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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE / COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES
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EXERCISE/EXERCICE – New Horizons

TITLE/TITRE – The Future of NORAD: Who Has Control?

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La présente étude a été rédigée par un stagiaire du Collège des Forces canadiennes pour satisfaire à l'une des exigences du cours. L'étude est un document qui se rapporte au cours et contient donc des faits et des opinions que seul l'auteur considère appropriés et convenables au sujet. Elle ne reflète pas nécessairement la politique ou l'opinion d'un organisme quelconque, y compris le gouvernement du Canada et le ministère de la Défense nationale du Canada. Il est défendu de diffuser, de citer ou de reproduire cette étude sans la permission expresse du ministère de la Défense nationale.

On May 12th, 2008 the North American Aerospace Defence (NORAD) Command celebrated 50 years as an operational bi-national command. Now, approaching twenty years since the end of the Cold War, NORAD remains at the forefront as the centrepiece of Canada/U.S. defence relations. Its status has been maintained, despite a marked military shift on both sides of the border to a national approach to homeland defence. With the recent creation of United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) and Canada Command (Canada COM) 2006, both militaries have indicated a desire to move on from sole reliance on NORAD, creating independent homeland defence commands which continue to grow together bilaterally.

Notwithstanding changes in the landscape, the state to state agreement which created the bi-national NORAD command remains strong politically. The 2006 renewal demonstrated full Canadian government confidence in NORAD. It expanded NORAD's mission to include maritime warning and signed onto a standing agreement which no longer requires renewal. Realizing the long-lasting and unwavering government support for NORAD and the fact that its military relevance has waned, it is evident the primary influence over NORAD has shifted. Control over NORAD's future no longer resides with the military, but is the purview of government.

This thesis will be argued in two main sections. The first section will explain how the military once controlled NORAD, starting with the creation of NORAD and the signing of the formal state to state agreement. It will also demonstrate the control the military once exercised over NORAD's continental defence requirements, leveraging

the agreement to influence government policy at the highest levels. The second section will argue how military influence over NORAD has decidedly shifted to government. This will be proven by demonstrating how NORAD is no longer militarily relevant. It will then illustrate how, under heavy government influence, NORAD not only continues to function, but flourish, retaining the Canadian government's unequivocal support in its policy and in the media.

The beginning of formal defence cooperation between Canada and the U.S. dates back to the Ogdensburg Agreement of 1940 where then, Prime Minister Mackenzie King and President Theodore Roosevelt, "agreed to mutual assistance should either country be threatened by attack."¹ Out of the Agreement the Permanent Joint Board of Defence (PJBD) was conceived, comprised of high-level government and military personnel from both countries. Subsequently, in 1946 the Military Cooperation Committee (MCC) was created. It was, and still is, a bi-national military committee "concerned with recommendations relative to military policy and planning for the defence of North America and such other mutual defence matters as may be referred to it."² It was the MCC that stressed the Soviet threat was growing and that North America was threatened. Quoting Joseph Jockel, Ann Crosby summarizes North America would be "liable to attacks on its 'nerve centres of executive, military and industrial control vital to wartime mobilization,' its 'concentration of industry...' and its

¹ Ann Denholm Crosby, *Dilemmas in Defence Decision Making: Constructing Canada's Role in NORAD 1958-96* (Suffolk: Ipswich Book Company Ltd, 1998), 23.

² *Ibid.*, 23.

‘concentrations of populations.’³ As prudent senior military advisors, the MCC “suggested that a combined Air Defence Headquarters with the operational control over all continental air defence forces, Canadian and American, would be required.”⁴ Subsequently, in 1953 the MCC sanctioned the creation of the Canadian-U.S. Military Study Group mandated “to undertake studies on continental air defence for the MCC ... [comprised] of Canadian and US officers to design a joint command.”⁵ Clearly the military led MCC influenced heavily the inception of the NORAD and the Agreement.

From the beginning, it was obvious the considerable military influence NORAD would have over its policies and structure, influence derived from military necessity for a credible air defence. Notwithstanding resistance from Canadian diplomatic and political forces, military persistence by the United States Air Force (USAF) and the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) pushed for the creation of NORAD to counter the Soviet threat. As a result, “plans for [NORAD] ... were approved by the United States JCS [Joint Chiefs of Staff] in 1957, and prepared for consideration by the Canadian Cabinet.”⁶ Subsequent to the election of 1957 when Prime Minister John Diefenbaker first took power, the “Canadian Department of National Defence urged the new Prime Minister to approve it, which he did without consulting his new Cabinet.”⁷ Later that

³ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁶ George Lindsey, “Canada-U.S. Defence Relations in the Cold War,” in *Fifty Years of Canada-United States Defense Cooperation*, ed. Joel J. Sokolsky and Joseph T. Jockel, 59-82 (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1992), 68.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 68.

same year, in response to much debate in parliament about the impact of the NORAD military to military arrangement, he took steps to formalize the Agreement through “an exchange of diplomatic notes ... to preclude any impression that the Canadian military was not under effective civilian control.”⁸

To ease the controversy surrounding the Agreement he also tried to tie NORAD to the existing North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) since as “part of NATO, NORAD could be seen as not new or great departure in Canadian defence policy....”⁹ This nebulous relationship provoked clarification from the U.S. military in short order. A message from the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) quoted in Jockel stressed “NORAD, it said, ‘was established through bilateral Agreement;’ it ‘is not and should not be a NATO organization.’ ”¹⁰ Even the NATO secretary general at the time “denied, during the course of a visit to Ottawa, that NORAD was a part of NATO.”¹¹ As these examples demonstrate, in creating NORAD, the militaries on both sides of the border influenced the Canadian government into a controversial departure from traditional defence policy in favour of military necessity.

Canada’s military commitment to NORAD indirectly influenced the first renewal of the NORAD Agreement in 1968, despite tense Canada/U.S. relations at the

⁸ D.F. Holman, *NORAD in the New Millennium* (Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 2000), 12.

⁹ Joseph T. Jockel, *Canada in NORAD 1957-2007: A History* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2007), 33.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 35.

time. During the last half of the 1960s, “Canadian [public] attitudes toward defence cooperation with the US recently had turned decidedly cool, largely as a result of the war in Vietnam.”¹² Government could have used the tumultuous era in public support for Canada/U.S military relations to allow the NORAD Agreement to expire. Military requirements, however, necessitated the renewal. External Affairs minister Paul Martin Sr. was one prominent politician who recognized the necessity. In a memorandum to the Prime Minister in 1967 on the subject of the future of NORAD, quoted in Jockel, he argued why there seemingly was “ ‘no alternative to NORAD which would not involve a substantial reduction in military effectiveness....’ ”¹³ To further his argument he pointed out to Prime Minister Lester Pearson that “NORAD had become the linchpin of several other defence arrangements with the US which would have to be renegotiated if the Agreement were to lapse.”¹⁴ These agreements included the 1965 authorization of nuclear air defence weapons and the provision of Voodoo air-defence fighters which had been given to Canada for NORAD roles.¹⁵ There was also concern for how the U.S. would react to termination of the Agreement, realizing “[t]he lapse of the NORAD Agreement could increase the pressures in the US for radical modification, if not termination, of these arrangements.”¹⁶ Despite the lack of public support for aligning

¹² *Ibid.*, 75.

¹³ Department of National Defence, Directorate of History and Heritage, Raymont fonds, 19/343, “Memorandum for the prime minister: Future of NORAD,” 19 May 1967. Quoted in Joseph T. Jockel, *Canada in NORAD 1957-2007: A History* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2007), 76.

¹⁴ Jockel, *Canada in NORAD...*, 76.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 76.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 76.

with U.S. policies, out of military necessity, Canada had little choice but to countenance the 1968 renewal.

Another good example of how Canada's military commitments to NORAD influenced government policy was the decision to agree to a controversial nuclear weapons role for Canada. Debated since the signing of the NORAD Agreement in 1958, the decision of whether or not to allow nuclear weapons in Canada was avoided until 1962. Canada's skirting around the issue eventually came to the forefront during the Cuban Missile Crisis.¹⁷ During the Crisis, Prime Minister John Diefenbaker's refusal to give the U.S. permission to dispatch nuclear armed interceptors to Canadian airfields "brought charges of Canadian non-cooperation from the US."¹⁸ This resulted in a press release from the U.S. "criticizing Canada's inability to come to terms with the nuclear question."¹⁹ As quoted in John English, Pearson vocalized his displeasure with the indecision stating that the government "should end at once its evasion of responsibility, by discharging the commitments it has already accepted for Canada."²⁰ After a vote of non-confidence and a change in government in May 1963, Prime Minister Lester Pearson announced "that since the country had acquired nuclear warhead weapons systems, it was obligated to accept the [nuclear] warheads...."²¹

¹⁷ Crosby, *Dilemmas in Defence*..., 53.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 53.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 53.

²⁰ John English, *The Worldly Years: The Life of Lester Pearson Volume II: 1949-1972* (Toronto: First Vintage Books, 1993), 250.

²¹ Crosby, *Dilemmas in Defence*..., 53.

After five years of political deliberating and avoidance, the decision to disperse nuclear weapons in Canada had finally been made.

This decision for Canada to accept a nuclear role was influenced heavily by military planners. By accepting the December 1956 Military Study Group Report which defined the design of the NORAD command, Diefenbaker “accepted [NORAD’s] implicit assumption of a nuclear weapons role for Canada, an assumption which was also the US political executive’s understanding of the Canadian role with the NORAD Command.”²² Considering Crosby’s analysis, and Pearson’s realization that Canada had committed itself through the acquisition of nuclear capable weapons, it can be concluded that military planners heavily influenced Canada’s nuclear weapons role which resulted in the placement of nuclear weapons on Canadian soil. This controversial military requirement was acquired despite the significant political apprehension.

This section demonstrated the significant influence the militaries on both sides of the border had over the creation of NORAD. It also argued how Canada’s commitments to NORAD directly and indirectly influenced decisions at the highest levels of government. From the creation of NORAD to the end of the Cold War the primary influence over NORAD was the military.

²² Crosby, *Dilemmas in Defence...*, 54.

Since the end of the Cold War, military influence and necessity has waned as control over the command shifts toward government. This swing in NORAD's control will be proven by demonstrating how NORAD is no longer able to influence decisions at the political level and how the militaries on both sides of the border have nationally restructured for homeland defence rendering NORAD militarily irrelevant. It will then demonstrate how and why NORAD continues to be prominent in government policy. Finally it will be demonstrated how the government has influenced the Agreement in recent years, and how the politicians make use of NORAD, in the spirit of national interests, through the media.

Through NORAD, the military previously exerted tremendous influence over high-level government decisions. A very public example of how this influence is no longer present is the government decision not to sign on to the U.S. led Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) program. This decision was made despite the fact that from a Canadian military and government perspective, Canada's full participation in BMD through NORAD made sense. BMD was developed to "protect North America against small-scale missile attacks from rogue states like North Korea or against accidental missile launches from states like China or Russia."²³ As former Deputy Commander NORAD, Lieutenant-General (LGen) George Macdonald, stated "[t]he imminent addition of an ability to defend against a ballistic missile ... would have been a natural

²³ J.L. Granatstein, *"The Importance of Being Less Earnest: Promoting Canada's National Interests Through Tighter Ties with the U.S."* Benefactor's Lecture, C.D. Howe Institute (Toronto, ON, 2003), 20.

extension for NORAD....”²⁴ Not only did participation in BMD make sense from a military defence perspective but also from the stand point of a democratic government. As quoted in Granatstein “as one Canadian expert, James Fergusson puts it: ‘Missile defence is designed to protect a nation’s citizens, and the fundamental role of a democratic government is to provide protection to its citizens.’”²⁵ Though Canada kept an open dialogue with the U.S., and gave all indications that it would participate in BMD, the decision was announced in February 2005 that Canada would not participate. This, despite the military requirement to bolster continental defence, and the democratic requirement to defend its citizens.

Since 9/11 changes to the military command and control landscape have rendered NORAD redundant, thus it is no longer militarily relevant. This has occurred as a result major changes to the homeland defence command structures on both sides of the border. First, NORAD is no longer distinct from the U.S. national command of USNORTHCOM with which it is co-located. Second, with similar areas of responsibilities (AORs) and similar missions, USNORTHCOM and Canada COM share a common interest for natural bi-lateral military cooperation.

²⁴ Lieutenant-General (ret’d) George Macdonald, “Canada – US Defence Cooperation: Where to from Here?” *Canadian Military Journal* 6, no.2 (Summer 2005): 6.

²⁵ J.L. Granatstein, “*The Importance of Being Less Earnest...*,” 22.

NORAD is no longer the “distinct command” stipulated in the 2006 Agreement.²⁶ In October 2002 USNORTHCOM was stood up in Colorado Springs leveraging the NORAD command structure, and its commander, U.S. Air Force General Ralph Eberhart. USNORTHCOM was structured with common directorates to NORAD, excluding plans and operations. As USNORTHCOM matured, the NORAD and USNORTHCOM planning directorates also merged leaving only the NORAD J3 (operations) and the Deputy Commander NORAD (traditionally a Canadian Lieutenant-General) as the only unbiased military entities representing NORAD interests.

Analysis of the NORAD and USNORTHCOM strategic Vision 2020 document further reveals how the two commands are no longer distinct. Despite separate missions, the visions of the two supposed distinct commands are combined in a common statement integrating them even closer. The commands’ vision statement is “NORAD and USNORTHCOM shall become a Center of Excellence for Defending our homelands.”²⁷ Combining the two distinct commands in a common vision creates ambiguity. In reference to the homelands, USNORTHCOM could be considered responsible for defending Canada, especially since its AOR includes Canada. In further describing the vision statement, the document states “[w]e will serve as a universal model for collaboration, integrating aerospace and maritime warning, aerospace control

²⁶ *Agreement Between The Government of Canada and the Government of the United States of America on The North American Aerospace Defense Command*. Ottawa: Government of Canada, April 2006, available from http://www.treaty-accord.gc.ca/ViewTreaty.asp?Treaty_ID=105060; Internet; accessed 17 April 2009.

²⁷ United States Northern Command, “North American Aerospace Defense Command and United States Northern Command Vision 2020,” available from <http://www.northcom.mil/News/2007/Vision%202020%2007-10-01.pdf>; Internet; accessed 19 April 2009, 4.

and multi-domain homeland defence....”²⁸ This statement combines the distinct mission sets of the two commands into one blurred vision.

Elements of the common vision are already being realized. In 2008, the Cheyenne Mountain based NORAD operations centre was relocated to NORAD and USNORTHCOM headquarters at Peterson Air Force Base (AFB), combining it with the USNORTHCOM operations centre. This merger of distinct operations centres was initiated by the Commander of NORAD and USNORTHCOM Admiral Timothy Keating as a way of “improving our [NORAD and USNORTHCOM’s] effectiveness and enhancing our unity of effort.”²⁹ As a result of this initiative, there now exists just one operations centre at Peterson AFB which simultaneously executes the missions of both commands through a common Command Centre Director. What NORAD knows, USNORTHCOM will also know.

The stand up of USNORTHCOM in 2002 and Canada COM in 2006 created a significant overlap of command and control structures with NORAD. The three commands have interlaced AORs and command and control structures. USNORTHCOM’s AOR includes “air, land and sea approaches and encompasses the continental United States, Alaska, Canada and Mexico.”³⁰ Though worded slightly

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 4.

²⁹ U.S. Department of Defense, “NORAD, NORTHCOM Personnel to Move,” American Forces Press Service, 31 Jul 2006; available from <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=306>; Internet; accessed 19 April 2009.

³⁰ United States Northern Command, “About USNORTHCOM,” available from http://www.northcom.mil/About/history_education/vision.html; Internet; accessed 19 April 2009.

differently, Canada COMs AOR is the same “continental North America.”³¹ Excluding Mexico, NORAD’s operating area is the same as Canada COM and USNORTHCOM. Similar missions, overlapping AORs, and common command and operations centres, there is little wonder why “[s]ome, in both the US and Canadian military, were beginning to argue that it [NORAD] was becoming a hindrance.”³²

The convoluted C2 structure of the three intertwined commands has resulted in a predictable formal study to clarify lines of authority for continental defence. Just prior to the 2006 renewal U.S. Navy Admiral Timothy Keating, Commander of NORAD and USNORTHCOM, stated during a U.S. Armed Services Committee Senate address “a review of roles and missions among USNORTHCOM, Canada Command and NORAD will be warranted.”³³ Indeed today a detailed tri-command study is well underway. Representatives of the commands “have been working closely to study and improve their understanding of each other’s roles, missions, and responsibilities.”³⁴ Notwithstanding the potential changes to NORAD roles which may result from the tri-command study, NORAD stands to remain untouched until completion of the

³¹ Canada Command, “Welcome to Canada Command,” available from <http://www.canadacom.forces.gc.ca/site/index-eng.asp>; Internet; accessed 19 April 2009.

³² Jockel, *Canada in NORAD...*, 197.

³³ United States Senate Armed Services Committee, *Statement of Admiral Timothy J. Keating, USN Commander United States Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command Before the Senate Armed Services Committee*, 14 March 2006; available from <http://armed-services.senate.gov/statemnt/2006/March/Keating%2003-14-06.pdf>; Internet; accessed 21 April 2009.

³⁴ Rocky Gaines, “The Enduring Value of North American Aerospace Command,” *vanguardcanada.com*; available from <http://www.vanguardcanada.com/EnduringValueNORADGaines>; Internet; accessed 19 April 2009.

Vancouver Winter Olympics in 2010.³⁵ As clearly stated by the former Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Peter Pace, “do no harm to NORAD [for the present time].”³⁶ Given this direction, NORAD’s current roles and missions will likely remain intact until the first four year review in 2010, post Olympics. Perhaps then NORAD’s waning military relevance will come to the forefront of the study.

Notwithstanding NORAD’s decreased military relevance, Canadian government policy continues to show full support for NORAD. This is not without good reason. As Jockel summarized, “[t]he Canadian government, however, would still tend to see NORAD ... as being something broader and of greater importance than just a military command. NORAD was the most important symbol of Canada-US defence cooperation.”³⁷

Jockel’s quote explains the prominence of NORAD in recent policy statements by both recent governing parties. In 2005 Prime Minister Paul Martin Jr. affirmed Canada’s support for NORAD stating its importance in Canada’s Defence and Diplomacy policy statements. In Canada’s 2005 International Policy Statement for Defence the government stressed its desire for an enhanced North American defence cooperation stating “the centerpiece of our defence relationship with the United States

³⁵ Bernard J. Brister, “When Perpetuity Doesn’t Mean Forever: The Approaching Demise of NORAD,” *Policy Options* (December 2007 – January 2008): 81; available from <http://www.irpp.org/po/archive/po1207.htm#brister>; Internet; accessed 19 April 2009.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 81.

³⁷ Jockel, *Canada in NORAD...*, 198.

remains the North American Aerospace Defence Command.”³⁸ Additionally, recognizing NORAD’s international influences, NORAD is also prominent in the International Policy Statement for Diplomacy. In this document the government stresses in its strategy for a North American Partnership the value of NORAD over the last 50 years, attributing its success as “a testament to the value of our defence relationship, a relationship that allows both nations to pursue common security goals while respecting sovereignty.”³⁹ In the 2008 Canada First Defence Strategy, Canada reaffirmed its support for being a strong and reliable partner in North American Defence stating “[t]he Canadian Forces will continue to collaborate with their US counterparts as a partner in North American Aerospace Defence Command.” The reason why NORAD receives such disproportionate prominence in high-level government policy documents when compared to other military entities is the fact that from a “continental perspective ... the strategic reality that primarily concerns [Canada] is that American power is our center of gravity.”⁴⁰

Full government support for the 2006 Agreement renewal was clearly evident in the signing of a standing agreement which no longer has to be renewed. Though the initial renewal period was ten years, and then reduced to five in 1968, the 2006

³⁸ Department of National Defence, A-JS-005-000/AG-001 *Canada’s International Policy Statement, A Role of Pride and Influence in the World, Defence* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2005), 22.

³⁹ Department of Foreign Affairs, *Canada’s International Policy Statement, A Role of Pride and Influence in the World, Diplomacy* (Ottawa: DFAIT Canada, 2005), 5.

⁴⁰ Peter Archambault, “Thinking About Strategic Threats,” *Electronic Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* (Winter 2006/07, Vol. 9, Issue 2): 5; available from http://www.jmss.org/2007/2007winter/articles/archambault_cont-defence.pdf; Internet; accessed 21 April 2009.

Agreement no longer needs government approval for renewal, though it will still be reviewed every four years. This significant change in the approach to renewal makes sense from a political perspective. As stated by Joel Sokolsky and Joseph Jockel, “[f]or either government to attempt to change or abandon its commitment to NORAD could well initiate a spate of misunderstandings and problems for Canadian-American relations.”⁴¹ For this reason alone there is no need to take the chance that the Agreement may lapse simply because of a temporary disagreement between governments. Rescinding the NORAD Agreement will now take significant deterioration in Canada/U.S. relations to create the political and public will to do so.

Since the end of the Cold War, changes to NORAD’s roles and missions are no longer influenced heavily by military necessity, but are the derivatives of government policy changes. An example of U.S. government influence over the Agreement was the counter-drug mission assigned to NORAD in 1991. It was largely driven by U.S. government policy and the proclaimed ‘war on drugs.’ Drug interdiction is a not a traditional defence role, however USELEMENT NORAD (a U.S. only chain of command within NORAD) seemed well poised to assume the mission being dictated to “a largely reluctant military.”⁴² It seemed logical that given the continental expanse of NORAD the drug mission seemed well suited to fit into the Agreement. It was also a way to bolster the NORAD Agreement and continue its relevance post Cold War to ensure the Command continues to have viable employment while maintaining its

⁴¹ David S. Sorenson, “The Future of the North American Air Defense System,” in *Fifty Years of Canada-United States Defense Cooperation*, ed. Joel J. Sokolsky and Joseph T. Jockel, 263-288 (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1992), 282.

⁴² Jockel, *Canada in NORAD...*, 138.

readiness for traditional strategic threats. Consequently, the 1991 NORAD Agreement assigned the counter-drug mission under the auspices of the aerospace control mission stating “our common interest in maintaining effective surveillance and control ..., such control includes the surveillance and monitoring of aircraft suspected of smuggling illegal drugs into North America.”⁴³ This role remains in the NORAD Agreement despite the fact that in 1993 “[a]n intelligence unit at Colorado Springs linking NORAD to US drug enforcement agencies was closed and the command’s counter drug efforts fell off.”⁴⁴

In 2006, the maritime warning mission was added out of political necessity to bolster the Agreement for the 2006 renewal. Thus, it is not surprising why the mission is singled out in the Canada First Defence Strategy. In the strategy it commends how NORAD “continues to evolve to meet future threats” and stresses the “new responsibility of maritime warning.”⁴⁵ The original recommendation for NORAD to delve into the maritime realm was initiated by the Canada/U.S. Bi-national Planning Group (BPG). The BPG was created in December 2002 through an exchange of diplomatic notes to “enhance bi-national military planning, surveillance, and support to civil authorities.”⁴⁶ The NORAD maritime warning mission was a derivative of the

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 140.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 147.

⁴⁵ Department of National Defence, “*Canada First Defence Strategy*,” (June 2008): 8; available from http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/focus/first-premier/June18_0910_CFDS_english_low-res.pdf; Internet; accessed 21 April 2009.

⁴⁶ Bi-National Planning Group, *The Final Report on Canada and the United States (CANUS) Enhanced Military Cooperation*, (Colorado: Bi-National Planning Group, 2006), iii.

BPG recommendation for “NORAD, Canada Command, and U.S. Northern Command ... to adopt a layered approach for reporting and monitoring to provide timely warning of ... terrorist or criminal activity.”⁴⁷ Though the BPG was a military led entity, the political necessity to expand the Agreement was ever present in a post 9/11 environment. As summarized by Eric Lehre, “[a]t the political level it [expansion of the Agreement] signals that both national leaders remain committed to cooperative continental defence when they had a host of operational and bureaucratic incentives to go unilateral.”⁴⁸

Even some of the top military commanders on both sides of the border questioned the logic in a maritime role for NORAD. The commander of NORAD and USNORTHCOM at the time was skeptical about NORAD moving into the maritime realm. As summarized by Macdonald, “[e]ven the current Commander of NORAD (and Northern Command) Admiral Timothy Keating has some reservations about an expanded [maritime] NORAD....”⁴⁹ In 2005 Canada’s Chief of the Defence Staff, General Rick Hillier, also “largely dismissed the need for a maritime NORAD.”⁵⁰ Despite some of both nations’ top military leaders questioning the military necessity of a maritime NORAD, the mission was still added to the 2006 renewal.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, C-8.

⁴⁸ Eric Lehre, “Will We See a Maritime NORAD?,” *Electronic Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* (Winter 2006/07, Vol. 9, Issue 2): 14; available from http://www.jmss.org/2007/2007winter/articles/lerhe_cont-defence.pdf; Internet; accessed 21 April 2009.

⁴⁹ Lieutenant-General (ret’d) George Macdonald, “Canada – US Defence Cooperation: Where to from Here?” *Canadian Military Journal* 6, no.2 (Summer 2005): 10.

⁵⁰ Eric Lehre, “Will We See a Maritime NORAD...,” 11.

In February 2009, NORAD's political relevance was national news in Canada. Following President Barak Obama's visit to Canada, the Minister of National Defence Peter MacKay, the Commander of NORAD General Gene Renuart, and the Chief of the Defence Staff General Walt Natynczyk, held a press conference on parliament hill. The day after the President's visit they announced how NORAD had successfully intercepted a Russian Bomber near Canadian airspace on the eve of the President's visit.⁵¹ A routine military response in previous years now warrants a political statement reassuring Canadians and Americans alike that Canada's efforts in continental defence through NORAD are resolute. Stating it was Canada COM who responded would not have had the same impact south of the border.

With the Canadian arctic also being a key national priority, responding to the Russians flying in international airspace was also an opportunity to promote national sovereignty. Remarking on the same Russian air activity, Prime Minister Stephen Harper was quoted as saying he would "respond every time the Russians make any kind of intrusion on the sovereignty of Canada's Arctic."⁵² The political necessity of promoting Canada's contribution to Canada/U.S. defence relations and its arctic presence continues to make the NORAD politically viable and necessary. As stated by an unnamed senior government official, "highlighting the mid-air meeting was a good

⁵¹ Steven Chase, "Ottawa rebukes Russia for military flights in Arctic," *globeandmail.com*, 28 February 2009; available from <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20090227.wrussia0227/BNSStory/politics/home;Internet>; accessed 21 April 2009.

⁵² *Ibid.*

way to show the worth and relevance of NORAD ... [i]t's also a good way to "get some ink" for Canada's contribution to continental security...."⁵³ Out of Canadian political interests it is anticipated NORAD's relevance will be at the forefront of continental air defence and challenges to arctic sovereignty for the foreseeable future.

Notwithstanding the shift of control over NORAD's future from the military to the government, in 2009 NORAD still continues to thrive as the centrepiece of Canada/U.S. defence relations. The political necessity of NORAD is evident as it continues to be supported in today's Canadian policies, and by the government in the media. This political support is unwavering despite the fact NORAD continues to lose its military relevance as Canada COM and USNORTHCOM strengthen their ties through formal military agreements such as the 2008 Canada COM and USNORTHCOM Civil Assistance plan.

It is clear that both the Canadian and U.S. militaries had a prominent role in pushing the concept of a bi-national air defence command through the Canadian government. Once NORAD was created, planners successfully leveraged the Agreement to lobby the government into approving controversial government policies such as a nuclear role for Canada, and the 1968 Agreement renewal during a tense period of Canada/U.S. defence relations. However, the shift of control over NORAD to the government has definitely occurred, evidenced by post Cold War changes such as

⁵³ Allan Woods, " 'Back off and stay out of our airspace,' Russia," *thestar.com*, 28 February 2009; available from <http://www.thestar.com/News/Canada/article/594490>; Internet; accessed 21 April 2009.

the addition of the maritime warning mission, despite questionable military relevance. The use of NORAD for political gain is also evidenced when NORAD contributes positively to national interests. The refusal of the Martin government to formally countenance Canadian participation in BMD shows politics trumps military in NORAD.

Despite the military benefits that may be gained from streamlining command and control structures, the potential political ramifications of dissolving the NORAD Agreement would be simply too unattractive in both nations. With Canada's national interests becoming more and more aligned with the U.S., taking unnecessary steps backward in relations will never be desirable politically. This, despite the fact both countries' militaries could, and perhaps would, prefer to move on without NORAD. Whether or not NORAD should continue in perpetuity is not for the military to decide, the government has control.

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