

thrust of the report was towards a better coordination of major government operations in the maritime sovereignty area.

In late-August 1990, three Canadian naval vessels sailed from Halifax for the Persian Gulf, the first engaged in active duty since the Korean War in the early 1950s.

For a country like Canada, with one of the longest coastlines in the world, maritime protection and defence is bound to remain a matter of primary national concern. Canada's interest in sovereignty over Arctic waters, in fisheries, in the marine environment, in foreign trade, in protecting the North American continent in association with the United States, in maintaining the defence of the North Atlantic and international stability in alliance with other like-minded countries, and in contributing to the pursuit of world order through the United Nations and other multilateral arrangements, all suggest that this country will wish to maintain a significant naval capability for the foreseeable future.

The question of balance is critical. Canada must seek a realistic combination of naval elements which serve direct national needs as well as international requirements, and this has to be adjusted to fit the demands of a changing world context. In addition, naval planners proceed on the basis that building programmes in their field are long-term affairs: they have to develop a fleet which will be appropriate not only for the days when the ships are launched but also for ten, twenty or even thirty years afterwards, when the vessels will still be operating, although possibly in significantly changed circumstances.

Current naval construction projects are critical to the future of Canada's maritime defence. By the mid-1990s, Canada may have only about a dozen modern frigates and destroyers in its fleet, consisting of four up-dated *Tribal Class*, the first batch of the new patrol frigate (*HMCS Halifax* has now been launched and the others are due by 1992, but there are some delays), and perhaps one or two of the second batch of new patrol frigates. The old *Annapolis* and *Mackenzie Class* vessels will then be reaching the end of their service. As the end of the decade approaches, however, the fleet should increase to sixteen modern frigates and destroyers, plus other assets including the mine