

embraced distinctly military as well as police-like functions when they stated, under the heading "Protection of Canada", that:

... the two principal aspects of this role for the Forces are surveillance and control. Surveillance requires detection and identification to obtain information on what is happening on Canada's land mass, in her airspace and on and under her coastal waters; control implies appropriate enforcement action to ensure that laws and regulations are respected.<sup>2</sup>

It is the view of the sub-committee that the commitment to the protection of Canadian sovereignty involves at minimum, in the case of MARCOM, ensuring that Canada can exercise jurisdiction over its waters in peacetime, successfully assert its control when confronted by a probing show of force, and deter the kind of opportunistic military adventures fostered by absence of a defensive capability.

Sovereignty is more than a concept to be repetitively proclaimed. It must be continuously asserted and exercised in tangible and visible fashion. Canada's geography dictates a need for these efforts, particularly in the Arctic and on the country's extended sea frontiers along the east and west coasts. Through inertia, encroachments on sovereignty can easily be invited from friend or foe. Canada's strategic geographic position, for example, virtually guarantees that if Canada were to be unwilling or unable to provide in some measure for its own defence, the United States would be obliged to fill that vacuum at the expense of Canadian sovereignty.

Even for a member of an alliance, it is dangerous, in providing for national security, to presume that the nation will never be called upon to act on its own in defence of its interests. Self-defence should always be the first consideration and should be provided for to the extent that resources permit and the competing demands upon them allow. The government may also decide that the surest or most cost-effective way of defending the security of the nation is through collective defence agreements. For lesser powers, such as Canada, it may well be normal to rely heavily upon alliances. Trade-offs between optimal self-defence arrangements and optimal collective defence arrangements may have to be made in favour of the alliance. Never, however, should the country lose sight of the fact that a trade-off is taking place. To operate otherwise is to risk leaving the nation defenceless.

**Because the first item in the current list of commitments of the Canadian Armed Forces, the protection of Canadian sovereignty, has been narrowly interpreted to include only police functions, the sub-committee recommends that it be recast so as to include specific reference to the defence of Canada.**

## Priorities in 1971

The white paper of 1971 provided many indications of the government's thinking about maritime defence priorities at that time. Pride of place was accorded to the protection of Canadian sovereignty, and it was thought likely that

---

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 17.