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‘Borderline’ Relations: Navigating the Canada-United States Defence Relationship in the Changing Security Landscape

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Exercise Solo Flight

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‘Borderline’ Relations: Navigating the Canada-United States Defence Relationship in the Changing Security Landscape

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‘BORDERLINE’ RELATIONS: NAVIGATING THE CANADA-UNITED STATES DEFENCE RELATIONSHIP IN THE CHANGING SECURITY LANDSCAPE

INTRODUCTION

Since the Canadian confederation in 1867, the dynamic bond between Canada and the United States (US) has undergone profound transformations, marking a significant evolution in their relationship. Initially rooted in a predominantly pro-British sentiment, Canadian values have gradually shifted towards a more pro-United States orientation over the span of the past century. This transformation has been a nuanced and gradual process, influenced by many factors such as economic ties, cultural exchanges, and geopolitical dynamics. Moreover, the evolving nature of Canadian values has been notably shaped by pivotal decisions regarding Canada's involvement in various global crises, reflecting the complex interplay between domestic considerations and international affairs in shaping the nation's identity and priorities.

This paper argues that analyzing Canada-US defence relations and political, strategic, and economic factors is essential for understanding North America's shifting security challenges. By investigating historical cases, contemporary developments, and future prospects, the paper aims to offer valuable insights into the dynamic nature of the relationship, the NORAD alliance, and continental defence, and their impact on regional stability and security.

This paper will begin with an overview of historical cases, examining past defence collaborations between the two nations and exploring how key historical events have shaped the current state of their relationship. Subsequently, examining contemporary developments offers insight into ongoing defence initiatives and activities while explaining the intricate impacts of political, strategic, and economic factors on the bilateral relationship. Looking toward the future, potential scenarios for Canada-US defence relations are discussed, accompanied by an analysis of their regional stability and security implications.

PART 1: HISTORICAL CASES IN CAN-US DEFENCE RELATIONS
World War II

Prior to the Second World War, the Canada-US defence relationship was not as cooperative as it is today. The US was initially hesitant to become involved in the war, while Canada's decision to enter the conflict had nothing to do with the US. Rather, Canada's involvement was largely driven by its status as a member of the British Commonwealth and its sense of moral commitment to supporting the United Kingdom in its fight against Nazi Germany.[1]

In the lead-up to World War II (WWII), the Canadian government, under the leadership of Prime Minister (PM) Mackenzie King, took a minimalist approach to military investment and readiness.[2] Ultimately, this decision of underinvestment left the country ill-equipped to engage in a prolonged conflict in Europe. Several factors influenced this stance, including skepticism within the Canadian government regarding the usefulness of international organizations like the League of Nations.[3] Many officials believed Canada's participation in the First World War had been excessively burdensome.[4] Geopolitical considerations also played a significant role, as Canada's vast ocean and arctic-protected geography and proximity to the US likely led to a belief that there was little need to put much consideration toward external threats to the nation. Additionally, the emergence of fascism in Europe initially did not provoke widespread alarm in Canada, contributing to a sense of isolationism and reluctance to engage with international affairs.[5] While Canada was beginning to distance itself from the United Kingdom, it had not yet established a strong relationship with the United States, further shaping its strategic outlook during this period.

Canada did not enter WWII until September 10th, 1939, while the US chose to remain neutral. However, just shy of 11 months later, on August 18th, 1940, both countries established the Permanent Joint Board on Defence (PJBD) as part of the Ogdensburg Declaration.[6] Given the increasingly precarious state of global security, open communication between the two nations was crucial, and the PJBD ensured the two nations would continue discussing security. This new relationship was the first official defence agreement between the two countries and would lay the foundation for future cooperation on many issues.

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[1] J. L. Granatstein and Robert Bothwell, '"A Self-Evident National Duty": Canadian Foreign Policy, 1935–1939', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 3, no. 2 (January 1975): p. 212.
[2] Larry D. Rose and J. L. Granatstein, *Mobilize! Why Canada Was Unprepared for the Second World War* (Toronto: Tonawanda, NY : Dundurn Press, 2013), p. 259.
[3] James Eayrs, 'A Low Dishonest Decade: Aspects of Canadian External Policy, 1931– 1939', in *Readings in Canadian History*, ed. R. D. Francis and Donald B. Smith, 5th ed (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Canada, n.d.) p.352.
[4] Ibid, p.348.
[5] Ibid, p.355.
[6] 'The Permanent Joint Board on Defence (PJBD): How Permanent and Joint? Celebrating 80 Years of Cooperation', A report by the Centre for Defence and Security Studies, University of Manitoba (University of Manitoba, 25 February 2020), p.5

Canada's entry into World War II was largely independent of U.S. influence, as already discussed; however, the subsequent trajectory of Canadian foreign policy became increasingly intertwined with the Canada-US relationship. During the period of the war and years following, the PM believed "…that our real self-interest lies in the strength of the British Empire as a whole, not in our geographic position and resources."[7] However, federal cabinet members would eventually challenge the PM's views, and a desire to distance Canada from the British Empire would take over national foreign policy.[8] Following World War II's conclusion, Canada and the US faced new geopolitical challenges, with their cooperation becoming increasingly significant. Canada would continue distancing itself from the British influence and pivot focus to its southern neighbour. The two nations were now members of the newly formed United Nations (UN) and would collaborate together on many future security problems. This newfound collaboration would soon face a crucial test in the Pacific theatre, specifically on the Korean Peninsula.

The Korean War

In the years immediately following WWII, the Korean Peninsula emerged as a pivotal geopolitical hotspot, defined by the clash between communism and democracy.[9] This period witnessed a significant convergence of global powers, each competing for influence and dominance, ultimately setting the stage for the outbreak of the Korean War. Amidst this tension, Canada faced pivotal decisions that would shape its future trajectory, with the US relationship emerging as a paramount consideration.

The first decision facing Canada during this period was whether to support the UN Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK), which would oversee elections in the US-controlled southern portion of the peninsula.[10] Under PM King, there was an initial desire to oppose the UNTCOK as he desired to remain separated from the affairs of growing world powers and US manipulation.[11] However, after much pushback from key Canadian government members, including Louis St. Laurent and Lester B. Pearson, the PM ultimately supported the commission.[12] Historian John Price argues that this decision was predominantly focused on taking measures to bring Canada closer to the US at the strategic level.[13] Despite the political ambiguity surrounding Korea, this decision to more closely align Canada with the US was a pivotal moment in the Canada-US relationship. Instead of being bound by historical ties and a moral obligation to support the commonwealth, Canada embraced its geographical proximity to a burgeoning global power, laying the foundation for a mutually beneficial partnership. However, Canada's naivety toward the US' true strategic intent was exposed upon the outbreak of hostilities in Korea. Canada's external affairs minister, Lester B. Pearson, had been led to believe

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[7] Granatstein and Bothwell, '"A Self-evident National Duty"', 221.
[8] Ibid, p.221.
[9] John Price, 'The "Cat's Paw": Canada and the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea', *The Canadian Historical Review* 85, no. 2 (June 2004): 297, https://doi.org/10.1353/can.2004.0077.
[10] Ibid, p.297.
[11] Ibid, p.298.
[12] Ibid, p.300.
[13] Ibid, p.300.

that "Korea was strategically unimportant to the United States, and therefore did not fall within the American protective umbrella."[14] As a result of this belief, the Canadian government was totally surprised that the US acted with such swift aggression.[15] This phenomenon of Canadian naivety toward US strategic intent would play out many times in the coming years and decades.

During the Korean conflict, Canada faced numerous challenges aligning with the United States. These and similar future challenges continue to impact the relationship between the two countries even today. One significant obstacle was the pressure exerted by the US on Canada to increase its military involvement in the conflict.[16] Despite having pledged support for the US through the UNTCOK, the US demanded more concrete military commitments from Canada when North Korea invaded the South. Canada's response was not immediate, and it took several months for the country to ultimately join the Korean War effort, which caused tension between the two nations.[17] Additionally, Canada relied completely upon US intelligence reporting in the region throughout the conflict. Without a foreign intelligence capability, Canada's views on the conflict were undoubtedly shaped by US reporting and influence.[18] This intelligence reliance would have likely made the decision to delay troops even more difficult for Canadian politicians. Canada was undoubtedly learning that the new relationship with the US required careful management. The experience likely served as a strategic lesson for Canadian politicians, who should have recognized the importance of managing expectations moving forward.

As Canada grappled with its role in global affairs during the Korean conflict, its close ties with the United States became increasingly evident. This highlighted the importance of Canada's relationship with the US and the need to balance maintaining its national interests while also aligning with its closest ally. This bond would soon face another critical test during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 when the complexities of international diplomacy and strategic alliances would again come to the forefront.

The Cuban Missile Crisis

The final historical case of this paper highlighting the Canada-US defence relationship is the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. Nearly a decade had passed since Canada's involvement in the Korean War, and much had transpired between Canada and the US during the interim period. Both countries had been major players during the Suez Crisis of 1956, which ultimately degraded the relationship between Canada and Great Britain. Canada believed that British actions during the crisis had undermined the UN and the Commonwealth and represented an unacceptable separation of views between the US

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[14] Denis Stairs, 'The Diplomacy of Constraint', in *Partners Nevertheless: Canadian-American Relations in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Norman Hillmer, New Canadian Readings (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1989), p. 216.
[15] Ibid, p.216.
[16] Robert Prince, 'The Limits of Constraint: Canadian-American Relations and the Korean War, 1950-51', *The Journal of Canadian Studies* 27, no. 4 (Winter 1992): p.139.
[17] Ibid, p.139.
[18] Ibid, p.137.

and the UK.[19] Arguably, this deterioration of the Canada-UK relationship only served to foster greater ties between Canada and the US. However, perhaps the biggest development in the Canada-US defence relationship came on 12 September 1957, when the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD) was created.[20] Canada and the US had created the world's only bi-national military command structure, setting a precedent for defence cooperation between two sovereign states.

In the lead-up to the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, the relationship between Canada and the US underwent a significant transformation. While the US took a hard-line stance against communism, Canada's position was more nuanced.[21] Even though it was not pro-communist, Canada decided against imposing economic sanctions on Cuba and instead chose to maintain trade and its foreign policy.[22] This position put Canada's relationship with Cuba in direct opposition to that of the US, which was becoming increasingly hostile towards the communist state, leading to mounting tensions between the two countries. As the situation escalated, Canada found itself facing a challenge to its foreign policy on communism. Its defence relationship with the US was at odds with its position towards Cuba, and as political and strategic considerations came into play, Canada found itself delicately navigating a complex situation. The country had to balance its support for the US as its ally and trading partner with its desire to maintain its own foreign policy towards Cuba.

Further complicating the situation was Canada's relatively new obligation under the NORAD agreement. Shortly after learning of nuclear ballistic missiles arriving in Cuba, the US President ordered the US NORAD forces to a higher alert status of Defence Condition (DEFCON) 3.[23] Under the agreement, raising the alert of NORAD forces was supposed to involve consultation between the Canadian PM and the US President. However, President Kennedy made the decision unilaterally, completely neglecting the Canadian PM's role in NORAD.[24] Similar to the US's unforeseen response during the initial stages of the Korean conflict, Canada was once again caught completely off guard by its defence ally. This caused much tension within the Canadian government, and senior politicians criticized the PM for not immediately matching the steps taken by the US.[25]

Perhaps the most notable challenge presented by the Canada-US defence relationship during this period was the expectation for Canada to accept US nuclear missiles on Canadian soil as a deterrent. Mirroring Canada's reliance on the United States

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[19] 'Suez', in *The Worldly Years: The Life of Lester B. Pearson, 1949-1972*, by John English (New York: Knopf Canada, 2011), p.135.
[20] Joseph T. Jockel, *Canada in NORAD, 1957 - 2007: A History*, Queen's Policy Studies (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), p.1.
[21] Jocelyn Ghent-Mallet and Don Munton, 'Confronting Kennedy and the Missiles in Cuba 1962.', in *Canadian Foreign Policy: Selected Cases*, ed. Don Munton and John J. Kirton (Scarborough, Ont: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1992), p.78.
[22] Ibid, p.79.
[23] Ibid, p.86.
[24] Ibid, p.86.
[25] 'Cuba-October 1962', in *Canada in World Affairs, 1961 - 1963*, by Peyton V. Lyon (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968), p.45.

during the Korean War, the nation found itself once more in a position of dependency, leaning on intelligence provided by its American counterpart regarding the nuclear missile deployments in Cuba.[26] Since Canada could not independently verify the US-provided intelligence, it was forced to take their word. This likely made the pressure to accept nuclear missiles much more difficult. Ultimately, Canada did not allow the Bomarc missiles in North Bay, Ontario to be armed with nuclear warheads during the crisis period. However, by 1963, Canada's government had changed, and the Bomarc squadron in North Bay, Ontario, became nuclear capable for years to come.[27]

The Canada-US defence alliance had undergone significant changes since the Ogdensburg Declaration of 1940. To this point, there had been over two decades of cooperation, and Canada had its share of learning experiences, as evidenced by these three historical case studies that demonstrate a shift in perspectives from Great Britain towards the US. Nevertheless, it is important to examine some contemporary examples to better understand the effects of a shifting security landscape on the relationship.

[26] Asa McKercher, 'A "Half-Hearted Response"?: Canada and the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962', *The International History Review* 33, no. 2 (June 2011): p.339.
[27] Bill Steer, 'Nuclear Warheads a Forgotten Part of North Bay's History', North Bay Nugget, 10 February 2019, https://www.nugget.ca/news/local-news/nuclear-warheads-a-forgotten-part-of-north-bays-history.

PART 2: CONTEMPORARY CASES IN CAN-US DEFENCE RELATIONS

Defence Spending Pressure

Canada has long been a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and has actively participated in the organization's operations since its inception. Canada values its membership in NATO as a top priority, as evidenced by the 2017 National Defence Policy, *Strong Secure and Engaged* (SSE). Notably, the policy underscores Canada's deep connection with NATO, as the organization is mentioned 72 times in the document.[28] In comparison, NORAD is mentioned 47 times, the United Nations 42 times, the United States 38 times, the G7 twice, and the Five-Eyes only once.[29] Due to Canada's evident dedication to NATO, it is not surprising that its inability to meet its defence spending commitments has been a point of contention, particularly from the US. The Russian invasion of Crimea in 2014 was a significant event in Europe's security landscape, which prompted NATO countries to pledge to allocate 2% of their GDP towards defence in the next decade (2014-2024).[30] At that time, Canada spent only about 0.9% of its GDP on defence.[31] In 2017, the release of SSE announced financial spending increases, representing a positive change. However, these increases only accounted for approximately 1.29% of Canada's GDP.[32] In the wake of the Republican Party taking office in January 2017, the issue of Canada's defence spending was brought under intense scrutiny, particularly by the newly elected US President.[33] The matter gained significant attention as concerns were raised about Canada's perceived lack of commitment to its own defence and its reliance on the US for military protection. However, Canada argued that the matter was not simply one of economics but required a more comprehensive analysis. Canada has taken a leadership position in the NATO Mission Iraq (NMI) as well as the NATO enhanced Forward Presence in Latvia, illustrating its commitment to burden sharing in other ways.[34] Despite these Canadian leadership efforts, the US continued to criticize Canada for not doing enough in terms of burden-sharing toward collective defence.

In 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine, which put even more pressure on Canada to take further steps towards collective security. Although not as dramatic as the pressure from former President Trump, President Joe Biden gave a speech to the Canadian House of Commons on March 24, 2023, which had subtle undertones of increased defence

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[28] *Strong Secure Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy* (Ottawa, ON, CA: National Defence, 2017).
[29] *Ibid*.
[30] Murray Brewster, 'NATO's Two Per Cent Spending Target — Where It Came From, What It Means', CBC News Analysis, 21 April 2023, https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/nato-military-spending-canada-trudeau-1.6817309.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Murray Brewster, 'Canada Pledged to Spend 2% of GDP on Its Military. Would That Transform It? Is It Affordable?', CBC News Analysis, 24 July 2023, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/gdp-nato-military-spending-canada-1.6912028.
[33] Brewster, 'NATO's Two Per Cent Spending Target — Where It Came From, What It Means'.
[34] 'Prime Minister Announces Additional Measures to Support Ukraine and Strengthen Transatlantic Security at NATO Summit', Government of Canada, Prime Minsiter of Canada, 12 July 2023, https://www.pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2023/07/12/prime-minister-announces-additional-measures-support-ukraine.

commitments.[35] The United States sees the changing global security environment as necessary to take more action toward North America's homeland and continental defence. The US National Defence Strategy of 2018 made clear that the North American continent can no longer be viewed as a sanctuary, pressing the strategic message that Canada and the US need to do more to bolster defences.[36]

Since Canada pledged to increase its contribution towards NATO collective defence in 2014, the US has been watching. The evolving security landscape has directly and profoundly affected the Canada-US relationship, and this pressure will persist regardless of who occupies the White House. This US pressure on Canada arguably had much to do with the next case involving the information and technology (IT) company Huawei.

Huawei, 5G, and Meng Wanhzou

During the 2010s, the relentless demand for faster cellular data speeds and bandwidth led to a public debate about the best company to provide the 5G infrastructure in many countries. The Chinese IT company Huawei was widely viewed as the front runner to provide the 5G network as they were the industry leader and could provide the technology at the most competitive price. This situation was the topic of many conversations in the Canadian defence community as everyone anticipated the government's decision on which company would provide the service.

Right from the beginning of this process, the US inserted itself into the Canadian decision-making apparatus. The US point of view was unambiguous: China was not to be trusted, and therefore, Huawei should be banned.[37] Huawei argued that their company had no connection to the Chinese state, and senior executives emphasized their transparency in public speeches.[38] By 2018, three of the Five Eyes nations had banned Huawei from providing their 5G networks, and only Canada and the UK had not made a decision.[39] The US applied immense pressure to both Canada and the UK to not allow Huawei to compete.[40] Using their vast intelligence network, the US repeatedly took opportunities to inform Canada about the Chinese State's influence over Huawei.[41] This reliance upon US intelligence was not new, as history has shown that Canada has often relied on its southern neighbour for intelligence to make informed decisions.

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[35] 'Remarks by President Biden in Address to the Canadian Parliament', Speeches and Remarks, The White House, 23 March 2024, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2023/03/24/remarks-by-president-biden-in-address-to-the-canadian-parliament/.
[36] 'United States National Defence Strategy', 2018, https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf.
[37] Robert Fife, 'U.S. Lawmakers Warn Canada about Chinese Telecom Giant Huawei', The Globe and Mail, 17 June 2018, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-us-lawmakers-warn-canada-about-chinese-telecom-giant-huawei/.
[38] Shannon Proudfoot, 'Huawei's Meng Wanzhou: The World's Most Wanted Woman', *Maclean's*, 4 February 2019 p.3.
[39] Ibid, p.3.
[40] Fife, 'U.S. Lawmakers Warn Canada about Chinese Telecom Giant Huawei'.
[41] Ibid.

At the same time when Canada was assessing the path towards the implementation of 5G technology, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was being renegotiated, putting the Canada-US relationship to the test in a different way. This trade negotiation added pressure on Canada to align its foreign policy with the US, including its stance towards China. Adding to the complexity was the fact that Canada's new Ambassador to China had recently delivered a message to President Xi Jinping, expressing Canada's desire to improve all aspects of the Canada-Chinese relationship.[42] This put Canada in a difficult position, as it could be argued that the pressure from the US was in direct conflict with Canada's foreign policy towards China, leading to a complex diplomatic situation. Interestingly, this is not the first time Canada has faced such a challenge. As described in the historical case, in 1962, Canada's stance towards Cuba was at odds with the US, leading to a similar diplomatic predicament.

In December 2018, Canada faced a challenging situation when it received a formal request from the US to arrest Huawei's Chief Financial Officer, Meng Wanzhou. She was briefly stopped on a layover in Vancouver for approximately 12 hours before she was arrested.[43] Canada's decision to arrest her on December 1st resulted in retaliation from China, which arrested two Canadians, Michael Korvig and Michael Spavor. The situation with Korvig and Spavor turned into a political and diplomatic nightmare for the Trudeau government. Canada had supported the US request to arrest Meng at the expense of its foreign policy goals to improve relations with China. Then, in a shocking twist, the US President politicized the situation by posting on Twitter that he would "certainly intervene" in Meng's case if it helped trade negotiations with China.[44] Once again, Canada's foreign policy interests were in complete conflict with its relationship with the US.

Canada had again faced a challenging lesson in its relationship with the US. According to authors Blanchfield and Hampson, the Trudeau government, "…will have to tread carefully and look out for Canada's national interests while avoiding another turn as a pawn in the struggle for geopolitical supremacy between China and the United States."[45] This case study highlights Canada's decision to prioritize its security, defence, and economic ties with the US over its broader foreign policy with China. Moving forward, the Canadian government can reflect on its past decisions and use this experience to inform future issues in the Canada-US relationship.

Israel–Hamas Conflict

The final case study is challenging to assess as the situation is ongoing. Nevertheless, the Canada-US relationship is once again being put to the test as violent conflict transpires in the Middle East. On 7 October 2023, the organization Hamas

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[42] Proudfoot, 'Huawei's Meng Wanzhou: The World's Most Wanted Woman', p.2.
[43] Mike Blanchfield and Fen Osler Hampson, *The Two Michaels: Innocent Canadian Captives and High Stakes Espionage in the US-China Cyber War* (Toronto: Sutherland House, 2021), p.6.
[44] Ibid, p.75.
[45] Ibid, p.118.

conducted an armed attack on Israel.[46] While there has been much conflicting information on this event, investigations have reported a "massacre of over 1200 people, mostly civilians, and the kidnapping of civilian hostages (including babies, children, women, and older persons, many with complex medical conditions)."[47] Almost immediately following the attack, the Israeli government declared that Israel was at war in Gaza. The Israeli government stated that the resulting war was legitimate and justified, quoting the right to self-defence under international law.[48] Many nations voiced their immediate support for Israel and adamantly condemned the actions of Hamas. However, the international community's support has changed as Israel took swift military action and ordered the complete siege of Gaza and a resulting prolonged humanitarian crisis.

The conflict in the Middle East has been ongoing for months, causing a deep division within the international community. The complex situation has the potential to escalate into a broader conflict with far-reaching consequences. In response, the UN General Assembly and Security Council have been actively involved in addressing the matter. Using its voice at the UN, Canada has taken a considered approach, undoubtedly considering the US position while pursuing its own interests.

The US has repeatedly used its veto power to block UN Security Council resolutions calling for a humanitarian aid cease-fire, a move that has caused widespread concern, especially within Canada.[49] In contrast, Canada has taken a more nuanced stance, showing support for Israel but also recognizing the need for a peaceful resolution to the conflict by supporting ceasefire resolutions.[50] As the conflict continues, Canadians have become increasingly polarized in their views on Israel's military actions in Gaza and the Canadian government's response. Many have taken to the streets to demand that the government do more to stop the violence. The Trudeau government has pledged its support for Israel but has also shown a willingness to engage with all parties involved in the conflict in a bid to find a peaceful resolution.

In recent years, Canada has taken a different approach towards Israel than the United States. This difference in stance was evident in the 2017 decision by the Trump administration to relocate the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, a move that sparked widespread anger and condemnation.[51] While the US chose to be more assertive, Canada has maintained its embassy in Tel Aviv, highlighting its dedication to resolving the conflict through diplomatic means.

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[46] Shmuel P. Reis and Hedy S. Wald, 'The Hamas Massacre of Oct 7, 2023, and Its Aftermath, Medical Crimes, and the Lancet Commission Report on Medicine, Nazism, and the Holocaust', *Israel Journal of Health Policy Research* 13, no. 1 (12 April 2024): p.2.
[47] Reis and Wald, p.2.
[48] Ibid, p.2.
[49] Faraz Fassihi, 'Middle East Crisis U.S. Vetoes U.N. Resolution Calling for a Cease-Fire in Gaza', New York Times, 20 February 2024.
[50] Michael Woods, 'Canada Supports UN Resolution Calling for Ceasefire in Israel-Hamas War', CBC News, 12 December 2023.
[51] 'President Donald J. Trump Keeps His Promise To Open U.S. Embassy In Jerusalem, Israel', Archives, Trump White House, 14 May 2018.

Throughout the ongoing conflict, tensions between Israel and its neighbours continue to escalate. The Yemeni Houthis' violent attacks on commercial ships in the Red Sea and Iran's drone and missile strike on Israel have raised concerns about stability in the region. Canada remains committed to finding a peaceful resolution and maintaining stability. As the security landscape becomes more complex, the US and Canada must strategize for the future and take proactive measures to protect their defence alliance.

PART 3: FUTURE PROSPECTS IN CANADA-US DEFENCE RELATIONS

Continental Defence: Together Or Alone

The Canada-US defence partnership has been a crucial aspect of the changing security landscape since the Ogdensburg Declaration in 1940. It has been put to the test several times, but the relationship has allowed both nations to thrive and has provided a relatively safe sanctuary for their citizens. However, the global security outlook is not optimistic, and the defence communities are urging their governments to take more deliberate actions toward improving defence. Canada has long been accused of freeloading off the US when it comes to collective security, and the NORAD relationship is a prime example of this.

While Canada is quick to brag about being a member of the world's only true bi-national command structure, it has not committed enough resources to the partnership.[52] As a result, it risks losing everything. Joel Sokolsky, an expert on the Canada-US defence relationship, has argued that Canada must do more, dating back to 2005 when the US was in Iraq. He believes that American unilateralism, albeit disguised as multilateralism, offers the best chance for victory in the war on terror and world order.[53] He also believes that Ottawa should do more because its own national interests, particularly economic ones, depend on maintaining good relations with Washington.[54] However, much has changed since 2005, and the criticism of Canada not doing enough continues to dominate the narrative. Sokolsky has also pointed out that the Canadian strategy regarding the US has always considered the following question: "Thus the question in regard to military ties with the US becomes not *How much is enough*? But *How much is just enough*?"[55] This implies that Canada has never been fully committed to the partnership.

Given this scenario, it is worth considering whether it would be wise for Canada to plan for a North America without NORAD protection. Dr. Andrea Charron argues that the NORAD alliance will likely continue regardless of Canada's contributions.[56] She explains that NORAD faced its biggest challenge when the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union ceased to exist.[57] NORAD was specifically created to counter that threat, and it has survived and grown to become more than was originally envisioned. Therefore, Canada may need to reconsider its level of commitment to the partnership and make a more significant contribution to the defence of North America.

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[52] 'Prime Minister Justin Trudeau Visits the North American Aerospace Defense Command with the United States Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III', Prime Minister of Canada, 8 June 2022, https://www.pm.gc.ca/en/news/readouts/2022/06/08/prime-minister-justin-trudeau-visits-north-american-aerospace-defense.
[53] Joel Sokolsky, 'Between a Rock and a Soft Place: The Geopolitics of Canada-US Security Relations', in *Geopolitical Integrity*, ed. Hugh Segal and Institute for Research on Public Policy (Montréal: Inst. for Research on Public Policy (IRPP), 2005), p.315.
[54] Ibid, p.315.
[55] Ibid, p.313.
[56] Andrea Charron and James G. Fergusson, *NORAD: In Perpetuity and Beyond* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2022), p.149.
[57] Ibid, p.149.

The glaring question facing Canada is how best to contribute. Should Canada simply increase its defence budget and purchase more capabilities? Sokolsky would argue in favour of that approach as he has stated that "capabilities will matter more than organizations" when it comes to homeland defence.[58] With that in mind, the recent NORAD Modernization initiative of 2022 and the Canadian defence policy update should be welcome announcements to the US as they show Canada is stepping up their commitments.[59] SSE was criticized for omitting policy guidance toward NORAD modernization, and the gap was referred to by many as 'the unwritten chapter.'[60] The NORAD Modernization announcement provided the missing information from SSE.[61] Now, the defence policy update, titled "Our North Strong and Free: A Renewed Visions for Canada's Defence," provides details on how Canada will do even more to achieve the goals set forth in SSE.[62] It would appear that Canada finally has the comprehensive policy guidance necessary to make meaningful contributions.

On the surface, these announcements seem to be a very positive step toward contributing to North America's collective defence. According to the Minister of National Defence, the NORAD Modernization plan will invest 38.6 billion, and the defence policy update will invest an additional 73 billion over the next 20 years.[63] However, the US will likely continue to exert pressure on Canada to spend more. Even with these investments, Canada's defence spending will only account for approximately 1.76% of its GDP, well short of the NATO target.[64] In essence, the Canadian government appears to have calculated "*how much is just enough*" to mitigate US pressure. In the government's defence, it must find a balance between Canadian public opinion and demonstrating to the US that it is not a freeloader, a daunting task.

Preventing US Isolationism

Up to this point in the paper, it has been discussed how Canada's defence relationship with the US has been a crucial aspect for the governments over the years. Regardless of the political party affiliation, ensuring the bond between Canada and the US remains strong has been the primary concern. The defence portfolio has also played a significant role in this regard. However, concerns have been raised about the US becoming increasingly isolationist, particularly during the previous Republican administration. The question arises, will Canada be ready if the US decides to discontinue the relationship on the current terms?

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[58] Sokolsky, 'Between a Rock and a Soft Place: The Geopolitics of Canada-US Security Relations', p.317.
[59] *Our North Strong and Free: A Renewed Vision for Canada's Defence*, [Cat. No.: D2-668/2024E-PDF] (Ottawa: National Defence = Défense nationale, 2024).
[60] 'The Missing Chapter of Strong, Secure, Engaged', in *Shielding North America: Canada's Role in NORAD Modernization*, by Teeple, Nancy and Ryan Dean, NAADSN Engage 4 (Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication, 2021).
[61] 'Minister of National Defence Announces Canada's NORAD Modernization Plan', Speech, Government of Canada, 20 June 2022.
[62] *Our North Strong and Free*.
[63] *Ibid, p.vi*.
[64] *Ibid, p.vi*.

This paper has demonstrated Canada's significant dependence on the US for foreign intelligence since the 1940s. While the US has always been willing to share intelligence, the growing trend of isolationism may lead to a decrease in this cooperation. This shift could have serious implications for essential defence agreements such as NORAD, the Five Eyes, and even NATO. Therefore, it may be time for Canada to reconsider its national policies regarding foreign intelligence collection. Stephanie Carvin echoes this sentiment, noting that Canadian governments have not felt pressure to develop their intelligence capabilities and have instead relied on the US.[65] However, the security landscape is changing, and the international order that Canada has relied on is no longer as certain. For instance, movements like "Trumpism" pose challenges to the liberal order, free trade, human rights, and multilateralism, and this movement is not limited to the US alone.[66] As the upcoming US federal election approaches, there is a chance that Donald Trump may secure another term or a like-minded candidate. Canadian officials have acknowledged this possibility and are making the necessary preparations, as they did in 2017.[67] However, it's important to note that existing agreements between the two countries, such as NAFTA in 2018, may be subject to challenges. As we look to the future, it's possible that a new US administration may seek to revisit the cost-sharing arrangement for the North Warning System. This wouldn't be without precedent as the US has renegotiated payment terms for NORAD radars before. In fact, the original system, the Distant Early Warning (DEW) line, was entirely financed by the US.[68] When the North Warning System was introduced in the 1980s, the financial arrangement was updated and Canada now contributes 40% of the operating costs.[69] The NORAD Modernization initiative is currently underway, with the Canadian Government collaborating with the US to renew and replace the system.[70] However, given the history of the US pushing for increased contributions from Canada, there is a valid concern that Canada could be asked to contribute more.

As noted previously, the Canadian government needs to strike a balance between appeasing the Canadian public and preserving the US relationship. If the Canadian public were more educated on the fragility of national security, perhaps there would be a stronger public will to invest more. Carver suggests that a possible solution to this problem is to “Canadianize National Security” by being more transparent with the public.[71] Carver also states, “For decades, Canada has been a net consumer of intelligence: we take in far more than we give back, especially with our closest partners.”[72] However, Global Affairs Canada (GAC) would counter-argue that their Global Security Reporting Program (GSRP) provides Canada with sufficient information

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[65] Stephanie Carvin, *Stand On Guard: Reassessing Threats to Canada’s National Security* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021), p.274.
[66] Ibid, p.274.
[67] Dylan Robertson, ‘Canada Has “game Plan” If U.S. Takes Far-Right, Authoritarian Shift, Joly Says’, The National Post, 17 August 2023.
[68] Jockel, *Canada in NORAD, 1957 - 2007*, p.121.
[69] Ibid, p.121.
[70] ‘Minister of National Defence Announces Canada’s NORAD Modernization Plan’.
[71] Carvin, *Stand on Guard*, p.278.
[72] Ibid, p.278.

on troubled countries.[73] However, the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS) has opposed the GSRP since its creation and has advocated strongly that Canada needs its own foreign intelligence capability under the CSIS mandate.[74] Perhaps they have a point, as recently, the public has witnessed an Indian State-sanctioned assassination on Canadian soil, Chinese foreign interference with government officials, Chinese surveillance balloon incursions to Canadian domestic air space, populist-motivated civil unrest, and more. All of these scenarios were forefront of the minds of Canadians as they made national news headlines, and all of them were enabled by US intelligence sharing with Canada.[75] In short, Canada would struggle to make informed decisions to protect the Canadian way of life without the US defence relationship, and the GSRP is not the solution. As it has since 1940, the security situation continues to evolve, and Canada needs to be prepared. The US defence relationship has been crucial to providing a security blanket under which Canadians can thrive, and the government needs to take measures to ensure the US does not put America first at the risk of our way of life.

[73] Daniel Livermore, 'Global Affairs Canada's GSRP: What It Is, and What It's Not', Centre for International Policy Studies, n.d., https://www.cips-cepi.ca/2023/11/29/global-affairs-canadas-gsrp-what-it-is-and-what-its-not/.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Peter Baker, 'Biden Is Caught Between Allies as Canada Accuses India of Assassination', New York Times, 20 September 2023, https://login.cfc.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/blogs-podcasts-websites/biden-is-caught-between-allies-as-canada-accuses/docview/2866487905/se-2?accountid=9867; Julien Barnes, Helene Cooper, and Edward Wong, 'Previous Chinese Balloon Incursions Initially Went Undetected', New York Times, n.d., https://login.cfc.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/blogs-podcasts-websites/previous-chinese-balloon-incursions-initially/docview/2773438726/se-2?accountid=9867.

CONCLUSION

This essay has explored the evolution of Canada-US defence relations through historical and contemporary case studies and outlines potential future prospects for the partnership.

Initially, it explores historical cases, including World War II, the Korean War, and the Cuban Missile Crisis. Despite Canada's initial desire to support Great Britain during World War II, the establishment of the Permanent Joint Board on Defense marked the beginning of a more collaborative relationship with the US. However, challenges arose during the Korean War, where Canada's alignment with US interests highlighted tensions between the two nations. Similarly, during the Cuban Missile Crisis, Canada's nuanced stance on Cuba clashed with US expectations, revealing complexities in the partnership.

Moving to contemporary cases, the essay examines defence spending pressure and the Huawei 5G controversy. Canada's struggle to meet NATO spending commitments has strained relations with the US, reflecting broader concerns about burden-sharing. Moreover, the US's opposition to Huawei's involvement in Canada's 5G network underscores the influence of US foreign policy on Canadian decision-making. Furthermore, the essay analyzes the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict and its implications for the Canada-US relationship. While both nations support Israel, Canada's diplomatic approach contrasts with the US's more assertive stance, highlighting divergent strategies in addressing international conflicts.

Finally, the essay discusses future prospects in Canada-US defence relations, emphasizing the importance of continental defence and preventing US isolationism. As the global security landscape evolves, Canada must consider increasing its defence contributions to NORAD and NATO to maintain the partnership's viability. Moreover, potential shifts in US foreign policy, such as isolationist tendencies, pose challenges that Canada must address by enhancing its own intelligence capabilities and promoting transparency with the public.

Overall, the essay demonstrates the multifaceted nature of the Canada-US defence relationship, shaped by historical precedent, contemporary challenges, and future uncertainties. It underscores the need for both nations to adapt to changing security dynamics while preserving the strength and resilience of their partnership.

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