

CANADIAN SECURITY AND SOVEREIGNTY

A continually changing international environment creates varying threats and opportunities for Canada's national security. Our economic prosperity, our form of government, and our values are subject to constant challenge. The federal government has a clear responsibility to take a leadership role in defining Canada's security interests, in recognizing and explaining threats to those interests, and in developing appropriate policies to protect and further Canadian security. In the past, Canada's geography protected the country from the horror of war and conquest. Now, however, the universal destructive nature of nuclear warfare has put Canada at risk and made the search for a credible defence posture more necessary. Canadians recognize that Canada cannot realistically expect to safeguard its security by acting alone. The strong support evident among Canadians for NATO and NORAD, and for Canada assuming a fairer share of the Alliance burden, indicates a widespread understanding and acceptance of the need for defence cooperation between Canada and its allies in the free world. The fact that such broad, public support for collective defence efforts continues to exist in Canada should not be overlooked when the parliamentary hearings to review Competitiveness and Security take place. Many groups will be calling for a radical alteration of this country's postwar national security policies. The evidence clearly suggests that their views are not representative of those of our citizens as a whole.

The Soviet Threat

The most salient threat to Canada and the community of democracies is posed by the Soviet Union's continually expanding military power.