

recourse to conscription, and at one time there were nearly 800,000 Canadians in the armed forces, out of a population of slightly over 11,000,000.

Demobilization in 1945 was less complete than in 1919, leaving about 35,000 in the regular army, air force, and navy by 1948, and strong reserve forces. Beginning in 1950, the needs of the Cold War exceeded the capabilities of the regular force, and volunteers were recruited for service in Korea. The regular force grew to a maximum of 125,000, including a large air element. Most types of the necessary modern armaments could be manufactured in Canada, but the forces did not possess heavy bombers, and eventually lost their one aircraft carrier and the nuclear weapons supplied by the United States. During the last twenty years the size of the regular force has decreased to about 85,000,<sup>40</sup> the number of combat aircraft and warships has been sharply reduced, and the reserves have declined.

Now that the Cold War is perceived to be ending, a further reduction in the resources devoted to defence is foreseen. The problem for the planners is to design this reduced force for the long-term requirements of the future.

Difficult in any department of the Canadian government today, realistic long-term planning faces special problems in National Defence. The immediate dangers in Europe appear to be sharply reduced. The future of NATO, the keystone of Canadian defence for forty years, is unclear. The urgent need to address the heavy and growing national debt puts special pressure on the budgets of departments whose programmes are primarily discretionary rather than statutory.

Assuming reductions in commitments and in manpower, the planners will need to accept a substantially decreased capability for immediate readiness. They should focus instead on the building and preservation of capabilities that may be required in the future, designing a force of modest proportions but with the capacity to expand in a period in which high technology is even more important than it is today.

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<sup>40</sup> *Defence 88*. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1988.