

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Your Committee has reached the following conclusions and, based on the facts and considerations discussed in the preceding sections, recommends:

1. That the government enter into negotiations with the government of the United States for the renewal of the NORAD Agreement for a period of five years, subject to termination—as has been the case to-date by either country, on one year's notice.

Your Committee was unanimous in favouring continuation of close Canadian cooperation with the United States in the field of surveillance of North American air space and of air defence. A more difficult question concerned the matter of continued Canadian participation in the integrated joint command, which is the main feature of the NORAD Agreement. Your Committee came to the realization, on the basis of broad security, political and economic considerations, that on balance it remained in Canada's present interest to participate with the United States in an integrated command for continental air defence. In reaching this conclusion, your Committee was impressed by the argument that a Canadian decision to withdraw from NORAD at this time would be interpreted at home and abroad, not as an isolated development, but as evidence of a possibly major change in the orientation of Canadian foreign policy.

Your Committee has noted that a number of important developments may have taken place towards the end of the decade. New NORAD regions may have been established in Canada, giving responsibility in peacetime for the surveillance and, to some degree, the control of Canadian airspace to Canadian air defence forces exclusively. The CAF may be procuring a new fighter aircraft and possession may have been taken of the first of the proposed Long Range Patrol Aircraft, thereby compounding the pressure on Canada's defence budget. At the same time, existing cost-sharing agreement for the DEW Line facilities will be close to expiry, and plans for the OTH-B radar system and for the proposed new radar and related facilities, to be jointly used by civilian and military agencies in Canada, may have been finalized. It should be possible by then to determine whether there is need for access to AWACS aircraft for Canadian command and control centres and whether this would be possible. Changes may also have taken place in the strategic situation, leading conceivably to further reductions in the strategic bomber capabilities of the United States and the U.S.S.R.—or the reverse may have occurred. Together, these developments may alter the balance of factors which has led your Committee to conclude that retention of an integrated command, for continental air defence, is now in Canada's interest. Given these considerations, your Committee believes that the government should be required to re-examine the question of NORAD'S future before the end of the decade. Accordingly, it recommends that the agreement be renewed for five years.

2. That the question of Canada's future participation in NORAD be referred to the Committee on External Affairs and National Defence well before the expiry of the new agreement. To enable the Committee fully to assess the effects of anticipated developments, noted above, and to consider them within the broader context of Canadian-American defence cooperation, referral of the question to the Committee should be made by the end of 1977. At that time the Committee should look into the possibility of restructuring the present command arrangements to take account of the new situation which may then prevail.

3. Your Committee strongly favours the establishment of a new NORAD region in Western Canada, and the adjustment of the existing regional boundaries, including those of the 22nd NORAD region, so that the peacetime surveillance and control of all air activities in Canadian airspace would become the responsibility of Canadian forces exclusively, operating under Canadian commanders with headquarters in this country. In the course of its visit to North Bay and Colorado Springs, your Committee received information regarding the proposed establishment of a new Canadian-based radar system to be used by civilian as well as military authorities. Your Committee supports this proposal, which would give greater substance to the establishment of the Western NORAD region and would produce desirable economies.

4. That the new NORAD agreement provide that the terms of reference for senior Canadian and American officers serving with NORAD should be public information. It also recommends that the new agreement contain provisions ensuring that, in the event of a U.S. national alert—as distinct from a NORAD alert—Canadian officers on duty at NORAD headquarters should be replaced immediately by United States personnel to the extent that these Canadian officers were performing CONAD command functions.

5. That the new agreement should make clear the current priorities assigned by the two governments to NORAD. It is important to assert that NORAD no longer has as its principal objective full scale defence of the continent against manned bombers. Your Committee concurs with the modified objectives of NORAD:

- 1) providing early warning of a surprise attack on North America;
- 2) surveillance of space; and
- 3) surveillance and control of sovereign air space, which includes providing a limited air defence in a time of crisis.

A copy of the relevant Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence (Issues Nos. 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 14) is tabled.