

drafted the famous press release providing for a joint approach to mutual problems of defence.<sup>17</sup> Although the press release has been widely quoted elsewhere, it is worth quoting here since it was of special concern to Canadian-Newfoundland relations during the War:

The Prime Minister and the President have discussed the mutual problems of defence relating 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.

The Permanent Joint Board on Defence shall commence immediate studies relating to the 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.

The Ogdensburg Declaration, although a singularly vague and imprecise document, marked a profound change in the approach to defence policy by both the United States and Canada. Hitherto defence had been considered an aspect of the national sovereignty of each country and therefore of unilateral concern to each. The Declaration on the other hand assumed that at least in some respects defence was a mutual problem demanding a joint approach in the interest of the security of both Canada and the United States.

The positive proposal which institutionalized the new concept of defence was the establishment of a Permanent Joint Board on Defence whose function would be to "study" the problems of defence of the "north half of the Western Hemisphere". The Board was promptly appointed after the Ogdensburg meeting, and it began work within a week. Its first and most urgent problem was that of defence of Newfoundland, which had been consulted neither about its establishment nor about its purposes.

In the absence of agreed defence plans the Board, at its first substantive meeting, approved an appreciation of Newfoundland's strategic significance, both for the defence of Canada and the United States and for the protection of transatlantic trade and air routes. It found Newfoundland inadequately defended, thereby endangering the security of Canada and the United States.

The Board's appreciation of the strategic importance of Newfoundland, adopted in its second meeting, sounded a distinctly North American note:

The island of Newfoundland occupies a commanding position at the entrance to the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes waterway and on the flank of the sea route between the Atlantic seaboard of North America and Northern Europe. It is on the direct air route between the East Coast of the United States and Northern Europe. It is the point in North America nearest to Europe, from which, if occupied by an enemy, further operations against the North American continent might be effectively initiated. As such, it should be adequately defended.<sup>18</sup>

Since Canada had assumed responsibilities for the defence of Newfoundland, the Board tended to treat Newfoundland as if it were a part of Canada

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<sup>17</sup> Pickersgill, J. W. *op. cit.* p. 130-135.

<sup>18</sup> Document 210.