

Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security

# **CANADIAN ARCTIC DEFENCE POLICY**

## **A SYNTHESIS OF KEY DOCUMENTS, 1970-2013**

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# **Canadian Arctic Defence Policy: A Synthesis of Key Documents, 1970-2013**

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## Foreword

This publication is intended to serve as a general reference document for scholars and policy-makers exploring topics in Canadian Arctic security policy since the 1970s. It provides a summary of and key quotations from major defence, foreign policy, and general policy documents and parliamentary reports related to the Arctic, beginning with the *Defence in the '70s* white paper.

Parliamentary reports and official policy statements set expectations and point to desired outcomes. Nevertheless, “Policy is only as good as the action it inspires,” Minister of Foreign Affairs Lawrence Cannon noted at the unveiling ceremony of *Canada’s Northern Strategy* in 2009. This working paper does not attempt to assess government success in implementing policies. Instead, we intend for it to serve as an accessible compendium of major official statements on sovereignty and security to help frame future policy discussion and to support more robust scholarly assessment of Canada’s Arctic record.

For general background on Canadian defence policy and the Arctic, see Ken Coates, Whitney Lackenbauer, William Morrison and Greg Poelzer, *Arctic Front: Defending Canada’s Interests in the Far North* (Toronto: Thomas Allen, 2008); Kenneth C. Eyre, “Forty Years of Military Activity in the Canadian North, 1947-87,” *Arctic* 40/4 (December 1987), 292-99; and Ron Purver, “The Arctic in Canadian Security Policy, 1945 to the Present,” in *Canada’s International Security Policy*, eds. David B. Dewitt and David Leyton-Brown (Scarborough, ON: Prentice-Hall, 1995): 81-110. On the Trudeau era, see Edgar Dosman, ed., *The Arctic in Question* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976) and P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Peter Kikkert, eds., *The Canadian Forces and Arctic Sovereignty: Debating Roles, Interests and Requirements, 1968-1974* (Waterloo: Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies/Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2009). On the Mulroney era, see Franklyn Griffiths, ed., *Politics of the Northwest Passage* (Kingston & Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1987); Franklyn Griffiths, ed., *Arctic Alternatives: Civility or Militarism in the Circumpolar North* (Toronto: Science for Peace/Samuel Stevens, 1992); and Rob Huebert,

“Steel, Ice and Decision-Making: The Voyage of the Polar Sea and its Aftermath” (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dalhousie University, 1994). On the transition to the post-Cold War era, see Rob Huebert, “Canadian Arctic Security Issues: Transformation in the Post-Cold War Era,” *International Journal* 54/2 (1999): 203-229. For introductions to developments over the last decade, see P. Whitney Lackenbauer, ed., *Canada and Arctic Sovereignty and Security: Historical Perspectives* (Calgary: Centre for Military and Strategic Studies/University of Calgary Press, 2011) and Franklyn Griffiths, Rob Huebert, and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, *Canada and the Changing Arctic: Sovereignty, Security and Stewardship* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2011).

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## 1. Defence in the 70s: White Paper on Defence

**Department of National Defence, August 1971.**

Donald S. Macdonald, the Minister of National Defence, released *Defence in the 70s: White Paper on Defence* in August 1971. It began declaring that “important international and domestic changes have occurred since the review of defence policy which culminated in the White Paper issued in 1964,” and these required a “fundamental reappraisal of Canadian defence policy.” The priorities for Canadian defence policy were set out in Prime Minister Trudeau’s 3 April 1969 statement, which summarized four major areas of activity for the Canadian Forces:

- (a) the surveillance of our own territory and coast-lines, i.e. the protection of our sovereignty;
- (b) the defence of North America in co-operation with U.S. forces;
- (c) the fulfillment of such NATO commitments as may be agreed upon; and
- (d) the performance of such international peacekeeping roles as we may from time to time assume.

In articulating these four policy areas, the white paper emphasized the military’s role in safeguarding “Canada’s sovereignty and independence” and careful attentiveness to “the cost-effectiveness and marginal return of various options.”

The first area of activity — surveillance and control over Canadian territory, waters and airspace — was “not a new role for the Canadian Forces, but its dimensions are changing.” In particular, attention was shifting northward:

The North, in a sense the last frontier of Canada, has a unique physical environment presenting special problems of administration and control. Modern industrial technology has in recent years stimulated a growth of commercial interest in the resources potential of the area, and contributed to a major increase in oil and gas exploration in the Territories, especially on the Arctic Islands. These activities, in which foreign as well as Canadian companies are involved, have brought with them a need to ensure that exploitation of the resources is carried out in accordance with Canada’s long-term national interests. There is a danger that this increased activity with its inherent danger of oil or other pollution might disturb the finely balanced ecology of the region. The Government therefore decided to take special measures to ensure the environmental preservation of this uniquely vulnerable area, and to ensure that these measures are fully respected. Strict regulations governing land use and mineral

exploration and exploitation are being brought into effect. Legislation provides for the exercise of pollution control jurisdiction in an area extending generally 100 miles from the mainland and islands of the Canadian Arctic.

The emphasis on defence responsibilities to support government efforts “to regulate the development of the North in a manner compatible with environmental preservation” and to “make a major contribution to the preservation of an unspoiled environment and an improved quality of life by supporting the civil agencies in exercising pollution control on the North and off Canada’s coasts” was certainly new. “Canada is a three-ocean maritime nation with one of the longest coastlines in the world, and large portion of the trade vital to our economic strength goes by sea,” *Defence in the 70s* observed. “The Government is concerned that Canada’s many and varied interests in the waters close to our shores, on the seabed extending from our coasts, and on the high seas beyond, be protected.”

The document noted that the Canadian Armed Forces had a principal role in 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,” it defined; “control implies inappropriate enforcement action to ensure that laws and regulations are respected.” Turning first to military surveillance, the white paper highlighted the domestic, continental, and broader North Atlantic importance of Canadian contributions. In the maritime and land domains it noted that:

A substantial capability for surveillance over Canada’s waters in the temperate zone is currently available. Surveillance over Arctic land and waters can be carried out by long-range patrol aircraft but at present is limited by light and weather conditions. Surveillance by ships is restricted to ice free periods of the year. Because of the areas involved, general ground surveillance by land forces is not practicable. The Department of National Defence is assessing the challenges that might be expected in the Canadian North and, if warranted, will increase surveillance.

Argus long-range patrol aircraft, designed and bought specifically to detect and track submarines, offered this capability (as did Tracker aircraft, albeit with a shorter range). Submarine detection, however, posed a particular problem in the far north:

Although Canada has a good capability to detect submarines in its waters in the temperate zone, it has only very limited capabilities to detect submarine activity in the Arctic. It might be desirable in the

future to raise the level of capability so as to have subsurface perimeter surveillance particularly to cover the channels connecting the Arctic Ocean to Baffin Bay and Baffin Bay to the Atlantic. The Government is therefore undertaking research to determine the costs and feasibility of a limited subsurface system to give warning of any unusual maritime activity. The Defence Research Board is playing an important role in these studies. If found to be desirable, the system could be operated as part of the overall surveillance of North America against unknown submarines.

The Canadian Armed Forces also had a growing role to play in supporting other federal departments in “Assistance to the Civil Authorities” capacity, with a view “to ensure that the total national effort is both effective and efficient in the use of available resources to meet the Government’s requirements.” These activities included:

- (a) general area surveillance of foreign fishing fleets off the coasts;
- (b) specific reconnaissance missions on a quick response, short-term basis to locate those fishing fleets when they move and fail to appear when expected;
- (c) area surveillance of offshore waters to detect and report suspected illegal seismic and other exploratory activities;
- (d) assistance in ice reconnaissance operations;
- (e) surveillance when needed of Canadian waters off the East and West Coasts and in the North to detect pollution at sea;
- (f) surveillance of Canadian territorial waters to detect and report foreign vessels illegally present therein;
- (g) surveillance of sites of mineral exploration and exploitation projects in the North when verification of their locations and status is required; and
- (h) during the appropriate seasons, provision of observer space on aircraft engaged in northern surveillance operations to permit wildlife observations.

*Defence in the 70s* also highlighted the need for “a military capability for control... as an adjunct to the other measures necessary for the protection of Canada and Canadian interests. This should include an ability to enforce these measures should laws not be respected. Such efforts to protect national interests are fully consistent with Canadian involvement in collective security against foreign military attack.” Sea and air maritime forces exercised control in territorial seas, fishing and pollution control zones, and waters above the continental shelf. “Although the present naval ships cannot operate safely in ice-covered waters, or above 65°N latitude at any time

of the year,” the paper noted, “they are being employed in northern waters to a greater extent during the summer months.”

*Defence in the 70s* also emphasized that the land forces possessed adequate capabilities for surveillance and control. “The three combat groups within Canada are air transportable and the Canadian Airborne Regiment provides a parachute drop capability well suited for operation in the North,” it explained, and the United States would assist in a situation that threatened continental defence. Regardless, the white paper stated that “more emphasis is being placed on training the Armed Forces to live and operate in the Arctic.” In addition to the Northern Region Headquarters created in Yellowknife and a military liaison staff in Whitehorse, DND would consider establishing other small bases in the North (“particularly in the Arctic Islands”), “the desirability of reconstituting the Canadian Rangers,” and “the desirability of establishing a special training school for all personnel assigned to the North.” It also promised to assess whether existing equipment, particularly over snow vehicles, were adequate.

Nevertheless, DND’s responsibilities and relationships were situated in a broader government context. In particular, *Defence in the 70s* noted that “the Government’s objective is to continue effective occupation of Canadian territory, and to have a surveillance and control capability to the extent necessary to safeguard national interests in all Canadian territory, and all airspace and waters over which Canada exercises sovereignty or jurisdiction.” Although the Canadian Forces did not bear sole responsibility for regulating activity in Canadian territory and ensuring compliance with Canadian laws, they had “a general responsibility for surveillance and control over land, sea and airspace under Canadian jurisdiction” that, in peacetime, complemented the roles of civil authorities. Military assistance was particularly necessary “in more sparsely settled regions until a stage of economic and social development has been reached, justifying an expansion of civil agencies and resources.” Given the size of Canada, adverse weather conditions, and the complexity of challenges that “could arise in more ambiguous circumstances from private entities as well as foreign government agencies,” such as a fishing vessel, an oil tanker, or a private aircraft, surveillance and control needed to be “effective and visible.” In partnership with civilian departments, exercising control to meet sovereignty and security requirements had to be done “in the most economical way.”

Military activities in the north also had to support Canada’s broader national policies, which sought to foster economic growth, safeguard sovereignty and independence, work for peace and security, promote social justice, enhance the quality of life, and ensure a harmonious natural environment. The white paper touted DND as “an important reservoir of skills and capabilities which in the past has been drawn upon, and which in the future can be increasingly drawn upon, to contribute to the social

and economic development of Canada.” The explanation of how the Canadian Armed Forces had contributed to Northern development warrants quoting at length:

The Northwest Territories and Yukon Radio System, established in 1923, pioneered development of communications in the North. Both before the Second World War and in the post-war years, the Forces carried out extensive aerial photographic and survey activities which played a key part in mapping the Arctic and in opening it up for air transportation.

The construction of defence installations in the North developed new techniques for dealing with permafrost and other Arctic conditions which have invaluable to subsequent northern development. Much has been done to understand and deal with the special problems of communications and navigation in the Arctic. An icebreaker operated by the Forces was the first large ship to navigate the Northwest Passage. The Forces, with the help of the Defence Research Board (DRB), have been in the forefront of the opening of the North and have pioneered in finding solutions to the problems of its development. This role will be enhanced in the future, particularly where National Defence engineering and construction resources can be utilized.

## **2. Independence and Internationalism**

### **Special Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons on Canada's International Relations, June 1986.**

On 26 June 1986, the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons on Canada's International Relations tabled its report on Canada's foreign policy in the House of Commons. Titled *Independence and Internationalism*, the Committee described its eleven chapters as “wholly unprecedented in Canada and rare, if not unique, within the international community” in that the parliamentarians had an opportunity to “review the entire scope of Canada's external relations.”

While much of the report dealt with general foreign affairs issues such as trade and international development, the report addressed two specific geographic regions: the United States (the major focus of Canadian activities) and the Arctic — the latter because the Committee members “concluded that that dimension of Canadian external policy has been neglected in the past and is emerging inescapably as a focus

of the future.” This emerging Arctic focus was largely predicated on increasing tensions between and military capabilities of the United States and the Soviet Union:

The message we heard is that many Canadians are growing increasingly concerned about the security of their own country, which is being affected directly by new developments in the world strategic balance. Canadian territory is no longer out of the limelight in the way it was a decade ago, when Canada’s main military task on this continent was to guard against an aging and declining Soviet bomber force that seemed to have only marginal importance. In addition to precision-targeted SLBMS (submarine-launched ballistic missiles), new U.S. and Soviet long-range bombers and cruise missiles under development and may soon lead to a great upsurge in the stocks of weapons that would be flown or fired across Canadian territory in the event of a major conflict. As a result, Canadians are having to reconsider the possible effects of missile attacks or nuclear fall-out on this country, to give renewed attention to proposals for counter-measures in the form of early-warning systems and anti-bomber and anti-cruise missile defences based on Canadian territory, and generally to think about strategic developments in the Arctic.

In examining the geostrategic situation of Canada in relation to the United States, Committee members heard recommendations from many defence experts, academics, and civil society groups:

It was generally agreed that the need to protect the deterrent force based in the United States from possible attack across the North Pole and over Canada caused a difficult situation. However, responses to this situation varied greatly. A number of witnesses considered that co-operation with the United States on northern air defence contributed to the defence of the Western Alliance, as well as putting Canada in a position to control and circumscribe U.S. activities over Canada’s territory and, in particular, in the North. As the Working Group of the National Capital Branch of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs (CIIA) warned, particularly with reference to “the strategically important Arctic, ...if Canada does not take such basic security measures itself, the United States will do so in its own way.” On the other hand, witnesses especially concerned about the danger of nuclear confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States argued that Canada should withdraw from NORAD either to escape a possible conflict or to convey a message of disapproval to one or both of the superpowers.

In following up with this line of advocacy, however, the report noted that:

Very few of the advocates of withdrawal from NORAD addressed the issue that Canada would then confront if it had to protect its sovereignty entirely from its own resources, namely the need to develop an all-Canadian warning and interception capability sufficient to satisfy U.S. concerns that its extended northern border – and the shortest route from the Soviet Union – was adequately defended from attack by air.

Beyond the sovereignty concerns associated with being the junior partner in continental air defence, *Independence and Internationalism* drew attention to the “U.S. questioning of Canada’s claim to the Northwest Passage.” The report noted that this “was a matter of special concern during our hearing, which followed soon after the voyage of the *Polar Sea*.” A United States Coast Guard icebreaker, the *Polar Sea*, had transited the Northwest Passage in the summer of 1985. Like the *Manhattan* voyage over fifteen years earlier, the *Polar Sea* made a point of not requesting permission from Canada to transit these waters, thus upholding the American position that the Passage constituted an international strait. “No one suggested that the United States wanted the Passage for itself,” the report acknowledged, “but U.S. insistence that it was an international strait was regarded as a challenge to Canadian sovereignty.”

Chapter 10 of the report, “A Northern Dimension for Canadian Foreign Policy,” offered recommendations to the government to frame a coherent ‘Arctic policy’ to mitigate aforementioned sovereignty and defence issues. The chapter began by urging readers to re-conceptualize the Arctic — long seen as a geographic barrier preventing connections between the small and dispersed settlements within it — as a *region*, an “arctic community” comprised of the eight arctic states: Canada, Denmark (Greenland), Finland, Norway, the Soviet Union, Sweden, and the United States.

Noting that modern air travel and telecommunications were removing the physical impediments to cooperation across the Arctic, the report asserted that the remaining challenge to the formation of an Arctic regionalism was political. “The Soviet Union occupies over 50 per cent of the land mass bordering on the Arctic Ocean and it regards that part of its territory as having a special strategic importance,” it noted. “Despite the interests that should be shared by Canada and the USSR, which together occupy more than four-fifths of the arctic land mass, it has taken a long time to work out mutually acceptable exchange arrangements.” Accordingly, *Independence and Internationalism* urged the Canadian government to draw the Soviets into this nascent Arctic community bilaterally (through enhanced efforts to promote a pre-existing Arctic exchange program) and multilaterally through a concerted Canadian government program to develop cooperative arrangements with all the Arctic states.

The report expressed hope that this would help to improve the deterioration of East-West relations that threatened Canada by opening new channels of dialogue through constructive diplomacy.

*Independence and Internationalism* directly addressed the sovereignty dispute over the Northwest Passage with the United States. The Government had taken concrete steps to strengthen Canada's sovereignty position in the wake of the *Polar Sea*, "including notification that Canada was drawing straight baselines around the arctic archipelago to delineate its claim, the removal of the 1970 reservation to the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice, increased aerial surveillance, naval activities in Canada's eastern arctic waters, and construction of a class 8 polar icebreaker." While ships from other foreign governments had requested Canadian permission prior to entering the Passage, the United States' worldwide maritime and naval interests made it reluctant to concede the Passage as internal Canadian waters. The report recommended that Canada seek a bilateral deal with the US to secure the latter's recognition of the Passage as internal Canadian waters.

The report devoted significant attention to Arctic defence questions, beginning with a quick overview of Canadian defence assets stationed in the North:

Apart from a headquarters unit in Yellowknife and a few small detachments at points such as Alert and Inuvik, the only land based force in the Canadian Arctic is the Rangers. Its 640 members are drawn almost entirely from the indigenous population. They receive some training and minimal equipment. Their primary function, in the words of Mark Gordon, is to be "the eyes and ears of the Canadian armed forces in the north." Mr. Gordon went on to suggest and upgrading of the equipment and training of the Rangers, comparing them unfavourably with the Inuit National Guard in Alaska who are "much better trained and... much better equipped than the Canadian Rangers are." With Soviet territory only 50 miles away, the situation in Alaska is different. Nevertheless, the Canadian Rangers is an intelligence-gathering service, and for this reason we think that improved training and an enhanced communications capability would be desirable. The Rangers are an important expression of Canada's sovereignty over the land and waters of the Arctic and should be given additional support.

While the report stressed that these forces will not be expected to face an invasion across the Pole, new technologies were revitalizing the old Soviet bomber threat from the air:



On the air side, the development of cruise missiles, which are hard to locate and destroy once launched, has given new significance to the Soviet bomber threat. The testing of a new Soviet bomber, the Blackjack, is seen in some quarters as evidence that the Soviet Union may be placing greater reliance on the cruise missile system. The revived need for an effective bomber identification and air defence system... has been reflected in two decisions of the Canadian and U.S. governments” the 1985 decision to build the North Warning System and the March 1986 decision to renew the NORAD agreement for five years. Successive Canadian governments have taken the view that NORAD, as well as fulfilling its primary function of North American air defence, also serves to enhance Canadian sovereignty by providing a framework for co-operation with the United States.

Likewise, while sea ice prevented a naval surface threat to the Canadian Arctic – the report stated that icebreakers “have little security value” – new technologies were also causing a subsurface threat posed by Soviet submarines to rapidly develop:

The strategic importance of arctic waters has been greatly enhanced by recent developments in submarine missile technology. The increased range and accuracy of submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM) has made it possible for the USSR to station its newer SLBM submarines in the relative safety of Soviet northern coastal waters. Nonetheless, some of these submarines may be dispersed under the Soviet side of the arctic of the arctic ice cap for added protection, and there is reason to suspect – although the committee did not receive testimony confirming this assumption – that Soviet and U.S. submarines pass through the Canadian archipelago from time to time.

In dealing with this rising submarine threat, the report determined that “under present conditions, if Canada wanted action taken against intruders for any reason, it would have to call on U.S. submarines.” In examining a number of options to address this dependency, *Independence and Internationalism* first turned to the possibility of installing a passive-sonar system to be able to monitor subsurface traffic in the Canadian Arctic. While such systems had long existed, George Lindsey, Chief of Operational Research and Analysis Establishment, Department of National Defence, pointed out that “technical difficulties caused by moving ice, which creates noise and displaces the sonars” would rule out this option for the near future.

To take a more active role in a subsurface defence of the Canadian Arctic, the report subsequently turned to Canada acquiring its own submarines capable of operating

under the polar ice. “Witnesses replied that not only would this strengthen Canada’s assertion of sovereignty in the region, but it would also put the U.S. navy in a position where it would have to share knowledge with Canada of the movement of U.S. submarines in Canadian waters,” it concluded. “The result could be enhanced naval co-operation of the United States and Canada.”

In examining nuclear-powered submarines capable of under ice operations, *Independence and Internationalism* stated:

A number of factors must be considered carefully before a decision can be reached that Canada should acquire modern submarines. The cost of standard nuclear-powered submarines is very high. The committee was informed of developments in conventional propulsion systems that could permit non-nuclear-powered submarines to undertake extensive under-ice operations. Although these systems are considerably cheaper, they have not yet been proven. The cost of even conventional modern submarines would have to be assessed carefully, because, apart from acquisition costs, there are servicing, training, shore establishment and other program costs, all of which are expensive. Finally, if a decision to acquire modern submarines were to involve a transfer of some resources from Canadian forces in Europe, the government would have to take into account the reaction of Canada’s NATO allies.

Due to these high costs, *Independence and Internationalism* turned to a previous report by the Senate Committee on National Defence on maritime defence (May 1983), recommending that:

Canada proceed to acquire a fleet of modern diesel-electric submarines, pointing to their great effectiveness as weapons in anti-submarine warfare. While the report focused mainly on ice-free waters, it expressed the opinion that “adequate surveillance of the Northwest Passage could be provided, for the time being, by conventionally powered submarines stationed at the entry and exit of the passage.” **The committee recommends that the possibility of equipping the Canadian navy with diesel-electric submarines be reviewed in the context of a general examination of the country’s naval forces and, more generally, of Canada’s defence policy.**

The report added the possibility of demilitarizing the Arctic region as an option in addressing these defence concerns:

Among the witnesses who addressed arctic security questions, a few proposed that Canada press for making the Arctic Ocean a nuclear free zone. Sometimes this suggestion was associated with the idea that a legal regime should be promoted for the Arctic region similar to that established in the Antarctic under the treaty of 1959.

We compared the situations in the antarctic and arctic regions from a legal perspective. The continent of Antarctica belongs to no country. To avoid the risk of competing claims, the international community agreed to internationalize the continent a generation ago. By contrast, all the land in the arctic region is part of the territory of one state or another. Moreover, viewed from the North Pole, 44 per cent of the horizon is Russian and 8 per cent is American. The whole region is therefore a major focus of great power rivalry, whereas Antarctica is remote from the strategic confrontation. In our opinion, the situations in the two polar regions are completely different.

We recognize that a major obstacle to establishing a nuclear-free zone in the Arctic is the extent to which the superpowers have already committed nuclear forces in those waters. One-half of the Soviet submarine fleet is based in Murmansk, and Soviet SLBM submarines are now deployed in the Soviet arctic basin, where they enjoy a large measure of immunity. U.S. nuclear submarines undoubtedly also operate in increased strategic significance in recent years. In addition, since nuclear-powered submarines are for the present the only vessels capable of operating under the arctic ice, nuclear-powered submarine tankers may in the future be employed to transport oil through the Arctic. Accordingly, although we are concerned about the militarization of the arctic region and would like to see this situation reversed, declaring the Arctic Ocean a nuclear-free zone would need the active support of the Soviet Union and the United States. **We recommend that Canada, in co-operation with other arctic and nordic nations, seek the demilitarization of the arctic region through pressure on the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as through a general approach to arms control and disarmament.**

#### *Main Security-Related Recommendations from **Independence and Internationalism***

#### **Chapter Ten: A Northern Dimension for Canadian Foreign Policy**

The committee considers that an arctic exchange program with the Soviet Union is an effective way to increase Canadian knowledge of the north as well as provide a basis for improving East-West relations. We recommend that the existing exchange program be properly funded.

We recommend a concerted program to develop co-operative arrangements with all northern states. ...

### **The Question of Sovereignty**

We recommend that the government of Canada renew its efforts to secure the agreement of the United States to Canada's claim to the Northwest Passage.

Unless the United States agrees to recognize Canada's claim, the committee's preferred course of action at this time is a deliberate decision to allow time to pass rather than pressing for a decision by the International Court of Justice.

### **Defence Questions**

The committee recommends that the possibility of equipping the Canadian navy with diesel-electric submarines be reviewed in the context of a general examination of the country's naval forces and, more generally, of Canada's defence policy.

We recommend that Canada, in co-operation with other arctic and Nordic nations, seek the demilitarization of the arctic region through pressure on the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as through a general approach to arms control and disarmament.

## **3. Canada's International Relations: Government Response to Independence and Internationalism**

### **Department of External Affairs, December 1986.**

The government's official response to *Independence and Internationalism*, titled *Canada's International Relations*, affirmed the government's commitment to a northern foreign policy in the Arctic, with particular emphasis on four dominant themes:

- Affirming Canadian sovereignty;
- Modernizing Canada's northern defences;
- Preparing for commercial use of the Northwest Passage; and
- Promoting enhanced circumpolar cooperation.

In reply to *Independence and Internationalism's* overarching recommendation that Canada "adopt a coherent arctic policy" as a component of its foreign policy, *Canada's International Relations* emphasized that the above "themes are interrelated, and indeed provide essential balance and support for one another. Taken together, they provide the basis for an integrated and comprehensive northern foreign policy."

The response insisted that the government moved promptly when faced with sovereignty challenges in the North, asserting Canadian sovereignty and demonstrating Canadian occupation and control. Accordingly, the government highlighted the action plan announced by Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark in September 1985:

Following the September 1985 statement, there has been an increase in Canadian airborne patrols as well as naval activity in the eastern Arctic. Of broader significance for the defence of the entire North American continent were the decisions to modernize our radar capability in the Arctic in cooperation with the U.S.A., through the installation of the new North Warning System, the upgrading of selected airfields in the North to support fighter aircraft operations, and renewal of the NORAD agreement for a further five years. Options for acquiring submarines capable of under-ice operations to replace Canada's aging Oberon class vessels are now also among those being explored. The land forces and Canadian Rangers continue to provide a surface presence in the region. In future defence planning, choices bearing on the defence of Canada's Arctic will be considered with due regard to the growing strategic importance of the Arctic region.

Bilateral talks with the United States regarding Arctic cooperation and Northwest Passage sovereignty concerns, as well as Canadian plans to build an Arctic Class 8 icebreaker, complemented these initiatives.

In turning to the more specific recommendation of *Independence and Internationalism* to properly funding the existing exchange program with the Soviet Union, *Canada's International Relations* responded that:

The government believes that its existing Arctic Exchange Program is a unique and valuable arrangement, providing contacts between scientists of both countries, and giving Canadian scientists improved access to Soviet research and experience in the Arctic. The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs is now committed to strengthening the funding structure will be meeting early next year to review past programs and future cooperation in areas such

as economic development, protection of the environment, and exchanges among indigenous people involved in traditional pursuits.

In response to the recommendation to develop co-operative arrangements with all the northern states, the Mulroney Government stated that:

Canada will explore ways of expanding our bilateral and multilateral relations with all northern states in areas of mutual interest, including trade, security, native people, environment, economic development, education, health, science and technology. This will be effected through visas, bilateral discussions and, where necessary, formal agreements.

The government is considering possible options for expanding relations with Northern states, including a high-level delegation or symposium.

In addressing to the two sovereignty related recommendations of *Independence and Internationalism*, the Government reiterated that bilateral discussions with the United States were already taking place, though “at this stage it would be premature to comment on alternatives.”

*Canada's International Relations* finally turned to the two major Arctic defence recommendations of *Independence and Internationalism*. In response to the recommendation to acquire diesel-electric submarines, the government pledged to “carefully consider what type of new submarines will best meet the national requirements of Canada's defence policy.” In reply to the recommendation to push for the demilitarization of the Arctic, *Canada's International Relations* explained that:

The government will strive to limit excessive militarization of the Arctic in the interest of strategic stability and in the context of our associated arms control and disarmament effort, and will seek out new ways of building trust in the circumpolar North. However, given the use of the northern seas by the Soviet fleet to reach the world's oceans and the size of the forces it has stationed in the Arctic, there seems no likelihood of the Soviet Union's cooperation at this time. Accordingly, singling out the Arctic for demilitarization does not seem practicable.

## 4. Challenge and Commitment: A Defence Policy for Canada

Department of National Defence, June 1987

In 1987 Brian Mulroney's Conservative government released its defence white paper titled *Challenge and Commitment*. It had been sixteen years since the last defence White Paper had been issued, and *Challenge and Commitment* articulated a significantly different vision of the world and of Canada's defence priorities.

It began by noting that much had changed since *Defence in the 70's*. The optimism of the early 1970s and the spirit of détente had given way to deteriorating superpower relations and a renewed Cold War by the mid-1980s. *Challenge and Commitment* no longer listed sovereignty and surveillance as the Canadian Forces' principle objectives. Instead, it prioritized Canada's defence objectives as:

- 1) Strategic Deterrence
- 2) Conventional Defence
- 3) Sovereignty
- 4) Peacekeeping
- 5) Arms Control

In listing deterrence and conventional defence as its overarching objectives, *Challenge and Commitment* fit within a new atmosphere of international tension. The document called for major military procurement and a significant expansion of the Canadian Forces. Nowhere was this shift in policy more evident than in the Government's approach to the Arctic.

Throughout the 1970s the focus of the Canadian Forces in the Arctic had been on unconventional threats. *Challenge and Commitment*, building on the previous year's reports on *Independence and Internationalism* and *Canada's International Relations*, clearly identified that the principle threat to (and from) the Arctic region consisted of new Soviet submarines, bombers, and air and sub-launched cruise missiles. The White Paper stated that, in this new context, "Canadians cannot ignore that what was once a buffer [the Arctic Ocean] could become a battleground."

*Challenge and Commitment* explained that the waters of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago offered a transit route for Soviet submarines to pass from the Arctic Ocean into the Atlantic Ocean, as well as channels in which they could intercept Allied submarines passing from the Atlantic to the Arctic Ocean. "In light of these circumstances," the policy statement stressed, "the Canadian navy must be able to determine what is happening under the ice in the Canadian Arctic, and to deter hostile or potentially hostile intrusions." Admitting that Canada lacked the capability to monitor the subsurface Arctic, the white paper emphasized that "nuclear-powered

submarines (SSNs) are uniquely capable anti-submarine platforms,” well-suited to do just that:

In all three oceans, underwater surveillance is essential to monitor the activities of potentially hostile submarines. Greater emphasis will be placed on underwater detection by continuing to develop Canadian sonar systems, by acquiring array-towing vessels to provide an area surveillance capability in the northeast Pacific and northwest Atlantic, and by deploying fixed sonar systems in the Canadian Arctic.

Submarines are essential to meet current and evolving long-range ocean surveillance and control requirements in the Atlantic and Pacific as well as in the Arctic. Nuclear-powered submarines (SSNs) are uniquely capable anti-submarine platforms. In contrast to a diesel submarine, the SSN can maintain high speed for long periods. It can therefore reach its operational patrol area faster and stay there longer. The SSN can also shift more rapidly from one area to another to meet changing circumstances. Essentially, it is a vehicle of manoeuvre while the diesel submarine is one of position. Given the vast distances in the three ocean areas in which Canada requires maritime forces and the SSN's unlimited endurance and flexibility, the Government has decided to acquire a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines to enhance the overall effectiveness of the Canadian navy.

Through their mere presence, nuclear-powered submarine can deny an opponent the use of sea areas. They are the only proven vehicle today or for the foreseeable future, capable of sustained operation under the ice. A program of 10 to 12 will permit submarines to be on station on a continuing basis in the Canadian areas of responsibility in the northeast Pacific, the North Atlantic and the Canadian Arctic. There they will be employed in essentially the same role now assigned to our diesel submarines. A fleet of nuclear-powered submarines is the same way to achieve the required operational capabilities in the vast Pacific and Atlantic oceans. In addition, the SSN is the only capable to exercise surveillance and control in northern Canadian ice-covered waters. SSNs will complement aircraft, destroyers and frigates in a vivid demonstration of Canadian determination to meet challenges in all three oceans. Such a highly capable, significant and versatile force will help to restore the effectiveness of the Canadian navy and



prepare it to meet Canada's naval requirements well into the next century.

*Challenge and Commitment* next turned to surveillance and defence of Canadian airspace. "We have traditionally seen the North American continent as a single strategic entity and have co-operated with the United States through NORAD in the warning, assessment and defence against air attack," the paper explained. To support that longstanding relationship, the government outlined the North American Air Defence Modernization Program (NAADMP). At its heart, this NORAD program would replace the Distant Early Warning Line (DEW Line) with a series of minimally manned, long-range radar stations and automated, short-range radar posts to fill in radar coverage gaps along the 70<sup>th</sup> parallel. "The result will be a significant improvement in our capability to identify and intercept aircraft and cruise missiles around the periphery of North America," it stated. "Modern radar systems will detect and track intruders so our tactical fighters can identify and, if necessary, engage them." As part of the NAADMP, existing airfields at Yellowknife, Inuvik, Rankin Inlet, Kuujuaq, and Iqaluit would be upgraded into Forward Operating Locations for CF-18 fighter aircraft (based further south) that were called upon to operate in the North.

Independent of NORAD, *Challenge and Commitment* outlined the air force's increasing responsibilities to conduct aerial surveillance patrols in the Arctic. Given the huge territory involved and the relatively few aircraft available (18 Aurora long-range patrol aircraft), the white paper admitted that the CF was "only able launch a three-day patrol approximately once every three weeks." Subsequently, the paper announced that the government would purchase at least six additional long-range aircraft and would modernize its fleet of Tracker medium-range aircraft.

In examining Arctic land force responsibilities, *Challenge and Commitment* stated that:

Canada needs well-trained and well-equipped land forces, comprising both Regular and Reservists, to protect military vital points, and to deploy rapidly to deal with threats in any part of the country. Land forces now fall short of these requirements. Aside from the quick response capability of the Canadian Airborne Regiment, and the valuable but limited surveillance in the Arctic provided by the Canadian Rangers, there is insufficient trained manpower or suitable equipment earmarked specifically for these missions.

In response, we will create additional brigades, mainly from the Reserves, to improve the land force's capability to undertake operations in the defence of Canada. There will also be a minimally-trained guard force created to protect vital military locations. These formations will supplement the present Special Service Force. They will be organized for purposes of command, control and support. In addition, the Canadian Rangers will be expanded and their equipment improved.

We will also establish a northern training centre in the 1990s to ensure that forces for the defence of Canada are maintained at an appropriate level of combat readiness. We are seeking a location that comprises all the essential elements for our military purposes and for support of sea, land and air training in Arctic conditions. The selection of the site for the centre will take into account the views of native people, existing facilities and local land use.

## 5. Defence Update 1988-89

### **Department of National Defence, March 1988.**

This update to the *1987 Defence White Paper*, which had promised significant new investments in military hardware for use in the Arctic, elaborated on how National Defence intended to proceed with the procurement initiatives and the ambitious roadmap outlined the year before.

The update acknowledged improvements in East-West relations but it advocated caution, noting that the Soviet Union still maintained significant armed forces and a firm hold over Eastern Europe. Canada contributions to defending the Arctic from the Soviets remained a key element in the government's Cold War agenda. To fulfill this objective, it confirmed plans to acquire 10-12 nuclear attack submarines as part of its overall naval modernization program and of Canada's Arctic surveillance effort in specific. These vessels would allow Canada to protect its territory from potential Soviet incursions, and would ensure that Canada retained an independent voice in NATO and could demonstrate control over waters which the United States did not recognize as Canadian internal waters. The updated explained:

One of the most challenging defence initiatives, which has caught the imagination of many and attracted criticism from some, is the plan to acquire 10 to 12 nuclear-propelled submarines. These boats will begin to replace our three diesel-propelled OBERON class attack submarines in 1996. They will substantially improve the

effectiveness of our maritime forces in the Atlantic and the Pacific. In addition, they are the only vessels capable of exercising surveillance and control in the Arctic. There is simply no other way for Canada to defend its Arctic approaches. Two designs, a British and a French, will be considered. The Government intends to select one of these by the summer.

The update also highlighted the new North Warning System radars at the centre of the North American Air Defence Modernization Program (NAADMP):

In November 1987, the first five long-range radars of the North Warning System became operational in the western Arctic. Indeed, they have already been used to detect Soviet long-range bombers over the Beaufort Sea and to assist our CF-18s in making a recent interception. By the end of this year, the remaining six long-range radars in the eastern Arctic and Labrador should also be operational. Contracts worth about \$380 million have already been awarded for communications and for operation and maintenance of the North Warning System. All such contracts include provisions to establish employment and business opportunities for Canada's northern residents.

Elaborating on the five Forward Operating Locations outlined in *Challenge and Commitment* as part of the NAADMP, the update reported that the work at Rankin Inlet would be the most extensive because "the runway has to be raised, lengthened and paved. Contracts for this project will be awarded later this year."

The update also focused on the Canadian Rangers and their contribution to Arctic territorial defence. Of the 1500 Rangers, over 800 fell under the operational control of Maritime Command and fewer than 700 operated under Northern Region Headquarters. The latter component, however, received the lion's share of attention in the document, reinforcing the government's northern focus:

In Northern Region, the Rangers are organized and function in small patrols. There are 38 patrols in settlements located in Yukon, Northwest Territories, northern Manitoba, the Ungava Peninsula area of Quebec and along the east coast of Hudson Bay. Over the next five to seven years, we will expand the Northern Region Rangers to 50 patrols totalling 1,000 personnel. This year discussions will be held with community officials in Tuktoyaktuk, Paulatuk and Sachs Harbour concerning new patrols. We will provide increased resources in support personnel, equipment and funding to improve the Rangers' effectiveness.

The government also promised to build a new Northern Defence headquarters building in Yellowknife in 1990, replacing the original 1972 building that was “now too small and too old.” This new infrastructure would “further demonstrate the permanence of our military presence in northern Canada.” So too would a new “northern training centre near the eastern end of the Northwest Passage,” as noted in the White Paper:

Initial study indicates that the Nanisivik-Arctic Bay area on Baffin Island best meets our operating requirements. We are initiating discussions with the native peoples, the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, and other interested agencies. We will commission a study to determine the potential impact of our proposed activities on the people and environment of the area. No decision will be made until full and thorough discussions and studies are complete.

*Defence Update 1988-89* also emphasized the economic benefits of Arctic defence efforts for Northern communities. For example, Northern residents would receive 500 of the 900 person-years of direct employment resulting from the creation of the Northern Warning System.

## **6. Looking North: Canada's Arctic Commitment**

### **Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, January 1989.**

Although produced by the federal department of Indian and Northern Affairs, *Looking North* paid considerable attention to Arctic defence. Commenting that the defence of Canada's northern territories “is an enormous but absolutely essential undertaking in the control and development of the North,” this policy document expanded the onus of this undertaking beyond Canadian territorial defence to Canada's mutual defence objectives under NORAD and NATO.

The document furnished a brief and revealing history of Canada's Arctic defence efforts:

The Canadian military presence in the North dates back to 1898 when the Yukon Field Force was dispatched to assist in maintaining law and order during the Klondike Gold Rush. Over the years the military have been involved in a number of major undertakings which had a lasting impact on the North and its peoples. In 1923 the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals erected a

communications system throughout Yukon and the Northwest Territories, and from 1944 to 1957 the Royal Canadian Air Force, assisting Royal Canadian Engineer ground survey parties, completed aerial photography of the entire region. The Canadian/US military construction of the Northwest Highway System/Alaska Highway in 1942 was a major engineering feat, of great importance to the development of Yukon. The period of the Second World War also witnessed construction of the North's first oil pipeline (the Canol line) from Norman Wells NWT to Whitehorse Yukon. The first Canadian icebreaker capable of sustained operations in the Arctic was HMCS Labrador which carried out extensive surveys and other research work in the mid 1950s; this ship was the first icebreaker to navigate the Northwest Passage.

During the 1950s and early 1960s three major radar chains were built across Canada to provide early warning of a possible attack by Soviet bombers against targets in Canada and the U.S. One of these, the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line created a string of airstrips and communications facilities across the high Arctic along the 70th parallel. In the late 60s and early 70s, military engineers constructed major bridges and undertook airfield construction in many locations in the NWT and Yukon.

Noting that Canada's current Arctic defence challenges were framed by geography (being sandwiched between the two superpowers) and that technological advances had heightened the region's strategic importance, *Looking North* dedicated the rest of its section on defence to updating the defence modernization plans laid out in *Challenge and Commitment*.

The report made no reference to the acquisition of the 10-12 nuclear-powered submarines which were previously identified as the centre-piece of the maritime portion of this program. Instead, long-range northern patrols (NORPATs) by CP-140 Auroras, "a highly sophisticated anti-submarine aircraft," were referenced alongside a fixed sonar system which was anticipated to become operational by the mid-1990s. This system would consist of "acoustic hydrophones strategically placed on the seabed" that would "detect the transmission of sound in arctic waters by the movement and machinery operation of submarines." Taken together, these two measures would grant the Canadian navy awareness of what was happening under the ice of the Arctic and deter intruders.

The document reiterated the major air component of *Challenge and Commitment*: the North American Air Defence Modernization Plan. The North Warning System would consist of 11 long-range radars supplemented by 46 unmanned short-range radar stations across the Canadian Arctic and along the coast of Labrador. The estimated cost for these radar stations and the five Forward Operating Locations would be approximately \$1 billion, but would “provid[e] substantial economic benefits for northern businesses and residents.”

*Looking North* also noted that the army was active throughout the Canadian Arctic, undertaking regular large and small scale exercises. It highlighted that the 3,000 members of the Special Service Force had special responsibilities in the North, conducting combined force operations with the air and maritime forces. In addition:

DND has just announced its intention to establish a Northern Training Centre (NTC) to support sea, land and air training in arctic conditions. Studies are now underway to examine the feasibility of establishing the NTC at Nanisivik on Baffin Island. It could open by 1995 and would partially offset the economic loss to the local economy which will be caused by the probable closure of the Nanisivik mine at that time.

The report also emphasized the Canadian Rangers as “an important element of the Canadian military presence in the North,” composed mainly of Indians, Metis and Inuit and representing “a unique component of the Reserve Force.” The “Northern group” of Rangers were divided into 38 patrols in Yukon, NWT and in the northern portions of Manitoba and Quebec, and

demonstrate visible proof of Canadian presence in sparsely settled northern, coastal and isolated areas of Canada where regular Canadian Forces units can neither practically nor economically provide a permanent presence. Their principal role is to report suspicious or unusual activities and collect information concerning their local area to assist other elements of the Canadian Forces. They also act as guides for Canadian Forces units and instruct them in survival techniques. Over the next five years, the Northern group will be expanded to 50 patrols totalling approximately 1,000 personnel.

The document reiterated the positive benefits of Canadian Forces activities in the North for Aboriginal people, including employment benefits generated by the construction of the North Warning System and the NTC as well as participation in

the military through the Northern Native Entry Program and the Cadet program. It concluded that:

The increasing strategic importance of the North, and the need for Canada to exercise effective control over its arctic lands, air space and waters is resulting in a greater military presence in that area. This will mean increased security for all Canadians and substantial economic benefits for Northerners.

## 7. Canadian Defence Policy

### **Department of National Defence, April 1992.**

Released in April, 1992, *Canadian Defence Policy* was not an official White Paper on defence but it served a similar function to one. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Cold War rationale underpinning Canadian defence policy as articulated in *Challenge and Commitment* was no longer valid. *Canadian Defence Policy* reformulated Canadian priorities as follows:

- defence, sovereignty and civil responsibilities in Canada;
- collective defence arrangements through NATO, including our continental defence partnership with the United States;
- international peace and security through stability and peacekeeping operations, arms control verification and humanitarian assistance.

The document emphasized that these priorities “all call for the maintenance of flexible, capable armed forces” and that Canada would “have to adapt to new domestic realities and new geostrategic conditions.”

Specific to the Arctic, the military’s objectives “are to up hold Canadian sovereignty by exercising surveillance, demonstrating presence, helping civilian agencies cope with non-military contingencies,” and to advise the government when faced with “new challenges”:

These objectives will be pursued in various ways. National Defence will expand the [Canadian] Rangers. It will retain an airborne

battalion capable of reacting to short notice emergencies in remote areas. It will conduct research and develop systems of particular applicability to the North. It will coordinate its activities and plans with other departments and governments, assisting civil authorities in public welfare emergencies, including search and rescue operations. The Canadian Forces will continue to carry out surveillance of the North and its air and sea approaches. They will develop and maintain maritime, land and air plans, and carry out training exercises in the North.

A number of specific initiatives are improving the ability of the Canadian Forces to contribute to sovereignty and security in the North. The acquisition of three Arctic and Maritime Surveillance aircraft will make possible an increase in northern air surveillance patrols. The completion of the North Warning System will significantly enhance the capability of the Canadian Forces to monitor the use of Canadian airspace. The upgrading of northern airfields and the acquisition of Hercules aircraft with an air refuelling capability will enable the air force, for the first time in Canadian history, to deploy fighters any where across the Canadian North. The installation of a sub-surface acoustic detection system to monitor movements at a number of strategic choke-points in the Canadian Archipelago, and to monitor activity in the Arctic basin, will give Canada an unprecedented detection and surveillance capability in the North. Plans to develop a facility in northern Quebec will also expand the Canadian Forces' presence in the North and facilitate training in Arctic conditions. Northern Region, encompassing the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, is headquartered in Yellowknife. It will be renamed Canadian Forces Northern Area and remain under the command of the Chief of the Defence Staff.

The 1992 defence policy update also noted that Air Transport Group maintained a C-130 Hercules on two hours' standby in Edmonton. This aircraft would be used in an emergency situation, such as a major air disaster, in the North. This C-130 could also be supplemented by additional aircraft from CFB Trenton or Edmonton.

## **8. Security in a Changing World**

**Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on Canada's Defence Policy, October 1994.**



The Special Joint Committee described this report as the “first comprehensive parliamentary review of defence policy ever undertaken in Canada.” Its objective was to determine what “principles, purposes and objectives should guide our government in setting Canada’s defence policy in a rapidly changing world.” While the Committee recognized the special importance of the polar region, the Arctic remains a secondary priority in this report (which focused on the management and organization of the Canadian Forces and on parliamentary oversight).

In *Security in a Changing World*, the role of the Canadian Forces in the Arctic is cast in similar terms to *Canadian Defence Policy*, namely the preservation of Canada’s sovereignty and security: “this requires, at a minimum, a capability to survey and control Canadian airspace and waters, particularly in the Arctic,” to deter attack and “assist the government where and when required in maintaining domestic peace and security.” In achieving these objectives, the Committee recommended that Canada retain a capability for “land patrol” in the form of the Canadian Rangers:

The presence of the Canadian Rangers in the North is a clear manifestation of Canada’s sovereignty throughout the region. The Rangers are an inexpensive and important element of the Reserve Forces.

There are opportunities to make greater use of the Rangers. Means to improve their surveillance capabilities, their use in search and rescue, and their responsiveness to emergency assistance needs should be explored.

On an international level, this report recommended Canadian efforts to reducing tensions in the Arctic through a broad, multilateral program of demilitarization. While *Independence and Internationalism* (1986) had dismissed this objective as unfeasible, the Committee suggested that the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union opened the window to enhanced cooperation and disarmament. In noting that “demonstrating and protecting our sovereignty in the harsh environment of the North, important as that is, will always be difficult and expensive,” the Special Joint Committee also saw the potential for additional cost savings through multilateral cooperation, specifically in the realm of Search and Rescue (SAR). “Search and rescue is particularly challenging and expensive in the Arctic,” the report noted. “To share the burden, the Committee believes there would be real benefit in developing a multilateral, joint SAR strategy among the polar states.”

## 9. Canada's Foreign Policy: Principles and Priorities for the Future

### **Special Joint Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons Reviewing Canada's Foreign Policy, November 1994.**

This foreign policy review was undertaken against a backdrop of accelerated change at home and abroad. As expert witnesses repeatedly told the Special Joint Committee, world politics were changing radically in the 1990s. The direct military threats posed by the USSR had receded with the end of the Cold War, but stability and security remained elusive. Low-level conflicts had erupted around the world, and environmental degradation, resource depletion, economic disparity and poverty remained serious global problems. As globalization erased traditional concepts of time and space, making borders porous and encouraging continental integration, national sovereignty was reshaped and the power of national governments to control events reduced. The Committee asserted that Canada's concept of security had to be enlarged and expanded.

In light of these concerns, this report framed dominant themes of shared security, shared prosperity, and shared custody of the environment. In the 1990s, Canada's security would depend less on submarines and fighters and more on a stable international order reinforced by multilateral cooperation.

To meet these challenges, the report indicated that the Canadian Forces would have to make do with far less. The report clearly stated that "defence policy must respond to challenges at home – in particular to current fiscal circumstances... At the present time, our prosperity – and with it our quality of life – is threatened by the steady growth of public sector debt. This situation limits governmental freedom of action in responding to the needs of Canadians." Accordingly, budget control and force reductions became the dominant themes in Canadian defence policy.

In this document, the proposed Arctic subsurface surveillance system was removed from the priority list while the Northern Warning System would be maintained "at a reduced level of readiness." Arctic exercises would be scaled back, although *Canada's Foreign Policy* emphasized the need to maintain the Canadian Forces' ability to "ensure effective control over our territory" and to maintain "the capability to field a presence anywhere where Canada maintains sovereign jurisdiction." This included the ability to mount an effective response to "emerging situations in our maritime areas of jurisdiction, our airspace, or within our territory, including the North."

In place of Arctic deployments, the Committee recommended a focus on increased international cooperation and efforts to address the domestic needs of Aboriginal people in the fields of development and environmental security:

The end of the Cold war has opened up possibilities for cooperation among the countries of the Arctic region that did not previously exist. For the first time it has become possible to think in circumpolar terms, of East-West collaboration among northern countries and peoples sharing similar experiences and challenges.

The Special Joint Committee report urged that international cooperation should go beyond traditional state-to-state diplomacy and devolve to the local level. The Committee also recognized the “important preliminary work has been undertaken in recent years by the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, which has been developing cooperative programs in the areas of agriculture, health and education.” By extension, it recommended that Canada support a formal collection of Arctic states and northern Aboriginal groups within an Arctic Council. This Council would work to address serious transnational Arctic issues affecting the lives of northern residents.

## 10. 1994 White Paper on Defence

### Department of National Defence, December 1994.

The *1994 White Paper on Defence* elaborated on the changing international environment and dire financial situation facing the government at home (as framed earlier in the policy review papers *Security in a Changing World* and *Canada's Foreign Policy*). This policy statement sought to formulate a defence policy which was both “effective, realistic and affordable,” generating a “multi-purpose, combat capable armed forces able to meet the challenges to Canada's security both at home and abroad.” The White Paper articulated that the primary obligation of these forces “is to protect the country and its citizens from challenges to their security.” Specifically, this meant that the Canadian Forces would:

- (a) demonstrate, on a regular basis, the capability to monitor and control activity within Canada's territory, airspace, and maritime areas of jurisdiction;
- (b) assist, on a routine basis, other government departments in achieving various other national goals in such areas as fisheries protection, drug interdiction, and environmental protection;
- (c) be prepared to contribute humanitarian assistance and disaster relief within 24 hours, and to sustain this effort for as long as necessary;
- (d) maintain a national search and rescue capability;
- (e) maintain a capability to assist in mounting, at all times, an immediate and effective response to terrorist incidents; and,

- (f) respond to requests for Aid of the Civil Power and sustain this response for as long as necessary.

The government emphasized the need to manage these defence expectations in light of tight fiscal constraints. By the numbers, “accumulated debt of the federal and provincial governments currently stands at approximately \$750 billion; the federal government's annual debt servicing payments in 1994-95 alone will amount to \$44 billion - more than the budget deficit of \$39.7 billion and some 27% of the total federal budget.” This translated into a new funding envelope for National Defence that by the year 2000 would amount to less than 60 percent, in real terms, of that projected in *Challenge and Commitment*.

Subsequently, little of the Arctic defence commitment articulated in *Challenge and Commitment* survived in the 1994 *White Paper on Defence*. The scant mention of Northern defence focused on the Canadian Rangers:

The Government will also enhance the Canadian Rangers' capability to conduct Arctic and coastal land patrols, and will modestly increase the level of support to Cadet organizations.

The Canadian Rangers reflect an important dimension of Canada's national identity and the Government will enhance their capability to conduct Arctic and coastal land patrols.

Aside from the Rangers, Arctic defence is absent from this document.

## **11. Canada and the Circumpolar World: Meeting the Challenges of Co-operation into the Twenty-First Century**

### **House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, April 1997.**

In April 1997, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade released *Canada and the Circumpolar North*, touting “circumpolar cooperation as a Canadian foreign policy vocation.” Criticizing the federal government for “the ad hoc, scattered or isolated federal approaches that have too often characterized Ottawa's past involvement in circumpolar affairs,” the all-party committee called for a robust circumpolar engagement strategy that reflected the broad interests of Canadians (and particularly northerners). “The Arctic is increasingly significant to the long-term interests of all Canadians - economic,

political, social, and environmental,” it stated. “There is a leading role to be played by Canada in forging closer ties with other Arctic states with similar interests, and in working collaboratively to develop better international regimes for preserving the Arctic's unique ecosystems and securing rights to sustainable human development under pressures of rapid change.”

This focus on sustainable development, balancing environmental stewardship with a viable economic base for Arctic communities, and the importance of northern voices in formulating policy revealed a shift away from traditional, military-centric approaches. “In recent years, as well, the demise of Cold War rivalries has opened up unprecedented avenues for collaborative pan-Arctic endeavours,” the report stated. This created space for new ways of envisaging circumpolar cooperation:

Fortunately, the historical transition from the sovereignty and military security preoccupations of the Arctic powers during past decades, to their emerging focus on environmental matters and human-centred sustainable development has paved the way for new thinking and policy options. This transformed context extends notably to the security field itself, now redefined to encompass the security of Arctic peoples rather than just state boundaries; seeking as well to reduce threats to the Arctic environment from military activities, which still need to be taken into account. While maintaining Canada's sovereign rights within its own area of Arctic jurisdiction, the Report stresses progress towards long-term cooperative security and demilitarization of the circumpolar region.

The explicit broadening of “security” concerns to include an array of social and environmental issues reflected the government's broader agenda. The government's February 1995 foreign policy statement, *Canada in the World*, promoted the concept of “shared human security,” requiring a shift from a narrow orientation on state-to-state relationships “to one that recognises the importance of the individual and society for our shared security.” By exploring security issues beyond military options, the government would “focus on promoting international cooperation, building stability and on preventing conflict.” This explains the recommendation to seek demilitarization of the Arctic.

By emphasizing that traditional security threats should no longer dominate the Canadian agenda, the report asserted that Canada should help address “modern” security issues such as military-related environmental contamination. This dovetailed with the Committee's specific interest in integrating Russia into a system of enriched circumpolar cooperation. In a priority area explicitly related to “environmental security,” the report recommended that Canada join with the Nordic countries and

the United States to help Russia address the serious nuclear safety situation in its northern areas.

“This new agenda for security cooperation is inextricably linked to the aims of environmentally sustainable human development,” the report noted. “Meeting these challenges is essential to the long-term foundation for assuring circumpolar security, with priority being given to the well-being of Arctic peoples and to safeguarding northern habitants from intrusions which have impinged aggressively on them.” Committee chairman Bill Graham noted that “nothing illustrates more dramatically the link between domestic and foreign factors than the state of the Arctic environment. That environment, so special and so fragile, is particularly sensitive to foreign influences.”

#### **Main Security-Related Recommendations in *Canada and the Circumpolar World*:**

14: The Committee recommends that the Government reaffirm its claim to sovereignty over the waters of the Canadian Arctic archipelago. In view of the financial and technical difficulties associated with the Arctic Sub-surface Surveillance System, the Committee recommends that the Government review the need for such a system, and explore alternative technical and diplomatic mechanisms for advancing Canada's sovereignty position.

15: The Committee recommends that the Government pursue as a priority the elimination of nuclear weapons in the Arctic, as well as international agreement on the demilitarization of the region. Given that not all the Arctic states are interested in pursuing discussions of confidence-building or other regional arms control measures at the moment, the Government should also encourage and support the establishment of a “Track Two” process by which nongovernmental experts from the various states could consider such measures, and pay special attention to the integration of Russia into a broader cooperative security system for the region. The Government should raise these subjects as feasible with other Arctic states.

16: The Committee recommends that the Government continue the cleanup of abandoned military sites in the Canadian North and pursue an equitable sharing of costs with the United States. Given Canadian expertise in the clean-up of Arctic military sites, the Committee recommends that the Government offer to participate in the Arctic Military Environmental Cooperation (AMEC) program. The Government should also convene with the United States and Norway an environmental security cooperation conference for the militaries and environmental agencies of the Arctic region.

17: The Committee recommends that Canada continue to cooperate with the Russian Federation and the other Arctic states to address the serious nuclear problems in northern Russia. Despite financial constraints, Canada should also extend its cooperation to help address nuclear issues related to the Russian Northern Fleet.

## **12. Government Response to Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade Report “Canada and the Circumpolar World: Meeting the Challenges of Cooperation into the Twenty-First Century”**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, May 1998.**

In 1998 the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) issued the Government’s response to the Standing Committee’s report *Canada and the Circumpolar World*. Calling the Standing Committee’s report “a particularly timely reminder of the growing importance of Northern and circumpolar issues on Canada’s foreign policy agenda,” the response noted that the Government “takes some measure of pride in noting that its foreign and domestic policies are largely on track with the directions proposed by the Standing Committee.”

The Government largely concurred with the Standing Committee’s recommendation that Canada reaffirm its sovereignty over the Canadian Arctic archipelago and develop technical and diplomatic mechanisms to advancing this sovereignty, reiterating its policy:

to exercise Canada's full sovereignty in and over the waters of the Arctic archipelago. Canada's sovereignty has been affirmed many times over the years and it is reaffirmed on a continuing basis through the controls and other measures that Canada has put in place. As indicated in the Committee's report, regional cooperation has proved effective in furthering Canadian objectives in the Arctic. The Government has devoted considerable time and effort to develop an affordable and effective Arctic Sub-Surface Surveillance System. However, all proposals received to date have been extremely expensive and have offered only limited undersea surveillance capability. For that reason, the system will not be deployed in the near future. Nevertheless, the need for an Arctic undersea surveillance capability remains, given that effective surveillance is an important component of sovereignty. We will,

therefore, continue our efforts to find a realistic and affordable solution.

Turning to its current efforts to address Canadian Arctic sovereignty concerns, the Liberal Government stated that:

In the meantime, surveillance efforts by other means will continue to provide a measure of control in this area. For example, CP 140 AURORA Maritime Patrol Aircraft and CP 140A ARCTURUS Maritime Surveillance Aircraft conduct regular patrols to provide an Arctic presence and to monitor vessel activity in the Arctic. These patrols are complimented by Canadian Coast Guard icebreakers and radio stations. In addition, the Department of National Defence is enhancing the capabilities of the Canadian Rangers to reinforce Canadian sovereignty in our Arctic region.

The Government did not support all of the defence recommendations issued in the parliamentary committee report. Most significantly, “the Government does not support the recommendation regarding demilitarization in the circumpolar North, which contradicts long-standing Canadian policy.” In rejecting recommendation 15 of *Canada and the Circumpolar World* (the establishment of an Arctic nuclear weapons free zone, as well as an international agreement to demilitarize the Arctic), the Government explained that it had long pursued non-proliferation and the reduction (and eventual elimination) of existing nuclear weapons through other diplomatic channels, specifically its membership in NATO and NORAD, “in a manner sensitive to the broader international security context.” The response emphasized that:

Canada supports both global and regional arms control measures, as appropriate. The conclusion of the “Founding Act” between Russia and NATO and the creation of the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council (PJC), for example, have provided new possibilities for enhanced consultation and cooperation with Russia. The current PJC work plan foresees consultations at the level of ambassadors in Brussels on nuclear issues, including weapons issues, doctrine and strategy and nuclear safety.

The Government pointed out that a regional policy of demilitarization would have harmful domestic effects:

The Government does not support the demilitarization of the Arctic as this would entail an abandonment of the Canadian



military presence in the North. Our military has had a long and distinguished history of Arctic operations. The present-day communication, navigation and transportation networks are just some of the products of a military presence in the North.

Demilitarization of the Arctic would make it more difficult, and perhaps even impossible, for our military personnel to provide defence services available to Canadians in other parts of the country. The Canadian Forces, for example, would be unable to conduct operations to protect our sovereign territory (thereby contradicting the thrust of Recommendation 14) or to provide humanitarian assistance, including rescuing people from downed aircraft. (It might be added, in this context, that Canada, the United States and Russia are currently negotiating an agreement for search and rescue cooperation in the Arctic.)

Additionally, the cultural inter-play of service people serving in our North has an intangible benefit in promoting a sense of national awareness among the military and those northern residents who come in contact with the military. A military presence in the North also provides Canada's Aboriginal peoples with an opportunity to serve their country and community through participation in the Canadian Rangers.

The Government did, however, support the Standing Committee's call for involving nongovernmental experts from across the Arctic to consider regional confidence-building measures.

The Government also supported the recommendation that Canada clean-up old, abandoned military sites in the Arctic. The Government pointed out that remediation efforts were already in progress across the Canadian North and that it would continue to invest in them. The Government also indicated that the United States would foot some of the bill, primarily related to the clean-up of former DEW Line stations:

An Agreement was signed with the United States in October 1996 which provides for a significant and equitable U.S. contribution (U.S. \$100 million which will be credited to the Canadian Foreign Military Sales Trust Account, through which Canada buys equipment for Canadian Forces from the U.S., and which is identified in the October 1996 agreement as the mechanism for the payment of U.S. funds earmarked for the cleanup of former U.S.

bases in Canada) toward the environmental cleanup of four former U.S. military installations in Canada, including 21 former DEW line sites which are under the responsibility of the Department of National Defence. U.S. payments still have to be authorized by the U.S. Congress.

The Government also agreed with the recommendation that Canada seek to multilateralize environmental clean-up efforts around the circumpolar world:

The Government views the Arctic Military Environmental Cooperation (AMEC) agreement as an important step in establishing a strong link between military activities and the Arctic Environment. Preliminary contact has occurred between AMEC representatives and Department of National Defence officials. The Government is prepared to discuss participation in the AMEC program, keeping in mind the fiscal constraints within which DND and other concerned departments must currently operate.

The Government also believes that an environmental security cooperation conference for the militaries and environmental agencies of the Arctic region could play a useful role in supporting AMEC activities and further strengthening the link between military forces and the Arctic environment. To that end, the Government will explore the possibility of participating in such a conference with the United States and Norway, conditional upon the availability of funds.

The Government's response to the final security-related recommendation – that Canada continue its multilateral cooperation to assist Russia with cleaning-up its nuclear waste – was largely positive. Canada cooperated on this issue with Russia and international partners through various multilateral initiatives, including the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program, and under NATO auspices through its Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS). The Government explained that:

Canada continues to support multilateral efforts to ensure that proper radioactive waste management practices are applied globally, including within the Russian Federation. Given the former Soviet Union's inadequate management of nuclear and chemical wastes from industrial and military activities, and the associated health and environmental risks, these efforts are critical. Over the past few years, efforts have focused on the successful development of

international law and Canada has actively participated in the development of the IAEA Nuclear Safety Convention, the IAEA Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, activities of the International Maritime Organization for the Protection of Marine Waters, and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty. However, it is important to ensure the effectiveness of any Canadian assistance within the broader context of the many environmental and health challenges that Russia is facing today.

While the Standing Committee expressed specific concern for the state of the Russian Northern Fleet, urging additional Canadian funding to tackle this particular challenge, the Government was more measured in its response:

With respect to the Russian Northern Fleet, the NATO/CCMS Pilot Study has indicated that principal concerns are related to de-fuelling activities and laid-up submarines still containing nuclear fuel. The Final Report on the results of Phase II is expected to be released by NATO/CCMS in the spring of 1998. Upon review of the report, a decision will be made on any Canadian financial assistance beyond that already committed to safety initiatives related to civilian nuclear power generating stations.

### **13. Speech from the Throne to Open the Second Session of the Thirty-Sixth Parliament of Canada**

**Parliament of Canada, October 1999.**

The Liberal Government's 1999 speech from the throne made brief mention of Canada's northern policy and objectives. In keeping with the previous policy documents from the 1990s, the speech emphasized Canada's interest in environmental protection, investment and human security in the circumpolar world. Defence issues were not mentioned. Instead, the speech highlighted improved pollution standards to "better protect the health of children, seniors and residents of the north." In terms of foreign policy, the speech promised that, "to advance Canada's leadership in the Arctic region, the Government will outline a foreign policy for the North that enhances co-operation, helps protect the environment, promotes trade and investment, and supports the security of the region's people."

## 14. The Northern Dimension of Canada's Foreign Policy

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, June 2000.**

The Chrétien Government's statement on *The Northern Dimension of Canada's Foreign Policy* (NDCFP) adopted a positive framework for pursuing opportunities in the circumpolar world. "In an increasingly interdependent and globalized world community," the document began, "Canada's long-standing foreign policy tradition of promoting international co-operation in pursuit of shared objectives, through institution building and pragmatic problem solving, continues to take on greater importance. This established and successful approach has taken on, as a new guiding theme, the protection and enhancement of human security."

The policy statement observed that:

For the North, this is a time of rapid change. Canada's own northern territories, for example, are emerging from an historical tradition of being on the periphery of Canadian political life as a result of political reform, reconciliation and decentralization, and are developing new governance structures. Similarly, a circumpolar community with a wide range of (often divergent) interests is also coming into being as a coherent entity. The end of the Cold War lifted the constraints which that period imposed on co-operation among the eight Arctic countries and on interaction among the North's Indigenous peoples. Circumpolar relations, contacts and activities have now begun to flourish. This has also occurred as a consequence of growing global awareness of the vital ecological role played by the North, and as northerners from across the circumpolar region have begun to press for action to address the serious environmental, economic, social and cultural threats facing their communities.

The international context for "an enlarging circumpolar partnership" made "both the tradition of transnational co-operation and the new emphasis on human security ... particularly applicable to the shaping of the Northern Dimension of Canada's Foreign Policy." While the Arctic world had been "a front line in the Cold War," by 2000 it had "become a front line in a different way – facing the challenges and opportunities brought on by new trends and developments." The core threats confronting northern communities and ecosystems in an increasingly globalized world were transboundary. "Whereas the politics of the Cold War dictated that the Arctic region be treated as part of a broader strategy of exclusion and confrontation," the document asserted, "now the politics of globalization and power diffusion

highlight the importance of the circumpolar world as an area for inclusion and co-operation.” Managing these complex northern issues promoted “the extension of Canadian interests and values” and was closely linked with “future security and prosperity.”

The NDCFP was framed by three principles:

1. meeting our commitments and taking a leadership role;
2. establishing partnerships within and beyond government; and
3. engaging in ongoing dialogue with Canadians, especially northerners.

In keeping with this framework, the government emphasized four overarching objectives:

1. to enhance the security and prosperity of Canadians, especially northerners and Aboriginal peoples;
2. to assert and ensure the preservation of Canada's sovereignty in the North;
3. to establish the Circumpolar region as a vibrant geopolitical entity integrated into a rules-based international system; and
4. to promote the human security of northerners and the sustainable development of the Arctic.

Accordingly, the NDCFP supported activities in five key areas: strengthening the Arctic Council; establishing a University of the Arctic and a circumpolar policy research network; working with Russia to address its northern challenges; promoting sustainable economic opportunities and trade in the North and increasing northern cooperation with the European Union (EU) and circumpolar countries.

Asserting and ensuring the preservation of Canadian sovereignty was deemed compatible with multilateral cooperation. In the Liberal interpretation, constructive engagement (not confrontation) would mark the twenty-first century, and it downgraded previous military concerns. The Arctic was cast as “a natural community — bound not only by geography but also linked by common experiences and often values as well.” Furthermore, according to the NDCFP, globalization had change state sovereignty practices through a growing web of multilateral agreements, informal arrangements and institutions (such as the Arctic Council):

In the past, much of Canada's attention to northern foreign relations has focused on threats to sovereignty. Time has changed the nature and implication of those threats - co-operation has largely overshadowed boundary disputes in the North. Public concern about

sovereignty issues has waned, but Canadians still want their governments to enforce their laws and regulations concerning the management of the North.

Accordingly, “to meet new transborder challenges and further promote co-operation,” the Government emphasized the “need to intensify dialogue with existing organizations that undertake common action, such as the United Nations (UN), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).” Its view of a comprehensive Arctic foreign policy highlighted “new approaches to deal with issues such as human security and the threats to individual safety and well-being posed by an increasing number of transnational problems” that made Arctic peoples “particularly vulnerable.”

In contrast to the Mulroney Government’s *Challenge and Commitment*, which had been cast in a classic Cold War frame of East versus West, the NDCFP saw Canada as “uniquely positioned to build a strategic partnership with Russia for development of the Arctic.” To do so required concerted efforts to address socio-economic and environmental issues in the Russian North, including radioactive legacies of the Cold War that affected the entire Arctic Ocean:

According to the International Atomic Energy Agency, 150 nuclear reactors from decommissioned submarines are waiting to be dismantled in Murmansk and Arkhangelsk. The Agency report also states that more than 8500 tons of highly enriched spent fuel is waiting to be reprocessed and properly stored around the Barents Sea, and an additional 500 million cubic metres of low-level radioactive waste remains to be treated.

The NDCFP anticipated that “radioactive waste clean-up and environmental remediation are other areas in which our Russian partners would welcome Canadian expertise.”

The NDCFP also promoted complementary policy objectives such as non-proliferation and disarmament, environmental protection, and a broad international partnership to manage radioactive waste originating from military activities and to decommission Russian nuclear submarines through a “multi-year, multi-task program.” Canadian funds towards this end “would support our aims in the circumpolar region, allowing us to extend our participation in sub-regional groupings, such as the Baltic and Barents Councils and the Arctic Military Environmental Co-operation program, a joint Russian-American- Norwegian initiative aimed at addressing military-related critical environmental concerns in the Arctic.”

Environmental and human security, rather than traditional military security, framed the NDCFP. The Cabinet approved the NDCFP in September 2000, and directed the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) to allocate \$10 million over five years to facilitate its implementation.

## **15. Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World—Overview**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, April 2005.**

In 2005, Paul Martin's Liberal government released its *International Policy Statement* (IPS). This document focused on Canada's role as a contributor to global peace, security and prosperity. These objectives reflect Canada's deep involvement in the war in Afghanistan and concerns about global terrorism and the dangers posed by failed and failing states.

The IPS identified the Arctic as a priority area in light of "increased security threats, a changed distribution of global power, challenges to existing international institutions, and transformation of the global economy." The statement anticipated that the coming decades would bring major challenges to the region, requiring investments in new defence capabilities and creative diplomacy. "In addition to growing economic activity in the Arctic region," the IPS predicted, "the effects of climate change are expected to open up our Arctic waters to commercial traffic by as early as 2015."

To meet these developments, the government returned to previous policy recommendations and agendas that highlighted Canada's need to enhance monitoring and to "control events in its sovereign territory, through new funding and new tools." Specific surveillance priorities included infrared sensors for patrol aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles, and satellites.

## **16. Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World—Defence**

**Department of National Defence, April 2005.**

This policy document was the final defence paper issued by the Liberal government before its defeat in early 2006. In it the Martin Government emphasized the

Canadian military's domestic responsibilities. In the Arctic, these responsibilities include:

the work of Northern Area Headquarters in Yellowknife, the operation of the signals facility at Alert, overflights by our long-range patrol and Twin Otter aircraft, and periodic exercises. The Canadian Rangers, part-time Reservists who provide a military presence in remote, isolated and coastal communities in the North, report unusual activities or sightings, and conduct surveillance or sovereignty patrols as required.

These efforts would need to increase, the IPS noted, anticipating that the coming decades would bring major challenges to the region. The high price of oil and gas, coupled with the increasing effects of climate change, had sparked renewed global interest in the region:

The demands of sovereignty and security for the Government could become even more pressing as activity in the North continues to rise. The mining of diamonds, for example, is expanding the region's economy and spurring population growth. Air traffic over the high Arctic is increasing, and climate change could lead to more commercial vessel traffic in our northern waters. These developments will not result in the type of military threat to the North that we saw during the Cold War, but they could have long-term security implications. Although primary responsibility for dealing with issues such as sovereignty and environmental protection, organized crime, and people and drug smuggling rests with other departments, the Canadian Forces will be affected in a number of ways. There will, for example, be a greater requirement for surveillance and control, as well as for search and rescue. Adversaries could be tempted to take advantage of new opportunities unless we are prepared to deal with asymmetric threats that are staged through the North.

These eventualities would demand a greater Canadian presence to ensure that the country's laws and regulations were respected.

To achieve this increased level of control, the Government would rely on space surveillance, maritime expeditions and air force patrols using CP-140 Auroras and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). The Air Force would enhance its capabilities in the Arctic by considering basing Search and Rescue (SAR) assets in the region, replacing its Twin Otters with more modern aircraft, and providing airlift to anywhere in



Canada – including the North. The army would support sovereignty and security objectives by improving the capabilities of the Canadian Rangers and conducting more Regular Force sovereignty patrols in the Arctic.

The Arctic played a larger role in this Defence policy statement than it did in previous statements since the early 1990s – an indication how traditional sovereignty and security concerns were re-emerging as a political priority.

## **17. Managing Turmoil: The Need to Upgrade Canadian Foreign Aid and Military Strength to Deal with Massive Change: An Interim Report**

**Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, October 2006.**

The Standing Committee's interim report was submitted nine months after Stephen Harper's election as prime minister. *Managing Turmoil* began with three major assumptions regarding the Canadian Arctic:

- (a) The Canadian Arctic is vitally important to Canada's people, natural resources, sovereignty, and to our vision of what this nation is all about.
- (b) The Canadian Forces are vitally important to defending Canada's citizens, natural resources, sovereignty and to our vision of what this nation is all about.
- (c) Nonetheless, the Canadian Forces should NOT be the primary tool used by the Government of Canada to protect and defend our country's Arctic sovereignty.

In explaining the above assumptions and how the Canadian Forces fit within the Arctic, the Committee emphasized that:

- There is no serious military threat to Canada through the Arctic – its lack of people and capital assets and its remoteness from the rest of the country make the odds of it being considered a likely military target ridiculously low.
- While there are countries that challenge Canada's claims to sovereignty in its Arctic waters – most notably the United States and some European nations – these challenges are of dubious legitimacy. Canada maintains that the Northwest Passage is

national territorial waters using the criteria of drawing a straight line from one point of national territory to another. While this procedure is internationally accepted, there is a requirement for traditional use which is also validated by the traditional use of the land by the Inuit. However, Canada must continue to have a presence in the Arctic to maintain its strong position.

- The best way for Canada to maintain a presence in the Arctic is not through sending large groups of military personnel there; it is by sending icebreakers on a consistent basis to perform useful tasks. Canada's icebreaker fleet – which is in desperate need of upgrading – is in the hands of the Canadian Coast Guard, not the Canadian Navy. The skills to operate those icebreakers also rest with the Coast Guard, and to force the Navy to reacquire those skills and purchase a fleet of icebreakers would diminish its capacity and capability to carry out its other military responsibilities.
- The best way for Canada to conduct surveillance of its sovereign territories in the Arctic is via satellites. Canada's Arctic surveillance satellites come under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Space Agency, which can gather data from a number of satellites, one of which (Radarsat 1) is Canadian. It is the Committee's view that the present surveillance is unsatisfactory and feels that Canada should expand its program to five national satellites to ensure full and continuing coverage of the northwest passage. The information from existing and future satellites should be shared among those number of departments responsible for Canadian sovereignty, including the Department of National Defence.
- The Navy should be responsible for establishing monitoring devices at choke points leading into the Northwest Passage. Information from these devices should be available to the Canadian joint operation centres on each coast.

Flowing from the above assessments, the Committee issued a series of critiques and recommendations regarding the overlapping Arctic and defence planks of the Conservative election platform. First and foremost, it emphasized that the perennial question of Arctic sovereignty should not be conceptualized as a *military* problem. Instead, defence dollars "should focus on countering legitimate military threats," and legal questions surrounding sovereignty should be "resolved through negotiation with other interested parties such as the United States and the European Community." The Departments of Justice and Foreign Affairs, not National Defence, would lead such negotiations.

In the maritime sphere, the Committee highlighted that the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) – not the Canadian Navy – patrolled the Arctic littoral, and it envisaged “the Canadian Coast Guard as the principal marine sovereignty and national security presence in the North.” Accordingly, the Committee was critical of the Conservative pledge to build three armed naval icebreakers, urging that investments in future icebreaking vessels be directed towards the CCG to renew its aging fleet.

The Committee also disagreed with the Conservative Government’s pledge to build a deep water port in the Arctic. Worried that defence funding was being used to “get a double bang from the defence buck by disguising regional development projects as DND facilities,” the Committee noted that several Nunavut communities were lobbying for the new port. “If a port is to be built,” the Committee recommended, “the costs should be paid by Public Works and Government Services Canada or other government agencies that have a legitimate Arctic mandate.”

Regarding the Land Forces and possible plans to build a winter warfare school at Resolute, Nunavut, the Committee was far more supportive, explaining that while:

placing much of the onus for defending Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic with the Canadian Forces would be misguided, it does support the Government’s suggestion that a Canadian Forces northern training facility for both Canada and its allies could be useful, if it were established at a reasonable cost. This facility will provide the CF with the ability to conduct operations in the North and also to develop its winter warfare skills.

In considering the Canadian Rangers, the Committee expressed particular enthusiasm:

Canadian Rangers provide a military presence in those sparsely settled northern, coastal and isolated areas of Canada that cannot conveniently or economically be provided for by other components of the CF. The Canadian Rangers are part-time reservists in Northern regions. They are responsible for protecting Canada’s sovereignty by reporting unusual activities or sightings, collecting local data of significance to the CF, and conducting surveillance or sovereignty patrols as required. They have been particularly useful in reporting unidentified vessels operating within Canadian water off the northeast coast of Quebec in the Bay of Salluit, and observers/guides to counter illegal immigration.

The Rangers are the sole military presence over large parts of the Canadian north. The Government has committed to a robust presence in the North to maintain Canadian sovereignty in the region. Announcements of icebreakers, deep water ports, training facilities are welcome news, but the implementation of these initiatives is still a long way off. Until that time, Canadian security is in the hands of our Rangers.

There are currently 4,000 Canadian Rangers in 165 communities across Canada. This number is expected to increase to 4,800 by March 2008.

The Committee recommended that the government further expand the Canadian Rangers to 7500 – although it provided no rationale for this number.

In addressing the Canadian Air Force's ability to operate in the North, the Committee pointed out that it would be helped by the Government's acquisition of new tactical and strategic lift aircraft, making it "possible to project CF presence anywhere in the Arctic in a matter of hours." The Committee concluded that sovereignty patrol flights – which had dropped off after the *1994 Defence White Paper*– should be revitalized as a stop-gap measure until additional surveillance satellites could be launched into orbit. The Committee also urged Canada to bolster its SAR capabilities in the North by stationing additional aircraft in Yellowknife.

#### **Main Security-Related Recommendations of *Managing Turmoil*:**

24. Canada enter into an agreement with the United States to share satellite and radar coverage of continental North America to include maritime approaches in the Arctic, Pacific and Atlantic;
30. The Government commit to a further expansion of the Canadian Rangers to 7500 by 2011.
33. Assertion of sovereignty over the Arctic is a government-wide responsibility that should not rest solely upon the Canadian Forces;
34. Maritime sovereignty in the Arctic can best be effected by a revitalized Canadian Coast Guard with constabulary powers;
35. The Government should be encouraged to continue economic development in the north as an end in itself and as a means of demonstrating Canadian sovereignty, but this should be funded by government departments such as

Public Works and Government Services Canada, Industry Canada, Environment Canada, the Department of Transport and others;

36. The Government should enhance Arctic surveillance by the acquisition of more satellites for a total of 5 by the year 2009. Information obtained by these satellites should be shared among the government departments involved in Canadian sovereignty including the Department of National Defence;
37. The Navy should be responsible for establishing monitoring devices at choke points leading into the Northwest Passage. Information from these devices should be available to the Canadian joint operations centres on each coast; and
38. As part of the renewal and recapitalization of the Canadian Coast Guard, three armed icebreakers capable of operating year round in the Arctic should be constructed no later than 2012.

## **18. Prime Minister announces expansion of Canadian Forces facilities and operations in the Arctic**

**Office of the Prime Minister, August 2007.**

*“Canada’s New Government understands that the first principle of Arctic sovereignty is to use it or lose it.”*

In highlighting “why we react so strongly when other countries show disrespect for our sovereignty over the Arctic,” Prime Minister Harper proclaimed in August 2007 that Canada would face new sovereignty challenges due to the “vast storehouse of energy and mineral resources” in the region and because “climate change is increasing accessibility to its treasures.” The previous month, the Government had announced that it would procure 6-8 Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ships for the navy for an estimated \$3.1 billion, with another \$4.3 billion required for operations and maintenance over their 25-year lifespan. In his speech in Resolute Bay, Nunavut, Harper listed three measures to further “strengthen Canada’s Arctic sovereignty”:

- 1) expand the size and capabilities of the Canadian Rangers to 5,000 personnel;
- 2) establish a Canadian forces Arctic training centre; and
- 3) establish a deep-water docking and refuelling facility at Nanisivik, Nunavut.

He touted the Canadian Rangers as a “tangible expression of Canada’s ability to defend its northern lands” and “an invaluable strategic resource” thanks to their “intimate knowledge of the terrain and climate.” In addition to expanding their

numbers, he promised to upgrade their equipment. This enhanced Canadian Ranger capability would be supplemented by improved cold weather training of the Regular Forces at the proposed Arctic training centre, where the Canadian Forces would “acquire the skills needed to control and protect the Arctic archipelago,” including SAR training and sovereignty patrols.

The speech noted that establishing a deep water port in Nanisivik – a location “strategically sited inside the eastern entrance to the Northwest Passage, would extend the Navy’s operational range in the Arctic. Furthermore, the Government anticipated that building on existing facilities “will substantially reduce the cost of developing the port.” Although primarily designed to support the military, especially the navy’s Arctic-offshore patrol ships, the Prime Minister highlighted that the facility “will also have important civilian applications.”

The Prime Minister’s speech concluded that these measures would not only strengthen Canadian sovereignty in the North, but would provide better safety and security for northerners while creating jobs. “Most importantly,” he noted, “today’s announcements tell the world that Canada has a real, growing, long-term presence in the Arctic.”

## **19. Speech from the Throne to Open the Second Session of the 39th Parliament of Canada**

**Parliament of Canada, October 2007.**

The Harper Government elaborated on its Arctic plans in its 16 October 2007 Speech from the Throne. Building upon the idea that “Canada is built on a common heritage of values, which Canadians have fought and died to defend,” the Government suggested that “the Arctic is an essential part of Canada’s history. One of our Fathers of Confederation, D’Arcy McGee, spoke of Canada as a northern nation, bounded by the blue rim of the ocean. Canadians see in our North an expression of our deepest aspirations: our sense of exploration, the beauty and the bounty of our land, and our limitless potential.” This clear mobilization of identity politics was backed by the assertion that “the North needs new attention.” To meet new opportunities across the region “and new challenges from other shores,” the Government promised to bring forward “an integrated northern strategy” focused on four pillars:

- 1 Strengthening Canada’s sovereignty,
- 2 Protecting our environmental heritage,
- 3 Promoting economic and social development, and

- 4 Improving and devolving governance, so that northerners have greater control over their destinies.

Investments in defence also featured prominently in the Throne Speech, with a particular emphasis on the Arctic. “Defending our sovereignty in the North also demands that we maintain the capacity to act,” the Government proclaimed. “New arctic patrol ships and expanded aerial surveillance will guard Canada’s Far North and the Northwest Passage. As well, the size and capabilities of the Arctic Rangers [*sic*] will be expanded to better patrol our vast Arctic territory.” The statement situated the “capacity to defend Canada’s sovereignty ... at the heart of the Government’s efforts to rebuild the Canadian Forces,” and also suggested that reinvestments in military capabilities and a strong stance on sovereignty “sent a clear message to the world: Canada is back as a credible player on the international stage.”

## 20. Canada First Defence Strategy

### **Department of National Defence, May 2008.**

In May 2008 Prime Minister Harper and Minister of National Defence Peter MacKay unveiled the *Canada First Defence Strategy* (CFDS), which called for the Canadian Forces (CF) to focus upon three primary roles: the defence of Canada, the defence of North America, and the CF’s contribution to international peace and security. These general security responsibilities encompass Canadian sovereignty tasks that apply to the Arctic. Overall, the CF is expected to provide domestic defence while contributing to stronger national security and, when necessary, assisting other government departments’ activities related to security, development, and surveillance. The CFDS’s four core defence missions relevant to the Arctic are:

- Conduct daily domestic and continental operations, including in the Arctic and through NORAD;
- Support a major international event in Canada;
- Respond to a major terrorist attack; and
- Support civilian authorities during a crisis in Canada such as a natural disaster.

The document’s survey of the strategic environment noted that “Canadians live in a world characterized by volatility and unpredictability.” On the home front, the Arctic factors heavily:

In Canada's Arctic region, changing weather patterns are altering the environment, making it more accessible to sea traffic and economic activity. Retreating ice cover has opened the way for increased shipping, tourism and resource exploration, and new transportation routes are being considered, including through the Northwest Passage. While this promises substantial economic benefits for Canada, it has also brought new challenges from other shores. These changes in the Arctic could also spark an increase in illegal activity, with important implications for Canadian sovereignty and security and a potential requirement for additional military support.

First and foremost, the CFDS emphasized that "the Canadian Forces must ensure the security of our citizens and help exercise Canada's sovereignty." Canadians looked to the military in domestic crises, and the CF had to "work closely with federal government partners to ensure the constant monitoring of Canada's territory and air and maritime approaches, including in the Arctic, in order to detect threats to Canadian security as early as possible." Specific tasks include sovereignty, environmental protection, nation building, and smuggling issues. Furthermore, the CF contributes to collective defence agreements such as NATO and NORAD.

In articulating the implications for and role of the CF, the strategy falls back on the traditional language of a military "presence" necessary to uphold sovereignty:

Finally, the Canadian Forces must have the capacity to exercise control over and defend Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic. New opportunities are emerging across the region, bringing with them new challenges. As activity in northern lands and waters accelerates, the military will play an increasingly vital role in demonstrating a visible Canadian presence in this potentially resource-rich region, and in helping other government agencies such as the Coast Guard respond to any threats that may arise.

Specific procurement commitments reiterated plans to build "Arctic/offshore patrol ships to help the Forces operate in our northern waters" and maritime patrol aircraft to replace the Aurora fleet and serve as "part of a surveillance 'system of systems' that will also comprise sensors, unmanned aerial vehicles and satellites and keep Canada's maritime approaches safe and secure, including in the Arctic."

## **21. The Coast Guard in Canada's Arctic: Interim Report**

**Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, June 2008.**



The Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans' interim report was produced after ten days of preliminary evidentiary hearings with a wide range of expert witnesses (including political scientists, international lawyers, Inuit leaders, and government officials) at a time when the Government was engaged in a general push to increase its presence in the Arctic, both in anticipation of increased maritime activity and in order to secure its northern sovereignty through a stronger physical presence. Announcements the previous summer had emphasized military capability, but this report highlighted the CCG's broad and important role in the Arctic in policing fisheries, conducting hydrographic surveys, breaking ice, assisting in law enforcement and providing security.

The Committee's general conclusions highlighted that the CCG was insufficiently funded to maintain its Arctic capabilities. Most importantly, Canada's existing fleet of heavy and medium icebreakers was approaching the end of its useful life and needed replacement. It was suggested that two polar-class icebreakers would be necessary "for a circum-annual presence over the entire Canadian archipelago and the deep Arctic basin."

These icebreakers would be needed not only for icebreaking but for maintaining Canadian sovereignty and asserting Canadian jurisdiction. The Committee heard testimony that the physical presence which these vessels represent is vital to winning foreign recognition of Canada's maritime sovereignty and that the CCG was the department most able to maintain that presence. While the CCG is not a law enforcement agency, the Committee concluded that its presence remained essential in maintaining Canadian control and jurisdiction:

Witnesses pointed out that even though it does not have an enforcement mandate, the Coast Guard supports Canada's security community by assisting other government departments that do have a direct role. Coast Guard vessels conduct security surveillance and carry officers from Customs, Immigration, the RCMP, Fisheries and Transport Canada on possible interdiction missions. Many participants in our study favoured the use of multi-use icebreakers as platforms to support the full range of federal government programs in the Arctic, including support for the Canadian Forces.

In this context, the Committee suggested that the CCG should arm its vessels to expand their potential use in law enforcement and security-related duties. In this way, CCG ships could provide the presence, situational awareness, and law enforcement capability needed when regional shipping and economic activity increased. The interim report noted that:

the replacement of the rest of Canada's aging fleet with an appropriate number of Arctic class, multi-mission icebreakers operated by the Coast Guard would be a cost-effective response to Canada's surveillance and sovereignty patrol needs in the Arctic. National Defence personnel, for example, could form a detachment to be carried on-board at certain times. Vessels could be armed, but the weaponry would be under the control and management of National Defence. Other countries were said to have found effective ways of combining the two responsibilities.

Along these same lines, the Committee assumed that the CCG would have to augment its search and rescue capabilities.

The Committee concluded that, as Canada seeks to enhance its physical security and bolster its legal claim to sovereignty over the Northwest Passage, the CCG will have to have a larger presence, with the status quo "no longer a viable long-term option for Canada."

#### **Main Security-Related Recommendations in *The Coast Guard in Canada's Arctic***

2. The Committee recommends that Canada develop a much stronger year-round, national presence and enforcement capability to show the world that Canada is serious about controlling the Northwest Passage, protecting Canadian interests and its people, and making the waterway a safe and efficient shipping route.
7. The Committee recommends that Canada develop a long-term plan for the acquisition of new multi-purpose heavy icebreakers made in Canada and capable of operating year round in its Arctic Archipelago and on the continental shelf.
8. The Committee recommends the deployment of multi-mission polar icebreakers operated by the Coast Guard as a cost-effective solution to Canada's surveillance and sovereignty patrol needs in the Arctic.

## **22. Rising to the Arctic Challenge: Report on the Canadian Coast Guard**

### **Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, April 2009.**

This report examined issues relating to the federal government's evolving policy framework for managing the country's oceans. It began with a broad overview of current and anticipated issues in the Arctic: sovereignty, economic and shipping

developments, the role of the Inuit, and climate change. The overarching conclusion is the same as that reached in every other government report from this period: the Arctic is changing rapidly and Canada must enhance its Northern presence and capabilities.

Reiterating findings in its previous report, the Committee notes that the CCG will need strengthening as an increased tempo of northern activity strains its existing capabilities. This includes improved SAR capability and additional assets for oil spill response. Most important, however, the report highlighted the need for replacement icebreakers. “Canada’s icebreaking fleet ...will not be adequate once shipping increases,” it warned. Fortunately, the Government had allocated \$720 million for a new CCG icebreaker (more capable than the CCGS *Louis St-Laurent*, scheduled to be decommissioned in 2017) the previous year – but more was still needed.

The report acknowledged that Canada’s Northern Strategy adopted a “whole-of-government-approach.” This involves enhanced cooperation and information sharing between government departments and agencies, as well as with local Inuit whose presence plays a role in confirming Canadian sovereignty and because they will be more affected than other Canadians by the changing environmental and economic realities of the region. Accordingly, the Committee concluded that “Inuit must be brought into the process of developing a strategy for the North, in an active partnership that will meet their economic and social needs while also buttressing Canada’s sovereignty claim.” The Committee emphasized Inuit representation in the Canadian Rangers as a positive example of practical collaboration and cooperation:

The Canadian Rangers were said to provide a good example by providing a military presence, serving as “the eyes and ears” of the Canadian Forces in Canada’s sparsely populated northern coastal regions. Being highly skilled in the ways of the land, they contribute to the effectiveness of the CF by sharing their in-depth knowledge of the land and environment, providing training in Arctic survival skills, helping with SAR missions, reporting unusual activities or sightings, and conducting surveillance and sovereignty patrols under the command of Joint Task Force North.

In line with the whole-of-government approach, the report provided a concise overview of existing Canadian defence responsibilities and capabilities in the Arctic. The Canadian Forces retained the duties of sovereignty and aerial surveillance patrols, and was expected to provide transportation and logistic support to other government departments (such as the CCG and the RCMP) in their duties and in response to emergencies. The CF’s northern assets consisted of:

the headquarters of Joint Task Force North (JTFN) in Yellowknife, four CC-138 Twin Otter aircraft, the North Warning System (a series of unmanned radar stations), four forward operating locations capable of supporting aircraft operations, Canadian Forces Station (CFS) Alert (a signals intelligence-gathering station located on the northeast tip of Ellesmere Island, the world's northernmost permanently inhabited settlement), and approximately 1,500 Canadian Rangers (reservists).

The report concluded that these Forces, augmented by units based in southern Canada, had undertaken joint Arctic exercises in recent years with other government departments such as Public Safety, Health Canada, Canadian Border Services Agency, and local authorities.

### **Main Security-Related Recommendations:**

2: The Committee recommends that Canada develop a much stronger year-round, national presence and enforcement capability to show the world that Canada is serious about controlling the Northwest Passage, protecting Canadian interests and Canada's northern residents, and making the waterway a safe and efficient shipping route.

3: The Committee recommends that the Government of Canada consider Goose Bay, Labrador, as a sub-Arctic staging area for the coordination and support of Coast Guard, fisheries, search and rescue, surveillance and other Arctic activities.

7: The Committee recommends that the Department of National Defence make the Canadian Rangers an integral part of the Canadian reserves and provide them with marine capability.

13: The Committee recommends that Canada develop a long-term plan for the acquisition of new multi-purpose heavy icebreakers made in Canada and capable of operating year-round in its Arctic Archipelago and on the continental shelf as part of an integrated approach to vessel procurement recognizing the complementarity of Coast Guard and naval vessels.

14: The Committee recommends the deployment of multi-mission polar icebreakers operated by the Coast Guard as a cost-effective solution to Canada's surveillance and sovereignty patrol needs in the Arctic.

## 23. Government of Canada Response to the Report of the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans “Rising to the Arctic Challenge: Report on the Canadian Coast Guard”

**Department of Fisheries and Oceans, October 2009.**

The Government’s response to *Rising to the Arctic Challenge* was substantial, providing an overview of its Northern Strategy and emphasizing that the Arctic was “one of its top priorities.” Its integrated, whole-of-government approach to the Arctic was designed to:

- 1) exercise Canada’s Arctic sovereignty as international interest in the region rises;
- 2) encourage social and economic development and regulatory improvements that benefit Northerners;
- 3) adapt to climate change and ensure sensitive ecosystems are protected for future generations; and
- 4) provide Northerners with more control over their livelihood.

In expanding on these priorities, the Government reiterated that the Northwest Passage is internal Canadian waters and, subsequently, “Canada has an unfettered right to regulate these waters as it would with regard to land territory.” The Government highlights that the 1970 *Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act (AWPPA)* remains the primary piece of Canadian law regulating these waters, pointing out that the *AWPPA* was amended in 2009 to extend its application from 100 to 200 nautical miles. As a result, “the *AWPPA* applies to Canada’s internal waters and to all of Canada’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the Arctic.”

Given the focus of *Rising to the Arctic Challenge*, the Government offers a primer on the coast guard’s Arctic operations and how they support all four Northern policy priorities:

Canada’s presence and capacity in the Arctic are strengthened by CCG’s vessel activities and maritime services, many of which are delivered in partnership with, and in support of, other federal departments and agencies, academic institutions, and northern communities. For example, the CCG provides: icebreaking services; aids to navigation; assistance in re-supplying Arctic communities; marine communications and traffic services; and, support for scientific activities, such as those related to the International Polar Year (IPY) and establishing the limit of Canada’s outer continental shelf consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Law of

the Sea (UNCLOS). By undertaking these responsibilities, the CCG plays an important role in exercising Canada's sovereignty, and maintaining its security in the Arctic, which, in turn, helps safeguard Canadian values.

Indeed, the Government supported *Rising to the Arctic Challenge's* second recommendation (the development of a much stronger year-round national presence and enforcement capability in the Arctic), explaining that the CCG is one of several departments and agencies actively safeguarding Canadian values through "safety, sovereignty, security, and enforcement activities in the Arctic." To illustrate this point, the Government cited various Arctic-specific investments it pledged for the Canadian Forces, including:

- the planned acquisition of up to eight Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships (AOPS) by 2020, which are expected to be capable of operating in the first-year ice of Canada's northern waters during the navigable season, including in the "Northwest Passage," and will patrol Canada's EEZ off all three coasts;
- the establishment of an Arctic training centre in Resolute Bay to allow the CF to train in the harshest Canadian climates;
- the creation of a berthing and refuelling facility in Nanisivik that will begin operations in 2015 to allow CF and CCG ships to refuel and resupply without having to rely on tankers;
- a primary reserve company which has been established in Yellowknife and the continued training of four Arctic Response Company Groups, which will be provided with specialized equipment and training to ensure they can operate effectively in the Arctic environment; and,
- the expansion of the Canadian Rangers to 5,000 personnel by 2011-12 (in May 2009, there were approximately 4400 Rangers, and 164 patrols had been established out of a planned 172).

The Polar Epsilon project, using imagery from RADARSAT II to grant the CF a space-based surveillance capability of the Arctic, would supplement these capabilities.

The Government's response to *Rising to the Arctic Challenge's* third recommendation – regarding Goose Bay as a sub-Arctic staging area for a variety of Arctic activities – was partially supportive. The CF airbase at Goose Bay was already used for various purposes, but existing facilities made "it logical to consider what role it might play in northern or sub-arctic training, staging and operations." Regarding SAR, the response noted that:

An analysis of the historical distribution of demand, as well as an assessment of future needs, determines that the greatest number of incidents can be responded to in the least amount of time utilizing the existing CF SAR basing solution. Demonstrating the capability to deliver a CF SAR response to the farthest reaches of our National areas of responsibility, within 11 hours of being notified, assures that incidents in all regions will receive a timely response. Goose Bay remains a valuable base in supporting SAR air operations in the North, as SAR helicopters from Gander and Greenwood will often use it as a refueling point when accessing northern latitudes. CF fixed wing SAR aircraft have speed and range capabilities that allow them to access northern latitudes without refueling in transit.

The Government fully supported the report's seventh recommendation to make the Canadian Rangers an integral part of the Reserves and provide them with a marine capability. It explained that:

The Canadian Rangers are an integral part of the Canadian Reserves and already engage in coastal and inland water surveillance. In May 2008, the Prime Minister announced the CFDS, the Government's comprehensive plan to ensure the CF have the people, equipment, and support needed to meet Canada's long-term domestic and international security challenges. The CFDS outlined the importance of the CF domestic responsibilities. Consequently, the CF is committed to improving its ability to operate in remote and sparsely populated coastal regions of Canada in the exercise of Canadian sovereignty. The Canadian Rangers are a highly valued and integral part of the CF's domestic surveillance and response strategy.

... The Canadian Ranger task list includes conducting coastal and inland water surveillance. Many Canadian Ranger Patrol Group's are presently equipped with various types of marine transport to fulfill this task. This capability is supplemented by the Canadian Rangers employing their own marine vessels for which they receive reimbursement via an equipment usage rate. Canadian Rangers will continue to employ watercraft within their assigned role and mission, however there is no intention to assign any tasks to the Canadian Rangers that have a tactical military connotation or that require tactical military training, such as naval boarding. There are

also no plans at this time to equip the Canadian Rangers with any additional marine transport capabilities.

To enhance the capability of the Canadian Rangers, the CF is in the process of executing a Canadian Ranger Expansion Plan through a combination of increased recruiting of Canadian Rangers to join existing patrols and the creation of new patrols along our extended coastlines, across the Arctic and in the interior north of 50°. Through this phased plan, it is the intent of the CF to increase the strength of the Canadian Rangers to 5000 members by 2011/2012 (in May 2009, Canadian Ranger strength was approximately 4400). In conjunction with expansion, funding has been increased for the Canadian Rangers to meet their operation and training obligations. This focus includes an examination of increased mobility assets over land and water to ensure the Canadian Rangers are well prepared for domestic operations in support of the CF.

The Government partially supported the report's recommendation that Canada develop a long-term plan to build new heavy icebreakers capable of operating year-round in Arctic waters, stating that it was committed "to building and maintain an effective federal fleet of ships for maritime security and service," but that a year-round coast guard presence was neither feasible nor necessary given the lack of demand for icebreaking services during winter months. The response also noted the role of the navy's Arctic/Offshore Patrol ships (AOPS), expected to come into operation between 2015 and 2020, which would be "capable of operating in first-year ice in Canada's northern waters during the navigable season," including in the "Northwest Passage," as well as patrolling Canada's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) on all three coasts.

Closely related to the above recommendation, the Government supported the idea that the CCG deploy multi-mission icebreakers as a "cost-effective solution to Canada's surveillance and sovereignty patrols needs in the Arctic," explaining that this was already done. Applying this multi-mission philosophy to the proposed icebreaker *CCGS John G. Diefenbaker*, the Government explained that:

The Mission Profile for this new vessel specifies that this icebreaker will contribute to Canadian Arctic sovereignty requirements by: maintaining a visible presence through community visits (often associated with the delivery of medical care); providing icebreaking, logistical and platform support to other government departments (notably DND and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police [RCMP]); providing platform support to science activities; and, escorting



foreign and domestic vessels through Canadian waters. Specific details for how the icebreaker will support maritime security, national defence, or policy enforcement activities in the Arctic will be determined through future discussions with DND, the RCMP, Canada Border Services Agency, and DFAIT.

Indeed, in summing up, the Government noted that while the CCG did not have a formal enforcement role, it was the only federal “agency capable of providing on-water platform support to departments and agencies charged in challenging ice conditions.” The CCG would provide essential support to DND in allowing the AOPS to extend their “operational reach into areas of heavier ice concentration and operational season into the early Summer/late Fall,” and would continue – through their presence – to serve as “eyes on the water” and as a “collector and disseminator of maritime domain awareness.”

## **24. Notes for an Address by the Honourable Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, on the Release of the Government of Canada’s Northern Strategy**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, July 2009.**

Minister Cannon’s address offered a brief but telling overview of Canada’s Arctic policy. Most importantly, he emphasized throughout the importance of international cooperation over competition or confrontation. The Government reiterated its maritime sovereignty position - rooted in historic title - while recognizing the need for cooperation in mapping out its sovereign rights on the outer continental shelf. In part this messaging reflected Canada’s inability to undertake this work itself, yet it also reflected a deliberate attempt to frame the Arctic as a region governed by a rules-based regime and to avoid resource competition that could prove dangerous or destabilizing. The Minister therefore called for cooperation through the Arctic Council, on environmental concerns, and with respect to trade and science.

## **25. Canada’s Northern Strategy: Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future**

**Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, July 2009.**

In July 2009, the Harper Government articulated its *Northern Strategy* in a major policy document. It began with a strong appeal to identity politics and the North's central place in emerging domestic and international contexts:

Canada's far North is a fundamental part of Canada – it is part of our heritage, our future and our identity as a country. The North is undergoing rapid changes, from the impacts of climate change to the growth of Northern and Aboriginal governments and institutions. At the same time, domestic and international interest in the Arctic region is rising. This growing interest underscores the importance of Canada to exert effective leadership both at home and abroad in order to promote a prosperous and stable region responsive to Canadian interests and values.

Accordingly, the Government of Canada framed its northern vision around the ideas that:

- self-reliant individuals live in healthy, vital communities, manage their own affairs and shape their own destinies;
- the Northern tradition of respect for the land and the environment is paramount and the principles of responsible and sustainable development anchor all decision-making and action;
- strong, responsible, accountable governments work together for a vibrant, prosperous future for all – a place whose people and governments are significant contributing partners to a dynamic, secure Canadian federation; and
- we patrol and protect our territory through enhanced presence on the land, in the sea and over the skies of the Arctic.

Its integrated *Northern Strategy* emphasized four equally important and mutually reinforcing priorities:

- Exercising our Arctic Sovereignty
- Promoting Social and Economic Development
- Protecting our Environmental Heritage
- Improving and Devolving Northern Governance

In setting the strategic context, the *Northern Strategy* stated that:

International interest in the North has intensified because of the potential for resource development, the opening of new transportation routes, and the growing impacts of climate change. In September 2007, satellite imaging verified that the Northwest

Passage had less than 10 percent ice coverage, making it, by definition, "fully navigable" for several weeks. This was well ahead of most recent forecasts. Although the Northwest Passage is not expected to become a safe or reliable transportation route in the near future, reduced ice coverage and longer periods of navigability may result in an increased number of ships undertaking destination travel for tourism, natural resource exploration or development.

Rather than dwelling on competition and conflict, the document affirmed that "Canada has a strong history of working with our northern neighbours to promote Canadian interests internationally and advance our role as a responsible Arctic nation" and that "cooperation, diplomacy and international law have always been Canada's preferred approach in the Arctic." It highlighted the United States as "an exceptionally valuable partner in the Arctic," including on safety and security issues (with specific reference to search and rescue). It also emphasized opportunities for cooperation with Russia and "common interests" with European Arctic states, as well as a shared commitment to international law. Implicitly, this confirmed that bilateral and multilateral engagement remained key to stability and security in the region. In reaffirming the central roles of the Arctic Council in circumpolar dialogue and of the Law of the Sea as "an extensive legal framework" providing "a solid foundation for responsible management by the five Arctic Ocean coastal states and other users of this Ocean," the overall tenor is optimistic and positive.

The first pillar, "Exercising Our Arctic Sovereignty," dealt directly with security and safety issues. It began with the declaration that "Canada's Arctic sovereignty is longstanding, well established and based on historic title, founded in part on the presence of Inuit and other Aboriginal peoples since time immemorial." Changes in the region, however, demanded "maintaining a strong presence in the North, enhancing our stewardship of the region, defining our domain and advancing our knowledge of the region." The Canadian Forces featured prominently in plans to strengthen the country's "Arctic presence":

The Government of Canada is firmly asserting its presence in the North, ensuring we have the capability and capacity to protect and patrol the land, sea and sky in our sovereign Arctic territory. We are putting more boots on the Arctic tundra, more ships in the icy water and a better eye-in-the-sky.

Significant investments in new capabilities on the land include establishing an Army Training Centre in Resolute Bay on the shore of the Northwest Passage, and expanding and modernizing the Canadian Rangers – a Reserve Force responsible for providing military presence and surveillance and for assisting with search and

rescue in remote, isolated and coastal communities of Northern Canada.

In the sea we are establishing a deep-water berthing and fueling facility in Nanisivik and procuring a new polar icebreaker, the largest and most powerful icebreaker ever in the Canadian Coast Guard fleet. This vessel will be named in honour of the late Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker. We are further bolstering Canada's Arctic-capable fleet by investing in new patrol ships capable of sustained operations in first-year ice. These ships will be able to patrol the length of the Northwest Passage during the navigable season and its approaches year-round. Polar Epsilon, National Defence's space-based wide area surveillance and support program, will use RADARSAT II to provide the Canadian Forces with greater capacity to monitor Canada and its Maritime Boundary.

The Canadian Forces, in cooperation with other federal departments and agencies, will continue to undertake operations in the North, such as Operation NANOOK, conduct regular patrols for surveillance and security purposes, monitor and control Northern airspace as part of North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), and maintain the signals intelligence receiving facility at CFS Alert, the most northern permanently inhabited settlement in the world. Defence Research and Development Canada will continue to explore options for cost-effective Arctic monitoring systems, building on the current Northern Watch Technology Demonstration Project.

In short, the *Northern Strategy* reinforced a message of partnership: between the federal government and northern Canadians, and between Canada and its circumpolar neighbours. Critics suggested that the strategy simply reiterated previous government commitments, while supporters suggested that the official document outlined a more coherent framework that shifted emphasis away from narrow security concerns and sovereignty loss. Although it trumpeted the Government's commitment to "putting more boots on the Arctic tundra, more ships in the icy water and a better eye-in-the-sky," the *Northern Strategy* also emphasized that Canada's disagreements with its neighbours were "well-managed and pose no sovereignty or defence challenges for Canada." This reflected a change in tone from previous political messaging, and the "use it or lose it" phrase that had been frequently mobilized to justify the Government's agenda was absent from *Canada's Northern Strategy*.

## 26. Controlling Canada's Arctic Waters: Role of the Canadian Coast Guard

### **Report of the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, December 2009.**

This report represented the final result of the Committee's investigation into the present and future role of the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) in the Arctic. It outlined the agency's duties and requirements, examined current and anticipated developments in the region, and issued recommendations regarding what the CCG will need to cope with these anticipated developments. As with its previous reports, the Committee touched upon the plans and activities of the Canadian Forces in the North alongside those of the CCG.

Once again, the Committee touted the CCG as Canada's most capable and indispensable agency in the northern maritime domain:

Research on fisheries, oceanography, seabed mapping and marine climate depends on its vessels. Vessels and commerce depend on the agency for marine communications and traffic management. The Coast Guard supplies isolated northern communities, breaks ice for northern commercial shipping, maintains navigational aids in northern seaways, and provides for marine pollution response. Everyone relies on the Coast Guard for marine search and rescue. The Coast Guard provides most of Canada's maritime awareness picture in the Arctic.

For the most part the Committee's overall conclusions echoed other policy reports issued around this time, anticipating that shipping and commercial activity in the Arctic would increase in the near future, with the CCG playing an essential role in monitoring, assisting and controlling this activity – but that the Coast Guard currently lacked the resources to carry out its future duties effectively.

The core recommendation urged the Government to “recapitalize” the Coast Guard fleet. This would require new, polar class icebreakers, capable of operating on Canada's northern continental shelf, to replace the CCG's aging ships. It would also need additional resources to enhance its SAR capabilities, accelerate its hydrographic mapping efforts, and improve training for oil spill response. The Committee again recommended that, to better assert government control in the region, the CCG should be given a law enforcement role (or at least greater capabilities to assist law-enforcement agencies until the Navy AOPS were operational).

In addition to patrolling the Northwest Passage and Canada's Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), *Controlling Canada's Arctic Waters* clarified that the navy's Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ships were "expected to enhance the Navy's ability to support other government departments and agencies in responding to illegal fishing, search and rescue, illegal immigration, environmental protection, disaster response, criminal activities and drug smuggling—non-military threats." These ships would be "armed with 25-mm cannons and equipped with landing pads for Cyclone helicopters, have a range of 6,000 nautical miles, be able to sustain operations in northern waters for up to four months, and have an ice capability exclusively for their own mobility (i.e., they will not be providing icebreaking services to others)." The AOPS project manager predicted that, due to costs, the navy was more likely to get six vessels than eight, and that there were not expected to become operational until 2015-2020.

The Committee provided updates on other CF Arctic programs. Plans for the Navy's deep-water port at Nanisivik had been effectively reduced, and was now re-designated a "berthing and refuelling facility." Operation NANOOK, the annual, "joint inter-agency sovereignty operations focused on interoperability, command and control and cooperation" in the Eastern Arctic had expanded in scope, with participation by the American and Danish militaries. The report also mentioned the Northern Watch Technology Demonstration Project, led by Defence Research and Development Canada, comprising "a series of trials to develop combinations of assorted surface, underwater and space-based sensors and systems at critical choke points in the Northwest Passage, which may at some point provide additional monitoring capability in the Canadian Arctic."

### **Main Security-Related Recommendations in *Controlling Canada's Arctic Waters***

2. The Committee recommends that, as a precautionary measure at least in the interim period before the new naval Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ships (AOPS) are built and deployed, the Government of Canada:
  - a) arm Canada's Coast Guard icebreakers with deck weaponry capable of giving firm notice, if necessary, to unauthorized foreign vessels for use in the Northwest Passage; and
  - b) provide on-board personnel from appropriate government agencies that have the authority to enforce Canadian domestic laws with small arms.
5. The Committee recommends that until the CP-140 Auroras are replaced by new patrol aircraft in 2020, the Government of Canada consider expanding maritime air surveillance in Canada's North either by increasing Canadian Forces capability or contracting specially equipped aircraft from the private sector.

6. The Committee recommends that the “Arctic Vision” include the notion of the Coast Guard, along with the Canadian Forces, having a year-round northern operation administered in the North to demonstrate that Canada is serious about protecting Canadian interests and the interests of Canada’s northern residents.
7. The Committee recommends that Canada develop a long-term plan and provide the funding necessary for the acquisition of a suitable number of new multi-purpose polar icebreakers capable of operating year-round in its Arctic Archipelago and on the continental shelf.

## **27. Government of Canada Response to the Report of the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans “Controlling Canada’s Arctic Waters: Role of the Canadian Coast Guard”**

**Department of Fisheries and Oceans, October 2010.**

The Government’s overall response to *Controlling Canada’s Arctic Waters: Role of the Canadian Coast Guard* – the third and final report by the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans regarding the CCG in the Arctic – was ambivalent. While the Government agreed with the general thrust of the Committee’s report that Canada must exercise a strong presence in the Arctic, it “does not support or only partially supports the majority of the Senate SCOFO recommendations as it is able to leverage and use actions already underway as part of its Northern Strategy to respond to many of the Committee’s recommendations.”

The Government partially supported the second recommendation that Canada arm CCG icebreakers with deck guns and place law enforcement personnel aboard as an interim measure until the Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ships (AOPS) are ready for service. The Government promised to review the CCG’s enforcement role, “including the possibility of arming CCG icebreakers,” but emphasized that:

The CCG has a long and established history of providing services to support DFO enforcement operations as well as to support other government departments and agencies with an enforcement role - including DND, the RCMP, and the Canada Border Services Agency - in all Canadian waters, with the Arctic as no exception. The CCG has historically provided resources as required and will continue to work in partnership with other government departments and agencies to ensure their ability to fulfill their mandates under existing legislation.

The RCMP will continue to leverage current capability with other stakeholders, such as the CCG, as required. Looking forward, and with a view of building on existing cooperative partnerships such as the Marine Security Enforcement Team (MSET) program currently operating in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway region, the RCMP and CCG will continue to work together on a case-by-case basis to respond to national security threats in Arctic waters.

The Government disagreed with the Committee's fifth recommendation on Arctic aerial surveillance. While concurring with the Committee's view about the importance of Arctic surveillance, the official response insisted that "the vastness of Canada's North demands a multi-layered approach to surveillance that includes not only aircraft, but also ships and both ground and space-based sensors... Combined, these systems offer the most effective and efficient means of surveying the North as they can cover an extremely large area and operate in all types of weather conditions, day or night."

While the Government did not mention contracting private industry aircraft for Arctic sovereignty and security patrols, it elaborated on its multi-layered approach which includes a maritime component delivered by the AOPS; space-based surveillance using RADARSAT-2; additional aerial surveillance provided by Transport Canada DASH-7 flights; and terrestrial Canadian Ranger sovereignty patrols. "The recent CCG-led implementation of satellite-based Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT)" also supplemented these activities and "has expanded Canada's surveillance capacity in Arctic waters up to 85 degrees latitude and out to 2000 nautical miles for vessels intending to enter Canadian ports." The Government also highlighted annual military exercises conducted in the Arctic, particularly Operation NANOOK, which give "partners from other departments and agencies a chance to highlight interoperability and cooperation in the North by conducting surveillance and presence patrols."

The Government also reiterated its commitment to procuring maritime patrol aircraft to replace the Aurora fleet:

The new aircraft will become part of a "system of systems", which will also comprise sensors, unmanned aerial vehicles and satellites, to keep Canada's maritime approaches safe and secure, including the Arctic. In the interim, the CP-140 Auroras are being modernized to improve their capabilities. Given the importance of their role in protecting Canada's North, the Aurora aircraft will be equipped with a state-of-the-art sensor package that will



significantly enhance their maritime and overland surveillance capability.

The Government response partially supported the recommendation that its “Arctic Vision” should include year-round northern operations by the CCG and CF as a demonstration of Canada’s will to protect its northern interests. It noted that CF already maintained a year-round presence in the North, including Joint Task Force North Headquarters in Yellowknife (responsible for the North under Canada Command), Canadian Forces Station Alert, and 1650 Canadian Rangers in communities across the territorial north. Although not a response to the Committee’s recommendations, the Government also pointed out that the RCMP maintained a year-round Arctic presence in the Arctic, with over sixty detachments comprising three northern divisions. This RCMP presence served “a combined population of approximately 101,000 in the North, with over 400 Regular Members, 50 Civilian Members, 60 Public Service staff and 4 special constables.”

Regarding the role of the CCG in the Arctic more specifically, the response explained that:

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and the CCG are developing a long-term strategic Arctic Vision that will provide an integrated approach for DFO and CCG activities in the North over the short, medium, and long-term. This vision will help to guide the specific activities of the department and the CCG, while the Government of Canada’s Northern Strategy continues to provide a framework for the integrated work of departments and agencies across government.

DFO and the CCG recognize that a key component of protecting Canada’s interests in the North is a strong, coordinated Government of Canada presence. Having operated extensively in the Arctic, the department understands the challenges associated with establishing a permanent, year-round presence in the region, including the vast geography, short open-water season, harsh environment and resulting high operating costs.

Although the pace of change in Canada’s North is rapid, the amount of commercial marine traffic in the near future is likely to remain low relative to other regions, and will include, to a large extent, Government vessels. This provides the Government of Canada with an opportunity to put regulatory frameworks and infrastructure in place to ensure vulnerable ecosystems are protected while enabling responsible development.

## 28. Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy: Exercising Sovereignty and Promoting Canada's Northern Strategy Abroad

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, August 2010.**

In August 2010, Minister of Foreign Affairs Lawrence Cannon issued a formal statement on Canada's Arctic foreign policy, providing the "international lens" of Canada's *Northern Strategy* across its four pillars. "The Arctic is fundamental to Canada's national identity," it began. By extension, the Government reiterated that "exercising sovereignty over Canada's North, as over the rest of Canada, is our number one Arctic foreign policy priority."

Reiterating emerging opportunities and challenges as the geopolitical significance of the Arctic continued to grow, the statement noted that increased accessibility would, over time, draw more traffic and people to the region. "While mostly positive," it stressed, "this access may also contribute to an increase in environmental threats, search and rescue incidents, civil emergencies and potential illegal activities." The statement articulated an overarching vision for the Arctic as "a stable, rules-based region with clearly defined boundaries, dynamic economic growth and trade, vibrant Northern communities, and healthy and productive ecosystems."

The absence of defence initiatives in the list of Canada's areas of focus for international efforts was revealing. Nevertheless, the statement reiterated that "in our Arctic foreign policy, the first and most important pillar towards recognizing the potential of Canada's Arctic is the exercise of our sovereignty over the Far North." Insisting that sovereignty "is the foundation for realizing the full potential of Canada's North," the policy document confirmed that "this foundation is solid: Canada's Arctic sovereignty is long-standing, well established and based on historic title, founded in part on the presence of Inuit and other indigenous peoples since time immemorial." That stated, the statement proclaimed that the Government was putting its "full resources ... behind the exercise of our sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction in the Arctic. We are taking a whole-of-government approach":

Canada exercises its sovereignty daily through good governance and responsible stewardship. It does so through the broad range of actions it undertakes as a government—whether related to social and economic development, Arctic science and research, environmental protection, the operations of the Canadian Forces or the activities of the Canadian Coast Guard and Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

We exercise our sovereignty in the Arctic through our laws and regulations, as we do throughout Canada.

The statement recounted the initiatives that the Government had announced since 2007 “to enhance our capacity in the North and to exercise, responsibly, our sovereignty there. These include significant new commitments to allow Canada to better monitor, protect and patrol its Arctic land, sea and sky and to keep pace with changes in the region.” Although discussion of specific projects began with the construction of the new polar icebreaker (“the largest and most powerful icebreaker ever in the Canadian Coast Guard fleet”), most related to national defence:

The Canada First Defence Strategy will give the Canadian Forces the tools it needs to provide an increased presence in the Arctic. Through this strategy, Canada is investing in new patrol ships that will be capable of sustained operation in first-year ice to ensure we can closely monitor our waters as they gradually open up and maritime activity increases. In order to support these and other Government of Canada vessels operating in the North, Canada is investing in a berthing and refuelling facility in Nanisivik.

Canada is also expanding the size and capabilities of the Canadian Rangers, drawn primarily from indigenous communities, that provide a military presence and Canada’s “eyes and ears” in remote parts of Canada. A new Canadian Forces Arctic Training Centre is also being established in Resolute Bay.

Canada and the United States work together to better monitor and control Northern airspace through our cooperation in NORAD, the North American Aerospace Defence Command. Canadian Forces will also take advantage of new technologies to enhance surveillance capacity of our territory and its approaches.

Canadian Forces Operation Nanook, an annual sovereignty operation that takes place in Canada’s Arctic, shows the government’s commitment to protecting and demonstrating control over the air, land and sea within our jurisdiction. In 2010, Operation Nanook will include collaboration with the United States and Denmark in order to increase interoperability and exercise a collective response to emerging cross-border challenges.

The document suggested that “this increased Canadian capacity demonstrates Canada’s presence in the region and will also ensure that we are better prepared to respond to unforeseen events.”

The *Statement on Canada’s Arctic Foreign Policy* stressed that Canada’s future “international agenda will complement these efforts further,” but the emphasis from this point onward was clearly non-military focused: “seeking to resolve boundary issues; securing international recognition for the full extent of Canada’s extended continental shelf ...; and addressing Arctic governance and related emerging issues, such as public safety.” The Government insisted that outstanding disagreements on boundaries “are well managed, neither posing defence challenges for Canada nor diminishing Canada’s ability to collaborate and cooperate with its Arctic neighbours.” Both boundary issues and potential continental shelf overlaps with neighbouring states would be “resolved through peaceful means in accordance with international law.” The statement explained that:

Canada’s sovereignty agenda will also address Arctic governance and related emerging issues, such as public safety. Increasingly, the world is turning its attention northward, with many players far removed from the region itself seeking a role and in some cases calling into question the governance of the Arctic. While many of these players could have a contribution to make in the development of the North, Canada does not accept the premise that the Arctic requires a fundamentally new governance structure or legal framework. Nor does Canada accept that the Arctic nation states are unable to appropriately manage the North as it undergoes fundamental change.

Canada would work to resolve issues such as emergency response, search and rescue, organized crime, and illegal trafficking in drugs and people “in concert with other Arctic nations through the Arctic Council (the primary forum for collaboration among the eight Arctic states), with the five Arctic Ocean coastal states on issues of particular relevance to the Arctic Ocean, and bilaterally with key Arctic partners, particularly the United States.” Nonetheless, the statement reasserted that “protecting national sovereignty, and the integrity of our borders, is the first and foremost responsibility of a national government,” and that the Harper Government was resolved to do just that.

In conclusion, the foreign policy statement insisted that “the key foundation for any collaboration will be acceptance of and respect for the perspectives and knowledge of Northerners and Arctic states’ sovereignty.” The Government promised to “show leadership in demonstrating responsible stewardship while we build a region

responsive to Canadian interests and values, secure in the knowledge that the North is our home and our destiny.” It ended with a strong message promising to stand up for Canadian interests while fostering positive relationships with circumpolar neighbours where possible:

Through our Arctic foreign policy, we are also sending a clear message: Canada is in control of its Arctic lands and waters and takes its stewardship role and responsibilities seriously. Canada continues to stand up for its interests in the Arctic. When positions or actions are taken by others that affect our national interests, undermine the cooperative relationships we have built, or demonstrate a lack of sensitivity to the interests or perspectives of Arctic peoples or states, we respond.

Cooperation, diplomacy and respect for international law have always been Canada’s preferred approach in the Arctic. At the same time, we will never waver in our commitment to protect our North.

## 29. Canada's Arctic Sovereignty

### **Report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, June 2010.**

A glance at the map of the northern hemisphere shows that the Arctic Ocean is in effect a huge Mediterranean. It lies between its surrounding continents somewhat as the Mediterranean lies between Europe and Africa. It has, in the past, been looked upon as an impassable Mediterranean. In the near future, it will not only become passable but will become a favourite route ... much shorter than any other air route that lies over the oceans that separate the present day centres of population. – Arctic explorer Vilhjalmur Stefansson (1922).

This prophetic quote, followed by Cold War defence strategist Robert Sutherland’s predictions dismissing socio-economic prospects in the Arctic while highlighting the region’s geostrategic importance, set the stage for the standing committee’s report. It suggested a “new reality” featuring elements of both appraisals: that the opening of the Arctic due to climate change brings the potential for both new economic opportunities and new tensions with non-Arctic states increasingly taking part in Arctic affairs:

It was because of such concerns that your Committee decided to undertake a study of Arctic Sovereignty and how changes in the region might impact the Canadian Forces (CF). Needless to say, the primary function of the CF is to protect Canada's territorial sovereignty. This entails the capability to survey and control Canadian territory, waters and airspace; the capability to deter attacks on Canadian territory, waters and airspace; and the capability to assist governments in Canada, when required in maintaining domestic peace and security.

The Committee noted two schools of thought regarding Canadian Arctic sovereignty: one suggesting that new international interest in the region posed little to no threat to Canadian sovereignty and that "future challenges will not be as dire as some claim"; the other portending that increasing interest and growing military capabilities to act in the region requires the Canadian government "to take a more robust approach to enforce its sovereignty and security in the Arctic."

In exploring these two schools of thought, Canada's Arctic Sovereignty synthesized testimonies from several of Canada's leading political scientists, historians, policy experts and legal authorities on the state of the Arctic and its future direction, yielding the following "common understandings" on these issues:

1. Canada's legal title to its Arctic territories is well established.
2. There is no immediate military threat to Canadian territories either in or "through" the Arctic.
3. The challenges facing the Arctic are not of the traditional military type. Rather, it is the effect of climate change, increased "traffic", resource exploitation, and the lack of sustained political and diplomatic attention that provide the backdrop for security challenges.
4. The [Canadian Forces] can and will defend all of Canada, including our Arctic territories.
5. Given the increased interest and anticipated activity in the Arctic, Canada needs to increase its "presence" in the region.
6. Along with an enhanced presence, it is also imperative that we have the ability to survey, and be aware, of what transpires "on", "underneath" and "above" our Arctic domain.
7. Given the future increase in traffic and activity that we can expect to take place in the Arctic, it is imperative that we have appropriate search and rescue (SAR) capabilities.
8. It is especially important that Canada's Indigenous peoples be an integral part of any decision making process affecting policies

- regarding the Arctic. In line with this, we believe it important that outstanding land claims in the region be settled quickly.
9. In order to be able to effectively deal with emerging challenges, it is important that Canada has in place an integrated Arctic strategy with a clear decision structure; one that includes the participation of relevant stake holders, especially those who have long inhabited the region.
  10. The basic principles informing that strategy should be those of multilateralism and stewardship. Such an approach will allow Canada to play to its historic and diplomatic strengths, and to take a leadership role in helping design those multi-lateral norms and regulations necessary for the harmonious and mutually beneficial development of the Arctic region. An initial step would be to expand and strengthen the Arctic Council and to widen its mandate.
  11. We are concerned that the government's timeframe for the purchase of key assets for enhancing our presence in the Arctic, such as the Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships, the John G. Diefenbaker icebreaker, and the Joint Support Ships is falling significantly behind schedule.

In its report, the Committee summarized testimony from political scientist Franklyn Griffiths suggesting:

that the threats to Canada's sovereignty have been greatly exaggerated, including concerns over the Northwest Passage. There is no real need to "... talk of asserting sovereignty." According to Griffiths, part of the reason for concern is simply the fact that the media "... have been listening to the purveyors of polar peril." Matters become exaggerated and are talked about because they "... play on the Canadian identity." However, to do so only brings attention to presumed problems that do not really exist or it simply serves to heighten minor irritants that could easily be dealt with amicably.

Griffiths also went on to argue that there is no conventional military threat to the Canadian Arctic. Rather than sovereignty threats we face what might best be termed policing threats. These do not require combat capability. What they do require is a constabulary force capable of policing our waters, responding to emergencies and providing SAR. The CF already provide support in these areas and should continue to do so.

The Committee noted that the Canadian Coast Guard was the primary instrument through which Canada asserted its “effective presence” in the Arctic, but it reiterated international lawyer Suzanne Lalonde’s assessment that the Canadian Forces could best exert “control” over the waters of the Northwest Passage. In her view, maritime domain awareness dovetailed with Canada’s legal sovereignty position:

An interdiction capability is important because “... any unauthorized transit by a foreign vessel, whether surface or underwater, will severely undermine Canada’s legal case.” A public violation of Canada’s sovereignty would call into question our ability to effectively govern those waters; “... the ability to do so is an important and essential component of our historic waters claim.” Lalonde concluded by arguing that in order to protect its legal position, the Canadian government “... would have to react vis-à-vis any ship or submarine that had entered the archipelago unannounced or uninvited.” Thus, the CF should be provided with the capability to interdict a foreign ship navigating through the Northwest Passage without Canadian permission. While diplomatic solutions will always be preferred, there may be instances when a different approach is required.

The report also cited political scientist Rob Huebert frequently, and his dominant message that:

Opportunities also come with problems. As “... the world starts to come to the Arctic, the issue of how we actually enforce security and sovereignty in this region becomes critical.” According to Huebert, our tendency to believe that the geopolitical situation, with respect to the Arctic, will continue to remain stable is one we need to carefully re-examine. If one takes a close look at the policies and the current armament programs of our circumpolar neighbours, we find that there have been a growing number of policy statements, since 2004, from both Arctic and non-Arctic states as they begin to revisit their own Arctic security policies. “Norway, Russia and the United States are increasingly taking a unilateral approach to how they perceive their Arctic security.”

The report noted similarities between Canada’s approach to Arctic security, articulated in the 2009 Canada’s Northern Strategy, with that of its circumpolar neighbours: embracing the principles of multilateralism and cooperation while developing a military capability to protect northern interests. Indeed, the Committee



cited the acquisition of the Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ships as “one of the few instances where the CF have acquired a new capability in the post-Cold War era.”

The Committee also agreed with testimonies suggesting that Canada needed to develop a long-term, sustainable strategy for the Arctic, that coordinated investments in military infrastructure with community development needs to address socio-economic issues alongside those of national defence. “In the long term it is important that the Arctic not again recede from our collective consciousness,” the report concluded. “Our policies need to be more than short term solutions to present exigencies. They need to be based on a consistent sense of stewardship; one shared by all Canadians. At the same time, we need to be able to ‘protect’ and ‘control’ what is ours.”

### **Main Security-Related Recommendations in *Canada’s Arctic Sovereignty*.**

While we have concluded that there is no immediate military threat to our Arctic territories, we nonetheless recognize the need for a robust policing role in the event of illegal incursions. We therefore recommend:

That the government expedite the procurement of the Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships.

We also believe that a significant presence in the Arctic requires significant ice-breaking capability. We therefore recommend:

That the government expedite the building of the promised John G. Diefenbaker icebreaker to ensure delivery within 15 years.

Given the essential role of the Canadian Coast Guard in the Arctic, we further recommend:

That the government allocate the necessary resources to enable the Canadian Coast Guard to effectively execute its mandate in the Arctic.

Knowing what takes place in our territories requires a sophisticated space based surveillance capability; one that is controlled and implemented in Canada by Canadians. We therefore recommend:

That the government fully fund the Radarsat Constellation Mission.

Given that we need to prevent the militarization of the Arctic, we recommend:

That the government vigorously use its influence in relevant multi-lateral and bi-lateral fora in order to prevent the militarization of the Arctic.

### **30. Government Response to the Third Report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, “Canada’s Arctic Sovereignty”**

**Department of National Defence, October 2010.**

The Government’s official response to the June 2010 report *Canada’s Arctic Sovereignty* provided insight into its Arctic policy and intentions. The Government agreed (in whole or in part) with most of the Committee’s 17 recommendations, but disagreed with its conclusions on the establishment of a Cabinet Committee on Arctic Affairs and of an Arctic ambassador (with both considered redundant to existing responsibilities).

The Government also rejected the Committee’s recommendation that it should work with other Arctic states “in the development of international regimes governing activities in the Arctic, outside of national sovereign territories.” Again, it considered such efforts redundant given the roles and responsibilities of existing organizations and treaties, such as the Arctic Council, UNCLOS III, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

On the subject of the Arctic Council, the Government rejected the Committee’s eighth recommendation that security be introduced as a subject of discussion, determining this an area best left to the Arctic nations themselves. After all, a state’s ability to ensure its own security is one of the most obvious manifestations of sovereignty.

The Government also disagreed with the Committee’s recommendation to expedite negotiations with the United States over the disputed area of continental shelf between the Yukon and Alaska. Even in this priority area, the Government indicated that there was no rush as the two countries were working together to map the area and as “the issue has been well managed by Canada and the US” it “will be resolved on its own merits when both parties are ready to do so.”

### **31. Sovereignty & Security in Canada’s Arctic, Interim Report**

**Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, March 2011.**

The present Canadian government has taken a particular interest in the Canadian Arctic that reflects the region's growing importance in world affairs, and in our national life. The Canada First Defence Strategy, for instance, speaks to defence of the Arctic and includes plans for six to eight Arctic/offshore patrol ships. Canada's Northern Strategy outlines measures for exercising sovereignty in the Arctic—including design and construction of a new Polar Class icebreaker, and expansion of Canadian Forces facilities and capabilities. More recently, the government outlined a Canadian Arctic Foreign Policy. And the prime minister has taken a great personal interest, visiting the Arctic for several days at a time each year since taking office. As Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon told the Committee, "The importance of the Arctic and Canada's interest in the North have never been greater.

This Standing Committee report focused on existing and emerging security threats in the Arctic region and Canada's ability to meet them. It assumed a continued reduction in the Arctic sea-ice, increasing foreign interest in the region, and more resource and shipping activity in the near future. Within this context, the Committee focused on Canada's ability to keep pace with rapid changes, to understand and adapt to any militarization of the region which might stem from its growing geopolitical importance, to prepare for the non-military security threats, and to ensure that the Canadian Forces have the situational awareness needed to keep tabs on anticipated developments.

The report offered a general overview of the Canadian military's organizational structure, capabilities and tasks in the Arctic and detailed the new equipment and capabilities being developed at the time. Most discussion centred on improving the CF's situational awareness of the Canadian Arctic. By the numbers, the report noted, this area is "about four million square kilometres, or 40 percent of Canada's land mass and 75% of its coastline. This includes the 94 major islands and 36,469 minor islands of the Arctic Archipelago."

The Standing Committee referenced specific programs to enhance the situational awareness in the Arctic. The Northern Watch Technology Demonstration Project, run by Defence Research and Development Canada, was a four-year trial program to test surface and subsurface sensors "to collect surveillance data at navigation choke points where marine traffic passes through." Another project, Polar Epsilon, used data from the RADARSAT-2 satellite to provide the Canadian Forces "an all-weather, day-night eye on the North." Building on the success of RADARSAT-2, the Committee noted the RADARSAT Constellation plan to operate three new satellites of greater capability than RADARSAT-2 simultaneously: "the first time that

RADARSAT will have taken a multi-satellite approach.” With an anticipated launch in 2014 and 2015, these satellites “will be able to spot details as small as one metre by three” and will “provide complete coverage of Canada’s land and oceans offering an average daily revisit.”

The Committee also addressed the Canadian Rangers and efforts to expand their numbers and update their capabilities. Existing plans to increase the Rangers’ numbers to 5,000 across the country entailed recruiting an additional 300 Rangers in the territorial north, bringing their total numbers there to 1,900. In addition, the military was implementing a Ranger Modernization Project to examine replacing all aspects of their uniform and equipment. Brigadier General D. B. Millar, commander of Joint Task Force (North) in Yellowknife, also envisaged “creating rapid reaction force high-readiness Ranger units, building a new centralized training facility for Ranger recruits and senior leadership, and helping them develop a coastline watercraft capability (a trial was to have been conducted on the Mackenzie River in the summer of 2010).”

The report also examined the Regular Forces’ capabilities to operate in the Arctic, noting that southern troops no longer possessed an “ability to do more than operate at the survival level and with a minimum of tactical capability in the Arctic.” Instead, it was rebuilding that capability since 9-11. The Canadian Forces Arctic Training Centre, being built at Qausittuq (Resolute Bay) on Cornwallis Island, would be able to train up to 100 personnel at a time and would serve as a command post for emergency operations and disaster response.

On the issue of threats to the Arctic, Brigadier Millar told the Committee: “There is no conventional threat and therefore we are not arming ourselves in preparation for an attack from any country. The likelihood of an attack in the High Arctic is as likely as an attack in downtown Toronto.” Likewise, the Chief of Defence Staff, General Walt Natynczyk, commented: “if a country invades the Canadian Arctic, my first challenge is search and rescue to help them out.”

The Committee concurred that non-state based threats caused by “rising sea levels, melting permafrost, grounded vessels causing environmental damage, the outbreak of communicable diseases within small communities, and an increasing need for search and rescue” constituted the primary security concerns facing Canada’s Arctic. Law-enforcement threats, such as “terrorism, people-smuggling, drug-smuggling, and other criminal activities,” might emerge in the future, but the likelihood and severity of these threats remained conjectural.

To meet these security concerns, the Committee endorsed improving the military’s situational awareness in the region and its ability to respond to emergencies. Echoing

several past policy recommendations, it held up SAR as an obvious area for improvement. “Witnesses made two basic observations about search and rescue in the Arctic,” the report noted. “First, the need is on the rise. Second, response times are potentially too slow given that Canadian Forces SAR air assets are based almost entirely in southern Canada.” Mitigation was another theme. The Committee noted that only 10% of the Arctic and 35% of the principal shipping lanes were charted to modern standards. This deficiency had resulted in damage to ships or grounding in the past and, while the Committee was told that the Northwest Passage was unlikely to become a feasible route for international navigation in the foreseeable future, inadequate charts continued to pose a problem to increasing cruise tourism and local traffic.

Overall, the Committee highlighted that Canada needed to improve its understanding of what was transpiring in the region, not only to assist those in need but to monitor dangerous activity and prevent violations of Canadian laws and regulations. While RADARSAT and the experimental Northern Watch systems exemplified the government’s expanding capability, the report observed that the best sources of information remained local residents – including the Canadian Rangers.

### **Main Security-Related Recommendations in *Sovereignty & Security in Canada’s Arctic***

1. The Government make speedy acquisition of new fixed wing search and rescue aircraft the top military procurement priority, and that target dates for the program be published.
2. The Government keep the Canadian Rangers modernization program on track, with consideration given to expanding the Rangers’ role in the marine environment. The program should be completed sooner than later.
3. The Government ensure procurement of the Polar icebreaker, *John G. Diefenbaker*, by the end of 2017—which is the year the Canadian Coast Guard says the ship is expected to enter service.
6. The Government, in order to reduce SAR response times in the Arctic, position Canadian Forces SAR assets at a central location in the North such that there is always an aircraft on standby, as in the South, to respond quickly to emergency calls.

## 32. Canada and the Arctic Council: An Agenda for Regional Leadership

### **Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, May 2013.**

With Canada assuming the chair of the Arctic Council for a two-year term beginning in May 2013, this timely report was intended to “provide parliamentary input to Canada’s Arctic Council agenda and to identify what the Committee believes are the most pressing challenges facing Arctic states.” The Committee noted that the Arctic Council brings together “the resources and knowledge of the eight Arctic states — Canada, Denmark (Greenland), Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the United States — with those of six international indigenous peoples’ organizations for the benefit of cooperation on a common regional agenda.” This regional agenda, however, is limited and the report reiterated that the Arctic Council “should not deal with matters related to military security.”

Despite this restriction, the report touched on matters of military security in its investigation and recommendation regarding Search and Rescue (SAR), given the military’s responsibilities and mandate in that regard. The Committee noted that it:

Learned of the significant search and rescue (SAR) requirements associated with Canada’s vast Arctic territory, and the growing need to have such capabilities in place, particularly as maritime traffic increases in the region. Witnesses emphasized that Canada’s current SAR capabilities are stretched, given the territory that must be covered and the potential range of incidents requiring a response.

The Committee pointed to the *2011 Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic*, negotiated under the auspicious of the Arctic Council, which provided a “regional framework... to coordinate and strengthen search and rescue responses.” As a binding agreement, it compelled the Arctic states to “promote the establishment, operation and maintenance of an adequate and effective search and rescues capability within their area, as established in geographic terms in the agreement’s annex.” The agreement also offered a framework for the Arctic states to coordinate their efforts through the sharing of information regarding SAR and in requesting assistance where required. The Committee noted that, ““with respect to funding, unless otherwise agreed, each state must “bear its own costs deriving from its implementation of [the] Agreement.” The agreement also stated that actual implementation was “subject to the availability of relevant resources.”“ By extension, the Committee acknowledged that Arctic SAR capabilities were “to some degree connected to more general issues of required infrastructure expansion in Canada’s north.” New deep-water ports for the Arctic, in particular, were pointed out as being crucial to enhancing Canadian SAR capabilities there.

In its final recommendations, the Committee urged the Government to “review its capacity to implement the terms of the Arctic state’s 2011 agreement on search and rescue.”

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**ADAM LAJEUNESSE**, Ph.D., currently holds the Defence Engagement Program Postdoctoral fellowship at St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo. His research focuses on the history of Canadian Arctic maritime policy as well as northern defence, development and security. His recent publications include work on the history of American submarine operations in *Cold War History*; Arctic oil and gas development in the *American Review of Canadian Studies*; and under-ice detection in the *Canadian Naval Review*. He is currently completing a monograph on the evolution of Canadian Arctic maritime policy and another on icebreaker operations in the Arctic Archipelago (with P. Whitney Lackenbauer).





# Documents on Canadian Arctic Sovereignty and Security (DCASS)

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