

in Europe. In the early 1950s, the Board was directly involved in much of the planning for North American defence but, as the threat to North America became more direct, with the development first of bomber aircraft of intercontinental range and later of long-range missiles, such planning was increasingly carried out by the military staffs of the two governments. The Board was closely involved in the planning of the three radar lines (the Pinetree Line, the Mid-Canada Line, and the Distant Early Warning Line) successively constructed across the continent at increasingly northerly latitudes to give warning of attack across the Arctic. Its role was more indirect in the construction by the United States of the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System (BMEWS) with sites in Alaska, Greenland, and Britain, in the establishment of NORAD in 1957, and in the resolution, in 1963, of the troublesome problem of nuclear warheads for Canadian weapons systems.

In recent years, the Board has found its most useful role in the broad area of helping to mesh military requirements with political, economic and other considerations in order to facilitate the implementation of continental defence programmes in ways satisfactory to the two governments. Recent technological advances have made the problems of North American defence more complex, and the arrangements to provide for that defence have become correspondingly more complicated and extensive. Such defensive arrangements now impinge much more actively than in the first post-war decade upon the everyday life of North America, giving rise to a host of problems of a political, economic or social nature. The task of reconciling the requirements of continental defence with the various other objectives of North American society is a complex and delicate one, involving the careful consideration of many sensitive factors that often cannot be separated by the normal dividing-line between military and political matters. It is in this area that, in recent years, the Board has found its most useful role, a role not readily filled by any other of the several channels now available to the United States and Canadian Governments for dealing with matters of joint concern.

The mixed military and civil membership of the Board, the prestige and experience it has acquired through the years and the flexibility of its procedures give it unique qualifications for dealing with the sensitive and complex problems which, under modern conditions, arise in connection with North American defence. The Board can be expected to continue to make an important and valuable contribution to the maintenance of mutually beneficial relations between Canada and the United States.

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