

### III THE NORTH AMERICAN AIR DEFENCE COMMAND

#### A. Strategic Purposes of NORAD

NORAD was established in the belief that, with Soviet acquisition of nuclear bombs, the air defence of North America had acquired a new urgency and significance. Given the size of the threat as then perceived, and limited Canadian resources, a cooperative effort was necessary. Both to ensure maximum efficiency with the forces available, and to provide a means by which the Canadian government could exercise control over possible United States air defence activities in Canadian air space, the NORAD structure of an integrated command jointly responsible to the two governments was conceived.

The decision to accept an integrated command in the air defence field, while retaining separate forces in the ground and sea environment (apart from Canadian naval forces committed to SACLANT which is a unified command) was taken because of the nature of the threat and of the consequent need for speedy and closely coordinated use of all available forces. It was also recognized that most engagements would take place over Canadian territory, and that it would be confusing for United States aircraft to shift to another command on overflying the border. Finally, without an integrated command, the Canadian commander would not be in a position to call on U.S. aircraft for assistance, but would in effect have to negotiate with the commander of U.S. air defence forces.

When the agreement was signed in 1958, defence planners in both countries assumed that the only direct strategic threat to North America lay in the possibility of attack by the manned nuclear bombers of the USSR. It was recognized that the primary defence against the occurrence of such an attack lay in the nuclear retaliatory strike capacity of the Strategic Air Command (SAC) bombers maintained by the United States.

At the same time, however, the SAC bombers were vulnerable to a surprise attack and, unless their survival could be guaranteed, their credibility as a deterrent would be jeopardized. An active air defence was therefore considered essential and NORAD was established. Its primary missions were to enhance the survivability of the U.S. deterrent forces, by providing early warning and defending the SAC bases, and to minimize the damage to centres of population by destroying as many bombers as possible before they could reach their targets.

Technological developments in the sixties, particularly the development and deployment of ICBMs (intercontinental ballistic missiles) and SLBMs (submarine-launched ballistic missiles) by both the U.S. and the USSR, progressively reduced but did not eliminate the importance of the manned bomber as a strategic, first-strike threat. Responsibility for the active defence against the new missile weapons, to the limited extent that it was considered feasible, was retained by the United States in the Continental Air Defence Command (CONAD). However, the responsibility for passive defence against space systems was vested in NORAD, which acquired the capability for

global aerospace surveillance and related warning and attack assessment.

North American air defence policy has been under review over the last several years and, mainly as a result of the agreements reached in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) between the United States and the Soviet Union, has undergone a dramatic change in priorities. Defence against the manned bomber has been de-emphasized in favour of surveillance and control of each country's sovereign air space. NORAD's declared missions now are:

- 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.

#### B. NORAD's Organization and Command Arrangements

The North American Air Defence Command is a two-nation, multi-service, integrated command structure. The forces under its operational control are supplied by its component commands, the Canadian Armed Forces Air Defence Command, the U.S. Army Air Defence Command, and the U.S. Aerospace Defence Command. The U.S. Navy also makes some units available to NORAD and some Navy personnel are on its staff. In addition, the Commander-in-Chief of the Alaskan Command—a separate U.S. unified command—is responsible to the Commander-in-Chief of NORAD for the air defence of Alaska.

For NORAD's operational purposes, the continent is now divided into eight regions, of which one is almost entirely in Canada, three including Alaska, are wholly in the United States, and four include parts of both countries. (See *Map Annex 1*).

By the terms of the agreement, the Commander-in-Chief (CINCNORAD) and his deputy must come from different countries. In practice, CINCNORAD is likely to be an American and his deputy, a Canadian. In the largely Canadian region, the 22nd NORAD region, with headquarters at North Bay, Ontario, the regional commander is a Canadian and his deputy is American. The regional commanders of the four regions comprising parts of both countries are American with Canadian deputies. For all regions except the 22nd, the headquarters are located in the United States. CINCNORAD's headquarters are situated at Colorado Springs, Colorado.

The terms of reference for CINCNORAD and his deputy are agreed upon between the two governments, but have been considered as classified information. Broadly speaking, however, CINCNORAD is responsible to both the Canadian and the United States governments for the air defence of North America. NORAD's peacetime missions of surveillance and control are performed through the regional command centres. The Canadian forces in NORAD are assigned to the 22nd and 25th regions, and CF-101 interceptor aircraft are normally stationed at Chatham, N.B., Bagotville, Que., and Comox, B.C.