



# SECURING THE CONTINENT: WHERE IS NORAD TODAY?

**Alan Stephenson** | November 2011

STRATEGIC STUDIES WORKING GROUP PAPERS

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CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL  
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Colonel (Retired) Alan Stephenson is an aspiring academic with a focus on Defence and Security issues. His extensive knowledge of NORAD and NATO airpower follows from his 35-year-career in the Canadian Forces as a CF18 fighter pilot and staff officer at all levels of command. Having held senior appointments such as the Special Assistant to the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, Special Assistant to the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff, and Director of Western Hemisphere Policy, he has a broad understanding of military and interagency operational and strategic interaction, both domestically and internationally.

Alan is a graduate of Royal Roads Military College with a BSc in Physics, the Canadian Forces Command and Staff College, and the United States Air Force Air War College where he received an MA degree in US Strategic Studies. His Master's thesis, "Shades of Gray: Gradual Escalation and Coercive Diplomacy" won the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Strategy Essay Competition in 2002, the only international student so honoured to date. Alan is currently in the process of completing his PhD dissertation at Carleton University.

The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Canadian International Council, its Senate or its Board of Directors, or the views of the Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute.

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ISSN 1925-4903

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper assesses the importance of the North American Aerospace Defence (NORAD) Command to North American defence and security in 2011, ten years after the establishment of the United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) and five years after the stand-up of Canada Command (COM). It addresses accusations of institutional irrelevance and of infringement on Canadian sovereignty, as well as fears that NORAD will simply be assimilated into the new operational commands. Following a short history of NORAD that chronicles the capitalization and capability advances that significantly contributed to Canadian sovereignty over the years, this paper explains the evolution of the NORAD airspace mission from being one of pure military defence to one that equally encompasses domestic air security. With the formation of USNORTHCOM and Canada COM as national operational commands, a Tri-Command Study was commissioned that clarified roles, missions, and authorities amongst the three commands responsible for the security and defence of North America. This clearly establishes the continued importance of NORAD's unique role. The paper highlights the challenges of NORAD's three stated missions in the domestic realm where overlapping jurisdictions and interagency authorities complicate operations due to national laws and regulations. Although complex, the continuing relevance of NORAD is linked to overcoming the challenges of Maritime Warning where interagency cooperation is crucial. This paper concludes that NORAD is perfectly placed to provide situational awareness in the Arctic to the two operational commands through leveraging the technology required of the North Warning System replacement and shaping the natural interagency maturation gained in developing the Maritime Warning network into one that includes Arctic All-domain Awareness.

### SOMMAIRE

La présente étude fait une évaluation de l'importance du commandement de la défense aérospatiale de l'Amérique du Nord (NORAD) pour la défense et la sécurité de l'Amérique du Nord en 2011, dix ans après l'établissement du Commandement du Nord des États-Unis (USNORTHCOM) et cinq ans après la mise sur pied du Commandement Canada (COM). Elle se penche sur les accusations de non pertinence institutionnelle et de violation de la souveraineté canadienne, ainsi que sur les craintes que NORAD se fasse simplement assimiler par les nouveaux commandements opérationnels. Suite à un court historique de NORAD qui fait la chronique de la capitalisation et des avancements de capacité qui ont contribué de façon significative à la souveraineté canadienne au cours des années, cette étude explique l'évolution de la mission aérospatiale de NORAD, à partir d'une pure mission de défense militaire qui a abouti à une mission qui englobe également la sécurité aérienne intérieure. Avec la formation de USNORTHCOM et de Canada COM comme commandements opérationnels nationaux, une étude des trois commandements a été commandée pour clarifier les rôles, les mission et les autorités entre les trois commandements responsables de la sécurité et de la défense de l'Amérique du Nord. Ce fait établit clairement l'importance continue du rôle unique de NORAD. L'étude fait ressortir les défis des trois missions énoncées de NORAD dans le domaine intérieur où un chevauchement de juridictions et des autorités interinstitutionnelles compliquent les opérations à cause des lois et règlements nationaux. Malgré qu'elle soit complexe, la continuité de la pertinence de NORAD est liée à l'action visant à surmonter les défis de l'alerte maritime, où la coopération interorganisationnelle est cruciale. L'étude conclut que NORAD est parfaitement placée pour offrir aux deux commandements opérationnels une sensibilisation situationnelle dans l'Arctique en tirant profit de la technologie nécessaire du remplacement du Système d'alerte du Nord (NWS) et en donnant forme à la maturation interinstitutionnelle naturelle acquise en développant le réseau d'alerte maritime pour en faire un réseau qui inclut une conscience de l'Arctique dans tous les domaines.

On 12 May 2008, the North American Aerospace Defence (NORAD) Command celebrated its 50th anniversary with US Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates, acknowledging that “Both of our nations are dedicated to protecting North Americans from air attacks, and this institution remains a vital part of the defense of the continent.”<sup>1</sup> This affirmation of permanence by government officials, however, does not necessarily reflect the views held by critics who maintain that NORAD is a relic of the Cold War and an enigma to Canadian sovereignty that should disappear. With the diminishing conventional military threat to Canada and changes in the military command structures, commentators, such as Ernie Regehr of Project Ploughshares, have critically questioned the need for NORAD. His focus is on sovereignty concerns and was highly critical of the Bi-National Planning Group (BPG) report of 2006 that is “effusive in its call for integration”<sup>2</sup> into the American military complex. Stephen Staples of the Rideau Institute shares this scepticism, asking whether “Canada will be trapped inside Fortress America”<sup>3</sup> and questions the utility of NORAD in the changing defence and security landscape.

Nor is ‘in perpetuity’<sup>4</sup> necessarily certain in the minds of many proponents who believe that NORAD is important, but that the emergence of United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM), US Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) as well as Canada’s decision in 2005 not to join in Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) signals the demise of NORAD. Dr Joseph Jockel, an academic expert on Canadian defence policy and Canada-US relations, is unequivocal in his prediction that “NORAD is heading for obsolescence. Saving it requires a reversal of the Martin government’s decision on missile defence.”<sup>5</sup> Others believe that USNORTHCOM will usurp the role of NORAD and that “[NORAD] will simply morph into a lesser being to fulfill its limited operational function ... to be trotted out periodically by one or another nation as a symbol of enduring strength and quality of our military security relationship.”<sup>6</sup>

There are certainly elements of concern to be found in both polar positions; however, NORAD continues to receive unqualified political support on both sides of the border as well as unquestioned relevance by military commanders and the reason for this is quite simple. The fundamentals that underpinned the establishment of NORAD in 1958 are unchanged. The spirit of bi-national cooperation and military professionalism that marked the genesis of NORAD has allowed this unique institution to mature and evolve within the changing dynamics of both advances in technology and the geopolitical threat environment. Today NORAD, in concert with Canada Command (COM) and USNORTHCOM, plays an important role in domestic security operations as well as in ensuring the sovereignty of continental airspace from foreign intrusion.

## NORAD’S EVOLUTION

Lost in the rhetoric of most discussions is the basic and enduring defence and security function that both countries need to perform—that of protecting and defending national territorial airspace. Whether done cooperatively or individually, the sovereignty of one’s nation is contingent on being able to exercise and enforce the national will in that domain. When the Soviet Union threatened North America with overwhelming air power during the Cold War, NORAD was created to protect the Canadian and American industrial heartlands from air attack. Principally funded by the US, the Early Warning radar systems provided the first comprehensive situational awareness in Canada’s vast northern territory, significantly increasing Canada’s sovereign responsiveness.

1 Speech made by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, Broadmoor Hotel, Colorado Springs, CO, Monday, May 12, 2008, found online at: <http://www.defense.gov/Speeches/Speech.aspx?SpeechID=1239>.

2 Ernie Regehr, “NORAD renewal: Further down the slippery slope?”, *The Ploughshares Monitor*, Autumn 2006, vol 27, no 3, p. 7. His other article, “Retiring NORAD: Time for a new kind of continental security”, Spring 2006, vol 27, no 1 was also referenced.

3 Steve Staples, “Will Canada be trapped inside Fortress North America?”, March 1, 2011, found online at: <http://rabble.ca/news/2011/03/will-canada-be-trapped-inside-fortress-north-america>.

4 ‘In perpetuity’ was the term used by officials to indicate that for the first time there was no expiration date identified in 2006 renewal of the NORAD agreement. Commentators such as Joe Jockel emphasize that this does not indicate permanence.

5 Joseph Jockel, “Saving NORAD: Should Ottawa Seize the Obama Moment?”, *The School of Public Policy: SPP Briefing Papers*, vol 2, issue 3, September 2009, found online at: <http://policyschool.ucalgary.ca/files/publicpolicy/Jockel%20FINAL%20web.pdf>.

6 Bernard Brister, “When Perpetuity Doesn’t Mean Forever: The Approaching Demise of NORAD”, *Options Politiques*, December 2007-January 2008, p. 83. The possibility of assimilation is also alluded to in the BPG Report.

With the rise of the Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) threat in the '60s and '70s, NORAD took on the role of Integrated Tactical Warning and Attack Assessment (ITW/AA) of ICBM launches worldwide. This too provided critical information to Canadian decision-makers responsible for crisis and consequence management should a nuclear attack ever occur. The Mulroney government's decision to proceed with the North American Air Defence Modernization (NAADM) program, which replaced the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Radar Line with the more capable North Warning System (NWS) and created five Forward Operating Locations (FOLs) in the Arctic region, finally provided Canadians with the means to enforce Canadian sovereignty throughout all Canadian airspace via NORAD.<sup>7</sup>

With the fall of the Berlin Wall, the weight of effort in NORAD airspace operations during the '90s shifted from perimeter defence of the manned bomber / cruise missile towards air sovereignty missions, in particular counter-drug operations. In retrospect, this was a significant evolution as it portended the transformation of NORAD from an institution principally focused on military defence of the continent to one in which domestic air security became of equal importance following the cataclysmic events of September 11, 2001 (9/11). In domestic air security there are overlapping departmental / agency jurisdictions with respect to air activities in each country that are unique and not replicated across the border. These jurisdictions had to be respected and NORAD was required to work within this environment where national domestic law naturally takes precedence over the Laws of Armed Conflict and International Law that govern military defence operations.

### THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF CONTINENTAL DEFENCE

The 9/11 attack on the US by non-state actors had a profound effect on the US psyche, permanently changing the US defence and security landscape. In the US, the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 was responsible for the current US military structure that divides military commands into 10 Unified Combatant Commands (UCC) under the Unified Command Plan (UCP) and into force providers. Although the UCP was first created in 1947, there was never one commander for the North American Area of Responsibility (AOR) until after 9/11 due to the belief that too much military power should never accrue to one individual other than the President. Prior to USNORTHCOM's establishment, four different combatant commanders (Joint Forces Command, Pacific Command, Southern Command, and NORAD Command) coordinated separate responsibilities for defence of the US. It is indicative of America's seriousness towards homeland defence that they quickly created USNORTHCOM, albeit with the constraint that the Commander only controls mission-essential forces on a day to day basis.

The emergence of USNORTHCOM significantly altered the continental defence relationship. In the aftermath of 9/11, Canada agreed to 'double-hat' the Commander of USNORTHCOM as the Commander of NORAD and approved the amalgamation of the NORAD command structure into that of USNORTHCOM. The two nations established a Bi-National Planning Group (BPG) in December 2002 to study "the merits of broadening the bi-national defence arrangements"<sup>8</sup> to address the military response to terrorism, natural disasters or other major emergencies in Canada or the United States. As the BPG Report was being delivered, Canada COM was established in February 2006. Its mandate, reflective of USNORTHCOM's, placed Canada and continental North America under a single theatre of operations for the Canadian Forces (CF), offering a single point of contact for the spectrum of defence and security partners.<sup>9</sup> For the first time, military support to civilian authorities for domestic operations was to be deliberately planned and coordinated through established operational commands, thereby increasing each nation's ability to protect its citizens by being prepared to meet all national needs across the entire security spectrum, from safety to security to defence.

<sup>7</sup> Joseph T Jockel's book, *Canada in NORAD 1957–2007: A History*, provides a comprehensive understanding of Canada's involvement in NORAD.

<sup>8</sup> Bi-National Planning Group, *The Final Report on Canada and the United States (CANUS) Enhanced Military Cooperation*, March 13, 2006, Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado.

<sup>9</sup> Canada Command's mandate is to be:

- A single point of contact for Canadian civil authorities seeking Canadian Forces support;
- A single military command for domestic and continental operations; and
- A focus on Canada as a single theatre of operations.

### TRI-COMMAND STUDY

With NORAD, Canada COM, and USNORTHCOM sharing the task of defending North America, as well as increasingly supporting domestic security and emergency response partners, the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) directed that the commanders of the three commands “initiate a study to investigate the future roles, missions, and relationships for their Commands.”<sup>10</sup> Acknowledging the concerns surrounding the BPG Report, “the overall goal of the Tri-Command Study was to increase North American defence and security, while respecting national sovereignty.”<sup>11</sup> The study produced several action items, of which a few recommendations were beyond the authority of the military commanders and were passed to respective defence policy divisions for further consideration.

*The Framework for Enhanced Military Cooperation* was the initial product of the study and provides a clear understanding of how central the NORAD mission continues to be on its own and how integral NORAD is to the overall effectiveness of the other two national commands. *The Framework* also states that both nations wish to retain unilateral response options to air threats that will require careful coordination between NORAD and the national commands. This unilateral response clause acknowledges there are missions in which sovereignty issues are paramount and NORAD must operate accordingly, such as during Special Security Events where differences in national legislation and responsibilities for security operations require tailored mission planning and execution. A good example of this was NORAD’s contribution to the security needs of the Vancouver 2010 Olympics (V2010).

### VANCOUVER 2010 OLYMPICS

Overall security for V2010 was the responsibility of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) who led a multi-organizational Integrated Security Unit, along with the Canadian Forces (CF) that supplied unique military capabilities in support of RCMP operations. Canada COM led the CF effort as Operation (OP) Podium, providing land, sea, and air support while NORAD was a supporting command ensuring airspace security both inside and outside the Olympic Airspace Control Area. Due to the congested airspace of the Vancouver area, NORAD was integrated into the interagency Air Security Operations Centre to ensure close coordination and control of all aircraft inside the Olympic Airspace, while outside, NORAD performed its normal duties on both sides of the border. The benefit of a bi-national command and control structure was clearly evident as NORAD ensured that seamless cross-border coverage was provided in an area where the flying time from US domestic airspace to the Olympic venues was less than 5 minutes.

The V2010 example illustrates the utility and flexibility of this unique institution. NORAD continues to provide continental defence services and has adapted well to the domestic air security mission. It operates effectively and efficiently with the two national operational commands, as well as with other government departments / agencies, providing tailored services that adhere to domestic laws and regulations. Replicating NORAD’s capabilities nationally would be very inefficient, less effective, and extremely costly.<sup>12</sup> Whether fighting an air battle or intercepting a suspected terrorist hijacked airliner, time-sensitive decision-making is crucial and will determine success or failure. NORAD is a proven product that has and still delivers.

10 Tri-Command Report, *Framework for Enhanced Military Cooperation among North American Aerospace Defense Command, United States Northern Command, and Canada Command*, June 2009, found online at: <http://www.canadacom.forces.gc.ca/docs/pdf/BG-Framework-eng.pdf>.

11 Canada Command Backgrounder found online at <http://www.canadacom.forces.gc.ca/par-par/canus-caneu/frm-frm-eng.asp>. Another good synopsis of the Tri-Command study can be found online at <http://nationalstrategy.com/Portals/0/documents/Summer%202010%20NSFR/George%20Gaines%20-%20Summer%202010%20NSFR.pdf>.

12 In terms of time-sensitive information flow and decision-making, NORAD has proven time and again that it is an exceptionally effective and efficient means for dealing with bi-national airborne security issues. However, to Fraser Holman, the real tangible benefit of the NORAD defence cooperation is in the burden sharing, in both direct and indirect costs, that clearly favour Canada (*NORAD: In the New Millennium*). Canadian Forces command and control transformation saw the consolidation of Air Defence Command into a Fighter Group subset of Air Command in 1975 to the elimination of Fighter Group altogether in 1997 at which point the capability for independent daily routine domestic fighter security operations ceased. One premise of the tri-command study was that NORAD would provide air security and defence for both Canada and the US. Thus, any decision by Canada to walk away from NORAD at this point would not only negate the efficient and effective command, control, and communication benefits already forged, but the costs associated with increases in personnel and self-financed infrastructure for an independent Canadian Air Defence organization would be immense and a reversal of current trends.



### SPACE AND MISSILE DEFENCE

The American investment in space has been enormous. In 1985, the US Space Command (USSPACECOM) was created under the UCP to institutionalize the use of outer space by the US Armed Forces and the commander of NORAD was 'double-hatted' as the commander of USSPACECOM. This was logical as the missions of the two commands were complementary but different; NORAD provided ITT/WA for surface-based ballistic missiles that transitioned outer space while USSPACECOM controlled all space-based assets. With the creation of USNORTHCOM in 2002, USSPACECOM was merged into USSTRATCOM. Again, this was a logical development as USSPACECOM was deemed a strategic asset in line with the other strategic components that include cyberspace, nuclear deterrence, and integrated missile defence coordination amongst others. Importantly, as protectors of the homeland, the Commander NORAD / NORTHCOM retained ITT/WA via NORAD and BMD for the AOR.<sup>13</sup>

The Martin government's mishandling<sup>14</sup> of its decision not to participate in the BMD initiative came at a time of already strained relations with the Bush Administration. Although much has been written forecasting the demise of NORAD as a result of this decision, the reality is that NORAD has found workarounds that meet the letter of the law and has moved beyond the problems and inefficiencies that were created.<sup>15</sup> Defence from ballistic missiles (i.e., BMD) was a natural extension of the 'detect, identify, assess, and warning' functions of NORAD and completing this spectrum would have only strengthened the institution, providing Canada with an opportunity to influence policy and plans. Although feasible, the US would be making a significant political statement of the highest order by unilaterally taking the ITT/WA mission out of NORAD today and, given the current strong bilateral military relationship built on global security operations, the likelihood of the US doing that in the near-term is low. Whether or not the Harper government is willing to tackle this particular politically sensitive issue in the near term, it would be extremely prudent for Canadians to reconsider the benefits of playing an active and positive role in BMD in order to protect Canadian national interests in the long-term.

### MARITIME WARNING

The 2006 NORAD Agreement added Maritime Warning for North America to the other two NORAD primary missions of Aerospace Warning and Aerospace Control. In theory, this is a similar function to Aerospace Warning, but in practice, it is far more difficult and complex. Aircraft movements are generally of short duration, conducted on predetermined routes, and moderate in numbers compared to maritime traffic that is of longer duration, conducted on less regulated routes, and voluminous in numbers. The air domain has virtually been the purview of the two air forces and their civilian counterparts, Transport Canada and the Federal Aviation Administration, that have grown in concert and are fairly well integrated. The maritime domain, traditionally the navies' sphere of influence, involves a plethora of departments and agencies with overlapping jurisdictions, especially when littoral and internal waters are included. Senior officers involved in the Tri-Command study acknowledged that the NORAD mandate is not clear and they are currently working through difficult jurisdictional and authority issues that also involve partner departments and agencies on their path to Full Operational Capability.

<sup>13</sup> The complexity of missile defence that ranges from defence against cruise missiles with conventional warheads to ICBMs with multiple nuclear warheads threats and the strategic implications of missile warfare demand that the President of the United States only delegate the minimum authority necessary to his Combatant Commanders that allows them to protect their respective Areas of Responsibility.

<sup>14</sup> There may have been justifiable political reasons for Prime Minister Martin's decision not to participate in BMD, but the political dithering and the maladroitness in which the decision was conveyed resulted in the US Administration feeling misled and used resulting in further estrangement. James Fergusson explains how the many political, diplomatic, and bureaucratic missteps made by the Martin government managed to alienate just about everyone on both sides of the BMD spectrum, from the Canadian public to American politicians, in his very detailed account, *Canada and Ballistic Missile Defence 1954–2009: Déjà Vu All Over Again*.

<sup>15</sup> General Renuart, Commander NORAD's response in the Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, May 3, 2010: "With respect to missile defence, our two governments either had some or chose not to have discussions on the specifics of missile defence. However, within our operational headquarters every day, the very elements that made NORAD successful for 52 years—that of ballistic missile warning—are key in providing me, in my U.S. national hat, with an ability to respond in the event of a missile attack against North America." Found online at [http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/SEN/Committee/403/defe/04eva-e.htm?comm\\_id=76&Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3](http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/SEN/Committee/403/defe/04eva-e.htm?comm_id=76&Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3).



This having been said, it is the Maritime Warning mission that has the greatest potential to reinvigorate the bilateral defence relationship through leveraging NORAD and its integral relationship with Canada COM, USNORTHCOM, and their domestic security partners. Political commentators on both sides of the border, as well as military leadership, have identified the significant capability that NORAD's expansion into new maritime warning mission may bring.<sup>16</sup>

### LEVERAGING NORAD TO ADVANTAGE

To understand the importance of NORAD to Canada in practical terms, we need to deconstruct and identify the three elements that constitute NORAD: the essence; the institution; and the service delivery. Unquestionably, Canada seeks security and sovereignty within its territory. For the proponents of NORAD, the means by which this is best achieved is through access to senior US defence / security officials and influence in policy formulation and decision-making regarding the defence of North America. This is the 'essence' of NORAD for Canada, as it militates against unilateral American action on the continent and provides senior government officials with an additional avenue for strategic discourse with their US counterparts.

The 'institution' called NORAD is a bi-national command and control structure that is unique in the world, as well as in time and space, since the likelihood of its reconstitution, should it ever disappear, is remote. Along with "symbolic embodiment of the partnership and friendship of two great nations",<sup>17</sup> it provides the conduit for transnational action in an efficient, effective, transparent and timely manner, fosters enduring relationships built on trust and confidence, and provides Canada access to privileged information and advanced technology.

Finally, the evolution of NORAD over the past 50 years clearly demonstrates that there is ample latitude for the 'service delivery' of an array of defence and security capabilities in a bi-national fashion, where the political will exists, without it changing the face of NORAD. To many, the real tangible benefit of the NORAD defence cooperation is in the burden sharing, in both direct and indirect costs, that clearly favours Canada.<sup>18</sup> It is in service delivery areas that Canada needs to determine what is in its own best interests to pursue and where these possibilities fit in with US defence and security priorities. To do this, Canada must understand the needs of its strategic partner.

So what do the Americans get out of NORAD? The simple answer is enhanced security through access and influence in Canada, as well as confidence in Canada's proven ability to deliver. With the signing of the NORAD Agreement, the US was able to ensure the ensuing air battle with the Soviets would take place as far away from Canadian and US population centres as possible. US defence strategy has always favoured forward perimeter security that protects its territory and, over time, this perimeter has become deeper and higher with the introduction of BMD. This will not change as today the *United States National Defense Strategy 2008* speaks of "the need to strengthen alliances and build new partnerships to defeat global terrorism and prevent attacks against us, our allies and our friends"<sup>19</sup> through an 'active layered defense'.

### SECURITY PERIMETER BOUNDARIES

Joel Sokolsky and Philippe Lagassé interpret the first layer as being global intervention in countries, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, while the third layer is the American homeland itself. 'Stuck in the middle' is Canada in the second layer, providing perimeter protection:

<sup>16</sup> Two examples are: Statement of General Victor E. Renuart, Jr., USAF Commander United States Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 11 March 2010; and Canadian International Council, *Open Canada: A Global Positioning Strategy for a Networked Age*, 2010 found online at [http://beta.images.theglobeandmail.com/archive/00690/Open\\_Canada\\_\\_A\\_Glob\\_690863a.pdf](http://beta.images.theglobeandmail.com/archive/00690/Open_Canada__A_Glob_690863a.pdf).

<sup>17</sup> D. Fraser Holman, *NORAD: In the New Millennium*, Toronto: Irwin Publishing Ltd, 2000, p. 96.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> US Department of Defence, *2008 National Defense Strategy*, Washington, DC, June 2008.

To the United States, a continental security perimeter serves to guard the approaches to the American homeland, not to stretch the third layer of defence to include all of North America...Hence, those who expect that the presence of North American security perimeter will compel the United States to renounce restrictive border policies ignore the way Washington is fighting the war on terror...<sup>20</sup>

Second layer perimeter boundaries, in this context, represent the separation of Canadian sovereign interests from those external activities over which it has limited jurisdiction. Canada is bounded by three oceans, a southerly nation, and space above. Space is a domain where Canada's military involvement is marginal and NORAD's involvement is tangential. The "Beyond the Border" initiative announced by Prime Minister Harper and President Obama on 4 February 2011<sup>21</sup> is designed to tackle the complex challenge of inter-state border security. Hopefully the Working Group will consider inclusion of NORAD in its deliberations given its wealth of experience in bi-national, interagency operations over the past 50 years; however, the Canada-US border is another security boundary where NORAD involvement would be limited.

### ARCTIC ALL-DOMAIN AWARENESS

The one underdeveloped boundary where Canadian and US defence and security interests intersect is the Arctic, and it is the one region most suited for further bi-national cooperation, particularly as NORAD has been present in the Arctic for over 50 years. Consider the fact that both Canada COM and USNORTHCOM have Arctic mandates to protect their sovereign territories. Both of these operational commands require situational awareness in that vast, inhospitable area and are already working closely with NORAD in developing Maritime Warning that includes the Arctic waters. Given the political will, an opportunity now exists to leverage the recapitalization of the NORAD NWS, due to be replaced around 2020-25, into an all-domain sensor system that would provide Arctic All-domain Awareness to the two operational commands and their associated interagency security partners. The Global Positioning Strategy Panel of the Canadian International Council makes a similar proposal, arguing that "shared interests ranging from environmental protection to economic development"<sup>22</sup> in the Arctic might make the US a willing partner in sharing the economic burden via NORAD, particularly given their current budgetary deficits.

Properly shaped, the long-term goal of Arctic All-domain Awareness could be achieved through the natural evolution of Maritime Warning in the three commands and a design-specific replacement system for NORAD's NWS. In the near-term, the commands will need government leadership that provides clear direction and authorities to qualify and quantify the Maritime Warning mission with all national stakeholders. Enabling technologies will need to be analysed and designed for the NWS replacement. In the mid-term, agreements on information and intelligence sharing will need to be finalized and enabling legislation tabled, if necessary, that address the challenges raised in the Tri-Command study and by the Commander NORAD.<sup>23</sup> The goal should be for NORAD to have a fully operational networked capability in Maritime Warning with operational commands and agencies within 5-10 years. In meeting the long-term goal of Arctic All-domain Awareness, national sovereignty will be assured through bi-national cooperation feeding critical information to national operational commands for action.

20 Joel Sokolsky and Philippe Legassé, "Suspenders and a Belt: Perimeter and Border Security in Canada-US Relations", *Canadian Foreign Policy*, vol 12, no 3, 2006.

21 Government of Canada, "Beyond the Border: A shared vision for perimeter security and economic competitiveness", *A declaration by the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of the United States*, 4 February 2011, found online at <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?id=3938>.

22 Canadian International Council, *Open Canada: A Global Positioning Strategy for a Networked Age*, 2010 found online at [http://beta.images.theglobeandmail.com/archive/00690/Open\\_Canada\\_A\\_Glob\\_690863a.pdf](http://beta.images.theglobeandmail.com/archive/00690/Open_Canada_A_Glob_690863a.pdf).

23 General Renuart, Commander NORAD's testimony in the Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, May 3, 2010 found online at [http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/SEN/Committee/403/defe/04eva-e.htm?comm\\_id=76&Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3](http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/SEN/Committee/403/defe/04eva-e.htm?comm_id=76&Language=E&Parl=40&Ses=3).

### NORAD TODAY

Although much leaner than in its heyday, NORAD is still strong at 53 and the prognosis is for it to remain that way. NORAD has proven to be flexible and resilient in its mission delivery, evolving from a Cold War defensive juggernaut to delivering contemporary domestic air security in a complex, selective environment. Canada's sovereignty has only been enhanced through NORAD and the tri-command evolution has proven that Canadians remain masters in their own homes. NORAD has clearly shown that cooperation and collaboration does not mean subjugation. Although Canadians would benefit from being a partner in BMD, NORAD survived and was mature enough to move beyond a diplomatic faux pas in its own way. Today, it is an equal partner with Canada COM and USNORTHCOM in their mission to not only defend North America from external attack, but to also protect each country from non-state actors who are adept at striking at the seams of democracy.

As NORAD solidifies its Maritime Warning duties with its partners, it will continue to grow more effective and important in the future as long as the political will is there to ensure the success of this mission. As the Arctic becomes more accessible, it would be wise to leverage the proven abilities and future infrastructure of NORAD to provide Arctic All-domain Awareness. Only a collaborative, bi-national effort will provide the necessary tools to accomplish this mission in the remotest parts of Canada and the US. This is a mission tailor-made for NORAD and one that will not only enhance the Canada-US defence relationship, but will ensure that Canadian sovereignty is maintained and assured through its close relationship to Canada COM and partner Canadian agencies.

### STRATEGIC STUDIES WORKING GROUP

The Strategic Studies Working Group (SSWG) is a partnership between the Canadian International Council (CIC) and the Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute (CDFAI). The CIC absorbed the former Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies (CISS) upon the CIC's formation in 2008, and the CISS's original focus is now executed by the SSWG.