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Directorate of History
National Defence Headquarters
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0K2

July 1986

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R E P O R T NO. 34
HISTORICAL SECTION (G.S.)
ARMY HEADQUARTERS

DECLASSIFIED
AUTHORITY: DHD 3-12
BY CLW FOR DHIST NDHQ
DATE: MAR 17 1987

24 Jan 50

Canadian-American Co-operation in the
Defence of Sault Ste. Marie, 1941-1944

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MAPS

Joint Defence of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, 1941-1944
Northern Defences - Radar Screen Protecting Sault Ste.
Marie, July 1942 - February 1944

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1. The object of this report is to discuss the defence plans and measures undertaken by Canada and the United States for the protection of the canals and waterway at Sault Ste. Marie during the Second World War. It is intended to be read in conjunction with the Preliminary Narrative, History of Canadian Military Policy and of Canadian Military Forces in Canada and Adjacent Regions, 1939-1945, particularly Chapters Eleven and Twelve, which deal with Canadian-American military co-operation in Canada's eastern and western defences. Reference should also be made to Chapter Eight (paragraphs 161-177), which discusses Canadian concern over the defence of Hudson Bay and the Northwest Territories prior to the entry of the United States into the war.

2. Canada's plans for the guarding of vulnerable points have received full discussion in Chapter Two (paragraphs 64 and 65), Chapter Five (paragraphs 136 to 159), and Chapter Thirteen (paragraphs 147-150). In connection with Section 12 of Defence Scheme No. 3, Sault Ste. Marie headed the list of vulnerable points "to be afforded military protection from the beginning of the precautionary stage or on the outbreak of war" (H.Q.S. 3498, vol 9: Appx "A" to letter C.G.S. to D.Os.C., 9 Sep 38).

IMPORTANCE OF THE SOO

3. Controlling all shipping entering or leaving Lake Superior, the St. Mary River* and the canals at Sault Ste. Marie constitute a "bottleneck" in every sense of the word. During the relatively short navigation season they handle a vast amount of shipping for the grain-carrying trade and the movement of iron ore to such American industrial centres as Chicago and Detroit. In 1929 more traffic passed through the Soo than through the Panama and Suez canals combined; in 1942, due to heavy war requirements for iron ore, the total freight exceeded 120,000,000 tons (Canada, 1945, Official Handbook of Present Conditions and Recent Progress, p. 138).

4. The canals and locks at Sault Ste. Marie are constructed to overcome a difference in level of approximately 19 feet between Lakes Huron and Superior. The earliest canal at this point consisted of one lock built in 1797-98 by the North-West Fur Company. It was destroyed in 1814 by American troops, and no new lock was constructed until 1852-55, when one was built on the American side of the river. This was superseded by four modern locks constructed at intervals between the years 1881 and 1919,

* In American publications this is referred to as the St. Mary's River.

one of these being subsequently replaced by the MacArthur Lock in 1942-43. Placed side by side, these four American locks are served by two canals - the North Canal leading to the Davis and Sabin Locks, the South Canal to the Poe and MacArthur Locks. (Statistical Report of Lake Commerce Passing Through Canals at Sault Ste. Marie, a U.S. Government publication available in the library of the Department of Transport, Ottawa). The present Canadian canal was completed in 1895, and consists of a single lock 900 feet by 60 feet, with a minimum depth of water on sills of 19 feet (The Canada Year Book, 1926, p. 627).

5. Collier's World Atlas and Gazetteer (1945) states that the population of the American city is approximately 15,000, that of the Canadian over 25,000. Many of the latter are employed by the Algoma Steel Corporation, whose plant at nearby Steelton has a capacity of about 720,000 tons annually and is Canada's chief producer of heavy structural shapes (Canada, 1945, op cit, p. 126). Navigation and steel, therefore, cause Sault Ste. Marie to be of double importance in North American economy.

6. During the First World War, the inland position of Sault Ste. Marie provided absolute security from the danger of attack, except by possible saboteurs. The development of long-range bombers, however, produced in the Second World War very realistic fears of a sudden air raid, particularly from the North.* A study of a globe or a polar projection map indicates that the air distance from Norway to the Soo is practically the same as to New York, and that the direct route of approximately 3000 miles passes over terrain where observers would be few and winter nights long. There was also a definite possibility that this route need not be traversed by a non-stop flight. During the winters of 1942-43 and 1943-44 the Germans were able to set up weather stations on the north-east coast of Greenland and maintain them for some months**; a refuelling base in the same area might conceivably have been established and maintained without much greater difficulty. There was also the possibility that during the summer months under-water and even surface vessels, such as aircraft carriers, might have been able to enter Hudson Bay, if not James Bay, to set up a second and ultimate base for attack on North American industry.

7. From a historical point of view,*** it is interesting to note that the organization of a military unit at Sault Ste. Marie dates from the year 1861, when a company was formed from the Sedentary Militia at the time of the crisis between Great Britain and the United States over the "Trent" affair. In 1865 there was organized in the area a Volunteer Infantry Company, which in 1879 was divided into a Half Battery of Mountain Artillery (allotted two 7 pounders) and a Half Company of Infantry. The former became non-effective in 1892, but the Soo continued to be the headquarters of various infantry units under the control of Military District No. 2. That the strategic importance of Sault Ste. Marie was receiving close attention early in the present century appears in the following notes submitted by a Major Vernon Eaton, R.C.A., after a tour of the Canadian West in 1906 with the Inspector-General (Lord Aylmer).

* File H.Q.S. 5285 contains numerous letters and marked maps from individuals and town councils expressing concern over this danger.

** See Preliminary Narrative (Canada) Chapter Eleven, para 51.

*** ((H.S.)142.83H49013(D1) contains a historical sketch of the militia localized at Sault Ste. Marie. Paragraphs 7, 8, and 9 are based on this.

The bridge could be blown up and the canal on the American side destroyed if careful previous arrangements were made to do so on or just before the declaration of war.

The canal on our side could then be defended for some time before destruction.

The steel works adjacent to the Canadian Canal would make a Naval Yard. But its defence calls for at least 1 battery of 6" guns and a battalion of infantry.

(H.Q.C. 496: Eaton to D. of O.
and S.D., 18 Sep 06)

8. During the First World War the 51st Regiment (Soo Rifles), in addition to sending numerous drafts overseas, provided guards for the canal and local wireless station. The Soo Rifles were reconstituted in 1923 as The Sault Ste. Marie Regiment, which in the reorganization of 1936 was amalgamated with parts of The Algonquin Regiment to form The Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury Regiment (M.G.). By authority of Section 63 of The Militia Act, details were called out upon active service on the eve of the Second World War (G.O. 124 dated 26 Aug 39). These details assumed guard duties at the canal until relieved by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police on 1 Nov 39, under the arrangements made previously for guarding vulnerable points.

9. On 29 Jul 41 the Regiment was mobilized for active service as an infantry battalion (G.O. 63/42). It left the Soo in December for training at Camp Borden and later at Niagara-on-the-Lake, performing guard duty for a time at the Welland Canal. In April 1942 it proceeded to Vancouver Island to form part of the 6th Division. Apart from a short spell at Wainwright, Alta., it remained on the Pacific Coast until disbanded 31 Oct 45 (G.O. 18/46). A 2nd (Reserve) Battalion continued as a machine gun unit until redesignated, effective 24 Mar 42, the 2nd (Reserve) Battalion The Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury Regiment (G.O. 185/42). After the war this Battalion was converted to and redesignated the 58th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment (Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury Regiment), R.C.A., effective 1 Apr 46 (G.O. 115/46). Also localized at Sault Ste. Marie during the Second World War was No. 23 Infantry Reserve Company, Veterans Guard of Canada. Authorized effective 24 May 40 (G.O. 198/40), this unit was redesignated the 23rd (Infantry) Reserve Company with effect from 1 Apr 42 (G.O. 137/42), and after hostilities ceased was disbanded on 31 Oct 45 (G.O. 402/45).

AMERICAN CONCERN BEFORE PEARL HARBOR

10. Well before entering the war, the United States showed an obvious interest in the defence of the Soo. The Journal of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence records that a full discussion on the subject took place at the 14th Meeting on 20 Jan 41.

In view of the vital military importance of the Sault Ste. Marie Canals and the St. Mary's River to the defence programme of the United States, and the vulnerability of the navigation channel, the Board agreed as its Thirteenth Recommendation that each Government should constitute a single authority to be responsible for the safety of navigation through these waters, and that each such authority be clothed with the necessary

powers and required to co-operate with the other in taking all measures necessary for the purpose.

(P.J.B.D. Journal, 14th Meeting,
20 Jan 41)

11. While Canada continued to regard the R.C.M.P. as the responsible body, it soon became obvious that the United States had a much more military interest in the matter. An extract from a U.S. War Department General Order dated 6 Jan 41 to take effect 15 Mar 41 stated:

There is hereby created within the Sixth Corps Area a district, to be known as the 'District of Sault Ste. Marie'. This district will include Chippewa County, Michigan, and its contiguous waters, Fort Brady, Michigan, and the St. Mary's Falls Canal at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

The district commander will command all troops in the military service of the United States...

(H.Q.T.S. 1225-Pl-44: AG 821
(1-6-41) Extract from U.S. War
Dept G.O. 2, to take effect 15
Mar 41, issued by G.C. Marshall,
C. of S.)

This was followed by a Presidential Order, dated 17 Mar 41, which declared that "it will be the duty of the district commander to prescribe the necessary regulations and, with the cooperation of other services of the Federal Government in the vicinity, to take all the appropriate and lawful measures for the protection of the canal locks, and waterways mentioned from obstruction or injury from any source" (ibid: AG 320.2 (3-17-41), Presidential Order, 17 Mar 41).

12. On 10 Jun 41 Colonel F.E. Sharpless, Officer Commanding Fort Brady, at his own request visited the headquarters of the local Reserve unit of the Canadian Army to confer with Lt-Col Wm. Maybin, Officer Commanding S. Ste. M. & Sud (M.G.). The latter had obtained the concurrence of a senior staff officer of M.D. 2, on condition that he forward a synopsis of what transpired. This read as follows:

Col Sharpless has been asked by Corps H.Q. for a defence plan against any form of attack on the waterway system of the St. Mary's River, and the Soo Canal, which it is considered, is vital to all industry in the United States.

The grave danger is believed to be from the large communistic element in the districts bordering Lake Superior, from the numerous fifth columnist elements and other subversive groups also organized in those localities. It is pointed out that 85% of all the iron ore used in Canada and the United States passes through this bottle-neck, and that the interruption of this trade for even a week would seriously hamper the war effort of both countries.

The possibility of a sacrifice attack by parachute

troops as an incentive to these elements, and in conjunction with them, is taken into account. This would come from the North.

(H.Q.S. 5839, vol 3: Synopsis of Conversation Sharpless and Maybin, 11 Jun 41)

13. Lt-Col Maybin further reported that the existing defence arrangements on the Canadian side consisted of "a guard of twenty-three men (veterans mostly) under the R.C.M.P., of company arrangements for the defence of their own plants by The Algoma Steel Corp. and the Chromium Mining and Smelting Corp. which are not considered adequate, and by what help the local regiment could give" (*ibid*). Although "fully informed" of these preparations and in close touch with the R.C.M.P., the American commander admittedly had a much more ambitious project in mind. The report said, in conclusion:

His plan, not fully formulated, calls for a perimeter defence of the whole area, the establishment of a bridgehead, about forty miles long on this side of the river, occupied, of course, by Canadian troops, and a co-ordinated plan, worked out by representatives of the armies of both countries, this to include:

- (a) A Radio Warning Net
- (b) A Bridgehead on the North side of the river
- (c) Aircraft Defence
- (d) Actual occupation of sensitive areas by armed troops

(*ibid*)

14. In commenting on the report, Brigadier M.A. Pope (A.C.G.S.) remarked that "As this facility is not considered to be exposed to attack by the Armed Forces of the enemy its protection was made the responsibility of the R.C.M.P. Commissioner Wood has taken charge and his report...indicates that his protective measures meet with approval of U.S. Army officers concerned." (*ibid*: Pope to D.M.O. & I., 16 Jun 41). This information was passed to the D.O.C. M.D. 2 (Maj-Gen C.F. Constantine) with the suggestion "that it may be possible for you to implement some of the features of the larger scheme envisaged by Col Sharpless in the local application of the internal security measures" (*ibid*: C.G.S. to D.O.C. M.D. 2, 17 Jun 41).

15. No mention of the Soo was made in ABC-22, the Joint Canadian-United States Basic Defence Plan No. 2, prepared by the Service Members of the P.J.B.D. in the summer of 1941. Although paragraph 12 of the Plan stated that "For all matters requiring common action, each nation will require its commanders in all echelons and services, on their own initiative, to establish liaison with and co-operate with appropriate commanders of the other nation", it went on to list only the senior naval, army and air force officers of both countries responsible for coastal defence as the "principal commanders" who were to co-operate under its terms. ((H.S.) W.F.S. 11-3-1-4: ABC-22.) ABC-22 as a whole dealt with coastal areas rather than with the interior, and on the date of the Pearl Harbor attack was placed in effect in so far as it applied to Japan only. Later that month it became applicable against Germany, Italy and Japan.*

* See Preliminary Narrative (Canada), Chapter Ten, paragraphs 130-134, Appx "E".

INCREASED CONCERN AFTER PEARL HARBOR

16. Subsequent to the entry of the United States into the war, the P.J.B.D. on 30 Dec 41 passed its Twenty-Second Recommendation, which read as follows:

That the United States and Canadian Governments now authorize the Commanders named in paragraph 12 of ABC-22, or their duly authorized representatives, to effect by mutual agreement any arrangements they deem necessary for the perfection of preparation for the common defence, including but not limited to, the installations of accessory equipment in the territory of either, the transit of armed forces, equipment or defence materials into or through the territory of either, and the utilization by either nation of the base and military facilities of the other.

(Preliminary Narrative (Canada)
Chapter Ten, Appx "B")

Specific discussion of the importance of the Soo took place at the next meeting, the Journal of the Board for 20 Jan 42 recording that:

...it was agreed that the appropriate authorities of each Government should be requested to review the situation with a view to speeding up the passage of ships through the canals. It was also felt that all defence provisions at Sault Ste. Marie should be reviewed in order to make certain that they are being maintained, and if necessary, supplemented to meet any problems that may arise.

(P.J.B.D. Journal, 25th Meeting,
20 Jan 42)

It would appear that the matter had been initiated by the U.S. Army Members, whose progress report submitted to that meeting contained the following statement:

United States is going into this question very carefully and suggests Canadian authorities also investigate and determine what, if anything further, can be done on the Canadian side to guarantee the uninterrupted and most efficient operation of this critical installation.

(Ibid: Report of Service Members,
U.S. Army)

17. The Department of National Defence at once passed this request to other Government agencies concerned and asked for their co-operation. With respect to the speeding up of traffic, Mr. C.P. Edwards (Deputy Minister of Transport) replied that the previous season there had been little congestion, if any, at the Canadian canal, which had handled, in addition to the normal traffic, any ships routed by the Americans to that side. He added that traffic lights were to be installed to facilitate night traffic. (H.Q.S. 5839, vol 3: Edwards to DesRosiers, 12 Feb 42). On the question of defensive measures, Commissioner S.T. Wood of the R.C.M.P. replied as follows:

Recent action has been taken for further collaboration at this point, and close liaison is maintained with the United States Authorities at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, who appear to be well satisfied with the protective measures presently being carried out on the Canadian Locks, by this Force.

(H.Q.T.S. 1225-Pl-44: Wood to Pope, 22 Jan 42. This file is held by D.M.O. & P.)

18. Advice on anti-aircraft installations was sought from Lt-Col F.C. Wallace, D.S.O., M.C., an officer of the Royal Artillery seconded to the National Research Council. In his opinion the north side of the river required a minimum of eight heavy A.A. guns, although he strongly recommended twelve heavy and four light A.A. guns "if these could be made available". He believed that the likely line of approach by a bomber would be to follow the river, which flows east at this point. Considering the area to be too large for a site at the centre only, he suggested one site up and another down the river, with a possible additional site to the north. Stating that at each site there should be a battery of four heavy A.A. guns, he added:

If the U.S. authorities provided two 4 gun stations south of the river corresponding with the 2 suggested, an 8 gun density would be available along the two likely lines of approach...

...If there [these] could be made available, I would strongly recommend 4 light A.A. guns being placed in position in the close proximity of the Locks and Power House.

If G.L. sets* were available, searchlights would not be required, but if searchlights are used a minimum of 12 would be necessary and 16 would be more preferable.

(H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 2: Wallace to Jenkins, 23 Jan 42)

19. In forwarding this report the Directorate of Military Operations and Intelligence appreciated the greater efficiency of 4-gun stations but, due to shortages of equipment, suggested that "the ultimate Canadian A.A. defences for Sault Ste. Marie" would be six 3.7 in guns (distributed in three 2-gun sections) and four 40 mm. A.A. guns, "co-ordinated with the U.S.A.A. defences". Moreover, in view of the slight risk of enemy attack**, the distance inland, and the shortage of A.A. equipment, the recommendation was made that "no allotment of A.A. guns should be made to Sault Ste. Marie at the present time but that the matter should be reviewed in six months time". (Ibid, vol 1: Lt-Col J.E. Lyon for D.M.O. & I. to V.C.G.S., 24 Jan 42). Maj-Gen Pope (then V.C.G.S.) added the following note:

As the traffic through the Cdn Soo Canal is but 1/25 of that through the U.S. Soo Canal the responsibility clearly lies with our U.S. friends.

- Gun laying equipment controlled by radar.

** The Chiefs of Staff Committee had designated the area to be in this category.

I therefore consider that a 6 months hoist is not too long.

(Ibid: Minute, V.C.G.S. to C.G.S.,
29 Jan 42)

The C.G.S. (Lt-Gen K. Stuart) at once agreed. In a later memorandum, dated 2 Feb 42, General Pope re-emphasized his point while making the following statement:

Now that the U.S. are in the war, they are taking a very serious view of the guarding and defence of the Sault Ste. Marie canals. As the U.S. steel production depends upon the flow of iron ore eastwards through the Soo, United States have made this an Army matter and have even decided to provide some anti-aircraft defence at this point... I believe that what we have done is adequate. Of course, we have no anti-aircraft equipments available to allot to this task.

(Cdn Sec P.J.B.D. Memoranda by
Maj-Gen M.A. Pope, vol 3: Pope
to C.G.S., 2 Feb 42. This file
is held by D.M.O. & P.)

20. At its 26th Meeting held on 25-26 Feb 42, the P.J.B.D. again discussed the defence of the Soo. The threat to this area was considered to be from Europe or from a possible air base in the Hudson - James Bay region, although the R.C.A.F. stressed that air attack could not take place from these bays until after the opening of navigation, normally about 25 Jul. The R.C.A.F. had reconnoitred that area the previous year and had linked all radio facilities with the Aircraft Detection Corps, and a more extensive reconnaissance was planned for the danger period. The U.S. members declared that their country intended to take more definite steps with regard to Sault Ste. Marie.

The Board was informed that United States defensive forces in the Military District would be augmented in the immediate future by an antiaircraft regiment (less one gun battalion) and by a squadron of pursuit planes and a battery of barrage balloons as soon as equipment becomes available and that a general officer will be assigned to command the Military District.

(H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 1: Lyon to
D.S.D., 2 Mar 42, Appx 2)

In view of this extensive programme, the P.J.B.D. passed its Twenty-Fifth Recommendation, which read as follows:

- (a) That the Royal Canadian Air Force undertake to make an immediate and comprehensive further study of the data available regarding the danger of air attack to the Sault Ste. Marie area.
- (b) That the Canadian Army assign a 4-gun, heavy, anti-aircraft battery to Sault Ste. Marie, to protect the Canadian locks and to tie in with the United States forces in order that all-round zone defences may be established. In the event of Canada being unable to provide this equipment within the near future, the United States Army endeavour to lend the

necessary guns and stores for manning by the Canadian Army until such time as Canada can meet this commitment from her own production.

- (c) That the said Canadian anti-aircraft battery come under the operational command of the Commanding General, Sault Ste. Marie Military District, (Michigan).

(See Preliminary Narrative (Canada)
Chapter Ten, Appx "B")

21. The Department of National Defence at once proceeded to form a battery to man four 3.7 in guns, the C.G.S. giving his approval on 1 Mar 42. It was understood that the guns to be loaned temporarily by the U.S. Army might become available by early summer. (H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 1: Lyon to D.S.D., 2 Mar 42). The submission by the C.G.S. called for the unit to be formed progressively by the provision and training of a cadre of Active Service officers and other ranks, then by the posting of trained "R" recruits. The estimated cost for the fiscal year 1942-43 was \$667,720. (Ibid: C.G.S. to the Minister, 6 Mar 42, approved 10 Mar 42). P.C. 25/2570 dated 2 Apr 42 completed the authorization of the 40th Anti-Aircraft Battery (Type "H")*R.C.A., noting those sections of the Twenty-Fifth Recommendation of the P.J.B.D. which stated that this Canadian unit was "to tie in with the United States forces" and to be under American "operational command". It was placed on Active Service by G.O. 118/42 (effective 10 Mar 42) and concentrated in M.D. 2. Due to lack of training equipment there, and anticipating that its own would not be available for "at least two months", the unit was sent, at the end of May, to Atlantic Command for training on 3.7 in operational equipment of 1 A.A. Bty at Halifax (ibid, vol 2: Tel Trng 593, GS to G.O.C.-in-C Atlantic Comd, 12 May 42; see also Tel Q1207, Atlantic Comd to Defensor, 13 May 42).

AMERICAN "OCCUPATION" OF THE CANADIAN SOO

22. The Americans lost no time in implementing their plans. During February 1942 five U.S. officers made a reconnaissance of the area about the Ontario city. In reporting this to Headquarters M.D. 2, the Officer Commanding the 2nd (Reserve) Battalion The Sault Ste. Marie & Sudbury Regiment (M.G.) stated that they had done this "with a view, apparently, to selecting suitable A.A. gun and searchlight positions", and he left with Lt-Col K.M. Holloway (G.S.O. I) a map showing the "rough proposed dispositions" (H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 1: Constantine to Secty D.N.D., 19 Mar 42, with map). This map (National Topographic Series, Canada 1 inch to 1 mile, Sheet 41, K/9, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario) showed sites for L.A.A. guns on either side of the Canadian canal, and two sites for medium-heavy A.A. guns - one site west of Steelton at map reference 7923, the other east of the Soo at map reference 8722. It also indicated that detectors would be placed in a ring well outside the city and that the Exhibition Grounds would be used as quarters.

23. There is no record of this action having been reported to Ottawa through military channels until Maj-Gen Constantine

* Type "H" indicated a battery of four 3.7 in A.A. guns consisting of a battery headquarters and two sections. Type "H2" was the designation of an eight-gun battery of the same calibre organized into four sections; type "2H" an eight-gun battery of two troops. The War Establishment of 40 A.A. Bty (Type "H") originally provided for a total strength of six officers and 152 other ranks. An amendment effective 1 May 42 increased the number of other ranks to 171; another effective 1 May 43 reduced their number to 145.

wrote on 19 Mar 42, when he added that the Commanding Officer 2 Bn S.Ste.M. & Sud (M.G.) had just advised the following:

Wish to report that on Saturday, March 7, 1942, this unit was contacted by Lt-Col MacMullen and Major Anderson, both from the American Soo.*

The American officers wished to make a reconnaissance with respect to adding one (1) more A.A. Battery for defence of this area.

The location chosen was approximately midway between those already indicated on the map which was marked, and left with Lt-Col Holloway, G.S.O. I, on February 28, 1942.

(Ibid)

On the copy forwarded by the D.O.C., a question mark at map reference 8523 indicated the site of the "proposed additional battery" to provide protection from the north.

24. Previously, Lt-Col J.H. Jenkins of the Directorate of Military Operations and Intelligence had informed the Private Secretary to the Minister of National Defence that "in the discussion at the Board meeting and in any subsequent correspondence there has been no mention at any time of U.S. army personnel being stationed in the Canadian section of the Sault Ste. Marie for the purpose of manning A.A. guns". He stated, however, that there was a possibility that if the United States made a temporary loan of four A.A. guns in accordance with the Twenty-Fifth Recommendation, "they may be accompanied by a small party, who will assist in maintenance duties until the Canadian personnel are familiar with the U.S. equipment". (Ibid, vol 2: D.M.O. & I. to P.S., 10 Mar 42, with note "Original sent by hand to P.S. in H. of C.") Maj-Gen Constantine's letter came as a surprise, therefore, causing Lt-Col Jenkins to forward a copy at once to Maj-Gen Pope in Washington** with the following comments:

...It would appear that the U.S. Army is planning to site some of the American manned A.A. equipments on the Canadian side.

There is no information available at these Headquarters regarding the A.A. defences which the U.S. Army plan to site in the Canadian section of the Sault, nor whether they plan to erect or rent accommodations for the U.S. personnel manning these equipments.

(Ibid: vol 1: Jenkins to Pope, 21 Mar 42)

In order that the information would be forthcoming at the next meeting of the P.J.B.D., he suggested that this matter might be drawn to the attention of Lt-Gen S.D. Embick, the senior U.S. Army member. Maj-Gen Pope has noted in his diary that on 25 Mar 42 he saw Lt-Col R.W. Douglass, who on 12 Feb had become U.S.A.A.C. Member of the Board, and asked him "to obtain details as to what U.S. proposed to do re A.A. defence at the Soo" (W.D., General Pope, 25 Mar 42). The following day General Pope, apparently without having received a reply, left for Ottawa to attend a meeting of the Board.

* The names of American officers are frequently misspelled in Canadian correspondence. Corrections have been made in the quotations cited.

** On 15 Feb 42 Maj-Gen Pope was appointed representative of the War Cabinet in Washington.

25. While he was en route there, further startling developments were brought to the attention of Lt-Col Jenkins, who has recorded the following:

At 1630 hours 26th March Dr. Keenleyside External Affairs telephoned to advise that he had been informed by Immigration that the U.S. Army Commander at Sault Ste. Marie Michigan had requested permission to obtain suitable sites and accommodation for approximately 600 members of the U.S. Army who would be manning A.A. guns, searchlights and lookout posts in Sault Ste. Marie Ontario.

He also stated that this matter had not been arranged by consultation between the State Departments in Washington and Ottawa respectively.

(H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 1: Memo by Jenkins, 27 Mar 42)

As Lt-Col Jenkins could not reach Maj-Gen Pope, Dr. H.L. Keenleyside telephoned Mr. J.D. Hickerson* of the State Department at Washington for further information.

26. The following day Mr. G.E. Nixon, M.P., (Algoma West), asked whether the U.S. Army would be manning A.A. defences in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, which was in his constituency, and if the whole area was to be under command of their officer in charge of A.A. defences in Michigan (Colonel F.T. Cruse). The inquiry was relayed through the Minister's private secretary, who was informed by Lt-Col Jenkins that the 40th A.A. Battery R.C.A. would come under the operational control of the U.S. Commander, "as it was essential that the A.A. defences of the Sault area be co-ordinated, and that to ensure all round defence it was possible that the U.S. might wish to mount some of their guns and look-out posts on the Canadian side" (*ibid*). Mr. Nixon later that day telephoned Lt-Col Jenkins himself "for confirmation of certain of these points in view of the rumour that 600 U.S. Army were moving to the Canadian Sault" (*ibid*). Lt-Col Jenkins also had a visit from a representative of the Bell Telephone Company (Mr. M.B. Hamilton), who stated that the U.S. Army were arranging for special telephone circuits in Michigan, a submarine cable across the river to be installed by the United States Coast Guard, and "a system of radiating circuits to be made available by the Bell Telephone Co. in the Ontario Sault for the U.S. Army to connect their battery and other communication lines" (*ibid*).

27. Lt-Col Jenkins discussed this turn of events with General Pope immediately on his arrival that same day, and received instructions to telephone Lt-Col Douglass in Washington. He has provided the following detailed account of what transpired:

In conversation, at 1550 hours, with Douglass I pointed out that the proposal to send 600 troops into the Canadian Sault had not been mentioned at the last meeting of the P.J.B.D. nor was it included in the 25th Recommendation, and suggested that before actual movement of troops took place that we be supplied with information in writing as to what was proposed. It was appreciated, however, that to give full coverage of the Sault area it might be necessary for the U.S. to site certain of their A.A.

* These officials were respectively Canadian and American secretaries of the P.J.B.D. In the files consulted, there is no record of their telephone conversation.

equipment on the Canadian side and in asking for this information in writing it was not the intention to restrict the U.S. Army in preparing their plans and in carrying out the necessary reconnaissance.

Douglass stated that he did not know anything about these proposed movements as his Dept had delegated authority to the local commander at the Michigan Sault, and that this was a case where the 22nd Recommendation should apply and all arrangements for installation of accessory equipment and movement of Armed forces should be dealt with by mutual agreement by the local commanders (which in their case would be U.S. Commander stationed at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan).

(Ibid)

Lt-Col Douglass promised to attempt to supply by 30 Mar a full report on the A.A. defence layout and proposed U.S. troop movements in the Ontario Soc. The memorandum stated, however, that further information was furnished almost immediately.

At 1630 hours, General Embick telephoned from Washington to say that the U.S. War Dept had been subjected to strong pressure from the U.S. Steel Industry and Congress to take immediate steps to provide adequate defences for the Sault. As a result they had moved a regiment of Infantry to the Michigan Sault in addition to the A.A. defences which were discussed at the last Board meeting. To provide adequate A.A. defence it would be necessary for some of the U.S. Heavy and Light A.A. guns, A.A.S.L. and Barrage Balloons to be sited on the Canadian side, but it was not the intention to ask Canada to man more than the four Heavy A.A. guns dealt with in the 25th Recommendation. However, the U.S. War Dept was extremely insistent that there should be no delay in proceeding with the siting and manning of the U.S. manned equipment on the Canadian side, and therefore requested that the Chief of the General Staff should arrange for the D.O.C. M.D. No. 2, or his representative, to visit Sault Ste. Marie so as to make the necessary arrangements with the U.S. Army Commander for any movement of U.S. troops to be necessary for the carrying out of the co-ordinated defence plan for the Sault Ste. Marie area.

He requested that this be treated as urgent...

(Ibid)

28. This lengthy memorandum was passed to the C.G.S. on 27 Mar by Colonel J.E. Lyon (D.M.O. & I.) with the suggestion that "the political aspect should be clarified at the earliest possible moment, in order that the way will be clear for the D.O.C. M.D. 2 to co-ordinate on the spot with the U.S. Army commander responsible for the defences at Sault Ste. Marie" (ibid: Lyon to C.G.S., 27 Mar 42). Meanwhile, on 24 Mar, the D.O.C. M.D. 2 had written to the Department asking for a committee comprising both Canadian and American representatives "to decide definitely upon the exact* locations for the installation of guns,

* The word "exact" was added in the handwriting of Maj-Gen C.F. Constantine.

accommodation, etc" at the Soo (ibid: D.O.C. M.D. 2 to Secty, D.N.D., 24 Mar 42). A reply dated 27 Mar stated that the layout of A.A. defences for the Canadian Soo was "a matter which could be taken up direct with the General Officer Commanding U.S. Army for the Sault Ste. Marie District - Michigan" (ibid: C.G.S. to D.O.C. M.D. 2, 27 Mar 42). On 29 Mar Lt-Col Jenkins telephoned Lt-Col Douglass to tell him that the G.S.C. 1 M.D. 2 had been sent to the Soo and would get in touch there with Colonel Cruse; on reporting the same to General Embick, he noted that the latter "seemed very pleased" (ibid: Memo by Jenkins, 29 Mar 42).

29. When General Pope returned to Washington on 30 Mar, one of his first acts was to ensure that the Americans knew that a Canadian officer had been sent to the Soo to ascertain from the local U.S. commander what A.A. defences they desired to set up on Canadian territory. In his diary he recorded the following reaction:

I said U.S. proposals were quite agreeable to us in principle but that we thought the pace was a bit fast. Douglass agreed and said that Hickerson of State Department was of the same mind.

... Embick was apologetic re haste of local U.S. commander at Soo with regard to installation of U.S. defences on Cdn territory.

(W.D., General Pope, 30 and 31 Mar 42)

30. In accordance with instructions from the C.G.S., Lt-Col Holloway proceeded to the Soo on 27 Mar 42. The following day he called on Colonel Cruse, being accompanied by Lt-Col L.H. Derrer, Officer Commanding the local Reserve Battalion. His report stated:

Colonel Cruse voiced the opinion that, no matter how remote air attack might be, it was felt that these vital locks must be given the maximum of protection against air attack. He further expressed the opinion, in which I entirely agree, that it was quite useless to attempt to protect the locks from air attack unless A.A. equipment was used to the best advantage on both the Canadian and American sides of the river.

(H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 1:
Constantine to Secty, D.N.D.,
30 Mar 42)

31. Colonel Cruse also stated that he anticipated having sufficient equipment on hand to instal within the next day or two a four-gun 90-mm A.A. battery at Steelton, another at the Exhibition Grounds, and a four-gun 37-mm battery at the Canadian locks. Additional equipment would include .5 in machine guns installed in the battery areas for defence against low-flying attack, an undeterminable number of barrage balloons over both the Canadian and American locks, and the necessary searchlights and detectors. Indicating these sites on the map accompanying his report, Lt-Col Holloway remarked:

It will be observed that the barrage balloon area, in fact the whole proposed anti-aircraft dispositions

include the Algoma Steel Company and the Abitibi Plant as well as the locks on the Canadian side.

I asked Colonel Cruse if he had definite instructions to provide both men and material on the Canadian side. He showed me a letter emanating from the War Department at Washington which briefly covered such a situation in principle and appeared to be an extract from the report of the jointed [sic] International Defence Committee.

Colonel Cruse informed me that he was having all these troops sent to him and that it was his responsibility to employ them to the best advantage irrespective of whether it was on the American or Canadian side of the boundary.

(Ibid)

32. When Lt-Col Holloway spoke of the Canadian A.A. battery being organized and trained for employment at the Soo, the American commander was said to have replied that he "looked forward to the day when the Canadians could take over the whole or part of the United States equipment on the Canadian side" (ibid). The Algoma Steel Corporation had agreed to the location of a battery on their property without charge; the city had similarly agreed to the use of the buildings at the Exhibition Grounds. Negotiations were in progress for the city to provide free water and light and for guns and shelters to be erected on Federal government property at the lock. The report continued:

Colonel Cruse informed me that he anticipated having the following troops under his command in the near future:-

Balloon Bty - approximately 335 all ranks

The 100th A/A Regt - approximately 1800

The 131st Infantry Regt - approximately
3200 other ranks

Colonel Cruse does not anticipate employing any of the United States infantry on the Canadian side although he asked me what steps might be taken to have Canadian personnel available in an emergency. I talked this matter over with the Officer Commanding, 2 Bn Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury Regiment and it was agreed that, as the 2 Bn is in process of re-organizing, it would be better to count on the fifty or sixty members of the local Reserve V.G. Coy of C.

(Ibid)

33. A weak point in co-operative defence at the Soo was the absence of a foot or road bridge across the St. Mary River. The sole ferry had a limited capacity of about 24 cars and the C.P.R. bridge there had openings between the ties. Colonel Cruse said he hoped to plank this bridge but was having some difficulty in the negotiations with the company and as yet had not obtained authority to purchase the lumber*. He did not then know the

* The files do not indicate when this planking was carried out, but enquiry reveals that during the war the U.S. Army used the bridge for motor transport, particularly for high vehicles which could not pass under an arch in the ferry system.

exact number of barrage balloons and searchlights to be employed in Canada but expected to have by 1 Apr "enough of all types of equipment to serve three Btys satisfactorily and provide formidable air defence" (ibid). Lt-Col Holloway invited him to Toronto to establish good liaison with M.D. No. 2.

34. In forwarding this report to the C.G.S., Colonel Lyon observed that the information appeared satisfactory with the exception of the remark by Colonel Cruse that he was looking forward to the day when the Canadians would take over the whole or part of the American equipment on the Canadian side. Colonel Lyon contrasted this with General Embick's statement that it was not the intention to ask Canada to man more than the four H.A.A. guns dealt with in the Twenty-Fifth Recommendation of the P.J.B.D.* (ibid: Lyon to C.G.S., 1 Apr 42). This matter was probably clarified verbally when on 3 Apr Colonel Cruse, accompanied by Lt-Col J.V. Houghtaling, visited Ottawa to discuss matters with Army and Air Force officers.**

35. Meanwhile there had been a conference at the Soo between military officers and officials of the Michigan Bell Telephone Company and the Bell Telephone Company of Canada regarding the international submarine cable to be laid. It was discovered that it would require at least three months for the civilians to secure permission to lay a cable, but a military project could be obtained at once. It was therefore decided to lay this cable under Army auspices and work out some arrangement of ownership and leases later. The Americans wanted it to run from ferry dock to ferry dock, although the Canadian telephone representatives advised that in 1907 a cable laid there had been pulled up by ships' anchors four times in as many weeks and then abandoned. Despite this warning the U.S. Army insisted upon approximately the same location for the submarine section, planning to construct and own it and to have it in position by the end of April 1942. (Ibid: sundry correspondence forwarded by the Bell Telephone Company of Canada)

36. Navigation at the Soo began that year on 23 Mar, when the first boat passed through on the American side. Some 18 days later the first boat passed through the Canadian canal on 9 Apr. By arrangement between those operating the various locks, it is the practice to open one canal a fortnight or so earlier than the others in order to allow these to undergo repairs after the ice has softened. (Debates, House of Commons, 1942, vol V, pp 5141-42).

37. At the meeting of the P.J.B.D. on 7-8 Apr 42, the R.C.A.F. report regarding the Twenty-Fifth Recommendation was received and discussed. This stated that a fighter unit was being placed in each danger area and, as soon as possible, an aircraft detector system would be provided to alert these fighters and give early warning of enemy aircraft. It added that, in the Soo area, there would be a common system of operational control. The Journal of the Board recorded:

The measures which had already been taken for the defence of the Sault and Arvida were reviewed in detail, and it was concluded that appropriate provisions are being made by both governments, considering the requirements elsewhere.

(P.J.B.D. Journal, 27th Meeting,
7-8 Apr 42)

* See paragraphs 20 and 27.

** Detailed notes of this visit have not been located.

Reporting to the C.G.S. that "it was a very pleasant meeting indeed", Maj-Gen Pope made the following observation with regard to remarks by Captain Forrest P. Sherman, U.S. Navy Member:

The very appreciable increases in our home defence plans, contained in our Progress Reports, created a favourable impression on our U.S. colleagues. Indeed, Sherman observed that possibly our Joint plans might with advantage be related to the needs of other theatres, thereby intimating that in respect, say, of the Soo and Arvida, we might be in danger of assigning too much equipment sorely needed farther afield. While he had no criticism to make of the provision reported, I think his word of warning was very welcome, as it shows that to his mind our arrangements are adequate and that overseas requirements should not be lost to view.

(W.D., General Pope, 10 Apr 42)

Although the urgency of Pacific defences was far from being on the wane, these remarks are of special interest as probably the first American suggestion to the P.J.B.D. that North American defences should be subordinated to the global strategy of the United Nations.

EARLY MISUNDERSTANDINGS OVER ACCOMMODATION

38. Meanwhile, officers of M.D. 2 carried out a joint reconnaissance with the Americans at the Soo. By 13 Apr two sites at map reference 8819 and 8322 had been definitely selected and manned by the 100th U.S. Coastal Artillery Regiment, according to a report by the D.O.C., who added the following:

A further site may be selected either on Old Vessel Point, map reference 8020, or the Algoma Steel Shipway, map reference 8121. Neither of these two are considered satisfactory and further study would have to be made before the site can be selected. There are approximately four hundred men manning the guns already in position at the two selected points.

(H.Q.S. 7018-1, vol 2: Constantine to Secty, D.N.D., 13 Apr 42)

Continuing, he pointed out that no suitable buildings were available for 40 A.A. Bty, R.C.A., and therefore requested authority to construct at once as permanent installations "central barracks to house four hundred" and four small huts at the gun positions. His letter concluded as follows:

The American forces are now housed in more or less derelict Exhibition sheds on the Fairgrounds. These sheds not only constitute a considerable fire hazard but are without flooring, without sanitation and are not rain proof. No facilities are available for cooking and messing which has to be done in the sleeping quarters. There are no washing facilities, shower baths, septic tanks or sewers. It is thought that no Canadian Medical Officer would sanction the use of these buildings for Canadian troops for any length of time.

(ibid)

39. From this letter, the V.C.G.S. (Maj-Gen J.C. Murchie) was in doubt as to whether Maj-Gen Constantine was proposing that Canada should construct the accommodation for U.S. Army personnel on the Canadian side, or whether he considered that the personnel of the Canadian battery should be housed with the Americans, the cost to be pro-rated. He therefore asked Maj-Gen Pope to obtain informally through Lt-Gen Embick the views of the U.S. War Department regarding accommodation "as to how they planned to arrange for its construction and for payment, with special reference as to whether there is any feeling that Canada should provide this accommodation, in addition to what is required for the 40th A.A. Bty, R.C.A.". (Ibid: Murchie to Pope, 15 Apr 42). The following reply came from Maj-Gen Pope:

Spoke War Dept and ascertained that local U.S. understanding at Soo has been that we would eventually take over both btys sited within Cdn territory...when explained we proposed to restrict ourselves to one bty only as agreed in P.J.B.D. War Dept said they would proceed on their own account with provision of appropriate accommodation for their forces permanently stationed in Canada. They plan to provide such accommodation for one A.A. Bty only as I gave them to understand that Cdn unit would be ready to take over some time this summer. Assured War Dept that our local commander would render every possible assistance in obtaining sites for hutments and so on.

(Ibid: Tel MP 15, Pope to Murchie, 18 Apr 42)

40. The substance of this report was passed at once to Maj-Gen Constantine with the following instructions:

The accommodation for this Canadian A.A. bty should be closely co-ordinated with the construction plans for the accommodation that the U.S. Army will be making for their A.A. battery in the Canadian Sault. This Canadian accommodation will be available for use by U.S. Army A.A. personnel until such time as it is required for the personnel of the 40th A.A. Bty R.C.A. Your recommendations in regard to this accommodation should be expedited.

(Ibid: Murchie to D.O.C. M.D. 2, 20 Apr 42)

The D.O.C. was also asked to obtain information regarding the establishment of the American 90 mm batteries at the Soo and the personnel manning the .5 in A.A. M.G. allotted to their defence. Such requests caused him to suggest that a liaison officer be stationed with the "Officer Commanding American Troops in Canada" and given the authority to report directly to N.D.H.Q. He remarked that the American troops were operating "under orders apparently direct from Washington" and that in contrast the Canadian channel of communication was "somewhat cumberson and not conducive to rapid action" (ibid: Constantine to Secty, D.N.D., 21 Apr 42). Ottawa replied that in reality the U.S. Commander at the Soo was under the G.O.C. Central Defenses, with headquarters at Memphis, Tennessee, and that he did not normally deal directly with the U.S. War Department. Until the Officer Commanding 40 A.A. Bty became available for liaison duties, Major G.H. Tolley, who was then

employed full time on the A. & T. Staff of 2 Bn S.Ste.M. & Sud, was to be the local officer with whom the U.S. Army commander might deal. Normal channels of communication through M.D. 2 were to remain. (Ibid: C.G.S. to D.O.C. M.D. 2, 29 Apr 42)

41. After hastening action had been called for with regard to the report, the C.G.S. on 6 May sent the following message to Maj-Gen Pope:

D.O.C. now advises that following an inspection of area with Colonel J.D. MacMullen 100th U.S. Coastal Artillery Regiment it appears that U.S. Army is still expecting Canada to provide barrack accommodation for all American troops on Canadian side. An estimated total cost of such accommodation is \$549,785. This includes 500 infantry as protection to A.A. batteries against saboteurs. In addition Colonel MacMullen requests that \$1650 be spent by Canada on temporary water lines and \$8450 for tent bottoms urgently required by U.S. Army personnel under canvas on the Canadian side. Local U.S. Commanders do not appear to have been advised regarding War Department policy...

(Ibid: Tel G.S. 0149, C.G.S. to Pope, 6 May 42)

The latter then spoke to Lt-Gen Embick, who confirmed his understanding of the position he had previously stated:

He repeated U.S. would construct all accommodation required for U.S. troops stationed on Canadian territory at Soo at their own expense. He further undertook to see that this intention was made fully known to local U.S. authorities.

(Ibid: Tel MP 22, Pope to C.G.S., 7 May 42)

COLONEL LYON'S VISIT TO THE SOO, MAY 1942

42. Colonel Lyon, meanwhile, had gone to the Soo to attend a conference on aircraft detection. While there he inspected A.A. defences on both sides of the river and met a number of American officers, including Maj-Gen Samuel T. Lawton, Commanding General, Great Lakes Section, Central Defense Command. The Sault Military District had just previously been placed under General Lawton, who reported from his Chicago headquarters direct to Memphis, Tenn. Learning that one of the U.S. 90 mm batteries was likely to be required elsewhere, Colonel Lyon on his return to Ottawa suggested that the priority of allotment of 3.7 in guns be so arranged that 40 A.A. Bty could proceed to the Soo complete with its own guns. He wrote as follows:

The procedure recommended will obviate the necessity of Canadian personnel learning the operation of U.S. equipment, in which they would no doubt be instructed by coloured personnel. We would also be definitely taking over a part of the defence of the Soo if we provided our own equipment. In addition, this would be a much more practical contribution than simply taking the equipment away from a U.S. battery.

From the administrative and accounting point of view, a great deal of work and correspondence would be eliminated.

(Ibid: Lyon to C.G.S., 8 May 42)

Although of the opinion that the priority of the 24 guns then being delivered should not be altered, both Maj-Gen Murchie and Brigadier R.B. Gibson (LCGS(A)) agreed in principle and the decision to send 40 A.A. Bty to Halifax for training resulted.*

43. During his visit to the Soo, Colonel Lyon also clarified the matter of accommodation. In conversation it developed that originally Colonel Cruse had been instructed not to undertake any construction on the Canadian side and misunderstandings had later arisen. Colonel Lyon explained to him that Canada would construct only accommodation for the personnel of the 3.7 in battery, whose total strength he gave as six officers and 171 O.R. ** Colonel Cruse stated that this would be perfectly satisfactory and would suit his needs in the event of such accommodation being occupied by his troops before the Canadians arrived. (Ibid: Appx "B", Notes on Accommodation)

44. With regard to the two American 90 mm batteries on the Canadian side, Colonel Lyon had the following to say in his report:

One of these is on the Fair Grounds, with personnel in buildings. The other is on the property of the Algoma Steel Company, with personnel in tents, living under somewhat primitive conditions. At this site, which we will take over, all facilities require to be provided, in addition to some road work.

(Ibid: Memo on Sault Ste. Marie Defences, 8 May 42)

He found that **skeleton** crews manned the guns, the rest of the manning personnel being accommodated some 200 yards away, while the "overhead" slept at the main camp. His notes stated:

The A.A. Regiment at the Soo has white officers, but all O.R. personnel are coloured. They all seem to be very keen and know their jobs. There is an absence of 'spit and polish' but a definite air of efficiency...

The searchlight layout did not seem to be having a great deal of attention, but an impressive display was put on by the lights on the night of 6th May. 14 lights were employed, and they were, unfortunately, placed around the target area in a circle so that the target would be definitely indicated to enemy planes.

(Ibid: Appx "B", Notes on Gun Layouts)

45. The conference at the Soo on 6-7 May 42 came about as a result of representations to the April meeting of the P.J.B.D. by Lt-Gen Embick regarding the vulnerability of the Soo area to air attack from James or Hudson Bay and the necessity for Canada

* See para 21.

** Cf footnote to para 21.

to organize immediately Aircraft Detection Corps for this area*. With Air Commodore F.V. Heakes, R.C.A.F., as chairman, representatives of the interested U.S. and Canadian services and governmental departments and of companies concerned with communications attended. It was decided to obtain observers by enlisting the support of the Ontario and Manitoba Provincial Forestry Services, the Ontario Provincial Police and the railways - C.N.R., C.P.R., Algoma Central, and T. and N.O. The R.C.A.F. undertook to establish Reporting Centres (Filter Centres) at Winnipeg, Sault Ste. Marie and Ottawa and arrange for direct channels of communication ("tie lines") to the Soo from the other two centres. Army links were thereby eliminated. One sub-committee made special note of the fact that in the opinion of its U.S. Army members (Colonels J.D. MacMullen and G.B. Robinson) the system agreed upon "would be a reasonably dependable working service under present circumstances". (Ibid: Appx "C", Minutes of Meeting re Aircraft Detection Corps, 6 May 42). The plan of organization included the following remarks regarding the American troops installed or being installed at the Soo:

UNITED STATES

100th Coast Artillery Regiment (less one battalion)
This consists of three 4 gun 90 mm. batteries.
Four 8 gun 37 mm. batteries
One searchlight battery (15 lights)
One balloon barrage battalion (18 combat balloons)

131st Infantry Regiment (three battalions)

In addition, there are elements of quartermaster Corps and other essential services as required.

It is probable that additional forces will be furnished in the future.

(Ibid: Annexure II to Minutes of Meeting of 6 May)

A footnote explained that the U.S. 37 mm batteries were not yet in action and that some other type such as 40 mm Bofors might be employed instead.

FURTHER MEASURES OF PROTECTION BY THE U.S. ARMY

46. Throughout the summer of 1942, the Americans continued to show a very keen interest in the defence of the Soo. On 18 May, for example, Colonel Cruse wrote directly to the Minister of National Defence requesting authority to designate a restricted area in and around Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, as provided for by Defence of Canada Regulations, Section 4, paragraph 1 (H.Q.S. 5839, vol 3: Cruse to the Minister, 18 May 42). Upon instructions by the C.G.S., Colonel Lyon replied to the effect that such a declaration had to be used "very sparingly" and was not necessary in view of Regulation 6, which prohibited trespassing or loitering on or in the vicinity of premises declared to be "essential services", such as railways, canals and docks. It was suggested that he consult with the R.C.M.P. and Major Tolley regarding the display in suitable places of public notices similar to those erected at Niagara. (Ibid: Lyon to Cruse, 1 Jun 42)

* See para 37. The R.C.A.F. called the conference on being pressed by the U.S. Army (Sundry correspondence on file H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 1).

47. On 10 Jul, hearing through the Department of Transport that the U.S. Army had moved additional infantry personnel to the Canadian side for the purpose of mounting armed guards on the Canadian locks, the C.G.S. requested an immediate investigation and report from the D.O.C. M.D. 2 (ibid, vol 7: Tel GS 0323, C.G.S. to D.O.C. M.D. 2, 10 Jul 42). The latter replied that he had on 9 Jul inspected the American forces at the Soo and approved of their dispositions. Stating that, to give adequate protection to the canal system and the A.A. defences, it was apparent that "Infantry Detachments must be established on the perimeter as well as within the vulnerable area", his report concluded:

It is, therefore, the opinion of the Commanding General, Fort Brady, that the occupation of the ground about the Canadian ship canal is vital to the security of the vulnerable area...

It should be added that the Commanding General, Fort Brady, anticipates that personnel of the R.C.M.P. on the Canadian ship canal will continue to function in respect of those duties which can better be performed by Canadian police than by soldiers.

All American ships passing through the Canal zone carry United States Coast Guardsmen. It is desirable, therefore, that United States personnel should guard all locks for better co-operation.

(Ibid: Constantine to Secty, D.N.D., 11 Jul 42)

48. On 15 Jul the D.O.C. was able to forward a copy of the proposed plans covering the joint operations of Canadian and American troops at the Soo. These plans detailed the location of A.A. guns, searchlights, machine guns and barrage balloons and indicated that additional U.S. troops would be activated. Although in March Colonel Cruse had said he did not anticipate employing U.S. infantry on the Canadian side*, the plans called for a Canadian lock guard totalling 101 U.S. infantrymen, alternated each 24 hours. The guard was to have two officers and to consist of 33 enlisted men on duty at one time and 66 off duty, the latter to require accommodation. In the event of a landing by parachute troops or airborne infantry north of the St. Mary River, a U.S. striking force of one rifle company with an attached .30 machine gun platoon would cross the river by ferry, move to the point of hostile landing, and engage the enemy. The remainder of the battalion supplying this striking force would hold itself available on the U.S. side as reinforcements, while in Canada defensive roles would be assumed by 2 Bn S.Ste.M. & Sud in the city and the 23rd (Infantry) Reserve Company, Veterans Guard of Canada, on the outskirts. The plans also contemplated military assistance to the civilian population of the Ontario city in the event of war disaster. (H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 1: Constantine to Secty, D.N.D., 15 Jul 42). Colonel Jenkins gave his approval, and the relevant information was passed to the R.C.M.P., Commissioner Wood replying that no changes had been made in the protection of the locks in so far as his Force was concerned. The special constable guards were continuing to carry out their duties to prevent trespass and sabotage, and also to inspect the trains crossing the international bridge, he said, adding that all crew members on boats were regularly inspected at the Welland Canal (ibid: Wood to Murchie, 25 Jul 42).

*

See para 32.

49. That month it was also learned that the United States District Headquarters at Fort Brady proposed to establish Radar Aircraft Detector equipment at Cochrane, Hearst, Nakina, Armstrong and Sioux Lookout, Ontario. Each post was to consist of approximately 55 all ranks; Hearst, which would be company headquarters, would have about 130.* Detachments were to be sent out within a fortnight and to be quartered under canvas until huts were constructed (H.Q.S. 5839, vol 7: D.C.C. M.D. 2 to Secty, D.N.D., 11 Jul 42). Advising Dr. Keenleyside of this, Air Commodore Heakes wrote:

I am unaware of permission having been given to the United States for this purpose, and am wondering if it should be dealt with through the Permanent Joint Board on Defence.

(Ibid: Heakes to Keenleyside,
18 Jul 42)

In reply, the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. N.A. Robertson), finding the relevant sections of the P.J.B.D. Journal "not entirely explicit", gave his opinion that

... it would not be unreasonable for the United States to interpret them as authorizing the United States to go ahead with the establishment of the aircraft detection equipment and personnel."

(Ibid: Robertson to Heakes,
28 Jul 42)

On receiving this advice, Air Commodore Heakes wrote to Colonel Douglass as follows:

The Canadian Government approves, in principle, the proposal as set forth above, subject to the reservation that detailed arrangements concerning in particular the establishment of joint operational control and the integration of United States and Canadian plans and establishments be discussed at the next meeting of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence.

(Ibid: Heakes to Douglass,
7 Aug 42)

50. As these radar detachments were to work more closely with the R.C.A.F. than with the Army, further detailed enquiry is not a subject for this report. Early in August 1942 U.S. Army Engineers visited Northern Ontario and made satisfactory arrangements for sites. The P.J.B.D. meeting on 1 Sep 42 expressed general agreement. The list of American units of the Sault Ste. Marie district as of 7 Oct showed the 671st Signal Air Warning Reporting Company with headquarters at Kapuskasing, and subordinate units at Armstrong, Nakina, Hearst, and Cochrane** (H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 2: Acting Military Attaché (Colonel Francis J. Grayling) to Jenkins, 15 Oct 42). From strength returns at various periods (shown on file H.Q.S. 9019) it appears that no post was established at Sioux Lookout.

* Cf paras 50, 68, and 87.

** Cf paras 68 and 87.

ARRIVAL OF 40 A.A. BTY, R.C.A.

51. The problem meanwhile was to prepare the Canadian Battery to take up its duties at the Soo, for, prior to May, none of its personnel had even seen a 3.7 in A.A. gun fired. Pointing out that the Americans had a coloured unit there, the D.O.C. M.D. 2 wrote:

... Partly for this reason and partly for the prestige of the Canadian Forces generally and the 40th A.A. Bty, R.C.A., in particular, it is considered very necessary that this Battery should not proceed to the Sault until it is fully trained and ready to take over equipment from a Battery of the United States Army.

(Ibid, vol 1: D.O.C. M.D. 2 to Secty, D.N.D., 16 May 42)

On being sent to Halifax the battery was allotted 40 rounds per month for training. By mid-June, however, Lt-Col Douglass was asking when it would be ready to assume its A.A. role (ibid: Tel MP 62, Pope to C.G.S., 17 Jun 42). Colonel Lyon forecast that this would be by late July and that four 3.7 in guns would then be available, although they would have no predictors (ibid: Tel GS 0265, Defensor to Pope, 18 Jun 42). When the War Department made further enquiries, it was pointed out that the seven Sperry predictors delivered to date were being issued to Halifax, Goose Bay, Arvida, Prince Rupert, Esquimalt, Gander, and the radio wing at Debert. Further allocation from Washington was therefore the determining factor; there were no height finders available and urgent operational requirements in coastal commands would delay allocation of G.L. sets to the Soo until September. (Ibid: Tel 0294, 1 Jul 42)

52. On 10 Jul the G.O.C.-in-C Atlantic Command (Maj-Gen W.H.P. Elkins) reported that a Q.F. 3.7 in mobile gun had been drawn for training purposes and that firing practices were to be carried out the following week; he therefore anticipated that the unit would be ready to take up its operational role by 27 Jul 42 (ibid: Elkins to Secty, D.N.D., 10 Jul 42). Expecting the four 3.7 in guns to be delivered by 5 Aug, Ottawa learned that temporary accommodation at Steelton Camp consisting of a mess hall sleeping quarters, and sanitary lines would be available by 1 Aug (ibid: Jenkins to D.O.C. M.D. 2, 18 Jul; see also Tel TQ 251, Commanding Two to Secty, D.N.D., 27 Jul 42). Arrangements were therefore made for the battery to leave Halifax for the Soo on 6 Aug 42. As of 31 Jul the unit was reported to have a War Establishment of 177 all ranks but an actual strength of only 121, all but one having completed basic and special courses. The report on the state of training said:

Firing practice was carried out by this battery on 15th and 16th July: Vickers Predictor and No. 3 Heightfinder were employed; fire control being by height control. 40 rounds were expended in 5 series.

This was the first firing exercise carried out by this personnel; fire discipline and gun drill including instrument drill were good. It is considered that this unit should be permitted to carry out further firing practice at an early date.

(Ibid: G.O.C.-in-C Atlantic Command to Secty, D.N.D., 7 Aug 42)

53. Prior to the move, advice was sought from the J.A.G. regarding the best method of initiating the command relationship. It was considered that no special recommendations were required other than instructions to the D.O.C. M.D. 2 advising him that, as a result of a recommendation of the P.J.B.D., the Minister of National Defence had authorized the placing of 40 A.A. Bty, R.C.A. under the Commanding General of the U.S. Forces in the Sault Ste. Marie area. The point was stressed that the U.S. Commander would not exercise the said command to control the administration and discipline of the Canadian unit but would do so for the purpose of operations only. These instructions were to be passed on by the D.O.C. to the Officer Commanding 40 A.A. Bty (Major A.J. Lunne, E.D.) and the U.S. Commander of the Sault Ste. Marie district (then Brigadier-General Trelawney E. Marchant). (Ibid: J.A.G. to D.M.O. & P., 2 Aug 42, with accompanying correspondence)

54. Lacking fuse cutters as well as directing equipment the battery found itself unable to function with its own guns on arrival but set about familiarizing itself with American equipment. Visiting the firing range which the Americans had established on the Ontario shores of Lake Superior at Mamainse Point, 62 miles north of the Soo on Highway 17,* Major Dunne suggested moving the guns and instruments to the range and leaving them there in charge of a small guard until firing was completed, personnel being sent out each day. Expecting that weather and road conditions would probably halt practice firing after 1 Nov, he recommended that allotments of ammunition for winter months be furnished in advance. (Ibid: D.O.C. M.D. 2 to Secty, D.N.D., 15 Aug 42).

55. Colonel J.H. Jenkins (newly-appointed D.M.O. & P.) pointed out that any arrangements to move the Canadian battery from its site to the ranges must, of necessity, be co-ordinated with the U.S. Commander responsible for operations. (Ibid: Jenkins to D.M.T., 18 Aug 42). Authority was granted, nevertheless, for 40 A.A. Bty to expend for practice a total of 360 rounds, the allotment to March 1943, although a further letter from Ottawa said that such practice would not appear advisable unless a Sperry Predictor could be obtained. (Ibid: C.G.S. to D.O.C., M.D. 2, 24 and 25 Aug 42)

56. On 22 Aug 42 Brig-Gen Marchant wrote to the D.O.C. suggesting that, as the Canadian battery could not function with its own equipment, it take over that of the American battery then in position, allowing the latter to be sent to the range with equipment on hand for a fourth battery not yet activated. He added:

This would allow the Canadian battery to function and preserve our present set-up of two anti-aircraft batteries on the Canadian side.

This plan is agreeable to the Commanding Officer of the Canadian battery who has been training his personnel in the use of the American material pending your authorization.

(Ibid: Marchant to Constantine, 22 Aug 42)

* When firing at towed targets took place, the danger area of this range extended some 32 miles from Agawa Point to Corbell Point, Ontario, and westwards about 20 miles into the lake (ibid: D.O.C. M.D. 2 to Secty, D.N.D., 2 Sep 42)

This arrangement was actually put into effect the following day, for "on orders of the Officer Commanding 100th C.A., U.S. Army, the 40th A.A. Battery took over the Stealton gun position from the U.S. forces at 1200 hours on August 23rd" (ibid: D.O.C. M.D. 2 to Secty, D.N.D., 28 Aug 42). U.S. guns and Predictor were to be used until Canadian instruments could be delivered, the U.S. forces being unable to supply a Height Finder (ibid).

57. The D.O.C. thereupon proposed to Ottawa that 40 A.A. Bty send parties to the ranges to shoot with U.S. equipment, provided that the U.S. authorities would furnish ammunition to be compensated for by Canada if necessary. (Ibid. This file contains two letters D.O.C. M.D. 2 to Secty, D.N.D. dated 28 Aug 42). On the grounds that equipment was expected by the end of September, the reply advised postponing further firing practice. If the U.S. Commander still desired the Canadian battery to practise with American equipment, N.D.H.Q. considered that Canada should not be responsible for the provision of any 90 mm ammunition which might be required. (Ibid: C.G.S. to D.O.C. M.D. 2, 4 Sep 42)

58. Although it required 98 men to man the American guns, 40 A.A. Bty on assuming its operational role had but five officers and 115 O.Rs., being in particular short of cooks and tradesmen. Correspondence on file indicates that considerable difficulty was experienced in obtaining personnel, but on 17 Oct a draft of 42 O.Rs. arrived and by 1 Nov the unit strength was 163 all ranks. (W.D., 40 A.A. Bty, 31 Oct 42). It is of interest to note that a 15 cwt utility vehicle was allotted to the battery due to a complaint that the daily ferry rate for a 30-cwt amounted to \$2.20 but was only \$1.20 for a 15 cwt. (H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 2: D.O.C. M.D. 2 to Secty, D.N.D., 16 Nov 42)

59. During the week ending 24 Oct the long-awaited Predictor and Height Finder were received, but they required some time to be set up and calibrated (H.Q.S. 7018-2-1: Progress Report to 31 Oct 42). The Battery Commander, however, indicated that he preferred to continue using U.S. guns until 1 Dec, in order to exercise his battery on the A.A. range with 3.7 in guns. Advising that this arrangement met with the approval of the U.S. Commander, H.Q. M.D. 2 therefore asked for practice ammunition and pointed out that the 300 rounds per gun then with the battery were reserved for operational purposes (H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 2: D.O.C. M.D. 2 to Secty, D.N.D., 27 Oct 42). N.D.H.Q. in reply authorized for practice the use of 90 rounds per gun from operational ammunition on hand, the expenditure to be made up by shipment at an early date. No objection was raised to the change-over date being 1 Dec 42 (ibid: C.G.S. to D.O.C. M.D. 2, 3 Nov 42).

60. Neither the files nor the unit War Diary indicate whether or not such firing practice was carried out that autumn, but a progress report from the battery received at H.Q. M.D. 2 on 12 Nov reads as follows:

4 Canadian 3.7" guns, Ht finder and Identification Telescope on hand. Canadian Predictor being set up, delayed due to possible wrong parts sent. Ordnance M.D. 2 are looking into the matter. G.L. equipment not to be available for several months.

(H.Q.S. 7018-2-1: Progress Report to 15 Nov 42)

Entries in the unit War Diary state that on 13 Nov an officer and two O.R. of the R.C.O.C. arrived "to change barrels on the guns" and that on 14 Nov "Canadian Guns, Predictor and Height Finder were set up for action" (W.D., 40 A.A. Bty, 13 and 14 Nov 42). By the end of that month these were reported to be "now in

operation in temporary position pending completion of permanent gun pits" and all equipment was said to be available "except the G.L. equipment" (H.Q.S. 7018-2-1: Progress Report to 30 Nov 42). The report for mid-December stated "All now available" (ibid, to 15 Dec 42). At the end of the year the guns and equipment were still reported to be "in temporary position" but thereafter they were said to be "now in operation in permanent position" (ibid, to 31 Dec 42 and to 15 Jan 43).

61. When the Americans were unable to assign an aeroplane for target towing, a request for R.C.A.F. assistance was initiated as early as 25 Jul (H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 1: D.O.C. M.D. 2 to Secty, D.N.D., 25 Jul 42). One of the complicating factors was that the only available airport was a civilian one in Michigan*, which meant that arrangements had to be made through the Canadian Legation at Washington (ibid, vol 2: C.G.S. to D.O.C. M.D. 2, 21 Nov 42).. Renewed requests brought considerable correspondence, but by December it was regretfully pointed out that the only "available" aircraft for this purpose were in Atlantic Command and at that time could not be "made available" due to operational requirements (ibid: 1 Dec 42). The R.C.A.F. stationed a liaison officer with Headquarters of the Sault Ste. Marie Military District at Fort Brady, but his specialty was communications rather than flying conditions (ibid, vol 2: Dunn to D.O.C. M.D. 2, 7 Dec 42). Continuing to urge that an aeroplane be provided for practice, Major Dunn wrote that "the possibility of firing at Mamainse Point will lessen as winter advances, but points closer to Sault Ste. Marie will be available on close of navigation" (ibid).

TROUBLE WITH BARRAGE BALLOONS

62. By the end of May 1942 the U.S. Army had installed a number of barrage balloons at the Soo, but during storms that month as well as in August and October some of these broke away from their moorings and caused short circuits in the local power system through trailing steel cables across transmission lines. One such balloon even interrupted power to the Michipicoten mines some 100 miles north. Considerable concern was felt over the effect upon the war effort of the Canadian Soo, particularly through shut-offs at the steel works, paper mills and chromium plant. The October incident, the most serious, caused an estimated loss of 400 tons of steel and 10 tons of ferro-alloys (H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 2: Statement of Power Interruptions). Fearing a possible breakdown of 20-year-old transformers and dynamos, one of the company officials even asked if something could be done about shooting down loose barrage balloons with A.A. fire (ibid: Report of Ontario Provincial Police, 7 Oct 42).

63. The matter was taken up at the November meeting of the P.J.B.D., when the U.S. Army undertook to consider the adoption of the British Army procedure of not putting up balloons until an "alert" (ibid: Minute dated 11 Nov 42, to letter C.G.S. to D.O.C. M.D. 2, 23 Oct 42). General Embick subsequently reported that the Commanding General, Central Defense Command was aware of the seriousness of this interruption and had stated that, to reduce the hazard, the 399th Barrage Balloon Battalion would undertake the following steps:

* An American plan for the Air Defense of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Valley (see paragraph 73 of this report) indicates that U.S.A.A.C. fighter protection for the Soo was to be based on military airfields at Racoon and Kinross, Michigan, approximately 20-25 miles distant.

The forces are disposed to meet air attack from the north, east, or west, and airborne troops landed south of the position...

Recent wet weather has made the positions reminiscent of the Passchendaele battle field.

I was informed that it is the intention to install anti-submarine nets at the entrances to the locks.

Camouflaging at present is non-existent...

Brig-Gen Marchant does not anticipate any changes in his disposition during the winter.

The 100th Coast Artillery A.A. Regt is a Negro Regiment and it is expected that they will feel the winter weather very severely. It may be necessary to replace them with a white regiment...

The 40th Hvy A.A. Bty, R.C.A. is being rationed by the U.S. Army and this is working very satisfactorily...

The impression I obtained was that the U.S. Army authorities exaggerate the possibilities of hostile attack but that the operational dispositions in this area are in an experimental condition. Brig-Gen Marchant expressed the opinion that he considered hostile attack unlikely but "nothing is impossible". It is not recommended that any additional troops or equipment be allotted to this area,

(H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 2: Alexander to the Minister, 25 Sep 42)

66. Apart from brief references to visits and inspections by U.S. officers, the War Diary of 40 A.A. Bty gives very little indication that the unit was under American operational control. There is frequent mention of close co-operation in sports and entertainment, however, U.S.O. shows being particularly enjoyed. The Canadian city, being the larger, usually provided the greater number of partners for dances held on both sides of the river. When a strike took place at the Algoma Steel plant on 13 Jan 43, the camp of 40 A.A. Bty was closed to civilians and two Bren guns were mounted on jeeps. It is not known whether the American troops took similar measures, but there was no rioting, and on 26 Jan all the men returned to work (W.D., 40 A.A. Bty, 13 and 26 Jan 43).

67. Although finding the Canadian camp still under construction in October 1942, an intelligence officer (Capt T.E. Crittle) observed that "even so, by comparison, both buildings and camp roads are superior to that of American troops stationed in similar locations in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan" (H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 2: Crittle to A.A.Q.M.G., M.D. 2, 10 Oct 42). He also reported having attended a security meeting at Fort Brady on 5 Oct, when problems caused by the presence of coloured troops were explored. He later commented on this conference as follows:

Local resentment has slowly been rising against these troops. This has been fed to some extent by idle gossip none of which seems to be founded on fact.

There have been cases where it is stated that they follow white women but no case in which they have molested Canadian women has been proven.

Young girls are stated to be attracted toward these troops and thereby cause race resentment...

In general, insofar as Canada is concerned, it is stated that these troops have actually been no trouble at all. In fact, one prominent authority states that they have been of less trouble than an equal number of white troops would have been.

(Ibid: Crittle to D.O.C. M.D. 2, 10 Oct 42)

The coloured troops were replaced by whites in April 1943, when the 100th C.A. Regiment was relieved by the 110th C.A. Group, consisting of the 162nd, 196th and 223rd Battalions (H.Q.S. 9019: D.O.C. M.D. 2 to Secty, L.N.D., 13 Apr 43)

68. Strength returns for U.S. troops located in Canada frequently omitted those at the Canadian Soo, since they were considered to be on detached service from Fort Brady, but on 30 Oct 42 these numbered 25 officers and 911 enlisted men (ibid: C.A.S. Washington to Secty, L.N.D., 6 Nov 42; see also memo for file, 8 Jun 43). In December 1942 Colonel Jenkins learned that the U.S. forces guarding the canal had been added to by "elements of a smoke generating company consisting at present of 12 units and to be increased in due course to 24 units, and including 4 officers and 113 other ranks" (H.Q.S. 5839, vol 7: memo by Jenkins, 24 Dec 42). By 20 Jan 43 two chemical companies (smoke generating) were included in the total of 5741 American troops stated to be at Sault Ste. Marie (H.Q.S. 9019: C.A.S. Washington to Secty, L.N.D., 26 Jan 43). As at 31 May 43 the U.S. Army had stationed in Canada:

	Offrs	E.M.
Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.	31	635
Cochrane, Ont	2	47
Kapuskasing, Ont.	1	20
Hearst, Ont.	4	50
Nakina, Ont.	2	50
Armstrong, Ont.	2	48

(Ibid: L.M.O. & P. to C.G.S., 13 Jul 43)

It will be noted that Kapuskasing, being merely an administrative post, had a smaller number of personnel.*

69. Early in the new year Ottawa learned that Brig-Gen Marchant had been succeeded by Maj-Gen Lawton in command of the Sault Ste. Marie Military District, Michigan. The significance of this upgrading brought an immediate comment (H.Q.S. 5839, vol 7: D.O.C. M.D. 2 to Secty, L.N.D., 6 Jan 43 with minute by Brigadier Gibson). The new Commanding General soon intimated that

* See paras 50 and 87.

he was revising the defensive scheme for the Soo and anticipated that tank units of the U.S. Army would be added to the garrison (ibid: 15 Jan 43).

70. In January, Maj-Gen Guy V. Henry, who had succeeded Lt-Gen Embick as senior U.S. Army member of the P.J.B.D., received the following information from his superiors:

The War Dept is contemplating the establishment of a Military Area in the vicinity of the Sault Ste. Marie in the near future, in order to place control of all defense activities, including control of aliens and internal security, under one command. It might be suggested that the Canadians take similar action on their side of the border.

(Ibid: War Dept Ops Div Memo, 8 Jan 43)

He passed this on to the Board that month, but, when later requested to supply details, stated that the proclamation to give effect to this was a voluminous document then under consideration in Washington prior to being implemented at the Soo. He therefore made available for study at Ottawa a similar proclamation by Headquarters, Eastern Defense Command. The various protective measures were seen to be substantially the same as Defence of Canada Regulations, however; the fundamental difference was that the United States placed responsibility primarily upon the armed forces, Canada upon civilian and military authorities. A draft memorandum to that effect expressed Canadian satisfaction that in many instances civilian police could afford better protection. (Ibid: Jenkins to Keenleyside, 6 Feb 43)

71. At the February meeting of the Board, the U.S. Army member stated that the Commanding General at the Soo had been directed to consult with the District Officer Commanding regarding means of securing equal protection on both sides. The following month the American proclamation creating the military area in Michigan was issued from Memphis on 22 Mar in the name of Lt-Gen Ben Lear, Commanding General, Central Defense Command. When Maj-Gens Lawton and Constantine later met in Toronto to discuss the matter, the Canadian personnel present agreed that it was not necessary to declare a military area on their side of the border. Unfortunately the report of this conference was not sent at once to Ottawa and the Canadian members of the P.J.B.D. were somewhat embarrassed to hear of it initially through the U.S. Army Member at the May meeting of the Board.*

FURTHER PLANS FOR DEFENCE

72. At the February meeting of the P.J.B.D. it had been agreed that the Twenty-Second Recommendation should be regarded as extending to the preparation of plans for defence, not only with respect of the coastal areas, but to the interval between them. It was further agreed that they would be concerted by the proper U.S. and Canadian officers, with the understanding, however, that the making of such plans would not obligate either Government to implement them with equipment or personnel. Colonel Jenkins and two R.C.A. officers subsequently attended a conference in New York on 31 Mar and discussed with representatives of Eastern

* The information in paras 70 and 71 is based upon file H.Q.S. 5839, vol 7, which also contains copies of the proclamation in question.

and Central Defense Command a plan for the area defence of the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Area. The D.M.O. & P's report stated:

As a result of the plans being prepared for a form and scale of **air** attack much more serious than at present anticipated, and as there was a general feeling among the Senior U.S. officers that the plans would never require to be implemented, the defence measures included in the plans are tremendous and, in my opinion, should not be undertaken by Canada, unless the security of the industrial areas in North America is seriously threatened.

(H.Q.S. 9027-1, vol 1: Jenkins to C.G.S., 4 Apr 43)

A resulting draft plan prepared by U.S. officers proposed no less than 23 radar installations extending from Prince Edward Island to the Ontario - Manitoba border. With minor amendments the Canadian Chiefs of Staff Committee approved in principle but took no steps to implement its extensive requirements. In these discussions the measures already in force at the Soo appear to have been satisfactory to both parties.

73. In March 1943, the Chiefs of Staff Committee had revised the allotment of A.A. equipment, however, and intended to alter to some extent the Canadian armament at the Soo. The 3.7 in guns of 40 A.A. Bty were to be exchanged for 3 in 20-cwt guns then manned by 17 A.A. Bty (Type "M") at Ile Maligne and Chute à Caron in the Arvida area (ibid: C.G.S. to J.O.C.-in-C Atlantic Command and others, 23 Mar 43). The purpose of the transfer was to make all the heavy A.A. guns at Arvida of the same calibre, in order to facilitate control. The intention was to keep the 3.7 in guns at the Soo until replaced by the 3 in guns and to convert 40 A.A. Bty from Type "H" to Type "M".* Advice was passed to the War Department through the P.J.B.D. and informally to H.Q. Central Defense Command, while the D.O.C. M.D. 2 was instructed to inform the Commanding General at Fort Brady, Michigan (H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 2: C.G.S. to D.O.C. M.D. 2, 3 Apr 43).

74. Just when this was done does not appear in the files consulted, but some two months later Maj-Gen R.O. Alexander, following an inspection at the Soo on 9-10 Jun, reported as follows:

Major-General Lawton was obviously very much disturbed by the decision to replace the four Canadian 3.7 A.A. guns by 3" guns, as the latter have a shorter range and consequently lower ceiling than the U.S. Heavy A.A. Batteries covering the V.P...

In my opinion the A.A. defence of this V.P., with the exception of the lack of Air Force Fighter units, is considerably stronger than that covering many of our own V.Ps. which are more likely

* The War Establishment of an Anti-aircraft battery, R.C.A. (Type "M") provided for a battery of four 3 in guns consisting of battery headquarters and two sections, the total strength being six officers and 159 other ranks. An explanation of Type "H" is given in the footnote to para 21 above. The relative merits of 3 in, 3.7 in, and 90 mm guns are discussed briefly in a dispatch (M.A. 27 dated 8 Dec 41) by the Canadian Military Attaché in Washington (Brigadier H.F.G. Letson) (P.J.B.D. Memoranda by Maj-Gen Pope, vol 3, contains a copy)

potential targets. The disadvantages of replacing 3.7 A.A. guns by the shorter range 3" guns can be overcome by changing the location of some of the U.S. guns in order to provide mutual support, cover dead arcs and the line of bomb release. I pointed this out to Major-General Lawton.

(Ibid: Alexander to the Minister,
11 Jun 43)

The D.O.C. later reported that Maj-Gen Lawton had stated "I am not opposed to the change as I feel it is a matter wholly for the Canadian Army Headquarters to determine, but I do strongly feel that our point[joint] A.A. defences of the locks will be materially weakened by the substitution of the 3-inch for the 3.7 inch equipment (ibid: Tel TG 841, Commanding Two to N.D.H.Q., 15 Jun 43).

75. Although pointing out that Maj-Gen Henry had raised no objection, Colonel Jenkins in view of this objection by the local American Commander recommended* that the four 3.7 in guns remain at the Soo and four additional 3.7 in guns be ordered for Arvida. The C.G.S. (Lt-Gen K. Stuart) at once agreed. (Ibid: Jenkins to C.G.S., with minute, 16 Jun 43)

76. A few days later the Officer Commanding 2 Bn S.Ste. M. & Sud applied for permission to form an A.A. (Reserve) Batter, at the Soo from the local Reserve Force unit. In forwarding his suggestion, the D.O.C. remarked that "considering the serious view which the Commanding American General takes of the defence of that area, such action would undoubtedly be welcomed by him". (Ibid: Constantine to Secty, D.N.D., 25 Jun 43). N.D.H.Q. at once turned down the proposal, however, writing as follows:

...while it is appreciated that the Commanding General, Sault Ste. Marie Area would welcome the conversion you suggest, U.S. Defence Plans for the Great Lakes do not envisage additional Canadian A.A. participation at the Sault.

Moreover, a role has already been allotted to the Reserve Army infantry troops at Sault Ste. Marie in the Commanding General's plans and it is not considered advisable to alter the present situation by a conversion which might later require a further development to provide replacement of troops to take care of the aforesaid role.

(Ibid: C.G.S. to D.O.C.,
M.D. 2, 30 Jun 43)

77. On 11 Jul 43 the Americans opened the MacArthur lock, on which construction had begun the previous year. It replaced the smaller Weitzel lock, which had been in existence since 1881. The new lock, 800 feet long and 80 feet wide with a depth of 31 feet, permitted much greater traffic (Statistical Report of Lake Commerce, op cit). Later that month newspapers were permitted to disclose that the Canadian city had been incorporated into an American military area and that U.S. troops were stationed there. Stating that on the authority of Maj-Gen Lawton this news was revealed for the first time, an article in the Toronto Globe and Mail included photographs of barrage balloons and of American sentries on guard. (W.D., 40 A.A. Bty, July 1943, Appx III,) ..

* As additional reasons, he remarked that "the retention of 3.7" guns would obviate the necessity of the U.S.A. Comd altering his fire plan, and these guns are now in good supply".

WITHDRAWAL OF 40 A.A. BTY

78. To meet heavy demands upon man-power for overseas service, however, Canada was at that very time considering reducing to the absolute minimum the number of personnel employed on A.A. defences in view of the improved situation abroad. By revision of R.C.A. war establishments a saving of approximately 1000 O.R. had been already effected, but L.M.O. & P. proposed in July to withdraw the A.A. defences completely from certain areas, including the Soo. The argument set forth was as follows:

Provision of the Canadian 3.7" Bty is only in the nature of a gesture of cooperation with U.S. in providing defences for the area, as the Canadian Soo would not in itself warrant any A.A. defences on the part of Canada... Saving in man-power 6 offrs, 145 O.R.

(H.Q.S. 7018, vol 18: Jenkins
to C.G.S., 24 Jul 43)

On being asked for his advice, the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs wrote:

My inclination is to believe that while there might be some objection from the United States, the people of Canada, and even those of Sault Ste. Marie itself, would not now seriously object to the withdrawal of the Battery in question if the military authorities feel that the personnel and equipment in question could be used more effectively at some other place.

(Ibid: Robertson to the Deputy
Minister of National Defence, 30
Jul 43)

Mr. Robertson added that he assumed that the proposal would be referred first to the appropriate service members of the P.J.B.D.

79. A record of a telephone conversation early in August from the Canadian Army Staff, Washington, notes that Maj-Gen Henry "having been approached informally by General Pope... broached the matter with the U.S. War Department and has ascertained that, if the proposal is put forward formally, it will be favourably received" (ibid: Memo for file, 6 Aug 43)

80. By early September the War Committee of the Cabinet had given approval subject to U.S. concurrence. Instructing Maj-Gen Pope to take up the matter formally with the War Department, the C.G.S. wrote in part:

It is therefore felt that the Canadian battery should now be withdrawn with the U.S. Army to assume full responsibility for such A.A. defence of the Area as they consider necessary.

...as it is desired to meet the wishes of the U.S. authorities as to the most convenient date for such withdrawal to take place, will you please also ascertain what date will be satisfactory to them, if concurrence in the withdrawal is obtained.

(Ibid: Stuart to Pope, 3 Sep 43)

81. Before action was taken, Maj-Gen Lawton wrote on 6 Sep to the D.O.C. to say that his field garrison was being reduced to one infantry battalion, a composite battalion of A.A. artillery, and the Canadian battery. It was intended that the 472nd Infantry Battalion would confine itself to guard duties, the battalions of the 131st Infantry Regiment which constituted the mobile ground task force being released. No searchlights were to be retained and each side of the river would have only one battery of 90 mm guns manned by the U.S. Army. His letter concluded:

The positions of these two batteries and that of the 40th H.A.A. Battery (Canadian) are at the three apices of what approximates an equilateral triangle of heavy gun defense. It will therefore be seen that it is essential to the defense that the 40th H.A.A. Battery be retained at its present position, and it is so recommended by this headquarters.

(H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 2: Lawton to D.O.C. M.D. 2, 6 Sep 43)

On this letter being received in Ottawa it was considered that "no purpose would be served in sending it to Gen Pope as it would probably confuse the issue" (ibid: D.M.O. & P. to D.C.G.S.(A), 11 Sep 43).

82. When Maj-Gen Pope officially presented the Canadian proposal on 10 Sep, however, he immediately wired Ottawa as follows:

General Henry who has been ill for some time, seemed to have an idea in his mind that our original inquiry to which he had informally replied in a favourable sense was that we replace the heavy A.A. battery by a light unit. He was reminded, however, that from the outset we wished completely to withdraw from Sault Ste. Marie and inquiry was made if he wished again to sound out the War Department in an informal manner. He said no but that he would endeavour to obtain formal and favourable reply at earliest date.

(Ibid: Tel CAW 591, C.A.S. Washington to N.D.H.Q., 10 Sep 43)

A further telegram of 18 Sep advised that it was acceptable to the War Department for Canada to withdraw the A.A. battery from the Soo "without replacement" (ibid: Tel CAW 606, 18 Sep 43). Later the War Department intimated that "any date at all" would do and suggested that it be fixed between the local commanders (ibid: Tel CAW 610, 20 Sep 43).

83. Maj-Gen Lawton on 27 Sep advised that no changes in tactical dispositions would be made upon the departure of the Canadian battery, but mentioned the advantage of allowing it to remain until navigation closed, normally about 15 Dec. He added:

However, it is clearly understood that the matter of allowing the battery to stay for any portion of the remaining navigation season must be governed by the present needs of the Department of National Defence.

(Ibid: Lawton to D.O.C. M.D. 2, 27 Sep 43)

Colonel Jenkins thereupon recommended that 40 A.A. Bty remain in an operational role until 30 Nov, the date when navigation insurance terminated and therefore the official end of the season (ibid: Jenkins to C.G.S., 6 Oct 43). Early in December the unit moved to another area in M.D. 2, to be disbanded by G.O. 498/43 effective 15 Dec 43. The majority of the personnel, being home defence troops, were sent to A.A. units in the Commands, while the active service personnel were released to the reinforcement stream.*

WITHDRAWAL OF REMAINING AMERICAN FORCES

84. The Americans on their part soon followed with further drastic reductions early in the new year.** As of 15 Jan 44 Eastern Defense Command assumed responsibility for the defence of the Sault Ste. Marie Military Area, placing it under the administration of the Commanding General Sixth Service Command, with his local representative the Commanding Officer at Fort Brady (Colonel Basil L. Spalding). On 22 Jan the latter informed the Canadian authorities as follows:

The Central Air Defence Region is being inactivated and the Signal Air Warning System is being withdrawn. Five radar stations now in operation in the Province of Ontario are to be inactivated and withdrawn as soon as arrangements can be made therefor. One long range radar located in the vicinity of Grand Marais, Michigan, and one in the vicinity of Sault Ste. Marie, supplemented by two short range radars in the vicinity of Sault Ste. Marie, will be utilized to give warning of the approach of unidentified planes.***

...the Barrage Balloon Battalion will probably be withdrawn during the week February 1 to 7. Anti-aircraft activities on the Ontario side of the St. Mary's River have been discontinued this date. It is proposed to salvage the housing used in connection with these activities, and restore the sites to their original condition as soon as weather permits. This same procedure will be followed in the case of the radar stations... It is desired to retain the use of the anti-aircraft artillery range at Mamainse Point for the purpose of training our gunners.

(H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 2: Spalding
to M.L. 2, 22 Jan 44)

85. By 31 Jan 44 the U.S. Army had but nine officers and 197 enlisted men at the Canadian Soo, with a total of 11 officers

* In October 1943 the unit had on strength 104 NRMA and 46 G.S. personnel, some of the latter underage when posted in the spring. Reduction of the establishment that month, however, had enabled a number of these to be released immediately (H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 2: Jenkins to VCGS, 7 Oct 43)

** During September 1943 the U.S. Army had withdrawn 320 troops from the Canadian Soo, leaving but ten officers and 258 enlisted men there. (H.Q.S. 9019: Memo for file, 25 Nov 43). These figures do not include the northern radar detachments.

*** The plan for the defence of the Great Lakes (see para 72 above) indicates that only the radar station at Grand Marais, Mich., and four in northern Ontario were then in existence. It is assumed that the others never were in actual operation.

and 235 enlisted men at the northern radar posts (H.Q.S. 9019: Memo for file, 6 Mar 44). A few days later Colonel Spalding advised that he had received instructions dated 28 Jan 44 to the effect that the War Department had decided to withdraw the A.A. and Signal Warning equipment from the Soo and to keep troops there only as guards. His letter to the D.C.C. stated, in part:

The War Department assumes the calculated risk involved. Orders of Eastern Defense Command require the withdrawal of the 427th A.A.A. Bn (Comp) on February 15, 1944.

... In the carrying out of these instructions, the 739th Military Police Battalion will be used entirely for defense against ground sabotage. The anti-aircraft equipment is being withdrawn for use elsewhere. This will make the retention of the anti-aircraft artillery range at Mamainse Point unnecessary.

(H.Q.S. 7018, vol 2: Spalding to D.C.C. M.D. 2, 4 Feb 44)

86. The files consulted do not indicate the actual date on which the U.S. troops on guard duty at the Canadian Soo actually left the country. None are listed, however, in the strength return for 29 Feb 44 (H.Q.S. 9019: Memo for file, 8 Apr 44). On the other hand, Canada kept a protective force there for almost a year longer, for a letter dated 8 Jan 45 states that "recently the R.C.M.P. withdrew their guards from the Soo Canal" (H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 3: D.O.C. M.D. 2 to Secty, D.N.D., 8 Jan 45). The buildings constructed for military purposes there were disposed of by various means, only one U.S. Army hut being turned over to the Department of National Defence. This was moved to a nearby rifle range for use by the local unit of the Reserve Army.

87. Negotiations for the disposal of the buildings constructed by the Americans to house the northern radar detachments dragged on for months. The signals personnel vacated these posts on 1 Mar 44, at which time a guard of four U.S. Military Police was installed at each station to protect the interests of the War Department until final disposition of the buildings and contents could be arranged. (Ibid: Statement prepared by Colonel Commanding Sixth Service Command, 1 Mar 44). Kapuskasing presented no problem as the headquarters detachment there had been accommodated at the local inn, owned and operated by the Spruce Falls Power and Paper Co., Ltd., which received \$54.00 per man per month from the U.S. Treasury. In accordance with the Twenty-Eighth Recommendation of the P.J.B.D., the radar sites at Cochrane, Hearst, Armstrong and Nakina were turned over to the Department of National Defence on 11 May 44, and a temporary receipt was given. The schedule of housing listed the following original costs, including electrical, water and sewage systems:

Cochrane	\$37,563
Nakina	35,069
Armstrong	37,141
Hearst	20,466

(Ibid)

88. When Canadian security guards of four men per site arrived between 24 Apr and 1 May, however, they found that the American Military Police had departed on 3 Apr and certain damage

from vandalism had resulted (*ibid*: Capt R.S. Harling, R.C.E. (C.E.O. Northern Area) to H.Q. M.D..2, 3 May 44). Various church and community organizations were interested in acquiring the buildings, and certain difficulties were encountered in maintaining personnel at such isolated posts. The estimated cost of keeping the security guard on local subsistence was \$2500.00 per month. (*Ibid*: D.C.C. M.D. 2 to Secty, D.N.D., 14 Jul 44). The buildings were therefore on 4 Jul declared surplus to the Crown Assets Allocation Committee and transferred to War Assets Corporation by P.C. 5950 dated 31 Jul 44.

89. The security guards were still on duty in August, however, and the D.O.C. M.D. 2 impressed upon Ottawa that the cost would "far exceed any salvage assets" unless prompt disposal was made (*ibid*: 29 Aug 44). The actual date on which they were withdrawn is not recorded, but through an oversight three O.Rs. remained at Armstrong for almost another year. In July 1945 they were reported to be on duty at an emergency landing field near Wagaming and subsequent investigation revealed that a staff officer of M.D. 10 had arranged to turn over the buildings at Armstrong to the Red Cross Society, obtaining a receipt in March, but the guard did not receive orders to leave until 18 Jul 45 (H.Q.S. 7018-2, vol 3 contains reports of investigations into this incident). The Canadian Government thereby incurred considerable expense for buildings which the U.S. Army had originally constructed and occupied.

90. The policy of disposition of all defence facilities constructed by the United States or Canada in the territory of the other was finally formulated by the Thirty-Third Recommendation of the P.J.B.D. on 6-7 Sep 44.

91. This report was prepared by Major R.B. Oglesby.

R. B. Oglesby Maj
for (C.P. Stacey) Colonel
Director Historical Section

JOINT DEFENCE OF SAULT STE. MARIE ONTARIO 1941-1944

MILES 8 6 4 2 0 8 16 24 32 MILES

A.A. SITES IN CANADA REFERRED
TO BY GRID CO-ORDINATES.

PROPOSED.....○
ACTUAL.....●

Grand Marais

Agawa Pt.

Mamainse Pt.

Corbeil Pt.

SAULT
STE. MARIE
SAULT
STE. MARIE

Civil
Aerodrome

Raco
Aerodrome

Kinross
Aerodrome

1000 0 1 2 3 4 5000
FEET

U.S. LOCKS FROM
NORTH TO SOUTH:
SABIN LOCK
DAVIS LOCK
POE LOCK
MACARTHUR LOCK

STEELTON
A.A. Site

COMPILED FROM:
STATISTICAL REPORT OF LAKE COMMERCE
PASSING THROUGH CANALS AT SAULT STE.
MARIE MICHIGAN AND ONTARIO DURING
SEASON OF 1948. (CORPS OF ENGINEERS, U.S. WAR DEPT.)

ALGOMA
STEEL
CORPORATION

ABITIBI PULP
& PAPER CO.

CANADA
U.S.A.

ST. MARY RIVER
Old Vessel Pt.

NORTH CANAL
SOUTH CANAL

Fort
Brady

SAULT STE. MARIE

SAULT STE. MARIE

A.A.
Site
EXHIBITION
GROUNDS

INTERNATIONAL
BOUNDARY

D.S.S. & A. RY.
ST. P. & S. STE. M. RY.



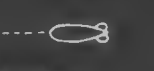
HISTORICAL SECTION G.S.

NORTHERN DEFENCES

RADAR SCREEN PROTECTING SAULT STE. MARIE

JULY 1942 — FEBRUARY 1944

MILES 100 50 0 100 200 300 MILES

- Radar Installations 
- H.A.A. Defences 
- Barrage Balloon Defences 
- RADAR RANGE SHOWN APPROXIMATELY TO SCALE

