

Bristol Aerospace further informed the Committee that the company is prepared, conditional on the receipt of appropriate funding from the Federal Government, to study the feasibility of developing a Canadian Expendable Launch Vehicle (ELV) for launching small satellites into orbit. The technology for an ELV is available in Canada. It was suggested to us that an international market might exist, or be created, to make the ELV project economically viable at some point in the future.³¹

The Committee has considered the evidence received. We do not feel that the development of a Canadian ELV capability is affordable. The Committee feels that Canada should rely on other countries for a satellite-launching capability, through participation in international projects.

We believe it is desirable for Canada to have a sounding rocket capability for space science projects but we question whether the financial resources are available from the Federal Government at this time to develop a launch facility. We believe, however, the feasibility of such a program should be reassessed. For space science projects requiring sounding rockets, we recommend that the Black Brant rockets should be used when required. If a Canadian launch facility is not re-established, launch services should be purchased from other countries or arrangements made for cooperative projects.

Recommendation 21

The Committee recommends that Canada not develop a capability to launch satellites but, instead, continue to participate in international projects with countries which have a satellite-launching capability.

Recommendation 22

The Committee recommends that Black Brant sounding rockets and balloons be used when required as part of Canada's Space Science program. If the numbers required do not warrant re-establishing a launch capability in Canada, arrangements should be made with other countries for launch services, either through direct purchase or through cooperative projects.

Canada has enjoyed a long and productive association with the United States through NASA. In the opinion of some witnesses, however, our Space Program became excessively reliant on launch services provided by the United States, a situation which has produced serious difficulties in the aftermath of the Challenger explosion. In recent years, other countries have become more active in space activities and a number, including France and Japan, have developed, or are developing, reliable launching capabilities. Historically, Canada's space activities have had a notable international character, including, more recently, some cooperation with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. The Committee feels it is appropriate that Canada continue to develop international linkages to ensure that our space researchers have both continuity and flexibility in obtaining launch services.

⁽³¹⁾ Bristol Aerospace Limited, Issue No. 32, May 27, 1987, p. 32:84.