

The detection of a number of ballistic missiles on course for North America would constitute unambiguous warning of imminent strategic attack. This would not be the case, however, for detection and identification of potentially hostile bombers approaching North America, even in considerable numbers. The intentions of an intruding bomber force remain unknown up to the point at which it releases its weapons, unless before that point it is effectively challenged. The approach of potentially hostile bombers in an ambiguous situation might lead to the release of retaliatory forces even without direct confirmation that an attack, as opposed to a show of force or even just an exercise, was intended. The stability of deterrence is, therefore, reduced if intruding bombers cannot be compelled by interceptor aircraft to reveal clearly what their intentions are.

Accordingly, it is our judgment that the two North American nations should maintain a reasonable level of capability to intercept aircraft approaching North America in order to provide for positive identification when necessary, and also to remove any ambiguity about the intentions of approaching aircraft identified as foreign bombers. It is important to recognize that this concept of stabilizing the deterrent does not require a capability to defeat an attacking bomber force but merely to determine without ambiguity, through the threat of significant losses, whether an attack on the continent is actually intended. The capacity to obtain that unambiguous determination should be sufficient to deter destabilizing probes or exercises; deterrence of actual attack, however, depends not on the air defence capability but on the assured retaliatory capability.

Canada, because of its geographical position, can contribute effectively both to the surveillance and warning systems and to the interceptor forces which the two governments judge necessary for our mutual security and to make sure that Soviet bombers cannot be employed effectively against the United States retaliatory forces. We can, moreover, make this contribution more effectively within the kind of integrated system for operational control of the air-defence forces of both nations which the NORAD Agreement has established.

At the present time, neither government has yet reached the point at which it is prepared to decide on the precise future of its air-defence systems. Further review and consultation will be required before these decisions are made but, in the meantime, I believe it would be most unwise to dismantle the existing NORAD arrangements.

From a purely national point of view, we need to maintain the capability to detect, identify and control aircraft which might not comply with Canadian regulations or might otherwise infringe on our sovereign authority and legitimate interests. For this reason, even if we did not make our present contribution to NORAD, we should still require similar forces and levels of capability. To provide all the facilities involved entirely by ourselves, without the type of close co-operation with the United States which we now have, could cost us more than our present NORAD contribution. Furthermore, we see advantage in greater integration of Canada's military and civil air-traffic surveillance and control systems, a trend observed in the United States as well. In this situation, and with a high and ever-increasing volume of air traffic between the two countries, a high level of cross-border co-operation will be a practical necessity.

As a final point, the working arrangements developed within the context of the NORAD Agreement would ensure the closest consultation between the two governments in any situation which could develop into a direct military threat to