathetic and Pearson got the impression that Acheson would be taking a far greater interest in the Canada-U.S. relationship in the future, but the meeting ended inconclusively.  

Although the Canadians would have preferred to focus on the development of the north and did “not relish the necessity of digging, or having dug for her, any Maginot Line in her Arctic ice,”

59. Memorandum from Secretary of the Cabinet to Prime Minister, June 12 1946, June 21 1946, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5750, File 52-C (S) Pt. 2.2 Canadian Post War Defence Relationship with the United States 1946, LAC.
60. Pearson to Robertson, June 21 1946, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5750, File 52-C (S) Pt 2.2 Canadian Post War Defence Relationship with the United States 1946, LAC. Pearson expressed concerns that the PJBD was sometimes too influential an organization. It also appears that these officials did not discuss the Joint Appreciation at this meeting.
many officials feared that this is what would occur. On June 20, when King was abroad, the Cabinet even discussed the option of not allowing the U.S. to use Canadian territory for its own defence. By June 28, King had returned to Canada and at the next meeting of the Cabinet he asserted:

The importance of considering as a whole all projects relating to the joint defence of northern North America, and suggested that this particular proposal [regarding weather stations] should not be dealt with separately; the general problem which require most careful consideration as involving major policy; it could not be expected that the government would deal with this question finally until after the session.

With this decision, the Canadian government declined the American request to construct weather stations in the Arctic, despite the fact that the Cabinet Defence Committee had recommended that the program be approved if the Americans “pressed the matter.” Not surprisingly, U.S. officials were displeased although it should be emphasized that they accepted the decision.

King soon faced a new problem, as the Canadian media began to take an interest into these defence discussions. On June 29, an article was published in the Financial Post entitled “Canada ‘Another Belgium’ In U.S. Air Bases proposal?” It outlined that the Americans had issued “a virtual ultimatum … to build or let us build for you, a system of northern frontier air bases to be maintained … as part of the general defensive machinery of this continent.” The article added that if this would occur then Canada’s independence

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62 The Mackenzie King Record Vol. 3, 265.
63 Memorandum by Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, June 28 1946, DCER, Vol. 12, 1946, 1571.
64 Memorandum by Head, Third Political Division, June 28th, 1946, DCER, Vol. 12, 1946, 1571-2; Abstract from the 19th Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, June 6 1946, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fond, Box 113, File Defence Collaboration with the United States – Generally Vol. 1, DHH.
65 Memorandum by Head, Third Political Division, June 28 1946, DCER, Vol. 12, 1946, 1571.
would be harmed. In response, King was forced to deny the charges in parliament.\textsuperscript{66} After these moves, there was little change in this situation until the fall. The Cabinet Defence Committee did approve the continuation of planning discussions in July, but the Joint Appreciation was left in limbo.\textsuperscript{67}

Some American officials remained confident that the Canadians would eventually come around. In August, Atherton stated that it was widely recognized in Canada that if another war begins that “Canada will be attacked along with the United States.” He concluded that “I think it is safe to say … that … we may expect slow but steady progress towards the integration of our defence system which seems so essential to the defence,” of North America.\textsuperscript{68} Acheson also understood that strengthening the Canada-U.S. defence relationship in peacetime was difficult for Canada. He told Truman that while both public and elite opinion in Canada understood the problem there were fears in Canada that defence co-operation with the Americans would lead to loss of sovereignty, and force it out of the Commonwealth.\textsuperscript{69} Finally, Henry tried to reassure the Canadian when he wrote to the PJBD in September that the United States “in no way wishes to infringe on Canadian sovereignty or Canadian rights.” He added that the United States saw continental air defence, as a problem, “which will require a more intimate and

\textsuperscript{67} Holmes, \textit{The Shaping of the Peace Vol. 2}, 79.
\textsuperscript{68} The Ambassador in Canada (Atherton) to Secretary of State, August 28 1946, \textit{FRUS}, Vol. V, 1946, 53-55.
\textsuperscript{69} Memorandum by Acting Secretary of State to President Truman, October 1 1946, \textit{FRUS}, Vol. V, 1946, 56.
complicated co-operation than has here to fore been achieved between the forces of two sovereign nations.” Patience on both sides, nevertheless, was beginning to wear thin.

For example, Acheson informed Truman that “our military authorities are naturally insistent on closing the gap between Alaska and Greenland and on pushing the defense of our industrial centers north of our own border.” He added, “for this [goal] we are dependent on the cooperation” of Canada. King, himself, at a meeting of the Cabinet, further expressed interest in both nations having a clear policy for the defence of the continent. Atherton therefore informed Pearson, the new Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, that Truman had decided that a high level meeting was needed to discuss defence co-operation.

Three days later, on October 28, the two leaders met at the White House in an attempt to resolve this issue. In a phone conversation with Pearson on October 25, King was advised that Truman would discuss the various defence issues in his usual friendly way to minimize any disagreements. Pearson advised that King should keep "the discussion on a general and a non committal line." Unfortunately, while this may have been good advice for making the meeting go smoothly, it was a missed opportunity to see if the senior leadership in Washington was really interested in developing an extensive air

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70 Memorandum to Members Permanent Joint Board, Undated, DCER, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5750, File 52-C (S) Pt. 2.2. Canadian Post War Defence Relationship with the United States 1946, LAC.
71 Memorandum for the President, October 1 1946, Papers of Harry S. Truman PSF Subject File 1940-1953, Box 150, File Canada- General, Truman Library.
72 The Mackenzie King Record Vol. 3, 356.
73 Memorandum for Mr. St Laurent, Undated, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5750, File 52-C (S) Pt. 2.2. Canadian Post War Defence Relationship with the United States 1946, LAC; Memorandum for Mr Wershof, February 27 1953, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5750, File 52-C (S) Pt. 2.2. Canadian Post War Defence Relationship with the United States 1946, LAC. Truman was also informed that he should assure King that civilian officials in Washington were convinced that the program is needed and that they were working to ensure that military plans would not be excessive. Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State to President Truman, October 26 1946, FRUS, Vol. V, 1946, 57.
defence system on Canadian soil. In the end, the results of this visit were not what Canadian officials had hoped for. The meeting itself went quite well, as there was a general discussion and no specific plans or proposals were outlined. In his diary, King noted that Truman agreed that any defence preparations in the Arctic should not harm Canadian sovereignty in the area, and that further discussions on this issue should take place between diplomats and ministers and not through military channels. Neither the Basic Security Plan nor the Joint Appreciation was mentioned. However, Truman also handed to Canadian officials an “Oral Message” drawn up by the State Department that stated the official American position. This document only outlined modest aims such as improving joint planning, approving the 35th Recommendation of the PJBD and requesting that U.S. forces be stationed at the base at Goose Bay. But it added that North America was now vulnerable to attack and that within five years it “must be prepared to meet major enemy capabilities.”

This mixed message meant that, despite Truman’s not mentioning the Joint Appreciation, Canadian officials still assumed that it represented American policy.

The Resolution of the Crisis

Fortunately for the Prime Minister and his officials, the situation began to improve. At a meeting on November 1, one American official noted that he had been told that the appreciation had been modified to reduce costs. This comment was in response to concerns from Pearson that if Canada and the U.S. paid too much attention to continental

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74 Memorandum of Phone Conversation with the Prime Minister Friday October 25th/46, MG 26 N1 Lester Pearson Fonds, Vol. 7, File King, W.L. Mackenzie, 1942-1950, LAC.
75 King Diary, October 28 1946, LAC; Ambassador in United States to Secretary of State for External Affairs, October 29 1946, DCER, Vol. 12, 1946, 1661-2; Memorandum by President Truman to Canadian
defence, their forces would be ill prepared for combat overseas. Pearson added that Canada needed more information on American global strategy. These officials, thus, agreed that there should be a conference between senior American and Canadian representatives to discuss this subject and its impact on Canada-U.S. defence cooperation.76

Another important development was at a meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee on November 13 when Leckie asserted “he was very much concerned at the extent of the undertaking which [the joint appreciation] envisaged, particularly the financial implications.” He added that he was not “altogether satisfied with the strategic concept upon which it was based.” This intervention from a senior military officer was highly appreciated by King, and bolstered the Cabinet’s willingness to not approve the document.77 At a Cabinet meeting the next day, Claxton was also critical of the appreciation, and argued that since there was a difference of opinion between the two countries military advisors on the nature of the Soviet threat, there was a need for discussions at the political level to resolve the situation. The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Louis St. Laurent, added that the British had urged that Canada not to go too fast with defence measures in the north so as not to provoke a negative reaction from the Soviets.78 It was at this moment that the Prime Minister chose to step in. He remarked

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76 From the Canadian Ambassador in United States to The Secretary of State for External Affairs Canada, November 6 1947, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5750, File 52-C (S) Pt. 2.2. Canadian Post War Defence Relationship with the United States 1946, LAC. Pearson added that if a World War broke out in the next ten to fifteen years, it would not be decided by operations taking place in North America.

77 Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, November 13 1946, DCER, Vol. 12, 1946, 1675; Grant, Sovereignty or Security, 181; Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 27. Curtis was furious that Leckie had neither supported the Joint Appreciation nor made an effort to properly present it at the November 13 meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee.

78 Undated Memorandum, MG 32 B5 Brooke Claxton Fond, Vol. 122, File Prime Minister Joint Defence Policy, LAC; Stacey, Canada in an Age of Conflict, 409.
that this issue was “of the highest importance. There is no doubt that North American
defence had to be considered as a whole. The defence of Canada was inseparable from
that of the United States.” He questioned “however, how far the government should
accept, in any event at this stage, the strategic concept upon which the conclusions of the
joint draft appreciation had been based.” 79 The Cabinet concluded that while the Joint
Appreciation could serve as the basis for military planning, it was not willing to approve
the document without more discussions with the Truman administration. 80

After this decision, both countries sought to resolve these problems through
additional high level meetings. As early as November 8, Heeney wrote to King that
Ambassador Wrong had informally discussed the idea of a conference in Ottawa with the
State Department. 81 On November 26, a meeting was held to lay the groundwork for these
discussions, and was attended by a number of senior officials including Pearson, Heeney,
Atherton and Henry. At this meeting, Henry stated that if a conflict broke out in the next
five to six years “very little of the basic security plan would have become operative and
by far the greater part of Canadian and United States forces would be available in theatres
outside of North America.” 82 But it was not until another conference on December 16 and
17 at the Chateau Laurier Hotel in Ottawa that the situation was finally resolved.

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79 Extract from Cabinet Conclusions, November 14 1946, DCER, Vol. 12, 1946, 1681. Pearson had
warned King that the current world situation meant that Canada would have to co-operate with both the
U.S. and Britain. Memorandum for the Prime Minister Defence Discussions, November 12 1946, RG 25
Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5750, File 52-C (S) Pt. 2.2. Canadian Post War Defence Relationship
with the United States 1946, LAC.
80 Memorandum for Mr Pearson and Mr Heeney, November 20 1946, RG 25 Department of External
Affairs, Vol. 5750, File 52-C (S) Pt 2.2 Canadian Post War Defence Relationship with the United States
1946, LAC.
81 Memorandum for the Prime Minister Problems of Canadian Defence Policy, November 8 1946, RG 25
Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5750, File 52-C (S) Pt 2.2 Canadian Post War Defence Relationship
with the United States 1946, LAC.
82 Memorandum by Head Third Political Division, November 26 1946, DCER, Vol. 12, 1946, 1701;
Record of Conversations Informal Canada United States Meeting, November 26 1946, RG 25 Department
Canadian officials saw these conversations as means of gaining more information on the “views of the United States as to the relationship between continental defence and global strategy.” The Canadians opened the meeting by stating that the Cabinet had not yet approved the Joint Appreciation, and desired “to have the latest American views on the political and military aspects of potential threats to North America and the steps regarded as essential to meet the situation.” As the meeting progressed it became apparent that the Americans were not going to make any significant policy demands on Canada. It was helpful that George Kennan, one of the American’s foremost experts on the Soviet Union, was in attendance and he stated that the Russians were not planning a direct attack on the West. Atherton did warn that they must consider the possibility of an enemy strike at the industrial heartland of North America; nevertheless, the American representatives emphasized how U.S. strategy was focused on the offensive action. These officers and officials noted that some defences for the North American industrial base was needed, but they were ultimately willing to take a calculated risk in only deploying limited forces for this task due to the massive resources that were needed to properly defend the continent. One of the American officials even asserted that they did not want to be seen as “too continental defence minded.” Atherton added that there were to be no “Maginot Lines” constructed in the North, although he warned that American forces could not be sent overseas until the Arctic was secure; however, Henry countered that few forces would even be needed in the next five to six years to defend North America. During the meeting, there was agreement that “all defence plans must be regarded as slightly utopian and as goals to be attained in the event of an emergency.” The participants agreed that this plan’s
implementation would require close attention to changes in the international situation, and the speed in which they would be actually put into place would be up to the individual governments. The meeting concluded that there was a need for more defence co-operation including improved joint training and personnel exchange programs between the two countries’ armed forces and for better weather forecasting and mapping of the Canadian Arctic.\(^{83}\)

**The Emergence of the Post-war Relationship**

The meeting, thus, did much to improve the Canada-U.S. defence relationship. A memo addressed to King in late December stated that American officials had “made a very good impression. They were well-informed, reasonable and moderate in their approach ... There was no effort on their part to overemphasize dangers.” The document further stated that the U.S. officials recognized the problems that joint defence initiatives posed for Canada and that the focus of American strategy would be on offensive operations.\(^{84}\) On January 9, Pearson added that the “scale and urgency of the undertakings visualized by the U.S. government were rather less than had been anticipated” and that the U.S. had agreed that joint defence measures would be carried out “under civilian

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\(^{84}\) Memorandum for the Prime Minister, December 23 1946, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5750, File 52-C (S) Pt. 3. Canadian Post War Defence Relationship with the United States 1946-1953, LAC.
Kennan later wrote to Acheson in 1948 that, “I understand that this visit was helpful in persuading the Canadians to agree to further development of defence arrangements … and in making them feel that we are taking them into our confidence generally.”

With this situation having been resolved, some steps were taken to improve defence co-operation. On January 16, the Cabinet approved PJBD Recommendation 36 that laid out several principles to govern Canada-U.S. defence co-operation, including the interchange of personnel and the standardization of equipment. It further outlined that joint military exercises or projects in one country should occur under the supervision of that nation and they be conducted “without prejudice to the sovereignty of either country, [and] confer no permanent rights or status.” Finally, public information on military installations or exercises should be the main responsibility of the host nation. As C.P. Stacey later noted “it would be hard to imagine a document with more saving clauses. It bore the clear hallmark of Mackenzie King.” Furthermore, after a recommendation from the Chiefs of Staff Committee, the Cabinet Defence Committee agreed that neither the Joint Appreciation nor the new Basic Security Plan would require approval from either government in the future.

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85 Abstract of Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, January 9 1947, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 113, File 3 (1 of 3), DHH.
86 Letter to the Secretary of State, May 7 1948, RG 59 General Records of the Department of State Records of the Policy Planning Staff, Box 13, File Canada 1947-53, NARA.
87 This was a revised and renamed version of Recommendation 35. Aronsen, American National Security, 13.
88 Recommendation 35 as set out in the journal of discussion and decision of the meeting of the Board November 19-20 1946, MG E133 McNaughton Papers, Vol. 289, File Permanent Joint Board on Defence, Canadian Government, Cabinet Defence Committee, LAC.
89 Stacey, Canada in the Age of Conflict, 412.
90 Raymont, The Formulation of Canadian Defence Policy, 33, 35. Another important step was the establishment of a close relationship between the Chief of the General Staff, General Charles Foulkes, and McNaughton so that the problems that occurred with joint planning in 1946 would be avoided in the future.
The Chateau Laurier conference was followed by two important speeches on Canadian foreign policy. The first was given in January 1947 when St. Laurent, in the first Gray Lecture, stated the principles that he believed should govern Canadian foreign policy, including that foreign affairs should not impair the unity of the country. Although the lecture showed a definite bias towards participation in international organizations, he did discuss Canada’s relations with the U.S. He compared it to two farmers whose farms had a “common cession line,” and that the problems between them were settled “without dignifying the process by the world ‘policy!’” He added that Canada was willing to take common action with its southern neighbour in order to achieve common ends. 91 St. Laurent certainly knew that he was romantizing the complexities of the Canada-U.S. relationship for Canadian public consumption. However, it should be noted that the speech does have another meaning that this relationship should be just like the one between two farmers, with each country in control of its own affairs. Another effort to present a positive image of these defence ties can be seen in February when King addressed the House of Commons. After giving an overview of its recent history and the principles outlined in PJBD Recommendation 36, he asserted that “there has been talk of Maginot Lines, of large scale defence projects, all of which unwarranted and much of it fantastic.” He then outlined that the Americans had not attempted to infringe on Canadian sovereignty, and that these measures would be of great help in the developing the resources of the region for civilian purposes. 92

92 Comments to be Made in House of Commons Following the Agreed Statement on Defence, RG 25 Department of External Affairs Vol. 5750, File 52-C (5) Pt. 3 Canadian Post War Defence Relationship with the United States 1946-1953, LAC. Pearson to Wrong, February 6 1947, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5750, File 52-C (5) Pt. 3 Canadian Post War Defence Relationship with the United
There were several reasons for this approach including the need to maintain a strong relationship in public so as not to give any comfort to the Soviets. It certainly reflected Canadian officials’ preference for what became known as quiet diplomacy: that disputes with the U.S. should be dealt with privately. But the most important reason was to assure the Canadian public that all was well with the relationship. This was done for political reasons, as public disagreements between the two countries could become a problem for the Cabinet.

This also explains why Canadian politicians and officials sought to minimize the U.S. military presence in Canada. For example, Claxton stated in regards to the joint weather station program that "as little public attention as possible be drawn to the project, particularly as regards large scale military participation. If any substantial number of U.S. aircraft were to be employed, it would be desirable to avoid their flying over heavily populated and urban areas if at all possible." The CAS replied that since the U.S. aircraft would not be flying in formation, they would not be too noticeable. Consequently, when the Cabinet Defence Committee approved this program, it added that great care should be "exercised to avoid unnecessary public notice in regard to U.S. military participation." 93

All of this reflected an increasing problem of Canadian politicians and their officials fearing a negative public response to improved defence co-operation with the United States even when the relationship was positive. Indeed, one External Affairs memorandum emphasized that the relationship was good because: “The United States have recently been careful to respect the sensitiveness of Canadian public opinion in this

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States 1946-1953, LAC; Sutherland, “The Strategic Significance of the Canadian Arctic,” 264; Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 28-29.
matter and have not been pressing the Government too hard or too often to initiate or carry out arrangements. The policy of moderation on both sides is proving to be successful in avoiding public domestic controversy.”

These concerns only increased after the debate over the Visiting Forces Act in mid-1947. This piece of legislation was in the words of one MP was “a very simple bill … It is a bill to allow a foreign country, whose military forces are here by our invitation and consent to set up their own courts to deal with infractions of the rule or the law.”

However, the debate in House of Commons did not go smoothly for the Cabinet, as many MPs were critical, particularly those from the CCF. One CCF MP, J.O. Probe was worried that the bill surrendered Canadian sovereignty and that he would not “consent to foreign troops drilling on this soil except by consent and agreement with the United Nations.” Another CCF MP, Stanley Knowles, stated that he feared that Canada was increasingly becoming an American satellite. He added that, “if it was wrong for the Soviet Union to have troops in other countries of Europe, it was equally wrong for the United States to have troops in Canada.” The Cabinet did not help matters when it was vague on how many U.S. military personnel were stationed in Canada. While the act was approved overwhelmingly, it was not a pleasant experience for the government. Claxton noted to the Cabinet Defence Committee in August that the “recent discussions in the House of Commons on a relatively simple aspect of defence co-operation had given some indication of the jealously that was felt concerning sovereignty.” Despite the fact

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95 Hansard, 1947, Vol. IV, 3860
96 Ibid, 3796.
that he admitted that most Canadians supported U.S. policy, this debate over this act
discouraged the Cabinet from supporting an increased U.S. presence on Canadian soil.99
Indeed, Atherton predicted that the protracted debate would “create [a] less favorable
atmosphere for consideration of future joint defence requests and has supplied [the]
Canadian government with [an] excuse for [the] cautious handling of such requests.”100
Acheson further noted to Truman that “our joint defence relationship requires careful and
tactful handling on both sides.”101

Despite these sentiments in Ottawa, the bilateral relationship remained strong.

King visited Truman in April 1947, and they agreed that any idea that Canada would
become a member of the Pan American Union should be shelved so there would be no
misunderstandings about Canada’s continued membership in the Commonwealth.102
Moreover, while there were some disagreements over defence production and the U.S.
bases in Newfoundland, the over-all defence relationship remained positive. One reason
for this was that, with the onset of the Cold War, the attention of Washington was
elsewhere. Another major factor was that since the U.S. had a monopoly on the atomic
bomb, the JCS believed that the Soviet Union posed only a limited threat to North
America.103 The Canadian Chiefs of Staff Committee agreed that attacks on the continent
would be primarily of diversionary character, directed toward the pinning down of the

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99 Special Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, Aug 12 1947, 2002/3 Cabinet Defence Committee
Fonds, File 13, DHH.
100 The Ambassador in Canada (Atherton) to the Secretary of State, June 7 1947, *FRUS*, Vol. III, 1947,
112.
101 Memorandum for the President, June 9 1947, Papers of Harry S. Truman PSF Trip File 1945-1953, Box
102 Memorandum of Conversation, April 23 1947, Hickerson-Matthews Files, Microfilm Reel 6, Robarts
Library, University of Toronto.
103 Enclosure B Facts and Assumptions Baring on the Problem, September 20 1948, RG 218 Records of
the Joint Chiefs of Staff Central Decimal File, Box 213, File CCS 413-44 (7-1-8) Sec 1, NARA.
maximum forces possible in North America. This opinion was shared by the British government, and was expressed by Claxton in June 1948, although he admitted, “if this last assumption was not well-founded, then our forces, as presently constituted, were quite inadequate.”

Both American and Canadian policy makers favoured an offensive strategy. For the Americans this meant a focus on developing a strong strategic bomber force. The first Chief of Staff of the USAF, Carl Spaatz, emphasized that the only way to prevent an attack on the United States was to “get them at the place they start from, and that is primarily our mission.” This view was shared by the Canadian military who considered “the most effective means of defence to be offensive strength which will include the ability to strike retaliatory blows and to destroy any potential enemy's ability to launch an effective attack against this Continent.” Claxton was also a strong proponent of the value of offensive action, and in a memorandum to the Chiefs of Staff Committee, he argued “as you know, I hold the view that static defence means defeat,” and that extensive defences in the Arctic would be too costly. He further raised the political implications of a defensive strategy, which he considered unacceptable as:

> the temperament of the Canadian people would lead them to refuse to confine their national war effort to a defensive role even though that might be the best way in which to use our resources; that the defence plans of North America must take factors like these into account; that our defence planning must also take into account national traditions and habits of thinking as well as factors of population and economic resources.

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105 Minutes of the 47th Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, June 2 1948, MG 30 E133 Andrew McNaughton Papers, Vol. 289, File Permanent Joint Board on Defence Canadian Government Cabinet Defence Committee, LAC.
106 Quoted in Futrell, Ideas, Concepts, Doctrine, 222.
107 Memorandum by Secretary, Cabinet Defence Committee, January 7 1948, DCER, Vol. 14, 1587.
As a result, there were no major problems with the bilateral relationship in relation to continental defence. In March 1948, the Chief of the General Staff, General Charles Foulkes visited Washington, and found that the Americans had “no desire whatever to interfere or dictate to Canada’s policy or to embarrass us in any way in regards to our sovereignty.” In fact, he found that few of these men knew anything about the Basic Security Plan. ¹⁰⁹ Once he returned to Ottawa, he reported that the Americans had “no inclination to press for further implementation measures in Canadian territory for the time being, and they seemed very pleased with Canadian co-operation in the field of defence.”¹¹⁰ This lack of interest can further be seen from the mostly innocuous items being discussed at the meetings of the PJBD as well as during the visits of two U.S. Secretaries of Defense, Forrestal and Louis Johnson. Forrestal was deeply impressed by the Canadian cabinet system of government and its ability to handle defence issues while “Johnson had expressed himself as being well satisfied with arrangements” dealing with Canada-U.S. defence co-operation. Johnson asserted to his Canadian counterparts “there were no major problems the United States Government wished him to discuss.”¹¹¹ Finally, in 1948, both governments agreed to the preparation of an Emergency Defence Plan that would utilize only those forces that currently existed. ¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Notes of Discussions and Conversations in Washington, March 21-25 1948, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 116, File 2564B, DHH.
¹¹⁰ Extract from Minutes of Meeting of Cabinet Defence Committee, April 15 1948, DCER, Vol. 14, 1948, 1580.
Continued Concern in Ottawa over the Relationship

On the other hand, the situation in Ottawa was more complicated. One reason was the wider discussions that took place due to the emergence of the Cold War. These were partially motivated by concerns over North American defence, but were also driven by the need to formulate new policies to deal with the start of the Cold War. During this debate, Canadian officials including the Canadian Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Dana Wilgress, and Reid expressed concerns about the erratic nature of American policy. R.M. Macdonnell and R.A. Mackay were further worried that Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic would be endangered by too close of ties with the U.S.\textsuperscript{113} However, this debate eventually subsided due to the reality that Canada would have to stand with the United States as the leader of the “free world.” As Don Page and Don Munton argued “although the Canadians may well have been less ready than their American counterparts to brand the Soviet Union an enemy, it was nonetheless clear where Canada stood.”\textsuperscript{114} Reid recognized that: “in the event of war we shall have no freedom of action in any matter which the United States considers essential. We shall be all-out belligerents from the day the war starts.”\textsuperscript{115} Moreover, it was concluded that the Canadian electorate would not support a radically different course in foreign policy.\textsuperscript{116} Events such as the communist coup in Czechoslovakia in 1948 had also shown the dangers that the Soviets posed with

\textsuperscript{115} The United States and the Soviet Union Study of the Possibility of War Implications for Canadian Policy, August 20 1947, MG 31 E46 Arnold Smith Fonds, Vol. 80, File The Russians and the Rest of Us Memoranda and Lecture 1947, 1977, LAC.
\textsuperscript{116} Holmes, \textit{The Shaping of the Peace Volume 1}, 192-3.
the result that Canada helped the U.S. and its Western European allies to create NATO in 1949.

Two questions for Canadian policy makers remained: how much would Canada have to do in support of the United States and how significant an American presence would it have to tolerate on its soil? Consequently, there continued to be much debate and concern in Ottawa over Canada-U.S. defence co-operation, despite the lack of interest by the Americans in this subject. Interestingly enough, the Canadians were aware of this reality. Claxton’s briefing notes for his trip to Washington in January 1948 specifically discussed the lack of interest in continental defence among American policy makers. Claxton found during his visit that there was little understanding of joint planning arrangements and “that Canada-U.S. planning represented a relatively small part of their whole strategic picture while in Canada it naturally bulked much larger.” This lack of profile, however, was not a source of comfort. Although Canadian officials certainly did not want to be the focus of American attention, they did not want to be ignored in planning either. Claxton argued that North American defence should “be considered as part of the broad picture and not as an isolated problem.” This was reflected in an intense interest in Ottawa in understanding American strategy of the period, and its implications for Canada. A memorandum from the Secretary of the Cabinet Defence Committee argued:

119 Minutes of the 44th Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, June 2 1948, McNaughton Papers, Vol. 289, File Permanent Joint Board on Defence Canadian Government Cabinet Defence Committee, LAC.
Canada has as yet no detailed knowledge of American strategic plans, of how offensive and defensive plans are integrated, and in what proportions the effort is to be divided. Moreover, the United States have understandably shown reluctance to discuss their overall plans. Since, however, Canada provides the essential areas for the establishment of the military installations … the Canadian Government should have fuller knowledge of U.S. plans. The only way in which this can be obtained is orally and at a high level.120

Ironically, between the inter-service battles of the period in Washington, the American budgetary limitations, and the general lack of certainty in U.S. planning, the Canadians were searching for something that really did not exist in Washington.121

Another issue that arose was the status of the various joint defence projects in the Canadian Arctic and how costs would be split between the two countries. As one memorandum for the Cabinet Defence Committee stated “The Canadian government ... will be faced with increased expenditures – not only for the initiation of new projects but for the continuation of those underway. The U.S. government on the other hand may find it difficult to authorize expenditures for military installations in Canada when they do not receive long-term military rights in return.”122 Furthermore, there was anxiety in Ottawa that U.S. officials did not understand the difference between Basic Security Plan and its implementation, which was up to the Canadian government.123 These issues were

122 Memorandum for Cabinet Defence Committee, Aug 5 1947, 2002/3 Cabinet Defence Committee Fonds, File 13, DHH. Interesting enough at a February meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, Foulkes argued that “it would be preferable to leave discussion on this point between Canada and the United States until such time as Canada was unable to undertake by herself those measures required in Canadian territory.” Extract from Minutes of Meeting of Chiefs of Staff Committee, February 12 1948, *DCER*, Vol. 14, 1948, 1570. When Acheson raised this issue at a meeting of the PJBD, McNaughton responded that discussion by the Joint Board “was premature, particularly as responsibility for planning and proposing implementation measures on the Canadian side lay with the Chiefs of Staff.” Extract from Minutes of Meeting of Chiefs of Staff Committee, February 12 1948, *DCER*, Vol. 14, 1948, 1570. Footnote 35.
discussed at an August 12, 1947, joint meeting of the Canadian Section of the PJBD and the Cabinet Defence Committee during which McNaughton was assigned the task of explaining the difference between the plan and its implementation to the Americans. This meeting further illustrated the contradictions in Canadian perspectives of the relationship. For example, McNaughton asserted that the Americans in his recent experience had showed a “complete propriety regarding Canadian rights,” and that Canada’s claims over the Arctic had been strengthened. Wrong and the CAS added, "the atmosphere in Washington was one of less immediate urgency” in regards to joint defence plans. Nonetheless, Claxton expressed concern about the reaction of the Canadian people to U.S. personnel manning facilities on Canadian soil. It was thus agreed that the Department of Transport needed to provide personnel for all U.S. operated weather stations on Canadian soil, “as soon as might be practical.”

Many Canadian concerns about the defence of North America were expressed during a meeting between the Defence Research Board (DRB) and British scientists in September. Foulkes argued that the objective of Canadian policy was to have a “reasonable defence with a minimum expenditure of men and materials.” He added that if an air defence system were built, many of the installations in Canada would have to be manned by the U.S. military. He believed that such a scenario would be unpopular with the Canadian people and raised sovereignty considerations with the Cabinet. Foulkes, therefore, stated that the solution to this dilemma was “to have a minimum of American cooperation in defence inside Canada during peacetime and reverse the procedure during

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124 Special Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, Aug 12 1947, 2002/3 Cabinet Defence Committee Fond, File 13, DHH; Memorandum for the Canadian Section of the Board, September 3 1947, MG 30 E133 Andrew McNaughton Papers, Vol. 278, File Permanent Joint Board on Defence Meeting New York 11-12 Sept 1947, LAC.
war.” There was also continued suspicion of American intentions. Wrong concluded from Claxton’s January visit to Washington “it is apparent that we shall be subjected to strong pressure to agree to annual implementation programs in the North which will constitute a very considerable drain on our budget and resources unless we permit the United States to assume a very large proportion of the cost.” The old problem of disparity of effort was another issue. Claxton noted to his U.S. colleagues that “something which might seem almost trivial in Washington would have a very different appearance in Ottawa.” Canadian ministers and officials thus remained concerned about the relationship and the main reason for this was these suspicions created by their conceptions of the national interest.

The government’s response to the perceived problem of the U.S. military presence in the Arctic was to create the Advisory Committee on Northern Development (ACND) in early 1948 to better co-ordinate Canadian policy in the region. Its first chair was Keenleyside, now the Deputy Minister for Mines and Resources. At the first meeting, he outlined that the ACND should study Northern defence to ensure maximum Canadian participation so that Canada retained control of that region. He presented two reports, including one from Trevor Lloyd, the head of the Geographical Bureau at the Department of Northern Affairs. While Keenleyside asserted that Lloyd’s report had been intended to be factual and not an attack on U.S. military activities in the Canadian North, its tone suggests otherwise, as it was particularly critical of the Americans. During the debate that followed, Heeney stated that he had read the report with considerable interest. He added that although the document outlined that the U.S. was “consciously attempting to carry on

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125 Special Meeting Defence Research Board with UK Reps, Sept 16 1947, 73/1223 Raymont Papers, Box 116, File 2560, DHH.
activities without seeking proper authority or fully informing the Canadian government 
... his experiences would indicate that there was no underlying design of this sort in the 
United States.” Instead, this situation was due to poor co-ordination in the Canadian 
bureaucracy and between the two governments. Pearson expressed shock at the situation, 
but felt that “there was no intention on the part of the United States to conduct these 
activities in any clandestine fashion.”

The discussion continued at the next meeting when Pearson commented “in his 
opinion, the U.S. authorities had not attempted to evade Canadian authority in the projects 
undertaken in Canadian territory, but rather the authority had sometimes been loosely 
drafted and had been, therefore, somewhat ambiguous.” He was relieved that further 
documentation had shown that the situation was not a serious as had been feared. 
McNaughton added that much of the problem was that junior officers were often in 
charge of such projects, and they did not understand the proper procedures. The Chair of 
the DRB, Olmond Solandt, then contended that they should not be too concerned about 
U.S. activities in the North, as they were doing nothing that would not have been 
approved anyway. However, Heeney disagreed with Solandt’s argument and the 
committee agreed to create procedures to better verify the number of American personnel 
in Canada. It was at this point that the ACND declined in importance. It would only 
meet three more times until it was reconvened in 1953. There were several reasons 
including the fact that despite all the discussions about the need to better co-ordinate 

127 Minutes of the 1st Meeting Advisory Committee on Northern Development held on Feb 2nd, 1948, 
Undated, MG 30 E133 Andrew McNaughton Papers, Vol. 289, File Permanent Joint Board on Defence 
Canadian Government Advisory Committee on Northern Development, LAC.  
128 Minutes of Second Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Northern Development, June 1 1948, MG 
30 E133 Andrew McNaughton Papers, Vol. 289, File Permanent Joint Board on Defence Canadian 
Government Advisory Committee on Northern Development, LAC.
policies, the actual implementation of this goal was another matter. Indeed, as Shelagh Grant argues, there was much dissension and bureaucratic infighting between the military and civilian bureaucracies.\textsuperscript{129} Nonetheless, the most important factor was the lack of American activity in the North and the sheer ordinariness of what did occur. In essence, the committee had been formed to deal with a problem that did not really exist.

There were approximately a thousand U.S. military personnel in the Canadian North in the late 1940s,\textsuperscript{130} but as already stated, the Americans were not that interested in that region. Moreover, the Canadians soon mustered additional resources for service in the Arctic including in March 1948 when the Cabinet approved the construction of an ice breaker and an arctic capable supply ship, and in June, when the RCAF was authorized to create an additional air reconnaissance squadron. Consequently, the U.S. increasingly stepped aside and most of the weather stations and airfields in the area were transferred to Canadian control. This success has led many Canadian historians, including David Bercusson, to argue that through the application of General Spry's formula of joint projects that Canada had “established the policies and procedures, by which it safeguarded its interests and protected its sovereignty," and Canada’s claim to the Arctic had been strengthened.\textsuperscript{131} The weakness of Bercusson’s argument, however, was that political considerations and nationalist sentiments drove the perceptions of Canadian officials, not events on the ground. Indeed, a study of declassified documents from 1947 to 1949 shows that the Cabinet and External Affairs continued to worry about the

\textsuperscript{129} Grant, Sovereignty or Security, 227-229.
\textsuperscript{130} Memorandum from Secretary, Cabinet Defence Committee to Cabinet Defence Committee, August 11 1948, DCER, Vol. 14, 1948, 1595.
\textsuperscript{131} Bercusson, “Continental Defense and Arctic Sovereignty,” 166.
situation despite having little reason to do so. But, as long as the U.S. remained
disinterested in continental defence, these Canadian perceptions were not that serious.

The Development of First Post-war Air Defences: 1945 to 1949

Despite the lack of interest in continental air defence, both nations did begin to
deploy minimal air defences in this period. One reason why this was done was that there
was a perception that despite the limited nature of the Soviet threat, both countries did
need some protection from aerial attack. For example, the U.S. Air Policy Board warned
in September 1947 that many of America’s aircraft factories, fuel storage depots,
plutonium production centres and iron ore shipping facilities were located near its coast
lines and vulnerable to attack. A similar situation prevailed in Canada, as senior
officials warned that new weapons such as jet aircraft and atomic bombs meant that
geography was not as great an advantage in protecting Canada as it had previously been.
In fact, Claxton argued “it is extremely doubtful if this continent will remained
unmolested for long after the beginning of a future war.” In June, he added “while it
would be wrong to regard war as inevitable, the attitude of Russia made it necessary to
plan defence measures as if it were.” There were also political reasons for the
development of these systems particularly for American Air Force officers who perceived
that they needed to demonstrate that the Air Force was capable of fulfilling all its roles
before and after it gained its independence from the U.S. Army. The Assistant Secretary
of War for Air, Stuart Symington, was particularly anxious to avoid the suggestion that

133 Statement on Defence Policy, Apr 13 1948, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 120, File 7, DHH.
the Air Force was only interested in offensive operations. Nevertheless, these defences remained modest, as neither government was willing yet to invest significant resources in air defence.

While the USAF’s Air Defence Command (ADC) was given the task of creating and operating an integrated continental air defence system, it was informed that the defences would be made up of units of the Air National Guard, which were not ready to assume this task. Early air defence planning was further hampered by the reality that the USAF had not yet been assigned primary responsibility for continental air defence operations. However, at the “roles and missions” conference that was held at Key West, Florida in March 1948, the USAF was assigned this responsibility. In 1948, the USAF began to construct a temporary radar network known as the Lashup system, to provide some radar coverage of the U.S. Northeast and Northwest. Furthermore, in October, the JCS approved the construction of a radar fence around the United States. Their memorandum warned that no air defence system could yet be considered to be a 100 percent effective. Nevertheless, the JCS approved the project because the radar fence would not only provide the United States with an early warning network, but it would serve as a proving ground for new technology and doctrine. It should be noted that one other important reason why the JCS approved this program was because of the belief that this effort would deter any attempts to shift resources away from SAC. The JCS added, “by 1953, it is considered that the existence of a reasonably effective air defense system will have a military priority second only to the capability of launching an immediate and

136 Ibid, 60, 76-77.
137 The “Lashup” radar system was given its name to distinguish this temporary line from the permanent radar system that was to be built; Schaffel, The Emerging Shield, 94.
effective retaliatory counterattack.” In March 1949, Congress approved the new radar fence program. This system, which became known as the Permanent Radar System, was much more limited than originally planned, but would still provide some warning of a Soviet bomber attack.  

The development of an air defence system was slower in Canada, as even fewer resources were available. Claxton summed up the Canadian position when he stated that since any Soviet attacks would be diversionary, it could be addressed though a small well-trained air defence force. Claxton noted that the realities of the international situation meant that Canada at this point of time did not need a fully equipped air force to protect the country from attack. As a result, the only air defence forces available until late 1948 were RCAF Auxiliary squadrons, equipped with P-51 Mustang Fighters. The Canadian military, however, had little confidence in these defence preparations, as a September 1948 defence plan warned that if Canada’s was attacked, the only forces that were immediately available were 32 RCN fighters and the anti-aircraft guns of RCN ships in port. In addition, there was no early warning radar system on Canadian soil. This would remain the situation until one regular RCAF fighter squadron was formed with de Havilland Vampire jet fighters acquired from Britain in December 1948. In late 1948, the RCAF also formed No. 1 Air Defence Group, acquired F-86 Sabre jet interceptors from the United States, and removed the ceilings limiting the RCAF to 75% of its authorized

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138 Nineteen Years of Air Defense, 2; Memorandum by the Chief of Staff U.S. Air Force to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on Radar Fence Program, January 17 1950, RG 218 Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Central Decimal File, Box 213, File CCS 413-44 (7-1-8) Sec 2, NARA; Memorandum for General Vandenberg, Undated, Stuart Symington Papers, Box 13, File General Hoyt Vandenberg, Truman Library.

139 This was even the case as the RCAF was the receiving the bulk of the resources allocated to defence in this period. W.E.C. Harrison, Canada and World Affairs 1949 to 1950 (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1957), 55-56.

strength. This was the state of both countries’ air defences when the Soviet Union tested its first atomic bomb on August 29, 1949.

**Conclusion**

The period from the end of the Second World War to August 1949 was a complicated one for the bilateral relationship. Despite the general lack of interest on the part of the U.S. in continental defence and the reductions in military spending that occurred in both nations, there still was a need for a peacetime defence relationship. For the Americans, Canada was a convenient place to conduct military exercises and had strategic value because of its location and airspace over the arctic. Moreover, there were some officials in State Department and the U.S. Section of the PJBD who favoured continuing the defence co-operation that had begun during the war. The U.S. military also supported the maintenance of its close ties with their Canadian counterparts although it should be noted that while some officers such as the Curtis were supportive of this relationship, others like Leckie were more suspicious. Ultimately, Leckie was not the only one in Ottawa who was wary of defence ties with the United States.

Indeed, a peacetime military relationship with the United States posed several problems for the Cabinet and External Affairs. These included political difficulties for Canadian ministers and the fact that these ties conflicted with nationalist sentiments in Ottawa. In addition, the memory of defence co-operation during the Second World War in Canadian officialdom meant that there was a reluctance to allow the U.S. to build and

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141 Summary of Joint Defence Capabilities, Air defence Appendix “B”, Sept 18 1947, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 55, File 4 Joint Planning Committee & Correspondence Vol. 10 August to November 1948 [Part 2+3], DHH.

operate installations in Canada in the post-war period. As a result, in 1945 and 1946, when Ottawa received a number of requests by the U.S. government to build facilities on Canadian soil, difficulties soon arose.

The relationship would be further strained by the release of the Joint Appreciation by the MCC, which seemed to be a high level American proposal to develop an extensive air defence system in the Canadian Arctic. It did not reflect thinking amongst senior U.S. policy makers, but inadequate communication between officials in both countries, when combined with a poor reading of the situation by External Affairs and the reluctance of senior Canadian officials to directly confront the Americans on the issue, meant that it created a great deal of alarm in Ottawa. These concerns were only resolved by the meeting at the Chateau Laurier in December 1946 when U.S. officials stated that they had little interest in continental air defence.

The bilateral relationship thus settled down. For the rest of the decade, despite some claims in the Canadian historiography, senior U.S. officials expressed little interest in defence co-operation with Canada. Canadian officials, nevertheless, remained overly concerned about American policy. This was especially true after the parliamentary debate over the Visiting Forces Act in June 1947, which raised the potential that the Cabinet would suffer political consequences due to this defence relationship. In response, Canadian officials sought to create a positive public image of the relationship in order to minimize political controversy. They further sought to limit any notice of the American military installations and personnel in Canada and created the ACND to better co-ordinate Canadian policy.

Ultimately, Canada was actually quite effective in addressing the U.S. military presence on its soil. Through a combination of Spry’s ideas and the cooperation of the
United States, it retained control and ownership of the joint facilities built and paid for by the Americans. Moreover, while U.S. military personnel did operate many joint facilities on Canadian soil in 1947 and 1948, once Canada was capable of manning and supplying these stations, the U.S. willingly stepped aside. However, it is important not to overstate the impact of this success on the perceptions of Canadian officials in Ottawa. While Canada’s control over its Arctic territories was strengthened in this period, the Cabinet and External Affairs’ conceptions of the Canadian national interest caused them to continue to be overly concerned about U.S. policy and to be suspicious of such problems that existed. As will be seen in future chapters, this reality would continue to influence policy after August 1949. Finally, it should be noted that this period saw the beginning of post-war air defence systems in both countries although these efforts would remain limited until events of 1949 and 1950 shook American and Canadian complacency.

Chapter 5: Air Defence Co-ordination, 1950 – 1953

Introduction

Beginning in August 1949, Canada and the United States faced the need to defend North America from the strategic nuclear forces of the Soviet Union. This situation represented a change from the immediate post war period when the threat was much more
limited, due to its conventional nature. Although this air defence effort began slowly, it accelerated after the beginning of the Korean War in June 1950 and included a number of PJBD Recommendations to strengthen air defence co-operation between the RCAF and the USAF. These included measures to facilitate local air defence exercises, and to ensure the speedy transfer of fighters across the border in wartime. However, the most important of these recommendations laid out the procedures under which USAF fighters would be allowed to intercept unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace. 1 While works such as Jockel’s *No Boundaries Upstairs* have already discussed many of these initiatives, the availability of newly declassified files now allow for a more detailed examination about how these recommendations were developed in Canada and the U.S.

Indeed, these new documents detail that these particular PJBD Recommendations provoked much discussion in Ottawa amongst the Cabinet, External Affairs, the RCAF and the Department of Transport, whose positions were shaped by their differing conceptions of the national interest. For example, before they agreed to measures to improve air defence cooperation, the Cabinet and External Affairs closely scrutinized how noticeable these initiatives were to the Canadian people because this factor would determine the measures’ political impact. These ministers and officials also examined the degree that these measures impacted on Canadian sovereignty, a subject that was sensitive to many Canadian nationalists in Ottawa. As will be seen, Canadian officials wanted the United States to respect Canada’s control over its airspace and to minimize the USAF’s intrusions into it while not actually willing to allocate sufficient Canadian resources to monitor and patrol that airspace. Ultimately, as long as these joint air defence measures could be kept quiet and were not too significant in terms of their impact on

1 Jockel, *No Boundaries Upstairs*, 50 – 57.
Canadian sovereignty, they would be approved with strong conditions. But if this was not the case then the Canadian government proved very reluctant to approve these PJBD Recommendations.

On the other hand, the RCAF worked closely with the USAF to achieve its goal of strengthening the air defences of the continent, although this relationship did have its limitations. It was still developing in the period from 1950 to 1953 with the result that the RCAF wished to have control over air defence operations in Canadian airspace. Moreover, Canadian ministers and officials were committed to retaining control over foreign and defence policy, which meant that the RCAF had only so much influence in Ottawa. The joint air defence effort was further limited by the lack of priority that this issue had in U.S. Cold War strategy. Consequently, those USAF officers who were interested in air defence could not utilize pressure from the President, the State Department or the USAF’s senior leadership to impose various measures on Canada. Instead, they were obliged either to negotiate with Canadian officials through the PJBD or to work with the RCAF behind the scenes to achieve their goals. Finally, the two air forces were opposed by the Department of Transport, which had its own set of priorities. These factors, therefore, shaped air defence cooperation in the early 1950s.

The Rise of the Soviet Strategic Threat

On September 3, 1949, a specially equipped U.S. reconnaissance aircraft detected evidence of the first Soviet atomic bomb test. This development caught the American and Canadian governments off guard, since most intelligence estimates had determined that

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Soviet Union would not develop an atomic bomb until at least the early 1950s. However, given the resources and scientific talent assembled by the Soviets for this effort, its success was not actually that surprising. While they had made little progress until the U.S. dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, Joseph Stalin immediately understood that the Soviet Union needed to quickly develop its own atomic arsenal. The program was thus placed under the control of Lavrenti Beria, the head of the Soviet secret police. Beria was “a mass murderer and [a] goon,” who personally tortured and killed many victims of Stalin’s purges, but he was a formidable administrator who used his reputation and organizational skills to mobilize the vast resources necessary for this project. In fact, it was at least partially due to his success in acquiring these resources from a ruined post-war Soviet economy that allowed Igor Kurchatov and his team of scientists to develop an atomic bomb by 1949. Nonetheless, the development of a long-range strategic bomber to deliver the weapon was to be a far more difficult task.

The beginnings of the Soviet bomber force can be traced to the 1920s and 1930s when the Soviet aircraft designer Andrei Tupolev developed a series of advanced all-metal bombers. The failure to develop an improved aircraft in the later half of the 1930s, however, when combined with the death of many proponents of strategic air power in Stalin’s purges and the need for short-ranged tactical aircraft during the Second World

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4 Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), 150, 173. It should be noted that intelligence from played a significant role in the Soviets developing an atomic bomb. In fact, the first Soviet atomic bomb was a copy of the Nagasaki bomb because the Soviet leadership did not trust their scientists, and wanted a weapon they knew that worked. Zubok and Pleshakov, Inside the Kremlin's Cold War, 14-15; David Holloway, Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy, 1939-1956 (London: Yale University Press, 1994), 212.
War meant that by 1946, the Soviets did not have a bomber that was suitable for operations against the U.S.\(^6\) Despite these problems, the Soviets did maintain an interest in strategic bombing during the war. Stalin was impressed by the Allied bombing campaign against Germany and even made several requests for U.S. and British heavy bombers, which were rejected.\(^7\) The Soviet defector G.A. Tokaev also noted a strong interest within the Soviet leadership in the mid-1940s in developing long range bombers to attack North America.\(^8\)

In 1946, after being informed that it would take many years for the Soviet Union to develop an equivalent bomber to the U.S. B-29 Superfortress, Stalin made the decision to copy it. This effort was aided by the possession of three intact USAAF B-29s that were acquired when they were forced to land in Siberia after suffering battle damage over Japan.\(^9\) Despite the expertise and the resources that were allocated to this project, the process of copying the B-29 was difficult. One problem was that the Americans used imperial measurements while the Soviets used the metric system. There were also difficulties in copying the advanced technology of the B-29 including the engines and propellers.\(^10\) Nonetheless, the first test flight took place of the TU-4 Bull in 1947 and after being displayed at the annual Soviet Aviation Day later that year, it entered service in 1949. The TU-4 could serve as a nuclear capable bomber, and 847 were built; however,


\(^7\) Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb*, 234.


\(^10\) Zaloga, *Target America*, 74.
the Soviets had produced a bomber that was heavier than the original, due in part to their inability to duplicate the imperial measurements used by the Americans. 11

Moreover, because the Soviets had copied an early version of the B-29, it did not have the enhanced fuel capacity of later models. When these factors were combined with the fact that they did not use the high-octane fuel that the B-29 was designed to operate with, it meant that under normal conditions the TU-4 could only reach targets 1525 kilometres away and return to base. These limitations meant that from Anadyr, the closest Soviet base to North America, the TU-4 could only strike targets in central Alaska, the Yukon and British Columbia. This problem was made even worse, since the Soviets, unlike the United States, lacked overseas airbases close to its major adversary. The Soviet Air Force had many other problems, including the vulnerability of the TU-4 to jet fighters, and their lack of experience with large-scale strategic bombing operations. Soviet attempts to create air-to-air refuelling capabilities also had only limited success. The wingtip to wingtip system they had developed by the early 1950s was very cumbersome and only three TU-4s were converted to the tanker role. Finally, because the Soviet leadership wanted to maintain as much control as possible over its nuclear weapons so a rogue pilot would not bomb Moscow, the bombs were placed under the strict control of special KGB units until 1959. This meant that there would be significant delays in the arming of the bombers if they were ever needed. 12

Despite these limitations, some of which were known to the Americans, the JCS took the Soviet strategic nuclear bomber threat seriously. Indeed, in 1949, the JCS argued that while the range of the TU-4 was limited, it believed that on one way missions the

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aircraft could still bomb most of major urban centres in the United States. The JCS further estimated that the Soviet Union would have 1600 long range bombers by 1952, and by 1953 would have the capability to launch a major atomic attack on the United States.\(^\text{13}\) These reports were an overstatement of Soviet capabilities to justify increased U.S. offensive forces; however, the Soviet bomber force still represented a real threat, as even if only a small number of atomic bombs were dropped on North America, the results would be devastating. In fact, at a meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee in 1950, Curtis warned against using the term diversionary to describe such attacks. He argued that the threat was much more serious than the conventional one before August 1949 and that the term diversionary implied to civilian officials that it was not that important.\(^\text{14}\)

**Response to the Soviet Threat**

U.S. and Canadian leaders now faced the reality of that the Soviet Union had the capability of launching attacks with atomic weapons against North America. Although the development of the Soviet strategic forces would influence the development of the North American air defence system in the future, it did not lead to an expanded air defence effort at this point, as defence spending remained low in both countries. For example, Truman, with the support of Secretary of Defense Johnson, continued to insist on a balanced budget. This fact, when combined with the allocation of aid to America’s European allies, meant that there were few additional resources for air defence. In addition, U.S. strategy continued to emphasize the offensive and SAC. This did not mean

\(^{12}\) Zaloga, *The Kremlin’s Nuclear Sword*, 13-18, 29-30. The USAF planned similar one-way missions with its B-47 jet bombers in the early years of the Cold War; Zaloga, *Target America*, 76.

\(^{13}\) Betts, “A Nuclear Golden Age?”, 7.

\(^{14}\) Minutes of the 471\(^{\text{st}}\) meeting held at 0930 hours, Tuesday, 22 August, 1950, Undated, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 90, File 10: Minutes to Meetings 471 – 476, DHH.
that the Americans were not concerned about the Soviet strategic forces. Indeed, after 1949, the Soviet atomic arsenal was seen to be the greatest danger to the United States. But while the mission to “blunt” an attack by the Soviet strategic nuclear forces included continental air defence, the primary means that the Americans sought to accomplish this goal was by destroying the Soviet bombers on the ground. This mission, code named Bravo in SAC war planning, would remain SAC’s most important task through the 1950s and would be achieved, if possible, through pre-emptive strikes.\footnote{Sagan, \textit{Moving Targets}, 20; Rosenberg, “The Origins of Overkill,” 25.}

In both the United States and Canada, the Soviet threat was perceived through strategic and political cultures that did not favour the development of improved air defence capabilities. After the Soviet atomic bomb test, only the USAF intelligence thought that the Soviet Union might attempt to attack the U.S. Instead, the primary concern of American policy makers was that this event would give the Soviets great political and psychological advantages in the Cold War and would cast a shadow over Western Europe that would erode the confidence of the West. As a result, one of the steps that the Americans took in response was to improve their offensive capabilities through the development of the hydrogen bomb, which meant that U.S. assessments were focused on Soviet intentions rather than capabilities.\footnote{Leffler, \textit{Preponderance of Power}, 326, 332.} Canadian assessments followed this line as well, although Canadian officials tended to believe that their U.S. counterparts were always focused on Soviet capabilities. General Pope summed up this view in 1944 when wrote a critical memo comparing the “American technique of assessing enemy capabilities … against our view of what the enemy will probably do.”\footnote{Chairman, Canadian Joint Staff Mission, Washington, to Department of National Defence, June 27 1944, DCER, Vol. 11 Part II, 1944-45, 1540-1.}
The early emergence of the Soviet strategic nuclear forces, therefore, did not have a great impact on the development of the air defences of either country. Vandenberg, the Chief of Staff of the USAF, did argue that the radar fence program needed to be reassessed. In November 1949, he outlined to the JCS that “almost any number of Soviet bombers could cross our borders and fly to most of the targets in the United States without a shot being fired at them and without being challenged in any way.” He feared that if the Soviets were able to destroy 50 major American cities and the atomic retaliatory power of SAC, the United States would be not able to strike back and win the war. He then concluded that there should even be a Manhattan style project to develop an effective air defence system. As a result of this meeting, 50 million dollars was reallocated from the USAF’s budget for the radar fence project; however, little else was done.\(^{18}\) Indeed, in November 1949, when Foulkes visited Washington, he and the Chairman of the JCS, General Omar Bradley, discussed how in wartime, North America would be defended by the minimum number of forces needed to maintain morale. They agreed that these forces “should be of such a character,” that they could be redeployed overseas and used for offensive operations.\(^{19}\) This reflected the position of both U.S. and Canadian officials, including Claxton.

Other than the allocation of funds for the Radar Fence Program, which was soon renamed the Permanent Radar System, the main response of the USAF was to continue its existing defensive preparations while they studied the problem. This reflected the reality that while the USAF’s leadership understood that more air defences were needed, their

\(^{18}\) Memorandum by Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force for Joint Chiefs of Staff on Radar Fence Program, November 23 1949, RG 218 Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Central Decimal File, Box 213, File CCS 413-44 (7-1-8) Sec 2, NARA; Borowski, *The Hollow Threat*, 191.

\(^{19}\) Record of Conversations During Trip to Washington and Fort Benning on 4 and 5 Nov 49, Hume Wrong Papers, Vol. 7, File 39: Ambassador File General Charles Foulkes Nov 9, 1949, 3-4.
focus was elsewhere. For instance, in January 1950, the Secretary of the Air Force, Stuart Symington, wrote to Johnson that with the Soviet test of an atomic bomb two to three years earlier than expected, the United States needed to revise its military strategy and develop an effective air defence system. The USAF Vice Chief of Staff, General Muir Fairchild, further stated that while the USAF’s first priority was the strategic air offensive, an effective air defence network was needed to protect the U.S. industrial base, SAC and the American people. In June, General Gordon Saville, the USAF’s leading air defence expert, also argued that when the Americans had monopoly on the A-bomb “it was perfectly proper completely to ignore the Air Defense business … and give complete preoccupation to the Air Offensive. But when the enemy starts A-bomb stockpiling, you get a different situation.”

Canadian officials did little to counter the Soviet threat as well. In November 1949, Foulkes warned that on one-way missions, the Soviet Union could strike any target in the U.S. and Canada. Claxton added that while it had been previously thought that any attack against North America would be of a purely diversionary nature, the Soviet atomic bomb test had changed the situation. He believed that even if Canada was not a primary target, an attack by one or two weapons would have significant consequences, and that the possession of long range bombers seemed to indicate that the Soviets were planning to launch strikes against North America in the event of war. Nonetheless, the Minister of Finance, Douglas Abbott, warned against a significant increase in defence expenditures,

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20 Symington to Johnson, January 9 1950, Symington Papers, Box 6, File Johnson, Louis, Truman Library.
21 Extract of Statement by General M.S. Fairchild Before Sub Committee on Appropriations House of Representatives Department of Defence Appropriations for 1951, February 7 1950, Symington Papers, Box 6, File F-General, Truman Library.
22 Futrell, Ideas, Concepts, Doctrine, 287-8. Fairchild had appointed Saville to this position because of his great expertise in air defence that he had gained during the Second World War. Schaffel, The Emerging Shield, 84.
and although the RCAF was allocated more funds than the Army or the Navy, it only had limited forces available to defend the country.\textsuperscript{23}

In 1949 and 1950, the Americans did recognize that there was a need for improved defence co-operation with Canada. One State Department report stated that militarily Canada “must be considered as if it were an integral part of the United States. It is important to our security to protect Canada as it is to protect California. Canada is the most logical avenue for a large scale attack on the United States. Even if it were not for the commitments in the Atlantic Pact … it would be necessary to protect Canada instantly from any threat.”\textsuperscript{24} Furthermore, the Canada-U.S. defence relationship, despite the continuing disputes over defence procurement and U.S. bases in Newfoundland, remained strong. Canada also benefited from the very close relationship between Wrong and the U.S. Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, and Claxton enjoyed a successful visit to Washington in April 1950.\textsuperscript{25} Nevertheless, a continued lack of resources and a focus on crises elsewhere meant that little was being done to protect the continent. Indeed, one comment from Wrong in February 1950 illustrated this reality when he stated that the Canada-U.S. relationship was good because “the tendency of the U.S. to tell us what we ought to do has diminished.”\textsuperscript{26} In fact, this reality had not lessened and the lack of

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\textsuperscript{23} Extract from 60th Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, Nov 23 1949, 2002/03 Cabinet Defence Committee Fond, Box 2, File 37, DHH; Minutes of a Conference of Air Officers’ Commanding and Group Commanders Held at Air Force Headquarters Ottawa 20 – 21 March 1950, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 102, File 2000 Air Officer Commanding Conferences, 3; Memorandum on Royal Canadian Air Force Requirements, Undated, MG 32 B-5, Brooke Claxton Fonds, Vol. 94, File Accelerated Defence Program, 2, LAC.

\textsuperscript{24} Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Office of British Commonwealth and Northern European Affairs (Satterwhaite) to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Thompson), February 8 1950, \textit{FRUS}, Vol. 1, 1950, 144.

\textsuperscript{25} Interview with Lester Pearson, November 1971, MG 31 E 46 Escott Reid Papers, Vol. 35, File Pearson, Lester B. 5, Harrington to Department of State, April 28 1950, Papers of Harry S. Truman PSF Subject File 1940-1953, Box 150, File Canada-General, Truman Library; Wrong to Johnson, April 25 1950, Papers of Harry S. Truman PSF Subject File 1940-1953, Box 150, File Canada-General, Truman Library.

\textsuperscript{26} Wrong to Pearson, February 7 1950, Ritchie Papers, Vol. 16, File Pearson Correspondence 1950.
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American demands simply reflected the minimal level of interest in Canada-U.S. defence co-operation that existed in Washington at this time.

The result was that despite some joint air defence exercises, the state of the air defences of North America remained poor. By mid-1950, there were only 44 radars in the continental United States, along with five in Alaska and three in Canada. The USAF and the RCAF could provide 29 squadrons of fighters, but many of the USAF fighters were obsolete while the RCAF squadrons were only at one half to two thirds strength. Some U.S. Army anti-aircraft units were deployed to protect the locks at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan and the Hansford Atomic Research Facility in Washington State, but the level of air defence co-operation was low. One report from the RCAF noted that it was clear “that the US will not build or man a defence system on Canadian soil prior to an emergency situation being deemed to exist.”

This situation was about to change, as once the U.S. had gotten over the shock of the Soviet atomic bomb test, they began to re-evaluate the state of their national security policies. In February 1950, a committee made up of representatives from the Departments of State and Defense was formed under the leadership of Paul Nitze, an advocate of increased defence spending and the Chair of the Policy Planning Staff at the State Department. Consequently, National Security Council (NSC) document 68 argued that the Soviet Union regards the United States “as the only major threat to the achievement of its fundamental design.” The report warned that the Soviets could now launch atomic

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27 Journal of Decisions and Discussions at the Meeting of the Board, Annapolis, Maryland, October 11-12, 1949, 82/196 PJBD Journals, Vol. 8, File 8, DHH; Memorandum for Cabinet Defence committee Canada-United States Joint Defence Projects, 2002/3 Cabinet Defence Committee Fond, File 35, DHH.
28 *19 Years of Air Defence*, 2 – 5; *Hansard*, 1950, 323.
29 Implementation of Air Defence Plans Prepared by Director of Air Plans (Peace), January 24 1949, 96/24, Box 4, File 6 Planning – Air Defence, DHH.
attacks against selected targets in North America, and that by 1954 they would likely have 200 atomic bombs and significant numbers of nuclear capable long-range bombers, which would allow them to launch “devastating attacks on certain vital centers of the United States and Canada.” Therefore, 1954 was to be the “year of maximum danger” for the U.S. and its allies. In response, NSC-68 called for a massive increase in defence spending, which included investments in continental air defence in order “to provide reasonable assurance, in the event of war, that it [the U.S.] could survive the initial blow and go on to the eventual attainment of its objectives.”

At first, NSC-68 had only limited influence on policy making, as Truman continued his policy of limiting defence spending, but the start of the Korean War in June 1950 changed the situation. While this conflict remained confined to the Korean Peninsula, the invasion of South Korea seemed to many in the west to be the first part of a general communist offensive and spurred greater defence spending both in Canada and the United States. Consequently, in September, Truman approved NSC 68, and American defence spending reached 49 billion dollars in 1951. The impact was so great that the U.S. diplomat Charles Bohlen later asserted “it was the Korean War and not World War II that made us a world military-political power.” In February 1951, Claxton also

announced a three year, 5 billion dollar program to reequip and expand the Canadian military, which was a great increase over the previous peacetime defence budgets.\textsuperscript{35}

This rise in defence spending allowed both countries to begin to improve their air defence systems. In November 1950, the U.S. Air Force re-established USAF Air Defense Command (ADC), and assigned it several federalized Air National Guard squadrons.\textsuperscript{36} In a September 6 address to the House of Commons, Claxton stated that the original number of interceptor squadrons had been increased threefold, and they were to be raised to full strength. He warned “the scale of attack that might be made on this continent must of course change with time and it is changing,” and that “where the risk of even a diversionary raid … was slight indeed three years ago it is an actual possibility today.” He did note that the intent of such raids was to force Canada and the U.S. to keep forces in North America that could be sent overseas.\textsuperscript{37} As Cold War tensions increased throughout 1950, officials in both Canada and the U.S. realized that more air defence cooperation was needed. But while the RCAF was supportive, the Cabinet, External Affairs and the Department of Transport closely scrutinized these measures to determine if they aligned with their conception of the national interest.

**The Air Interception Issue**

The most important problem to surface was the interception of unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace by USAF fighters. This problem was based on the geographical reality that Canadian airspace was an air corridor between the U.S. and the


\textsuperscript{36} *19 Years of Air Defense*, 6.

\textsuperscript{37} *Hansard*, 1950, 323-4.
Soviet Union. It first began to be addressed when the USAF created an active recognition and interception zone stretching from 87 degrees longitude east or the area around Lake Michigan to the Atlantic Coast. As a result, USAF officers requested that all southbound aircraft flying from Canada submit a flight plan, with the understanding that if they failed to do this, USAF fighters would intercept them. In addition, the ability of the newly established Permanent Radar System to detect and track unidentified aircraft over Canada, when combined with the RCAF’s limited air defence capabilities, meant that the USAF became increasingly interested in intercepting south-bound aircraft in Canadian airspace. In August 1950, General H.L. Walsh, the USAF Member on the PJBD, asked the State Department to forward a request to Canada that U.S. fighters “engaged in intercepting unidentified aircraft crossing the border between the United States and Canada be permitted to fly over Canadian territory as may be required to carry out effective interceptions.”

This request posed several problems for the Cabinet and External Affairs, as the interception of aircraft in Canadian airspace by the USAF would lead to criticism from the opposition parties and the press that the government was not devoting enough resources to defend Canada. Moreover, this proposal represented a threat to Canadian control of its airspace that was not acceptable to nationalist ministers and officials. Finally, there was the problem that the RCAF did not yet have the right to shoot down

38 A Survey of Relations Between Canada and the United States, June 20 1951, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 113, File 2511 A Survey of Relations Between Canada and the United States, DHH, 2.  
aircraft in Canadian airspace in peacetime, and therefore giving the USAF this authority was a non-starter.

Canadian officials in Ottawa quickly recognized that “the very broad authority sought by the United States required certain definitions and limitations in order to be compatible with Canadian requirements.”\textsuperscript{41} Writing to the Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, Arnold Heeney, on August 10, another official from External Affairs, R.A. MacKay, noted that that Walsh had been informed of Canadian acceptance of USAF interception of aircraft as long as certain procedures were followed. First, these interceptions would only take place on occasion with aircraft that were flying off course or which had not filed a flight plan. The USAF fighters would be restricted to limited penetrations into Canadian airspace and would only investigate unidentified aircraft if those planes were clearly heading towards to U.S. border and were about to cross it. Finally, the U.S. fighter would only be allowed to request the aircraft in question to land if it remained unidentified and there was “no question of opening fire.” The memorandum added that Walsh stated that refinements could be made to the arrangements in order to avoid any difficulties. MacKay further noted that the commander of RCAF ADC, Air Vice Marshal A.L. James had informed Walsh that the issue should be addressed through the State Department “and that he was not taking any steps to have the matter given consideration in Ottawa.” This was possibly a sign that the special relationship between the RCAF and the USAF was still emerging. MacKay concluded that Washington

\textsuperscript{41} United States Air Operations over Canadian Territory, December 21 1950, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 65, File 1324, DHH.
considered the request “fairly urgent” and he was forwarding it to the Department of Transport.\(^\text{42}\)

This proposal, as Jockel already noted, quickly drew criticism from that Department. On August 14, A.T. Crowley, an official representing the Deputy Minister of Transport, protested to Heeney “in general we can see no great necessity for military interception of civilian aircraft in peacetime.” Crowley argued that there were many localities in Canada such as Windsor that would be serviced by aircraft flying south, towards the border that would not have filed a flight plan with the USAF and could be intercepted by U.S. fighters. He added that there were a number of other civilian operations that required aircraft to approach the U.S. border without flight plans.\(^\text{43}\)

Heeney further weighed in on this issue at an August 22 meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, when he warned that it was of considerable political importance, as it had been raised three times in the House of Commons in the last session.\(^\text{44}\)

After External Affairs requested the Chiefs of Staffs Committee’s input, the Joint Planning Committee (JPC) was assigned to study the issue. It responded with a report that argued that since the U.S. air defence system could detect and intercept unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace, “the imposition of a barrier at the boundary between the countries constitutes a limitation upon the capability of the United States air defences to defend vital areas adjacent to the boundary against attacks by enemy aircraft approaching from the north.” The JPC added that due to the military threat posed by the Soviet air


\(^{44}\) Minutes of the 471st meeting held at 0930 hours, Tuesday, 22 August, 1950, Undated, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 90, File 10: Minutes to Meetings 471 – 476, DHH; Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 50.
force “no unnecessary limitations be placed upon the already limited capability of air
defence forces to defend vital areas,” and that the border should not hamper joint air
defence operations. However, although the report concluded “it is of overriding
importance in the interests of Canada-United States security that the USAF aircraft be
permitted to conduct interceptions of unidentified aircraft in flight over Canadian
territory,” it recommended that strict guidelines be applied to how these interceptions
were conducted. Along with the earlier conditions, the report added that the interceptions
should only occur if there was a “reasonable interpretation” that the aircraft would cross
the border, and they should be implemented in a way that would minimize their impact on
Canadian civilian traffic particularly for areas close to the U.S. border.45

On September 13, the Americans were informed that the Chiefs of Staff Committee and
the Department of Transport had agreed to submit a proposal to the Cabinet Defence
Committee.46 At an early October meeting of the PJBD, Henry responded that he been
notified about the USAF’s willingness to accept the Canadian conditions, and that the
USAF was interested in working with the RCAF in order to develop the necessary
operational instructions.47 However, in November, Walsh had to contact the Canadians to
urge them to speed up the development of these procedures.48 Canadian officials blamed
these delays on officials and senior officers being occupied by other duties relating to

45 United States Air Operations Over Canadian Territory, Aug 30 1950, RG 2 18 Privy Council Fonds,
Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 51.
46 Ignatief to Benninghof, September 13 1950, RG 25 B-3 Department of External Affairs Vol. 2127, File
1950 Defence US Interception of Flights over Canada, LAC.
47 Journal of Decisions and Discussions at the Meeting of the Board held at Mitchel Air Force Base, Long
Island, New York on October 2, 1950, and at Fort Monroe, Virginia, on October 3-5, 1950, Undated,
82/196 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Fonds, Vol. 8, File 8 Meeting 72, DHH.
48 Canadian Ambassador in Washington to Secretary of State for External Affairs, Nov 1950, RG 2 18
NATO. But, it was conceivable that given the political and sovereignty implications of the issue, they were delaying discussions as long as possible.

Moreover, although Jockel was right to state that the agreement had largely been concluded by September 1950, there still were additional discussions in Ottawa about this proposal including at a meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee on December 1. At this meeting, Claxton stated that while Canada would allow USAF aircraft to intercept unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace, he believed that since Canada was making many concessions on this issue, RCAF fighters should be given the reciprocal right to intercept aircraft in U.S. airspace. Pearson agreed and this condition was later incorporated into the agreement. This point reflected the influence of both nationalist sentiments and political considerations on Canadian policy makers.

Indeed, the original proposal had been based on the USAF’s ability to detect southbound unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace, which they feared could be Soviet bombers, however; the RCAF had little to no capability to detect unidentified aircraft in U.S. airspace. Moreover, the radar defences that were being constructed on Canadian soil were based on the “‘polar orientation’” to stop an attack from the north. Finally, there was little point of having RCAF fighters visually identify aircraft in American airspace, when vastly greater numbers of American interceptors could shoot them down. Ultimately, it was a harmless inclusion and was another step, although completely unintended by Claxton and Pearson, in making the defence of North America more continental in scope. The clause would further help shield the Canadian government from

50 Minutes of the 68th Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee on Dec 1 1950, Undated, RG 2, 18 Privy Council Fonds, Vol. 244, File C-10-9M Cabinet Committee Defence Committee Meetings (Minutes, Agenda, etc.), LAC.
criticism from the opposition and the media if the agreement were ever made public. Nonetheless, its inclusion primarily reflected the influence of nationalist sentiments on Canadian policy. Therefore, for these reasons, both Pearson and Claxton believed that if the USAF could intercept unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace then the RCAF should be given permission to do so over the United States. Other changes to the original proposal included that the interception zone would no longer be restricted to an area from 87 degrees longitude to the Atlantic Coast, and that two-engine aircraft could be intercepted, as intelligence reports had indicated that such bombers might be used to attack North America. With these changes, as well as the acceptance of this proposal by the Department of Transport, the road was paved for its formalization as a PJBD Recommendation.  

Thus, in May 1951, the PJBD approved Recommendation 51/4.  

Not surprisingly, many in the USAF air defence community were unhappy with 51/4 and the unwillingness of the Canadian government to allow USAF fighters to fire upon unidentified aircraft in its airspace. Newly declassified evidence even showed that on June 28, 1951, Major General R.M. Ramey, the USAF’s Director of Operations, argued that because 51/4 prohibited the USAF fighters from “opening fire or ordering intercepted aircraft to land,” in Canadian airspace that it should not be submitted to the

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51 Nineteen Years of Air Defense, 11.  
52 Memorandum for Cabinet Defence Committee, May 25 1951, 2002/03 Cabinet Defence Committee Fonds, File 59, DHH. Transport asked that the two air forces take every precaution to avoid any attacks on a Canadian civilian aircraft that crossed the border by mistake. Extract from Minutes of Seventy Fourth Meeting of Cabinet Defence Committee - Held Tue, 29 May 51, Undated, 2002/03 Cabinet Defence Committee Fonds, File 59: Cabinet Defence Committee Papers for 81st Meeting 12 Dec 51, DHH.  
53 Journal of Decisions and Discussions at the Meetings of the Board Held at Kingston, Ont, on May 7-10 and Chalk River, Ont, May 10-11, 1951, Undated, 82/196 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Fonds, Vol. 9, File 9 75th Meeting, DHH; Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 52.  
54 Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 52; Goette, Canada and the United States, 199.  
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U.S. government for approval.\textsuperscript{55} Walsh countered that while the U.S. Section of the PJBD understood these concerns, senior officers from the USAF’s ADC had endorsed the wording of 51/4. Walsh added that the Canadian government had approved 51/4 and it would “place the Canadian members of this board in a most embarrassing position if the U.S. government fails to conclude the agreement.” He stated that if the USAF HQ wished to have more authority to intercept flights in Canadian airspace, then it should address a memorandum to the PJBD.\textsuperscript{56} Consequently, the USAF accepted 51/4 as “an interim measure.” Furthermore, at the August meeting of the PJBD, Walsh stated that there was a need for less restrictive conditions for the interception of aircraft and that the USAF would request changes to 51/4 in the future.\textsuperscript{57} But 51/4 continued to be in effect until 1953. At this point, it should be emphasized that at no point did the Americans present a “take it or leave it” demand to the Canadian government, backed by the full weight the Truman administration and the USAF to force Canada to allow U.S. fighters to shoot down unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace. Although the American air defence community was unhappy with 51/4, it was not American policy to force measures upon the Canadians. Moreover, the issue was not important enough to merit significant attention by senior U.S. officials and the USAF leadership.

On this issue, a number of factors related to differing conceptions of the Canadian national interest influenced policy makers in Ottawa. First, because this proposal involved

\textsuperscript{55} Memorandum For: The USAF and Steering Member, Permanent Joint Board on Defense, Canada-US, June 281951, RG 333 Files of International Military Agencies PJBD Entry 17-A, Box 3, File “Top Secret Correspondence, 1941-1956” Folder 17, NARA.

\textsuperscript{56} Memorandum for the Director of Operations, U.S. Air Force, August 10 1951, RG 333 Files of International Military Agencies PJBD Entry 17-A, Box 3, File “Top Secret Correspondence, 1941-1956” Folder 17, NARA.

\textsuperscript{57} Journal of Decisions and Discussions at the Meetings of the Board Held at Edmonton, Alberta, August 20, 1951, Suffield Experimental Station, Ralston, Alberta, August 21-23 1951, and the Joint Services Experimental Station, Churchill, Manitoba, August 24-25, 1951, Undated, 82/196 Permanent Joint Board
the interception of aircraft in Canadian airspace by USAF fighters, its implementation could not be hidden from the Canadian public and this greatly worried the Cabinet. Indeed, in Ottawa, policy makers feared that American encroachments into Canadian airspace would create political difficulties for the government. Moreover, many ministers believed that 51/4 threatened Canadian sovereignty and Canada’s control of its own airspace. For example, in early 1953, Henry noted the Canadian government had “a great deal of pride in their sovereignty. They are just becoming one of the big nations in the world, so to speak, and they hesitate very greatly to tell their people that the United States is up there defending them.” These attitudes were reflected in the condition of making 51/4 reciprocal. But this combination of political considerations and nationalist sentiment also led to contradictions in Canadian policy.

While the Cabinet and External Affairs wanted to maintain formal control of Canadian airspace and limit USAF intrusions as much as possible, at the same time Canada had little capability to actually monitor and patrol its airspace. The RCAF had only a handful of fighter squadrons available, and its early warning system included a few radar stations, a number of civilian volunteers of the Ground Observer Corps, and a program to receive reports of unidentified aircraft from government personnel in the Canadian Arctic. In fact, the RCAF member on the PJBD informed the Board at the end of January that there was at that point “no comprehensive system of aircraft control and warning,” in Canada. The only system in operation was that flight plans “filled by civilian aircraft operating into defense areas were reported by the Department of Transport to the

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58 Extract OSD Ad Hoc Study Group on Continental Defense, Friday, 23 January 1953 – 2:30 p.m. – Room 3E-0869 The Pentagon, Washington D.C., March 12 1953, RG 333 File of International Military Agencies PJBD Entry 17-A, Box 4, File “Top Secret Correspondence, 1941-1956” Folder 19, 12
It was only in May 1951 that the RCAF and Transport agreed to the control of civil aircraft in peacetime, with the creation of interception zones for Eastern and Western Canada. Ironically this system conformed to the regulations set by the USAF’s ADC, since it was “realized that the integration of Canadian and United States systems of air defence … would make it desirable to have similar procedures in effect in both countries.” In December 1951, the RCAF was given authority to intercept unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace prior to a declaration of war or a national emergency. But it was only in mid-1952 that air defence interception zones covered the entire country.

Canadian air defence efforts were limited by a number of other factors including the need for an effective army and navy, which meant that there was a ceiling on the resources available to the RCAF. These services also had a little or no interest in continental defence: the army was focused on its overseas brigade groups in Korea and Western Europe and the RCN on its anti-submarine role and carrier aviation. This reality was reflected in policy disagreements between Simonds, the Chief of the General Staff, and Curtis. Simonds argued that the main goal of a Soviet bomber offensive against North America would be to limit the ability of Canada and the United States to dispatch forces

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59 Journal of Decisions and Discussions at the Meetings of the Board held at Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Alabama, on January 30-31, 1951 and at Patrick Air Force Base, Banana River, Alabama on February 1, 1951, Undated, 82/196 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Fonds, Vol. 9, File 9 Meeting 74, DHH; Journal of Decisions and Discussions at the Meetings of the Board Held at Kingston, Ont, on May 7-10 and Chalk River, Ont, May 10-11, 1951, Undated, 82/196 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Fonds, Vol. 9, File 9 75th Meeting, DHH; RCAF Agenda for the Members, PJBD, Canada-United States, Undated, 82/196 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Fonds, Vol. 9, File 9 75th Meeting, DHH.

60 Journal of Decisions and Discussions at the Meetings of the Board Held at Kingston, Ont, on May 7-10 and Chalk River, Ont, May 10-11, 1951, Undated, 82/196 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Fonds, Vol. 9, File 9 75th Meeting, DHH. RCAF Agenda for the Members, PJBD, Canada-United States, Undated, 82/196 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Fonds, Vol. 9, File 9 75th Meeting, DHH.

61 Extract from Minutes of the 81st Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee – 12 Dec 51, Undated, 2002/03 Cabinet Defence Committee Fonds, File 59, DHH; Permanent Joint Board on Defence Canada-United States RCAF Progress Report Meeting of September 1952, Undated, McNaughton Papers, LAC.
overseas. Curtis countered that the Soviets might recognize that they could conquer Western Europe before significant forces could be sent from Canada and the U.S. and might choose to strike at the North American industrial base at the onset of war.  

Canadian capabilities to control its airspace were further hampered by a focus on the Air Division in NATO. Foulkes warned in September 1950 that air defence would have second priority to the force dispatched to Western Europe. He later added that only limited resources were available for the air defence system. Even by 1952, the RCAF could only provide fighter cover for Halifax, Vancouver and Goose Bay and it would be only in 1953 that Montreal, Ottawa, Trail, Esquimalt, Toronto and Arvida would receive such protection. It should be noted that there were good reasons why Canadian personnel and aircraft were being sent to serve in Western Europe while the U.S. helped to defend Canada. American and Canadian postwar defence plans had always emphasized that forces were to be sent to Europe as soon as possible in the event of war. Furthermore, it was in Canada's interests to ensure that its NATO allies remained out of the Soviet sphere of influence, as it was likely that they would be the first victims of a Soviet attack. In this period, Canadian forces made an important contribution to the defence of Western Europe, as the first F-86 Sabres based in Europe were Canadian. Furthermore, the F-86 was better suited to fighting over Western Europe than hunting down Soviet bombers over the Canadian Arctic due to the fact that the Sabre was a single-engine day fighter with limited range and navigation capabilities. It was also the only Western fighter that

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62 Extract in minutes from Minutes of 493rd Meeting – Chiefs of Staff Committee, Undated, File 423.009 (D2) HQ AA Command File TSLO “Policy Anti-Aircraft” AAC TSLO, DHH.
63 Extract from Minutes of the 496th Meeting – Chiefs of Staff Committee, Undated, File 423.009 (D2) HQ AA Command File TSLO “Policy Anti-Aircraft” AAC TSLO, DHH.
64 Untitled Memorandum from CGS, September 27 1950, 2002/03 CDC Fond, Box 2, File 43 66th Meeting, DHH; Extract from the 494th Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff, Undated, RG 24 Department of National
could match the Soviet MIG-15. More importantly, the Canadian government had not sent significant military forces to Western Europe just to help with its defence against the Soviet Bloc. Canada did this because it sought, in the words of Jon McLin, to “gain some voice in the operation of the strategic-political balance affecting its security.” As Pearson asserted in his memoirs “Canada was expected to make an appropriate contribution. If we had not done so, we would have had little or no influence in the foreign policy discussions at the council.” Therefore, Canadian officials believed that by sending forces to Western Europe, Canada gained a “seat at the table” and greater influence in NATO than it normally would have had. The Cabinet, however, was not interested in explaining this position to either the Canadian public or the opposition.

Finally, many Canadian officials and ministers were not that concerned about the Soviet threat to North America. This was despite the fact that in November, a report from the Joint Planning Committee stated that the latest intelligence estimates indicated that the Soviet Union could attack with atomic weapons “with little or no warning.” Another assessment asserted that the Soviets now had to capability to devastate North American with a surprise attack. This strike would include the majority of the atomic weapons in the Soviet arsenal and would be directed at the North American industrial base and its ability to send forces to Western Europe. Moreover, it was inevitable that the Soviet atomic stockpile would grow in size and in yield and that the Soviet air force would improve its

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Defence, File Planning Air Defence T.S. 096-205 Vol. 2, LAC; Memorandum for Cabinet Defence Committee, Cabinet Defence Committee Fonds, LAC.
65 For more information see Goette, Canada and the United States, 224.
66 McLin, Canada’s Changing Defence Policy, 213.
69 Memorandum for the U.S. Members, Permanent Joint Board on Defense, Canada-U.S. Subject: Canada-United States Security Plans, September 27 1950, 82/196 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Fonds, Vol. 8,
operational effectiveness and capabilities. The reluctance to take strong action to counter this threat was particularly strong in the Department of Transport. They preferred that no interceptions would take place by USAF fighters in Canadian airspace, because it would interfere with their operations and would create what they saw as unnecessary problems; however, this reluctance also existed in other departments and the Cabinet. This fact was not surprising given the focus on intentions over capabilities in strategic thinking in Ottawa. Canadian officials in Ottawa could always find a reason to think that the Soviets would not attack North America, particularly when officials knew that Canadian politicians were often reluctant to allocate too many resources for defence. The diplomat turned historian John Holmes later noted “I sometimes think Canadian politicians opted for the less pessimistic interpretations of Soviet policy at least partly because they were thereby relieved of problems in defence expenditures and the raising of forces.”

Ironically, Canadian attitudes towards continental air defence were not that different than those held by Americans officials in Washington. The United States had focused their efforts on SAC and only made limited demands of Canada in the field of air defence, although even these modest requests posed problems for the Cabinet and External Affairs conceptions of the national interest. The air interception issues, however, was not the only one that had to be addressed in 1950 and 1951.

**PJBD Recommendations 51/3 and 51/6**

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File 8 Meeting 72, DHH; Military Cooperation Committee Planning, September 12 1950, 82/196 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Fonds, Vol. 8, File 8 Meeting 72, DHH.

Holmes, *Life with Uncle*, 34.
The development of the air defences in both countries and the expectation outlined in Canada-U.S. defence plans that the security of the continent would be a combined effort meant there was a need for joint local air defence exercises. However, these exercises were hampered by the fact that both air forces needed to gain formal approval of their governments before each one could be conducted. Another problem that arose was that the only way the RCAF or the USAF could be granted permission to dispatch forces across the border in a time of war was through diplomatic channels. Both of these issues were addressed in a report presented to the Chiefs of Staff Committee in November 1950. It called for Canada and the U.S. to give their air forces “blanket” approval to carry out joint air defence exercises and to reinforce each other’s forces during an emergency.

The report was forwarded to the USAF and was approved by the JCS; however, opposition in Ottawa quickly emerged. 71 There was concern from some Canadian officials that “the proposal appears to be at variance with present government policy that Canada has the right, in each case, [emphasis included] to determine the conditions under which armed troops of another country may cross her border.” 72 The Deputy Minister of National Defence, Bud Drury, added that the giving of ‘‘blanket approval,’ would be inappropriate and too all-embracing.” 73 A number of issues soon surfaced with the possible deployment of U.S. forces to Canada in wartime when they were on Canadian

72 Air Defence Exercises and Operations Canada-United States, November 18 1950, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 77, File 2, DHH.
73 Extract from Minutes of 475th Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee Held 21 Nov 50, Undated, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 77, File 2, DHH.
Thus, while a RCAF briefing document on both these issues was presented to the PJBD in early 1951, the air reinforcement issue was put on hold, and it was the air defence exercise question that was first addressed.75

These exercises were the subject of concern of many Canadian officials who particularly desired to minimize the Canadian public’s knowledge of them. There was annoyance in External Affairs that there were occasions when the Department was not asked for approval until the last minute. After one such case, an official from External Affairs argued that they should send a “mild protest” to the Department of National Defence “over the tendency of the services to ‘tee up’ joint exercises which require Ministerial approval without giving us adequate notice in advance.” Heeney had earlier argued to Pearson that a protest should be sent to Washington.77 The lateness of such requests was probably partially due to problems with co-ordination of operations on both sides of the border. It was also likely that the two air forces understood that if they requested permission at the last minute, it would be harder for the Canadian government to refuse approval. At the end of January, the Board approved Recommendation 51/3. It outlined that, since necessary exercises were being delayed by the need to secure diplomatic approval, “the Air Defence forces of Canada and the United States be given

75 Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 53.
76 Memorandum for Mr. Heeney, February 7 1951, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5940, File 50215-40 Pt.1 Joint USAF-RCAF Air Defence Training Exercises, LAC.
77 Memorandum for the Minister, February 6 1951, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5940, File 50215-40 Pt.1 Joint USAF-RCAF Air Defence Training Exercises, LAC.
authority to carry out on local notification combined air defence training exercises.” The PJBD further noted that 51/3 would only apply to fighter forces.78

By this point, External Affairs had become agreeable to the giving of blanket permission for these exercises. The officials recognized the need for them and understood that, since they would be local in nature, they would be minor affairs and would draw little attention from the Canadian public as long as the commanders adhered to Canada-U.S. publicity agreements. These agreements first emerged in the late-1940s and were designed to ensure that any release of information about joint defence matters would be the subject of consultation between the two countries.79 Another consideration was that one of the main issues with American military activities on Canadian soil was ensuring that there were sufficient Canadian personnel and assets involved so that the exercises were truly joint. As the previous chapter illustrated, this was a major preoccupation of Canadian officials with initiatives in the Canadian Arctic such as the Joint Weather Stations; however, this factor was not an issue in this case. The need to obtain Canadian permission for these exercises was also recognition that the U.S. respected Canada’s control of its airspace, and it helped that the measure could be addressed through a PJBD Recommendation and could be kept from the Canadian public. Indeed, when the Americans mentioned that the RCAF had proposed having the measure “‘confirmed by a specific joint government statement,’” External Affairs responded that “we do not consider it necessary to record agreement by any more formal method than the normal

79 Directive Concerning Publicity Relating to Joint Canadian-United States Defence Plans and Operations, Undated, 82/196 PJBD Journals, Vol. 9, File 9 74th Meeting PJBD Journals, DHH. The agreement also stated that no encouragement should be given to journalists to believe that they can visit joint installations or that they can witness combined Canada-U.S. military exercises or operations.
exchange of notifications through PJBD channels.” Finally, it was possible that External Affairs concluded that it would be better just to give blanket permission for these exercises in order to free its officials for other more important issues. The result was that the Department therefore supported Recommendation 51/3 and informed U.S. officials that the Cabinet would soon approve it.

It was thus a surprise to External Affairs that on February 20, Claxton intervened and announced that there would be several conditions attached to 51/3. These included that the agreement would be on an annual basis and that for important exercises, the CAS would have to give permission. He further outlined that there would be no flights over Canadian cities except at high altitudes, that no live bombs would be carried by these aircraft and that flight plans would have to be filed as part of these exercises. These conditions were mostly the already existing arrangements to govern training flights of SAC bombers over Canada. External Affairs, however, was embarrassed by Claxton’s intervention, since they had indicated to the Americans that Canada would approve 51/3, and now they had to go back and say that the Cabinet would only approve it with conditions. Moreover, both External Affairs and Air Vice Marshal James raised a number of practical considerations such as the fact that the agreement should not on an annual basis and that the filing of flight plans would be problematic, as the whole point of the exercise was that the defending forces would not know where the attack was coming from. The memo further noted that James would discuss the matter with Claxton. This

80 Secretary of State for External Affairs to Canadian Ambassador Washington D.C., March 16 1951, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 101, File 10 Permanent Joint Board on Defence – Air Defence System, LAC; Canadian Ambassador Washington D.C., to Secretary of State for External Affairs, March 15 1951, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 101, File 10 Permanent Joint Board on Defence – Air Defence System, LAC.
81 Extract from Minutes of Meeting of Cabinet Defence Council, Held, Tuesday February 20th, 1951, Undated, 2002/03 Cabinet Defence Committee Fonds, File 40 71st Meeting, DHH.
conversation had some impact, as some of Claxton’s conditions were watered down. These changes included that the agreement would not be put on an annual basis, but most of the other ones remained.82

At the May 1951 meeting of the PJBD, the Canadian Section informed their U.S. counterparts that the 51/3 had been approved by the Cabinet under the condition that it “could be terminated upon notification of either government.” In addition, the Canadians stated that “the usual arrangements governing flights of U.S. bomber aircraft over Canada would apply,” to the bombers participating in these local air defence exercises. Aside from the conditions already mentioned, these “usual arrangements” included that all photos taken by bombers on their runs must be given high security classifications and be provided to the RCAF. These photos also could not be distributed without the RCAF’s permission. Moreover, only a limited number of bombers would be able to fly over Canada, and that the aircraft flying over Canadian cities would have to fly one at a time at high altitude.83 These rules were to limit the USAF’s presence in Canada’s airspace and to minimize the Canadian public’s knowledge of these exercises. Ultimately, the U.S. Section, which had previously been consulted, accepted them.84

It was at this point that both governments turned to the air reinforcement issue. By mid-1951, Curtis and Vandenberg had addressed the problems relating to the USAF

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82 Memorandum for the Undersecretary, February 20 1951, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5940, File 50215-40 Pt.1 Joint USAF-RCAF Air Defence Training Exercises, LAC.
83 Minutes of the 71st Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee on February 20 1951, RG 2 Privy Council, File C-10-9M Cabinet Committees Cabinet Defence Committee Minutes and Agenda, LAC; Movement of Aircraft Across the Border Part I Methods of Clearing Flights of U.S. Service Aircraft Over Canadian Territory, Undated, 82/196 Canada-United States Permanent Joint Board on Defence Fonds, Vol. 9, File 9 78th Meeting, LAC.
fighters being stationed at Canadian bases.\textsuperscript{85} Ironically, it should be noted that newly declassified documents show that the USAF was not interested in having squadrons stationed in Canada with the exception of Newfoundland, and isolated cases such as the area north of Detroit. Indeed, a briefing note prepared for Vandenberg for a conference with Curtis in late 1950 argued: “A proper deployment of available Canadian air defence units and available U.S. air defence units should result in the sufficient development of an air defence system, thereby decreasing or eliminating the necessity for deploying the USAF units into Canada.”\textsuperscript{86}

Thanks to newly declassified files, the full story of the development of this proposal is now clear. In June 1951, a Canadian military study noted that there was still a need for procedures to facilitate such aerial reinforcement, but it was not until the autumn that the Chiefs of Staff Committee discussed the issue.\textsuperscript{87} Curtis argued that there “appeared to be no questioning the military desirability of adopting the principle of mutual reinforcement.” But Foulkes countered that “in the past the government had been reluctant to commit itself to arrangements of this kind.” He added that while St. Laurent had stated that once war began, Canada would co-operate fully with the U.S. to defend North America, he believed it was “questionable” if the Cabinet wished to formalize such an agreement before it was necessary.\textsuperscript{88} Nonetheless, by this point, External Affairs had recognized that Canada and the United States “are now in the somewhat unreal position

\textsuperscript{85} Jockel, \textit{No Boundaries Upstairs}, 53-54.
\textsuperscript{86} Memorandum for General Vandenberg, December 19 1950, RG 333 Files of International Military Agencies PJBD Entry 17-A, Box 2, File “Top Secret Correspondence, 1941-1956” Folder 12, NARA.
\textsuperscript{87} A Study of the Improvements Required in the Defence Measures to be Taken in Canada in Event of Sudden Attack or Threat of Attack Prior to Discussion with the U.S. of Desirable Methods for Achieving Concerted Action in an Emergency of the co-ordinated Defence Forces of the Two Nations, June 26 1951, 96/24, Box 4, File 6 Planning Air Defence, DHH.
\textsuperscript{88} Extract from Minutes of 509\textsuperscript{th} Meeting Chiefs of Staff Committee, Undated, 2002/03 Cabinet Defence Committee Fonds, File 59, DHH.
that the USAF and the RCAF could conduct training exercises, but should an attack occur on the outbreak of war, the forces would return to their own countries and avoid all joint action until approval is obtained through diplomatic channels.” These officials also warned that the value of the early warning that would be provided by radar systems such as the Pinetree Line, which was under construction, would be lost if this problem was not corrected.\textsuperscript{89} Therefore, the Cabinet Defence Committee, with the support of External Affairs and the RCAF, sent a proposal to the PJBD, which was approved as Recommendation 51/6 in November 1951.\textsuperscript{90} 51/6 gave both the RCAF and the USAF’s air defence commanders the power “in the event of war,” to redeploy their forces as needed to the other country.\textsuperscript{91}

A number of factors explain why 51/6 was approved including that Canada saw this recommendation as a necessary step to improve the air defences of the continent. On the other hand, one should not ignore the fact that the recommendation would not come into force until the event of war when the political consequences would be limited.\textsuperscript{92} It was certainly helpful that since 51/6 was a PJBD recommendation, as it would not become public unless the Cabinet chose to release it. Another factor was that 51/6 granted only limited concessions to the Americans. In fact, a memorandum to the Cabinet Defence Committee stated that the proposal was for the adoption of the principle of

\textsuperscript{89} Memorandum for Wershof, Undated, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5924, File 50210-A-40 Pt. 1 Mutual Reinforcement in Wartime, LAC. The Pinetree Line will be discussed in Chapter 6.\textsuperscript{90} Memorandum for Cabinet Defence Committee, December 3 1951, 2002/03 Cabinet Defence Committee Fonds, File 59 Cabinet Defence Committee Papers for 81\textsuperscript{st} Meeting 12 Dec 51, DHH.\textsuperscript{91} Journal of Discussions and Decisions at the Meetings of the Board Held at Fort Bliss, Texas, November, 1951, Undated, 82/196 PJBD Journals, Vol. 9, File 9, DHH.\textsuperscript{92} Canada-United States Air Defence, Mutual Re-enforcement, November 12 1951, RG 2 18 Privy Council Fonds, Vol. 145, File DND Canada-United States Defence Relations PJBD 1950, LAC.
mutual reinforcement for the purposes of joint defence planning.\textsuperscript{93} External Affairs had also resisted U.S. efforts to allow commanders to implement 51/6 not just during a state of war, but during an emergency, as the American meaning of emergency differed from that of Canada. Canadian ministers were ultimately “reluctant to delegate powers under circumstances which cannot now be clearly foreseen.”\textsuperscript{94} In addition, it would only apply to air force units, as the Army anti-aircraft units that the RCAF and the USAF ADCs had operational control over were not included.\textsuperscript{95} Finally, 51/6 enhanced Canadian control of its airspace, since it would be up to the RCAF ADC to authorize the deployment of USAF fighters to Canada.\textsuperscript{96}

One area of possible concern that arose was the issue of which country would have control of fighters over those parts of Canada where the RCAF did not have forces. As Jockel has noted, Claxton was aware of this issue when he carefully noted in one memo that under 51/6, "agreement has been reached on the principle that any force located in Canada will operate under a Commander designated by Canada.”\textsuperscript{97} This meant that in the Prairies and Newfoundland, USAF officers would be given this authority because there were no RCAF squadrons located in these areas.\textsuperscript{98} In the event, the Cabinet Defence Committee either overlooked this issue or was not that concerned about it, since they approved the recommendation. Thus, both 51/3 and 51/6 were relatively simple
measures whose development reflected the effort by Canadian ministers and government officials to balance the security of the continent with the protection of Canada’s sovereignty and the desire to avoid any negative political consequences. Nonetheless, while the air defence exercise and the air reinforcement issues had been addressed, the air interception problem remained.

The Revision of 51/4

For the USAF’s air defence community, 51/4 had not strengthened the defences of North America enough to overcome the limitations of the Canadian air defence forces. Even by April 1953, Western Ontario and the Prairie Provinces did not have RCAF fighter cover. The Americans were also well aware that the RCAF had sent most of its trained manpower and aircraft to defend Western Europe, and had left its home defence in a weakened state. This was not only a problem for Canada, as the USAF fighters provided the only protection for these areas, but it increased the vulnerability of many U.S. cities. Moreover, there were fears that Soviet bombers would fly parallel to the border and strike at American cities such as Detroit or Buffalo. Therefore, the USAF pushed a somewhat reluctant State Department to begin negotiations to replace Recommendation 51/4 with an agreement with fewer limitations. In addition, the Canadian section of the PJBD had been informed through informal channels that the U.S. Section would raise the issue of fighters “of one country firing on unidentified aircraft

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98 For more information see Goette, *Canada and the United States*, 197.
100 Memorandum by the Charge d’Affairs in Canada (Bliss) to the Director of the Office of British Commonwealth and Northern European Affairs (Raynor), April 24 1953, *FRUS*, Vol. VI 1952-1954, 2080.
when flying over the territory of the other country.” The Canadian Section had already recognized that 51/4 provided a “‘full set of teeth,’” but “‘immobilized the jaw,’” and that the air defence commanders were primarily worried about the defence against the first Soviet attack. Developments elsewhere had further exposed the Canadian position. The United States had established a coastal air defense interception zone (ADIZ) beyond its sovereign boundaries, including into areas west of Vancouver Island, and in 1953, the USAF moved to establish ADIZs over Greenland and Iceland. Consequently, in June 1952, the air defence community in the USAF asserted to the PJBD that 51/4 was “too restrictive” and presented a revised version.

The new USAF proposal would allow the air defence commander of either Canada or the U.S. or the commander of a coordinated continental air defence system to use the forces of both countries to intercept unidentified aircraft “regardless of International Boundary.” The proposal did outline that the unidentified aircraft would only be intercepted if the flight plan had not been processed by the air defence system or if it was late. The fighter also could only fire upon the unidentified aircraft or order it to land if the aircraft in question committed a hostile act, showed “manifestly hostile intent” or if it was declared hostile by the national ADC. The memo, however, specifically did not define what a hostile act was, as the USAF considered such a task impractical and felt

103 Memorandum for Members of the Canadian Section, Permanent Joint Board on Defence, February 21 1952, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 102, File PJBD Recommendations, DHH; Interceptor Flights, Undated, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 102, File PJBD Recommendations, DHH.
104 Atlantic and Pacific Coastal Air Defence Identification Zones, Undated, RG 218 JCS Geographic File 1951-53, Box 56, File 373.24 US (9-8-49) Section 3, NARA; Proposed U.S. Negotiating Position Regarding the Air Defence of Greenland and Iceland, Undated, RG 218 JCS Geographic File 1951-53, Box 56, File 373.24 US (9-8-49) Section 3, NARA; Secretary of Defense to the President, September 19 1952, RG 218 JCS Geographic File 1951-53, Box 56, File 373.24 US (9-8-49) Section 3, NARA.
that it would only hinder the Air Defence Commanders. The proposal was discussed at the June meeting of the PJBD and criticism quickly emerged in Ottawa.  

Some of this sentiment came from the RCAF. Certainly, they wanted to work with the USAF to defend the continent, but since the special relationship between them and the USAF was still emerging, the RCAF preferred, if possible, to control operations in Canadian airspace. They were concerned that the USAF’s proposal would mean that: “either [emphasis included] USAF or RCAF aircraft, directed either by USAF or RCAF air defence controller, could order interception of aircraft over U.S. or Canadian territory, and if it was deemed that a hostile act was being committed or intended, could order the aircraft being intercepted to land or be shot down.” The RCAF concluded that these changes would allow USAF fighters to shoot down aircraft over Canadian territory.

Moreover, newly declassified files illustrate that the Department of Transport continued to oppose any extension of the right of the USAF to intercept aircraft in Canadian airspace. Crowley wrote to External Affairs that he believed that there was no reason why the restrictions to 51/4 should be lifted and he was “completely unaware of any incident wherein an extension of the general authority to U.S. aircraft … would have proved beneficial.” To strengthen its position, Transport informed External Affairs of an incident that had occurred when U.S. fighters had intercepted a Trans Canada Airline (TCA) flight in an unsafe manner. This case illustrated to Transport that the existing

106 Memorandum For: The USAF & Steering Member, Permanent Joint Board of Defence, Canada-US, April 14 1952, RG 333 Files of International Military Agencies PJBD Entry 17-A, Box 4, File “Top Secret Correspondence, 1941-1956” Folder 24, NARA; Memorandum for the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations USAF, July 17 1952, RG 333 Files of International Military Agencies PJBD Entry 17-A, Box 4, File “Top Secret Correspondence, 1941-1956,” NARA; Goette, Canada and the United States, 200.
108 Crowley to Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, July 17 1952, MG 30 E133, McNaughton Papers, Vol. 293, File PJBD Proposed Extension REC 51/4, Interceptor Flights, LAC.
procedures should not be expanded and that such interceptions could lead to accidents. It
was left unsaid that such an incident would have grave political implications for the
government. The RCAF responded that if TCA’s claims were true then they would be
reported to the USAF. The RCAF added that Transport and TCA would have to endure
additional interceptions while a system for forwarding flight plans to the USAF’s ADC
from the Canadian Central ADIZ were improved, and that in their experience that
Transport was not doing enough to make the existing arrangements work. Nevertheless,
Pearson concluded that, “we should be very careful about extending these interception
rights – especially when no emergency exists.”

By September, the RCAF had developed its own revision to 51/4. Its main
features were that the interceptions would take place under the rules of engagement of the
country over whose territory the interceptions were taking place and that they could only
be ordered by that country’s air defence commander, “or an officer who has been
delegated the requisite powers.” This proposal was the subject of much discussion in
Ottawa. At a meeting attended by the Canadian Section of the PJBD as well as other
officials, Transport stated that while they recognized the need to intercept unidentified
aircraft in Canadian airspace, they feared the consequences of an international incident
caused by an over zealous USAF pilot. McNaughton, the Chair of the Canadian Section
of the PJBD, countered that both countries had invested significant funds into the
development of the air defence system and it needed to be effective. He then suggested
that one solution to Transport’s concerns was that all violations of the interception
procedures and the disciplinary action taken by the USAF in each case be forwarded to

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109 Memorandum for Defence Liaison (I) Division to Acting Under- Secretary of State for External
the PJBD. Ultimately, McNaughton won over the Minister of Transport, Lionel Chevrier, who wrote to Claxton that while he remained concerned, he realized that “in times of war or great emergency such as we have now the national interest must prevail.” He was willing to support the RCAF’s revision of 51/4 as long as McNaughton’s suggestions were included.  

At the September meeting of the PJBD, the USAF again argued that they needed less restrictive procedures. However, a plan to present the revised RCAF proposal at the meeting had fallen through. Instead, the RCAF member argued that discussions on this subject should be deferred until service to service conversations could take place, as the RCAF proposals “would meet substantially,” the USAF’s requirements for changes to 51/4. McNaughton further emphasized to the Board the challenge of obtaining Canadian agreement to changing 51/4 “unless there was assurance of prompt action in handling complaints which might arise,” and there was a need for quick disciplinary action for breeches of the regulations governing the interception of unidentified aircraft. However, the political atmosphere in Canada was not that conducive to resolving this issue. In late November, a story in the Globe and Mail on various incidents of U.S. fighters intercepting aircraft in Canadian airspace had generated interest in this issue in the House of Commons, which Claxton had to address. The U.S. Embassy in Ottawa further warned that since 1953 would be an election year, Canadian ministers would be

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111 Minister of Transport to Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs, September 19 1952, DCER, Vol. 18, 1952, 1131.  
“zealous” to protect Canada’s sovereignty. While this memo focused on Canada’s relations with NATO, its assessment could be applied to North American defence. Both air forces, nevertheless, continued to work together to develop an acceptable proposal.

A key event was a conference held in November 1952. One USAF officer noted that “it is suggested that such working level conference between our representative staff agencies having primary interest may serve to obtain completed action more expeditiously,” including the revision of 51/4. He formally stated that this was not an attempt to bypass the PJBD, but an effort to develop “completely coordinated (USAF-RCAF) positions for which the PJBD could then secure final governmental approval.” Finally, he invited a RCAF representative to attend a future conference at the USAF HQ. As already shown, the formation of this relationship had been a gradual process, but by 1952, it was well underway. Such a relationship was both necessary and inevitable because the defence of the continent was a combined effort, and without a formal command structure such as NATO, strong ties between the two air forces were required to make these often informal arrangements work.

Moreover, because of the low priority that air defence generally had in both U.S. strategy and amongst the USAF’s leadership, those interested in air defence within the USAF could not get the American government to impose measures on Canada such as a revision to 51/4, and had to work with the RCAF to achieve such goals. In fact, thanks to these discussions, much progress had been made in revising 51/4. As Jockel has already noted, both air forces quietly had negotiated a side deal that would allow the RCAF to

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113 Memorandum, November 4 1952, RG 59 State Department, 1950-1954 Decimal File, Box 3554, File 2, NARA.
114 Burns to Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief RCAF, December 1 1952, RG 59 Department of State Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada (EUR/CAN), Box 8, File Radar General, NARA.
delegate authority to the USAF to control the interception of unidentified aircraft over parts of Canada where the RCAF did not have forces. The RCAF’s draft proposal, thus, included the provision that the interception would be carried out only “on the orders issued by the Air Defence Commander of the country over which the interception takes place, or an officer who has been delegated the requisite powers.” Indeed, the most controversial aspect of this relationship was that it allowed the two air forces to improve the air defence system without the agreement of the Cabinet. However, while this issue had been overlooked when it arose in 1951 in connection with 51/6, newly declassified evidence indicates that it did not go unnoticed by Canadian officials this time.

In November 1952, after examining the revised RCAF proposal, MacKay asked for clarification of what command arrangements would exist for areas such as Newfoundland and the Prairies where no RCAF forces were deployed, and more importantly, where “the communications required by the Canadian Air force Commander to control movements of the USAF aircraft will also be lacking.” MacKay then asserted that the revised proposal would violate the “Joint Canadian-United States Statement” of February 1947, which states that all “cooperative arrangements” would be under the control of the country in which they take place. He concluded by arguing these points should be considered when the Cabinet Defence Committee discussed the issue.

External Affairs added in March 1953 that the main problem with interception issue “will

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115 Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 57.
116 MacKay to Miller, November 12 1952, MG 30 E133, McNaughton Papers, Vol. 293, File PJBD Proposed Extension REC 51/4, Interceptor Flights, LAC.
117 Ibid. It should be noted that Richard Goette has discussed the impact of these changes on command and control arrangements for continental air defence in his Ph.D. dissertation. For more information see Goette, Canada and the United States, 201-3.
be to evolve procedures which will make possible the exercise of effective Canadian
control over such operations.”

Not surprisingly, Canadian ministers and officials were not terribly eager to
discuss this proposal. While the two air forces quickly developed procedures for dealing
with violation of the interception procedures,\textsuperscript{119} and the JCS and the State Department
had approved a draft revision to 51/4 by March 1953, in Ottawa, no progress had been
made. Henry even wrote to McNaughton on March 10, inquiring when the Canadians
were going to make a decision. It would not be until April that the Cabinet discussed this
issue.\textsuperscript{120} At this meeting, Claxton admitted that a revision to 51/4 was justified from a
military point of view. “Because of the limitation in Canadian manpower and aircraft,”
the RCAF alone could not intercept “enemy aircraft along the Canada-US border in
western Ontario and the three prairie provinces,” and much of Canada and many
American cities were not adequately defended. Claxton then emphasized that “it was for
consideration whether the proposal was politically and otherwise acceptable.” He then
warned “the most important change in the modification to Recommendation 51/4, as
recommended by US military authorities, would be to enable the Canadian Air Defence
Commander … to delegate his powers to US commanders responsible for the defence of
that area bordering on western Ontario and the three Prairie Provinces.”\textsuperscript{121} Claxton
justified this situation in a memorandum by arguing that the delegation of control of the

\textsuperscript{118} Current Problems in the Development of Canada – United States Defence Policy, March 20 1953,
Defence Policy, LAC.

\textsuperscript{119} Journal of Discussions and Decisions at the Meetings of the Board held at the Aberdeen Proving
PJBD Aug 51 – Oct 53, LAC. These procedures were that incidents would be dealt with the two ADCs and
that follow up reports would be sent to the PJBD.

\textsuperscript{120} Henry to McNaughton, March 10 1953, MG 30 E133, McNaughton Papers, Vol. 290, File U.S.
Interceptor Flights over Canada 1951-1952, LAC.
USAF fighters over Canada to American commanders was due to the fact that the USAF operated many of the Pinetree Line stations, and that this situation temporary and would continue only “until such time as Canada takes over the manning of stations initially manned by the United States.” While this was not really true, Claxton believed it. Ultimately, the Cabinet determined that Canada was going to have to accept a revision to 51/4. After much discussion, they concluded that the Canadian Section of the PJBD’s position should be that “while the Canadian Government wished to meet the American points substantially, every precaution should be taken to safeguard Canadian interests.”

Therefore, at the April meeting of the PJBD, McNaughton took the floor and emphasized this point. In particular, he noted that both ADCs needed to study how the revised agreement would apply to border cities such as Niagara Falls and Sault Ste. Marie as well as the Prairie Provinces and Newfoundland. In response, the RCAF Member argued that the commander of RCAF’s ADC would consult with his USAF counterpart on this situation. The PJBD then stated that the commander of RCAF ADC should not consider himself bound by the restrictions imposed by 51/4 during these discussions.

Ultimately, when the PJBD approved this joint RCAF-USAF proposal as Recommendation 53/1 in the autumn of 1953, both countries accepted it.

It was clear why the American government and the USAF supported 53/1, as they had always regarded 51/4 as a compromise made necessary because of Canadian political

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122 Aircraft Interception Modification of Agreement, March 25 1953, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 78, File 34, DHH. Richard Goette also argued in his dissertation that Claxton did not fully understand what Canada was giving up due to rapid evolution of these command and control arrangements in the 1950s. Goette, Canada, the United States, 202, 358 Note 109.
123 Extract from Cabinet Conclusions, April 9 1953, DCER, Vol. 19, 1953, 1020-1
considerations and was “a serious detriment to the air defense capabilities of the United States and Canadian forces.”  

The combination of 53/1 and the side deal with the RCAF had given them what 51/4 had not, the right to intercept and shoot down aircraft in Canadian airspace. But this leads to the question of why Canada accepted 53/1?

First, Transport’s concerns had been addressed by the two air forces. In addition, the USAF had agreed to a clause in 53/1 that “the authority to issue orders to engage an unidentified aircraft should, to the greatest extent possible, be retained by the Air Defence Commander,” which eased Canadian anxieties over the command and control arrangements of 53/1.  

Goette has also shown that Canadian concerns over the situation in Newfoundland had been resolved through an arrangement that the commander of RCAF ADC would have control over air defence operations in Newfoundland, but that this authority would be exercised through the commander of U.S. Northeast Command, since all the air defence forces in Newfoundland were American.  

Pressure from the RCAF and the USAF and the fact that the issue had been ongoing since mid-1950 had an impact as well. Another factor was the Canadian Election in August 1953 in which the Liberals had won another landslide victory had made the political considerations of 53/1 less of a problem. Finally, it helped that the agreement was covered by a PJBD Recommendation, which meant that it could be kept secret from the Canadian public.

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125 Merchant to Secretary of State, November 30 1953, RG 59 State Department 1950-1954 Decimal File, Box 3553, File 2, NARA.  
127 Goette, Canada, the United States, 235-236.
There were also other important reasons for the Canadian decision, including the first test of the Soviet hydrogen bomb in August 1953. This event had heightened concern over the Soviet strategic forces, and led to increased interest in continental defence in the United States and Canada, and a greater willingness to support air defence measures such as 53/1. This increased attention to air defence was shown by the bilateral discussions over the DEW Line and the Mid Canada Line in 1953 that will be discussed in Chapter 8. Finally, although nationalist ministers and officials wanted to retain as much control of Canadian airspace as possible, in the end they had to recognize that Canada did not have the resources available to do this. This factor, when combined with the need to improve the defence of North America, meant that Canada had to accept an increased USAF presence.

**Conclusion**

From 1950 to 1953, the U.S. and Canada worked together to begin the process of creating a continental air defence system. Although this effort was slow to emerge, the dramatic increase in military spending that followed start of the Korean War allowed both nations to expand their air defences. This program included improved cooperation between the RCAF and the USAF on joint air defence exercises, air reinforcement during wartime, and most controversially, the interception of unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace by U.S. fighters. Indeed, the development of these measures was not always a smooth one.

Canadian ministers and officials did support proposals to improve the air defences of North America; however, they sought to limit the political impact of these initiatives. Canadian nationalists within the Cabinet and External Affairs also wanted to safeguard
Canada’s sovereignty over its airspace, even if that control was more formal than real. On the other hand, the RCAF along with their USAF counterparts generally pushed for measures to strengthen air defence co-operation as a result of their growing special relationship. These informal ties helped to secure North America in the days before NORAD. But these efforts were often constrained by the Cabinet and External Affairs, as well as Transport, which believed that the USAF’s authority to intercept aircraft in Canadian airspace should be limited. Moreover, the officers in USAF responsible for the development of these defences were hampered by the reality that the U.S. government and the USAF’s senior leadership had limited interest in air defence. Without this high level support, these officers were forced to either negotiate with the Canada through the PJBD or to work behind the scenes with the RCAF to achieve their goals.

The manner that these measures were developed and implemented reflected these influences. Recommendation 51/3 that facilitated the conduction of local joint air defence exercises and 51/6, which addressed the mutual reinforcement of the air forces in wartime, were relatively simple to implement because they raised few problems for the Cabinet and External Affairs. 51/3 not only covered a relatively minor issue, but could be seen as a sign of U.S. respect for Canadian control of its airspace. Furthermore, 51/6 would only come into effect during wartime. Ultimately, both these agreements made few requirements of Canada and were approved with strict limits. On the other hand, the recommendations to address the air interception problem were more complicated and raised numerous concerns with the Cabinet, External Affairs and Transport, and took over three years to resolve. The first recommendation, 51/4, was only approved after a number of strong conditions had been attached. Moreover, the revision 51/4, 53/1 was only accepted by the Cabinet and External Affairs after the first test of the Soviet H-Bomb in
August 1953 and because of various other factors including the increased U.S. interest in air defence and even it had to be supplemented by a side deal between the two air forces.

These measures represented some of the first steps in the development of a continental air defence system and would help to secure the continent throughout the 1950s. The importance of these measures was shown in later years as both the capabilities of the Soviet bomber force and the size and explosive power of its nuclear stockpile increased. Moreover, as will be seen in future chapters, the factors that shaped these PJBD recommendations would continue to influence the North American air defence system.
Chapter 6: The First North American Radar Defences

Introduction

In the early 1950s, Canada and the United States began to work together to develop a continental air defence system. This process not only included increased cooperation between the RCAF and the USAF, but the development of improved early warning capabilities. While the Americans had constructed the Permanent Radar System, both countries understood that there was a need for a radar system on Canadian soil to provide more warning time of a Soviet bomber attack and ground control capability for RCAF and USAF fighters. The RCAF was preparing its own limited plans for such a network when the USAF offered to develop a joint system with them. Consequently, both countries decided to construct the Pinetree Line. As part of this project, the United States would not only provide two thirds of the funding for this project, but USAF personnel would operate a majority of the stations. Several scholars, including Jockel, have discussed the emergence of this defence system; however, the availability of newly declassified documents at American and Canadian archives allow for a re-examination of this project, including why both sides took the positions they did during the negotiations over this line. Indeed, the development of this early warning system would be complicated by different conceptions of the Canadian national interest in Ottawa.

While the Cabinet and External Affairs agreed to the construction of the Pinetree Line and traded control over a Canadian built system for improved security, the USAF’s interest in having tenure at the radar stations it was funding ran into a Canadian

1 Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 44-46; Schaffel, The Emerging Shield, 210.
reluctance to give them formal rights of occupancy on Canadian soil.\textsuperscript{2} More seriously, American demands that the agreement be formalized as an exchange of notes ran into strong opposition in Ottawa because the State Department decided that this note would have to be registered at the United Nations (UN), which would serve to make it public. Canadian ministers and officials feared that if the Canadian people found out about the terms of the Pinetree Line agreement then there would be significant political consequences for the Cabinet.\textsuperscript{3} The result was months of protracted negotiations, as Canadian officials sought to avoid the registration requirement. On the other hand, although the RCAF supported the Pinetree Line and played an important role in planning and the implementation of the project, it had a limited role in Canadian decision making on this issue. The relationship between the RCAF and the USAF also played only a minor part in the emergence of this system. Instead, the USAF generally dealt directly with the Canadian government. During this period, U.S. officials and American airmen briefly showed a high level interest in air defence and strongly supported the Pinetree Line project. Nonetheless, after the Canadians agreed to construct the radar system, this support was not sustained and U.S. interest in this project quickly declined.

After the Pinetree Line agreement was finalized, both countries continued to have their disagreements over this project, which have been overlooked in the secondary literature due to the unavailability of the necessary documents. One problem in particular that arose was the procurement of Canadian radar components for the Pinetree Line. During these discussions, the Department of Defence Production and its powerful

\textsuperscript{2} Memorandum for the Minister, April 6 1951, R.A. MacKay Papers, File Diary File February 5–August 9 1951, LAC.

\textsuperscript{3} Under Secretary of State for External Affairs to Canadian Ambassador Washington D.C., April 17 1951, McNaughton Papers, Vol. 293, File PJBD – Policy re publication, Canada-US Defence agreements, LAC.
Minister, C.D. Howe, along with the Cabinet and External Affairs sought to counter USAF and RCAF efforts to cancel orders for Canadian made radar equipment. Another issue was the development of the Temporary Radar Station Program to augment the Pinetree Line. The Cabinet and External Affairs was reluctant, again for political reasons, to allow additional USAF personnel on Canadian soil particularly, since these temporary stations would not utilize Canadian electronic equipment. Furthermore, indecision and a lack of interest on the part of the USAF meant that the construction of these stations was delayed. Ultimately, the result of all these factors was that the development of these first joint radar systems on Canadian soil would be a difficult process.

The Origins of the Pinetree Line

The need for early warning of a Soviet bomber attack over the North Pole and through Canadian airspace was a problem that dated from the end of the Second World War. However, U.S. and Canadian efforts to resolve this problem had been constrained by a lack of resources, Canadian concerns about sovereignty in the Arctic and especially the massive cost of providing such early warning. One attempt to address this problem through the Joint Appreciation and the Canada-U.S. Basic Security Plan (BSP) had already been sidelined because it was seen to be too grandiose. In fact, in addressing a question on this subject during a visit to Washington in February 1949, St. Laurent informed reporters “we have seen plans that call for so great an expenditure that if they

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4 Memorandum for the Chairman, January 25 1952, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 101, File 10 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Air Defence System, DHH.

were implemented there would not be very much left to do anything else.\(^6\) Vandenberg’s efforts to secure funding for additional early warning radars had also been rebuffed by the other members of the JCS.\(^7\) However, soon after the test of the first Soviet atomic bomb, General Ennis Whitehead, the Commander of the USAF’s Continental Air Command (CONAC), began to argue for improved early warning capabilities. In February 1950, he warned that there would be little warning of a Soviet atomic strike on North America, and he would have less than one hour to scramble his fighters. He concluded that the U.S. would be “playing for keeps” in the first hour of a Soviet attack, and additional warning time was of vital importance.\(^8\)

Fortunately, plans were already under development to remedy this situation. The RCAF had realized that the radar plan proposed under the Canada-U.S. BSP was too ambitious, and a scaled down program was needed. By 1950, the Canadian government had approved the new scheme, which specified the construction of five radar stations to be operational by 1954.\(^9\) When the USAF was informed about the Canadian plans, the Americans requested information about them.\(^10\) Whitehead had already recommended that additional radar sites should be installed on both sides of the border, although he believed that the Canadian radar sites would not be built unless the U.S. provided the


\(^{7}\) Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 44.

\(^{8}\) Remarks Made to the Members of the Air Defense System Engineering Committee of the Scientific Advisory Board on February 3 1950, Symington Papers, Box 5, File General Correspondence, Truman Library.

\(^{9}\) Development of Canadian Radar Screen, May 22 1950, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fond, Box 1010, File 10, Permanent Joint Board on Defence Radar Screen, DHH.

\(^{10}\) Memorandum for Major General Walsh, USAF Member of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence Canada-United States, April 12 1950, RG 333 Files of International Military Agencies PJBD Entry 17-A, Box 2, File “Top Secret Correspondence, 1941-1956” Folder 12, NARA.
As a result, discussions began between the two air forces that were headed up on the Canadian side by Air Vice Marshal James. He concluded it was “clear that the U.S. hope we can complete at least all of this eastern portion and so give depth to the system.” He also believed that “since these radar stations are vital to the security of the United States it is likely that the desire of the U.S. section is to discuss informally the possibility of an arrangement for proportioning of costs between the two countries.” However, the RCAF did not brief External Affairs about these conversations, and it was only in May 1950 that External was informed about these talks by the State Department. U.S. officials were interested in discussing the issue informally with the Canadian Section of the PJBD to examine the “practicability and possible means of speeding up the radar screen project.” They especially wanted to raise the level of discussion from the technical to the political level through an exchange of views in the PJBD. On May 17, External Affairs contacted James, noting that since this project, “sounds … as though it would be a pretty important item,” a paper should be produced for the next meeting of the Board.

During the summer, both sides continued to discuss this issue. For example, CONAC worked with James to develop a plan acceptable to both nations. Indeed, the original U.S. proposal was modified because certain elements of it were not acceptable to Canada for political reasons. While these planning discussions continued, in August, the RCAF increased the number of radar stations in their construction program from five to

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11 Grant, The Development of Continental Air Defense to 1 September 1954, 57, 64; Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 43.
12 Development of Canadian Radar Screen, May 22 1950, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fond, Box 101, File 10, Permanent Joint Board on Defence Radar Screen, DHH.
13 Ignatieff to Eberts, May 16 1950, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5930, File 50218-C-40 Vol. 1, PJBD File Recommendations, Correspondence, Progress Reports, LAC.
14 Eberts to James, May 17 1950, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fond, Box 101, File 10 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Radar Screen, DHH.
nine, and received instructions to accelerate their development.\textsuperscript{16} The U.S. Air Force also urged the RCAF to accelerate planning of its version of the Civilian Observer Corps to provide more early warning of a Soviet attack.\textsuperscript{17} Finally, in early September, Vandenberg and Curtis corresponded about this issue with Curtis responding that he agreed with U.S. plans except on the division of costs.\textsuperscript{18}

By the fall of 1950, RCAF and USAF planners developed \textit{A Plan for the Extension of the Permanent Radar Net of the Continental Air Defense System}. The two air forces argued that the Permanent Radar System could only provide one hour’s warning of an attack on the U.S. North East, and that the proposed Canadian radars could only provide coverage for Southern Ontario, Quebec and Vancouver. The planners agreed that it was essential that the Canadian based radars give the USAF’s ADC more early warning of a Soviet attack, and provide cover for U.S. bases on Canadian soil. The paper further argued that the American need for additional early warning and the RCAF’s requirements for ground control radars were compatible and “adaptable to a reasonable and logical joint solution.” The plan outlined a network of over 30 radars to be constructed by both countries, since it was recognized that Canada did not have the resources to deal with this issue alone. The report concluded that because of improved Soviet capabilities, the radar system should be operational by July 1, 1952.\textsuperscript{19}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{15} Memorandum for General Vandenberg, December 19 1950, RG 333 Files of International Military Agencies PJBD Entry 17-A, Box 2, File “Top Secret Correspondence, 1941-1956” Folder 12, NARA.
\bibitem{16} Aircraft Control and Warning Programme, April 25 1951, 92/4 Alexander Ross Fond, File 26 24-11 Radar, DHH.
\bibitem{17} Eberts to Benningnoff, September 16 1950, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5930, 50218-C-40 Vol. 1, File PJBD File Recommendations, Correspondence, Progress Reports, LAC.
\bibitem{18} Memorandum to General Vandenberg, December 19 1950, RG 333 Files of International Military Agencies PJBD Entry 17-A, Box 2, File “Top Secret Correspondence, 1941-1956” Folder 12, NARA.
\bibitem{19} A Plan for the Extension of the Permanent Radar Net of the Continental Air Defense System, Undated, 2002/03 Cabinet Defence Committee, Box 2, File 47, DHH; Jockel, \textit{No Boundaries Upstairs}, 44.
\end{thebibliography}
Continental defence was increasingly the subject of interest to Canadian politicians and officials. In his September 6 address to the House, Claxton stated “it is obvious that any radar defences that we have in Canada would be just as much for the defence of the United States as of Canada,” and that “it may be that we shall work together on the establishment of some stations in Canada, by joint effort, with possibly joint operation.” Moreover, because of concern expressed in Ottawa that “perhaps [there was] still some tendency in Ottawa to overlook the extent of our responsibilities for the defence of this continent,” the issue was examined at a November 14 meeting of the Panel on Economic Aspects of Defence Questions. At this meeting, Foulkes raised the point that there was the need for more information, since “it had been indicated recently that the Americans were attaching much greater importance to the continental defence of North America than had previously been the case.” Drury, the Deputy Minister of National Defence further noted that it was difficult to gain any information on U.S. continental defence planning, as it was not done centrally and was subject to a "creeping mobilization." Drury defined this process as when one project was emphasized without relation to the whole defence program. He added that he believed Canada was willing to take greater risks with continental defence than the Americans. Ironically this assessment overestimated U.S. interest in continental defence, although in fairness it was often difficult to interpret American intentions. Indeed, even if the American government and military establishment was not that interested in a problem, they could still muster vastly greater resources than Canada could while overwhelming Canadian officials with their

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20 Hansard, 1950, 325.
requests. The meeting concluded that Foulkes should attempt to extract from the U.S. officials more information on their continental defence plans.²²

On December 15, the U.S. Section of the PJBD was informed that the JCS wanted the PJBD to discuss the new radar scheme.²³ After an informal meeting between McNaughton and U.S. officials on December 27, Henry wrote to McNaughton on January 3, 1951 that the JCS had referred the question of the radar system to the PJBD so it could advise the JCS “as to the acceptability of the plan and the feasibility of its implementation.” He added that the plan was not finalized, but it still would “provide a suitable basis for consideration of the problems.”²⁴ The PJBD met on January 10 and 11, 1951, and after both sides agreed that the discussions were purely exploratory, Henry informed the Canadians that the U.S. services supported the plan. He also outlined that the Americans would pay two thirds of the cost of the project while the Canadians would provide the remainder of the funding.²⁵

The Panel on Economic Aspects of Defence Questions then examined the project. A report prepared for the committee noted that both air forces supported the scheme and that the cost to Canada of the line would be no more than the nine radar stations the

²³ Memorandum for Steering Member, United States Section Permanent Joint Board on Defence Canada-United States, December 15 1950, 82/196 PJBD Journals, Vol. 9, File 9 73rd Meeting, DHH.
RCAF was already planning on constructing. In fact, this exact point may have been the reason that the RCAF expanded its original radar project from five to nine stations in the summer of 1950 in order to make it easier to sell the radar extension scheme to the Canadian government. The Panel was informed that the Chiefs of Staffs supported the plan provided that it did not lead to excessive financial costs and manpower commitments. McNaughton then outlined the scheme and argued that the “execution of the plan would improve North American defences out of all proportion to the cost. After four years of discussion, all three U.S. services were solidly behind the plan. Their great anxiety to have the system installed explained their readiness to assume the major share of the costs and to meet Canadian susceptibilities.” He added that the U.S. Secretary of Defense, George Marshall, backed the project. Foulkes stated that the radar plan had emerged from joint defence planning under NATO, and that this should be emphasized to the Canadian public. He further noted that another advantage of the scheme was that Canada would not have to bear the whole costs of defending the approaches to the American heartland. There were some reservations about the project, but the panel gave its endorsement. Moreover, the Cabinet was pleased that this scheme, unlike the one proposed in 1946, was practical and would strengthen the defence of North America at a reasonable cost. Consequently, at its next meeting, the PJBD approved the radar program as Recommendation 51/1.

27 Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 45.
28 The Sixteenth Meeting of the Panel on Economic Aspects of Defence Questions, January 18 –19 1951, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 104, File 2020, 5-8, DHH.
29 Extract from Cabinet Conclusions, January 24 1951, DCKER, Vol. 17, 1951, 1248; Journal of Discussions and Decisions at the Meetings of the Board Held at Maxwell Air force Base, Montgomery,
21 while Truman approved 51/1 “subject to the availability of required funds,” on April 14.  

At this point, it appeared the situation was resolved, since Canada had approved the construction of a major radar system on its territory that became known as the Pinetree Line, which would be partially funded by the United States. The Cabinet had agreed that USAF personnel would operate over half the stations, and that the system would be integrated into the wider U.S. air defence network. Canadian ministers and officials had done this because they recognized the need for increased warning of a Soviet attack. Neither, the Cabinet nor External Affairs were entirely happy about the project, however, since it required “the stationing of U.S. personnel under U.S. command in pockets across Canada,” which ran “counter to the policy we have endeavoured to follow since the war.” Indeed, a reference to replacing USAF with RCAF personnel was later included in the Pinetree Line agreement even after the RCAF stated that it would not possible to do this.  

Despite their unhappiness, the Canadians were more or less content to co-operate with the Americans, since the Pinetree Line would not cost them any more money than the stations they were already planning on building. Canadian ministers and officials were willing to sacrifice control over its own radar system in order to gain increased security although the Cabinet still desired to retain the “necessary accoutrements of sovereignty,”

31 The Minister of Embassy in Canada (Bliss) to the Officer in Charge of Dominion Affairs (Haselton), May 16 1951, FRUS, Vol. II, 1950, 889.
over the Pinetree Line stations.\textsuperscript{32} Canadian officials recognized the reality that Canada’s air space was an air corridor between North America and the Soviet Union, which meant that they had to accept radars on its soil.\textsuperscript{33} This decision was made easier by the fact that the line would be constructed using Canadian labour, contractors, and most importantly, Canadian-made electronic equipment.\textsuperscript{34} Finally, it was helpful that the proposed radar system was being constructed away from populated areas and the prying eyes of the public who might have been offended by an extensive U.S. military presence, but not too far north as to raise questions about Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic.

Canadian officials were also very careful to minimize any public information regarding the line. In February 1951, Claxton assured the House of that the government was continuously “reviewing our territorial defense with the U.S. services because the defense of the North American continent is a joint operation. Our security does not depend exclusively on what Canada does or what the Americans do, but on the sum of our joint effort. Every cent spent in Canada helps to defend the United States and vice versa.”\textsuperscript{35} He then stated: “A screen of stations with the latest and most powerful radar apparatus is being built ... The American and Canadian chains will be linked together to form a single system of which one quarter will be in Canada.”\textsuperscript{36} He did not state that the Americans would be building and operating radar stations in Canada, only that the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[32] Memorandum of Conversation, June 14 1951, RG 59 Department of State Records of the Policy Planning Staff, Box 13, File Canada 1947-53, NARA.
\item[33] A Survey of Relations Between Canada and the United States, June 20 1951, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 113, File 2511 A Survey of Relations Between Canada and the United States, DHH, 2.
\item[35] “Where Do We Stand Now on Defense,” February 3 1951, Financial Post, 16, Stauffer Library, Queen’s University.
\item[36] Hansard, 1951, 91.
\end{footnotes}
Canadian radars would be linked with the U.S. system. This reflected the desire to keep the details of the agreement from the Canadian people to minimize political difficulties.

Problems, nonetheless, soon emerged. One of them was the difficulty in obtaining the necessary funding for the project in Washington. Henry wrote in his memoirs that the U.S. Bureau of the Budget raised financial concerns that caused difficulties in getting the project approved. Moreover, in April 1951, after learning that funding for the project was lagging in Washington, Curtis wrote to the Under Secretary of the Air Force, John McCon, requesting that funds be released. McCon, together with the Secretary of the Air Force, Thomas K. Finletter, went to Truman and directly lobbied the President to allocate the funds for the project and on June 13, 1951, 20 million dollars were allocated. This delay was a reflection of the lack of sustained high level interest in continental air defence that existed in Washington that the President had to be directly lobbied to allocate these funds out of a 40 billion dollar defence budget. It is important to note that this delay came even after a personal appeal from Acheson to Marshall on April 25 that the greatest efforts be made to obtain funding for the project because the “failure to do so would undoubtedly have an unfavorable effect upon our relations with Canada.” Ultimately, it was only on August 20 that the USAF actually released these funds.

38 Schaffel, The Emerging Shield, 160.
39 Acheson to Marshall, April 25 1951, RG 333 Files of International Military Agencies PJBD Entry 17-A, Box 3, File “Top Secret Correspondence, 1941-1956” Folder 17, NARA.
40 Permanent Joint Board on Defence, Canada-United States U.S. Air Force Progress Report Meeting of November 1951, 82/196 Canada-United States Permanent Joint Board on Defence Fond, File 9 Meeting 78th, DHH,
Other problems soon arose between the two governments, and resulted in what the State Department later characterized as “months of difficult negotiations.”

The first issue, which we now know of from declassified documents, was what kind of tenure the USAF would have at the radar stations in this system. The USAF representatives argued that it needed some sort of “temporary tenure” at the stations they were funding and operating in order to convince Congress to appropriate funds for the project. On the other hand, Canadians officials argued that this was unnecessary, and their position was based on their great reluctance to lease any facilities to the Americans on their soil. Having recently agreed to a 20-year lease for the base at Goose Bay, Labrador, which had been done in order to get the Americans to revise the leases for their bases in Newfoundland, Canadian officials did not want to grant any more leases to the U.S for installations on Canadian soil.

In one memo, Heeney, the Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, argued that “although we are of course ready to let the United States use and improve defence facilities in Canada where such use or improvement is shown to be necessary for our joint defence,” leases were no longer acceptable. He urged that Canada should “take a firm line and refuse to agree to any formal rights of occupancy. The U.S. defence authorities are very anxious for the construction of the radar screen and I am inclined we should take advantage of the situation.” He even asserted “if their law requires changing it is not our problem,” and concluded that the fact that the agreement contains the provision that no

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42 One official from External Affairs, R.A. MacKay, had raised this issue in January. The Sixteenth Meeting of the Panel on Economic Aspects of Defence Questions, January 18 –19 1951, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 104, File 2020, 5-8, DHH.

43 For more information see Beatty, Canada-United States Permanent Joint Board on Defence, 206-26.
station would be closed without the consent of both governments should be sufficient to assure Congress that the funds will be well spent.\textsuperscript{45} Moreover, there was concern that the granting of more facilities to the Americans on Canadian soil would pose political problems for the government. One official, Jack Pickerskill, wrote to Claxton that Canada needed to make it abundantly clear to U.S. officials that their demands for facilities created serious political difficulties. Pickerskill even asserted that Canada was being “occupied strategically by the Americans.”\textsuperscript{46} This position reflected the strong sentiments of Canadian nationalism that arose in Ottawa at any sign that the Americans were telling Canada what to do. Indeed, even if the Americans were not that interested in continental defence, they could still make demands upon the Canadian government that could not easily be refused and at times seemed overwhelming. This stance further reflected the effort to limit the U.S. military presence on its soil as much as possible. Although many of Canada’s NATO allies had to endure the presence of U.S. bases and substantial forces on their territory, Canada wished to avoid this as much as possible.

Canadian officials even communicated with Wilgress, the Canadian High Commissioner in the United Kingdom, to find out how the British government had addressed these issues in regards to SAC bases in Britain. He responded that while the U.K. did not grant leases or even “assured rights of occupancy” to the Americans, they paid one half of the capital charges and carried out maintenance up to RAF standards.\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{44} Heeney to Foulkes, April 24 1951, Claxton Papers, Vol. 123, RTH Louis St. Laurent, LAC.
\textsuperscript{45} Memorandum for the Minister, April 6 1951, R.A. Mackay Papers, File Diary File February 5–August 9 1951, LAC.
\textsuperscript{46} Memorandum for the Minister of National Defence, April 23 1951, St. Laurent Papers, Vol. 234, File DEA Defence 1948-1953, LAC. Pickerskill’s comments were made in the context of U.S. demands for facilities at Torbay, Newfoundland, but they reflect wider concerns over the U.S. military presence on Canadian soil.
\textsuperscript{47} Memorandum for the Minister, April 19 1951, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 5921, File 50209-40 Pt 1 US Military Use of Facilities in Canada and Canadian Policy, LAC.
Eventually, Canadian officials were convinced of the need to grant a limited form of tenure to the USAF so that it could obtain Congressional funding for the stations operated by the RCAF.48

The other major issue emerged on March 9 when the USAF’s Assistant General Counsel informed Canadian officials that the USAF needed 51/1 formalized as an exchange of notes in order to secure funding for the project from Congress. The State Department then argued that if this were done, the note would constitute an international agreement that would have to be registered at the UN Secretariat. This issue would cause great difficulties and certainly the need to secure funding from Congress was a major reason why the USAF concluded that it needed an exchange of notes. Indeed, Jockel has already discussed this factor in No Boundaries Upstairs.49 However, newly declassified files indicate that another possible explanation for the American position was that the USAF’s legal officers treated the construction of the Pinetree Line as a NATO issue, not a Canada-U.S. one. In February 1951, the Deputy Under Secretary of State, H. Freeman Matthews, wrote a memo to Marshall about how the United States would handle agreements covering installations constructed on the soil of its NATO allies. Matthews stated that there would be occasions when it would be necessary or desirable to register these agreements at the UN, and that a general agreement could be registered while the details would be kept secret. However, at the end of the memo, he argued that Canada and the United States have a “close and efficient working arrangement in military matters”

and that any additional measures “should be handled through existing machinery,” which in this case would be through the PJBD. Consequently, it was possible that the legal officers in the USAF ignored the reality that the Canada-U.S. defence relationship could handle the Pinetree Line agreement and instead decided, as the memo stated, that if an exchange of notes was needed or desirable, one would be negotiated. It can also be argued that this situation was a reflection on the lack of sustained high level support for the project in the USAF and the Truman administration. For example, a senior official and officer such as Marshall or Vandenberg could have discussed this issue informally with senior Congressional figures in order to avoid the need for a formalized Pinetree Line agreement. Furthermore, if the USAF really believed that the Pinetree Line was that important, its senior leadership would not have allowed its legal officers to hold the project up. Ultimately, this intervention did not occur and Canada was left to address these demands.

The problem was for the Cabinet and External Affairs that once an agreement was registered at the UN Secretariat, this body would publish the document, which would make it available to the Canadian journalists and opposition politicians, a fact that caused great concern for the government and its senior officials. Moreover, there was great annoyance that the Cabinet was going to have to face these potential political difficulties because of an action that External Affairs disagreed with and felt was unnecessary. While

50 Matthews to Marshall, February 10 1951, RG 333 Files of International Military Agencies PJBD Entry 17-A, Box 3, File “Top Secret Correspondence, 1941-1956” Folder 17, NARA.
51 This is perhaps of reflection that the power of legal advisors and officers is not a new phenomenon. For more information on the influence of legal officers in contemporary militaries see J. Holland, “Military Objective and Collateral Damage: Their Relationship and Dynamics,” In *Yearbook of International Humanitarian Law – 2004*, ed. T. McCormack and A. McDonald (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 35–78.
52 Under Secretary of State for External Affairs to Canadian Ambassador Washington D.C., April 17 1951, McNaughton Papers, Vol. 293, File PJBD – Policy re publication, Canada-US Defence agreements, LAC.
the State Department contended that it was only following the policy mandated under Article 102 of the UN Charter that “every international agreement entered into by any member of the United Nations, shall, as soon as possible, be registered with the Secretariat and published by it,” Heeney rejected this argument. He argued “most of the defence arrangements entered into between our two countries are not very suitable for publication and there is no compelling reason to register them under Article 102.” Furthermore, he noted that many agreements such as those dealing with local air defence exercises had not been registered. He concluded “it would seem to us more appropriate, and also safer, to limit the publicity to a general statement that the two countries are co-operating in the construction and operation of radar stations for their joint defence.”

Pearson agreed that the American arguments for the registration and publication of the notes at the UN were unconvincing. It is interesting to note that despite Canadian rhetoric about the importance of the UN, the Cabinet and External Affairs was prepared to ignore Article 102 because it served their conception of the national interest while the Americans wished to uphold their UN commitments.

Ultimately, it did not matter to Canadian officials if the agreement contained secret information or not, it was the fact that it was to be made public that was the problem. Canadian ministers and officials were worried about the political consequences if the government had to admit to the opposition and the Canadian people that Canada needed U.S. assistance to construct a radar system to defend its own territory.

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53 Copy of a Memorandum from Mr. Tate, L to BNA, Mr. Hasselton, Undated, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 102, File 1 PJBD Recommendations, DHH; The Canadian Charge D’Affaires to The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Canada, August 30 1951, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fond, Box 102, File 1 PJBD Recommendations, DHH; Under Secretary of State for External Affairs to Canadian Ambassador Washington D.C., April 17 1951, RG 24 Department of National Defence, Vol. 5921, File 50209-40 Pt. 1 US Military Use of Facilities in Canada and Canadian Policy, LAC.
government also did not want to admit that it would have to accept additional U.S. military personnel on Canadian soil to operate these stations. Canadian officials knew from prior experience, such as the debate over the Visiting Forces Act in 1947 that the government would face strong criticisms from the Conservatives and the CCF, which were both critical of the American military presence in Canada. The Canadian position further reflected the government’s already existing policy of withholding certain information on the Canadian-U.S. defence relationship from both the opposition and the public. They had already rejected the creation of a parliamentary committee on defence for this reason.\(^55\)

The Cabinet and External Affairs were further opposed to the agreement becoming public because it would raise the issue of why Canada was sending forces to Western Europe as part of NATO while U.S. forces defended Canadian soil. These concerns had already been expressed in January by Norman Robertson, the Secretary to the Cabinet and the Clark to the Privy Council, when he argued that the presence of too many U.S. troops on Canadian soil would make it difficult for Canada to send forces overseas.\(^56\) It should be emphasized that there were good reasons why Canadian forces were being sent overseas while the U.S. defended Canada. It was in Canada's interests to ensure that Western Europe remained out of the Soviet sphere of influence. As already stated in Chapter Five, Canadian officials believed that they gained influence in NATO by having significant forces there. Nevertheless, the Canadian ministers and officials did not want to have to make this case to the public unless they really had to. Finally,

\(^{54}\) Memorandum from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Secretary of State for External Affairs, May 29 1951, DCER, Vol. 17, 1951, 1292. (Marginal Note)
\(^{55}\) Harrington to Department of State, April 28 1950, Papers of Harry S. Truman PSF Subject File 1940-1953, Box 150, File Canada – General, Truman Library.
Canadian officials chose to take a stand on this issue because of their belief that Canada had already made many compromises in regards to this radar defence system. This belief was particularly strong, as it was influenced by nationalist sentiments that surfaced at any sign that the Americans were making excessive demands of Canada, even if in reality these requests were not that large especially in comparison to the thousands of U.S. troops stationed in Western Europe. Thus, the combination of political considerations, nationalist sentiments and the fact that Canadian ministers and officials strongly disagreed with this U.S. position meant that the Cabinet was firmly opposed to the American demand that the Pinetree line agreement be formalized as an exchange of notes. The Canadian position was that a PJBD Recommendation should be sufficient and since the recommendation and the note were essentially the same and the recommendation did not have to be registered at the UN, why should the exchange of notes have to be?

**Concerns about the Relationship in Ottawa and Washington**

It should be emphasized that many of the concerns that emerged during these negotiations reflected wider anxieties in Ottawa about the Canada-U.S. relationship. Pearson, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, expressed these sentiments in a number of speeches and reports including an address in Toronto on April 4, 1951. This speech was mostly motivated by fears that General Douglas MacArthur would attack China and widen the Korean War. Pearson had been quite critical of the MacArthur’s conduct as the commander of the UN forces in Korea; however, the address had also expressed broader Canadian concerns about its ties with the U.S. Before his appearance,

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56 The Sixteenth Meeting of the Panel on Economic Aspects of Defence Questions, January 18 – 19 1951, 73/1223 Raymoent Collection, Box 104, File 2020, 5-8, DHH.
Pearson ordered External Affairs to study this relationship while one of the briefing notes prepared for him stated that because the continental defences located on Canadian soil were often of greater importance to the Americans, Canada faced a choice. It could either strain its fiscal and manpower resources to provide them or risk “impairing her sovereignty by letting the United States contribute the preponderant share.” During the speech, Pearson argued that the relationship represented “one of the most difficult and delicate problems of foreign policy” faced by the Canadian government. He added that Canada should not transfer the suspicions and touchiness it felt with Britain to the U.S. just because the Americans had become Canada’s most important ally. Nevertheless, he asserted that: “the days of relatively easy and automatic political relations with our neighbour are, I think, over. They are over because, on our side, we are more important in the continental and international scheme of things, and we loom more largely now as an important element in United States and in free world plans for defence and development.” While this speech greatly overestimated Canadian influence in the world, it reflected some of the Canadian perceptions that created difficulties in the relationship.

The public reaction to the speech focused on the issue of MacArthur mostly because Truman had relieved him of command later that day, and Acheson sought to deflect criticism of the speech by stating he had the greatest respect for Pearson; however, privately American officials were irritated. The U.S. Ambassador to Canada, Stanley Woodward, reported to Washington that the speech was a “rather disjointed exposition of

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58 Canadian Foreign Policy in a Two Power World, April 10 1951, MG 26 L Louis St. Laurent Papers, Vol. 233, File External Affairs American-Canadian Relations 1951-56 Statements, 4-6, LAC.
present Canadian foreign policy with particular emphasis on United States-Canada relations.” American officials believed that the speech represented a tendency among some Canadian officials “in External Affairs and in other Departments, to view questions with the U.S. not simply as problems to which solutions should be found, but as international incidents involving Canadian prestige.” Ultimately, the State Department decided to ignore the speech and contain its impact, as “the attitudes prevailing in External Affairs do not appear to be shared to any appreciable extent by other Canadian government departments or by the public at large.” It is worth noting that Wrong expressed his unhappiness to Pearson about the speech, and told U.S. officials that it had been for political reasons. Pearson even admitted to Woodward that the address had been meant for domestic consumption.

In early May, Pearson also spoke to the House of Commons. He stated that the development of atomic weapons and long range bombers had made Canada more critical than ever for the defence of North America. He warned against Canada showing an excessive sensitivity toward the United States while cautioning that American arrogance and carelessness posed problems for Canadian sovereignty. He asserted these problems would be resolved if the U.S. met their legitimate defence requirements “in a way which recognises Canadian jurisdiction and, even more important, Canadian self respect.”

60 The Ambassador in Canada (Woodward) to the Secretary of State, April 19 1951, FRUS, Vol. II, 1951, 882-3.
61 Northern European Affairs (Raynor) to the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Perkins), August 1 1951, FRUS, Vol. II, 1951, 892-894.
62 English, The Worldly Years, 60; Howe also complained in a letter to an American friend that he felt the speech was unnecessary, as relations between Canada and the U.S. were excellent.
63 Memorandum of Conversation by the Ambassador in Canada (Woodward), April 18 1951, FRUS, Vol. II, 1951, 884-5. Pearson told Wrong that he was worried by the strong anti-American reactions to the
Pearson concluded that the defence relationship had to accommodate the concerns of the Canadian people.  

Canadian concerns were further detailed by External Affairs in a Survey of Relations between Canada and the United States. It argued that Canada had to defend its territory in order to avoid the U.S. filling the vacuum, although these officials recognized that Canada could scarcely refuse the United States the use of its territory or air space in a major conflict. The report added that there were serious issues related to the status of American personnel and defence installations on Canadian soil and that in the future Canada should anticipate great difficulties caused by U.S. requests for facilities on Canadian soil. It then argued that latent anti-American sentiment posed a great problem because any Canadian government “is subject to the temptation to pull the Eagle’s feathers in order to gain more support in Canada, and which means on the other hand that the freedom of action of a Canadian government in dealing with the United States is limited by the fact that if it goes too far in deferring to the United States it would lose a substantial measure of support in Canada.” The paper concluded that this anti-American sentiment could serve as “a bargaining counter, which we can usefully use from time to time in negotiations with the United States,” just as U.S. officials use their need to deal with Congress in their dealings with Canada. The authors added, “public opinion is the most important determinant of foreign policy.”

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64 Pearson to Wrong, April 16 1951, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Vol. 6184, File 1415-40 Pt 2.2 Canada-United States Relations, LAC.
66 Ibid, 10.
These wider concerns about the Canada-U.S. relationship were also reflected in Washington. In particular, many State Department officials were becoming annoyed with the positions taken by their Canadian counterparts. For example, one document complained that Pearson, Heeney and other officials stressed “the independence of Canada’s decisions in international matters.” Consequently, these officials have “a tendency to play down the effects of Canada’s bilateral ties with the U.S., to insist on the inviolateness of Canadian territory and to become easily irritated over what they consider our lack of appreciation of Canadian interests and views.” This memo concluded that these attitudes reflected the importance that Canadian “officials attach to problems with the United States, particularly in regard to co-operation in joint defense projects. The tendency in External Affairs to exaggerate the sensitivities of the Canadian public creates difficulties and delays in the implementation of various defense measures,” even if they had already been approved by the PJBD.69

Finally, in June, Pearson expressed his concerns privately to senior American officials about both the relationship and the Pinetree Line. He argued that that there were compelling political reasons to issue a new set of principles to govern the Canada-U.S. defence relationship, as it would serve as a “general canopy under which detailed agreements could be pressed forward.”70 Canadian ministers and officials were thus very concerned about this defence relationship and the potential political problems it posed. Nonetheless, they declined to confront the Canadian public with the reality that the importance of Canada airspace and territory meant that a strong defence relationship with

70 Memorandum of Conversation, June 14 1951, RG 59 Department of State Records of the Policy Planning Staff, Box 13, File Canada 1947-53, NARA. While many U.S. officials, including Acheson, were supportive of this idea, it was not followed through.
the U.S. was needed and that American forces would have to be based on Canadian soil to operate installations such as the Pinetree Line. Instead, the Cabinet and External Affairs sought to deal with the problem by limiting disclosure of the U.S. military presence in Canada.

The Negotiations: Spring and Summer 1951

The issue of the exchange of notes remained unresolved into the summer of 1951, as officials attempted to draft a note acceptable to both sides. The problem was that the Canadians wished to give the impression that they were not surrendering anything to the Americans, and that RCAF personnel would be substituted for U.S. servicemen if their presence was too objectionable. On the other hand, the USAF representatives wanted to ensure that the agreement included enough information to justify the appropriation of funds with Congress, and to retain support for the project within the Pentagon.71 By the end of May, the Canadians had agreed that the sums of money involved meant that an exchange of notes was needed, and by mid-June, both sides had agreed on a draft. However, on the registration issue, there was no movement. When the U.S. Minister in Ottawa, Don Bliss, discussed the issue with the Canadians on May 15, he “got a long grumble from [Max] Wershof,” who felt that the U.S. was being inconsistent by not accepting the PJBD recommendation and asking for the Pinetree notes to be registered with the UN. Another official, R.A. MacKay, asserted that he felt that an exchange of notes would have to be presented to Parliament, which was a problem because the note implies “another cession of territory by Canada to the United States, the advent of

71 The Minister of Embassy in Canada (Bliss) to the Officer in Charge of Dominion Affairs (Haselton), May 16 1951, FRUS, Vol. II, 1951, 889.
additional U.S. troops on Canadian soil,” and that Canadian public opinion would be hostile. Bliss countered in a memo that “Canadian public opinion is not as sensitive in these matters as MacKay implies. My own feeling is that the Cabinet … is the sensitive point, and a real problem is to get officials to put through proposals and persuade their Ministers to accept them. After that hump is passed it is fairly easy sailing.”

Bliss later wrote that the Canadians “certainly could not argue that their interests would be damaged in any way by publication, except possibly in the area of Canadian public opinion, where the Cabinet, to my mind, tends to be unduly sensitive.”

Bliss’ assessment of the situation was correct, but it did not matter. Canadian officials argued that since they had agreed to compromise on the exchange of notes for the convenience of the USAF, the Americans should do so on their registration. One Canadian official even argued that “he felt sure that the United States would be horrified if it found itself in the position of having to register with the U.N. some of its agreements with other countries.” However, Canadian officials did admit that that they did not oppose registering and publicizing all defence agreements with the Americans. Indeed, the publication of an exchange of notes covering the lease of the base at Goose Bay would not be a problem, since the government could not conceal such an extensive U.S. military presence from the Canadian public. This point illustrates how much political considerations influenced the Canadian position on this issue. The Americans had also

72 Ibid, 888.
learned that both Pearson and Claxton “refused absolutely to agree” to the registration and publication of the exchange of notes.\textsuperscript{74}

In July, Canadian officials met with the assistant legal advisor for the State Department, who asserted that they would not be asking for this concession unless they thought it was really needed.\textsuperscript{75} This position was not entirely accurate, as the State Department had contacted the USAF in late June arguing that a PJBD Recommendation should be sufficient to obtain Congressional funding and in fact “would provide a more flexible and satisfactory operating basis than a formal exchange of notes.”\textsuperscript{76} However, to the Canadians, the State Department continued to support the USAF’s position, and even argued that PJBD Recommendations were not formal international agreements binding both parties. Instead, they constituted “unilateral undertakings to carry out such recommendations, and the undertaking on one side is not necessarily contingent on the undertaking on the other side.”\textsuperscript{77} The Americans added that External Affairs should seriously consider the compromise of keeping the note in abeyance for a time to minimize the political consequences of its release.\textsuperscript{78}

\textsuperscript{74} Memorandum of Conversation, June 12 1951, RG 59 Department of State Records of the Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada Records Relating to Military Affairs 1943-1966, Box 12, File Registration of International Agreements (Radar) with the UN, NARA; Bliss to Hasselton, June 13 1951, RG 59 Department of State Records of the Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada Records Relating to Military Affairs 1943-1966, Box 8, File Radar Agreement Exchange of Notes 1949 – 1952, NARA.

\textsuperscript{75} Ambassador in United States to Secretary of State for External Affairs, July 6 1951, DCER, Vol. 17, 1951, 1266-7.

\textsuperscript{76} Perkins to Finletter, June 21 1951, RG 333 Files of International Military Agencies PJBD Entry 17-A, Box 3, File “Top Secret Correspondence, 1941-1956” Folder 17, NARA. In the files I examined for this project, I found no evidence that this position was communicated to the Canadians.

\textsuperscript{77} Copy of a Memorandum from Mr. Tate, L to BNA, Mr. Hasselton, Undated, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 102, File 1 PJBD Recommendations, DHH.

\textsuperscript{78} Exchange of Notes on Radar Agreement, July 10 1951, RG 59 Department of State Records of the Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada Records Relating to Military Affairs 1943-1966, Box 8, File Radar Agreement Exchange of Notes 1949 – 1952, NARA.
Meanwhile, in Ottawa, Claxton remained strongly opposed to the note being registered at the UN.\textsuperscript{79} He was particularly concerned that the need to have annual appropriations could lead to unwanted attention and discussions of the radar line in Congress, which would draw attention to Canada’s participation in the Pinetree Line project in both countries. He believed that because the radars were in Canada “the impression might get abroad that Congress was being asked to spend funds for the defence of Canada although in fact the additional radar sites are being established at U.S. request.” He then suggested that perhaps Canada should simply pay for the whole network by itself in order to avoid the question of registration all together. Claxton was a strong Canadian nationalist who tended to worry about the political implications of even minor aspects of Canadian defence policy. Moreover, as Minister of National Defence, he had sought to minimize any public information about the U.S. presence in Canada. Despite some support from Wilgress, Pearson rejected this proposal although he did note that that it was a legitimate question of whether it would be in the Canadian national interest to pay for the Pinetree line.\textsuperscript{80}

While the negotiations continued, another problem arose involving Defence Construction Ltd., the Canadian Crown Corporation assigned the task of constructing many of the Pinetree Line stations. It had spent significant funds on construction work under a “gentlemen’s agreement” that the USAF would quickly provide its share of

\textsuperscript{79} Memorandum from Deputy Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Minister of National Defence, July 10 1951, DCER, Vol. 17, 1951, 1268.

\textsuperscript{80} From Secretary of State for External Affairs, Canada, July 17 1951, R.A. MacKay Papers, Vol. 1, File Diary File February 5 –August 9 1951, LAC; High Commissioner in United Kingdom, July 25 1951, DCER, Vol. 17, 1951, 1270. For example, according to Stacey, Claxton had held up the publication of the first volume of the official history of the Canadian Army in the Second World War because it contained information that Claxton thought might cause problems for the government. Stacey, \textit{A Date with History}, 218-9.
funding for the project. Because of the delay with the exchange of notes and the fact that the USAF refused to give them a letter of intent without a note, the company was in an increasingly bad position, since it had spent over 5 million dollars on the project. The Minister who oversaw this company, C.D. Howe, was both deeply concerned about the situation and in a position to address the situation, since he was serving as acting Prime Minister with St. Laurent out of the country. Howe, thus, ordered External Affairs to agree to the exchange of notes. On July 30, Wrong was notified that despite that fact that External Affairs still opposed the registration of the note at the UN, it realized “that the debate could go on for some time without agreed result,” and this would create an “impossible situation” for Defence Construction Ltd. In addition, Wrong was informed that the USAF would sign the letter of intent after the exchange of notes was made and that the State Department had agreed that it would be not registered at the UN for some time.

Howe’s action, however, was not the last word on the matter, since on July 31, Wrong was told that St. Laurent wished to defer the exchange of notes until the Cabinet could discuss this issue further. The reason was that Claxton had again intervened and argued that the registering of the note “may contribute to Congressional and public misunderstanding of our position.” He was concerned that the radar agreement would give the impression that Canada was a recipient of U.S. military aid, which would cause

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more political difficulties for the government. It should be noted that this designation would have been extremely disagreeable for Canadian officials in this period because they took pride in being strong supporters of the Western Alliance, and in not accepting American aid. Moreover, such a claim would have created political controversy in Ottawa. Therefore, after the meeting, Wrong was instructed to obtain understanding from the Americans that the Pinetree Line was a “co-operative defence project which is being undertaken in the interests of both countries,” and Canada should not be designated as a country receiving U.S. aid.

The next day Wrong met with the Americans, and admitted that the Cabinet had been opposed to the registration of the notes for domestic political reasons. He asked that the registration of the note be delayed for the “near future,” which meant a delay of at least one year. The State Department agreed, and on August 7 sent a letter to Wrong reassuring the Canadians that they would “use its best efforts to ensure” that other U.S. government departments would not regard the project as aid to Canada. American officials also had informed the Canadians that they would not regard this situation as a precedent for future PJBD recommendations being formalized as notes. Finally, the

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84 Secretary of State for External Affairs to Canadian Ambassador Washington D.C., July 31 1951, MG 27 B20 C.D. Howe Papers, Vol. 195, File Radar Division, LAC.
85 Wrong to Acheson, August 1 1951, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds Box 101, File 10 Permanent Joint board on Defence Air Defence System, DHH.
86 Memorandum of Conversation, by the Officer in Charge of Dominion Affairs (Haselton), August 1 1951, FRUS, Vol. II, 1951, 896.
87 Perkins to Wrong, August 7 1951, Joint Staff Fonds, Box 101, File 10 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Air Defence System, DHH; Memorandum by the Director of the Office of British Commonwealth and Northern European Affairs (Raynor) to the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Perkins), August 1 1951, FRUS, Vol. II, 1951, 894; Recent and Current Questions in the Relations Between Canada and the United States, August 15 1951, Escott Reid papers, Vol. 7, File 16 Foreign Policy Department Policy Paper, 1951-1952, LAC. Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 26.
88 U.S. officials felt that this position had been important in the conclusion of the negotiations. Haselton to Bliss, August 2 1951, RG 59 Department of State Records of the Bureau of European Affairs Country
State Department fully understood that the exchange of notes should only be published after consultation with Canadian officials, as “any deviation from this agreed procedure would be most embarrassing to the Department and would seriously prejudice our relations with Canada.”

Despite the resolution of this crisis, newly declassified documents indicate Canadian officials continued to manoeuvre into the fall of 1951 in order avoid the registration of the note at the UN. While MacKay suggested that External Affairs should drop the issue and “let sleeping dogs lie,” many in the Department, including Pearson, disagreed. In early October, a Canadian official was informed that Pearson “would be grateful if you would examine whether we might make use of the security arrangements now being made between the United States and Japan in attempting to resist pressure from Washington to publish and register,” the Pinetree Line note. Some members of the Department concluded that since these U.S.-Japanese security arrangements could be kept secret then the same could be done with the radar agreement. External Affairs only dropped the issue after they determined that even if they were successful in getting the State Department to agree that PJBD Recommendations represented a valid form of international agreement, U.S. officials would then conclude that all these recommendations should be registered with the UN. Nonetheless, the fact that External Affairs...
Affairs, with Pearson’s approval, continued to search for a way to avoid this requirement was still significant.

Ultimately, despite the fact that the Cabinet and External Affairs conceded the registration of the exchange of notes, they were successful in achieving their end goal of minimizing the political consequences of the Pinetree Line. Indeed, the combination of the delay in registering the note at the UN with the decision to release the text of the agreement at a time when the public was distracted by the debate over the budget and the opening of the UN General Assembly proved effective. In fact, Cabinet was able to table this agreement in the House of Commons with little political controversy in February 1953.\textsuperscript{92}

The Construction of the Pinetree Line, 1951-1954

While the initial issues involving the Pinetree Line had been resolved, other difficulties emerged, namely with the procurement of radar equipment from Canadian manufacturers. Even before the Cabinet had approved 51/1, officials in Ottawa had placed a number of orders for Canadian-made radar components. This move was driven by a number of considerations including the need to maintain the capacity to manufacture electronic equipment in Canada in the event of a war, and the desire to decentralize production of radars from the United States. Although Canadian officials emphasized that “this arrangement was not merely in the interest of Canada,” there was also a strong desire amongst Canadian ministers and officials to build up a domestic electronics

industry. They wanted to maintain those industries that had been developed during the Second World War, and they believed that such industries contributed to economic development of the country. In addition, there were strong political considerations, since these radar plants provided the kind of employment that politicians liked to emphasize around election time. Canadian nationalism also played a role, as it led to the position that because the U.S. was constructing these radar lines in Canada, it should purchase Canadian manufactured electronic components for these installations. Finally, this approach both reflected the strong tendency of many officials in Ottawa to see defence contacts as a way to fuel Canadian economic development and the interests of Howe and the Department of Defence Production.

On February 22 and 23, 1951, representatives from Defence Construction Ltd. and another Canadian government company, the Canadian Commercial Corporation, met with USAF and RCAF representatives. After discussing the shortage of radar sets and equipment that existed in the United States, Canadian officials argued that as long as the specifications for the sets was received by April, Canadian industry could meet the target date for orders of July 1, 1952. In early March, after further discussions, Defence Production then instructed its electronics division to commence production of the necessary equipment. The main Canadian contractor, Northern Electric, was even advised by Howe to spread this order as widely as possible through the Canadian electronic industry and over 200 suppliers and subcontractors were given orders.

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93 Notes for the Canadian Chairman, February 25 1952, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 101, File 10 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Air Defence System, DHH.
94 Memorandum for the Chairman, January 25 1952, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 101, File 10 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Air Defence System, DHH.
Problems soon emerged because of the different agendas amongst the officials and officers involved in the Pinetree Line. While the Americans from the PJBD, the State Department and the USAF had negotiated in good faith when they had agreed that the Pinetree Line would include Canadian-made radar components, the implementation of these agreements was often turned over to officials and officers who had different priorities. These included the construction of the radar line as quickly as possible, and not the state of the Canadian electronics industry. Some USAF officers may have also been influenced by their ties to the U.S. electronics industry, which would not have been pleased by the loss of orders to Canadian companies. In addition, the RCAF officers charged with working with the Americans were primarily concerned with the development of an effective air defence system. Consequently, neither air force had much patience for dealing with Canadian firms.  

At a June meeting of the Radar Extension Programme Operations Committee, the RCAF noted that the failure to provide the specifications and operating requirements for the radar sets meant that meeting the July 1952 deadline would be quite difficult. In the summer of 1951, officials from Defence Production further admitted to the Americans that Northern Electric would not be able to meet the planned deadline. Therefore, in September 1951, a joint USAF-RCAF working group agreed that the Canadian contract should be cancelled and the radar sets should be ordered from American contractors on condition that the U.S. purchased equivalent amounts of radar equipment from Canadian 

97 Memorandum for the Chairman, January 25 1952, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 101, File 10 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Air Defence System, DHH.
manufacturers. Not surprisingly, Defence Production was deeply distressed by the situation arguing if the contract was cancelled, it would cause serious financial losses to the Canadian government and would seriously reduce the morale of Canada’s electronics industry. These officials further complained that because so many contracts were let out, it would be difficult to salvage equipment from the order if it was cancelled. They admitted that there was no formal agreement by the USAF to purchase the sets, but argued that there was a moral commitment to buy the equipment. They further argued that because construction on the Pinetree Line was behind schedule anyway, the June deadline was not that important, and that Canadian manufacturers could deliver the sets between June and October 1952.

Another factor complicating the situation was that if the USAF did not purchase the equipment, the RCAF would have to do so, and this would require a special defence appropriation that would have to be voted on by parliament, which would cause political embarrassment for the government. The State Department admitted internally that American officials bore much of the responsibility for the situation, but rejected External Affairs claims that the U.S. had caused the problem. Bliss even noted that the RCAF agreed with the USAF that the American sets should be installed in the Pinetree Line, opposing Canadian civilian agencies who in Bliss’ words had “jumped the gun,” as part

100 Memorandum for the Chairman, January 25 1952, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 101, File 10 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Air Defence System, DHH.
of the wider effort to develop a Canadian electronics industry. Nevertheless, after a
visit by Walsh, the USAF Member on the PJBD, the Americans decided that as long as
the Canadian sets were compatible with U.S. equipment then they could be used in the
Pinetree Line. Defence Production and its supporters in the Cabinet and External Affairs
thus had achieved their goals in line with their conception of the national interest. Blame
for the affair was placed on the two air forces, and both countries began to construct the
line although Canadians such as McNaughton did not forget what had occurred.

There were further disagreements over the establishment of USAF offices in
Winnipeg, Vancouver and Ottawa to help co-ordinate the construction and operation of
the Pinetree Line. When he first heard about this request, Pearson was not pleased
because he did not want the USAF to have a public presence in Canadian cities. This
reflected Pearson’s desire that none of the Pinetree Line sites that were operated by
American personnel be near populated areas. Indeed, Pearson had already requested
that the Pinetree Line station at Gander, Newfoundland should be operated by the RCAF
because Gander was an international airport and the presence of U.S. military personnel

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would raise questions about it being an American responsibility. While he was informed that it would be best if the USAF operated the Gander station, since the only air defence forces in Newfoundland were American, responsibility for operating the station was transferred to the RCAF.\footnote{Notes on Discussions between Mr. Claxton, Mr. Pearson, Mr. Heeney, Mr. Drury and Lt-Gen Foulkes, held Tuesday, 4 March 1952, March 5 1952, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 116, File 2564B Early Reports and Reports of Discussions by General Foulkes with UK and US, DHH, 2-3; Agenda Memorandum for the PJBD – Canada- United States, January 14 1953, Paul Martin Sr. Papers, Vol. 7, File Department of National Defence, Permanent Joint Board on Defence, January 1953, 5.} At a meeting on October 1, 1952, Pearson stated that the Pinetree Line offices should be set up as Annexes to U.S. Consulates and not separate offices.\footnote{Memorandum by Defence Liaison (1) Division, October 1 1952, DCER, Vol. 18, 1952, 1122.} But after U.S. officials agreed that USAF officers would not wear their uniforms and that the offices would have a low profile, they were allowed.\footnote{Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Minister Embassy of United States, October 20 1952, DCER, Vol. 18, 1952, 1125. Ironically, the USAF office had been established in Winnipeg to allow for the purchase of Canadian goods to be sold at U.S. operated Pinetree Line stations. Memorandum from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Secretary of State for External Affairs, October 8 1952, DCER, Vol. 18, 1952, 1123.}

The Pinetree Line became operational in 1954 and as Foulkes later recalled, it was the “first real joint defence effort which involved construction, finance and manning.” The system served as one the first initiatives in the creation of a continental air defence system, along with improved air defence co-operation between the RCAF and USAF. While it was only able to provide limited additional early warning of an attack, it did improve the ability of both the RCAF and the USAF to intercept Soviet bombers in Canadian air space.\footnote{Address by General Charles Foulkes to Canada-United States Business Conference Canadian-United States Cooperation in Defence, February 18 1959, BIOGF Foulkes, DHH, 13.} Claxton further believed that this line provided lessons for the later construction of radars in the far north.\footnote{Claxton Memoirs, 959.} In fact, the development of this system raised the need for more early warning, which could only be provided by radar lines in the Arctic, as will be discussed in future chapters.
The Temporary/Augmentation Radar Stations

One other issue that caused difficulty was the construction of temporary radar stations to augment the Pinetree Line. This proposal originally emerged out of an USAF program to construct 44 mobile radar stations in the continental United States to provide coverage for atomic research installations, for SAC bases and to fill gaps in the Permanent Radar System. However, USAF officers concluded that six of these stations would be better placed in Ontario to provide coverage against low flying aircraft striking at industrial sites in Southern Canada and the North East United States. In May 1952, the U.S. Section of the PJBD was briefed on this project. The issue was then discussed at a meeting of the Board in June when the Americans requested that the USAF be given permission to conduct surveys for these sites. Five of the stations would be for early warning while the sixth would have the capability to control aircraft from the ground. Not surprisingly, the request raised concerns in Ottawa, since this program raised a number of issues with the conceptions of the national interest of the Cabinet and External Affairs. Indeed, McNaughton warned that this request would require careful consideration by the Canadian authorities because USAF personnel would have to operate these stations, and requested detailed information about these stations and the role that they would serve.¹¹⁰

In July, he wrote to Henry asking, “why it was not possible in January 1951 to foresee the need for further stations in Ontario,” and would it be possible to station them on American soil? He even suggested that the stations be left unmanned except during

emergencies when RCAF personnel would operate them.\textsuperscript{111} Canadian officials concluded that while U.S. officials had “been put off with requests for further information … we shall certainly be under pressure for the establishment of these sites.”\textsuperscript{112} Furthermore, in September, Foulkes warned Bradley, the Chairman of the JCS, that additional “requests for concessions in Canada would create a very delicate political problem for us.”\textsuperscript{113} It was not until the September meeting of the PJBD that the Canadians were briefed that the stations would form part of a double perimeter of stations to support sites constructed in the U.S. and would have to be operated 24 hours a day. The USAF added that it had no objections to these stations being operated by RCAF personnel. The Americans concluded the briefing by informing the Canadians that because the radar sets had originally been procured for use in the U.S., no orders for Canadian radar equipment would be made.\textsuperscript{114}

McNaughton expressed appreciation for the information; however, he quickly shifted his tone and argued that in order for the Canadian electronics industry to prosper it “must be awarded an appropriate proportion of new contracts resulting from new requirements for the air defense system.”\textsuperscript{115} In November, Canadian officials further complained to the State Department about the delay in receiving information about the

\begin{thebibliography}{115}
\bibitem{111} McNaughton to Henry, July 3 1952, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 101, File 10 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Air Defence System.
\bibitem{112} Memorandum from Defence Liaison (1) Division to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, July 9 1952, DCER, Vol. 18, 1952, 1114.
\bibitem{113} Notes on Discussion with General Bradley held in Washington on 10 September 1952, September 15 1952, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 1116, File 2564B Early Reports of Discussion by General Foulkes with UK and US, DHH.
\bibitem{114} Memorandum for the Members, September 19 1952, Paul Martin Sr. Papers, Vol. 7, File National Defence PJBD Aug 51 – Oct 53, 3-5; NARA.
\end{thebibliography}
project, and emphasized the potential political impact of having more U.S. defence installations on Canadian soil.116 Discussions continued at the January 1953 meeting of the PJBD when the Americans informed the Canadian section that there was a need for three additional sites in B.C. to protect the Vancouver and Seattle area, and that these stations would be constructed on the same basis as the ones in Ontario. McNaughton responded that Canada would continue to object to the presence of additional U.S. forces on Canadian soil, particularly near populated areas.117

The Cabinet Defence Committee examined these requests on February 10. While the Chiefs of Staff Committee had recommended their approval, strong concern was again expressed that these stations would have to be operated by USAF personnel. This was especially troubling for the Canadians because many of these stations were located near populated areas particularly Trenton, Wiarton, and Mattawa in Ontario and Kamloops, B.C. Ultimately, the committee recommended that permission be given for the surveys and the construction of the sites, and that the RCAF should assume responsibility for their operation as soon as possible.118 Canadian officials later decided not to inform the Americans that permission to construct the stations had been granted.119 It is possible that the Canadians did this because they preferred that the stations not be built at all and hoped if the project was delayed enough, it would be cancelled. They may have also desired better terms, particularly that the project would utilize Canadian radar

116 Memorandum for a Discussion with Mr Hayden Raynor of the State Department Held on November 20, 1952, November 22 1952, DCER, Vol. 18, 1952, 1119.
118 Memorandum from Secretary of State for External Affairs to Cabinet Defence Committee, Undated, DCER, Vol. 19, 1953, 1032-4.
components. There were also discussions in Ottawa over what kind of tenure would the USAF have, as Pickerskill contended that the U.S. should not be given the same kind of rights that they were given in relation to Pinetree Line. It is not surprising that he made this argument, since he was a strong nationalist and had opposed Canada granting the USAF these rights in 1951. This time, he received the support of Pearson who informed External Affairs that the Pinetree Line formula should not apply to these new sites.  

In April 1953, Canada decided to allow the USAF to conduct the surveys for these radar stations. Accompanying this permission, however, was an “Oral Statement” that outlined that “it would be for the Canadians to decide whether or not it would, in actual fact, in any given case, be reasonable and practicable for the electronic equipment to be supplied from Canadian sources.” The document reflected the position of the interests of those ministers and officials in Ottawa who supported the development of the Canadian electronics industry and it led to a “lengthy and acrimonious” meeting of the PJBD later that April. The U.S. Section complained that the Canadian position on this issue was different than during the Pinetree Line negotiations when it had been agreed that Canadian electronic equipment “will also be used, so far as practical.” McNaughton replied that Canada had not committed to the construction of the stations and that once the surveys were completed, the Canadian government would want to discuss issues such

119 Memorandum from Secretary of State for External Affairs to the Cabinet, February 5 1954, DCER, Vol. 20, 1954, 1115.
120 Memorandum by Defence Liaison (1) Division, February 20 1953, DCER, Vol. 19, 1953, 1035.
as the manning of the sites. But he felt that there was no reason why consultations on the procurement of electrical equipment should not continue.\footnote{Journal of Discussions and Decisions at the Meetings of the Board held in the U.S.S. Franklin D. Roosevelt Enroute from Norfolk, Virginia to Jacksonville, Florida –April 13 – 17 1953, Undated, Paul Martin Sr. Papers, Vol. 7, File National Defence PJBD Aug 51 – Oct 53, LAC, 5, 5a, 5b.}

McNaughton then outlined the Canadian position further in a private conversation with an U.S. official. He explained that the “Oral Statement” was the result of problems that had occurred with the procurement of radar equipment during the construction of the Pinetree Line when there had been “a determined attempt to take this work away from Canada ... [which] would have created a serious crisis for the Canadian government.” He explained that there had been great difficulties in getting technical specifications for the radar sets, and Canadian contractors had to deal with many unnecessary and superficial changes in the design of the sets. He placed most of the blame for these problems on U.S. civilian companies, upset at the granting of contracts to Canadian firms, as well as the USAF and even the RCAF, who as inspectors and agents for the USAF had “made trouble” with the Canadian orders. While he emphasized that in his opinion the nine temporary stations posed few problems, the Canadian government wanted to set a stronger precedent for the procurement of Canadian radar equipment for future radar stations on Canadian soil, namely the proposed early warning system in the Canadian Arctic then being studied, which will be discussed in future chapters.\footnote{Memorandum for the U.S. Section, P.J.B.D., April 23 1953, RG 59 Department of State Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada (EUR/CAN) Records Relating to Military Affairs, 1942-1966, Box 8, File Augmentation Radar 1950-1963, NARA. The name of the DEW line study was Project Counterchange.}

On June 5, the U.S. responded formally to the Canadian “Oral Statement” with one of their own, arguing that they felt “it would not be in consonance with our long-standing joint defence arrangements if a principle were adopted whereby Canada would
have the unilateral right to determine in any case that it would be reasonable and practicable for the electronic equipment to be supplied from Canadian sources.” The document added that “arrangements for joint defence projects should not be influenced by any commercial considerations or require the development of uneconomic production facilities,” and that joint defence measures needed to utilize the resources of North America in the most efficient manner possible. Therefore, “arrangements for equipment, manning and construction should be by mutual consultation.”

Canadian officials countered that the American decision to preclude the procurement of Canadian made radar components from these sites “represented unilateral action by the U.S. and, therefore, the U.S. was not following a principle of mutual determination regarding provision of equipment.” Nevertheless, at the June meeting of the PJBD, McNaughton stated that since the radar stations were to be operational before the equivalent Canadian radar equipment could be produced, Canada would not require that Canadian sets be procured. The PJBD was then informed that the USAF hoped the stations would be operational by January 1, 1954.

At the autumn 1953 meeting of the PJBD, the U.S. Section stated that a formal request to construct the stations would soon be forwarded to Ottawa. Consequently, both governments began to negotiate an exchange of notes; however, these negotiations

would drag on into 1955 and were driven by concerns expressed by the USAF that if they were not given some kind of tenure at the stations, they could be unilaterally shut down by the Canadian government. 127 The radar stations further remained in limbo because the USAF had not made its final decision on how many stations were needed, and where they would be built. When one State Department official asked an USAF officer why that was the case, given the delays with the project, he received the answer that it was because the officers responsible for this project were constructing 200 temporary stations in the United States. 128 This lack of attention was also a reflection that this project was being overlooked due to the focus of both countries on larger projects namely the Mid Canada Line and the DEW Line. As a result, at the July 1954 meeting of the PJBD, it was disclosed that the USAF and RCAF ADCs were still examining the issue. In response, External Affairs stated that the Canadian government had not as yet considered the draft agreement and reserved the right to revisit it, including clauses dealing with the procurement of Canadian made radar equipment. 129 It was only in January 1955 that the USAF submitted a formal proposal to Canada. By this point, the scheme had been reduced to four sites, two in Ontario and one in B.C. and Nova Scotia. The stations were now known as “augmentation radar stations,” because they were no long transportable because they now all had ground control capability. In June, after more discussions and

further changes to the project, including the elimination of one of the Ontario sites, the exchange of notes took place and these three stations became operational in 1957.\footnote{\textit{(Secret) Proposed Establishment of Augmentation Radar Stations in Canada, April 1955, RG 59 Department of State Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada (EUR/CAN) Records Relating to Military Affairs, 1942-1966, Box 8, File Augmentation Radar 1950-1963, NARA; Permanent Joint Board on Defence, Canada- United States U.S. Air Force Progress reports Meeting of July 1957,}}

**Conclusion**

In this period, Canada and the United States began to address the need for more early warning of a Soviet attack over the North Pole and through Canadian airspace. Canada had already begun to provide a limited solution to this problem when the USAF suggested to the RCAF that both countries combine their efforts to build the Pinetree Line. After a flurry of negotiations, the two governments agreed that this system would be built on Canadian soil, and that the U.S. would provide two-thirds of the funding for its construction. The Cabinet and External Affairs therefore traded control over its own early warning system for improved security, and accepted the fact that U.S. personnel would operate a majority of the stations in the system. They recognized the need for more warning and were relieved the stations were largely located away from populated areas, but not too far north to raise questions about Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic. Despite this agreement, problems quickly emerged including with the funding arrangements in Washington and disagreements over what the kind of tenure would the USAF have at these stations. The most serious issue was the U.S. demand that an exchange of notes be utilized to finalize the agreement. This form of agreement was particularly problematic because the State Department argued that the note would have to be registered and
published by the UN Secretariat. This reality meant that the Canadian public could learn about the agreement through newspaper reports, which raised serious political concerns for the Cabinet. Canadian officials thus actively sought to avoid the registration and publication of the note. It was only after months of difficult negotiations that External Affairs finally agreed to what the Americans wanted, and even then it was the deteriorating financial position of Defence Construction Ltd. that forced them to compromise. Indeed, Pearson and External Affairs continued to be interested in avoiding the registration of this note until the fall.

Other problems with the line emerged during its construction, as there were difficulties with the procurement of Canadian radar sets. For a number of reasons, including the need to decentralize production of radar equipment from the United States, nationalist sentiments, political considerations and the influence of Defence Production, the Canadian government wanted to develop its domestic electronics industry. However, many American officials were critical of this effort and resistance from the two air forces and U.S. companies caused problems for Canadian firms. As a result, there was a storm of criticism from Canadian officials when an USAF-RCAF committee attempted to cancel an order from Canadian suppliers because American-made equipment would be available sooner. Ultimately, after much discussion, the USAF agreed to purchase the Canadian sets. This experience resulted in resentment amongst certain Canadian officials such as McNaughton that resurfaced during the Temporary Radar Station Program.

These stations were to supplement the Pinetree line and to provide low-level coverage for Canadian and U.S. territory. However, for the Canadians, these stations...
meant additional U.S. personnel on Canadian soil, which raised political concerns, particularly as many of these new sites would be located near populated areas. These stations served as a lightning rod not only for Canadian complaints over procurement of electronic components during the construction of the Pinetree Line, but for their anxieties about a possible early warning line in the Canadian Arctic. Moreover, because there were no orders for Canadian radar equipment for these stations and that the project was to supplement the Pinetree Line, interest from Canadian officials was limited. This was also the case in Washington, as the temporary stations in Canada were a small part of a much larger program, which combined with the lack of sustained high level attention by the Americans meant that it had low priority. Both governments were further distracted by the need to focus on more important air defence projects. These realities were seen in the delays in providing information to Canadian officials and the extreme indecision by the USAF in the number, location and function of the stations in question.

The experience of these radar programs reflected the continuing influence of certain elements on policy makers. In Ottawa, the Cabinet’s position was driven by the need to balance the need to defend the continent with the retention of political power. While Canadian ministers agreed to the development of a joint early warning radar system on Canadian territory, they were keen to avoid the publication of this agreement, as they feared the political consequences of doing so. Political considerations as well as Canadian nationalism influenced the positions of External Affairs, as the Department sought to negotiate agreements that would not harm the interests of their ministers. Ultimately, both these groups were largely successful in achieving their goals. Canadian ministers and officials did have to give the USAF tenure at the radar stations that the Americans were paying for, and accepted the formalization of the Pinetree agreement as
an exchange of notes; however, they were able to successfully minimize the political fallout of this project. Furthermore, Howe and Defence Production had succeeded in their effort to strengthen the Canadian electronics industry. On the other hand, while the RCAF was motivated by the desire to develop an effective air defence system, its role in policy making was limited. Therefore, its special relationship with the USAF only had a minimal influence on policy. As for the Americans, their policies were driven by their varying degrees of interest in continental air defence. Although they initially showed a high level interest in the Pinetree Line, it was not sustained. Thus, the development of the Pinetree Line was a product of the different conceptions of the national interest in Ottawa and the level of interest of the United States in air defence, which as future chapters will show, would continue to influence the development of this air defence system.
Chapter 7: The Expansion of the Early Warning System

Introduction

By 1952, the North American air defence system had started to emerge. The Pinetree Line was under construction and both countries had begun to work out the procedures under which USAF fighters could intercept unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace. Nonetheless, even with the Pinetree Line, the air defence system would only be able to provide a limited amount of warning of an attack due to the fact that neither government was interested in constructing a radar system in the far north because of the cost and Canadian concerns about a substantial U.S. military presence in its Arctic territories. Therefore, it was largely due to the efforts of a small group of American scientists working as members of study groups examining U.S. air and civil defence policy that the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line emerged. However, this project faced deep opposition from the USAF and the Department of Defense (DoD), which both objected to resources being diverted from SAC to fund this early warning system. The USAF was also opposed because of its conception of airpower, its focus on preempting a Soviet attack and its doubts about the technological feasibility of a radar system in the Arctic. Both the USAF and the Secretary of Defense, Robert Lovett, thus, sought to suppress these pro-air defence studies. They were, however, outmanoeuvred by the proponents of these defences who took their results directly to sympathetic officials in the Truman Administration, namely Jack Gorrie, the Director of the National Security Resources Board (NSRB). After an intense debate in the NSC and with support from Acheson and Paul Nitze, the Chair of Policy Planning at the State Department, President
Truman approved the development of the DEW Line. Nevertheless, before much progress could be made, Dwight Eisenhower took office and the transition between these two administrations was to cause serious difficulties for both this project and the Canada-U.S. defence relationship.

Eisenhower’s focus on the development of a new Cold War strategy meant it was months before the administration determined its approach to continental air defence. Furthermore, the loss of expertise and experience due to the turnover of senior officials in the State Department and the Pentagon posed especially serious problems for the Canada-U.S. relationship because of its dependence on informal procedures that allowed for consultation on major issues. Indeed, in the early days of the Eisenhower administration, the U.S. got out of the habit of consulting with Canada. These changes in personnel further resulted in many important contacts being cut off between the two capitals. This situation was made worse by the fact that Canadian officials were slow to address this problem.

In the meantime, spurred on by test of the first Soviet hydrogen bomb, the Eisenhower administration had responded to improvements in the Soviet strategic forces with significant investments in its strategic defences. This process was hastened by the development of a new U.S. Cold War strategy and by the collapse of opposition in the administration and the USAF to the new early warning lines due to the decision to fund these systems through cuts in the U.S. Army and U.S. Navy. These measures, which were approved in the fall of 1953, included an early warning line at the 55th parallel and the DEW Line in the far north, if that system was proved to be technologically feasible. It
will be argued that these improved air defences would become an important complement to Eisenhower’s “New Look.” However, notwithstanding advice to the contrary, the administration made these decisions without first discussing the matter with Canada. Therefore, while scholars such as Huntington, Eayrs, Cox, Jockel and Schaffel have discussed many elements of this story, newly available documents allow for a more detailed examination of why the Truman and Eisenhower administrations became more interested in continental air defence in 1952 and 1953. These declassified sources will further allow for a detailed discussion how the transition between these two administrations and Eisenhower’s conception of U.S. nuclear strategy influenced the emergence of these air defences.

The Origins of the DEW Line

Despite the danger of a Soviet attack over the North Pole, the idea of radar system in the Arctic did not originate from the American or Canadian governments or their air forces. The USAF was willing to devote some resources to North American air defence, as by the early 1950s, it had deployed hundreds of fighters, along with the Permanent Radar System, the Pinetree Line, and the Temporary/Augmentation Radar Stations to defend the continent. Formally, this effort was based on the idea of slowly extending the air defence system out from the industrial heartland of the U.S. and Canada northwards, although one could argue that the USAF was simply committed to allocating as few resources as possible on these defences. Similarly at this point, the Truman

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administration had real no interest in a greatly expanded air defence system. The Canadian government was also neither able to construct an early warning system in the Arctic because of the expense involved nor was interested in allowing the Americans to construct such a system on its soil. Canadian decision making was shaped by certain perceptions of what had occurred in the Second World War along with political considerations, nationalist sentiments and concerns about impact of an U.S. military presence on its Arctic sovereignty. Finally, while the RCAF was more interested in air defence than its U.S. counterparts, it was primarily focused on its forces in Europe and on improving its existing air defences.

The roots of the DEW Line were in of a study group headed by Dr. George Valley, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). While the Valley Committee did not argue for the construction of a warning line in the Arctic, it did call for the creation of an air defence research centre at MIT. After another study by the Weapons Systems Evaluation Group reported that the U.S. air defence system was inadequate, the USAF decided to establish the Lincoln Laboratory at MIT in September 1951. It was in the words of the Secretary of the Air Force, Thomas Finletter, to be “the Manhattan Project for Air Defense.” The truth was that both Finletter and the USAF saw air defence as a secondary priority, but by creating the Lincoln Laboratory, they had given those interested in air defence a base from which to promote their efforts. It was not surprising

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3 One Secretary of Defense, James Forrestal, had raised the possibility of such a system in a letter to Claxton in 1948. But even he admitted that technical issues would prevent any joint action for the time being. Forrestal to Claxton, August 31 1948 MG 26L, Louis St. Laurent Papers, Vol. 26, File Canada US Relations 1947-1948, LAC. In any case, Forrestal’s resignation in early 1949 meant that there was no one to champion the project in Washington and interest in a northern radar line quickly faded away.

4 Futrell, Ideas, Concepts, Doctrine, 286; Schaffel, The Emerging Shield, 144.

soon that after the creation of this centre, a study group known as Project Charles was formed there to examine this issue.  

This group faced numerous obstacles, since it did not have the co-operation of the USAF, which worked to scuttle this study. Truman also did not want any word of the study leaking out to the press, as he believed it would create political controversy. Project Charles’ report argued for an improved air defences although it did not support an early warning system in the Arctic because of the technical issues with constructing a radar system that far north. It had little direct influence on policy because of the USAF’s lack of interest in the problem, and questions about the ability of the proposed air defence system to destroy sufficient numbers of Soviet bombers to justify the cost. Nevertheless, the movement for improved continental defences only continued to gather steam, as additional pressure came from another study group, established outside the purview of the Lincoln Laboratory, Project East River.

Originally established to examine civil defence, the participants in this study quickly realized that a significant amount of warning time was required to make this effort effective. This conclusion was not surprising, since many members of Project East River had been involved in Project Charles. Project East River warned “the Soviet Union will soon have the capability to deliver a saturation attack on the United States,” and that such an attack “can and must be prevented.” It called for immediate improvements to the air defence system to provide one-hour alert of an attack, and an

6 Schaffel, *The Emerging Shield*, 145. The study group was named after the Charles River in Boston.
7 Herken, *Counsels of War*, 61.
9 Herken, *Counsels of War*, 63.
expanded radar system to provide two to three hours of warning. Lovett was not happy about these conclusions, particularly that the air defence system should be improved to the point that the civil defence network would only have to deal with “leakage through the defensive net.” This position was not surprising, as Lovett had been a strong supporter of strategic bombing since the Second World War when as Assistant Secretary for Air in the War Department he had strongly supported the bombing offensive against Germany. He wrote to the chair of this study, Otto Nelson, a former Major General in the U.S. Army, that the United States was “undertaking all practical measures for defense,” and that the committee should focus on civil defence. However, in June, in a letter that the Truman Library has made available, Nelson countered: “it was our hope that the Department of Defense would be willing to accept immediately an assigned responsibility for some specified standard of performance in military defense without which civil defense plans, programs and operational procedures are confused and wasteful.” He thus rejected the idea that the committee should change its report.

Although DoD ignored the results of this study, like Project Charles, Project East River inspired further efforts namely the Lincoln Summer Study Group. Its report argued for the construction of an early warning system from Alaska to Greenland that would provide up to six hours warning of a Soviet attack. The report added that a complete emphasis on offensive forces was as dangerous as France’s reliance on defence

11 Ibid, IV.
12 Ibid, 3-5.
14 Lovett to Nelson, May 14 1952, Papers of Harry S. Truman PSF Subject File, 1940-1953, Box 135, File File of Miscellaneous, 1950-1953 (2 of 2), Truman Library; Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 64
had been in 1940, and concluded that the cost of providing this early warning would be 370 million dollars, with 100 million per year for maintenance.\textsuperscript{17} One important aspect of this effort for Canada was that it introduced U.S. scientists and officials to the McGill Fence, a radar system that had been developed at McGill University.\textsuperscript{18} Canadian defence scientists involved in the project also kept Ottawa informed about the Lincoln study. The USAF was less much enthused, as Finletter had expressed concerns that the study group might get out of hand. Although the President of MIT, James Killian, assured Finletter that the study would be “kept in bounds” and would not be leaked out, this is what occurred.\textsuperscript{19} The most effective of these leaks were to two prominent U.S. columnists, Joseph and Stewart Alsop, who became strong supporters of the drive to improve the air defence system.\textsuperscript{20}

Ultimately, both the USAF and Lovett sought to suppress this study to the consternation of many proponents of air defence. Lloyd Berkner, one of the members of Project East River, argued “many efforts were made to ignore or to suppress the findings of the Lincoln Summer Study and little effort was made to demonstrate how the ideas might work out.” He added that “the Armed Forces refused to recognize the serious state of the air-defense problem or to admit that it could be improved by radical measures.”\textsuperscript{21} Of course, the USAF wanted to avoid major effort that would divert resources away from

\textsuperscript{17} R.J. Watson, The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Vol. 5: The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy 1953-1954 (Washington D.C.: USGPO, 1986), 116-7; Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 67; Grant, Continental Air Defense, 63-64. This study also argued there should be two early warning lines built in the North.  
\textsuperscript{18} Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 66-7. The McGill Fence was a radar system that could detect the direction and speed, but not the altitude of aircraft that crossed it. Because of its high level of automation, it was much cheaper to build and operate than a conventional radar system. Briggs, Shield of Faith, 74-5.  
\textsuperscript{19} Schaffel, The Emerging Shield, 77; Goldfischer, The Best Defense, 92.  
\textsuperscript{20} Joseph Alsop and Adam Platt, I've Seen the Best of It (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992), 353.
SAC. This sentiment increased in 1951 and 1952, as the Truman administration had slowed down the expansion of the defence budget begun under NSC-68. This “stretch out” meant that there were fewer funds available for the services, which increased the USAF’s hostility to anything that would divert resources from SAC. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that the USAF’s lack of interest in air defence was more than a concern over funding.

**USAF Thinking on Air Defence and Strategic Bombing**

Indeed, any challenge to SAC’s dominance in the USAF would be hotly contested, since it touched upon its very essence as an independent institution. The USAF was only five years old in 1952, and had been challenged through that period by the other services. For instance, in the late 1940s, the U.S. Navy had criticized the USAF’s strategic bombing role during the “Revolt of the Admirals.”

Many USAF officers further believed that any self-respecting airforce would emphasize strategic bombing because this was how the USAF and the RAF had gained independence from the other services. Consequently, it was only a matter of time before the Soviets deployed a bombing force that would overwhelm any air defence system that could be built. There was some truth to this perception, as in the 1920s and 1930s, the Soviet Air Force developed a number of advanced long-range bombers and had a number of strong advocates of strategic air power, including Mikhail Tukhachevsky and Vasili V. Khripin. But most of these men were executed during Stalin’s purges of the armed forces.

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22 Moody, Neufeld & Hall, “The Emergence of the Strategic Air Command,” 57.
23 During this controversy, the Navy argued for the procurement of a new aircraft carrier, the U.S.S. *United States* instead of the B-36 Peacemaker bomber for the USAF. The Navy argued that carrier aircraft
in the late-1930s, which led to a decline of this concept in the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{24} The Soviets would deploy the TU-4 Bull in the strategic bombing role, and would develop advanced bombers in the 1950s, but they also emphasized strategic defence far more than the USAF. In the post war period, the Soviets allocated 15 percent of their defence budget for their air defences compared to six percent for their strategic bombing force and ten percent on their atomic weapons program.\textsuperscript{25} Nonetheless, the USAF continued to expect the Soviet Air Force to develop a large bomber force because of a combination of lack of intelligence and mirror imaging.\textsuperscript{26}

The tradition of American air power thinking further worked against improved continental air defences. Beginning in the 1930s, U.S. airmen came to believe in the industrial web theory of bombing, which was derived from the concept that a modern industrial economy was highly interdependent and as shown by the experience of the Great Depression, was quite fragile. U.S. airmen thus concluded that if certain key elements or nodes of the enemy’s economy were knocked out then that state would collapse. These ideas heavily influenced Air Force war planning in the Second World War and continued to influence its thinking in the post-war period. Indeed, the development of the atomic bomb had only made strategic air power even more destructive to the point that it was likely that many USAF officers concluded that an

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would be better for attacking the Soviet Union and stopping a Soviet invasion of Western Europe then long range bombers. Borowski, \textit{A Hollow Threat}, 155; Leffler, \textit{A Preponderance of Power}, 274.  
\textsuperscript{25} Zaloga, \textit{Russia’s Nuclear Shield}, 18. In 1948, the Soviets created a separate branch of their armed forces, the Air Defence Forces (PVO), to operate this defence system.  
\textsuperscript{26} Mirror imaging was “the projection of U.S., “strategic goals and means onto Soviet behavior.” Goldstein, \textit{Preventive Attack and Weapons of Mass Destruction}, 33.
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effective air defence of the U.S. was not practical. For example, one report in 1950 estimated that just sixteen atomic weapons, if properly targeted, could "most seriously disrupt" the U.S. government. In the mid-1950s, the Commander of SAC, General Curtis LeMay, further argued that the loss of a dozen U.S. cities would be sufficient to severely disrupt SAC’s bombing offensive against the Soviet Union.

There was also the influence on the USAF of Guilio Douhet and his work *Command of the Air*. U.S. airmen had been interested in Douhet’s argument that the use of air power in war could lead to “swift, crushing decisions on the battlefield,” particularly against an enemy state’s homeland because of the great destructive and psychological power of bombing. While these expectations had not been met in the Second World War due to the fact that Douhet had over estimated the destructive power of high explosives, in the view of American strategist Bernard Brodie, the atomic bomb had solved this issue. Brodie also concluded in 1946 that the atomic bomb would only be introduced into a major war on a massive scale, and that the defence of cities was no longer practical.

At the centre of USAF strategy was the idea of SAC was “to have overwhelming strength so that nobody would dare attack us … we would never have to do any fighting.” One observer noted that SAC’s war plans would result in Soviet Russia being “a smoking, radiating, ruin at the end of two hours.” More specifically, SAC war plans

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32 Rosenberg and Moore, “‘Smoking Radiating Ruin at the End of Two Hours,’” 11.
sought to retard a Soviet advance into Western Europe and to destroy its war making capabilities. However, its most important objective was the “blunting” the Soviet strategic forces by destroying them on the ground.\textsuperscript{33} For example, in 1953, LeMay asserted at a congressional hearing the need to quickly destroy the Soviet strategic forces in war, and added in 1954 that a determined attacking force could “only be stopped by destruction on the ground before it is launched.” It should be noted that Douhet would have approved of these plans, as he believed that an enemy’s air force could only be destroyed on the ground.\textsuperscript{34}

To achieve this goal, the USAF emphasized preemptive strikes. Indeed, LeMay, in answering a question at a briefing in 1953 that posited that it was not U.S. policy to strike the first blow in a war, countered that the U.S. had fired the first shot in the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812 and the Spanish-American War.\textsuperscript{35} In his memoirs, LeMay asserted that there was a time in the 1950s that SAC could have destroyed the war making capabilities of the Soviet Union “without losing a man to their defences,” and “as for their offensive capability: not one bomb or missile in that day, could have hit the United States.”\textsuperscript{36} In 1952 and 1953, the issue of blunting and preemption were connected with the air defence debate in several ways. First, this kind of strategy necessitated a very strong bomber force, which would require great resources being allocated to SAC and served to limit the available funds for an improved air defence system. In fact, many USAF officers feared that the Truman administration would choose to take resources away from SAC in order to strengthen the air defence effort. Moreover, as the USAF was

\textsuperscript{33} In SAC war planning, the blunting mission was code named Bravo, the retardation mission was Romeo and the mission to disrupt the enemy’s economy was Delta. Sagan, \textit{Moving Targets}, 20.

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid, 21; Borgiasz, \textit{The Strategic Air Command}, 127; Brodie, \textit{Strategy in the Missile Age}, 86.

planning on preempting a first strike by the Soviet air force, improved air defences were much less important than if one was planning to allow the Soviets to strike the first blow. Finally, in this period, as David Alan Rosenberg has argued, “warning of a Soviet attack—even a surprise attack—was still being calculated by the CIA in terms of days or even weeks because of the time needed to prepare Soviet forces and bases for strikes on the United States.”

LeMay’s interest in strategic warning and preemptive strikes can be seen in September 1957 when a number of defence consultants associated with the Gaither Committee visited the North American Air Defence Command (NORAD). During this visit, there was an exercise during which, after only being given tactical warning of a Soviet attack through the DEW Line, very few bombers got into the air. However, LeMay was not upset about this fact, and one of the consultants, Robert Sprague, wondered why. He visited LeMay and asked him directly how many SAC bombers would be able to get airborne if they only had tactical warning of a Soviet attack, and LeMay informed him that only a few would be able to get into the air. This answer greatly worried Sprague because it could mean that the U.S. nuclear deterrent could be destroyed on the ground. LeMay then explained that this reality did not bother him because he was relying on strategic warning to warn SAC about a Soviet first strike, and that he was planning to preempt such an attack. He asserted “I’m going to knock the shit out of them before they

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36 LeMay and Kantor, *Mission with LeMay*, 481.
38 H. Rowan Gaither Jr., the Chair of the Board of the Ford Foundation, was the head of this committee, which was formally known as the Security Resources Panel. Originally, it was supposed to study the U.S. civil defence effort, but it later shifted to examining U.S. strategic policy. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 184-5; David Callaghan, *Dangerous Capabilities Paul Nitze and the Cold War* (New York: Harper Collins, 1990), 166-8; Herbert F. York, *Making Weapons, Talking Peace: A Physicists Odyssey from Hiroshima and Geneva* (New York: Basic Books Inc, 1987), 97-99.
take off the ground.”\textsuperscript{39} Thus, while those supporting an early warning system in the Arctic highly valued improved tactical warning, others in the USAF were more focused on strategic warning gained through signals intelligence and reconnaissance.

The USAF and the Department of Defense were further opposed to a crash program to build an early warning system in Arctic due to practical considerations. The USAF had dealt with the enormous logistical problems and the unique technical challenges of operating in the Arctic, particularly with the Loran navigational system, which had been a costly failure and had been shutdown in 1950. This experience made many U.S. and Canadian servicemen sceptical of the prospect of constructing an extensive radar line in this area. There were also concerns that radar technology was not advanced enough, and that the promoters of air defence were exaggerating its potential. This factor partially explains why officers such as the commander of the USAF ADC, General Benjamin Chidlaw, did not support the construction of this system.\textsuperscript{40} These concerns were at least partially justified, as according to one scientist, Richard Garwin, many of the individuals involved in these studies were so interested on developing a defence-oriented strategy against the USAF’s focus on strategic bombing that this focus had become a sort of crusade. Another other unnamed scientist stated “we all knew the conclusions we wanted to reach.”\textsuperscript{41} Killian later noted that some of the scientists who participated in these study groups had previously been involved in the development of the atomic bomb and sought to assuage this guilt by taking “refuge in the Maginot line

\textsuperscript{39} Kaplan, \textit{Wizards of Armageddon}, 134.
\textsuperscript{40} Memorandum of Conversation, April 22 1953, RG 59 State Department Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada (EUR/CAN) Records Relating to Military Affairs 1942-1966, Box 9, File Project Counterchange Extension of Early Warning System (Formally Project 572), NARA; Grant, \textit{Sovereignty or Security}, 214-6; Schaffel, \textit{The Emerging Shield}, 185-6.
\textsuperscript{41} Herken, \textit{Counsels of War}, 64.
complex of an idealized defence system." Another major factor in the debate was the perception that the United States had to choose between a strong air defence system and a highly effective bomber force. The result was that there was a reaction in the USAF against this group of “experts” who placed too much faith in untested technology, particularly since it would come at the expense of weakening SAC, which the USAF believed in the early 1950s that “was about the only war force we possessed.”

This situation was further muddied by the involvement of J. Robert Oppenheimer. He had led the Manhattan Project to develop the atomic bomb and emerged as an important scientific advisor in the postwar period. In 1950, he opposed the development of the hydrogen bomb and became increasingly opposed to a reliance on SAC for the defence of the United States. These beliefs had led him to advocate the development of tactical nuclear weapons for the U.S. Army, and the construction of an improved continental air defence system. He also chaired the Panel of Consultants on Disarmament that was created by Truman in 1952, which supported a greater emphasis on continental defence. While the panel’s report was not made public, Oppenheimer expressed many of its conclusions in an article in *Foreign Affairs* that was published in July 1953. Oppenheimer’s alleged ties to Communists in the 1930s and his tendency to alienate many important figures in Washington, including Finletter; however, had created suspicion about his true motivations. In fact, the USAF’s Chief Scientist, David Griggs, had concluded that Oppenheimer and other scientists “had formed an informal committee of three to work for world peace or some other purpose.” Griggs felt that Oppenheimer believed that to strengthen the air defences of North America, the U.S. would have to

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weaken SAC and many in Washington including Finletter, Vandenberg and Lovett shared these views.\textsuperscript{45} To the USAF, Oppenheimer embodied opposition “to the very things on which the survival of the United States depended—the hydrogen bomb, the strategy of deterrence, the Strategic Air Command, and by inference the Air Force itself.”\textsuperscript{46}

\textbf{The Air Defence Debate in the Truman Administration}

The result of all these factors was that the USAF and many officials in the Defense Department were prepared to ignore these pro-air defence studies. But their efforts were thwarted by the proponents of improved air defences, who conducted an “end run” around the USAF by seeking out sympathetic officials in the Truman administration. One of the figures they approached was Gorrie, the Director of the NSRB.\textsuperscript{47} The NSRB had been formed in 1947 to plan the mobilization of the U.S. economy in wartime and came to play an important role in civil defence planning.\textsuperscript{48} Like the members of Project East River, this interest in civil defence had drawn Gorrie to the air defence problem. In early September, after being briefed by members of Project East River and the Lincoln Summer Study Group, Gorrie wrote a memorandum to the NSC arguing that the NSRB needed more direction for its non-military defence programs. He complained about the lack of effort in continental air defence, and warned that “in the event of war the enemy would endeavor to strike the United States with an initial decisive blow.” He was also

\textsuperscript{44} Goldfischer, \textit{The Best Defense}, 80, 86.  
\textsuperscript{46} Moody, Neufeld & Hall, “The Emergence of the Strategic Air Command,” 57.  
\textsuperscript{47} Huntington, \textit{The Common Defense}, 330; Jockel, \textit{No Boundaries Upstairs}, 68.  
\textsuperscript{48} Hogan, \textit{Cross of Iron}, 211.
worried that without an effective air defence system that it would be very difficult if not impossible to have an effective civil defence program.\footnote{Views of the Chairman, NSRB (Gorrie), on “Reappraisal of United States Objectives and Strategy for National Security” (NSC 135/1), Undated, FRUS, Vol. II, 1952-1954, 114-5.}

Gorrie’s paper would lead to an extended debate in the Truman administration in the fall of 1952, which can now be discussed in detail due to the availability of newly declassified documents. At the next meeting of the NSC, Lovett replied that while he was sympathetic to Gorrie’s concerns, the development of an effective air defence system would be a very difficult task. Truman, who had been briefed about this issue earlier that day, then asserted that the only foreseeable defence for the time being was a good offence, a proposition that Lovett quickly supported. Indeed, Lovett recommended that the U.S. should strengthen its offensive forces, as “the defensive weapon of today was almost always an offensive weapon also.” Gorrie then responded to Lovett by asking if the U.S. military had made every effort to deal with this problem and when Lovett replied no, Gorrie replied that there was a need for an “extensive new national effort.” Lovett countered that the military had already been making great efforts in this field and that claims of what could be achieved such as those made in a recent article by the Alsop Brothers were “utter nonsense.” He even argued that he was more fearful of a covert attack using “bombs in suitcases” than an overt one. The meeting concluded without any decisions being made to address the air defence problem.\footnote{Memorandum for the President of Discussions at the 122d Meeting of the National Security Council on Wednesday, September 3, 1952, Undated, FRUS, Vol. II, 1952-1954, 120-2.} Acheson, in fact, concluded that Gorrie’s concerns had been addressed and that Gorrie was satisfied that everything
possible was being done about the air defence problem. Yet, at the next meeting of the NSC, Gorrie continued his campaign by presenting another paper.

In this document, he emphasized that the cost of an improved early system would be a “nominal fraction of current military outlays,” and that new technological discoveries would make the effort more effective in the next few years. He concluded that three to six hours of early warning was now possible, and there was a need for the “immediate [emphasis included] allocation of funds sufficient to initiate this program as a matter of utmost urgency and with the highest priority.” He further claimed that many scientists had begun to support an expanded air defence effort after studying the problem.

Not surprisingly, the USAF and DoD were deeply unhappy about Gorrie going to the President and the NSC without consulting them first. Of course, Gorrie had done this because he knew that they would ignore the issue. During this meeting, Lovett again countered Gorrie’s arguments by arguing that the cost estimates for a warning system in the Arctic had been understated and that many scientists doubted the effectiveness of such a system. Nevertheless, after hearing Gorrie’s presentation, Truman’s agreed that the matter “was of the greatest importance.” According to Acheson, Truman’s position had shifted since the NSC meeting on September 3, but Truman did not suggest that the U.S.

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51 NSC Meeting, September 3 1952, Papers of Dean Acheson Memos of Conversation, Box 71, File September 1952, Truman Library.
53 Paper Distributed by the Chairman of the National Security Resources Board (Gorrie) at the meeting of the National Security Council, September 24 1952, Undated, FRUS, Vol. II, 1952-1954, 142, Note 6.
54 Untitled Memorandum, September 24 1952, Papers of Dean Acheson Memos of Conversation, Box 71, File September 1952, Truman Library.
should immediately address the problem. Instead, the President assigned Lovett to study the issue.\textsuperscript{55}

It should be noted the supporters of air defence had another important ally in the Truman administration, Paul Nitze.\textsuperscript{56} He had acquired much knowledge of strategic bombing during and after the Second World War when he was a member of the United States Strategic Bombing Survey (USSBS), which examined the effectiveness of the bombing campaigns against Germany and Japan. As he related in his memoirs, he had witnessed both the impact of the atomic bomb and the limitations of this “ultimate” weapon. In Nagasaki, he learned that the railroads were back in operation 48 hours after the atomic bomb was dropped, and that many people who had taken precautions had survived the raid.\textsuperscript{57} He concluded that the impact of the atomic bomb was equal to 210 B-29s for the attack on Hiroshima, and 120 B-29s for Nagasaki. One of Nitze’s biographers concluded that Nitze saw his duty to demystify the atomic bomb. John Kenneth Galbraith, another member of USSBS, further commented in his memoirs that Nitze was “an attractive, self-possessed man, he devoted the rest of his life to studying the theory and practice of aerial destruction, emerging in the end as a devout partisan of the art.”\textsuperscript{58}

Therefore, Nitze was inclined to view continental air defence in a better light than the USAF or Lovett.

Nitze was also a man of great confidence who had already supervised the formulation of NSC-68, and was close to Acheson, Truman’s most important advisor.

\textsuperscript{55} Record of Actions by the National Security Council at its One Hundred and Twenty Third Meeting on September 24 1952, Undated, Papers of Harry S. Truman PSF: Subject File, 1940-1953, Box 167, File Records of Actions NSC 1952, Truman Library; Memorandum by the Secretary of State, September 24 1952, FRUS, Vol. II, 1952-1954, 140.
\textsuperscript{56} Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 69.
\textsuperscript{57} Nitze, Hiroshima to Glasnost, 43.
Because Acheson had little confidence in the Under Secretary of State, James Webb, and other career diplomats, Nitze had a great deal more influence then his position would suggest. The result was that he was in an excellent position to support the efforts to improve the air defences of North America. In addition, he had contacts within the air defence community, as Berkner had already briefed Nitze about Project East River. Moreover, during the discussions over air defence in the fall of 1952, Nitze and other officials drew upon their expertise. On September 29, he met with officials from the NSRB and “expressed tentative concurrence in the position taken in the NSRB paper.”

The discussions over air defence continued at the next meeting of the NSC when there was a presentation by DoD on the problem. This meeting included a briefing on the capacity of the Soviet Union to attack the U.S. that argued that the Soviet Air Force could inflict serious, but not crippling damage. The meeting concluded when Lovett and Gorrie were directed by Truman to recommend measures to address the air defence problem. DoD and the USAF, however, had little interest in doing this, and instead sought to prevent the approval of a policy statement from the NSC calling for the construction of a warning system in the Arctic.

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60 Paper Distributed by the Chairman of the National Security Resources Board (Gorrie) at the meeting of the National Security Council, September 24 1952, Undated, FRUS, Vol. II, 1952-1954, 142 Note 3. He was also sent a briefing document on this subject in early October. Untitled Report, Undated, RG 59 Department of State, Policy Planning Staff, Box 10, File National Security (Civil Defense), NARA.
61 Record of Action by the National Security Council at its One Hundred and Twenty Fourth Meeting on October 14 1952, Undated, Papers of Harry S. Truman PSF: Subject File, 1940-1953, Box 167, File Records of Actions NSC 1952, Truman Library.
63 Record of Action by the National Security Council at its One Hundred and Twenty Fourth Meeting on October 14 1952, Undated, Papers of Harry S. Truman PSF: Subject File, 1940-1953, Box 167, File Records of Actions NSC 1952, Truman Library.
The USAF argued that funds directed to a crash program for an early warning system in the Arctic could be better spent elsewhere and that the radar and communication technology required was not advanced enough for such a project. To support its case, the USAF asked the RAND Corporation to study this issue. Although RAND’s report argued that a DEW Line “under certain conditions, could give useful warning against a surprise attack,” it added that the Lincoln Summer Group’s cost estimates underestimated the scale of the problem. More importantly, the funds for such a project would have to come out of the USAF’s budget, with the implication that SAC that would be negatively affected. RAND concluded that it was likely “the DEW Line will be extremely and technically difficult to build” and would not provide enough advantages to justify its development, especially given the great deficiencies that already existed in the air defence system, and it should be built only after these weaknesses had been corrected. Despite this opposition, on December 15, the NSC circulated a draft policy statement, which argued that the increased development of Soviet “mass destruction weapons” necessitated improvements in the continental air defence system “without detracting from the necessity of continuing to build up” SAC. It concluded that this requirement for more early warning needed to be met by December 31, 1955.

Despite Truman’s intention to approve an NSC policy statement and the assertion that SAC would not have its funding reduced, Lovett and the USAF continued to oppose the approval of such a document, and their new argument was that the air defence

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64 Grant, Continental Air Defense, 64.
65 RAND, which stands for Research and Development, was an independent think tank that had been established by the USAAF after the Second World War.
66 Excerpts From Project RAND, Undated, RG 59 Department of State Policy Planning Staff, Box 10, File National Security (Civil Defense), NARA; Futrell, Ideas, Concepts, Doctrine, 331; Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 69.
problem needed further study. For this reason, Lovett created an ad hoc study group chaired by Mervin Kelly, the head of Bell Telephone Laboratory, and argued that any NSC statement should be delayed until this group, which became known as the Kelly Committee, had presented its report. He also asked the JCS to comment on the NSC draft. The JCS responded that it would be premature to state that such an air defence system could be constructed in the timetable outlined. The JCS was also critical of a focus on defensive versus offensive forces, and agreed with Lovett that any policy statement should be delayed until the Kelly Committee submitted its report.

DoD suggested a number of changes to the draft statement. The most important was that the deadline of December 31, 1955 for the completion of this radar system be removed, and replaced by a statement that the project would be given high priority. The revisions further reflected the view that there were numerous complications that would have to be addressed before such a system could be developed. The State Department countered that an effective continental air defence system was needed to protect the

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country because the Soviet threat would increase in the next few years, as its nuclear stockpile grew in size and its delivery systems improved.\textsuperscript{71}

Ultimately, Acheson convinced Truman to support the DEW Line, and on December 31, 1952, Truman approved the draft policy statement as NSC 139, without the Department of Defense’s suggested revisions. The primary factor behind Truman’s approval of this document was the influence of Acheson and Nitze.\textsuperscript{72} Truman did have other reasons for approving NSC 139 including that the proponents of air defences had offered a significant increase in security for a modest cost. Lovett’s argument that the air defence issue needed more study also would not have appealed to Truman. Not only was it clear that the issue had already been extensively studied, but he would soon be out of office and unable to do anything about the problem. Indeed, a man whose slogan was “The Buck Stops Here,” would not have been temperamentally inclined to leave the issue to his successor while he had a chance to do something about it.

After the approval of NSC 139, Lovett authorized the JCS to begin planning for the system and assigned the USAF responsibility for the testing of the available radar technology under the code name Project Counterchange. The administration also began talks with the Canadian government to allow the U.S. to test equipment on its soil.\textsuperscript{73} These discussions were delayed by the need to arrive at a policy consensus among the USAF, the JCS and DoD. The Canadians, however, quickly became aware of American internal planning discussions due to informal contacts between the Director of the

\textsuperscript{71} Memorandum for Mr. James S. Lay Jr. Executive Secretary National Security Council, December 22, 1952, Box 168, File Memorandum Approvals: 696, Truman Library.
\textsuperscript{72} Jockel, \textit{No Boundaries Upstairs}, 70.
Defence Research Board (DRB), Olmond Solandt, and U.S. officials. Consequently, when the Americans first formally approached the Canadians at the January 1953 meeting of the PJBD, they found that Canadian section already knew a great deal about their plans, although the U.S. Section still encountered strong misgivings from McNaughton about the prospect of additional U.S. personnel on Canadian soil. Officials from the State Department, including Nitze, then met with Canadian representatives at the end of January. Nitze stressed to Wrong the importance of this project, and how the growing vulnerability to a Soviet attack needed to be countered. Wrong replied that the Canadians were aware of the general nature of the project, and would make its decision within a few weeks.

Eventually, both governments agreed that one station would be built on Canadian soil. The agreement, like the one for the Pinetree Line, included clauses to protect Canadian sovereignty as well as the condition that a Canada-United States Military Study Group (CUSMSG) would be created to review the progress of Counterchange and other issues relating to continental air defence. However, by this point, Eisenhower had taken office, and while Truman had signalled his successor the need for an early warning system in the Arctic and had left numerous studies on the problem, it would be up to

75 Bonbright to Matthews, January 29 1953, RG 59 State Department Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5, NARA; Excerpt from the Journal of the P.J.B.D. Meeting of January 26 1953, Undated, RG 59 State Department Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5/12-2754, NARA.
76 Memorandum of Conversation, January 30 1952, RG 59 State Department Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5/12-2754, NARA.
Eisenhower to decide what would be done. Ultimately, in the coming months, this issue would be greatly complicated by the transition between the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, which would pose great difficulties for both the development of the continental air defence system and the Canada-U.S. relationship.

**Eisenhower Comes to Power**

Transitions between presidential administrations are inherently problematic. The veteran diplomat Robert Murphy noted that the State Department “always functions below par during change of administrations.”

Pearson further complained to John Hickerson, an U.S, diplomat and an old Canada hand, in August 1952: “the gap between your period of political transition and your period of electoral preparation— and that gap provides the only time during which the rest of the world can get any business done in Washington— has been narrowed to about nine months.” This transition was to be particularly difficult for several reasons.

One factor was that the Eisenhower administration was preoccupied in its early months with a series of discussions about the nature of U.S. Cold War strategy. Eisenhower came to office having concluded that the military build up begun under NSC 68 was unsustainable and that America would either bankrupt itself or have to impose government controls on its economy if defence spending was not reduced. His main goals were to continue Truman’s strategy of containment while working to ease the strain on the American economy and ending the Korean War. Eisenhower had also run for

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78 Murphy, *Diplomat Among Warriors*, 456-7.
79 Pearson to Hickerson, August 15 1952, MG 26 N1 L.B. Pearson Papers, Vol. 6, File Hickerson, J.D. Dept of State USA, LAC
President because he feared that Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio would adopt a more isolationist policy and reduce America’s support for its Western European allies. The most important of these attempts to “clarify the various alternatives conceivable for American policy towards the Soviet Union” was Project Solarium in mid-1953. Thus, these deliberations had to be concluded before the administration could address the problem of continental air defence. The result was that whatever momentum that had been built up after the approval of NSC 139 in favour of an improved air defence system was lost.

Another factor was the poor relationship between Truman and Eisenhower, which led to what one of Truman advisors termed as a non-transition between administrations. Truman had previously held Eisenhower in high regard and had shown interest in having a smooth handover of power. But a number of events including Eisenhower’s criticisms of the policies of the Truman administration, despite the fact he had played a role in developing them, had damaged the relationship. Consequently, there were only limited contacts between the two groups after the election including a short meeting between Truman and Eisenhower and a 50-minute discussion between Eisenhower’s liaison for foreign affairs, Henry Cabot Lodge and Nitze. The lack of communication between the

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81 Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 70-1.
82 George Kennan, *Memoirs Vol. 2* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1972), 181-2; Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 127-138. It included three Task Forces. Task Force A was assigned the task of developing policies to safeguard the U.S., and to maintain the cohesion of the free world without overly increasing the risk of general war. Task Force B articulated a policy that would draw a line around the free world, and threaten the Soviets with general war if it crossed it. Task Force C argued that the U.S. should attempt to cause “maximum disruption and popular resistance throughout the Soviet Bloc.” “Memorandum for the Record by the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (Cutler),” May 9 1953, *FRUS*: 1952-1954, II part 1, 325; “Summaries Prepared by NSC Staff of Project Solarium Presentations and Written Reports,” Undated, FRUS, Vol. II, Part 1, 1952-1954, 399-434.
administrations meant that there was poor policy continuity, and while the Canada-U.S. relationship would not have been a major subject of discussion, an outstanding issue such as NSC 139 probably would have been.

An even more serious problem was the withdrawal of certain key figures from the Truman administration from government service. As Murphy stated in his memoirs “what really disturbs American foreign relations is … the inevitable comings and goings of all the highest officers of the Department every time a new President is elected.” This was particularly the case for the Canada-U.S. relationship because of the importance of informal procedures and contacts. There were a number of formal institutions such as the PJBD, but what often made the relationship work were unofficial contacts between senior U.S. and Canadian officials. The most important of these connections was a series of consultative meetings begun in December 1950 to keep Canada informed about developments, “which might or might not lead to general war and the use of atomic weapons.” These talks, however, were informal, and depended on the willingness of U.S. officials to get into the habit of consulting their Canadian counterparts. Moreover, these kinds of meetings relied on the organizational memory of certain key officials who not only included Acheson but Nitze. He had an important role in the development of NSC 139, and played a critical part in consultative discussions with Canadian officials in 1952 and early 1953. However, because of his close ties with Acheson who had been the target of much Republican criticism before and during the 1952 election, Nitze was a controversial figure to many conservative Republicans in Congress. Furthermore, since the new Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, wished to have his own man as Chair of

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84 Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors, 456-7.
the Policy Planning Staff, Nitze’s time in the State Department was short, and when another appointment in the Pentagon was aborted because of criticism from senior Republicans, Nitze spent the rest of the 1950s in exile.\textsuperscript{86}

This would prove to be a problem for the Canada-U.S. relationship because he was an important reservoir of experience. With him gone, none of the senior officials in the State department including Dulles, the Under Secretary of State, Walter Bedell Smith, and the Chair of the Policy Planning Staff, Robert Bowie, had a good understanding of how the relationship had worked in the past. U.S. officials even had to scramble in the fall of 1953 to find someone who understood these procedures. Junior officials would continue to communicate with their Canadian counterparts, but they generally lacked information about decisions made at higher levels.

These personnel changes further had the effect of severing a number of personal contacts. These relationships between civilians and military officers were often quite valuable in ensuring that both sides were kept updated about developments in each other’s capitals, and both External Affairs and the State Department recognized their importance. For example, Acheson not only knew Pearson well, but had an exceptionally close relationship with Wrong. Indeed, Pearson concluded that no other diplomat had the relationship that Acheson had with Wrong.\textsuperscript{87} Wrong also had a wide range of other connections in Washington. These contacts were seen to be so valuable that Hickerson sent a letter to Pearson in August 1952 in which he suggested that Wrong should continue to serve as Canada’s Ambassador to the U.S. throughout 1953. He cited Wrong’s

\textsuperscript{85} Memorandum for Information, October 13 1953, RG 59 State Department Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1-1652-742.5/12-2754, NARA.
\textsuperscript{86} Callaghan, \textit{Dangerous Capabilities}, 150-2.
extensive personal contacts and the problems that would be created by the transition to a new administration with new officials who lacked experience.88

Indeed, with Eisenhower’s victory in November, Dulles replaced Acheson as Secretary of State. Dulles did have some ties to Canada, as he had a cottage in Ontario, and had some experience with Canadian affairs due to his experience as a Wall Street lawyer, but he was unable to develop the kind of relationship that Acheson had with Canadian officials. Furthermore, while Pearson acknowledged Hickerson’s suggestion, the Canadian government recalled Wrong to serve as Under Secretary of State for External Affairs in July and replaced him with Arnold Heeney.89 Heeney would go on to be an effective Ambassador, but it would take time for him to develop his own contacts. Thus, at a moment when the Eisenhower administration began to focus on air defence, Canada was increasingly cut off from what was going on in Washington. One other result of this turnover in personnel in the State Department and DoD was that it led to a loss of valuable expertise and experience. For example, Secretary of Defense Lovett, who had previously been the Under Secretary of State and the Deputy Secretary of Defense, was replaced by Charles E. Wilson, the former President of General Motors, who had no experience in government. Canadian officials understood this situation, as Wrong noted in February 1953 that Wilson, the Deputy Secretary of Defense and the three service secretaries suffered from a “complete lack of background” on defence issues.90

88 Hickerson to Pearson, August 12 1952, MG 26 N1 L.B. Pearson Papers, Vol. 6, File Hickerson, J.D. Dept of State USA, LAC.
89 Pearson to Hickerson, August 15 1952, MG 26 N1 L.B. Pearson Papers, Vol. 6, File Hickerson, J.D. Dept of State USA, LAC.
90 Canadian Ambassador to the United States to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, February 24 1953, RG 59 State Department Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5/12-2754, NARA.
The Canada-U.S. defence relationship faced a number of other challenges including the reality that the Republican Party had been out of power for 20 years, and had no recent experience dealing with Canada. In fact, when the Republicans left office in 1932, relations were still a relatively early stage, and it would not be until the mid-1940s before the two countries would be represented in each other capitals by officials with ambassadorial rank. Another issue was the inherent reality that this relationship was simply was not that important to the United States and the administration generally did not have the time to fully address Canadian concerns. Throughout the period that the Eisenhower administration addressed the issue of continental air defence, it had to deal with the ending of the Korean War, the creation of the European Defense Community and German rearmament as well as smaller crises such as the riots in East Berlin in the spring of 1953 and the situation in Indochina.

The result of all these factors was that the issue of continental defence was largely sidetracked in the early days of the administration. While U.S. officials understood that there was a problem, it was neither a major priority nor one they knew how to address. It was also overshadowed by the need to balance the administration’s goals of reducing defence spending while still maintaining an effective defence posture. During this debate, Dulles, Smith, Vice President Richard Nixon, and the Mutual Security Administrator, Harold Stassen, were supportive of increased defence spending while the Secretary to the Treasury, George Humphrey, the Director of the Bureau of the Budget, Joseph Dodge, and Wilson were opposed. This disagreement would have to be resolved before continental air defence problem could be tackled.

Consequently, internal discussions on continental air defence in Washington were limited to the examination of various reports commissioned by the Truman administration such as the Report by the Panel of Consultants on Disarmament. It argued that improved continental defences would delay the time when the Soviets would be able to launch a “knock out” blow against the U.S. During the discussion of the report in the NSC, Oppenheimer, the chair of this panel, argued that there was a need for candor on the strategic situation to encourage the American people to support more funding for air defence. Vannevar Bush, another member of the panel, added that the construction of a continental air defense system had been delayed for too long and the public must be informed about the reality of the strategic situation and how the U.S. was going to defend North America.\textsuperscript{92} The Kelly Committee also submitted its report in this period. Because of its Democratic sponsors, it was a bit of lame duck in the Eisenhower administration, which was fitting since it had failed in its main purpose of delaying NSC 139. The Kelly Report supported the creation of an improved air defence system and the construction of a South Canadian Radar Line at the 54\textsuperscript{th} parallel, although it did not support the construction of an early warning line in the Arctic, and argued that there was need to little need for a crash air defence program. It took a more balanced approach to the problem, and concluded that a near perfect system was “unattainable, and in any case completely impractical, economically and technically.” Ultimately, the Eisenhower administration decided that its “own people” needed to look at the air defence problem before the U.S. allocated significant resources to address it.\textsuperscript{93}


\textsuperscript{93} Huntington, \textit{The Common Defense}, 332; Jockel, \textit{No Boundaries Upstairs}, 73; Study Group on Continental Defense Reports to Secretary Wilson, June 3 1953, RG 59 State Department, Box 9, File
Consequently, Eisenhower commissioned another study chaired by retired Lt. General (Retired) Harold Bull. Bull, a former U.S. Army officer, was not only a wartime associate of the President, but had served on a committee chaired by General Idwal Edwards, which examined the ability of the Soviet Union to inflict “Direct Injury” on the United States. The Edwards Report had argued that a Soviet attack could inflict serious damage on both SAC and the American cities; however, this damage would not prevent the United States from delivering a successful retaliatory strike against the Soviet Union and carrying out “the successful prosecution of the war.”

During a discussion of this study in the NSC in June, Eisenhower asked whether it would be worthwhile to construct a radar system in the Canadian Arctic, and cautioned Edwards not to overestimate the Soviet Air Force. Edwards concluded that despite the vulnerability of the U.S. to a surprise attack, any strike on the United States “by the Soviets during this period would be an act of desperation and not an exercise in military judgement.”

Because of all the problems caused by the transition between administrations, Eisenhower’s desire for a new Cold War strategy and debates within the NSC over proposed cuts in defence spending, continental air defence was to languish. Ultimately, it would not be until the late summer and early fall of 1953 that the Eisenhower administration would decide on how it was going to address this issue. However, it should be noted that other factors that would complicate the resolution of the air defence problem, namely difficulties within the Canada-U.S. defence relationship.

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The Canada-U.S. Relationship in 1952 and 1953

For example, in October 1952, the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa sent a detailed report to Washington warning that Canadian opposition to additional American forces in Canada had only grown due to the “intensification of national pride and an upswing in nationalist feeling” in the postwar period. The report added that the difficult debate over the Visiting Forces Act in 1947 still influenced Canadian policy. Another memo in November warned of resistance to additional defence measures because of political considerations and Canadian concerns of potential violations of its sovereignty. In particular, it expressed concern of the “cavalier” fashion that the USAF had behaved in its dealings with Canada, that USAF officers tended to use “informal” channels to communicate their requests, and that the USAF’s dealings with the Canadians were poorly co-ordinated. The report did note that “the size and complexity of the U.S. military organization” created many problems that were not well understood by Canadian officials, and stated that the Canadians were generally annoyed that the Cabinet had not been sufficiently consulted. Canada’s concerns about insufficient consultation were re-emphasized at a meeting with U.S. officials in late December. In addition, at this meeting, MacKay presented a map of Canada with pins on it showing every location where U.S. forces were stationed in Canada that “made an impressive showing” of the American presence on Canadian soil.

Canadian officials were also concerned about the state of the relationship. In September 1952, Douglas LePan, an official in the Canadian Embassy in Washington,

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96 Foreign Service Dispatch No. 419, October 27 1952, RG 59 Department of State Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1-1652 – 742.5/12-2754, NARA.
97 Perkins to Matthews, November 14 1952, RG 59 Department of State Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1-1652 – 742.5/12-2754, NARA.
argued that Canada would have great difficulty in refusing the U.S. permission for facilities in the future. In fact, he felt that the only thing that could be done would be to take responsibility for joint defence installations constructed near populated areas to minimize charges that Canada was being “occupied” by the Americans.99

Canadian officials were also well aware that many U.S. officials were increasingly interested in improving the air defence system through the construction of additional radar stations on Canadian soil. Indeed, they knew from the January meeting with the State Department that, for some officials, an Arctic warning line had high priority and if Counterchange was successful, the U.S. would likely approach them to construct part of the DEW line on Canadian soil.100 In fact, the project included a program of surveys for an entire warning system in the Arctic.101 Solandt further reported that for some American officials an early warning line in the Arctic had “already gone beyond the experimental stage.” Finally, articles in the press and prominent magazines continued to discuss the prospect of an increased American air defence effort to the point that Wilgress feared that they might spur the Americans into building an overly ambitious warning system in the North.102

98 Memorandum of Conversation, December 22 1952, RG 59 Department of State Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1-1652 – 742.5/12-2754, NARA.
100 Memorandum of Conversation, January 30 1952, RG 59 State Department Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5/12-2754, NARA.
101 Excerpt from the Journal of the P.J.B.D. Meeting of January 26 1953, Undated, RG 59 State Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5/12-2754, NARA.
Such concerns were expressed to the Americans at a meeting of the PJBD in April 1953 during a discussion of the Temporary Radar Station program. As discussed in Chapter 6, McNaughton believed that in order to avoid the development of an American-manned early warning line in the Canadian Arctic, Canada would have to absorb a large part of that effort, and to fund it, contracts would have to be given to the Canadian contractors and industry “in a manner whereby the dangers and difficulties experienced by Canada in the Pinetree project were avoided.”

Faced with this situation, Canada took several tentative steps in this period to address it, including the reactivation of the ACND. As had been outlined in Chapter Four, it had been formed in early-1948 because of concern in Ottawa over the American military presence in the Canadian North that had emerged in the post-war period. However, as the U.S. serviceman withdrew and were replaced by Canadian personnel, the committee had fallen into abeyance and ceased to meet. In early 1953, after being informed about the increasing U.S. interest in the Arctic, Pearson expressed his concerns to this subject to his colleagues. As a result, the Cabinet decided to reactivate the ACND to advise on “the means which might be employed to preserve or develop the political, administrative, scientific and defence interests of Canada in that area.” It was also no coincidence that in early 1953, St. Laurent named future Quebec Premier, Jean Lesage, as Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources. In fact, St. Laurent informed the new Deputy Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Gordon Robertson,

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one of the Prime Minister’s old assistants, that his government would be taking greater interest in the North.105

It can also be argued that the Canadians did make some mistakes in this period. These included the recall of Wrong to Ottawa as well as ones involving the creation of CUSMSG. While this study group was a source of valuable information, Canadian officials and ministers had agreed to the creation of a body that was dominated by USAF and RCAF officers. Moreover, the CUSMSG had been vested with the authority to recommend air defence projects while having limited representation from External Affairs in the form of a junior officer who served as an observer. This represented a mistake, as this was a missed opportunity to provide more input from the Cabinet and External Affairs in the process. Furthermore, this study group would allow the two air forces to better utilize their special relationship to get things done. Finally, Canadian ministers and officials were not prepared to make a sustained effort to find out what the U.S. air defence plans were even though they understood that Eisenhower’s senior officials did not have a good understanding of the consultative procedures that had existed under Truman. For example, Wrong argued that a meeting with U.S. officials should be delayed, since continental defence had a low priority in Washington, and it would be several months before the administration could direct serious attention to it. Wilgress even argued that “there is some advantage in a situation where the U.S. Government regards Canada – U.S. defence as a matter of low priority, since under such circumstances there is less likelihood of ambitious new defence projects being pressed

Jan-Feb 1953, DHH; Memorandum from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Secretary of State for External Affairs, December 31 1952, DCER, Vol. 18, 1952, 1201-2.

105 Robertson, Memoirs of a Very Civil Servant, 108.
on” Canada. He added that there would be plenty of time to address these matters in the future.\textsuperscript{106}

Consequently, neither American nor Canadian officials were prepared to discuss continental air defence in any detail. When Pearson and Wrong met with Dulles on February 15, air defence was only mentioned in passing.\textsuperscript{107} Claxton also visited Washington in early March 1953, and while he was critical of the proposed radar system in the Arctic during his trip, he was not able to have substantive discussions because “Wilson and his assistants were not familiar with the background [of the project] and in any event had had no opportunity to give any serious consideration to this matter.” Wrong instead suggested that Claxton should concentrate on establishing a personal relationship with Wilson.\textsuperscript{108} This situation continued when Eisenhower and St. Laurent met in Washington in May, as the Canadians decided not to take up a suggestion from LePan to examine with the Americans “the problems of joint Canada–United States defence … especially Arctic problems.” The State Department also concluded that the main purpose of St. Laurent’s visit was to establish a good relationship with Eisenhower “in keeping with past practice and our special relationships with Canada.”\textsuperscript{109}

During the visit, Eisenhower noted that “he was not familiar with the plans in detail but that anything which was done obviously would be done on a partnership basis

\textsuperscript{106} Canadian Ambassador to the United States to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, February 24 1953, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 6, File Defence of Canada Seaward Defence, DHH; Memorandum for the Acting Minister, February 25 1953, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 6, File Defence of Canada Seaward Defence, DHH.


\textsuperscript{108} Canadian Ambassador to the United States to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, February 24 1953, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 6, File Defence of Canada Seaward Defence, DHH; Eayrs, \textit{In Defence of Canada} Vol. 3, 363.

with the US doing its share of what might be jointly deemed necessary.” He also assured the Canadian representatives that the U.S. would respect Canadian sovereignty. In response, St. Laurent questioned whether an improved air defence system would be the most effective use of resources, and both Eisenhower and the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Frank Nash, in response seemed to downplay the chance of a massive air defence program. Nash noted that while many scientists were enthused about the project, the cost estimates for such an endeavour of 15 to 20 billion dollars meant that it was “desirable to avoid large expenditures and commitments until more information is available.” Eisenhower then interjected “he would be willing to guarantee that any program of these dimensions by its very nature would become obsolete before it was completed.” Both sides then agreed that the negotiations were going well and that “further decisions would be made upon the basis of more information and experience.”

After this meeting, the Canadian officials felt that they had made their point that the U.S. should consult with them well before any decisions were made, although as we shall see this was not the case. Indeed, this presumption led to a degree of complacency in Ottawa and while the Canadians did make one attempt in July to have meeting of consultation with U.S. officials, they were rebuffed. The Canadians were informed that due to personnel changes and the fact there was nothing pressing to discuss, the State Department did not want to have a meeting “for the sake of having a meeting.” After this effort, External Affairs gave up and decided to wait for the Americans to approach

110 Canadian Prime Minister’s Visit May 7-8 Minutes Opening Meeting, May 12 1953, RG 59 Department of State, Entry 3051B, Box 23, File Conference Files 1949-1963, NARA. It should be noted that Nitze would have been serving in Nash’s office if his appointment had been approved. Callaghan, Dangerous Capabilities, 150-1; Nitze, From Hiroshima to Glasnost, 146-7.
them. It would only be the end of the September before the Canadians tried again when they discovered that the Eisenhower administration had already determined its approach to continental air defence.

One other result of this lack of effective consultation was that the Cabinet and External Affairs only received limited information from Washington. However, it should be noted that for a time, Canadian officials still had Foulkes’ contacts in Washington including with General Bradley. For instance, during a meeting in February, Bradley emphasized that Project Lincoln, “had gotten a bit out of hand,” and that the JCS had been unable to examine it. Bradley and Foulkes agreed that the difficulties of developing a radar system in the North needed more study. In July, Foulkes had learned that the new USAF Chief of Staff, General Nathan Twining, had little use for a radar project in the Arctic. During this visit, Foulkes was also informed that Eisenhower was becoming more interested in North American air defence, and the President had been given a detailed briefing on the problem. Foulkes also learned that the State Department was thinking of using a meeting between Eisenhower and St. Laurent to discuss this issue.

Unfortunately, Bradley retired in mid-1953 and was replaced as Chair of the JCS by Admiral Arthur Radford, a carrier Admiral who had served in the Pacific in the Second World War, and had little experience dealing with Canada. Foulkes admitted this problem in August when he wrote that he hoped to develop a good working relationship with Radford, but he was aware “it will take some time before our relations with Admiral

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112 Raynor to Merchant, October 6 1953, RG 59 State Department Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5/12-2754, NARA.
113 Record of Discussions held with General Bradley, February 6 1953, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 116, File 2564B Early Reports and Reports of Discussions by General Foulkes, DHH.
114 Records of Discussions held during visit to Washington on 22 July 1953, Undated, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 116, File 2564B Early Reports and Reports of Discussions by General Foulkes, DHH;
Radford are going to be on the same basis” as with Bradley. Moreover, both Curtis and Vandenberg had retired as the head of their respective air forces in mid-1953, so another connection between the two countries had been lost. Therefore, the result of all these factors while the Eisenhower administration was starting to figure out its air defence policy, the Cabinet and External Affairs were largely cut off from developments in Washington. As Chapter 8 will show, it would not be until late-September that Canadian officials began to engage with their American counterparts on this issue.

**The End of the Debate in the United States**

Throughout the summer of 1953, Eisenhower was slowly becoming more interested in continental air defence. In July, he encouraged Bradley, in a farewell article in the *Saturday Evening Post* to give the American public a clearer conception of what defence problems the U.S. faced, including in this area. The Bull Committee submitted its report in July, which argued that while a serious Soviet air threat “may not materialize for several years,” the U.S. needed to strengthen its air defence system. Although the committee argued that such a system would not be 100 percent effective, it would still ensure that in the period from 1956 – 1960 that the Soviet Union could not destroy the U.S. industrial base while providing enough warning to allow SAC to disperse its forces. Bull’s report outlined three categories of actions that needed to be taken. Under actions

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115 Records of Discussions in Washington on 21/22 July 1953, July 23 1953, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 116, File 2564B Early Reports and Reports of Discussions by General Foulkes, DHH.
116 Foulkes to Tackaberry, August 4 1953, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds Series VI Foulkes Daily Correspondence, Box 50, File 5 July to Aug 1953 [2 of 2], DHH.
“Essential to the Over-all Continental Defense and Requiring Immediate Action,” it listed the Southern Canadian Radar Line while the DEW Line was listed as a secondary priority to be built if it were technologically feasible. The NSC then took on the task of examining the report and asked the JCS and a group of civilian consultants to offer recommendations; however, before this process could get underway, the Soviet Union tested its first H-bomb on August 12, 1953.

While it only had a yield of 400 kilotons, it was still quite powerful and could be developed into a deliverable weapon. U.S. concerns were further heightened by the realization that the Soviets would eventually develop a bomber with improved range to replace the TU-4. Improvements in the Soviet strategic nuclear forces thus led to sustained high level interest in U.S. strategic defences. For example, the NSC discussed a report written by Radford arguing that the U.S. should withdraw forces from overseas to strengthen its home defences, but this viewpoint was ultimately rejected because of concerns over the reaction of America’s allies. Dulles further expressed fears that an increased focus on continental defence would lead to the perception that the U.S. was moving towards a “Fortress America.” Nonetheless, even Humphrey agreed that improvements to continental defence needed to be made quickly, and the main question was where the funds were going to come from.

This was always an important issue because it had led to apprehension in the USAF that the government would take resources from SAC to expand the air defence

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119 Holloway, Stalin and the Bomb, 307; Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 75.
system. However, by this point, Eisenhower had begun to articulate his revamped approach to the Cold War. His “New Look” sought “to meet the Soviet threat to U.S. security,” without “seriously weakening the U.S. economy or undermining our fundamental values and institutions.” He was concerned that the maintenance of large conventional forces to counter the Soviet threat would lead to “ever-greater controls on our economy and on the freedom of our people.”

In fact, he expressed concerns to Dulles that such a posture might force the U.S. into some form of dictatorship or even compel it to consider “whether or not our duty to future generations did not require us to incite war at the most propitious moment that we could designate.” Therefore, Eisenhower was determined to reduce America’s conventional forces by emphasizing its strategic nuclear forces and offensive striking power. Eisenhower’s new strategy articulated in October 1953 in NSC 162/2 not only preserved SAC but enhanced its funding and prestige. Once the USAF realized that it was not a choice between SAC and improved continental air defences, it dropped its opposition to the early warning lines.

Instead, the funding for air defences came from cuts to the U.S. Army and the U.S. Navy. By doing this, Eisenhower also placated the economizers, namely Humphrey and Dodge, who opposed an increased defence budget. Nonetheless, to fully understand the president’s focus on continental air defence, one must understand the broader aspects of U.S. nuclear strategy in the early years of his administration.

124 Memorandum for the Secretary of State, September 8 1953, Papers of Dwight Eisenhower 1953-61 (Ann Whitman File) DDE Diaries, Box 3, File DDE Diary- Aug-Sep 1953 (2), DDE Library.
125 Memorandum of Discussions of the 168th Meeting of the National Security Council, October 29 1953, FRUS, Vol. II, Part 1, 1952-1954, 570-4; Bowie and Immerman, Waging Peace, 189, Goldfischer, The Best Defense, 139. The USAF remained sceptical about air defence. Briggs noted that SAC, after getting the sense that USAF ADC was getting too “cocky,” staged a surprise exercise, which in Brigg’s words “blew
In this period, the United States sought to deter a Soviet attack on itself and its allies through the threat posed by SAC’s retaliatory striking power. In fact, SAC would become even more important under Eisenhower’s New Look due to the reductions in America’s conventional forces. However, what was not stated in documents such as NSC 162/2 was the reality that this strategy included the option of preemptive strikes on the Soviet Union. While according to Rosenberg “no high national policy decision in the gray area of preemption was ever made,” many scholars including Scott Sagan, Richard Betts, Marc Trachenberg and Rosenberg all have argued that preemption formed an important part of U.S. strategy in the 1950s. Indeed, Eisenhower stated on a number of occasions his willingness to launch such a strike on the Soviet Union including in January 1954 when he told a number of Congressmen that he was prepared to preempt a Soviet attack. Later that year, he spoke to a Bipartisan Legislative meeting about the need to “blunt” an enemy attack to allow “U.S. economic superiority to have an effect.” Eisenhower made such statements to his officials in private as well. In December 1954, he asserted that he would order SAC to strike “in case of alert of actual attack,” while in August 1955, he emphasized to the NSC that in a war with the Soviet Union, the U.S. “should knock out their SAC first.”

On a number of occasions, Eisenhower also linked preemption and a strengthened air defence system. For example, during a discussion about continental air defence at a

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NSC meeting in July 1954, he cited Clausewitz and emphasized that the U.S. needed to strengthen its “capability of diminishing as much as possible the first blow of an enemy attack.”\(^\text{128}\) In January 1955, he wrote to Wilson that “our first object must therefore be to maintain the capability to deter an enemy from attack and to blunt that attack if it comes – by a combination of effective retaliatory power and a continental defence system of steadily increasing effectiveness.”\(^\text{129}\)

Moreover, as already discussed, SAC and LeMay strongly supported the use of preemptive strikes; however, newly declassified documents indicate that the U.S. air defence forces also shared these views. In fact, USAF’s air defence doctrine explicitly argued that the defence of the U.S. against a Soviet air attack would include blunting attacks.\(^\text{130}\) The Chair of the U.S. Joint Air Defense Board even wrote to the CAS, Air Marshal Roy Slemon in April 1954, “since we cannot gamble on being able to destroy all of his aircraft of his bases before they have had time to attack us, we must have a defensive force in Canada and the United States.”\(^\text{131}\)

Under this approach, a preemptive strike would be launched to blunt the Soviet strategic forces on the ground while the air defence system would protect the North America and its war fighting potential from whatever Soviet forces had survived that attack. The U.S. would then use its “mobilization base” to raise the additional forces necessary “to ensure victory in the event of general war.”\(^\text{132}\) While Eisenhower had sought to reduce American’s conventional military forces in peacetime, he recognized

\(^{129}\) Eisenhower to Wilson, January 5 1955, Dwight Eisenhower Papers (Ann Whitman File) DDE Diaries, Box 9, File DDE Diary January 155 (2), DDE Library.
\(^{130}\) United States Air Defence Doctrine, April 11 1954, 96/24, Box 5, File Planning Air Defence, DHH.
\(^{131}\) Gardner to Slemon, April 20 1954, 96/24, Box 5, File Planning Air Defence, DHH.
that the U.S. would need additional forces in wartime and those units would come from the mobilization base. This approach would further allow for the protection of the American people without intruding too much on their way of life and undermining their “fundamental values and institutions,” which an extensive civil defence program would require.\footnote{Report to the National Security Council by the Executive Secretary (Lay), October 30 1953, \textit{FRUS}, Vol. II, Part 1, 1952-1954, 578, 582} Eisenhower did offer vocal support for his civil defence administrators, but a truly effective effort would have involved too much government interference in the lives of ordinary Americans for his conservative beliefs. Indeed, Eisenhower had opposed the maintenance of large conventional forces so that the United States would not become a garrison state.\footnote{Interestingly enough, one of the few nations that developed an effective civil defence system after the war was Sweden. Moreover, many of the supporters of civil defence in the U.S. were on the left of American politics including the National Planning Association and the Democratic Congressman, Chet Holifield, a protégé of Upton Sinclair. Briggs, \textit{Shield of Faith}, 72, 125-6.} Therefore, although Jockel argued that air defence served as a bridge between the focus on nuclear weapons and the mobilization base with the idea that at least in theory, the air defence system would be able to secure the later, it is clear that air defence complemented U.S. nuclear strategy in this period.\footnote{Report to the National Security Council by the Executive Secretary (Lay), October 30 1953, \textit{FRUS}, Vol. II, Part 1, 1952-1954, 578, 582; Memorandum of Discussion at the 163d meeting of the National Security Council, September 24 1953, \textit{FRUS}, Vol. II, Part 1, 1952-1954, 469.} These realities, thus, confirm what David Cox argued that, at least from 1953 to 1955, there was a link between American nuclear war fighting and continental air defence.\footnote{Memorandum of Discussion at the 163d meeting of the National Security Council, September 24 1953, \textit{FRUS}, Vol. II, Part 1, 1952-1954, 469.}

The acceptance of the use of preemptive strikes helps to explain why the vulnerability of SAC to attack was not explicitly discussed in NSC 159/4. This absence existed despite the fact that the Edwards Committee had stated that a Soviet attack could destroy 24 percent of SAC in 1953 and 30 percent by 1955, and that Allen Dulles, the Director of CIA, warned on several occasions that an attack could take place without

\footnote{Figure 12.1. The Strategic Air Command (SAC) and its relationship to the National Security Council (NSC).}
warning. Within the USAF, there were some concerns about the vulnerability of U.S. bombers to a Soviet attack. In fact, Twining saw the new radar lines as a way to reduce this danger; however, there were dissenting voices. When Sprague, who was conducting an air defence study for a Congressional Committee, asked SAC about this issue, they replied that “the capability of the Soviet Air Force by surprise attack to damage SAC was not of controlling significance, because there could be circumstances under which SAC would strike before [underline included] an aggressive attack could be made on the Continental United States.”

There was also a general sense in the administration that even if the Soviets launched a surprise attack, SAC would survive and would be able to launch a retaliatory strike. Indeed, Eisenhower had openly expressed doubts about the ability of the Soviet air force to launch a massive strike on the United States during a presentation of the Edwards Committee’s findings to NSC. At this meeting, Eisenhower argued that “he had perhaps some little doubt as to whether General Edwards and his committee had given sufficient weight, in downgrading Soviet capabilities, to their obvious inferiority and even incompetence in the navigation of planes at long ranges. Anyone who had ever ridden with Soviet pilots could vouch for this incompetence.” He later added one should not

135 Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 77.
136 Cox, Canada and NORAD, 9-11.
138 Jockel, The United States and Canadian Efforts at Continental Air Defense, 170-1; Memorandum for the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff, December 18 1953, Dwight Eisenhower Papers, NLE 2007-300#3, DDE Library.
139 Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, October 28 1953, Dwight Eisenhower Papers White House Office National Security Council Staff Records 1953-61 Executive Secretary Subject File, Box 17, File Cutler Memos – 1953 (6), DDE Library.
underestimate the difficulties of launching an attack against the United States. All these factors, therefore, helped to shape the air defence policy of the Eisenhower administration.

Ultimately, Betts was right to state that there was never a “nuclear golden age,” of U.S. invulnerability to a Soviet nuclear strike. But there certainly was a period when Eisenhower seemed prepared to rely on strategic air power with the option of preemptive strikes and a mobilization base protected by a limited air defence system to defend the United States and its allies. It was not that Eisenhower was really convinced that the United States, through this strategy, could win a nuclear war with the Soviet Union. Indeed, his primary focus was the avoidance of such a conflict. Nonetheless, given the great uncertainties of the nuclear age, Eisenhower believed that this approach would allow the United States to maintain the forces necessary to deter the Soviet Union while achieving his goal of reducing defence spending and limiting the size of the American armed forces. Moreover, this strategy allowed Eisenhower to appease important domestic constituencies namely the USAF and SAC.

Finally, it should be noted that despite Canadian fears that public opinion would force Eisenhower to allocate more resources than necessary for the air defence of the United States, it appears from the documents that this was not the case. While some members of the NSC expressed concern about the reaction of the press to their plans, Eisenhower disagreed. He countered that it was not wise to “get so excited about what the columnists reports, as to fail to use common sense in reaching a decision.”

142 Ibid, 473; Huntington, The Common Defence, 338. These Canadian concerns will be outlined in Chapter 8.
On September 25, the NSC finalized NSC 159/4. Following the lead of the Bull Committee, NSC 159/4 emphasized the Southern Canadian Line, which would eventually be renamed the Mid Canada Line, as well as the seaward extensions of that system and expanded fighter forces. The DEW Line would wait until Project Corrode (the new code name for Counterchange) had determined if it were technologically feasible although, with the collapse of the opposition to improved early warning systems, its approval was far more likely than before. The Mid Canada Line was attractive for several reasons. It could provide up to three hours warning of a Soviet attack, and was both much cheaper and more feasible to construct than an early warning system in the high Arctic. It thus seemed to be a much better alternative to many USAF officers, including Twining, who had never really supported the DEW Line. Moreover, this line would be easier to support with fighter aircraft and it would be less susceptible to “spoofing” or false alarms triggered by Soviet air activity in the Arctic. This line further had the approval of the CUSMSG. In late September 1953, Twining contacted the CUSMSG arguing that “it was desirable as a first step for the MSG to report acceptance of the principle of the requirement for an electronic early warning system” on the 55th parallel in Canada, which it did in their Interim Report. However, while Jockel was right to note that Twining’s encouragement to the CUSMSG was significant, it needs to be emphasized that at CUSMSG’s Second Meeting in early August 1953, the study group was “impressed by the apparent agreement between the U.S. and Canadian Air Defense Commands

143 Memorandum of Conversation, February 11 1953, RG 59 State Department Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5/12-2754, NARA.
regarding requirement for an early warning line based on the 55th parallel concept.” Both the RCAF and the USAF ADCs felt that this radar line was a “matter of first priority.”  

Furthermore, some USAF and civilian officials knew that numerous Canadian officials and military officers would be supportive of this project. These individuals not only included the RCAF ADC and the Canadian members of the CUSMSG, but Foulkes. During visits to Washington in 1953, he strongly argued for a system “pushed out from the present line of the Canadian National Railways” to Bradley and presumably other senior officers. The State Department was made aware of such views, and it is possible that some U.S. officials and USAF officers took this factor into account in their decision to support the Mid Canada Line.  

However, despite warnings from the State Department, the Bull Committee and Bradley, this was as far as Canada was taken into account in these discussions. Eisenhower did express concern of the problem of “inducing other sovereign states to go along with our recommendations” in peacetime, but Canada was not directly consulted about this issue and no attempt was made to approach senior Canadian officials and “establish a common appreciation of the threat,” as had been suggested by the Bull Committee. Instead, Canada was taken for granted and Radford even commented that he believed that the U.S. “would encounter very little difficulty in getting all the co-operation and assistance we needed from the Dominion.”

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145 Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Canada-U.S. Military Study Group at Stewart Air Force Base, Newburgh N.Y. August 4 & 5 1953, Undated, File 112.3M2 (D711) Canada—US Military Study Group Minutes of Meetings Terms of Reference, DHH.

146 Memorandum of Conversation, February 11 1953, RG 59 State Department Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5/12-2754, NARA; Early Warning System, February 12 1953, RG 59 State Department Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5/12-2754, NARA; Record of Discussion with General Bradley and Admiral Davis, Held Thursday 21 Apr 23, Undated, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 116, File 2564B Early Reports and Reports of Discussions by General Foulkes, DHH.

147 A Report to the National Security Council by the Continental Defense Committee on Continental Defense, July 22 1953, RG 273 National Security Council, Box 23, File Policy Paper NSC 159, NARA, 7-
Conclusion

In the early 1950s, Canada and the United States faced the problem of protecting the continent from the strategic nuclear forces of the Soviet Union. While both countries were constructing the Pinetree Line, there was still the need for additional warning of an attack from over the North Pole, which could only come from a radar line in the Arctic. It was the United States that took the lead in resolving this problem although at first it did so very reluctantly because of deep internal divisions in Washington. While some scientists and officials believed that there was a critical need for this line, DoD and the USAF disagreed. They feared that the construction of an early warning line in the Arctic was technologically unfeasible and would divert resources away from SAC. The USAF was against an expanded air defence for other reasons including its tradition of air power thought, its focus on preempting a Soviet attack and its general conception that air defence was impractical in the nuclear age. Lovett and the USAF, thus, both distrusted these pro-air defence studies and sought to suppress their results, but were outmaneuvered when the proponents of improved continental air defences took their results directly to sympathetic officials in the Truman administration. The result was an intense debate in the NSC that ended when Truman approved the construction of the DEW Line.

At this point, Eisenhower took office and the resulting transition between administrations caused a number of problems. Because of a number of factors including the turnover in personnel, Eisenhower and his officials had only a poor understanding of the existing consultative arrangements with Canada. Canadian officials also did little to bridge this gap despite the fact that they recognized the existence of this problem, which

resulted in them being increasingly cut off from developments in Washington. Furthermore, the determination of Eisenhower to develop a new Cold War strategy meant that continental air defence languished while the administration limited itself to discussing various studies. Consequently, it was not until September when spurred on by the test of the first Soviet H-bomb and the development of the New Look that the administration decided to counter improvements in the Soviet strategic forces with an expanded air defence system. This move was made easier by the decision to fund these systems by reducing funding for the Army and Navy, which won over both opponents of improved early warning in the USAF and administration officials who did not want to increase the defence budget.

For the Eisenhower administration, improved air defences were an important complement to the New Look and NSC 162/2 in that these defences would protect the U.S. mobilization base from whatever forces that had escaped SAC’s preemptive strikes in a war with the Soviet Union. This is an important point that helps to explain why Eisenhower developed only limited air defence system in this period. It also illustrates that Cox was correct when he linked U.S. nuclear war fighting and continental air defence. It should be emphasized that Eisenhower did not adopt this strategy because he thought a nuclear war with the Soviet was winnable. Instead, this approach was the president’s attempt to manage the uncertainties of the nuclear age. Moreover, it allowed Eisenhower to achieve his goal of reducing American defence expenditures while still maintaining the forces necessary to deter the Soviet Union from attaching the U.S. and its allies.

The administration, thus, approved NSC 159/4, which called for the construction of the Mid Canada Line and the development of the DEW Line, if it was technologically
feasible. But despite a number of warnings, the Eisenhower administration made these decisions without consulting the Canadian government. The main reason was that due to the transition between administrations, the U.S. had gotten out of the habit of consulting with the Canadians, as they had done regularly since December 1950 about the overall world situation as well as specific matters such as the Pinetree Line. Indeed, the administration had done what the Bull Committee warned against and took Canada for granted.\footnote{A Report to the National Security Council by the Continental Defense Committee on Continental Defense, July 22 1953, RG 273 National Security Council, Box 23, File Policy Paper NSC 159, NARA, 52.}
Chapter 8: The Mid Canada Line and the DEW Line

Introduction

From 1953 to 1955, the Eisenhower administration confronted the problem of continental defence. After extensive debate, the President and his officials made two key decisions. The first, in the fall of 1953 was to approve the construction of the Mid Canada Line, which was to be located on the 55th Parallel on Canadian soil. The administration then decided in June and July of 1954 to build the DEW Line in the Arctic. However, the fact that both these lines would have to be partially or completely built on Canadian soil meant that the Americans would have to work with Canada, which created complications in the relationship that can now be discussed in greater detail due to the availability of newly declassified documents.

These difficulties emerged because the administration had limited experience dealing with Canada. American and Canadian officials also had different ideas on how consultation between the two countries should take place. Moreover, as seen in earlier chapters, the development of both these two radar systems raised great questions for the different conceptions of the Canadian national interest in Ottawa. For example, the Cabinet and External Affairs attempted to balance the need to work with the Americans to defend the continent with political considerations. Many ministers and officials such as Claxton also felt that it would hurt Canada’s self respect if the Americans played too great a role in defending Canada’s territory and airspace. The OGDs including Defence Production and Northern Affairs, further sought to utilize these radar projects to serve their interests, namely the development of Canada’s electronics industry and the Canadian Arctic. Finally, the RCAF worked with the USAF to secure the continent, as they were much less concerned about Canadian sovereignty then their civilian colleagues. Their
main preoccupation was to develop these air defences without overstraining their available resources.

To resolve this issue, Canadian ministers and officials took two different courses of action. In November 1953, they first decided to develop the Mid Canada Line as a Canadian project. This decision was taken despite the fact the United States had not consulted Canada when it made its decision to develop this system. Nevertheless, Canadian ministers and officials, namely Claxton and Howe, had determined that this was the best course of action even before they had been formally informed of the American plans. The DEW line, however, was a much more difficult issue because of its much greater cost as well as the general skepticism of the need for the line in Ottawa, and the realization that the development of the system would mean an increased U.S. military presence in the Canadian Arctic. This decision would be further complicated by internal disagreements in Ottawa including Foulkes’ position in the autumn of 1954 that Canada needed to reconsider its participation in the development of this air defence system in light of the potential problems posed by radioactive fallout during a nuclear conflict. Despite these arguments, the Cabinet eventually agreed that the DEW line would “be built as a joint Canada-United States project.”

What this meant in reality was that the Americans would largely be responsible for the construction of the system, as Canada would not take a formal role in its development. Instead, Canadian officials sought to protect Canada’s sovereignty by reserving the right to take up certain responsibilities with the construction, operation and maintenance of the DEW line, and then would decide to allow the United States to continue in these roles. Canadian ministers and officials further

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1 Record of Cabinet Defence Committee Decision, Undated, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 90, File 8 Radar Mid Canada Line, DHH.
worked to ensure that Canada received the maximum benefits of this project. The result was that both countries were able to overcome all these difficulties and work together to defend North America.

The Early Discussions

By the fall of 1953, the Eisenhower administration had decided to strengthen the air defences of North America. But despite warnings from the State Department and the Bull Committee, it had failed to consult the Canadian government. Although Jockel argued that some American officials expected trouble from Canada, there is no indication that the Eisenhower administration actually did. Indeed, none of the senior officials either in the administration or the State Department had any real experience dealing with the Canadians. Furthermore, Radford’s comments in the NSC that he expected no problems from Canada were not countered. Instead, the administration had taken the Canadian government for granted, and assumed that it would go along with their plans.

While the American deliberations were going on, Canadian officials struggled to understand U.S. policy. After the release of Bradley’s article on Continental defence in late August, Heeney, the Canadian Ambassador to the U.S., commented that due to the Soviet hydrogen bomb test and improvements in the Soviet strategic forces “you should assume that you will be faced with requests ... for co-operation in the field of continental defence on a scale considerably larger than any which have been made previously.” He then stated that due to opposition in the administration to increased defence spending and the technical problems with constructing a system in the far north, he was not willing to
draw any conclusions on what measures might be taken. On the other hand, Douglas LePan, an official in the Canadian Embassy in Washington, argued that the test of the Soviet H-Bomb would almost certainly result in improvements in continental defence. The CUSMSG’s External Affairs observer added that the study group would most likely propose that a McGill Fence be installed along the 54th parallel."

In Ottawa, there was general concern about the potential U.S. interest in the Canadian North as well. In July, Pearson wrote an article in Foreign Affairs entitled “Canada’s Northern Horizon.” It is important to remember that the last time he wrote on this subject in the journal of the U.S. foreign policy establishment was in 1946, the last time the Americans had appeared to show interest in this region when Pearson was Canada’s Ambassador in Washington. Another official, Gordon Robertson, further noted that with the increased U.S. interest “in air defence in the North … we have to consider out positions and policies there extremely carefully.” Ultimately, it was only in September that Heeney began to receive some insight into U.S. planning through a series of conversations with American officials.

The most important of these conversations was with Gordon Arneson, a State Department official who had a good relationship with his Canadian counterparts, and often passed on information to them without the authorization of his superiors. One such

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2 Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 78.
4 Charge d’Affairs Canadian Embassy Washington to Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, RG 25 Department of National Defence, Box 56, File TS 096-207-4 Planning Defence Planning Canada-US, LAC.
occasion was on September 21 when he stated that the various reports on continental air
defence were about to be considered by the NSC. Heeney learned that the NSC Planning
Board had concluded there was a need for improved air defences to be developed “in
conjunction with Canada,” although it was not yet clear what measures were going to be
taken. Arneson suggested that the report would favour the approach suggested by
Bradley of slowly extending radar coverage north rather than building a DEW Line in the
Arctic. While he was “vague” about U.S. plans, he did state that the cost of the measures
would be much less than those discussed in the press, and that the U.S. would consult
with Canada before its plans had been finalized. He then suggested that Eisenhower
should discuss the issue with St. Laurent at a high level meeting. Heeney reported to
Ottawa that it was not certain that the NSC would approve the report given Eisenhower’s
intention to reduce defence spending. He added that the Embassy had “ensured that at
the working levels of the State Department there is a realization of the important
considerations of national policy, which from the Canadian standpoint, should be taken
into account in any new proposals for continental defence.”

On September 24, Heeney met with Wilson. While the Secretary of Defense
raised the issue of continental defence, he was not that forthcoming about American
plans, although he did mention that the U.S. was considering the construction of a radar
system at the 54th parallel. However, considering that the meeting was a courtesy call
between two individuals who did not know each other, it was not terribly surprising that
the conversation was not too detailed. Wilson’s office did not even keep a record of the

7 Canadian Ambassador to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, September 21 1953, 2002/17 Joint
Staff Fond, Box 90, File 8 Radar Mid Canada Line, DHH.
8 Canadian Ambassador to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, September 24 1953, 2002/17 Joint
Staff Fond, Box 101, File 11 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Air Defence System, DHH. Jockel, No
Boundaries Upstairs, 81
meeting, as they concluded that there had been “no serious discussion.”

On the other hand, according to Heeney, both men agreed that the administration should consult Canada before the situation had “jelled.” Wilson also mentioned several options for arranging consultation including a personal visit by himself to Ottawa to discuss this matter with Claxton. Canadian officials would later reject this option, as it would draw too much attention. In addition, Heeney emphasized to Wilson that the situation “would be very much more difficult to deal with if the United States were to come to us with something cut-and-dried.”

By late-September 1953, Heeney had learned from Arneson that the State Department had begun to prepare for a meeting of consultation; however, at this point, the transition between the Truman and Eisenhower administrations came into play again. While there had been nine meetings of this type between late 1950 and early 1953, Arneson admitted that Dulles, Smith and Bowie did not understand how these meetings had worked in the past. Arneson further disclosed that it would take time for U.S. officials to figure out what they were going to communicate to the Canadians, and that he would have to discuss the problem with H. Freeman Matthews, the former Deputy Under Secretary of State. Matthews was the main connecting link in the State Department between the two administrations, and was the only senior official who understood how the previous procedures had worked. Heeney then advised Ottawa that it was in Canada’s interests for to allow Arneson to make these arrangements because it would allow for the

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9 Ibid, 80.
10 Memorandum for the files, October 2 1953, RG 59 State Department Country Director for Canada Records Relating to Military Affairs, Box 10, File Continental Defense 1953-1955, NARA;
11 Canadian Ambassador to the United States to Secretary of State for External Affairs, September 24 1953, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 101, File 11 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Air Defence System, DHH; The Secretary of State for External Affairs to Head of Post Canadian Embassy Washington D.C.,
“reviving the procedures for continuing consultation which have so far not been employed since the new administration took over.”  

Arneson later informed Heeney that he believed that it would not be until December 1 before any final decisions were taken on this issue due to their financial implications. Consequently, Heeney felt that since the Americans had not yet finalized their plans, there was time to arrange consultation and that Canada should wait for an approach by the United States. Canadian officials were also prepared to give the CUSMSG more time to produce a report on this problem.

Canadian officials received additional information from an off the record conversation that took place between the Canadian and U.S. Sections of the PJBD on October 1. During this conversation, the acting Chair of the U.S. Section, General H.M. Webster, discussed American concerns about the Soviet threat against North America and how the recommendations to deal with the problem had been considered by the NSC, but had not given final approval by the President. He stated that the defence measures the U.S. was planning were quite modest and they hoped that the CUSMSG would soon recommend the construction of a radar line at the 54th Parallel. He added that the DEW Line in the Arctic would be built if it was to be proved feasible by Project Corrode. In response, McNaughton expressed approval of the 54th Parallel Line particularly if it used

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12 The Canadian Ambassador to the United States to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, September 29 1953, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 90, File 8 Radar Mid Canada Line, DHH; Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 80.
13 The Canadian Ambassador to the United States to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, September 29 1953, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 90, File 8 Radar Mid Canada Line, DHH.
14 The Secretary of State for External Affairs to Head of Post Canadian Embassy Washington D.C., September 28 1953, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 90, File 8 Radar Mid Canada Line, DHH.
the McGill Fence system. They also discussed the completion of an interim report by the CUSMSG that would be ready by October 15 in advance of Eisenhower’s visit to Ottawa.\textsuperscript{15} One important aspect of this conversation was that it reflected the inherent discontinuity between American and Canadian expectations on how consultation would work. The Canadians wanted the U.S. to consult them before the Americans had decided what they were planning to do. On the other hand, even those American officials who did not take Canada for granted, and many at higher levels did, felt that since the President had not given final approval to NSC 159/4 due to the need to finalize the financial arrangements, there was still time to arrange a meeting with Canada.

While it waited for more information from Washington, External Affairs studied this issue and concluded that the U.S. would ask permission to build more radar defences in Canada, but it was not clear what would be requested. The Department agreed that it would be very difficult for Canada “to reject any major defence proposal which the United States Government presents with conviction as essential for the security of North America.” External Affairs’ study further suggested that while it was time to consider how Canada would contribute to the continental air defence system and balance these requirements with its commitments in Europe. It concluded that was likely that it would be some time until the U.S. would finalize its air defence policy. Therefore, an exploratory meeting should be held later in October to caution American officials on “the dangers of premature unilateral United States decision,” or even worse, premature press announcements of what they wanted.\textsuperscript{16} C.D. Howe also learned from Wilson that the

\textsuperscript{15} McNaughton to Claxton, October 1 1953, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 101, File 11 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Air Defence System, LAC. Pearson and Foulkes were also informed about this meeting.

Americans were thinking of allocating 500 million dollars to air defence projects, including some for fighters. Howe concluded that this meant that the Americans were looking at the McGill Fence to provide for the early warning coverage.\footnote{Howe to Claxton, October 9 1953, MG 27 B20 C.D. Howe Papers, Vol. 195, File Radar Division, LAC.} This assessment corresponded with Heeney’s conclusion that the remarks of Wilson at one of his press conferences indicated that the administration had taken a “sober and moderate approach” to continental defence.\footnote{Canadian Ambassador Washington D.C. to Secretary of State for External Affairs, October 8 1953, RG 24 Department of National Defence, Vol. 21417, File 1855.1 Pt. 1 DND Continental Air Defence of North America, LAC.}

Finally, Canadian ministers and officials were preoccupied by the attention the U.S. media was paying to this issue. Not all of these stories were supportive of improved air defences, as many journalists including Hanson Baldwin of the New York Times were critical of these defences, but these reports did increase the profile of this issue in the U.S., which worried Ottawa. Canadian officials feared that the Americans might be forced by public opinion to devote unnecessarily large resources to these defences. They also found these stories detrimental to security and politically embarrassing. Claxton complained “he had repeatedly stood up in Parliament and refused on security grounds to disclose to the House of Commons information which all Members of Parliament can now read in Colliers.”\footnote{Memorandum to the Prime Minister, September 23 1953, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 6, File 89 Continental Defence, DHH; Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 80; Eayrs, In Defence of Canada Vol. 3, 365.} Foulkes would later explain to Claxton that many of these leaks had emerged because U.S. officers were still accustomed to a wartime censorship arrangements in which they would speak candidly to reporters, and those reports would then be vetted by some outside organization.\footnote{How to Claxton, October 9 1953, MG 27 B20 C.D. Howe Papers, Vol. 195, File Radar Division, LAC.} However, it is doubtful if Claxton was satisfied by this response. U.S. officials were frustrated as well by this situation, since
they felt that these stories created unnecessary difficulties. Wilson even argued at a press conference that “we are talking just as if we could move up in Canada and do what we damn please without the Canadians and anything else and not getting them into it.”

The Process of Consultation Begins

Although there was a realization amongst some Canadian officials that the senior officials in the Eisenhower administration had little experience dealing with Canada, there still was an expectation into the fall that the U.S. would consult them before the administration had determined its air defence policy. This perception, as already stated, reflected a difference in opinion between American and Canadians perspectives on the timing of these consultative discussions on joint defence measures. Nevertheless, a few American officials did recognize the need to quickly consult Canada. On October 6, Hayden Raynor, a junior U.S. official warned the Assistant Secretary of State, Livingston Merchant, that Canadian officials felt that the United States was making decisions on continental defence that would both effect their country and were being made with information that they did not have. Raynor believed that if this problem was not corrected then it would be difficult to gain Canada’s co-operation. He concluded that “the Canadians will not take the domestic political risks involved in increasing their military program under ‘U.S. pressure,’” but given sufficient time and information would make decisions that would “parallel our own.” It should be noted that Merchant’s follow up

20 Foulkes to Claxton, October 15 1953, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fond, Box 51, File Foulkes Daily Correspondence Vol. 6 Sept-Oct 1953, DHH.
memo to Smith reflected these views in a much more moderate way, but the meeting of consultation was eventually scheduled for October 22.\textsuperscript{22}

The Americans saw these discussions as an opportunity to get “Canadian agreement on the degree of threat of air attack and to create a climate which will lead to Canadian Government approval” to improvements to the North American air defence system.\textsuperscript{23} Moreover, by October 12, the CUSMSG had produced an interim report that in the minds of the U.S. Section served “the basic purpose of adequately preparing the Canadian government for a formal request for joint action in the next step towards the establishment of the southern Canadian radar line,” at the 55\textsuperscript{th} parallel. This view was “verified by informal conversations” with some members of the CUSMSG’s Canadian Section.\textsuperscript{24} This report was passed to Canada on October 14 and endorsed not only the Southern Canadian Line, but the use of the McGill Fence system, and the development of seaward radar systems extended out from the Southern Canadian Line to provide additional coverage.\textsuperscript{25}

Most Canadian officials thus concluded that, despite assurances to the contrary, the Americans had made up their mind on what they were going to do without first consulting them. A memo for Pearson on October 14 asserted that Canada should soon anticipate requests from the U.S. “especially in view of the ‘briefing’ in Washington …

\textsuperscript{22} Raynor to Merchant, October 6 1953, RG59 State Department Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5, NARA; Merchant to the Acting Secretary, October 13 1953, RG59 State Department Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5, NARA.

\textsuperscript{23} Memorandum for Col. Monteith Chairman Staff Group JCS, October 20 1953, RG 333 Files of International Military Agencies PJB Entry 17A, Box 4, File Top Secret Correspondence 1941-1956 Folder 20, NARA.

\textsuperscript{24} Horsey to Raynor, October 12 1953, RG 59 State Department Records of the Policy Planning Staff, Box 13, File Canada 1947-1953, NARA. The Mid Canada Line was often referred to as the Southern Canada Line during 1953 and 1954.

\textsuperscript{25} Untitled Memorandum, October 14 1953, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 6, File 92 Continental Defence –Mid-Canada Warning Line, DHH; Interim Report, October 8 1953, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 6, File 92 Continental Defence – Mid-Canada Warning Line, DHH.
tentatively scheduled for next week.”26 The Chiefs of Staff Committee also had a special meeting on October 15 and decided to produce a study with cost estimates for a Mid Canada Line that would be completed “whether or not the U.S. requests a decision.”27 Indeed, a Canadian response to the anticipated request had already been set in motion.

In particular, two Canadian ministers emerged as critical influences on policy. One of them was Howe who had already been informed by his officials that Canada would “be called upon to participate to some extent in any new programme which may be considered essential to the joint defence of the two countries.”28 As already discussed in previous chapters, his main interest was the state of the Canadian electronics industry, and on October 13, he addressed letters to Claxton and Pearson on this subject. Howe argued that the Pinetree Line note in 1951 had established the principle that Canadian radar equipment would be purchased when the early warning systems were built in Canada. He then asserted that the Americans had differing opinions on how this principle should be applied to projects that Canada was not contributing funds to. In these cases, U.S. officials believed that both American and Canadian manufacturers should have equal opportunity to bid on contracts “provided prices, lead time and quality are competitive,” and decisions should not be “influenced by commercial considerations nor require the development of uneconomic production facilities.” Not surprisingly, Howe opposed this view, as he argued that Canadian electronic firms needed new contacts to keep abreast of new developments in order to meet future wartime demands. He felt that the allocation of

27 Extract from Minutes of A Special Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee Held on 15 Oct 1953, Undated, RG 25 Department of National Defence, Box 2534, File S 801-100-M177 Committees Canada-U.S. Military Study Group Vol. 1, LAC.
28 Northern Continental Defence As it Concerns Canada, October 1 1953, MG 27 B20 C.D. Howe Papers, Vol. 195, File Radar Division, LAC.
orders of radar equipment should be subject to consultation between the two governments and that orders should be given based not only on strategic and practical considerations, but economic and commercial ones as well. He concluded that these Canadian concerns needed to be emphasized to the Americans “in order not to jeopardize Canadian industry’s position.”

Pearson took Howe’s interest seriously and had an “Aide Memoire” to the Americans prepared although it was not sent, since Howe stated that it was not needed. Furthermore, Claxton forwarded Howe’s letter to the Chiefs of Staff with the comment that “the Chiefs, I know, appreciate the great desirability of building up and maintaining Canada’s protective capacity.”

The other minister who played a significant role in these discussions was Claxton. On September 23, he had written to St. Laurent arguing that the press leaks were part of an effort by the Eisenhower administration to cover up for the fact that their plans for defence economies would have a negative impact on the U.S. armed forces. Claxton also feared that an increased focus on continental defence would force Canada to divert resources from its forces in NATO to the defences of North America. He added if “further inquiries confirm my own grave misgivings, it may not be too much to say that the line of action that may be taken may prove to constitute the most serious setback of our work together for joint security since the end of the Second World War.” He concluded that Canadian officials needed to communicate to the Americans the advisability of discussing

29 Howe to Pearson, October 13 1953, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fond, Box 101, File 11 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Air Defence System, LAC; Jockel No Boundaries Upstairs, 82.

this “matter fully with Canada before starting currents of opinion in the United States which would virtually force our taking additional steps” to defend the continent.31

Due to his position, Claxton was quickly made aware of the American decision on the Mid Canada Line and was increasingly concerned about the situation. As early as October 17, he discussed with Foulkes the option of Canada taking on the Mid Canada Line as a Canadian project. On October 20, Foulkes outlined to Claxton a conversation he had about this issue with Slemon, Solandt and the Chair of the CUSMSG’s Canadian Section, Air Vice Marshal Frank Miller. Foulkes related that they agreed that there were “many advantages in Canada assuming responsibility for the building of an early warning line across Canada on the 55th parallel,” and leaving the seaward extensions, which would be quite expensive and difficult to operate to the U.S. However, they did emphasize that the issue should be studied and that the two countries would have to agree on the type of radar technology to be used in the line so that it would meet both their requirements.

Foulkes added that the Chiefs of Staff were reluctant to recommend this project until more detailed cost estimates were available, as the existing ones were very preliminary. The meeting concluded that the development of the Mid Canada Line by Canada should be studied while the DRB and the RCAF would develop more accurate estimates of the line’s cost for the next meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee.32

On October 21, Claxton reported the results of the CUSMSG’s study to St. Laurent. He argued it was “very much more reasonable than the Lincoln Project. Indeed, the report is one with which I think any reasonable person would find it difficult to

31 Memorandum to the Prime Minister, September 23 1953, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 6, File 89 Continental Defence, DHH; Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 80; Eayrs, In Defence of Canada Vol. 3, 366.
32 The Minister, October 20 1953, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 6, File 92 Continental Defence Mid Canada Line, DHH.
disagree.” He concluded that the Americans would want the system built as soon as possible. Claxton then took the step of stating to the Prime Minister that both he and Howe agreed that there would many advantages to building the Mid Canada Line as a Canadian project. It would allow Canada to “keep greater control of the production of equipment,” a point that reflected his and particularly Howe’s interest in gaining more contracts for the Canadian electronics industry. This suggestion was certainly inspired by the problems that had occurred with the Pinetree Line and the Canadian position that had been developed during the negotiations over the Temporary Radar Station Program. Claxton added that it would be more cost effective for Canada to build the system by itself then to contribute to a joint project with the Americans, which further reflected lessons learned from the Pinetree Line.33

Moreover, in Claxton's mind, building this line would “give us the initiative and enable us to tell our own people …that we were quite prepared to do anything we thought necessary in continental defence.”34 Claxton and his colleagues were well aware of the political difficulties that arose from balancing Canada’s contribution to NATO and the defence of North America, as the bulk of the RCAF’s fighter squadrons were based in Western Europe. In fact, Claxton had to deal with several attacks from the Conservatives and the press on this issue. For instance, in March 1953, Wing Commander Richard Rohmer of the RCAF Auxiliary stated publicly that Canada had no protection from RCAF jet fighters, and that the Soviets, the RCAF and the government knew this, but the Canadian people did not. He added that Claxton’s counter argument that Canada was best

33 Memorandum to the Prime Minister, September 23 1953, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 6, File 89 Continental Defence, DHH
34 Ibid; Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 82; Eayrs, In Defence of Canada Vol. 3, 370.
defended overseas only proved his point. The Cabinet had survived such attacks and easily won the 1953 election, but Claxton saw an opportunity with the Mid Canada Line to address these kinds of charges. A Canadian built early warning line with Canadian radar technology would demonstrate that the government was taking its responsibilities seriously.

Claxton then stated his belief that the Americans would want to build the DEW line and by building the Mid Canada Line, Canada would “‘have done what we thought was necessary for continental defence. If you want to go on and do more we are not going to stand in the way’ and keep our self-respect without having to put out too great an expenditure of materials, manpower and money.” Indeed, it would allow Canada to avoid a commitment to a project that many Canadian ministers, officials and military officers were very lukewarm about. As early as February 1953, the Chiefs of Staff had concluded that such a line did not “occupy a high priority in the general scheme for Continental Defence,” and doubted its technological feasibility. The reference to self-respect was a reflection of the Canadian nationalist sentiments that were shared by Claxton and other officials in Ottawa. Furthermore, a Canadian project in this area would have been in line with the Canadianization of military installations in the Northwest and the Arctic that had occurred after the Second World War and again in the late 1940s. While such a policy had not been employed during the development of the Pinetree Line, certain clauses in that agreement showed that there still was interest in Ottawa in having

37 Kingston to Claxton, February 10 1953, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fond, Box 78, File 33 536th Meeting Chiefs of Staff Committee, DHH.
military installations in Canada operated by the Canadian military personnel. Therefore, Claxton and Howe concluded that the Mid Canada Line should be built as a Canadian project before they had been formally informed about U.S. plans.

This formal notice from the Americans came on October 22 at the first of two major consultative meetings held in late-1953 to discuss the issue. The meeting began when Smith stated that the Eisenhower administration considered continental defence to be a joint effort between Canada and the U.S. and that there was the need for “the closest cooperation on continental defence matters.” He was followed by a report by Bowie on the world situation, which the Canadians felt was reassuring, since it argued that the Soviets would not start a major conflict with the West. Radford then briefed the meeting on the nature of the Soviet threat and American plans for continental air defence. He argued that while the Soviets had the capability to attack North America, the limitations of their bombers and the threat of U.S. nuclear retaliation meant that such a strike was unlikely. A Soviet attack could inflict serious damage, but it would destroy neither SAC nor the continent’s mobilization base. Nevertheless, he believed in the need to improve the air defences of North America and argued that “Canadian participation on an adequate scale is essential.” He then stated “we naturally seek to determine the extent to which Canada may wish to assume leadership in parts of the system and to contribute to its expense.” At this point, he outlined a number of initiatives that “should be completed with all possible speed” including the Southern Canadian Line and the seaward extensions. He concluded that contrary to press reports, the effort was “being pressed forward to high priority but without hysteria or a tendency to over commit resources to purely defensive measures.” Foulkes responded that the Canadian government regarded the Soviet test of a thermonuclear weapon as “a most significant development.” Indeed,
he believed that the Soviets would possibly shift their strategy and seek to “deliver a crippling blow on to the North American continent,” in the event of war. The Canadians also outlined the need to stress to their Western Europeans allies the need to strengthen North America’s air defences in order to defend the NATO’s war making potential. Foulkes added that Canadian military agreed with the CUSMSG’s Interim Report and “was confident that every effort would be made to get on immediately with the Southern Canadian Line both as regards the necessary surveys and decisions as to the equipment to be used.”

The U.S. assessment of the meeting was that it had revealed “a remarkable similarity of views between the two governments.” In general, American officials had concluded that this issue would not be resolved quickly and that Canadian officials would likely want to use the PJBD to work out a solution to the problem. For the Canadians, the situation was quite different, as the meeting had simply confirmed that the Americans had made their plans without first consulting them. Despite this realization, the Canadian government and military responded quickly with a proposal to the United States that Canada should construct the Mid Canada Line as a Canadian project. These individuals understood that Canada did not really have a choice but to co-operate, although it was still a question of how much of an effort this would entail. In fact, they did not want to contribute too many resources to development of a continental air defence system because

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38 Memorandum of Conversation, October 22 1953, RG 59 State Department Records of the Policy Planning Staff, Box 13, File Canada 1947-1953, NARA; Admiral Radford’s Comments re Soviet Capabilities, October 22 1953, RG 59 State Department Records of the Policy Planning Staff, Box 13, File Canada 1947-1953, NARA Informal Views on and Actions of the United States Relative to Continental Defense Missions by Admiral A.W. Radford, USN, Chairman of United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, October 21 1953, RG 59 State Department records of the Policy Planning Staff, Box 13, File Canada 1947-1953, NARA; Canadian Ambassador to the United States to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, October 23 1953, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fond, Box 101, File 11 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Air Defence System, DHH.
it would force them to either reduce their forces in Europe or to increase defence spending, which would reduce the government’s ability to fund its new social programs. Merchant even noted some Canadian officials “feared that they had been asked to share in the entire program of continental defence outlined” by Radford, and may want the next meeting “to confirm that their assistance and financial cooperation is being asked now only in connection with the Southern Canada Line.”

The Cabinet was able to act quickly because of the strong support that existed for a Canadian Mid Canada Line from Claxton and Howe. In fact, Claxton had already asked the Foulkes and the Chiefs of Staff Committee to develop a plan to build this early warning system as a Canadian project before the meeting on October 22. Their position was enhanced by the interest in an early warning line on the 55th Parallel that existed from Foulkes and the DRB. Moreover, the RCAF’s ADC had already supported the project in the CUSMSG, and in general the RCAF was inclined to support measures that would strengthen the air defences of North America and were supported by the USAF. Even the Canadian Army and the RCN agreed that the increased Soviet threat meant that there was a need for a warning system on the 55th Parallel.

More support for this proposal came from Pearson and External Affairs. Wilgress, the Canadian Representative to NATO, had already argued to the NATO Secretariat that Canada would now be devoting more of its resources to continental defence. He stated

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40 Merchant to the Acting Secretary, November 5 1953, RG59 State Department Decimal File 1950-1954, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5, NARA.
42 Record of Discussion at the Defense Research on Project “Lincoln” held 30 Oct 52, Undated, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 1, File 8 Air Defence of Canada, DHH; Early Warning System Summary of U.S. – Canadian Discussions, Undated, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 6, File Continental Air Defence 1952-1954, DHH.
“as the long-range striking power of our potential enemies increases. The Canadian public would not understand if its government chose at this stage to neglect” its home defences. He added that this had been an issue in the most recent election campaign and would only become a greater problem if the Canadian public saw U.S. personnel operating radar lines on its territory while its forces were stationed in Western Europe. The Cabinet Defence Committee agreed that the Canada taking over the construction and funding of the line “might be justified since it might be difficult to explain large US expenditures of US resources on Canadian soil while Canada was maintaining substantial forces abroad.”

Moreover, Canadian ministers and officials understood the need to address the increased Soviet threat to North America. Foulkes had written to Heeney and MacKay on October 19 that the Soviet air force now had the ability to launch crippling attacks on North America rather than simply diversionary ones. This reality was further emphasized to the Cabinet Defence Committee at its meeting on November 3. Finally, St. Laurent had become more focused on the situation in the North in response to the increased American interest. Indeed, Gordon Robertson noted in late September that St. Laurent felt that Canada had been doing too little to assert its sovereignty there.

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43 Extract From 547th Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee 27 Oct 53, Undated, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fond, Box 101, File 11 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Air Defence System, DHH.
44 Canadian Ambassador to the United States to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, October 23 1953, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fond, Box 101, File 11 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Air Defence System, DHH. Ninety Fifth Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, October 6 1953, RG 2 Privy Council, Box 44, File Cabinet Committees Cabinet Defence Committee Minutes and Agenda, LAC; Ninety Sixth Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, November 3 1953, RG 2 Privy Council, Box 44, File Cabinet Committees Cabinet Defence Committee Minutes and Agenda LAC.
45 Memorandum from the Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee, October 19 1953, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 6, File 89 Continental Defence, DHH; Brief to be Used for Civil Defence Discussion on Friday 12 March 54 Agreed Statement of the Risk as Presented to the Cabinet defence Committee in November, 1953, March 12 1954, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 147, File 58 Civil Defence, DHH.
thus, would be inclined to support a Canadian built Mid Canada Line both for this reason and because most of his key ministers supported such a course.

One other reason for the speedy Canadian decision was the recommendation from the CUSMSG. This study group had been established to gather technical information and to provide a Canadian perspective in U.S. planning. It was also likely that Canadian officials hoped that they could use this body to delay American initiatives. But instead, the RCAF had worked with their USAF counterparts to quickly recommend the construction of the Mid Canada Line. Nonetheless, because of the fact that External Affairs seemed to be unaware of this issue with CUSMSG as well as the importance that it had placed on the study group’s creation and that it had argued that Canada would not make a decision without its report, the CUSMSG’s support was still critical. The Chiefs of Staff Committee thus concluded that work should begin on the Mid Canada Line. The service chiefs left the decision on whether Canada should build the line itself to the Cabinet Defence Committee, who after being briefed by Claxton, agreed that “Canada should assume the leadership in the planning and construction of this line without prejudice to a decision on the division of costs.” Indeed, it is important to emphasize that this proposal did not mean that Canadian officials were prepared to fund this project, only that Canada would supervise its construction. This recommendation was approved by the Cabinet on November 4, in a decision that noted the increased threat to North

47 Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 81.
48 Extract from 574th Meeting Chiefs of Staff Committee Held 27 Oct 53, Undated, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 101, File 11 Permanent Joint Board on Defence Air Defence System, DHH.
49 Ninety Sixth Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, November 3 1953, Box 44, File Cabinet Committees Cabinet Defence Committee Minutes and Agenda, LAC.
America and appreciated the “on the whole, reasonable views [that] prevailed in Washington” to address it.  

The decision to proceed with the Mid Canada Line as a Canadian project reflected the conceptions of the national interest of the various groups in Ottawa. For the Cabinet and External Affairs, the construction of the line as a Canadian project not only served their political interests, but allowed them to balance the security of the continent with the protection of Canadian sovereignty. They ensured that Canadian self-respect would be maintained and that the costs of the line would be lower than a joint effort with the Americans. Likewise, the RCAF had achieved its goal of strengthening the North American air defence system in cooperation with the USAF. For Howe, Defence Production and their supporters in Ottawa, Canadian control of the line ensured strong orders for Canadian radar components. This arrangement would also allow Canadian construction companies and labour to play an important role in the project.

The speed in which the Canadian government made this decision reflected the urgency that these officials felt about the problem. This factor further helps to explain why Canadian officials did not utilize the PJBD as it did during the negotiations over the Pinetree line. This decision was taken despite the fact that External Affairs suggested to Pearson “the use of this channel in negotiations on defence projects of this type has, as you know, many advantages which we can exploit to good effect.” Moreover, Henry wrote to McNaughton that the JCS had requested the U.S. Section to intervene and he hoped that a meeting of the Board would be helpful in resolving this matter. Instead,
while the Canadians agreed that Henry was to be kept informed, there was no special meeting of the Board.\textsuperscript{53} The Cabinet Defence Committee later determined that although it was desirable to record the views of both governments in the records of the PJBD, it was “not necessary to await a meeting of the board to inform” the Americans of Canada’s position.\textsuperscript{54} On November 6, at the second consultative meeting that addressed the air defence issue, the Canadians stated their intention to build this line as a Canadian project “without prejudice” to the future splitting of the costs of the project. They also emphasized the speed that they had made their decision. Under Secretary Smith responded that he “was gratified by the quick action of the Canadian Government,” and felt that the proposals were completely acceptable.\textsuperscript{55} As a result, Eisenhower’s visit to Ottawa in November was anti-climatic, as there were no substantive discussions on continental defence.\textsuperscript{56}

\textbf{The Emergence of the DEW Line}

The approval of the Mid Canada Line still left the question of the DEW Line. NSC 159/4 stated that this system would be built as long as Project Corrode determined it was technologically feasible. While this was a legitimate issue given the problems that had occurred in the past with the Loran navigation system, the collapse of opposition in the USAF and the administration in the fall of 1953 to improved air defences meant it was

\textsuperscript{53} Secretary of State for External Affairs to Ambassador in United States, November 5 1953, \textit{DCER}, Vol. 19, 1953, 1099.
\textsuperscript{54} Ninety Sixth Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, November 3 1953, Box 44, File Cabinet Committees Cabinet Defence Committee Minutes and Agenda, LAC.
\textsuperscript{55} Canadian Ambassador to the United States to Secretary of State for External Affairs, November 7 1953, RG 24 Department of National Defence, Box 56, File TS 096 096-207-4 Planning Defence Planning-
quite likely that it would be built. But there were still skeptics in the administration, including Eisenhower, who needed to be convinced of the need for this line. At a January meeting of the NSC, the President criticized static defences, pointing out the lessons of the Maginot Line in the Second World War, and argued that investment should be made in “mobile defence forces which can be used in a variety of different ways.” He further expressed great concern about the use of crash air defence programs warning that if the U.S. attempted to rush construction of the Mid Canada Line “we were likely to find the electronics equipment which had been installed would have become obsolete when the task had finally been completed.” He then suggested that the U.S. should take a gradual approach to the air defence problem.57 Because the work of Project Corrode and the CUSMSG was not yet complete, it would be several months until the administration made a final decision.

In the meantime, there was again uncertainty about U.S. policy in Ottawa. The Canadian Section of the PJBD had been briefed by the USAF ADC on the necessity of constructing a DEW Line in the Arctic and of expanding the air defence combat zone north, an assertion that Pearson noted that was “very interesting.” Indeed, this briefing was meant to shake up “complacent, or conservative, Canadian thinking,” and was seen to have “a profound effect” on the members of the Canadian Section.58 However, during a visit of Twining and another USAF official, James Douglas, to Ottawa in February, they

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57 Memorandum, January 15 1954, Dwight Eisenhower Papers (Ann Whitman File) NSC Series, Box 5, File 180th Meeting of the NSC Jan 14 1954, DDE Library. Eisenhower warned that the U.S. should not become “too dependent,” on the seaward extensions because by the time they would be completed, the Soviets would have developed aircraft with enough range to evade them.
58 Briefing for General Twining Feb 1954, Undated, RG 333 Files of International Military Agencies PJBD Entry 17-A, Box 1, File Top Secret Correspondence Briefing for General Twining Feb 1954, NARA.
stated that “no further requests on Canada were pending.” Twining emphasized to Foulkes in March that the Mid Canada Line and the seaward extensions were his first priority.  

Finally, American officials asserted during another consultative meeting on March 4 that while the danger of surprise attack had lessened, there still was need for additional air defences. Radford added that the JCS were prepared to “proceed fast but surely,” and would not be forced into taking measures of “unknown reliability or practicability,” but the U.S. did not outline any additional initiatives at this meeting.  

While this uncertainty about U.S. policy continued, other factors created difficulties in the bilateral relationship including the activities of the U.S. Federal Civil Defense Administration (FCDA). This organization sought to release a film of an U.S. hydrogen bomb test to promote the need for more civil defence measures. Canadian officials were worried that such actions would only generate panic, and would force both countries to take unnecessarily large steps to defend the continent. This issue was discussed at the March 4 meeting when Smith noted that the FCDA needed to “obtain money for their purposes and to sustain interest in their activities which was not easy unless the people were frightened periodically.” The Americans added that a public statement should be issued to head off controversy caused by such actions.  

Another problem was the interest in continental defence by Congressman Sterling Cole (R – New York). Cole, who was regarded by the Canadians as one of the more responsible members


60 Memorandum of Conversation, March 4 1953, RG 59 State Department Decimal File, Box 3554, File 742.5/1-1652 to 742.5/12-2754, NARA; Draft Public Statement on Continental Defense, Undated, Box 3554, File 742.5/1-1652 to 742.5/12-2754, NARA.  

61 Draft Public Statement on Continental Defense, Undated, Box 3554, File 742.5/1-1652 to 742.5/12-2754, NARA. The statement was eventually released on April 8.
of the Republican Party, had been influenced by pro-air defence scientists from the Lincoln Laboratory and had called for the creation of a formal “Assistant Secretary for Continental Defense” and a joint Canada-U.S. air defence command. Cole’s ideas had little influence on policy in Washington, but his criticism of the air defence effort created headaches for Canadian officials who were concerned that “his views probably carried considerable weight with the administration.”

Later in June 1954, the Americans concluded that Cole’s speeches had spurred the Canadians to be more supportive of the DEW Line.

A final development that influenced the development of the relationship was an increased interest in the PJBD by the Eisenhower administration. In fact, Wilson had moved, over the opposition of the JCS, to improve the integration of the U.S. Section of the PJBD into the American policy structure. He wrote in November 1953 that the increasing importance of the Canada-U.S. relationship and the fact that the NSC was discussing these issues meant that the status of the Joint Board needed to be raised in Washington. The Americans also eased Henry out of the position of Chair of the U.S. Section and sought to find a more high profile replacement. Possible candidates included the Governor of New York, Thomas Dewey. Eventually, John Hannah, the former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Personnel and a strong Republican was

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62 Cole was that the Chair of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, Merchant to the Under Secretary, March 15 1954, RG 59 State Department Decimal File, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5, NARA. The Canadian Embassy Washington D.C. to USSEA, May 13 1954, RG 24 DND, Box 56, File TS 096-207-4 Vol. 3 Planning Defence Planning – Canada-US, LAC; Heeney to Claxton, June 21 1954, Pearson Papers, Vol. 65, File USA-Canada Relations 1953-1957, LAC; Memorandum from Foulkes, May 11 1954, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 79, File 29, DHH.
63 Merchant to the Under Secretary, June 16 1954, RG 59 State Department Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada Records Relating to Military Matters, Box 17, File DEW Line Conditions and Agreement, NARA.
64 Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 789-79.
65 Memorandum for the JCS, November 19 1953, RG 341 Air Force Plans Project Decimal File 1942-1954, Box 728, File OPD 660.2 Canada (14 Sept 45) Section 45, NARA
selected. Upon his appointment, he was instructed to meet with the President every three months. Moreover, the quality of the service members was improved, as Major General James Briggs, the USAF’s Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, now represented the Air Force on the Board, and was made the head of the U.S. military members.\textsuperscript{66} Thus, in this period, the administration would use the PJBD to try to speed up Canadian decision making. Nevertheless, it would not be until early June that developments occurred that convinced the Eisenhower administration to build the DEW Line.

One important factor was the appearance of an improved Soviet bomber. As stated in earlier chapters, the Soviets had a great deal of difficulty in developing an effective intercontinental-range aircraft capable of attacking North America. Some of these problems were related to the fact that they allocated far more resources to their strategic defences than their offensive nuclear forces. It was also due to the problems they had in developing advanced aviation technology. Therefore, while the Soviet Air Force was able to produce a copy of the B-29, the TU-4 Bull, this aircraft lacked the range to launch strikes on the continental United States and to return to base. Moreover, the vulnerability of this type of aircraft to jet fighters had been exposed by the experience of the B-29 during the Korean War to the point that the USAF ceased daylight operations of this bomber. The Soviet leadership thus concluded that they needed a jet bomber of intercontinental range to threaten the U.S.\textsuperscript{67}

Stalin turned to Andrei Tupolev for a solution; however, Tupolev declined this assignment because he believed that Soviet industry could not mass-produce the jet

\textsuperscript{66} Golden to Howe, June 1 1954, Howe Papers, Vol. 52, File S-14-7 Permanent Joint Board on Defence (1) – 1941-1954, LAC; Cosgriffe, “The Permanent Joint Board on Defence,” 158; Pierce, \textit{Canada-United States Permanent Joint Board on Defence}, 250-1. Hannah was also the President of Michigan State University.

\textsuperscript{67} Zaloga, \textit{Russia’s Nuclear Shield}, 22- 24.
engines necessary to power a bomber of this range. This awareness came from his work on another aircraft, the TU-16 Badger. In response, Stalin turned to another designer V.M. Miasishchev. Miasishchev was an imaginative engineer who tended to be overly optimistic about the capabilities of the available jet engines. Given the chance to design and build his own intercontinental-range jet bomber, he assured Stalin and the Soviet leadership that he could design such an aircraft. To accomplish this task, Miasishchev was given his own design bureau and one of the premier Soviet aircraft factories at Fili.68

By 1954, Miasishchev’s aircraft was ready for testing. The MYA-4 Bison was a four engine, swept wing aircraft with a maximum speed of 1 000 kilometres per hour, and it was given a defensive armament adopted from the TU-4. Unfortunately, it only had a range of 9 000 kilometres, which was less than the 16 000 kilometres needed to attack the United States and to return. Furthermore, the aircraft had no capacity for in-flight refuelling because the designer thought that the aircraft would not require it. It also had great difficulties with the reliability of its engines and had a high accident rate in service. Nevertheless, these deficiencies were not known to the Eisenhower administration, and when this aircraft made its first appearance during a flyby of the May Day parade of 1954, it caused alarm in Washington.69

The Vice-Chief of the Air Staff, Air Vice Marshal C.R. Dunlap, later noted that the development of this aircraft created increased urgency in Washington to improve North America’s air defences.70 Indeed, one study from the Department of Defense

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68 Ibid, 22-23; Christoph Bluth, Soviet Strategic Arms Policy Before SALT (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 176; Zaloga, Target America, 85. The Soviets did however allow Tupolev to develop a new turboprop bomber, the TU-95 Bear, which appeared in 1955.
69 Holloway, Stalin and the Bomb, 245; Zaloga, The Kremlin’s Nuclear Sword, 24; Schaffel, The Enduring Shield, 224.
70 Aide Memoir, October 28 1954, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 6, File 90 Continental Defence DEW Line, DHH.
argued that continental defence system needed to be continuously upgraded to protect the U.S. industrial base. In June 1954, the CUSMSG also recommended that both countries agree in principle to build the DEW Line, as an examination of intelligence reports revealed by the time it would be built the Soviets “could have available numbers of aircraft of such advanced performance that a line as far north as practicable is essential to provide the required warning time.”

Another factor in the American decision was a realization that the problem of radioactive fallout in a nuclear conflict would be much more serious than previously thought. Before 1954, U.S. planning had been based on the experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as the results of various nuclear tests. However, after a number of additional U.S. nuclear tests in 1954, it was discovered that ground bursts of megaton thermonuclear weapons generated far greater amounts of fallout than airbursts. This development meant that fewer bombs would have to be delivered to devastate the United States, which complicated the air defence problem and increased the need for more warning of an attack. This issue was raised at a meeting of the NSC on July 1 by a consultant to that body, Robert Sprague. He had become interested in the issue during his study of the air defence system for a Congressional Committee. Eisenhower was also aware of this problem and addressed a question directly to Sprague about it. Moreover, Dunlap noted in a report that he believed that this concern over fallout had been an important factor in the Eisenhower administration’s decision to improve the air defences of North America.

72 Third Interim Report by the Canada – United States Military Study Group, Undated, File 112.3M2 Canada – US Military Study Group. Minutes of Meetings, Terms of Reference, DHH.
73 Memorandum for the National Security Council, July 1 1954, DDE Papers, NSC Staff Papers Disaster File, Box 23, File Continental Defense 1954 (8), DDE Library; Aide Memoir, October 28 1954, 73/1223
Finally, all these improvements in the Soviet strategic forces raised the problem of the vulnerability of SAC to a surprise attack. In 1953, as has already been discussed, many senior officials in the administration did not believe that the Soviet Strategic Forces seriously threatened SAC. In fact, Eisenhower had openly expressed doubts about the Soviets’ ability to attack the United States; nevertheless, by 1954, this perception had begun to change. While the previously mentioned study from DoD did not mention this issue, a report from the NSC Planning Board did raise it. Moreover, the first reason that the CUSMSG gave for the need for additional warning time was not for the air defence forces or the civil defence authorities, but for “meeting the early warning needs of” SAC.

Eisenhower further agreed that the U.S. needed to “take all practicable measures to protect this capacity.” One obvious reason was the importance that SAC had in American strategy. Although Eisenhower and the USAF continued to support the use of preemptive strikes against the Soviet Union either to blunt a Soviet first strike or to retaliate against a Soviet invasion of Western Europe, there was still value in improving early warning capabilities to reduce SAC’s vulnerability against a surprise attack. Indeed, given the uncertainties of the nuclear age and the need to plan for many contingencies, such a position made a great deal of sense. Moreover, according to James Killian, the President of MIT, Eisenhower was concerned that a closed society like the Soviet Union


75 Third Interim Report by the Canada – United States Military Study Group, Undated, File 112.3M2 Canada – US Military Study Group. Minutes of Meetings, Terms of Reference, DHH.
could possibly be able to launch a surprise attack on the United States. In the spring of 1954, Eisenhower even created what became known as the Technological Capabilities Panel (TCP) under the leadership of Killian to study this problem.\(^{77}\) As a result of all these factors, Eisenhower, who had not committed to the building of the DEW Line in November 1953 and had been critical of expanded continental air defences in January 1954, had shifted his position.\(^{78}\)

For Canada, the construction of this system posed many difficulties. Canadian ministers and officials had never believed in the project and feared that its participation in the DEW Line would strain its available resources. Furthermore, having the Americans develop this line by themselves posed numerous problems for the conceptions of the national interest held by the Cabinet, External Affairs as well as the Department of Northern Affairs. A U.S. military presence in the North had been a source of anxiety during the later half of the Second World War as well as in 1946 when Canadian officials feared that the U.S. was going to build a massive air defence system in that region. Canadian ministers and officials had thus sought to avoid any harm to Canada’s sovereignty in the Arctic by maintaining as much control over this area as possible. They also wanted to avoid the political difficulties of having the Americans develop and operate an extensive early warning in the Arctic while Canadian forces served overseas. At the same time, the Cabinet, External Affairs and the OGDs such as Defence Production and Northern Affairs saw this project as an opportunity to strengthen Canada’s electronics industry and to develop the Canadian North. On the other hand, the

\(^{76}\) Quoted from Memorandum of Discussion at the 204\(^{th}\) Meeting of the National Security Council, June 24 1954, FRUS, Vol. II Part 1, 1952-1954, 687.

RCAF was interested in strengthening the air defences of North America and much less concerned about sovereignty. They would work with their U.S. counterparts through the CUSMSG to recommend the project, and presumed that the Americans would build the DEW Line without significant Canadian involvement.79

In June, the External Affairs’ CUSMSG observer, Bill Barton argued to his superiors that Canada had two options. First, it could build the Mid Canada Line as a Canadian project while the U.S. would construct the DEW Line, a course that the RCAF and Defence Production favoured. Alternatively, he suggested that the two lines could be developed as a combined project, which would involve the construction of the line by a joint task force being under the control of a Canadian officer. The supply and operation of the line would then be conducted under similar arrangements. He believed that this latter approach had obvious political attractions and would strengthen Canadian operational control over the system. However, unless External Affairs made an effort to interest other departments in this approach, “Canada will build and operate the Mid-Canada Line and the United States will build and operate the DEW line.”80

Consequently, in June 1954, there was a debate in Ottawa over this issue. Foulkes, the RCAF and the rest of the Chiefs of Staff advocated that Canada should agree to build the Mid Canada Line and avoid discussion of the DEW Line until they had more time to study it. Part of their reasoning was that the JCS had indicated that “it would not be stampeded into building such a line without a thorough examination of its implications.”

79 Foulkes later criticized the RCAF for this perspective, arguing that the Cabinet would not accept such an arrangement. Memorandum from Head, Defence Liaison (1) Division to Assistant Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, November 5 1954, DCER, Vol. 19, 1954, 1031-2.
Radford had even stated to Foulkes in June that he “was quite sure they would not take any action for some time” on the DEW Line. Foulkes and the RCAF believed that it would be quicker and cheaper for Canada to build the Mid Canada Line then to construct it with the Americans. Moreover, the RCAF was “concerned about the rapid increase in the size of its continental defence commitments,” and did not want to overextend itself by becoming too involved in other projects. In contrast, External Affairs complained that the Chiefs of Staff Committee’s decision to recommend that Canada should build the Mid Canada Line would constrain the Cabinet’s freedom of action, as it would mean that a Canadian contribution to the DEW Line would be nominal. They also believed that the Americans would quickly decide to build the DEW line and it was pointless to delay this decision.81

The reason for this disagreement was that External had different priorities, namely their fears of the political consequences of having the Americans build a line in North. Indeed, Barton had already warned U.S. officials that while it was obvious that they should build the DEW Line, there were individuals in the government “who were particularly sensitive respecting Canadian sovereignty in the Far North who would probably object to such a course.” Furthermore, the USAF had concluded that “many high level Canadians think and act in terms of defending two separate nations,” and that these attitudes were “the natural result of wishing to [a] maintain natural sovereign public attitude.”82 Indeed, External Affairs was focused on keeping the options of the Cabinet as

81 Ibid; Record of CCOS Discussions held in Washington – 7-8 Jun 54, June 10 1954, 73/1223 Raymont Collection Box 116, File 2564B Early Reports and Report of Discussions by General Foulkes with the UK and US, DHH, 9; Wershof to Acting Under Secretary of External Affairs, June 21 1953, RG 25 Department of External Affairs, Box 6029, File 50286-40 Pt. 2.2 Early Warning System in the Arctic - Project Lincoln and Project Corrode (formerly Counterchange), LAC.

82 Briefing for General Twining Feb 1954, Undated, RG 333 Files of International Military Agencies PJBD Entry 17-A, Box 1, File Top Secret Correspondence Briefing for General Twining Feb 1954, NARA.
open as possible. On the other hand, Foulkes as well as the RCAF and the other Chiefs of Staff preferred a course that would quickly strengthen the security of the continent and would not overly strain the defence budget.

Foulkes and the Chiefs of Staff eventually won this argument. The briefing document for the Cabinet Defence Committee argued that there would many advantages to Canada building the Mid Canada Line including that with one country controlling the project there would be fewer delays and it would be easier to control costs. In addition, Canada taking over the Mid Canada Line would mean that there would “be a better chance of avoiding any suggestion that Canada take part in the provision of the sea wings.”

It should be noted that MacKay recommended to Pearson that he not press External Affairs objections. The Cabinet Defence Committee agreed that Canada should fund and construct the Mid Canada Line. Moreover, it decided to not agree in principle to the construction of the DEW Line. Instead, the committee stated that if this line was built “it would be most desirable” that it “be built as a joint Canada-United States project.”

Developments in the U.S., however, had already begun to move forward.

By July, Eisenhower, the JCS, and the NSC had not only approved the DEW Line, but given it the same priority as the Mid Canada Line. MacKay reported that while the new U.S. Ambassador to Ottawa, Douglas Stuart, and Bliss had told him that they agreed that more studies needed to be done on the project, the Eisenhower administration was

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83 Memorandum for the Cabinet Defence Committee, June 18 1954, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 90, File 8 Radar Mid Canada Line, DHH.
84 Memorandum to the Minister, July 17 1854, RG 25 External Affairs, Vol. 5928, File 50210-C-40 Pt. 6.2 Canada-US Radar System DEW Line, LAC;
85 Record of Cabinet Defence Committee Decision, Undated, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 90, File 8 Radar Mid Canada Line, DHH.
“impatient about any delay.” 87 Wilson also impressed upon the Canadians the administration’s interest in constructing this line quickly during a visit to Ottawa that summer. 88 Finally, at the July meeting of the PJBD, Hannah emphasized that he had been specially requested to ask for Canadian approval in principle for construction of the DEW Line. Hannah added that the details of the agreement could be worked out later. This initiative by the U.S. Section of the PJBD may have been the result of a warning from Barton in June who stated that the Canadian government was “unenthusiastic” about the DEW Line, and if the Americans wanted action before the fall, they should use the PJBD to prod them. McNaughton responded by acknowledging the need for the project due to improvements in the Soviet strategic forces, but stated that the Canadian government wished to have more information before it made its decision. Hannah countered that in light of the Canadian decision to take responsibility for the Mid Canada Line, the United States were prepared to take on the DEW Line depending on Canada’s position on the extent of its participation in this system. Briggs added that the deferment of approval would have a negative impact on U.S. plans. McNaughton then stated he would forward these views to the Cabinet. 89

Canada’s role in the North American air defence system was further discussed at the July 29 meeting of the NSC. The meeting began when Eisenhower noted that while

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86 Elbrick to Murphy, July 19 1954, RG 59 State Department Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada Records Relating to Military Matters, Box 17, File DEW Line Condition and Agreement, NARA.
88 Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, July 1 1954, RG 333 Files of International Military Agencies PJBD Entry 17A, Box 2, File Top Secret Correspondence 1941-1956 Folder 7, NARA.
89 Mayer to Wight, June 24 1954, RG 59 State Department Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada Records Relating to Military Matters, Box 17, File DEW Line Condition and Agreement, NARA; Extract from PJBD Journal July 1954, Undated, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 51, File Chairman of Chiefs of Staff – Daily Correspondence Vol. 8, DHH; Journal of Discussions and Decision of the
relations between the two countries were good, he was curious what could be done to speed up the development of the air defence system. Although Wilson believed that little could be done about the Mid Canada Line, since the Canadians were funding it, Robert Cutler, the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs argued that senior Canadian officials “have not yet come to grips” with the air defence problem, and suggested a high level approach to get them to speed up their decision making. The meeting also discussed the Canadians scepticism about the DEW Line. Radford noted that the Canadians felt that it would be vulnerable to false alarms triggered by the Soviets while Wilson stated that Canadian officials believed that the U.S. had grossly underestimated the challenges of operating a radar system in the Arctic. However, Eisenhower disagreed with the Canadian perspective and even stated in regards to the problems of operating the DEW Line in the Arctic, “he thought the Canadians could be talked out of that view.” At this point of the meeting, the President shifted the discussion to examining one of the principles of war enunciated by Clausewitz that he believed could “be applied to this situation,” which was the need to diminish “as much as possible the first blow of an enemy attack.” He felt that the need for additional continental defences was an important priority and even argued that a supplemental appropriation would be requested from Congress if necessary. Indeed, the next policy statement by the NSC argued that the U.S. needed to strengthen SAC and “take all practicable measures to protect this retaliatory capability against any foreseeable attack.” It added that the United States should “accelerate its military and non-military programs for continental defence ... to the fullest extent deemed feasible and operationally desirable and give to these programs very high priority, having in mind that

it is estimated the Soviets will reach a high capacity for strategic nuclear attacks by July 1957.” The meeting then shifted back to the subject of Canada. When Cutler again proposed a high level approach, Wilson responded that he thought that it was not necessary. Eisenhower decided that Wilson “should go ahead on this matter along the lines presently being pursued, with a view to getting a decision as soon as possible.” Wilson responded that he would seek Eisenhower’s help in this matter if necessary.90

In the end, Eisenhower’s assistance was not necessary. While McNaughton noted to Hannah that the policy discussions in Ottawa had been difficult, both the new Minister of National Defence, Ralph Campney, and Pearson realized that there was no alternative but to approve the American proposal to build the DEW Line.91 Indeed, Canadian ministers and officials had been informed of Eisenhower’s strong interest in the project. Pearson added if Canada did not want to face an entirely U.S. effort to build the line in the Arctic, it would have to agree to co-operate. The Cabinet agreed in principle on the need for the DEW Line “without prejudice, however, to the extent of Canadian participation and subject to further review when preliminary studies had been completed and the details and cost of the undertaking were available.”92 But before these studies had been finished, the Eisenhower administration approached the Canadians to begin construction.

92 Memorandum for the Minister, August 6 1954, RG 25 External Affairs, Vol. 5928, File 50210-C-40 Pt. 6.2 Canada-US Radar System DEW Line, LAC. Aide Memoir, October 28 1954, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 6, File 90 Continental Defence DEW Line, DHH; Cabinet Conclusions, Undated, RG 2 Privy Council, File 11 August 1954, LAC; Extract from Cabinet Conclusions, August 18 1954, DCER,
The Final Decision on the DEW Line

This initiative partially emerged from the fact that interest in the project continued to be high in Washington. One U.S. official had told Solandt in September that they would be pushing to go ahead with the DEW Line.\(^{93}\) It also came after the main contractor, Western Electric, had determined in October that the line was feasible. The USAF thus felt that if Canada granted the U.S. permission to build the line then construction could begin in the spring of 1955. At the October meeting of the PJBD, Hannah emphasized this point to the Canadian Section and that the U.S. would accept any level of Canadian participation in the project, although they appreciated that it would probably be limited. McNaughton replied that they would pass on this request to Ottawa.\(^{94}\) Despite concerns that it was premature to go ahead with the line without the necessary studies, External Affairs realized that Canada had little choice but to agree to the request and produced a briefing document in support of this decision.\(^{95}\) With this move, it seemed that any additional discussion in Ottawa would be a mere formality. However, it was at this point that Foulkes raised his voice against these early warning systems.

One possible reason why was that Foulkes feared that the ever-expanding air defence effort would reduce the funds available to his service, the Canadian Army. However, a more likely factor was an increased awareness of the problem of fallout. Like

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\(^{94}\) Aide Memoir, October 28 1954, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 6, File 90 Continental Defence DEW Line, DHH; Hannah to Wilson, November 4 1954, RG 59 State Department Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada Records Relating to Military Matters, Box 17, File DEW Line General, NARA.

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their American counterparts, the Chiefs of Staff Committee had studied the issue and concluded that, presuming the Soviets understood this fact, they could use a smaller number of bombers to devastate North America. Therefore, the Soviet Union could launch a crippling first strike on SAC far earlier than had been estimated, which would limit SAC’s ability to retaliate. Furthermore, fallout would ease many of the problems with the future development of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), including accuracy.\(^96\) As a result, it was likely that Foulkes had become sceptical of the effectiveness of further air defence measures including the Mid Canada Line and the DEW Line. But he was in a difficult position because he had pushed for Canada to build and fund the Mid Canada Line in July, and was not willing to reverse his position lest he lose the confidence of his minister and the respect of his military and civilian colleagues. Instead, he needed someone else, preferably from the U.S., to push this position forward and he thought he had found this person in Radford. In September, Radford stated to Foulkes that he was concerned about the fallout problem, although U.S. laws on atomic energy prevented the U.S. from providing data to Canada. Most importantly, Radford added that the United States would not be forced into a crash program with this line, and would wait for the completion of all the necessary reports on the line before beginning work on the project.\(^97\) Foulkes then sent Radford a letter that outlined his concerns about the impact of fallout and new technological developments, including the ICBM, in more

\(^{95}\) Memorandum to the Under-Secretary, October 28 1954, McNaughton Papers, Vol. 281, File PJBD Journal of Meetings Toronto 18-20 October 1954, LAC.

\(^{96}\) Reappraisal of Problem of Continental Defence Taking into Consideration the Possible Effects of Fallout, September 21 1954, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 47, File 881 Continental Defence – Reappraisal of Problem (1954-1955), DHH.

\(^{97}\) Memorandum for Information, November 8 1954, RG 59 State Department Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada Records Relating to Military Matters, Box 17, File DEW Line Condition and Agreement, NARA; Memorandum to Campney, October 6 1954, 73/1223 Raymont Collection Box 116, File 2564B Early Reports and Report of Discussions by General Foulkes with the UK and US, DHH.
detail. Foulkes hoped that the JCS would agree to consultative discussions with Canada that would lead to a reappraisal of the air defence problem."

When Foulkes had sent this letter, he believed that it would be some time before the United States approached Canada about building the DEW Line. Thus, when the PJBD forwarded this request to the Canadian government in October, he was caught off guard, and he sought to delay a decision in Ottawa to give more time for Radford to get back to him. First, Foulkes argued that Radford “attached no particular urgency” to the DEW Line. In addition, Foulkes asserted that because the U.S. had approached Canada through the PJBD and not the CUSMSG and that the studies on the line were not complete, the Cabinet Defence Committee would not approve the project. He even wrote to one of his colleagues that “this change of procedure after getting the government to agree in principle will be looked upon with grave concern here and may actually delay approval.” Moreover, at a meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee on November 2 and 3, he only briefly discussed this issue. However, it was during a briefing of senior Canadian officers and officials on November 5 that he stated his case.

In a tone that was hostile to the External Affairs memo on this subject, Foulkes outlined his concerns about the air defence system. He argued that since Canada had very meagre fighter forces, what was the point of the Mid Canada Line if the DEW Line would provide first warning of the attack and the Pinetree Line confirmation of it? After this

98 Foulkes to Radford, September 30 1954, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 47, File 881 Continental Defence – Reappraisal of Problem (1954-1955), DHH. R.B. Bryce, the Secretary to the Cabinet and the Clerk to the Privy Council, not only reviewed the letter, but discussed it with St. Laurent and Paul Martin Sr., the Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs. Bryce suggested that Foulkes discuss other factors then just the fallout problem. Bryce to Foulkes, September 28 1954, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 47, File 881 Continental Defence – Reappraisal of Problem (1954-1955), DHH.

99 CCOS Ottawa to CJS Washington, November 1 1954, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 51, File Chairman of Chiefs of Staff – Daily Correspondence Vol. 8 Nov-Dec 1954 [3 of 3], DHH. Foulkes was partially correct on this point, as Canadian officials were annoyed by the way that the U.S. sought
point, he sank into an even deeper pessimistic outlook that with the coming development of ICBMs, there was little reason to develop the Mid Canada Line and the DEW Line; however, Slemon and the RCAF did not support Foulkes. In fact, the CAS and the rest of the Chiefs of Staff forced Foulkes to contact Radford to get the CUSMSG to issue a report on the DEW line. External Affairs was also unhappy with Foulkes’ arguments, and believed that much of his opposition was derived from the fact the memo had come from them. One official from the Department even believed that Foulkes was “deliberately prejudicing early action by the Cabinet Defence Committee” on the DEW Line. In general, they were more concerned about the consequences if Canada did not quickly approve the American request than Foulkes, who was worried about military considerations. Some External Affairs officials even expressed the sentiment that Canada had little flexibility in this matter anyway, since Foulkes had taken this away by pushing for Canada to agree to build the Mid Canada Line.  

Foulkes’ position, particularly about the interest of Radford in the project, did create some confusion in Ottawa, and External Affairs warned Washington that if this situation was not cleared up then it would be very difficult to get the DEW Line approved. But Radford quickly responded to the Canadian inquiry that he did not know how Foulkes had gained the impression that he was not interested in the project, which

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permission to build this line. Extract from a Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee held in the Privy Council Chamber on Friday November 12 1954, Undated, 92/1, File 3, DHH.

100 Memorandum from Assistant Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, November 6 1954, DCER, Vol. 19, 1954, 1031-2; Memorandum from Head, Defence Liaison (1) Division to Assistant Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, November 5 1954, DCER, Vol. 19, 1954, 1031-2. There was more than a little self satisfaction by some officials in External Affairs that if their advice had been followed during the summer than Canada would not be in this position.
meant that Foulkes’ position became untenable. Ultimately, Radford and the JCS did not share Foulkes’ concerns about the air defence system, and they rejected the suggestion of additional consultation on the issue of fallout. Radford wrote to Foulkes that the JCS does “not feel, however, that this [the fallout] problem affects the objectives of our continental defence system, which is presently designed to provide the best feasible defence against delivery of all types of weapons.” Consequently, Foulkes withdrew his opposition, and the Chiefs of Staff Committee recommended that Canada allow the U.S. to build the DEW Line.

On November 12, the Cabinet Defence Committee reviewed a memorandum approved by Campney and Pearson that the U.S. should be granted authority to construct the DEW Line, and that it should be seen as “one element of an overall continental defence warning system, the establishment of which is being undertaken as a joint Canada-United States project.” They added that while the Americans should be given this responsibility, Canada should be involved in the construction of the line to prevent the establishment of a chain of exclusively U.S. installations in the Canadian Arctic. These suggestions were motivated by concerns that the Canadian people would object to more installations in Canada, particularly in areas where its sovereignty was seen to be weak. Indeed, at the meeting of the Cabinet on November 18, St. Laurent asserted that Canada was not willing to have the U.S. build facilities in Canada “without any regard to Canadian sovereignty.” He emphasized that “no impression could be allowed to be given

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101 Memorandum for Information, November 8 1954, RG 59 State Department Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada Records Relating to Military Matters, Box 17, File DEW Line Condition and Agreement, NARA.
to the Canadian public that the U.S. had vested rights in the northern half of the continent,” and that “it had to be made clear that the U.S. was doing its share … with the consent of the Canadian government.” The way that Canada sought to do this was quite novel.

Instead of taking on a direct role with these installations as had been done the Joint Arctic Weather Stations, the Pinetree Line and the Mid Canada Line, what the Canadian government did was to assert the right to participate in certain aspects of the line. For instance, in November 1954, the Cabinet Defence Committee recommended that the U.S. “should be informed of Canada’s intention to participate in the project, the nature and extent of Canadian participation to be determined in the near future.” They added it should be “emphasized” to the Americans that Canada would determine later whether it would take part in the manning and operation of the line and if this task should be done by civilian or military personnel. These clauses, which were approved by the Cabinet, would become one of the main methods for Canada to assert its sovereignty over the U.S. during the construction of the DEW Line. During these negotiations, Canada would reserve certain rights in regards to this project and would state that it would later determine its level of involvement. What this meant in practice was that Canadian officials, after much discussion, would usually allow the Americans to continue to look after the responsibility in question. Canadian sovereignty would thus be preserved without the commitment of scarce funds and resources.

103 Extract From Minutes of the 570th Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee Held on 8 and 9 Nov 54, Undated, 2002/17 Joint Staff Fonds, Box 79, File 32, DHH.
104 Extract from a Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee held in the Privy Council Chamber on Friday November 12 1954, Undated, 92/1, File 3, DHH; Cabinet Conclusions, Undated, RG 2 Privy Council, Vol. 2656, File 18 November 1954, LAC.
105 Memorandum to the Cabinet Defence Committee, November 10 1954, 92/1, File 3, DHH.
It was at this point that these discussions shifted away from the PJBD where theoretically the Canadian Section did not speak for the government, to direct talks between the two countries with an exchange of notes being used to lay out the agreement. This change on the Canadian side from using the PJBD Recommendations to lay out the details of these agreements, as was the case with Recommendations 51/3, 51/4, 51/6 and 53/1, to using it as a means to communicate with the Americans represented an important development. There were a number of reasons for this change. First, Canadian ministers and officials had gained much experience negotiating directly with their U.S. counterparts over such matters as the Pinetree Line and the Mid Canada Line. Thus, while they appreciated the usefulness of the PJBD, as the defence relationship developed throughout the 1950s, it was likely that Canadian officials wished to control these negotiations as much as possible because of their political and sovereignty implications. Moreover, it was possible that they understood that while the Canadian Section sought to carry out the instructions of the government, the PJBD wanted to keep the Canada-U.S. defence relationship strong as well. For instance, McNaughton wrote to Hannah in August 1954 with “complete frankness” on the need to have “the most complete passage of information between you and I so that we can do everything within our capacity to clear matters,” which caused problems in the relationship.

Another factor behind the Board’s decline was that by 1954, Canada had accepted the use of exchanges of notes rather than PJBD Recommendations to outline the terms of

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106 Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Ambassador in United States, November 16 1954, 

107 Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 125.
these defence agreements. In the case of the DEW Line, Canadian officials even determined that they wanted to make this note public. The most likely reasons for this decision was that they felt that they could sell the line as a joint project to the Canadian people and that they could not hide such a massive presence in the Arctic anyway. However, this decision meant was that one of the main advantages of the PJBD, that its recommendations could be kept from the Canadian public, was no longer an important factor. Ironically, with this shift, Canada had adopted the American position that it had strongly opposed in 1951 during the Pinetree Line negotiations. One other factor in the decline of the PJBD was that bodies such as the CUSMSG had been created which performed similar functions. Therefore, while Jockel was right to note that the PJBD fell into decline because of the tightening relationship between the two air forces, these other factors played an important role. In the end, the increase in the importance of U.S. Section of the PJBD did little good in stemming the decline of this body in the mid-1950s.109

Despite the Canadian approval of the DEW Line, the negotiations to finalize the agreement would still be complicated. Bliss noted “the relatively complacent wording of the draft must not be permitted to make us over confident that we can go too far without stirring up opposition.” He recognized that “the issue of sovereignty is very close to the surface and also the Canadians intend to get everything possible out of it,” and will seek to protect every advantage that they had gained in previous negotiations. Bliss concluded “the Canadians want their ham with frills on it. They are pinning us down closely and squeezing every material advantage out of a project which contributes as much to their

security as it does to ours, but for which we are expected to pay. Their contribution, to put it bluntly, is a bit of useless land and a small sacrifice of sovereignty.”

Disagreements quickly emerged over various clauses of the agreement including the procurement of electronic equipment. Although the U.S. draft of the agreement called for “equal consideration be given to Canadian and U.S. manufactures of electronic equipment … the Canadian wording proposes that such equipment shall be purchased in Canada in so far as practicable. [Underlined in the original]” Canadian officials believed in the continuation of the principle that the electronic components for radar systems built in Canada should be purchased from Canadian firms, and that this issue should be the subject of consultation involving not only strategic considerations but economic and commercial ones as well. One memo from External Affairs emphasized that they “would be sorry to see any retreat in the current negotiations with the United States regarding the DEW System.” This memo added that “if we do give way on the proposed wording of the clause, we will I think find it much more difficult to reassert the principle when other United States radar projects are under discussion in the future.” Canadian officials further complained that the American position would leave their firms in an impossible position in meeting “requirements for equipment needed in our own country.” In the mind of Canadian officials, Canada had cooperated in the past to ensure that measures were “carried out efficiently and expeditiously,” and that the U.S. should “defer to our judgement as to the importance of the principle of practicability.”

109 Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 79.
110 Bliss to Horsey, November 17 1954, RG 59 State Department Decimal File, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5, NARA.
111 Secretary of State for External Affairs to Head of Post Washington D.C., November 22 1954, File 112.3M2.009 Collaboration with USA Early Warning System, DHH; Memorandum, November 24 1954, RG 59 State Department Decimal File, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5, NARA; Wershof to Golden, October 26 1954, McNaughton Papers, Vol. 286, File PJBD Journal of Meetings Toronto 18-20 October
a restatement of the position of Howe’s letter from October 1953 and reflected both the influence that he and Defence Production had in Ottawa and the importance of this issue for Canadian ministers and civilian officials since the development of the Pinetree Line as outlined in Chapter Six.

One particularly important factor that emerged during these negotiations was that because the Eisenhower administration had achieved their main goal when Canada agreed to allow the construction of the DEW Line, they were much less concerned about terms of the agreement. These negotiations were thus delegated to more junior officials in the State Department, the USAF and DoD. This reality meant that like the previous negotiations over PJBD Recommendations 51/4 and 53/1 discussed in Chapter Five, these individuals lacked the backing of the administration and the USAF’s senior leadership to pressure Canada to agree to their terms. Consequently, these officials were obliged to negotiate with their Canadians counterparts. Further complicating the situation was that many officials in the State Department did not entirely agree with many of the USAF and DoD’s positions, particularly on the procurement issue. The State Department would even use back channels with External Affairs to seek ways to resolve this issue. They told the Canadians that they “felt themselves to be something in the nature of ‘shuttlecocks batted from one side to the other’ and would welcome any development which would make the U.S.A.F. aware of the strength of the Canadian view.” They even warned the Canadians that the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, Roger Lewis, held particularly strong views on this matter.112

As a result, at a meeting with him and other U.S. officials, the

1954, LAC. Memorandum, December 22 1954, RG 59 State Department Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada Records Relating to Military Matters, Box 17, File DEW Line Conditions and Agreement, NARA.

112 The Canadian Embassy Washington to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, December 9 1954, File 112.3M2.009 Collaboration with USA Early Warning System, DHH.
Canadians strongly emphasized their position. While Lewis replied that Canada’s demands would create problems during construction and with Congress, the Canadian representatives countered that these concerns could be overcome by emphasizing that the DEW Line was being built in Canada and that these clauses had been included in past agreements. They added that a strengthened Canadian electronics industry would be of great use in wartime. The discussion continued until after a recess when Lewis admitted that the meeting had “advanced the solution to the problem,” which the Canadians took that he was prepared to accept their position. The Canadians informed the State Department that the meeting had achieved the results they hoped for. DoD had realized by this point that their original position was not acceptable to the Canadians, and due to the urgency of the DEW Line, they were prepared to accept the “Canadian position ... if this proves necessary during the final negotiations.”

These discussions represented the clash of two perspectives. On one side was the Canadian belief that the radar equipment for this system should be purchased from Canadian firms and that this principle should be formalized in the DEW Line agreement even if they accepted that, in practice, much of the equipment used in this project would be American. The position reflected both the interest in Ottawa in the health of their electronics industry and nationalist sentiments. On the other hand, certain U.S. officials were concerned that the interests of its firms should not be harmed, although they

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114 Hensel to Murphy, December 17 1954, RG 59 State Department Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada Records Relating to Military Matters, Box 17, File DEW Line Conditions and Agreement, NARA.
admitted that much of the radar equipment used in the DEW Line would be purchased from Canadian companies. Briggs noted that whatever the agreement states, Canadian electronic firms would receive about 10 million dollars in orders. Ultimately, the Americans understood that the Canadians would insist on them giving “nominal preference to Canadian equipment and go as far as possible in giving them this preference in actual practice.” In fact, once the USAF and the DoD fully understood that the Canadians were “adamant,” they compromised and used the Canadian wording for this clause, which was quite similar to that of the Pinetree Line agreement.\(^\text{115}\)

There were further disagreements over a section of the note that “Canadian law will apply to all phases of the project,” as some USAF legal officers were concerned it might violate U.S. statues, despite the fact that similar clauses had not been a problem in past projects. The State Department responded that such a provision was “innocuous” and only a reflection of the reality that the U.S. had “no extraterritorial privileges in Canada.” Eventually both sides compromised on a different wording.\(^\text{116}\) Another issue was that the Northern Affairs sought to minimize the impact of the project on the Inuit peoples of the North by curtailing the ability of workers on the line to hunt and by limiting their contact with the local population.\(^\text{117}\) These clauses were motivated by several factors including a genuine concern for the Inuit population and the reality that any problems that occurred

\(^\text{115}\) Bliss to Horsey, November 22 1954, RG 59 State Department Decimal File, Box 3554, File 742.5/1—1652-742.5, NARA; Merchant to Murphy, April 7 1955, RG 59 State Department Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada Records Relating to Military Matters, Box 17, File DEW Line Conditions and Agreement, NARA; Memorandum, December 22 1954, RG 59 State Department Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada Records Relating to Military Matters, Box 17, File DEW Line Conditions and Agreement, NARA.

would have to be dealt with by Northern Affairs. While most of these terms were accepted by the U.S., Canadian demands that the Americans restore the radar sites after they had been closed to make them safe for the local Inuit population created difficulties. The Americans were wary of “entering an indefinite commitment to expend funds or to even seek appropriations, at some future time for the purpose of site restrictions,” and there were concerns from the DoD that Congress would not be happy with this clause. The Americans added that they had not agreed to such a clause with any of their other overseas base agreements.\[118\]

The United States eventually accepted the Canadian position on the rehabilitation of sites in the Canadian North; however, it was not in the exchange of notes that outlined the DEW Line agreement, which was made public by the Canadian government in 1955. Instead, it was in a supplementary note that was kept secret by the two governments. This supplementary note had two clauses. The first committed the Americans to restore the sites after the line was closed down. U.S. officials wanted to keep this clause quiet because they concluded that it would have a negative impact on its agreements with other nations. It should be noted that the Americans attached reply to this note that their agreement to restore the DEW Line sites would only apply to this situation and would not “constitute a precedent for other arrangements in the future.” The other clause in this agreement addressed a separate issue, the use of USAF transport aircraft in Canada that

\[117\] Distant Early Warning Line Sealift 1955, Undated, Raymont Collection, Box 202, File 91 DEW Line, DHH.
“the Canadian Departments concerned do not want to make public.”Thus, with the approval of these two notes, Canada and the United States formally agreed to construct the DEW Line in May 1955.

Conclusion

From 1953 to 1955, Canada and the United States worked together to develop the Mid Canada Line and the DEW line; however, this process was complicated by a number of factors. The development of the Mid Canada line was hampered by the lack of experience of the Eisenhower administration in dealing with Canada and differing perceptions of how consultative talks would work between the two countries. The result was that Canada was not consulted before the U.S. had made their decision on this line. Despite this reality, some Canadian ministers and officials, namely Claxton and Howe, had determined that Canada should construct the line as a Canadian project even before they had been officially informed of U.S. plans. Along with other Canadian ministers and officials, they felt that this approach would serve the Cabinet’s political interests, preserve Canada’s self respect and give the Canadian electronics industry access to contracts. The Cabinet and External Affairs also perceived that there was a real threat to North America and that they had little choice but to cooperate with the Americans. Support for the

project from St. Laurent, Foulkes, the RCAF, the other service chiefs and the CUSMSG also helped; however, both nations still had to address the issue of the DEW Line.

The Eisenhower administration had to first determine whether or not they would build this system. While it had taken continental defence more seriously and had increased the status of the U.S. Section of the PJBD as part of this effort, there was still some scepticism about the value of the air defence effort amongst some in the administration, including Eisenhower. But the appearance of a new Soviet bomber when combined with the realization of the problem of fallout and the vulnerability of SAC to a surprise attack meant that the administration decided to build the DEW Line in June and July of 1954.

The project, however, faced opposition in Ottawa. An U.S. military presence in the North had been a source of anxiety for Canadian ministers and officials since the war. They had sought to avoid any harm to Canada’s sovereignty in the Arctic by maintaining as much control over this area as possible. They further wanted to limit the political consequences of having the U.S. develop and operate a radar system in the Arctic while Canadian forces served in Europe. Conversely, the RCAF wanted to work with the Americans to strengthen air defence system. The result was a series of debates between the military and External Affairs over whether Canada should commit to building the Mid Canada Line or whether it should keep its options open. These discussions were eventually concluded when the Cabinet agreed to construct and fund the Mid Canada Line; however, this opened up the question of how Canada would address the DEW Line when most of the RCAF’s available resources were already being fully utilized. Foulkes further complicated this issue when he raised questions about the air defence effort in early November. This change was caused by his belief that continental air defence needed
to be re-examined in light of new reports about the problem of fallout, but this opposition was overcome when his contention that Radford was not that interested in the DEW Line was disproved. Canada thus agreed to allow the United States to build the DEW line as a joint project. Indeed, St. Laurent emphasized the need to ensure that Canadian rights in the area would be respected; however, the way that Canadian officials did this was unique. Canada did not take up a direct role in the line. Instead, it reserved the right to take up certain responsibilities, and then would allow the U.S. to continue to fulfil those roles. As a result, Canadian sovereignty was protected without a commitment of resources.

Canadian officials further sought to ensure that other conceptions of the national interest were served, particularly in regards to the development of the Canadian electronics industry. Their position was helped by the reality that since the administration had achieved its main goal of getting the DEW Line approved, it was not that concerned about the details of the agreement under which the line would be built. Moreover, the State Department did not agree with the USAF and DoD’s position on this issue, and worked with the Canadians behind the scenes to resolve this issue. In fact, one of the most important achievements of the Canadian negotiators was to ensure that the gains achieved under the Pinetree Line agreement with respect to the procurement of Canadian radar components were maintained despite the fact that Canada was not helping to fund the DEW Line. Ultimately, the development of these two early warning systems reflected both the influence of the various conceptions of the national interest in Ottawa, and the level of interest in air defence that existed in Washington.
Chapter 9: The Decline of Continental Air Defence

Introduction

In May 1955, Canada and the United States completed the exchange of notes for the DEW Line. This agreement, however, did not end discussions in Ottawa about how Canada would participate in the construction and operation of this early warning system. These policy debates were shaped not by the actual situation in the Arctic, but by the different conceptions of the national interest held by the Cabinet, External Affairs, the RCAF and the OGDs. For example, the OGDs were concerned with how should the project be utilized to develop the Canadian North and other aspects of Canada’s economy? Moreover, how should the Cabinet and External Affairs structure Canada’s participation in the DEW Line to avoid the perception that the Americans had too great a military presence on Canadian soil particularly in an area where its sovereignty was seen to be weak? The problem for Canadian ministers and officials, for the most part, was not what the Americans were doing, but the perceptions of these activities held by the Canadian public and the potential political consequences for the Cabinet.

Pearson and External Affairs thus pushed for the RCAF to take up more of a role in the DEW Line. These arguments were countered by Foulkes and the Chiefs of Staff who argued that Canada had already committed to constructing the Mid Canada Line, and that it should not overstrain its resources by taking up a major role with the DEW Line. While a number of incidents and misunderstandings did create the perception amongst some ordinary Canadians that the U.S. had violated Canada’s sovereignty in the Arctic, Canadian policy remained unchanged. Indeed, in December 1956, the Cabinet Defence Committee turned down a chance to take control of the DEW line stations on its soil.
Canadian ministers and officials made this decision not only because of the expense involved, but because of the lack of real problems to date as well as the fact that the U.S. had cooperated in allowing them to use the project to develop their Arctic territories. Nonetheless, despite the overall strength of the relationship, Canadian officials as well as Foulkes did express apprehension about future air defence cooperation. They were worried that the United States would make further demands of Canada as part of a continuing effort to strengthen the North American air defence system. But these concerns were based on flawed perceptions of America’s continuing interest in air defence. In fact, even before the launch of Sputnik by the Soviet Union in October 1957, American policy toward air defence had begun to change, a process that accelerated after October 1957, and one that would have important consequences for this defence system.

The Determination of Canada’s Role in the Development of the DEW Line

Even before the negotiations over the DEW Line were complete, Canadian officials sought to address the question of what Canada’s role in the program would be including the extent that it would participate in its construction. In December 1954, at an interdepartmental meeting chaired by Drury, the Deputy Minister of National Defence, it was agreed that the Canadian people needed to be reassured that U.S. defence projects in Canada were “under effective Canadian control.” Pearson then argued that Canada should be involved in the construction process; however, Drury’s suggestion that Canada contribute financially to the project was later rejected, and Pearson changed his mind.

1 Foulkes to Leger, June 29 1955, Raymont Collection, Box 202, File 91 DEW Line, DHH.
3 Memorandum on Discussions United States Chiefs of Staff Standing Group and Military Representatives Committee Washington 18 and 19 June 1956, Undated, Raymont Collection, Box 130, File 3177, DHH.
Instead, a consensus developed that Canada should participate in “continuing aspects of the project” rather than “transient operations.” In late January 1955, the Cabinet Defence Committee determined that Canada would not participate in the construction of the DEW Line other than by making available the resources of the Canadian military and government “where practicable,” and in assisting the U.S. in utilizing Canadian resources. This later point reflected the influence of the OGDs such as Defence Production, Northern Affairs and Transport. Their conceptions of the national interest were based around the idea that the construction of the DEW Line should be utilized for the development of the Canadian North and other aspects of the Canadian economy. The committee also decided that Canada would “participate effectively” in the maintenance and operation of the line and this level of involvement would be determined after a number of studies had been completed on the project. This question became more pressing after the U.S. Section of the PJBD argued at the April 1955 Meeting of the Board that Canada needed to decide what role it would have in the operation of the DEW Line and whether the USAF would be allowed to operate it through a civilian contract.

At a meeting in mid-June to discuss this problem, Foulkes, having changed his position on continental defence once again, suggested that nothing should get in the way of making the DEW Line operational as soon as possible. He added that the U.S. should be granted permission to operate the line during its first three years of operation. Wershof, the External Affairs representative, was more cautious arguing that Canada should allow

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4 Canadian Participation in the Distant Early Warning Line, December 21 1954, RG 24 DND, Box 105, File 096-100-80/9 Planning DEW Line Vol.2, LAC.
5 Minutes of 103rd Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, February 3 1955, 92/1, File 3, DHH; Statement of Conditions to Govern the Establishment of a Distant Early Warning System in Canadian Territory, May 5 1955, RG 59 State Department Bureau of European Affairs Country Director for Canada Records Relating to Military Matters, Box 17, File DEW Line Conditions and Agreement, NARA.
the U.S. to fulfill this role for a period “not exceeding two years.” Pearson was particularly interested in Canada taking part in the operation of the line, since he believed that it would be “inadvisable” to have the Americans build and man the DEW Line completely because of political considerations. His comments reflected the importance in Canadian decision making of creating the least politically damaging perception of the U.S. military presence in the region.

Indeed, in March 1955, Pearson had discussed the political difficulties of having additional U.S. forces on Canadian soil with Secretary of State Dulles and suggested that “future requirements as far as possible” be met by Canadian forces. He added that Canada would help operate the DEW Line when it had sufficient technical personnel available. Pearson even stated that the Canadian people needed to be convinced that they should not see the North from a nationalistic perspective, but rather as “a NATO sector where it was normal to have foreign personnel stationed in view of our common defence.” He thus suggested that if 200 to 300 troops from a NATO country such as the Netherlands were stationed in the area, it would allow the Canadian public to “see the whole exercise in more collective terms.”

It should be noted that these comments reflected an interest on the part of External Affairs in having NATO involved in continental air defence that emerged periodically throughout the 1950s. These sentiments surfaced first in 1950, and Pearson noted in his

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6 Extract from Memorandum from Chief of the Air Staff to the Chairman Chiefs of Staff, May 11 1955, Joint Staff Fond, Box 119, File 19 DEW Line Minutes, Memoranda Other Documents, DHH.
7 There is nothing in the documentary record on why Foulkes changed his position. Summary Record of a Meeting Held in the Office of the Deputy Minister DND at 2:30 PM June 15 1955 to discuss Operation, Manning and Resupply of the Distant Early Warning Line in Canada, Undated, 92/1, File 3, DHH; Notes on Meeting, June 16th Re Supply, Manning, Operation of DEW Line, Undated, RG 12 Department of Transport, Vol. 2046, File 14-13-9-7 Vol. 2 Distant Early Warning Line General, LAC.
memos “there would have been great political advantages for us in such arrangements.”
Because neither the Americans nor the Europeans had any interest in involving NATO in
continental defence, this idea was never seriously considered. Pearson also blamed the
Canadian military for this failure to involve NATO in continental defence. He argued that
the armed forces “preferred bilateral dealings and arrangements with Washington.”
However, one factor that Pearson did not discuss in his memoirs was that Canadian
officials eventually determined that involving NATO in continental defence would
“probably entail the appointment of an over-all American commander for all defence
planning for both Canada and the United States.” In fact, such an arrangement would
have probably forced Canada, in the words of Joel Sokolsky, to accept: “a greater
American presence and a more highly integrated command arrangement. Such was the
case with the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe and his subordinate regional
commands.”

Eventually Canadian officials agreed that the U.S. should be allowed to operate
the DEW Line for two to three years until all the “bugs” had been worked out the system,
although MacKay did note that this could have political consequences, since it would
delay Canada’s participation until 1960. In July, McNaughton communicated this
information to the U.S. Section of the PJBD along with the position that “Canadian

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8 Memorandum for the Prime Minister, March 19 1955, Pearson Papers, Vol. 65, File USA-Canada
Relations 1953-1957, LAC; Secretary’s Visit to Ottawa March 17-19 1955, March 21 1955, RG 59 State
Department, Box 69, File CF 440 Ottawa Visit (JFD) March 17-19 1955, NARA.
9 Pearson, Mike Vol. 2, 84. The Americans wanted to maintain control over its military forces in North
America, particularly SAC. They also did not trust their NATO allies with information about SAC. Jockel,
No Boundaries Upstairs, 96. In fact, many NATO countries suffered from security leaks. One senior
French Admiral even moved his Headquarters from Paris to a ship in harbour at Brest, so that secret NATO
communications would not be compromised. Major Owen E. Jensen, “The Canada-U.S. Military
Relationship: Stifling Embrace or Firm Handshake,” Unpublished Paper, 83/720, DHH.
10 Willoughby, The Joint Organizations of Canada and the United States, 133; Sokolsky, “A Seat at the
Table,” 22.
wishes concerning its future participation in manning and operation will be made known.” He added “Canada reserves the right to participate actively, to the extent dictated by Canadian interests including taking over the manning and operation of all or any part of the system on Canadian territory,” after the initial three year period of operation. This statement again reflected the tactic of reserving certain rights in regards to this project and then deciding later whether Canada would actually fulfil those roles. McNaughton further outlined that the U.S. would be allowed to contract out the operation of the DEW Line, but the Canadian government would require that “sub-contacts for air communications and the operation and maintenance of air strips should be placed with Canadian entities.”12 The Cabinet agreed to this condition despite some concerns from External Affairs about the potential political difficulties of having civilians operating the system, and that it might create issues for “any subsequent decision by Canada to have the RCAF take over responsibility for part of the system.”13

McNaughton then stated that the U.S. would be responsible for the control and administration of its forces and civilian personnel, but that command of the area and “operational control” of the line would remain with the RCAF. This comment was a response to a proposal from USAF that the DEW Line should be divided into three segments, of which two would be commanded by an USAF officer. The Chiefs of Staff Committee noted that such an arrangement “would in effect give the United States command over certain portions of Canadian territory” and deemed this proposal

12 Statement by General McNaughton to be made at the July 1955 Meeting of the PJBD, July 6 1955, Joint Staff Fonds, Box 121, File 10 TS 2111-5 Vol 1. Collaboration with USA Early Warning System Minutes, Meeting Notes, Other Documents, DHH.
unacceptable.\(^{14}\) Finally, he passed on the Cabinet’s interest in having at least one RCAF officer at the four main stations in Canada.\(^{15}\)

The issue of which country would operate the rearward communications of the line was left for the time being, as there was much debate in Ottawa about these links. Indeed, Pearson believed that if Canada could not take part in the operation of the DEW Line, it should at least man the rearward communication system. Again, his interest centred on creating the right perception of Canada’s participation in the construction of the DEW Line in order to avoid political consequences for the government. Gordon Robertson further argued that these links should be shifted to assist the civilian development of the area, and the Department of Transport concluded that Canada should assume responsibility for these systems “to demonstrate to the public that we were contributing” to the development of the DEW line. However, Drury disagreed and Foulkes countered that the DEW line was being constructed as a joint Canada-U.S. defence project with the implication that the Canadian operation of the rearward communications was unnecessary.\(^{16}\) The Chiefs of Staff had determined that it would cost

\(^{14}\) Extract from Memorandum from Chief of the Air Staff to the Chairman Chiefs of Staff, May 11 1955, Joint Staff Fond, Box 119, File 19 DEW Line Minutes, Memoranda Other Documents, DHH. Extract from Minutes of the 581\(^{10}\) Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee held 22 and 23 Jun 1955, Undated, Joint Staff Fond, Box 119, File 19 DEW Line Minutes, Memoranda Other Documents, DHH. Operational Control was defined as “the power of directing, coordinating and controlling the operational activities of deployed units which may, or may not, be under the command of the authority exercising operational control. It specifically excludes redeployment.” Memorandum for the Cabinet Defence Committee, June 24 1955, Raymont Collection, Box 202, File 91 DEW Line, DHH. For more information on Canada-U.S. command and control arrangements see Goette’s *Canada, the United States.*

\(^{15}\) Statement by General McNaughton to be made at the July 1955 Meeting of the PJBD, July 6 1955, Joint Staff Fonds, Box 121, File 10 TS 2111-5 Vol 1. Collaboration with USA Early Warning System Minutes, Meeting Notes, Other Documents, DHH. A civilian contractor was also used to operate the Mid Canada Line. Record of Cabinet Defence Committee Decision 106\(^{10}\) Meeting, Undated, Raymont Collection, Box 65, File 1329 Cabinet Defence Committee Minutes, Decisions and Conclusions for 1955, DHH.

\(^{16}\) Summary Record of a Meeting Held in the Office of the Deputy Minister DND at 2:30 PM June 15 1955 to discuss Operation, Manning and Resupply of the Distant Early Warning Line in Canada, Undated, 92/1, File 3, DHH; Notes on Meeting, June 16\(^{16}\) Re Supply, Manning, Operation of DEW Line, Undated, RG 12 Department of Transport, Vol. 2046, File 14-13-9-7 Vol. 2 Distant Early Warning Line General, LAC.
15 million dollars for Canada to construct the necessary relay stations and “no advantages would accrue to Canada if the communications system were taken over at this time.” Foulkes further warned External Affairs that the Cabinet needed “to realize the undertakings we are making regarding the manning of the Mid-Canada Line at the time they are considering the proposals for the manning of the DEW Line.”

Once Campney stated his opposition to Canada operating these communication links, this debate quickly ended. Moreover, an ad hoc committee under the Secretary to the Cabinet and the clerk to the Privy Council, R.B. Bryce, had determined that the value of these installations was far less than originally thought. The Cabinet Defence Committee ultimately decided that the U.S. would operate them under the terms already outlined for the DEW Line, except where they passed through the Mid Canada Line. The committee added that the Americans should be informed that Canada might wish to utilize surplus circuits for civil purposes. It was not until the late summer of 1955 that these issues were resolved, but in the meantime the construction of the line had already begun.

The Construction of the DEW Line

From 1955 to 1957, both countries worked together to build the DEW Line. Once completed, the system provided additional warning time for SAC, for both countries’ air

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17 581 Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee Item 2 Manning and Operation of DEW Line, June 17 1955, Joint Staff Fond, Box 119, File 19 DEW Line Minutes, Memoranda Other Documents, DHH; Extract from Minutes of the 581 Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee held 22 and 23 Jun 1955, Undated, Joint Staff Fond, Box 119, File 19 DEW Line minutes, Memoranda Other Documents, DHH. The Chiefs of Staffs Committee did note that this could be done in the future “without the outlay of capital costs.”
18 Foulkes to Leger, June 29 1955, Raymont Collection, Box 202, File 91 DEW Line, DHH.
19 Memorandum from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Secretary of State for External Affairs, July 5 1955, DCER, Vol. 21, 1955, 776.
defence forces and for their civil defence authorities; however, for Canada, the line provided two additional advantages. First, it helped to secure Canadian territory from aerial encroachments, improving Canada’s control over its Northern airspace. Indeed, Canadian officials overlooked this point during the debates over the DEW Line, as before this project all Canada had to watch its Arctic skies were a few civilian observers. The system also provided facilities, namely airstrips, which enhanced Canada’s ability to control its northern territories. Northern Affairs had hoped that this project would assist in the development of the region, but its officials underestimated the impact of the line itself in enhancing this control. Nonetheless, it would be an exaggeration to state as the Canadian strategist, R.J. Sutherland, argued “as a result of the DEW Line Agreements Canada secured what the United States had up to that time assiduously endeavoured to avoid namely, an explicit recognition of Canadian claims to the exercise of sovereignty in the Far North.” Sutherland’s assertion reflects a fundamental misinterpretation of the American level of interest in the Canadian Arctic. U.S. officials saw their presence in this area as a means to an end to improving the security of the North American continent, and there was nothing new to this reality. Although problems often occurred at lower levels, due to the activities of junior American officials and officers, senior officials in Washington maintained this perspective from the Second World War onwards.

For example, after a meeting that addressed the construction arrangements of the DEW Line in November 1954, one Canadian memo stated that “my impression is that the Americans, both in the U.S.A.F. and in the civilian group are quite conscious of Canadian

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20 Memorandum from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Secretary of State for External Affairs, September 26 1955, DCER, Vol. 21, 1955, 780.
21 Manning and Operation of the DEW System, Undated, 92/1, File 14, DHH.
22 Sutherland, “The Strategic Significance of the Canadian Arctic,” 270-1.
rights … and therefore take the terms of the draft more seriously and more literally than we might have expected.” This official concluded, “I think we should take advantage of every opportunity for Canadian industry … which this attitude affords.”23 Indeed, the willingness of the American officials like the Secretary of the Air Force, Donald Quarles, to use as many Canadian facilities and personnel as possible during the construction of the line was quite helpful in making the construction process go smoothly.

The result was that Hannah could state at the September 1956 meeting of the PJBD that the construction effort had fully utilized “Canadian sources for material, transport and manpower.” Moreover, two Canadian construction companies were given contacts for work on the line, and by June 1957, 81 percent of all construction personnel on the line were Canadian.24 Furthermore, when the Americans were looking for an alternative to shipping supplies around Alaska to supply stations in the Western Arctic, Canadian officials offered to have the Canadian Northern Transportation Company on the Mackenzie River assume this function. This proposal reflected both Canada’s desire to take over as much responsibility as possible for the supply of the DEW Line and its interest in developing the transportation capacity of the North, particularly in the Mackenzie valley. The offer, however, came with the conditions that the U.S. would provide the necessary vessels, “that the undertaking would be on a reimbursable basis,” and that these shipments would be integrated into the supply of civil communities in the area. After some difficult negotiations, complicated by the need to abide by American

legislation, the U.S. agreed to provide the necessary vessels and deliveries began in 1958.\textsuperscript{25} Notwithstanding this reality, it should be noted that there were some difficulties during the construction process.

One example was when the Alaska Freight Company transported equipment and supplies into Canada without permission and committed other violations of Canadian law. These incidents annoyed Northern Affairs and the Minister of Transport, George Marler, complained that in the future that such work should be given to Canadian firms. The case was raised in the House of Commons, which showed to Gordon Robertson that the transportation issues associated with the DEW Line were “a matter of great concern in this country.”\textsuperscript{26} In fact, neither External Affairs nor the State Department was terribly concerned about this particular incident. They were more worried that it would be used by critics of the Canada-U.S. relationship and would be blown “out of all proportion to its size.”\textsuperscript{27} Incidents such as this as well as other tales of violations of Canadian sovereignty “sometimes true, sometimes partially true, sometimes wholly false but always disturbing,” did create an impression of the U.S. presence in the Arctic amongst some of the Canadian public that was potentially problematic for the Cabinet. These stories included tales about U.S. “discrimination against Canadian contractors … of American flags flying where Canadian flags (whatever they might be) ought to have flown,” and


\textsuperscript{27} USSEA to Canadian Embassy Washington D.C., February 7 1956, RG 25 External Affairs, File 50210-C-40 Pt. 6.2, Canada-US Radar System DEW Line, LAC.
reports that Canadian ministers, officials and journalists could not visit the line without American permission because of their security regulations. The Canadian political scientist, James Eayrs, even concluded that these factors “gave rise to a vague but uneasy concern that for all the rules and regulations drawn up in the intergovernmental agreement of 1955, de facto control of the Canadian North had passed into American hands.”

Pearson thus sought to reassure the Canadian public that this situation was incorrect. He asserted that reports of U.S. flags flying in the North and of Canadian ministers and officials needing security clearance from U.S. authorities to visit DEW Line stations were untrue. He explained that Canadians needed American permission to visit these sites because of the limited accommodation available at the stations, not security reasons. Pearson then argued the fact that “there had been a few relatively minor irregularities and irritations should not surprise anyone,” and the pace which the Canadian North was being developed as a result of these defence initiatives was something that Canadians should be pleased with. St. Laurent also sought to defend the DEW line by invoking Canada’s NATO commitments. Indeed, despite this controversy in Canada over the U.S. presence in the Arctic, the situation there was actually quite good.

The Realities of the Canada-U.S. Relationship

One sign that things were going smoothly came in the fall of 1956 when the U.S. requested that Canada decide as soon as possible “when they wished to assume

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28 Eayrs, Canada in World Affairs, 151.
29 Note for incorporation in a speech by Minster on Oct 26, October 17 1956, RG 25 External Affairs, Vol. 5928, File 50210-C-40 Pt. 8 Canada-U.S. Radar System DEW Line, LAC.
responsibility for the continuing operation” of the DEW Line stations on its soil. While this approach was based on the American need to plan for the years after 1960, it reflected a strong desire to have Canada take up the burden of operating these stations. Many Canadian officials understood that the USAF was facing numerous other costly programs such as the development of the ICBM as well as the seaward extensions of the DEW Line and SAC’s base expansion program, and would be very happy to have Canada fulfill this requirement. The offer would have allowed Canada to secure ultimate control over the stations on its soil; however, the Cabinet declined to take up this responsibility. One factor was that the Chiefs of Staff Committee concluded that it did not want Canada to be in the position of sounding the first alarm of a Soviet attack that would cause the unleashing of SAC and the evacuation of U.S. cities, as there was a great risk of false alarm. Moreover, they concluded that it would be best for one nation to control the entire DEW Line system, and Canada was already contributing many resources to continental air defence. Another important factor was that it would cost at least 53 million dollars a year to operate the DEW Line, an expense was would rise in future years as the line was re-equipped. Neither the Canadian military nor the Cabinet was eager to take on increased responsibilities for continental defence at a time when the defence budget was under strain. Nonetheless, this decision was a reflection of the small number of problems that occurred during construction. Indeed, during the discussion in the Cabinet Defence committee, it was agreed that since most of the personnel on the line were Canadian and most of the supplies for the line were coming from Canadian sources, they were generally satisfied with the situation. Consequently, the committee recommended that the U.S. should be allowed to operate the line for an additional three years “on the understanding
that Canada would be free to review the decision if conditions should change in the future.” While Hannah expressed his regrets over this move, the Americans accepted it.  

Another sign that the relationship was good occurred in 1955 with the negotiations over the Labrador extension of the Mid Canada line. Because these stations were tied into USAF’s Northeast Air Command’s early warning system, the U.S. agreed to build them. Canadian officials were happy to be relieved of this burden, but there still was the need to agree to an exchange of notes. This issue posed some potential problems because of the USAF’s desire to conduct the negotiations quickly because of its claim that if they did not use funds allocated under the current fiscal year’s defence budget, these dollars would revert to the Treasury. This situation had similarities to that of the Joint Weather Station Program in 1946 discussed in Chapter 4; however, the State Department noted that the USAF was not really being honest. U.S. diplomats believed that the real reason for the USAF’s urgency was the short construction season in Labrador and its desire to begin construction in 1955. Nevertheless, External Affairs cooperated and the negotiations were quickly concluded. There were a number of reasons for this speed including the small number of sites, the fact they were located far from populated areas but not too far north to raise sovereignty considerations and that the USAF was willing to work with Defence Production to utilize Canadian electronic components. This later point reflected


lessons by the Americans learned from previous negotiations. Moreover, it was helpful that the note was based extensively on the DEW Line note to the point that the State Department called it “almost verbatim.” Finally, USAF was very focused on getting the project finalized. Consequently, unlike with the Temporary radar stations, the negotiations went quite smoothly, and in June, the exchange of notes was made.  

One other sign of the reality of the relationship was when Canada was able convince the Americans to drop a proposal to have the Canadian Army operate two batteries of Nike-Ajax surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) on Canadian soil to defend Detroit. It should first be noted that the U.S. Army simply did not request permission to station these forces in Southwestern Ontario, since they understood that this request would be rejected. Indeed the fact that they were prepared to go to the trouble of leasing two batteries of Nike SAMs to the Canadian Army and training its personnel in the operation of these systems was a reflection of the strength of the bilateral relationship. Nonetheless, the Chiefs of Staff Committee opposed this proposal because felt that this commitment would not only be a strain on Canadian resources but they doubted the value of such short ranged air defences. Canadian officials believed that this deployment would create political difficulties for the Cabinet on why Canada was using such weapons to defend an American city, but not Toronto or Montreal. The result of these factors was that the U.S. Army dropped this request. Ultimately, the fact that the Americans were willing


35 The Nike Ajax SAM was a short-range air defence system developed by the U.S. Army in the 1950s. Because, it needed to be deployed in the general area of the target being defended, but not too close so that it would not have time to engage the attacking aircraft, the best place to station these batteries for the defence of Detroit would be in Southwestern Ontario.
to do this was both a sign of their willingness to cooperate and the fact that American interest in air continental defence was beginning to flag. Nonetheless, Canadian officials continued to worry about the relationship.

These concerns emerged in early 1955 when officers of the U.S. Continental Air Defense Command (CONAD) briefed the Canadians on their future air defence plans. CONAD’s representatives outlined that both countries’ ADCs had agreed that the air defence system needed to be strengthened through a number of measures including the deployment of additional early warning radars on Canadian soil. The USAF planners further emphasized that Eisenhower fully supported this effort. Many Canadian officials were thus concerned that these initiatives would place great demands on the Canadian defence budget at a time when resources were limited. In June 1955, External Affairs argued that Canada would not only have to address the Mid Canada Line and the DEW Line, but was being informed on a daily basis “of new projects which will involve the establishment and operation by the United States of additional defence facilities in Canada.” Canadian officials also worried that if Canada withdrew some or all its forces from Western Europe, it could start a process that could lead to an U.S. withdrawal as well. This would not only weaken NATO, but would increase the importance of Canadian territory and airspace for the security of the United States. The result would be “ever-increasing demands upon us for further measures of defence,” as Canada would find itself “locked in the embrace of the United States in a continental fortress of North America.” Furthermore, in 1956, the RCAF asked for permission to begin the surveys with the

36 Briefing on Journal of Permanent Joint Board on Defence Meeting Held 16 – 20 January 1956, April 19 1956, Joint Staff Fond, Box 52, File 2 Chairman Chiefs of Staff Correspondence Vol. 12, DHH.
USAF for a program of air defence measures that included “26 heavy radar stations, one hundred unmanned gap-filler radar stations, two BOMARC installations (one near Sudbury and the other near Ottawa) … and a SAGE (semi-automatic ground environment) sector in connection with the BOMARC installations.”

As a result, George Glazebrook, an official in the Canadian Embassy in Washington, asserted to U.S. officials that to meet these new commitments, Canada would either have to withdraw forces from Western Europe or accept additional USAF forces on its soil.

Foulkes communicated these anxieties during a visit to Washington in June 1956. He emphasized to Twining that some of the new air defence measures being proposed, namely the new radar systems, would cause great difficulties for Canada due to their cost. Foulkes added that not only would it be difficult for Canada to operate these stations, but the chance that the Canadian government would allow additional USAF personnel in Canada to operate them “were exceedingly slim.” He thus argued that both countries should reconsider these measures, since “we had reached the stage when we must overrule some of the ‘eager beavers’ who of course could always find ways of improving any system.”

He had also begun to reassert his skepticism about air defences that he had expressed in fall of 1954. For example, during this visit to Washington, he expressed his concerns to Radford that with the increasing likelihood that the Soviets would soon

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38 Memorandum from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Secretary of State for External Affairs, June 14 1955, DCER, Vol. 21, 1955, 714-5.
40 Memorandum of a Conversation Between the Canadian Minister (Glazebrook) and the Counselor (MacArthur), April 19 1956, FRUS, Vol. XXVII, 1955-1957, 866-7.
41 Memorandum on Discussions United States Chiefs of Staff Standing Group and Military Representatives Committee Washington 18 and 19 June 1956, Undated, Raymont Collection, Box 130, File 3177, DHH.
deploy an ICBM force, what was the point in allocating more funds to improve the air
defence system. He added that since it took around five years to actually implement any
defensive measures “what was the cut-off date when we would not be getting value for
the money we were spending on air defence?” Radford responded that the JCS had
discussed the problem of how many resources should be allocated to defensive measures
and “they had now reached the stage where they had to see how much could be allocated
to the defensive side and how much had to be put in the offense to maintain the
deterrent.”

In addition, Foulkes warned Radford that because Canada was going through
a period of intense nationalism, “it would be advisable for the near future to minimize
requests for further U.S. requirements in Canada.” He restated many of these arguments
to the JCS Ad Hoc Committee on Air Defence in February 1957. For Foulkes, the main
purpose of the air defence system was to protect the U.S. deterrent and that the Canadian
government “were quite concerned about the cost of marginal improvements to the
present air defence system and the question of how long these additional improvements
will bring in satisfactory returns.” Nonetheless, while Canada were worried about how
to address these new requests, the irony was that the United States was beginning to lose
interest in these defences

The Decline in American Interest in Air Defence

42 Ibid
43 Memorandum on Discussions United States Chiefs of Staff Standing Group and Military
Representatives Committee Washington 18 and 19 June 1956, Undated, Raymont Collection, Box 130, File
3177, DHH.
44 Script of Remarks made by General Charles Foulkes before United States Joint Chiefs of Staff Ad Hoc
Committee on Air Defence, February 21 1957, Raymont Collection, Box 213, File 873 Continental Defence
General, DHH.
From the fall of 1952, the Truman and Eisenhower administrations had devoted an unprecedented amount of attention and resources to addressing the problem of continental air defence. The result was that by 1955, with help from Canada, the United States had begun to deploy an extensive air defence system supported by several different early warning radar systems and a large force of fighters and SAMs. Nevertheless, this high level interest in air defence was not to be sustained.

One factor was the reality that U.S. strategic culture was inherently offensive in nature. America’s enemies had been dealt with far from North America in both World Wars and this was the approach that was adopted during the Cold War. During the 1950s, the United States contained the Soviet Union in Europe and Asia through alliances such as NATO as well as with strategic air power. The fact that the United States had developed an air defence system in the 1950s, thus, did not change the reality of American strategy. Moreover, the USAF was not only offensively oriented, but it was at its heart a bomber air force. Although there were officers in the USAF who strongly supported the air defence effort, the Air Force’s senior officers were “bomber barons.” This reality was reflected in the fact that SAC received vastly more funding than any other USAF commitment in the 1950s, including the air defence system.45 As a result, while there was a strong constituency within the USAF that would support the existence of a strong American bomber force, this was not the case for air defence.

Another factor was the report by the Technological Capabilities Panel. As stated earlier, this committee was created in March 1954 under the leadership of James Killian to study the problem of surprise attack. By February 1955, its work was complete and the

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NSC discussed its report in March. On paper, the Killian Report did not seem to pose many problems for the continental air defence system, as one of its objectives was to strengthen American “defenses as an additional deterrence to surprise attack and to blunt the attack should it occur.” The report supported the construction of the DEW Line and called for improvements in the proposed seaward extensions in the Atlantic and Pacific so that more airspace in those areas would be monitored. It also stated the need for the extension of radar coverage up to the Mid Canada Line and the improvement of low level coverage in Canada through the installation of gap filler radar sets. Finally, the report not only argued for improved defence cooperation with Canada, but that the U.S. needed to gain permission to use nuclear tipped air-to-air missiles in Canadian airspace, and to station additional forces on Canadian soil.

On the other hand, the report also recommended major investments in the development of new American offensive forces including ICBMs, intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) and submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs). In response, Eisenhower ordered that the development of ICBMs be given “the highest national priority.” He also accelerated the production of IRBMs and ordered the development of the Polaris SLBM. These new programs had two major consequences for continental air defence. First, these expensive offensive weapon systems absorbed funds that could have been allocated to further air defences. Moreover, the fact that the development of these weapons needed to be emphasized signaled to Eisenhower and his officials that the era of the ICBM would soon begin and that the main problem facing

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American security would increasingly be the deterrence of a Soviet ICBM attack on the United States.\textsuperscript{49} The result was that there was much less reason to continue to expand the North American air defence system. This did not mean that the air defence system would be dismantled. In fact, many of these programs that began in the period of emphasis on air defences in the early-to-mid 1950s would be carried on including the DEW Line, but the reality was that the interest in air defence had begun to fade.

This decreasing interest in air defences can further be seen during the “bomber gap” controversy of 1955 and 1956. As already stated, when the MYA-4 Bison emerged in 1954, it triggered greater attention to continental air defence. Its appearance was followed in 1955 by two surprising large displays of the aircraft during the preparations for the May Day parade, and at the Soviet Aviation Day parade when it appeared that 28 Bison flew overhead in-groups of ten, nine and nine. While many observers suspected that the Soviets had flown the same bombers around the air show three times, other analysts concluded that the Soviets had a much larger bomber force then had been projected. The result was fears that the Soviets had begun a crash program to build up a large bomber force and that a greater than expected number of Bisons were ready for service. Consequently, the Pentagon decided, with the support of the USAF, to base their new estimates upon these two displays. Despite disagreement from the U.S. Army and the U.S. Navy, the new National Intelligence Estimate for 1955 predicted a Soviet strategic bomber force of 500 by 1960.\textsuperscript{50} However, what was different from this situation than from the one in 1954 was that these intelligence reports did not lead to an increased interest in air defences.

\textsuperscript{49} Craig, \textit{Destroying the Village}, 55.
Instead, the focus of this “bomber gap” was fears that the Soviet Union was building a bomber force that would be more powerful than SAC. This news was leaked to the media and attracted the attention of ambitious Democratic politicians such as Senator Stuart Symington of Missouri who used the issue to criticize the Eisenhower administration. The USAF further took advantage of this opportunity to gain funding for more B-52 bombers from Congress. Although intelligence gained through the U2 spy plane eventually disproved the existence of the gap, the result of the controversy was that the administration ordered an increase in production of the B-52.\textsuperscript{51} In contrast, there was no corresponding improvement in the air defence system.

Furthermore, the realities of the nuclear age played a role in this decline, as the Eisenhower administration had begun to realize the impact of the hydrogen bomb on the strategic situation. This was a major issue for the North American air defence system because it had been developed to stop an attack of 100 to 200, 20 kiloton atomic bombs; however, the explosive power of the hydrogen bomb had made this conception obsolete. For instance, while a 20-kiloton weapon would destroy all buildings within one and a half kilometres of ground zero, a one-megaton thermonuclear bomb would destroy everything within eight kilometres of ground zero.\textsuperscript{52} This perception was strengthened by a number of reports, including one by the retired Air Force General Harold L. George in late January 1956. George’s committee studied two scenarios: one in which the U.S. would only have tactical warning of a Soviet attack from the DEW Line, and the other if it had

\textsuperscript{51} Prados, *The Soviet Estimate*, 43-46; Brown, *Flying Blind*, 153-5; Dockrill, *Eisenhower’s New Look*, 131. The former intelligence analyst and historian, Raymond Garthoff, did argue that overestimation of the Soviet threat was often “considered the most prudent course: an underestimate of the most threatening case could bring disaster and defeat, while an overestimate would (it was believed) only bring over insurance.” Raymond, L. Garthoff, “Chapter V Estimating Soviet Military Intentions and Capabilities” In *Watching the Bear Essays on CIA’s Analysis of the Soviet Union*, ed. Gerald K. Haines and Robert E. Leggett <http:www.cia.gov/csi/books/watchingthebear/article04. html> (February 24, 2005), 1.
30 days warning. In the first case the U.S. would suffer 65% casualties and a general economic collapse, although the damage suffered by the Soviet Union would be much worse. In the other case, he argued that no amount of dispersion of industry, evacuations of populations or improvements to continental defences during the period of warning would make a significant difference. The only thing that could be done would be to launch of preemptive strike against the Soviet Union. Therefore, the historian Campbell Craig has argued, Eisenhower concluded that any war between the superpowers would escalate into a global thermonuclear conflict that would destroy the world. Richard Betts made similar arguments in his article “A Nuclear Golden Age? The Balance Before Parity.” Consequently, improved continental air defences, beyond radars necessary to provide tactical warning of an attack, were no longer that important.

One other factor was the use of different approaches than improved tactical air defences to reduce SAC vulnerability. While USAF planners still considered early warning to be important, they would increasingly deal with this problem through better dispersion of SAC’s bombers as well as airborne alerts. For instance, when the USAF proposed to spend 500 million dollars on dispersal programs in 1957 and 1958, a total of

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52 Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 122.
53 “Dwight David Eisenhower Diary Entry January 23 1956,” In The Eisenhower Diaries ed. Robert H. Ferrell (New York: W.W. Norton, 1981), 311-2. In this period, Eisenhower often equivocated on whether he would be willing to launch such an attack on the Soviet Union. For example, in January 1956, he stated that such an attack “would not only be against our traditions but it would appear to be impossible unless the congress would meet in a highly secret session and vote a declaration of war which would be implemented before the session terminated. It would appear to be impossible that any such thing would occur.” Ibid, 312. However, in January 1957, he stated to the NSC in response to the strategic situation that “the only sensible thing for us to do was to put all our resources into our SAC capability and into hydrogen bombs,” a comment that indicated to Trachtenberg that Eisenhower continued to be interested in preemption. Trachtenberg, History and Strategy, 134. Moreover, in November 1957, Eisenhower reemphasized to SAC that “we must not let the enemy to strike the first blow.” Sagan, Moving Targets, 22.
54 Craig, Destroying the Village, 54.
55 Betts, “Nuclear Golden Age,” 14-16.
33 million dollars was allocated to additional radar systems through 1962.\textsuperscript{56} It should be noted that SAC continued to plan and train to launch a massive preemptive attack against the Soviets in the event of war.\textsuperscript{57} Indeed, this was the period when LeMay asserted to Sprague about his willingness to launch a preemptive strike against the Soviet Union based on strategic warning.\textsuperscript{58}

The result was that funds for improved air defence had begun to dry up. For example, in 1956, USAF air defence commanders were unable to get additional funding to improve their radars to deal with expected Soviet electric countermeasures.\textsuperscript{59} The USAF’s willingness to transfer control of the DEW Line stations on Canadian soil to the RCAF further reflected this reality. In January 1957, Dulles also asserted that he was dubious about continental air defence and compared the DEW Line to the Maginot Line. He added “such lines could be overflown” by missiles.\textsuperscript{60} In April, Radford added that he believed “that there would have to be a very drastic reduction in the current level of expenditure for continental defense in order to provide and maintain our offensive capabilities.”\textsuperscript{61} The result was that Canadian officials were overly concerned about future air defence developments, although in fairness this decline was masked by the fact that the U.S. air defence effort was still vastly greater than the Canadians could muster. While the Canadians reconsidered their air defence effort in 1955 and 1956 and struggled to deal with one major acquisition program, the CF 105 Avro Arrow, the Americans were

\textsuperscript{56} Memorandum of Discussion at the 292d Meeting of the National Security Council, August 9 1956, FRUS, 1955-1957, Vol. XIX, 339-41.
\textsuperscript{57} Rosenberg, \textit{The Origins of Overkill}, 66.
\textsuperscript{58} Kaplan, \textit{Wizards of Armageddon}, 133-4.
\textsuperscript{59} Schaffel, \textit{The Emerging Shield}, 223.
\textsuperscript{60} Memorandum of Discussion at the 309th meeting of the National Security Council, January 11 1957, FRUS, Vol. XIX, 1955-1957, 406.
constructing the DEW Line and were developing several different fighter aircraft and a number of SAM systems. This reflected the old problem of disparity of effort between the U.S. and Canada even when the Americans were not that interested in addressing a problem.

This reality further meant that for all the political significance of the creation of NORAD for Canadian ministers and officials, it was ultimately just an attempt by the USAF and the RCAF to rationalize the command and control arrangements for the continental air defence system that had emerged by the late-1950s. Indeed, as Jockel has noted, before NORAD this air defence system had “one American command (with authority over U.S. and Canadian aircraft in the U.S.) and one Canadian (with authority over Canadian and U.S. aircraft in Canada, except insofar as authority over U.S. aircraft had been delegated away).”62 This command arrangement was not acceptable to American and Canadian airman who had come to the realization that the border, for the purpose of intercepting aircraft, was not relevant operationally, and that the lack of a central command hindered efficiency.63 Indeed, NORAD was to be the last gasp of the effort to develop the air defences of North America in the 1950s.64

The decline of air defence in U.S. strategy was solidified by the launch of Sputnik I on October 4 1957, which formally heralded the beginning of the age of the ICBM or as James Eayrs later noted “henceforth the missile was the message.”65 It should be

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61 Memorandum of Discussion at the 320th Meeting of the National Security Council, April 17 1957, FRUS, Vol. XIX, 1955-1957, 483. He also noted that “the demands of our continental defense programs were simply skyrocketing.”
62 Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 59.
64 For more information on the creation of NORAD see Jockel, No Boundaries Upstairs, 91-117; Ibid, Canada In NORAD, 9-43; Goette, Canada, the United States, 239-276; Crosby, Dilemmas in Defence Decision Making, 19-37.
emphasized that the first Soviet ICBMs were ineffective weapons.\textsuperscript{66} The result of these weaknesses was that up to 1963, the main threat to North America from the Soviet Union was their force of Bear and Bison bombers, and the existing North American air defence system was maintained to deal with these aircraft. Nevertheless, there was limited interest in expanding the air defence system to deal with a threat from a weapons system that would soon be superseded. Funding for air defences thus gradually fell with various programs such as the Avro Arrow and the F-108 being cancelled and others such as the BOMARC B SAM being scaled back.

Another result was the decline of importance of Canadian airspace for U.S. defence planners. While this airspace had served as the main potential air route for Soviet bombers, this factor did not come into play with the ICBM. Therefore, the Canada-U.S. defence relationship became far less important in real terms. This of course is not to say that these defence ties would not continue to be a source of controversy in the coming years. This relationship would be complicated by the Prime Minister John Diefenbaker’s inability to decide whether to fulfil Canada’s commitments to accept U.S. nuclear warheads for the BOMARC B and the MB-1 Genie air-to-air missile. However, these disagreements were not so much over the value of the nuclear weapon system themselves, but the fact that Canada had committed to acquiring them. The result of all these factors

\textsuperscript{66} For example, the R-7 took 20 hours to fuel, and could only be kept fuelled for 24 hours at a time. It was based in above ground facilities, which were vulnerable to attack and difficult to conceal.\textsuperscript{66} Thus, only four to six of these weapons were ever deployed. Even by 1962, the Soviets only had between 44 and 75 ICBMs complete of which only 20 were operational. Moreover, while the Soviets were able to deploy a number of SLBM submarines, including the diesel powered Golf class and the nuclear powered Hotel class, their SLBM program was plagued with a number of difficulties including that they were equipped with a small number of missiles, with a range of only 300 to 600 kilometres that could only be fired from the surface. Bouchard, “Guarding the Cold War Ramparts,” 130; Bluth, \textit{Soviet Strategic Arms Policy Before SALT}, 10; Zaloga, \textit{Target America}, 77.
was that, ultimately, a truncated American air defence network faced off against a truncated Soviet bomber threat.

**Conclusion**

In the spring of 1955, Canada and the United States formally agreed to construct the DEW Line. However, despite this agreement, Canadian officials continued to debate how it would participate in the development of this project. Policy discussions in Ottawa were complicated by different conceptions of the national interest including the strong desire amongst ministers and officials, particularly in Northern Affairs, to utilize the DEW line to develop Canada’s Arctic territories. More importantly, the Cabinet and External Affairs wished to avoid creating a perception that the Americans had too great a role of the project and that the U.S. forces had taken over the Canadian North. Therefore, they were interested in having the RCAF take up more of a role, particularly in the operation of the DEW Line’s rearward communication links. However, Foulkes and the Chiefs of Staff countered that Canada’s resources were limited and that it was already participating effectively in the air defence effort through the Mid Canada Line. Canada thus decided not to formally contribute to neither the construction of the DEW Line nor to its operation. Instead, it reserved the right to participate in the future and worked with the U.S. to facilitate the utilization of Canadian resources during this line’s development.

In the end, the DEW Line served both Canadian and American interests. The system not only provided more early warning of a Soviet attack, but it improved the ability of the Canadian authorities to control the Arctic and contributed much to the development of the region. It would be an exaggeration, however, to state that the DEW Line agreement was “an explicit recognition of Canadian claims to the exercise of
sovereignty in the Far North.” Indeed, senior American officials were never that interested in these territories, and for them, their presence was simply a means to an end of greater continental security.

Moreover, U.S. officials cooperated extensively with Canada in the construction of the line. Canadian firms and personnel participated in the construction effort while the Americans would utilize Canada’s Northern Transportation Company to supply some of the DEW Line stations. The result was that, despite the controversy that erupted in Canada in 1956, Canadian ministers and officials were quite satisfied with the situation to the point that they declined an USAF offer to take over control of the line. This decision was based on a number of considerations including financial ones, but it was also because the construction of the line was going smoothly. Canadian officials, nevertheless, remained unsettled about the state of the relationship. These concerns were based on fears that U.S. proposals for additional air defence projects in Canada would strain the Canadian defence budget and force it to shift some of its forces from Europe to defend the continent. Foulkes further argued to his U.S. counterparts that there was little point in investing additional resources into defences whose utility was declining.

Ironically around this time, American policy makers were slowly coming to similar conclusions. This development had a number of causes such as the inherently offensive nature of American strategy and that the USAF was a bomber centric airforce. Other factors included the influence of the Killian Committee and the realities of thermonuclear war on U.S. policy makers. It can also be seen during the controversy over the “bomber gap” and in how the USAF increasingly dealt with the problem of SAC vulnerability. While this process was slow and was masked by the inherent disparity
between the American and Canadian air defence efforts, it increased after the launch of Sputnik I. Therefore, while some air defences would be maintained to deal with a limited Soviet bomber threat, the high point of interest in North American air defence had ended.
Chapter 10: Conclusion

Introduction

This dissertation has shown that the development of the North American air defence system from the late 1940s until 1956 was the product of two important factors. The first was the different conceptions of the Canadian national interest held by the Cabinet, the Department of External Affairs and the RCAF as well as the OGDs namely Transport, Defence Production and Northern Affairs. Throughout this period, the Cabinet and External Affairs understood the need to work with the United States to defend North America. But these ministers and officials wanted to avoid any measures that would cause the Cabinet political difficulties. These individuals were further influenced by nationalist sentiments and the desire to ensure that Canada benefited economically from these projects and that its sovereignty in the Arctic was protected. On the other hand, the situation was much simpler for the RCAF, especially after the special relationship with the USAF had been consolidated in the 1950s. Senior RCAF officers wanted to develop the best air defence system as possible within the confines of their available resources, and they worked behind the scenes with their USAF counterparts to achieve this goal. They were also not interested in making projects such as the DEW Line more Canadian in order to appease the concerns of their political masters.

The OGDs’ conceptions of the national interest were straightforward as well. The Department of Transport tried to ensure that Canadian air traffic would not be negatively impacted by USAF’s desire to intercept unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace. Howe and his officials in Defence Production sought to gain more contacts for the Canadian electronics industry and to ensure that the gains made during the previous radar agreements with the United States were protected. Northern Affairs angled to ensure that
these projects in the North would not negatively impact the lives of Canada’s native peoples while at the same time using these defence initiatives to help develop the Arctic.

It should be noted that the Canadian Army and RCN only played minor role in influencing the development of these defences. While Simonds as Chief of the General Staff occasionally raised questions about this effort, these services generally went along with the RCAF’s plans because the U.S. was providing most of the resources to develop these air defences. Moreover, these two services were preoccupied with the rebuilding of their own forces after the post-war demobilization and had little interest in contributing forces to this defence system.

The other major influence was the attitude of the Truman and Eisenhower administrations towards continental air defence. During this period, the Americans took the lead in pushing for an improved air defence system, a position that reflected both their dominant position in the Canada-U.S. defence partnership as well as their far greater resources. However, at the same time, the American senior civilian and military leadership only had so much interest in this issue. One reason was that the United States primarily pursued an offensive-oriented strategy during the Cold War with a focus on its strategic nuclear forces and its overseas alliances. In particular, the USAF was a bomber-oriented air force that focused most of its resources on SAC. Its conception of air power led it to be at best sceptical and often hostile to the prospect of improved air defences. As a result, its senior leadership opposed the construction of the DEW Line from 1951 to 1953. There were thus only a few periods of sustained high level interest in air defence in Washington in the 1950s, which had a great impact on the co-operative efforts between Canada and the United States. In fact, this reality provided Canadian officials with the opportunity to ensure that Canada received the maximum benefits of these projects.
However, it also meant that the U.S. only had so much interest in its defence relationship with Canada. Canada was important, but not too important, which meant that it was often overlooked during policy discussions in Washington particularly during the transition period between the Truman and Eisenhower administrations.

**The Emergence of the Canada-U.S. Defence Relationship**

As outlined in this dissertation, relations between these two countries were often strained. Despite some co-operation that occurred during the First World War, both countries’ militaries still formally regarded each other as possible enemies in the 1920s. By the mid-1930s, these sentiments had largely disappeared. Driven by the potential threat posed by Germany and Japan and greatly assisted by the excellent personal ties between Roosevelt and King, the relationship had improved greatly. Nonetheless, it would take the fall of France in the spring of 1940 for a defence relationship to be forged with the creation of the PJBD. Consequently, both countries worked together to defend the continent. This defence co-operation went well although there were still some bumps in the road. For instance, in mid-1941, the U.S. Section of the PJBD requested that under the new joint defence plan, ABC 22, the United States should have command and control authority over Canadian Forces under the principle of “unity of command.” This situation was only resolved when the U.S. Section, lacking support from Roosevelt and having been informed by the State Department that Canada would co-operate willingly during a crisis, backed down. This situation prevailed in January 1942 when La Guardia and Embick attempted to have unity of command imposed on all forces on the West Coast. But they did not have the support of Roosevelt, the U.S. Navy or the Chief of Staff of the
U.S. Army, General Marshall, and Canadian officials were able to successfully oppose their request.

Further difficulties emerged in the early-1943 when reports, particularly from MacDonald, the British High Commissioner, reached Ottawa about the extent of U.S. military presence in Canada’s Northwest. These forces, which had been sent north to build installations such as airfields and weather stations, had been largely left to their own devices and were perceived by some officials to be a threat to Canadian sovereignty. It is important to note that this situation was not as critical as outlined by some of these observers. In fact, the problems that did exist were quickly addressed through a combination of the U.S. Army reining in their commanders with Canadian actions such as the dispatch of Foster to be the special commissioner in the area. Moreover, the only major action taken by Canada to protect its rights in the region, the purchase of these American built facilities in 1945, was driven not only by the need to assert Canadian sovereignty, but to reduce Canada’s surplus of U.S. dollars that had been built up during this conflict.

Ultimately, the wartime experience illustrated several important features that would become enduring features of this relationship. First, it showed that these defence ties were only so important to the Americans. This reality became apparent especially after the U.S. became a global power with their entry into the Second World War. The wartime experience further illustrated that while some U.S. military officers and civilian officials believed that Canada should agree to certain defence measures, they often found that they did not have the support of their senior leadership in Washington, which allowed Canada to successfully oppose many of these initiatives. But, despite the limited interest in Canada that existed in Washington, the post-war period saw the development of a
peacetime military relationship. The U.S. military wanted to build installations such as weather stations in the Arctic and there was a need for a new joint defence plan. Not surprisingly, the emergence of this relationship was not a smooth process.

One factor was that Canada was facing a number of requests, some of which like the Joint Weather Station Program were being pressed on them by the U.S. officials. Ironically, this haste was not caused by the Soviets, but by the desire of the Americans to utilize funds from the wartime defence budget. More importantly, the new Joint Appreciation by the MCC seemed to indicate that the Americans were planning on constructing an extensive air defence system in the Arctic. This project posed many potential issues for the Cabinet, since it would have involved a major financial burden as well as a significant U.S. military presence on Canadian soil, which was not wanted due to perceptions in Ottawa of the wartime experience. Canadian officials, however, failed to perceive that the Americans, in the midst of severely cutting their defence budget, were not going to build an extensive air defence system in the Arctic. Furthermore, the Canadians did not directly confront American officials with their concerns. Even at a high level meeting with Truman, King did not discuss this issue with the President. Ultimately, this situation was only resolved at a meeting of senior U.S. and Canadian officials and military officers, when the Americans disclosed that they were not going to build an air defence system in the Arctic.

At this point, the relationship improved as both countries embarked on a relatively limited program of peacetime defence co-operation, although it should be emphasized that this reality did not end Canada’s unease. Canadian ministers and officials understood that Canada was not that important in American planning and that U.S. strategy was offensive in nature. But events such as the parliamentary debate over the Visiting Force
Act in June 1947 created a deep desire in the Cabinet and External Affairs to minimize any political fallout from these defence ties. The Canadian government, therefore, sought to create a public image of this relationship that would be uncontroversial while limiting any public notice of U.S. military installations and personnel on Canadian soil. In addition, there was a strong desire in Ottawa to reassert control over its Arctic territories both due to political considerations and nationalist sentiments. This drive manifested itself in the creation of the ACND and the taking over of the operation and supply of most of the joint defence facilities that had been established on Canadian soil in the immediate post-war period. The Cabinet and External Affairs’ conceptions of the national interest, nevertheless, caused them to remain overly concerned about U.S. policy, and to be suspicious of the problems that occurred. Indeed, even the fact that, the Americans had willingly withdrawn most of their forces from the region by the late 1940s had little impact on their thinking. These perceptions would thus continue to be influential after August 1949, which proved especially problematic because the importance of this defence relationship increased in the early 1950s.

The Early Development of the North American Air Defence System

From mid-1950 onward, both countries worked together to develop the North American air defence system. Despite the test of a Soviet atomic bomb in August 1949, this effort had been slow to emerge until the dramatic increase of military spending that followed the beginning of the Korean War provided the both necessary resources and the impetus for greater co-operation. As a result, the Cabinet and External Affairs supported efforts by the RCAF, the USAF and the PJBD to improve the air defences of North
These measures included PJBD Recommendation 51/3 that facilitated local joint air defence exercises and 51/6 that allowed the USAF and the RCAF to reinforce each other’s forces in wartime. Both these measures were relatively simple to implement and raised few political difficulties, since they made few demands of Canada. 51/3 and 51/6 could even be seen as a sign of U.S. respect for Canadian control of its airspace although they were still approved with strict limitations. The issue of the USAF intercepting unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace would prove to be a much more difficult one to resolve.

This USAF proposal faced opposition from Canadian ministers and officials who were influenced by nationalist sentiments, and were determined to ensure that Canada’s sovereignty over its airspace would not be harmed even if Canadian control over that airspace was more formal than real. They were also worried about the political consequences of such an initiative. The Department of Transport further believed that the USAF’s authority to intercept aircraft in Canadian airspace should be strictly limited because of their concerns that flights of Canadian civilian aircraft would be negatively affected. On the other hand, the USAF officers responsible for the development of these defences were hampered by the limited amount of interest that the American senior leadership had in air defence in this period. Without this high level support, these officers were forced to either negotiate with Canada through the PJBD or to work behind the scenes with the RCAF to achieve their goals. The result was that the interception issue took several years to resolve. The first attempt to deal with this problem was PJBD Recommendation 51/4, which was only approved by Canada after a number of strong conditions had been attached to address their concerns. Moreover, despite awareness in Ottawa about the need for a revision to 51/4, the Cabinet only approved 53/1, which
allowed USAF fighter to fire upon unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace, after the first test of a Soviet hydrogen bomb in August 1953. Even then, this agreement had to be supplemented by a side deal between the USAF and the RCAF.

Difficulties also emerged with the development of the first early warning system in Canada. This project began as a limited effort by the RCAF to build several radar stations on its soil, but was expanded after the USAF approached the RCAF about a cooperative effort. By early 1951, both governments had approved this project, which became known as the Pinetree Line. With this system, the Cabinet and External Affairs traded control over Canada’s own radar system for improved security, and accepted the reality that U.S. military personnel would operate a majority of these stations. Canadian ministers and officials had recognized the need for more warning and were relieved that the sites were located away from populated areas, but not too far north to raise issues with Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic. Despite this agreement, problems quickly emerged getting the required funding for the Pinetree Line allocated in Washington by the Department of Defense, which illustrated the limited interest that U.S. officials had in these defences. The Americans and Canadians further disagreed about what the kind of tenure the USAF would have at the sites it was funding. The USAF was worried about getting Congress’ approval to fund the project, but Canadian officials, including Heeney, opposed this request because of nationalist sentiments. In general, External Affairs wanted to limit the American military presence on its soil, although they eventually gave in and gave the USAF a limited form of tenure at these sites.

The most serious difficulties emerged from the American demand that an exchange of notes be used to formalize the Pinetree Line agreement. The USAF again was focused on getting the appropriations for the project approved by Congress.
However, it was likely that the legal officers in the USAF ignored the reality that the Canada-U.S. defence relationship could have easily addressed the issue through the “existing machinery” and instead decided to treat this project as a NATO issue.\(^1\) It should be noted that this situation further reflected the limited interest in continental air defence in Washington because neither the administration nor the USAF’s senior leadership intervened with Congress to eliminate the need for an exchange of notes. The problem with using this form of agreement was that the State Department then argued that the note would have to be registered and published by the United Nations Secretariat. This demand, however, created serious political concerns for the Cabinet and External Affairs because it meant that the opposition parties in the House of Commons and the Canadian public would learn about it. Indeed, the Canadians had hoped that a PJBD Recommendation, which could have been kept secret, would have been used instead. The result was months of difficult negotiations as Canadian officials actively sought to avoid this requirement. It was only after the deteriorating financial situation of Defence Construction Ltd. emerged and C.D. Howe decided to intervene that Canada compromised on this issue. Even then, Pearson and External Affairs continued to be interested in avoiding the registration of this note until the fall of 1951.

Further difficulties arose over the procurement of Canadian radar components for the Pinetree Line, which originated from Canada’s drive to develop its own domestic electronics industry. This interest was the result of several factors including the desire to decentralize the production of sets for wartime needs, nationalist sentiments, political considerations and the influence of Howe and the Department of Defence Production. But

\(^1\) Matthews to Marshall, February 10 1951, RG 333 Files of International Military Agencies PJBD Entry 17-A, Box 3, File “Top Secret Correspondence, 1941-1956” Folder 17, NARA.
many U.S. officials were critical of this effort and resistance from the two air forces created difficulties. Indeed, an attempt by a joint USAF-RCAF committee to cancel the Canadian order created a storm of criticism from Defence Production as well as other ministers and officials in Ottawa. Ultimately, the USAF relented and agreed to purchase the Canadian sets, but the resentment caused by this issue resurfaced during the discussions over the Temporary Radar Stations Program. These stations, which were first proposed in 1952, were to supplement the Pinetree line by providing additional coverage against low-level aircraft. Nonetheless, the Cabinet and External Affairs were worried about the political fallout from the presence of additional U.S. military personnel on Canadian soil, particularly since many of these new stations would be located near populated areas. The procurement issue as well as Canadian anxieties about a possible early warning line in its Arctic territories further complicated these negotiations. Finally, this program was hampered by the USAF’s lack of interest in air defence, which was evident in the uncertainty of the number, location and function of the stations in question. The result was that these stations only became operational in 1957. All these measures, however, were only the initial steps in the development of the North American air defence system. Yet, before both countries could move forward, the United States had to first decide what additional steps would be taken to defend the continent.

The Construction of the Mid Canada Line and the DEW Line

Although the Americans took the lead in the expansion of this air defence system, their efforts were greatly complicated by internal disagreements. There were many promoters of air defence, particularly in the study groups that examined the problem, but
the Secretary of Defense, Robert Lovett, and the USAF opposed their efforts because they favoured an emphasis on America’s offensive nuclear forces. Indeed, the USAF’s senior leadership was critical of an increased air defence effort for many reasons including their fears that resources would be diverted from SAC. Other factors included their conception of air power, their focus on preemption and their view that air defence was no longer practical in the nuclear age. Lovett and the USAF thus tried to suppress these pro-air defence studies, but were outmaneuvered when the proponents of improved air defences took their reports directly to sympathetic officials in the Truman administration, including Jack Gorrie, the chair of the NSRB. The result was an intense debate in the NSC that ended when Truman, after having been convinced about the need for these air defences by the Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, and Paul Nitze, the Chair of the Policy Planning Staff at the State Department, overcame his skepticism about improved defensive measures and approved the construction of the DEW Line. However, when Eisenhower took office, the transition between these administrations caused a number of delays.

For example, Eisenhower’s belief that the United States needed a new Cold War strategy meant that the issue of continental air defence languished while he and his officials limited themselves to examining the various studies begun under Truman in addition to commissioning one of their own. Furthermore, because of the turnover in personnel caused by the transition, the administration had a poor understanding of the previously established consultative arrangements with Canada, which the Canadians did little to rectify despite the fact they recognized that it was an issue.

It was not until the late summer when spurred on by the test of the first Soviet H-bomb the administration decided to expand the North American air defence system. There was much opposition to these defences from the USAF and critics of increased defence
spending such as George Humphrey, the Secretary of the Treasury, which was only overcome when the administration made the decision to fund these early warning lines from cuts from the Army and Navy. Ultimately, improved air defences were an important part of Eisenhower’s strategy of fighting the Cold War. The New Look sought to reduce U.S. defence expenditures by relying on the American nuclear deterrent, namely SAC. An expanded air defence effort complemented this approach by securing the U.S. mobilization base from whatever forces had escaped SAC’s preemptive strikes. While it is doubtful that Eisenhower believed that the United States could win a nuclear war, this strategy did allow the president to manage the uncertainties of the nuclear age while achieving his goal of reducing the size of America’s conventional forces. This air defence system would include the Mid Canada Line and the DEW Line, if the later was technologically feasible. However, Eisenhower and his officials had made these decisions without first consulting Canada. U.S. officials had gotten out of the habit of consulting with their Canadian counterparts in the early days of the administration, and this lack of consultation would pose difficulties when both countries began to discuss this issue in the fall of 1953.

In fact, there was much confusion amongst Canadian officials about U.S. air defence plans until they realized that the Eisenhower administration had decided what they were going to do without first consulting them. Nonetheless, the Cabinet led by Claxton and Howe and with the support of External Affairs, the RCAF and the Prime Minister decided to build the Mid Canada Line as a Canadian project. It was felt that Canada taking control of this effort would serve the Cabinet’s political interests, provide Canadian firms with access to contracts and preserve Canada’s self-respect. These ministers and officials further concluded that the Soviet Union posed a real threat and that
Canada had to cooperate with the U.S. to protect the continent. Claxton and Howe suggested this course even before Ottawa had been formally informed of the American plans.

This move still left the DEW Line to be addressed, since Eisenhower and his officials had yet to determine if it was going to be built. Despite their interest in improved air defences there were some in the administration, including the President, who had doubts about this effort; however, this scepticism disappeared in June 1954. The appearance of a new Soviet long-range bomber when combined with concerns about radioactive fallout and of SAC’s vulnerability to a surprise attack generated renewed urgency in Washington. These concerns, in turn, caused U.S. officials to approach Canada in July about approving the DEW Line quickly. However, an extensive American military presence in Canada’s Arctic territories had been a source of concern for the Cabinet and External Affairs since the end of the war. They wished to preserve Canada’s sovereignty in the region while limiting the potential political consequences of having an American built early warning line on its soil. On the other hand, Foulkes and the RCAF wanted to co-operate with the U.S. to strengthen North America’s air defences. The result was a series of discussions between the military and External Affairs over how Canada should address this request. Although this internal debate was partially resolved when the Cabinet agreed to construct and fund the Mid Canada Line, this decision still left the question of whether Canada would approve the DEW Line unresolved, which became a major issue once the Eisenhower administration had given it top priority. Ultimately, after some prodding from the Americans, the Cabinet agreed in principle to its construction in August. But even this decision did not fully resolve this issue in Ottawa because in the fall, Foulkes revised his position and became a critic of the air defence effort. He was
concerned that radioactive fallout would pose major problems for this system, and supported a reappraisal of the air defence problem with the Americans. Foulkes’ opposition, however, was withdrawn once it became clear that his claim that Radford did not strongly support the DEW Line was incorrect with the result was that Canada agreed to allow the U.S. to build this line on its soil in November 1954.

Notwithstanding this approval, Canadian officials still wanted to ensure that Canada would receive the maximum benefits from the DEW Line. Their efforts were helped by the reality that the U.S. senior leadership was much less concerned about the details of the agreement, since they had achieved their goal of getting the line approved. Thus, while the negotiations proved difficult over the issue of giving preference to Canada’s electronic industry, the Canadians prevailed with some help from the State Department. Indeed, that Canada was able to maintain the gains achieved under the Pinetree Line agreement, despite the fact that it would not actually be helping to fund this project, was a great accomplishment. Moreover, the United States agreed that they would restore the DEW Line sites after it had been shut down, a clause that the Americans had never agreed to before in one of their overseas base agreements.

The Cabinet, including the Prime Minister, were also interested in ensuring that “no impression could be allowed to be given to the Canadian public that the U.S. had vested rights in the northern half of the continent.”\(^2\) To accomplish this goal, Canadian officials did not seek a direct role in the line. Instead, they reserved the right for Canada to take up certain responsibilities, but would later allow the Americans to continue in

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\(^2\) Extract from a Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee held in the Privy Council Chamber on Friday November 12 1954, Undated, 92/1, File 3, DHH; Cabinet Conclusions, Undated, RG 2 Privy Council, Vol. 2656, File 18 November 1954, LAC.
them. Consequently, Canadian sovereignty was protected without a significant commitment of resources. It should be noted that Pearson and other officials argued that Canada should take up more of a role in the development of the DEW Line. In particular, they asserted that the RCAF should build and operate its rearward communication system, but they were opposed by Foulkes and the Chiefs of Staff, which counteracted that External Affairs needed to appreciate that the RCAF’s resources were strained by its commitments with the Mid Canada Line.

Ultimately, Canada limited its participation in the development of the DEW Line to facilitating the use of Canadian companies and labour in the construction effort. Canadian officials were so successful that, despite the controversy that erupted over the behaviour of certain U.S. companies in the region, the Cabinet declined an USAF offer in 1956 to take over control of the DEW Line. While financial considerations were a major factor in this decision, the fact that the Canadians were satisfied with the situation was important. Nonetheless, it would still be an exaggeration to assert that the DEW Line agreement was an explicit U.S. admission of Canada’s claims over the Arctic, since this argument overstates American interest in this region.

Despite the overall health of the defence relationship by the mid-1950s, Canadian ministers, officials and military officers remained concerned. They feared that some USAF proposals for further improvements to the air defence system were part of a new major American effort that would force Canada to shift more of their defence budget to the defence of North America. Foulkes emphasized these beliefs during several meetings with his U.S. counterparts in 1956 and 1957. However, what the Canadians did not understand was that American interest in continental air defence was actually declining. There were several factors behind this shift including the reality that U.S. strategic culture
remained offensive in nature, the focus on strategic bombing in the USAF and the massive investments in offensive missile systems that followed the release of the Killian Report. This change can be further seen during the controversy over the “bomber gap” and how SAC sought to reduce its vulnerability to surprise attack, and only accelerated after the launch of Sputnik I in October 1957. The result was for all the political controversy under Diefenbaker, the importance of air defence declined with the result that a truncated air defence network faced off against a limited Soviet bomber threat into the early 1960s.

Therefore, the emergence of the North American air defence system from 1949 to 1956 was the result of a series of compromises. Some of these occurred in Ottawa while others took place in the bilateral relationship. The end result was that both countries benefited from this defence co-operation. The United States got the early warning of an attack over the North Pole and air defence co-operation they wanted. On the other hand, Canada balanced the security of the continent with the protection of Canadian sovereignty while ensuring that it received the maximum benefits possible from its participation in these projects. Certainly, Canadians ministers and officials were not happy that they had to allow the Americans to station additional forces on their soil, and that they had to agree to measures that they would have preferred to avoid including the DEW line. Canada also had to drop the pretence that it could effectively monitor and control its own airspace, as it had to allow USAF fighters to intercept aircraft over Canada. But ultimately this American pressure to expand the North American air defence system was simply a reflection of the fact that the United States was the country that would have to take the lead if anything was going to be done to improve the continent’s defences.
Other Findings and Future Research

There are several other conclusions from this thesis that will prove useful for understanding this defence relationship. One example was that the purchase of the U.S. built installations in the Canadian Northwest after the Second World War was motivated by considerations other than the need to assert Canada’s sovereignty in the region. Although the scholarly literature emphasizes this factor as the driving force behind this move, Norman Robertson who was the Under Secretary of External Affairs between 1941 and 1946 argued in 1950: “While the desirability of Canada acquiring these installations had been a consideration, a more compelling one perhaps had been the desirability of reducing our reserves of American dollars.”\(^3\) This conclusion ties in with the need for a more nuanced account of the U.S. Army in the Canadian Northwest in the Second World War, as the American activities in this region were not the crisis that they have generally been portrayed in the historiography.

Moreover, this dissertation showed the impact that individual American and Canadian politicians, officials and military officers had on policy in this period. This is not a particularly new conclusion, but it is one that has been overlooked in recent years by some scholars who have wanted to avoid the impression that they believed in “great man” theory of history. Nonetheless, during the 1950s, Claxton, Howe and Pearson all influenced Canadian air defence policy. One also saw this behaviour in the activities of U.S. officials such as Gorrie and Nitze, who along with Acheson, played a key role in the approval of the DEW Line and in the positions that military officers such as Foulkes and

\(^3\) Fourteenth Meeting on Panel on Economic Aspects of Defence Questions, November 14 1950, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 104, File 2020, DHH, 2.
Radford took in the various policy debates. Finally, it was seen in the various interventions most notably by Truman and Eisenhower, but by St. Laurent as well.

The role of individuals further manifested itself in the importance of the transnational aspects of this relationship. These elements included meetings of consultation and the special relationship between the USAF and RCAF as well as a whole series of personal and informal ties, which have often been overlooked in the literature due to the difficulties in gaining access to the necessary documents. These connections ranged from the friendship between Acheson and Wrong to the various conversations that Foulkes had with senior U.S. military leaders such Bradley and Radford. Another example was the off the record conversation that McNaughton had with an unnamed U.S. official during the April 1953 meeting of the PJBD, which cleared up for the Americans why the Canadian Section had been so defensive during the discussions over the Temporary Radar Station Program. These efforts also included actions that would have not received the support of their governments including the suggestions given to U.S. officials by the External Affairs’ CUSMSG observer over how to best push Canada on the DEW Line, and the State Department’s advice to Canadian officials on the procurement issue during the DEW Line negotiations in late-1954.

A word should be said about the often-maligned special relationship between the USAF and the RCAF. Many scholars and journalists have criticized this relationship including James Macdonald Minifie who after the emergence of NORAD complained “it is tragic that Canada was sucked in by such a brassy intrigue, and that its independence of action was subordinated to ‘one over-all boss’ in the U.S.A.F.” However, I would argue

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that these kinds of comments ignore the fact was that the development of this relationship was not only inevitable but necessary and beneficial due to the fact that up to the creation of NORAD, the defence of North America relied on informal arrangements that this relationship helped to facilitate. It was also through these ties that the USAF was able to work with the RCAF to push through needed measures such as 53/1 and the side deal that supplemented it. Because of its interest in protecting the U.S., one could argue that the USAF actually was more committed to defending Canada than the Cabinet or External Affairs, whose decisions were overly influenced by political considerations and nationalist sentiments.

Another conclusion of this thesis was on reasons behind the decline of the PJBD in the mid-1950s. While this outcome has been blamed on the increasingly close relationship between the USAF and the RCAF, this dissertation argued that another important factor was the attitude of the Cabinet and External Affairs towards the Board. By 1954, Canada had moved away from using the PJBD to negotiate defence agreements with the United States. It was increasingly seen as an unnecessary middleman, and it was likely that the Canadians politicians wished to control the negotiations as much as possible because of their political implications. Moreover, by 1954, Canada had accepted the use of exchange of notes rather than PJBD Recommendations to outline the terms of these defence initiatives, which further marginalized the Board. Therefore, despite an effort to increase the status of this body by the Eisenhower administration, the PJBD fell by the wayside. In the short run, this factor did not have a significant impact on the relationship, since Canadian ministers and officials had developed extensive expertise with this defence relationship, but in the long run, it would prove more problematic. Indeed, the new Diefenbaker government elected in June 1957 lacked such experience
and could have used a more vigorous PJBD both as a source of expertise and as a body to study joint defence problems, particularly during the creation of NORAD.

There were also some important new conclusions in this thesis derived from the American experience with continental air defence that contribute to the scholarly literature on U.S. foreign relations and nuclear strategy in the 1950s. First, this dissertation showed that continental air defence was a salient part of American Cold War strategy in the mid-1950s. In fact, for much of Eisenhower’s Presidency, the development of the North American air defence system served as an important complement to the New Look by ensuring that the U.S. mobilization base would be protected from whatever Soviet bombers escaped an American first strike. Although this link between continental air defence and preemption did not last, it does show that David Cox was at least partially right when he discussed the connection between air defence and U.S. nuclear war fighting capabilities. This dissertation further argued that improvements in the Soviet strategic forces had influenced U.S. decision making on this subject. Like the decision to develop the hydrogen bomb was in response to the Soviet test of an atomic bomb in August 1949, the development of the Mid Canada and DEW Lines were a reaction to the test of a Soviet H-Bomb in August 1953 and the appearance of the MYA-4 Bison in the spring of 1954. Ultimately, these changes in the strategic situation caused U.S. policy makers to emphasize and then to de-emphasize continental air defence once it was evident that the ICBM was replacing the manned bomber as the main threat to U.S. security. This thesis also illustrated the importance of understanding how institutional beliefs influenced policy. Scholars such as Jockel have rightly argued that financial considerations played a role in the USAF’s opposition to an expanded air defence system, but other factors such as its conception of air power were influential as well.
One other important finding was the influence that presidential transitions had on U.S. foreign policy. While the impact of these transitions has been generally noted in the literature, their influence on policy has usually been taken for granted or has been only discussed in relationship to certain major policy initiatives such as the European Defence Community. However, this thesis found these transitions were particularly influential with less pressing issues in Washington such as the Canada-U.S. defence relationship. Indeed, the turnover in personnel and the corresponding loss of institutional memory that resulted from these transitions had a particularly negative impact on the informal procedures of consultation and personal contacts that relationships such as the one between Canada and the U.S. relied on to get things done.

It should be noted that although this thesis addressed a number of important issues and filled many gaps in the historiography, there is still much work that needs to be done. One obvious example is the history of the Canada-U.S. defence relationship both before and after the creation of NORAD. Because of the lack of research on this relationship, it is often misunderstood and too often the impression is left of the United States constantly pushing Canada around, which is just a caricature of the reality. Moreover, it is equally important that these studies take in account policy decisions in Washington, because if this is not done then the Canadian perspective is overemphasized.

More attention also needs to be paid to the role that the national interest played in Canadian decision making. This dissertation argued that these different conceptions that existed within the Canadian state and armed forces were extremely influential, and I believe that this model can be applied to better understand other aspects of Canadian foreign and defence policy. Moreover, along with the need to incorporate a better understanding of the national interest into the historiography, there is a need to finally
dispense with the “golden age” paradigm of Canadian diplomatic history in the 1950s. As this dissertation showed, this picture of Pearson and other highly skilled Canadian diplomats pursuing Canada’s national interest needs to be revised. Certainly the period from the end of the Second World War to 1957 was one when Canada reached its peak of influence on the world stage, and much of this was due to Pearson and External Affairs. The problem with this perspective was that political considerations and nationalist sentiments as well as other priorities such as the development of Canada’s electronics industry heavily influenced the conduct of Canada’s foreign policy. Consequently, a break with this paradigm would allow for a more realistic portrayal of Canadian foreign relations in this period.

Finally, there is a need for more research on a number of topics within Canadian military history including the postwar history of the RCAF. Although it appears that Directorate of History and Heritage is finally beginning work on volume 4 of the official history of the Air Force, more work will still need to be done on a number of topics including the RCAF’s special relationship with the USAF. Studying this relationship will be difficult due to its informal nature, but there should be enough evidence in the archives to increase our understanding of it. The careers’ of Canada’s senior military leaders is another subject that needs more study. As stated earlier in this dissertation, Canada’s Cabinet ministers and diplomats from this period have received extensive coverage, but there is a need for more studies of those senior officers who played an extremely important role in the development of Canadian defence and foreign policy in the 1950s.
Lessons Learned and Final Thoughts

There are several lessons that policy makers in Washington and particularly in Ottawa can learn from this historical experience. The first and most important was that ultimately both countries were able to work together to defend the continent. While there were some difficulties, the air defence system that emerged was something that both countries could live with. This is an important point because many Canadians tend to think that co-operation with the Americans will entail Canada simply doing what the United States wants, when a detailed examination of the documents proves otherwise.

Another interesting aspect of this relationship is how much about it has not changed. For example, during recent discussions over a proposal for a security perimeter around North America, some Canadian politicians warned that this initiative could open the door for Canada’s refugee and immigration being challenged by the United States, which would pose a major problem for Canadian sovereignty.\(^5\) However, at the same time, it is clear that Canadian territory is not as secure as it could be. For example, in 2008, the Auditor General, Shelia Fraser, argued that there were 41 000 people currently living in Canada who have been ordered out of the country, but Canada’s Border Agency does not know where they are.\(^6\) Another example is that while Canada has sovereignty over parts of the Great Lakes, Senator Colin Kenny has argued that the resources that the Canadian government actually allocates to patrol them are utterly inadequate.\(^7\) One can

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argue that these situations are similar to one during the debates in Ottawa over whether the USAF should be allowed to intercept unidentified aircraft in Canadian airspace. The Cabinet and External Affairs had insisted on asserting Canadian sovereignty and wanted to limit the USAF’s ability to intercept aircraft in Canada’s airspace that the U.S. could track using their own radars. But at the same time, Canada actually had little capability to monitor and control its airspace. This situation was only resolved when the Canadian government relented and gave the USAF the clearance to intercept these unidentified aircraft in late-1953. The history of this relationship thus shows that either Canada must either assert control over its territory or it needs to work with the Americans to achieve this goal.  

This point is even more important today because the problem of North American security has changed in one very important way. During the 1940s and 1950s, the Americans had to defend Canada in order to protect themselves because of the importance of the airspace over the Canadian Arctic. Working with Canada made this task easier because of the need to build radar facilities on Canadian soil and to co-ordinate USAF operations with the RCAF. However, the United States government now has the option of improving the security of their homeland by toughening the Canada-U.S. border if it ever concludes that the situation in Canada seriously endangers American security. Consequently, it is even more important for the Canadian government to ensure, whether through their own or co-operative efforts with the U.S. that the continent remains secure. This lesson leads to one final point that Canadian ministers and officials need to better manage the political aspects of this relationship.

cites the figure of 24 Canadian officers on the Great Lakes versus over 2000 Coast Guard Officers for the Americans.
As shown by this dissertation, in the 1940s and 1950s, Canadian ministers and officials felt that as long as they could keep information of these initiatives from the Canadian public, they could minimize any political fallout. In this period, this tactic was quite successful largely because of the strong Cold War consensus that existed in both English and French Canada despite the fact it was not acknowledged by Canadian ministers and officials. In fact, it was American officials who often noted that the Canadian public was much more supportive of these joint defence measures than the Canadian government admitted. The effectiveness of simply not telling the Canadian people what was going on, however, rapidly declined after this period due to a number of factors including the waning of this consensus as well as the rapid growth of anti-American sentiment that was fuelled by the Vietnam War and Canadian distrust of presidents such as Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush. What this has meant is that it has become more difficult to get joint defence measures approved in Canada, particularly since Canadian ministers and officials have rarely taken the offensive to explain the realities of the relationship to the Canadian public. They have not done this for the very same reason that St. Laurent’s Cabinet did not, because they believed there are no votes in it. Furthermore, many governments since this period have made this problem worse by attempting to use anti-American sentiment in order to benefit their chances of re-election. Ironically enough, this tactic was predicted by External Affairs in a report from 1951 when they noted that any Canadian government would be “subject to the temptation to pull the Eagle’s feathers in order to gain more support in Canada.”

8 The United States and Canada Reciprocity in Defence, 5.
9 A Survey of Relations Between Canada and the United States, June 20 1951, 73/1223 Raymont Collection, Box 113, File 2511 A Survey of Relations Between Canada and the United States, DHH, 13.
example was Paul Martin’s decision to say no to the U.S. on Ballistic Missile Defence in 2005.

The result of these attitudes can be seen in how the Civil Assistance Plan was presented to the public by the government of Stephen Harper in February 2008. Despite the fact that this initiative was a relatively simple measure that would allow “the military from one nation to support the armed forces of the other nation during a civil emergency,” Harper’s Cabinet decided to limit the disclosure of this agreement. As a result, Canadian opposition politicians claimed that they found out about this initiative from American military websites. The government did accomplish their goal of minimizing political controversy over this issue. But, at the same time, these tactics could have backfired because most of the criticism of the agreement from the opposition and the media was centred on how “neither the federal government nor the Canadian military gave public notice of talks that led to the creation of the Civil Assistance Plan.” The fact that information on such an elementary measure in this defence relationship was released in this way is another sign of how things need to change. Ultimately, Canadian ministers and officials face a choice. They can either continue to do what they have been doing and react to whatever criticism they face or they can take the offensive and confront the critics of this defence relationship in a public debate that is very winnable. In fact, the historical experience shown by this thesis is that there is very little to hide about Canada’s defence ties with the United States. However, it is doubtful that any Canadian government would actually follow through on this course.

Fortunately, for the foreseeable future, this factor is not as critical an issue as it could be. For all the tightening of the Canada-U.S. border and its pernicious impact on the Canadian trade, the emphasis of U.S. foreign policy has remained on “the away game,” as the United States has continued to expand its global military presence to fight the “global war on terror.” As Joel Sokolsky has argued, this defence relationship is “special but not especially important” for the United States. However, it would be a mistake to assume that this situation will always remain this way, particularly if Washington ever decides that its foreign commitments are too expensive. Canadian nationalists and leftists may enjoy Andrew Bachevich’s latest book Washington Rules, and its critique of assumptions which have guided U.S. foreign policy since the beginning of the Cold War. But if his suggestion that the U.S. should withdraw from the world and move to a policy of “tending its garden” in the Western Hemisphere was ever followed then this defence relationship would become of far more important for the Americans. While this is not a likely outcome, the possibility that it could occur further illustrates the significance of this relationship for Canada and the need to study it. Indeed, as Dean Acheson argued, although Canadians always complain about the U.S. taking them for granted, it is equally important that “Canadians must never take Americans for granted, either.”

13 Andrew Bachevich, Washington Rules: America’s Path to Permanent War (Macmillan, USA, 2010). His critique centres on attacking the idea that the United States needs to maintain a global military presence to preserve peace and stability in the world.
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