

present talks. Nevertheless, Canada will soon have to decide whether it wishes to develop a national capability in this area or whether it will seek a share in U.S. space programmes.

## 2. Some Fundamental Considerations

Behind the consideration of transitional arrangements and eventual space-based systems is the fundamental issue of the protection of Canada's own territory and people. This is the most basic responsibility of the state. As Professor David Cox remarked during the hearings, "in our own defence policy, we have to develop a very clear sense of priorities and, in my opinion, they start with ensuring that we are not prejudicing our own territorial integrity".<sup>1</sup>

Similar sentiments motivated this committee when, in its previous form as the Senate Sub-committee on National Defence, it studied Canada's maritime defence and recommended a mixed fleet that would enable Canada to protect its own waters while fulfilling its Alliance commitments. Its approach then was "to explore the full range of threats that modern naval forces could pose to Canada today and over the next thirty years and then to consider what steps Canada could, within reason, take to counter them".<sup>2</sup> The sub-committee stated in that report that it was a strong proponent of Canada's membership in NATO, "but felt it also had to examine the country's needs in circumstances when the Alliance might not be involved".<sup>3</sup>

In the air environment, the outstanding characteristic of Canada's situation is that this country lies directly between the superpowers. The most dangerous threats it faces are not those aimed directly against itself but rather against its neighbour, the United States. Many of the Soviet Union's long-range bombers, air-launched cruise missiles (ALCMs), inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) would pass over Canadian territory if they were ever launched against the United States and would cause massive devastation in this country if they fell short of their American targets. In addition, Canada would suffer as much as the United States from fallout and other side-effects of a nuclear attack.

In 1957, Canada and the United States agreed to maintain jointly the air defence of the continent. Under the North American Aerospace Defence Command, radars, interceptors and other systems provide an early-warning capability that limits the danger of U.S. land-based deterrent forces being destroyed on the ground and thus ensures that one of the main pillars of world stability is preserved. These NORAD forces also have some collateral capacity to limit damage to strategic targets, people, and territory in Canada and the United States.

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<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings of the Special Committee of the Senate on National Defence*, 8 March 1984, p. 3:33.

<sup>2</sup> *Canada's Maritime Defence*, Report of the Sub-committee on National Defence of the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Ottawa, May 1983, p. 3 (ISBN 0-662-52500-0).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4.