

In order to ensure that the public has a good awareness of the varied and essential roles performed by the Forces, the Committee recommends:

I That the Department of National Defence make a concerted effort to inform Canadians of the wide range of vital non-military activities it now performs.

While accommodations will have to be made, they should be done so in light of the fact that "...the custodial responsibilities of our land are our first duty" and that a neglect of defence responsibilities "...is a certain way of placing our sovereignty at risk." The Committee fully concurs with General Gérard Theriault (ret.), former Chief of the Defence Staff, when he went on to conclude that "the worst folly at this time would be to think that we no longer need any defence."⁽⁹⁾

C. Some Basic Elements

A sovereign state is one that can effectively administer and control its territories and, when necessary, defend its territorial integrity through the effective application of force, at times with the help of allies. Thus, as noted by General Theriault, our primary national responsibilities in terms of sovereignty and security are driven by two imperatives:

- a) the ability to deploy the means necessary anywhere within or on the perimeter of our country to ensure compliance with Canadian laws, and/or to provide a reasonable level of defence against any defensible and demonstrable threat directed against Canada; and
- b) secondly, we have to be more sensitive to the fact that the security of Canadian territory is of compelling strategic importance to the security of the U.S. Of itself that imposes on Canada a special responsibility which is underscored by the fact that the U.S. strategic nuclear deterrent has been, and will remain for some time, the ultimate guarantor of Western security. Thus, whether we like it or not, we must see to it that the U.S. should never feel threatened by a perceived vulnerability of Canadian territory or approaches.⁽¹⁰⁾

It is therefore important that Canada not only have the means to provide adequate surveillance and control of its territories, but that our military capability be such that we do not, by default, become a security risk to our most important ally. Currently, "...our ability to control our own territory is at best very marginal."⁽¹¹⁾

To argue the foregoing is not to suggest that the recognition of sovereignty requires an "absolute" control and surveillance capability. Sovereignty cannot be lost through inadequate occupation or control procedures and necessarily stems from more than just the ability to exercise a controlling function. Legitimate sovereignty claims are in no sense

⁽⁹⁾ Proceedings, 12:6-12:8.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Written presentation to the *Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs* (SCONDVA) by General Gérard Theriault, 25 January 1990, p. 2.

⁽¹¹⁾ *Ibid.*