

U.S. and NATO exercises, specialized training and maintaining a Canadian presence abroad diminish the number of units readily available for sovereignty surveillance.

Only just able to cope with normal requirements, the three major fleets maintained by the Canadian government become stretched almost beyond capacity in exceptional circumstances, such as when larger than usual numbers of foreign fishing vessels are found in the waters adjacent to Canada's. This leads to a situation where the only possible way to respond seems inappropriate. In a recent West coast incident, for example, a destroyer was the only armed vessel available (there are no other armed vessels on the west coast) to assist in the arrest of some narcotics smugglers in a small boat. In much of the vast Arctic, the only Canadian presence is provided by the infrequent and brief appearance of one of the over-extended force of eighteen long-range patrol aircraft (LRPAs). Each year a total of approximately sixteen sets of missions, each about three to four days long, are flown over the north.

What is barely adequate in peacetime becomes, by any measure, wholly inadequate in wartime. Not counting three old, mothballed destroyers, MARCOM has only twenty-three combat vessels to patrol the huge ocean area for which it is responsible. There are three submarines and twelve helicopter-carrying destroyers on the east coast, and eight destroyers (none of which carry ASW helicopters) on the west coast. Four of the west coast destroyers are employed in a training role. There are fourteen LRPAs on the east coast, and four on the west coast. The eighteen coastal patrol Trackers are currently unarmed, although thought is being given to equipping them with rockets. Again, 20 to 25 per cent of this force would probably not be immediately available.

Of the surface naval vessels, the general consensus is that only four, the DDH-280s, possess a marginal capability to survive in a multi-threat hostile environment. As observed by the mildest critic of the current state of affairs among the retired officers who appeared before the sub-committee, VAdm Porter, the others "could only be used in the western Atlantic at this point, because they are . . . unable to defend themselves . . . against missiles."<sup>11</sup>

RAdm Martin had previously stated:

... in the Atlantic, four of the destroyers . . . could probably do a reasonably effective job; but do not be misled. These ships are at least a generation behind in their capability. The other helicopter-destroyers are so old that all they are really providing is a command and control centre and a deck from which a . . . helicopter can operate. In the Pacific, the situation is even worse. The four improved Restigouche class destroyers will have some ability to survive, and I put it that way intentionally. However, the Mackenzie class will not only be in danger but a liability to the Commander.<sup>12</sup>

Only the four DDH-280s are equipped to handle a modern air threat — and that capability is marginal because it does not include an effective anti-missile system. None of the surface vessels could deal with a modern surface threat, nor

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 22 March, 1983, p. 43:15.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, 8 February, 1983, p. 38:24.