

THE TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS 1985 – 2000: DESCRIPTION

1. The Urgency of the Transitional Systems

Eventually, space-based systems are likely to provide the main elements of North American air defence, because they are becoming technically feasible and cost-effective.¹ All of the witnesses appearing before the committee agreed, however, that North America will not be in a position to rely primarily on space-based systems for another fifteen to twenty years. In the interim, there is a requirement for transitional systems and arrangements, that is to say ground-based radars, interceptors, space tracking and warning devices, AWACS, and related communications networks and other facilities. Furthermore, some ground-based installations are likely to be needed indefinitely, or at least well into the next century, in order to supplement space-based systems.²

2. The ADMP Solution: Brief Description

The Air Defence Master Plan, approved by Canada and the U.S. as a basis for negotiations in 1982 and expected to provide the framework for modernization of NORAD, is a classified document. However, enough accurate information has emerged in print, speeches, and public hearings for the committee to feel confident that it is not betraying any secrets in sketching the plan's major components. Some care has been taken to screen out sensitive or contentious material; as a result, some of the details given in this report may in the future prove to have contained dated or slightly inaccurate elements. These modest imperfections do not distort significantly the perspective that the present chapter can open on the future.

As shown in Figure 6, the ADMP aims to provide peripheral radar coverage and warning against air-breathing threats through a number of complementary systems: the Seek Igloo network in Alaska; the North Warning System due to replace the DEW Line from Alaska to southeastern Greenland; and three OTH-B radars which cover the Atlantic, Pacific, and southern approaches to North America. Not shown on the map, but also under consideration, are an extension of the NWS along the coast of Labrador and new or modernized gap-filling radars on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of Canada. Also excluded from the map are the CADIN-Pinetree Line, which is expected to be "phased out"³, and the Joint

¹ *Proceedings of the Special Committee of the Senate on National Defence*, 14 March 1984, p. 4:24-5.

² *Ibid*, 1 February 1984, p. 1:16.

³ *Report of Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger to the Congress on the FY 1985 budget, FY 1986 authorization request, and FY 1985-89 defense programs*, Washington, D.C., February 1, 1984, p. 194.