

the United States. As aviation develops the northern routes will increasingly become world commercial highways. By the same token they will become potential routes for hostile powers with designs against the United States, and could conceivably be used by the United States for offensive purposes.

- (d) Although no immediate threat of attack may be discerned, neither country is likely again to reduce its defences to the pre-war level.

Canadian Defence Policy in the Post-War Period

14. In the circumstances, the United States may be expected to take an active interest in Canadian defence preparations in the future. Moreover, that interest may be expressed with an absence of the tact and restraint customarily employed by the United Kingdom in putting forward defence proposals. Pressure along these lines will doubtless develop in accordance with the trend of United States post-war foreign policy. It is unlikely that isolationism in the United States will return to its traditional form, but is quite possible that it may develop as a militant form of continental defence-mindedness. If such is the case, the pressure on Canada to maintain defences at a higher level than would seem necessary from the point of view of purely Canadian interests might be very strong.

15. Since Canada lies astride the overland route between the United States and the U.S.S.R., any serious deterioration in their relations would be embarrassing to Canada. The best hope of Canada being able to avoid such embarrassments lies in the establishment of an effective world security organization in which the leading military powers actively co-operate to secure jointly the settlement of international disputes.

16. Whether there is a security organization or not, it is clear that defence planning for Canada and the United States should be co-ordinated. This co-ordination, which would in fact constitute a regional defence system, would not conflict with the purposes of the world security organization, but would take its place as part of a plan of universal security. In this way one part of the world would be better provided against outside attack, and would be available as a safe base from which punitive operations might be launched against a country attempting to break the peace.

17. To facilitate this co-ordination the Permanent Joint Board on Defence is an appropriate piece of machinery; it has been in existence since 1940 and there is an understanding between Canada and the United States that the Board will continue to function after the war although no treaty obligation exists. Through the Board, representatives of two countries (the one great and the other relatively weak) meet together on an equal footing. It is quite conceivable that in the post-war period there may not be a great deal for the Board to do. Nevertheless, its mere existence is a useful public symbol of the mutual confidence which exists between Canada and the United States. Moreover, there is a great advantage in having available a body that can consider potentially controversial questions of defence before government policy in either country has become fixed. It is, therefore, desirable to retain the Board not only as a body to recommend joint defence plans, but as an agency which will facilitate discussion and the exchange of information.

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