

An American's reading

which befell a Canadian brigade sent to reinforce the British garrison in that crown colony in 1941. The military utility of the CAST BG was predicated on its arrival in north Norway well before the outbreak of hostilities there. The bulk of its equipment was to travel across the North Atlantic and Norwegian Seas in Norwegian merchant shipping, a dubious voyage of up to thirty days. Most Norwegian strategists believe that the Soviet Union would need only a week or so to mobilize its resources to the point where they might be able to seize north Norway. Even if the BG were to arrive in time, grave doubts have persisted as to whether with current resources its troops could be logistically sustained as well as provided with adequate medical facilities.

Moreover, the army's commitments to Norway and Germany were of different kinds, resulting in an enduring headache for army planning and training. 4CMBG includes an armored regiment equipped with Leopard tanks. The CAST BG was a lighter force; its heaviest equipment being Cougar and Lynx armored vehicles. The program outlined in the White Paper ends this dichotomy. The equipment to be pre-positioned in Germany for 5GBC is, according to the White Paper, eventually to include new main battle tanks. New tanks are eventually also to be acquired for 4CMBG and for Canada-based armored regiments including 5GBCs. The strengthening of the Militia (Army Reserve), also announced in the White Paper will reduce another of the army's perennial worries. At the moment the dispatch of 5GBC to Norway or Germany, along with the dispatch of the AMF(L) battalion group and reinforcements for 4CMBG would all but deplete Mobile Command's manpower, severely limiting the availability of forces for such Canada-based tasks as aid to the civil power.

Fighting ships

Maritime Command (MARCOM) is the big winner. To be sure, it loses the third, proposed "batch" of new "City" class patrol frigates. But the first batch of six such ships is now under construction, with the first vessel, HMCS *Halifax*, to arrive in two years. The White Paper pledged the construction of a second batch. The most widely reported and debated feature of the White Paper, of course, was the announcement that MARCOM would be equipped with ten to twelve nuclear powered submarines (SSNs) capable of operating in the open waters of the Atlantic and Pacific as well as under Arctic ice. But that was not all. MARCOM is also to be given new shipborne anti-submarine warfare helicopters to replace its aging Sea Kings, a fixed, under-ice surveillance system in the Arctic, new sonar systems, and detection-array towing vessels. The Naval Reserve is to get minesweepers. At the same time Maritime Air Group, which belongs to the air force but which falls under MARCOM's operational control and which participates in MARCOM's anti-submarine warfare (ASW) activities, is to receive at least six new long-range patrol aircraft (LRPAs).

Beyond the six LRPAs, no new major capital acquisitions were announced for Air Command. But the air force is still in the midst of conversion to CF-18 aircraft. The North American air defence system, largely in accordance with an agreement signed by Prime Minister Mulroney and President Reagan at their 1985 summit, is being modernized, the most notable features being the construction of the North Warning System and Over-the-Horizon Backscatter radars pointed

eastward, westward and southward. Yet certainly the air force was not overlooked in the White Paper. The government recognized three of the air force's current concerns, and dealt immediately with one of them. First, it committed itself to maintenance of the CF-18 fleet at its current number of 138. (It remains troubling though, that those 138 aircraft retain too many commitments in Canada and Germany.) Second, the air force has become increasingly worried that US developments in space-based surveillance systems could leave Canada out. The White Paper associated itself with this worry. Pointing to studies underway in both Canada and the United States, the White Paper recognized that if those studies proved that space-based radar is "feasible, practical and affordable," National Defence "will have to devote, over the next fifteen years, significant resources to the establishment of a space-based surveillance system for North American air defence. Decisions regarding our contributions to a joint space-based radar system, or the development of a national system if a co-operative endeavour is not possible, will have to be taken in the course of the next five to ten years." Third, the equipment of Air Command's Air Transport Group is overtaxed and aging. The White Paper admitted that the air force suffers "from a serious shortage of air transport to move troops and equipment to Europe in times of tension," and promised to provide "additional airlift capability." No details were supplied, though.

Strong for NATO

"Transatlanticists" in Canada and elsewhere in the Western alliance are of course pleased that Canada's longstanding involvement in the defence of NATO Europe is to be retained. It bears underlining that the number of Canadian commitments there as well as their essential nature remains the same: an air group and a mechanized brigade both in place in Germany; with a brigade group, a battalion group and two fighter squadrons to be transported from Canada to Europe in an emergency. Yet those Canadians who believe that greater use must be made of the Canadian Armed Forces to protect Canadian sovereignty will find in *Challenge and Commitment* both gratifying rhetoric and an array of concrete steps. Most notably this involves the fixed under-ice surveillance system in the Arctic and the nuclear submarines, which, while militarily directed against the Soviets, are politically directed against the sovereignty challenge from the United States. Their presence in the Arctic is expected to bolster Canada's legal claims, although debate has already broken out over whether this is the best method to achieve that end. Surveillance capabilities will be strengthened by the six new long-range patrol aircraft and by the opening of forward operating locations (FOLs) in the north for CF-18s, as announced earlier this year by Mr. Beatty. In addition, a new army task force for territorial defence is to be created, along with a new northern training center in the High Arctic.

Long-term spending

Having found something for the Germans, the Americans, the three armed services, assorted critics of past policy, "transatlanticists," and those concerned about Canadian sovereignty; having even found a little something for the Norwegians; and having retained the same number of Canadian contributions to NATO Europe, while at the same time announcing a bolstering of Canadian sovereignty protection,