

# Canadian Participation in Ground Based Ballistic Missile Defence in an Era of Uncertainty

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## Abstract:

Ballistic Missile Defence is one of the pre-eminent issues in Canadian foreign and defence policy today. Unfortunately, such an important issue is also a very confused one obscured by irrelevant and unfounded debates. Journalists in the media tend to describe the situation as being one of 'Star Wars' and the weaponization of space, versus continuing in what they perceive to be traditional and acceptable Canadian foreign policy. In reality, BMD is neither the weaponization of space nor a massive diversion from the traditions of Canadian defence policy. In fact, the system is a logical extension of the NORAD mission of which Canada has been a strong and proud partner for over forty years.

Using renown scholar Neils Orvik's theory of Defence Against Help, this paper will make the case for Canadian participation in Ballistic Missile defence by considering: security threats to Canada (including deliberate authorized, unauthorized and accidental launches by hostile states, rogue states and terrorists), the technology of the system (this will address concerns about weaponization and issues of feasibility), Canada's role in NORAD and homeland defence, and most importantly BMD's importance to maintaining Canadian sovereignty in an insecure world.

The paper is based on over five years of research and an honours thesis on Canadian participation in BMD and will be updated with unique insights for the conference by a very recent trip to NORAD.

## Introduction

The tragic September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks served as a shocking reminder to many Canadians and Americans alike that North America is not immune to violent attacks. Oceans no longer separate a conflict torn world from the 'safe house' of North America. The frontlines of war have arrived in North America's backyard.

In response to the devastating Al Qaeda strike, homeland defence has become a major concern for the U.S. and Canada alike. American security is at the forefront of the Bush administration's agenda.<sup>1</sup> Fears of potential security risks, which include a perceived porous Northern border, have resurfaced. An atmosphere reminiscent of the early days of the Cold War exists again today. North American geostrategic interdependence is once again relevant, with perimeter and continental defence topping the bilateral security agenda.

The United States has expressed concern about Canadian security and defence repeatedly since September 11<sup>th</sup>. U.S. Ambassador Paul Celucci has made a point of encouraging Canada to increase its defence spending in a number of speeches and even stated that the only instructions he received from Secretary of State Colin Powell before assuming his duties in Ottawa were "...you have to talk to the Canadians about increasing their military spending."<sup>2</sup>

The United States apparent increased interest in Canadian security stems directly from the post-911 realization that Canadian security and defence policy have a direct effect on U.S. security. A terrorist attack or ICBM impact North of the border could conceivably have a more devastating effect on sectors of the U.S. economy and population than Canada. Canadian policies have real consequences for American national security. With this realization in mind the United States has once again turned its attention to Canadian military capability and bilateral cooperation.

President Bush's December 2002 announcement that a limited ground-based ballistic missile defence system would be imminently deployed forced Canadian policy makers to finally take a stand on Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD). The longstanding Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) position that Canada was in 'consultation' with the U.S. on participating in BMD is no longer tenable. Missile defence will be deployed within one year.<sup>3</sup> Decisions about the command and control of BMD, determining whether the system will be a NORTH Com or NORAD mission must be made before the autumn of 2003.<sup>4</sup> This means that Canada must make a decision about where it stands on the missile defence issue within approximately 100 days. If

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<sup>1</sup> Mason, Dwight N. The Future of Canadian-United States Defense Relations, unpublished draft, September 2002, pg 19.

<sup>2</sup> Mason, pg 19.

<sup>3</sup> Department of National Defence. Backgrounder: Canada and Ballistic Missile Defence, <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/departement/focus/bmd-en.asp>, accessed May 10, 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Canada agrees to missile defence it will become a part of the NORAD mission, if Canada is opposed, BMD will be moved to NORTH Com or Strategic Command.<sup>5</sup>

Participation in BMD – specifically Ground Based Missile Defence (GBMD) - is a watershed issue for Canadian sovereignty and security. Whatever decision the Canadian government makes, there will be serious consequences for Canadian security and sovereignty. Recognizing the critical importance of the decision at hand this thesis seeks to answer the question: Should Canada participate in Ground-Based Missile Defence?

### Theoretical Underpinnings: Defence Against Help

Canada has historically participated in continental defence for a number of reasons including sovereignty and security concerns, national interests and international image. This thesis will subscribe to Nils Orvik's theory of defence against help to explain Canada's past and continued participation in continental defence. Defence against help was originally formulated to explain the behaviour of Scandinavian non-aligned states, however Orvik believed that it could be applied to Canada in the North American context as well.<sup>6</sup>

Orvik characterizes defence against help as a security strategy for small states.<sup>7</sup> Defence against help is applicable in most trilateral equations where the three major actors are: a large militarily powerful state (State A), a smaller neighbouring state (State B) and an external threat.<sup>8</sup> Geostrategic interdependence dictates that any threat to the smaller state, also poses a security threat to the larger state.<sup>9</sup> State A may fear State B being used as a conduit for attack on State A because B is smaller and militarily weaker. Orvik argues State A will pursue its own interests, namely maintaining its security, often at the cost of the sovereignty of State B. Perceived threats are as significant as actual threats according to defence against help, as the larger state will act with equal vigour to defend itself against threats it perceived to be real and those which have proven themselves to be real.<sup>10</sup> The larger state's incursions on the smaller state's sovereignty are equally as real to small state regardless of whether or not they are in response to real or perceived threats. Defence against help is the smaller state's response to potential sovereignty incursions and is designed to control the amount and nature of help provided by the larger state, by assuring the larger state it is militarily credible.<sup>11</sup> Sovereignty incursions on the smaller state increase proportionately to the degree which the larger state perceives the smaller state to be an intermediary between the threat and itself. In particular, the more strategic significance the smaller state's waterways, aerospace and

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<sup>5</sup>Mason, p g 17.

<sup>6</sup> Orvik, Nils. "The Basic Issue in Canadian National Security: Defence Against Help Defence Against Others," Canadian Defence Quarterly 11:1 (Summer 19981).

<sup>7</sup> Orvik, Nils. "Defence Against Help – A Strategy For Small States," Survival, 15:5 September/October 1973, pg 228.

<sup>8</sup> Lackenbauer, Whitney P. From 'Defence Against Help' to 'A Piece of the Action': The Canadian Sovereignty And Security Paradox Revisited, an unpublished paper for Dr. Rob Huebert, Poli Sic 685.91, April 2000, pg 1.

<sup>9</sup> Orvik, "The Basic Issue in Canadian National Security," pg 9.

<sup>10</sup> Lackenbauer, pg 2.

<sup>11</sup> Orvik, "The Basic Issue in Canadian National Security," pg 10.

territory hold for the larger state the more capabilities the smaller state will need to deter 'help' from the larger state.<sup>12</sup>

If the smaller state can convince the larger one it is independently militarily credible and can defend against its own enemies, as well as those of the larger state, Orvik postulates the smaller state will successfully ensure its own physical and territorial sovereignty and security.<sup>13</sup>

State B can assure State A of its military credibility in two ways which can be performed separately, simultaneously or in weighted combination.<sup>14</sup> For the purpose of clarifying Canadian foreign policy this thesis will highlight the two techniques that can be used in defence against help and in doing so create a more artificial separation than the author originally recorded. This technique was successfully pioneered by Dr. Donald Barry in his paper *The United States in Canadian Security Policy: Defence Against Help*. It should be noted that Don Barry was one of the first scholars to link defence against help to formalized bilateral defence relations with the United States and not just Canadian military expenditures.

- I) Unilateral Defence Against Help: State B employs the strategy of unilateral defence against help by undertaking national measures to maintain or strengthen military capability. An example of unilateral defence against help would be State B increasing military spending to purchase more equipment, therefore increasing its capability to deal with security threats. This new capability convinces State A that State B is unilaterally militarily credible and does not require 'help,' allowing State B to maintain its sovereignty.<sup>15</sup>
- II) Conjoint Defence Against Help: Conjoint defence against help is employed by State B when it cooperates with State A to address security threats, specifically through military organizations, committees and commands.<sup>16</sup> Through pursuing bilateral military cooperation State B gains access to State A's equipment and resources, which State A believes are sufficient to address the threat. State B is therefore able to assure State A they are militarily credible because they have access to the sufficient resources, while ensuring that State B retains command and control of the use of State A's resources in State B's sovereign territory. Thus State B meets State A's requirements for military integrity, but also reduces sovereignty incursions.<sup>17</sup>

### A Brief History of Canadian Defence Against Help:

Canada became a geostrategic security concern for the United States with the development of the Soviet long-range nuclear bomber. The fastest trajectory from the USSR to the United States was to fly over the circumpolar North, which is Canadian airspace. The Americans were extremely concerned that the Canadian Air Force alone

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<sup>12</sup> Orvik, "The Basic Issue in Canadian National Security," pg 10.

<sup>13</sup> Orvik, Nils. "Defence Against Help – A Strategy For Small States," pg 228.

<sup>14</sup> Barry, Donald. "The United States in Canadian Security Policy: Defence Against Help," paper presented at the annual meeting of the Western Social Science Association, San Diego, California, April 23-25, 1981.

<sup>15</sup> Orvik, Nils. Canadian Security and 'Defence against help', International Perspective May/June 1983, pg 6.

<sup>16</sup> Barry, pg 1.

<sup>17</sup> Orvik, "Canadian Security and 'Defence Against Help'," pg 6.

would not be able to stop an onslaught of bombers in a Soviet attack on the U.S.<sup>18</sup> A doctrine of Forward Engagement was developed to deal with the Soviet threat and to circumvent the difficulty of what the Americans perceived as an inadequate Canadian Air Force. Forward engagement is a military tactic which stipulates that Canadian and American jets would engage incoming Soviet bombers as far north as possible.<sup>19</sup> This served the dual purpose of both ensuring any nuclear detonations and subsequent fallout would occur as far from civilian centres as possible. Forward engagement was also designed to attack Soviet bombers before they were able to bomb North American air bases destroying assets on the ground. This ensured a second wave of North American fighter jets would be present to engage the Soviet fighters which slipped through the first defensive line. Forward Engagement ensured that a weak Canadian air defence would not pose a threat to American civilians or military assets and was one of the first indications that the United States considered Canadian sovereignty subordinate to U.S. national security.<sup>20</sup>

Canada was now faced with a neighbour who not only harboured concerns about Canada's ability to maintain Canadian security, but planned to act on these concerns by taking Canadian security into its own hands, effectively threatening Canadian sovereignty.<sup>21</sup> Unable to muster a level of military power acceptable to the Americans, Canada was unable to muster a level of military power which could guarantee security to Canadians or security to a degree the Americans would find acceptable. This left the Canadians with two choices. Either Canada accepted unwanted American military presence on its territory, or provide the Americans with some sort of compromise which would allow Canada to retain sovereign control over its territory, while allaying American concerns about Canadian defence capabilities.<sup>22</sup>

Forward engagement represented the beginning of the balance between sovereignty – security that would characterize Canadian – American homeland defence relations from the 1940s on. The American desire to ensure its security through forward engagement and the Canadian inability to provide sufficient military power to achieve forward engagement alone, led to the development of a specific brand of continental defence. The ongoing balance between sovereignty and security is best described by Orvik's defence against help. Defence against help stipulates that "One credible objective for a small state [in this case Canada] would be, while not attempting military resistance against a large neighbour [the United States], to persuade him that they are strong enough to defend themselves against any of the large neighbour's potential enemies. This could help to avoid the actual military presence of the great neighbour on one" territory for reasons of military 'help' or 'assistance'."<sup>23</sup>

Canada has practiced a unique form of defence against help, the balancing of its security and sovereignty concerns. Recognizing its own lack of military might to ensure security, Canada has accepted that the United States will want a role in ensuring

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<sup>18</sup> Jockel, Joseph. No Boundaries Upstairs: Canada, the United States and the Origins of Air Defense, 1945-1957. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1978, pg 2.

<sup>19</sup> LCol Macleod, Bob. Interview December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2000.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Jockel, pg 2.

<sup>22</sup> Lackenbauer, pgs 9-10.

<sup>23</sup> Orvik, Nils. Canadian Security and 'Defence against help', International Perspective (May/June 1983).

Canadian security and prevent Canada from becoming a threat to the United States.<sup>24</sup> What Canada had to avoid at all costs was the presence of American troops in Canada without Canadian control. The NORAD command was created not only with the intent of rationalizing continental defence and formalizing cooperation, but also with the explicit purpose of ensuring Canadian command of military air assets in Canadian territory, specifically American.<sup>25</sup> In this way, the Americans would feel confident that Canada was not a security threat, as Canada was able to utilize American resources to protect itself and Canada would not suffer from America's "unhealthy preoccupation with the North."<sup>26</sup>

### Defence Against Help in the Modern Context

Canada's use of defence against help as a mechanism to balance the sovereignty/security paradox has declined over the past decade.<sup>27</sup> Unilateral and joint defence against help have remained at static levels of participation, while the more powerful United States has increased its defence budget and military capability. Canada's failure to increase its levels of unilateral and joint defence against help has increasingly aggravated the US Administrations – particularly the current Bush administration- and the Canada-U.S. relationship has become increasingly strained.<sup>28</sup> The issue of Canadian participation in Ground Based Missile Defense will be the watershed for Canadian sovereignty in the continental context. Non-participation will put an end to effective joint defence against help as it will marginalize Canada's presence in NORAD, the major joint mechanism of defence against help.<sup>29</sup> The Canadian government has given no indications that it plans to increase the defence budget sufficiently to manage unilateral defence against help.

A number of analytical reports recorded severe shortcomings in the Canadian Forces capabilities and funding. The CF's struggles with aging equipment, personnel levels and financing all place Canada's military credibility into question. The previous chapter also documented American doubts about Canadian military credibility and even suggested that many American policy makers (Congress) believe Canada poses a security threat. Dwight Mason, former American Chair of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence concluded that Canada's unsuccessful application of unilateral defence against help would result in an increasingly unilateral and isolated American dominance in North American defence – a prospect that threatens Canadian sovereignty.

According to Niles Orvik a small state like Canada has two defence against help strategies at its disposal: unilateral and joint as discussed previously. Orvik suggests that when one strategy is unsuccessfully implemented, a country may use the other to augment or replace the failed strategy. Based on the previous chapter which assesses the Canadian application of unilateral defence against help as largely unsuccessful, Orvik would postulate that to retain sovereignty, Canada should augment its efforts by

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<sup>24</sup> Barry.

<sup>25</sup> Lackenbauer.

<sup>26</sup> Van, Gerard S. Canada: The Military and Strategic Pawn. New York: Praeger, 1988, pg 37.

<sup>27</sup> Mason, pgs 1-27.

<sup>28</sup> Mason, pg 23.

<sup>29</sup> Robertson, Major Jamie R. NORAD Official Spokesman. Interview conducted Dec 11, 2000.

employing joint defence against help. This chapter will suggest an alternative strategy to maintaining Canadian sovereignty to augment Canada's relatively unsuccessful application of unilateral defence against help. More specifically, this chapter will examine the possibility of Canada using participation in Ground Based Missile Defence as a joint defence against help strategy to preserve Canadian sovereignty and security.

### Joint Defence Against Help

Joint defence against help is not a new strategy for Canada. Since Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Mackenzie King announced their mutual commitments to keeping North America safe, Canada has engaged in a number of bilateral forums including: The North American Aerospace Defence Command, The Military Cooperation Committee and the Permanent Joint Board on Defence, just to name a few of the more than 80 treaty level defence agreements, 250 memoranda of understanding and 145 bilateral forums for defence coordination between Canada and the U.S.<sup>30</sup>

Canada has pursued joint defence against help since the 1940s and the 1994 Defence White Paper continued in that vein, outlining a number mechanisms for bilateral cooperation. While Canada's application of joint defence against help has been arguably more successful than its application of unilateral defence against help, it is a strategy on the decline.<sup>31</sup> Canada has not explicitly removed resources from joint defence against help, but rather has exhibited a lack of interest in joining new continental initiatives such as U.S. Northern Command and Ballistic Missile Defence.

The Chretien government declined American offers to join Northern Command.<sup>32</sup> The results of Canada's refusal to participate are historic. For the first time in the history of Canada-US relations a unilateral, geographic command has been created which places Canada within its area of operations.<sup>33</sup> The command, like all American geographic commands is charged with defending American security interests in its area of operations, in this case Canada, the U.S. and Mexico. Northern Command could conceivably act to defend American security interests in Canada without consulting the Canadian government and certainly without Canadian knowledge, control or consent. Concerned about the implications for Canadian sovereignty, the Chretien government dispatched a Joint Planning Group on Defence to Northern Command to work as a liaison group with the command and maintain Canadian input.<sup>34</sup> While the group provides an effective mechanism for peacetime consultation and input, it is not a formal component of the command and could be excluded in times of crisis decision-making.

A significant blow to Canadian participation in American aerospace programs occurred when Space Command was separated from NORAD and joined with U.S. Strategic Command.<sup>35</sup> While this was not purely the result of Canadian non-participation in a bilateral initiative (although Canadian fence sitting on ballistic missile defence certainly was a factor) but evolved as part of the United States' Unified Command Plan it

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<sup>30</sup> CDA, pg 37.

<sup>31</sup> Mason pg 23.

<sup>32</sup> Macdonald, Lieutenant General George E.C. Open Remarks in Calgary, February 15, 2002.

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.northcom.mil/index.cfm?fuseaction=s.whoweare&section=4>

<sup>34</sup> Calder, Dr. Ken. Unpublished speaking notes on Enhancing Partnerships, October 2002.

<sup>35</sup> CDA, pg xx and pg 40.

had a significant impact on Canadian participation and influence in American space programs. Previous to the decoupling of Space Com from NORAD, Canadians frequently worked for both commands. As of October 1<sup>st</sup> when the unified command plan coupled Space Command with Strategic Command, Canadians working inside Space Com were removed and assigned purely NORAD related duties. The implications for Canada have been substantially decreased influence, knowledge or participation in U.S. plans, programs and operations relating to outer space surveillance and protection.<sup>36</sup>

NORAD forms the cornerstone of bilateral continental defence and of Canada's application of joint defence against help.<sup>37</sup> The NORAD command is unique and frequently referred to as the "gem" in the crown of bilateral North American defence relations.<sup>38</sup> NORAD is the largest and most 'seamlessly' integrated bilateral military command in the world.<sup>39</sup> NORAD is a binational continental aerospace defence command in which command and control of the NORAD structure and missions are jointly and equally managed by Canadians and Americans. The binational structure of NORAD means that there are Canadians commanding Americans and vice versa. The NORAD Commander is traditionally an American, while the Deputy Commander is a Canadian.<sup>40</sup> On September 11<sup>th</sup> for example, it was a Canadian officer in Command of the Cheyenne Mountain Operations Centre who led the NORAD response to the terrorist attacks.

NORAD has a seamless mechanism for conducting defensive actions on either side of the border and can acquire national approval for any extraordinary measures in either nation's capital if required.<sup>41</sup> NORAD has a direct link to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and Chief of Defence Staff and/or the President and Prime Minister if required. Agreements are already in place to automatically respond to specific threats as the NORAD Regional structure respects national sovereign boundaries but can, if required, call upon forces from either side of the border to react when prudent and required.

The NORAD mission tasks the command to "Deter, Detect and Defend" North American aerospace.<sup>42</sup> NORAD's primary missions are aerospace warning and control. Aerospace warning consists of detection, validation and warning of attacks against North America.<sup>43</sup> NORAD provides aerospace warning against all threats including missiles, aircraft and space vehicles. NORAD's aerospace control is another matter however. Aerospace control involves the actual protection of North American aerospace – meaning the active defence of aerospace in the face of a threat. NORAD can currently defend against air-breathing threats only (manned aircraft and cruise missiles).<sup>44</sup>

The strength and success of NORAD has been the command and control architecture that focuses on a perimeter defence concept for North America while still

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<sup>36</sup> Mason, pg 18

<sup>37</sup> CDA, pg 37.

<sup>38</sup> Robertson, Major Jamie R. NORAD Official Spokesman. Interview conducted Dec 11, 2000.

<sup>39</sup> Macdonald, Open comments.

<sup>40</sup> Macdonald, Lieutenant General George E.C. unpublished (as date of receipt) article on interoperability and NORAD, October 2002.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> NORAD website: <http://www.norad.mil>

<sup>43</sup> Macondald, unpublished.

<sup>44</sup> Macdonald, NORAD and NMD pg 11.

preserving each nation's sovereignty.<sup>45</sup> NORAD preserves Canadian sovereignty by providing a number of unique opportunities for Canada to assure the United States of its military credibility and to cooperate with the U.S. in the joint defence of North America. NORAD gives Canada institutionalized influence and a voice in the American defence structure, access to American resources, and allows Canada to retain sovereign control of the defence of Canadian territory.<sup>46</sup>

The bilateral nature of NORAD and 'seamless' integration ensures that Canadian interests are voiced at every stage of the decision making process and have as much influence on the ultimate outcome of the command's decisions as American interests do.<sup>47</sup> Canadian officers are present in every sector of NORAD, commanding and serving Americans. This trend of full integration carries up to the political level, where NORAD can call upon additional resources from either nation to carry out its mission. For instance, on September 10th, 2001, NORAD had just 20 fighters on alert (4 in Canada and 16 in the US).<sup>48</sup> Shortly after the terrorist attacks there were dozens airborne across the continent, all assigned to NORAD.

Canadian resources cannot be utilized without Canadian consultation and consent, and more importantly American resources cannot be used over Canadian territory without Canadian knowledge, consultation and consent. The bilateral nature of NORAD and resulting disproportionately strong Canadian influence in the command ensures that the Canadian voice is heard, Canadian interests effect outcomes and furthermore, Canada retains control of its national forces and of forces used to protect the nation.

NORAD also functions to demonstrate Canadian military credibility to the United States. The command does this by ensuring Canadian access to otherwise unaffordable American resources.<sup>49</sup> According to the current Deputy Commander of NORAD, General Ken Pennie, Canada cannot afford independent aerospace warning and control. NORAD provides access to essential equipment allowing Canada to exercise sovereignty by monitoring and responding to threats nationally through the bilateral NORAD structure. Access to U.S. equipment also eases American fears about Canadian capabilities, as the Americans are aware of the amount and quality of resources Canada has access to. The NORAD arrangement provides a further benefit for Canada in terms of cost. Canada participates in NORAD through quid pro quo contributions, meaning that rather than financing 50% of the cost of NORAD, Canada contributes through personnel and space surveillance capabilities.<sup>50</sup> In excess of 90% of the operational costs of NORAD are shouldered by the U.S. with Canada's approximate 9% contribution remaining strictly in the quid pro quo category.<sup>51</sup>

Canada's fifty percent command and control duties at NORAD ensure the Canadian government is apprised of potential aerospace threats to its territorial sovereignty, ensures Canadian command and control of any response to potential threats and ensures a Canadian voice in continental defence. The Canadian government is

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<sup>45</sup> Mason, pgs 5-7.

<sup>46</sup> Mason, pg 7.

<sup>47</sup> Macdonald, NORAD and NMD pg 8.

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.norad.mil>

<sup>49</sup> Pennie, Ken. Speech at the Calgary Chamber of Commerce

<sup>50</sup> Macdonald, NORAD and NMD, pg 11.

<sup>51</sup> Robertson, Major Jamie R. NORAD Official Spokesman. Interview conducted Dec 11, 2000.

always aware of potential situations and given the ultimate authority to command and control national forces assigned to Canadian aerospace protection through NORAD.<sup>52</sup> If national forces were unable to respond to a threat to Canadian aerospace, American forces would be assigned, but would be under Canadian command (Canadian NORAD Region) and control thus retaining Canadian sovereignty.

The success story of NORAD is threatened however. The United States plans to deploy its Ground Base Missile Defence system within the next one hundred days. The Americans must decide before that point which command will be responsible for the command and control of the GBMD system.<sup>53</sup> Without Canadian consent, missile defence cannot be assigned as a NORAD mission and would have to be located within Northern Command or Strategic Command. The placement of missile defence within either of these commands will remove Canadian participation or influence in the program on a formalized, institutional level, as Canada has no permanent presence in either command.<sup>54</sup>

The Americans have indicated they would like to locate GBMD in NORAD as a logical extension of the NORAD mission. It would facilitate centralized and rationalized planning of continental defence (especially considering NORAD and North Com share the same commander) without threatening Canadian sovereignty, and to ease the strain of the size and complexity of missile defence by distributing responsibilities bilaterally.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore Canadian participation offers a level of political palatability to the missile defence program, making it easier for other U.S. allies to support the program.

The need for Canadian participation for reasons of international palatability has been significantly eroded by recent events. NATO met to examine the options available for a broader 'allied' missile defence, indicating a shift in international attitudes towards a GBMD program. The major reason for this shift is the termination of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. Several countries, including Canada had reservations about participating in missile defence because it was widely perceived to threaten the foundation of the ABM Treaty, widely cited as the 'cornerstone' of bilateral nuclear deterrence and the foundation of a subsequent international nuclear anti-proliferation regime. It was feared that the end of the ABM treaty would destabilize U.S.-Russian relations and in turn undermine the carefully established anti-proliferation regime resulting in renewed regional arms races around the globe.<sup>56</sup> The United States legally withdrew from the ABM Treaty without causing the collapse of the current international arms control regime. A number of states other than the U.S., perhaps most notably Russia are now considering deploying national missile defence systems and discussions are underway to assess the potential of a global missile defence system. Missile defence is earning increasing international acceptability and hence a mollifying Canadian presence and participation are not as important as it was before the termination of the ABM Treaty.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Mason, pg 18.

<sup>53</sup> Department of National Defence. Backgrounder: Canada and Ballistic Missile Defence, <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/departement/focus/bmd-en.asp>, accessed May 10, 2003.

<sup>54</sup> Mason, pg 18.

<sup>55</sup> Mason, pgs 7-28.

<sup>56</sup> Fergusson, Jim. Deputy Director of the Centre for Defence and Security Issues. Interview conducted on December 11, 2000.

<sup>57</sup> Calder, Dr. Ken. Unpublished speaking notes on Enhancing Partnerships, October 2002.

If Canada does not agree to sign onto Ground Based Missile Defence, the task will be removed from NORAD and relocated in a purely American command. The result will be the marginalization of Canadians within the existing NORAD structure and ultimately the marginalization of the entire command. Marginalization of Canadians within the command, or the command itself will result in a decline in Canadian defence against help and subsequent ability to exercise and ensure Canadian sovereignty.

The Cheyenne Mountain Operations Centre (CMOC) is the key command and control node for NORAD. If Canada plays no role in missile defence, Canadians will no longer be able to hold key positions such as the CMOC Command Director who oversees all aspects of the Cheyenne Mountain mission such as missile warning, air warning, air control and space control.<sup>58</sup> Regardless of which command is assigned missile defence, the actual execution of that mission will be conducted at Cheyenne Mountain. Canadians therefore will be denied positions previously shared by both nations and moreover be excluded entirely from missile warning and defence.<sup>59</sup> The NORAD Command itself will be effectively limited to air defence and warning only and Canadians will find themselves limited to the original pre-space era NORAD air defence mission (NORAD became operational on 11 September 1957 a few weeks before the launch of Sputnik).<sup>60</sup> Access to space-based warning systems would no longer be necessary for Canadians as radar alone is sufficient to carry out the air defence mission. At this point, the entire rationale of NORAD then comes into question as the emerging threat is missile attacks not long-range Soviet bombers. The US would arguably have no need to maintain the NORAD Agreement if the command is relegated to an air defence role only.<sup>61</sup> The cost for Canada to go it alone on air defence could prove prohibitive. The removal of a Canadian voice in US air defence decision-making could erode Canadian sovereignty in the event of a unilateral decision taken through the North Com to 'defend' American interests in Canadian airspace. Saying no to Missile Defence therefore will have a negative domino effect on NORAD itself and Canada's position within it.

Lieutenant General George E.C. Macdonald, Canadian Vice Chief of the Defence Staff and former Deputy Commander in Chief of NORAD, writes that GBMD is a logical extension of the NORAD mission.<sup>62</sup> NORAD is currently responsible for aerospace warning of ballistic missiles, but not aerospace control (defence). Assigning NORAD the role of missile defence would parallel NORAD's current mission of aerospace control of air-breathing threats and form a logical evolution to NORAD's current mission of ballistic missile detection and warning. Macdonald writes "Given the requirement to fuse existing and required warning and defence systems, combined with the fact that the current warning and attack assessment mission is already performed by NORAD in Cheyenne Mountain, it makes sense to simply evolve the existing capabilities to include ballistic missile defence."<sup>63</sup>

The American military have cited the same continuity between the NORAD mission and missile defence as the central reason for making missile defence a NORAD

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<sup>58</sup> Macdonald, open comments.

<sup>59</sup> Macdonald, NORAD and NMD, pg 11.

<sup>60</sup> Robertson, Major Jamie R. NORAD Official Spokesman. Interview conducted Dec 11, 2000.

<sup>61</sup> Mason, pg 18.

<sup>62</sup> Macdonald, NORAD and NMD, pg 11.

<sup>63</sup> Macdonald NORAD and NMD, pg 11.

task.<sup>64</sup> Dwight Mason states "...NORAD now performs the warning and validation functions needed to make a decision to fire missile interceptors. It seems sensible to keep the warning, validation and firing responsibilities in the same place given the short time available for action."<sup>65</sup>

If the integration of Canadian and American militaries within NORAD were to be eroded by creating an artificial compartmentalization within the Command structure then the operational effectiveness would come into question. It would be doubtful that a Canadian deputy commander – who de facto runs NORAD on a day to day basis and the Commander is double hated with North Com – would be able to effectively execute his role if Canada is excluded from specific mission areas. The Command and Control structure would be fragmented and negatively impacted.<sup>66</sup>

Canadians are currently being marginalized within the NORAD command because of a neutral Canadian position on GBMD. The Canadian government has long stated that they are in 'consultation' with the U.S. government on the issue of missile defence or have deflected questions about Canadian participation for years by claiming the government is either unaware of what GBMD involves or states that Canada has not been invited to participate in missile defence<sup>67</sup> – even though a Canadian officer is assigned to the Ballistic Missile Defense Office in Washington DC and another officer is assigned to the Joint National Test Facility at Shriever AFB in Colorado Springs who works on BMD simulated tests.<sup>68</sup> Canada's refusal to declare a position on missile defence has contributed to a de facto marginalization of Canadian officers at NORAD.

The logical extension of the NORAD mission is a powerful argument for including GBMD as a NORAD task. Due to the bilateral nature of the command, if Canada refuses to participate in missile defence however, NORAD cannot accept the mission. Missile defence being assigned to a command other than NORAD, because of Canadian non-participation, will risk the marginalization of the entire command. Not only will Canadians be excluded from key decision making processes in the command which share resources with a missile defence-tasked North Com or Strat Com, but the NORAD mission will be relegated to questionable relevancy. As already noted, the NORAD mission will be limited to air warning and control if Canada refuses to participate in missile defence, the result of which will be restrictions on Canadian access to U.S. space asset data, research and development and ultimately will significantly alter NORAD's current mission of aerospace warning and control.<sup>69</sup> Dwight Mason writes that perhaps more significantly the Canadian refusal to participate in missile defence and subsequent changes to the NORAD mission would signal a symbolic reduction of cooperation in continental defence for the first time in more than sixty years.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Mason, pg 17.

<sup>65</sup> Mason, pg 17.

<sup>66</sup> Macdonald, pg 11.

<sup>67</sup> Stephenson, Mercedes. *Who Gives Manley These Strange Ideas?*, Calgary Herald, August \_ 2001.

<sup>68</sup> MacLeod, Colonel Robert. NORAD/US Space Command. Interview conducted on December 8, 2000.

<sup>69</sup> Mason, pg 18.

<sup>70</sup> Mason, pg 18.

## Implications for Canada

The marginalization of Canadians within the NORAD command would indicate an erosion of the bilateral nature of the command that defines it as the cornerstone of continental defence against help. The benefits that Canada incurs from participating in NORAD will be significantly reduced and the subsequent Canadian ability to exercise sovereignty will also decrease.<sup>71</sup>

Canada will lose its position of influence within the NORAD command and wider American defence structure. If the integrated command and control process is fragmented or the command is artificially compartmentalized by nationality, the very characteristic that made the command unique – its bilateral nature – will be destroyed.<sup>72</sup> A diminished Canadian presence in the chain of command will reduce Canadian influence, access to equipment, knowledge of situations concerning Canadian territory and ability to respond to threats. NORAD is currently a full partnership where Canadians interests receive equal weight to American interests.<sup>73</sup>

A decrease in Canadian presence throughout the command will erode Canadian influence and control in the decision making process. This in turn will erode Canadian sovereignty and security by decreasing Canada's ability to monitor and defend against threats to Canadian territory. The removal of Canadians from certain areas of Cheyenne Mountain will deny Canadian decision makers critical information and input.<sup>74</sup>

The United States does not need Canada to effectively perform continental defence in a way which protects American interests.<sup>75</sup>

Canadian non-participation in Ground Based Missile Defence will jeopardize the future of Canadian defence against help as the major joint mechanism for exercising Canadian sovereignty is marginalized. A less relevant mission for the NORAD command, due to a Canadian decision to refuse missile defence, will lead to increasingly unilateral American defence of North America. Canada will lose its direct ability to access American resources and affect American policies in order to sustain Canadian sovereignty.

## Bilateral Defence – Ceding Rather than Exercising Sovereignty?

While defence against help postulates that bilateral mechanisms of cooperation will increase Canadian security, some critics such as Lloyd Axworthy and Michael Byers argue that this cooperation is tantamount to integration and a ceding rather than securing sovereignty. The Liu Institute for Global Issues released a study titled *The Canadian Armed Forces Under U.S. Command*, which warned against the dangers of greater

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<sup>71</sup> Mason, pg 24.

<sup>72</sup> Macdonald, NORAD and NMD, pg 11.

<sup>73</sup> CDA, pg 39.

<sup>74</sup> Macdonald, open comments.

<sup>75</sup> Mason, pg 18.

continental cooperation. Michael Byers, the author of the report, wrote that increased cooperation would lead to greater interoperability, the logical extension of which he argued was less independence in Canadian foreign and defence policy as it is increasingly easier for U.S. forces to command Canadian troops.<sup>76</sup>

Byers extended this argument to direct opposition to Canadian participation in ballistic missile defence in an article he penned with Lloyd Axworthy, the former Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs. In their article *Say no to missile defence* Axworthy and Byers argue that it will sacrifice Canadian sovereignty by forcing Canada to abrogate current international responsibilities and commitments (namely arms control agreements such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) and sacrifice Canadian sovereignty by signing onto a “neo-conservative juggernaut.”<sup>77</sup>

This argument is flawed on a number of fronts. Historically, NORAD has never forced Canada to break with or abrogate any international commitment or responsibility. Canada and the United States have differing viewpoints on a number of international treaties and accords including Kyoto and the International Ban on Landmines. The United States has never asked, much less attempted to force Canada to change its position on any of these foreign policy issues via the lever of NORAD.

On the sovereignty front the argument is flawed because it ignores the value of retaining a Canadian voice at the American table, not to mention the ability to retain sovereign command and control of Canadian aerospace. Non-participation in BMD and the subsequent implications for NORAD will mean ceding Canadian decisions about Canadian national defence to the American government as Canada will no longer have access to American resources required by defence against help to assure the Americans Canada does not pose a security threat. General George E.C. Macdonald flat out refutes this viewpoint stating that participating in continental defence is an exercise in sovereignty, not a sacrifice of it. It is better to retain some control and knowledge over your territory he postulates, than refuse to cooperate and contract your national defences and control of national territory to another nation.<sup>78</sup>

Currently, Canada is ineffectively practicing unilateral and joint defence against help. Sovereignty and security concerns are not being balanced against one another, but rather both have become major issues of contention within Canada and between Canada and the U.S.<sup>79</sup> Missile defence offers a way for Canada to decrease its security risk and increase its sovereignty through a convenient, functioning and fully integrated established mechanism for defence against help, NORAD.

### Updating the Predictions, was the Thesis Correct? Assigning the BMD Mission and the NORAD Amendment

This paper was written over a year and a half ago, predicting somewhat ominously the deadly loss of sovereignty that lay ahead if the Canadian government

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<sup>76</sup> Byers, Michael. The Canadian Armed Forces Under U.S. Command, The Liu Institute for Global Issues, April 2002.

<sup>77</sup> Axworthy, Lloyd and Byers, Michael. Say No To Missile Defence, The Globe and Mail, April 29, 2003.

<sup>78</sup> Mason, pg 7.

<sup>79</sup> Mason, pgs 1-27.

chose not to participate in BMD and the subsequent negative implications that would have for NORAD and therefore, Canadian sovereignty.

Over eighteen months later and Canada has yet to make a decision about its participation in Ballistic Missile Defence. As a result of the government's dithering, the United States has assigned the BMD mission to the solely American Northern Command. This means that Canada will have no involvement in making decisions about shooting down incoming ICBMs over Canadian territory.

Currently, Canada still has access to NORAD resources and the Martin administration has attempted to secure Canada's role in NORAD by writing a 2004 NORAD amendment stating that Canadians at NORAD will provide Americans at NORAD and North Com with the information they need to operate the missile defence system. This was the bare minimum the government could have done, as Canadians were physically in the way of the operation of the missile defence system previous to this amendment.

The amendment is purely a band-aid solution however and does little to ensure Canadian sovereignty via the relevance of NORAD in the long term. First of all, the amendment represents de facto participation in the missile defence system, because Canadians are providing information, which facilitates its operation. However, in their haste to avoid being perceived as supporting missile defense and risking the balance of the minority government, the Martin administration has essentially agreed to participate in missile defense without garnering any real influence in the way the system is built or executed (including over Canada) and without gaining any of the political currency that outright participation would have garnered.

The amendment will temporarily ensure NORAD's continued existence, however in the long term, NORAD and Canadian sovereignty, which is tied to it, are at risk. The Americans are currently pursuing a unification of command plan to reduce redundancy within the joint command structure and to ensure faster, more effective response times when attacked. It was under this plan that Canada lost access to Space Command when it was moved to Strategic Command in Omaha, Nebraska. Under the unification of command plan, the United States seeks to eliminate duplication of mission and this puts NORAD at risk. Assigning early warning to Strategic Command and the actual missile defense mission to Northern Command has resulted in two mission overlaps with NORAD – early warning and aerospace monitoring, warning, assessment and defence. Should the Americans decide that the current command structure does not provide a rationalized response structure and a risk in terms of time and effective response, it is quite conceivable that NORAD will be eliminated if not in name, then in function.

Even if Canada does make the decision to participate in missile defence, it may be too late. It is possible and ideal, in Canada's case that the mission of missile defence be moved back under the NORAD mandate allowing Canada full national command and control over how the system is used in Canada and continued access to American resources in NORAD and the security assurances those resources provide. However, it is possible that due to the unification of command plan, North Com will continue to be the operator of the missile defence system. In this case it is highly unlikely the US will convert a solely US command into a bilateral one, instead North Com will likely subsume NORAD. In this case, Canada while retaining access to American resources will no longer be a full partner in the defence of North America, but rather a very junior partner.

No longer will the full logistical integration of the command be possible and Canada will be forced to accept unilateral American decisions about the defence of the continent and even Canada on some issues.

### The American Election's Outcome and its impact on Canadian Participation in BMD and Canadian Sovereignty

Some have suggested that the coming election will represent a sort of panacea for Canada if John Kerry is elected. Kerry has voted against missile defence systems over 50 times in his political career and was a vocal opponent of SDI. It is important to note however, that all of Senator Kerry's opposition to the system occurred pre-9/11 and there has been a drastic change in America's security mindset since that time. Senator Kerry in his campaign has criticized Bush's layered Regan like approach to missile defence and has threatened to cut money from the BMD program in order to fund an additional 40,000 American troops to fight in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Regardless of what Senator Kerry has stated previously, it is very unlikely if not impossible that missile defence would not go forward under a potential Kerry administration. Kerry has stated in his election platform that he believes in an effective, limited system of missile defence – precisely the system Canada has been invited to join in. While Kerry would likely abandon the Bush administration's plans for air-born laser missile defence and other boost phase missile defence systems, he would almost certainly support the limited ground based system of missile defence and for Canada, that is the only one that matters. The reality is that it is not politically tenable for any administration to pull the plug on missile defence. The system will be operational within 90 days (and hence before either President Bush or Senator Kerry is inaugurated) and to end the program now would be to cost the American tax payer billions and shut down the only defence America has against ballistic missiles. The political backlash of dismantling Americas only (if questionably effective) system of missile defence at a time when the United States is at risk and nuclear terrorism is a very real possibility would be massive. No American president is willing to risk a nuclear strike on the nation – or willing to risk the criticism that they did not do every they possibly could to prevent that strike.

Furthermore, Senator Kerry's apparent opposition to missile defence does not mean that Canada will be free to further dither on participation in the system, or that the pressure to participate will halt. If anything, it is likely Senator Kerry would put more pressure on Canada to participate in the system as he has made it clear that his administration's missile defence system must be supported by international allies. Canada's refusal to participate could cost the nation more under a determined internationalist Kerry administration than the somewhat isolationist Bush administration who does not care one-way or the other whether or not Canada participates.

### Conclusion

Participation in Ballistic Missile Defence is an issue of sovereignty and not security for Canada. Canada must have access to the aerospace resources available at NORAD to convince the United States of American that Canada does not pose a security threat.

Without access to those resources, Canada will be unable to monitor and control its own aerospace and the Canadian people will defacto cede defence policymaking to American lawmakers and military officers rather than to the Canadian government. The allocation of the missile defence mission to Northern Command raises serious questions about the future of NORAD and Canada's place in continental defence. The recent amendment to the NORAD agreement provides a band-aid solution that allows Canadian participation in BMD, but with none of the political or long-term sovereignty benefits of overt participation. In conclusion, it may already be too late for Canada to save its sovereignty as year of watching and waiting have yielded Canada with a situation in which it is no longer a strong or relevant partner and a nation unable to fulfill its citizens with its most basic obligation – the obligation to protect them.

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