

Canada and the American National Missile Defence: Still a room for participation?

Samir Battiss*

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Political and military analysis

To undertake an analysis as to whether Canada should participate or not participate in the NMD programs, it is important to review a number of important background factors including Canada's defence relationship with the United States and the reasons for its importance to the U.S., and exactly what interests are at stake in terms of Canada's foreign and defence policy goals.

- Political background of the non-participation decision of Canada to American NMD project

Canadian concern with missile defense dates back to the 1960s and 1970s, when US missile defense plans first complicated Canadian participation in NORAD. However, more recent concern began in the mid-1990s, when the program began attracting renewed attention. The *1994 Defense White Paper* offered the first public statement on the proposed US program. It allowed Canadian research and consultation with like-minded nations in order to obtain a better understanding of missile defense. Furthermore, the *White Paper* noted that Canada's future missile defense role would be determined in conjunction with the evolution of North American and possibly NATO aerospace defense arrangements, would have to be cost-effective, would have to meet Canadian defense needs, and would need to relate directly to the missions and capabilities of the Canadian Forces (CF).

In February of 2005, the Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin and its government made the decision to decline formal participation in US plans

* Samir Battiss is researcher and lecturer at the Canada Research Chair in Canadian Foreign and Defence Policy (Quebec university in Montreal - UQAM) and member of the *Société française d'études militaires* (SFEM) based in Paris.

for a ballistic missile defense (BMD) system for North America. For many observers the Canadian position was not completely unexpected because of a longstanding opposition to 'strategic' BMD systems. After many years of debate, this decision took place despite a number of public signals hinting that Canada would endorse this project and involve itself in the proposed system. The chosen orientation by Paul Martin was nevertheless to deepen the Canada-US ties in military and security issues. According to the 2005 Defense Policy Statement, published under the Liberal Party area, maintaining a strong security and defense partnership with the United States remains essential to protecting Canada and Canadians. In addition to enhancing the domestic roles and capabilities of the Canadian Forces, the Government explored new ways to work with the United States in the defense of the shared North American continent. In this document, the Canadian authorities included greater co-operation in countering maritime threats to North America and new military-to-military arrangements for the support of civilian authorities during crises and emergencies. Substantive discussions with the United States were begun in these and other areas in the following months, including as part of the negotiations to renew the NORAD Agreement.

Strengthening further Canada-US relations was, as written, a need expressed many times by the Prime Minister, and a bilateral cooperation on missile defense would have given such an occasion in this enterprise. After around six months debate, its decision not to participate was made. As noticed by Dr. James Fergusson such a *flip flop* Canadian attitude on this issue could represent "a blow to the manner in which bilateral defense relations, if not broader foreign policy, are conducted with the Americans and other nations."¹

While the Martin government's posture is still the official one, there are some reasons to think that the matter is on the table, at least on the academic one.

After the parliamentary election in January 2006, a Conservative minority government, conducted by Stephen Harper, has led the country. Since Harper's governmental team arrival, Canada's role in the U.S. missile defence program has not been expressed. This government is regarded as a political party more amenable to the idea of a Canadian contribution in strategic defense. But it is likely that Washington waiting for a more stable majority. Despite many meetings, in March 2006 in Mexico and in July 2006, Stephen Harper and George W. Bush declare not having talked about missile defence.² In exchange for such participation, there are though several trade disputes between the two countries in which the US could be more comprehensive, e.g. lumber trade disputes, arctic issues,

¹ Fergusson, James: "Shall We Dance? The Missile Defence Decision, NORAD Renewal, and the Future of Canada US Defence Relations," *Canadian Military Journal*, 8, 2 (Summer 2005), p. 17

² CBC News, "In-depth: Ballistic Missile Defence: Canada's Role," http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/us_missiledefence/canadasrole.html.

etc... President Bush was asked by a reporter whether or not he anticipated Canada would eventually participate in Ballistic Missile Defence. By stating in his answer that he was conscious of how delicate is this subject inside Canadian public opinion³, the U.S. President showed his frustration *vis-à-vis* the previous Martin government.

More important remains continuing uncertainty over the meaning of the term 'participation' and what exact role Canada has formally declined. The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) now plays, indeed, a critical early warning role in BMD. By giving to Canada a more expansive part to play in the detection and guidance tracking of ballistic missiles, the current government could with respect to the Martin's declaration, have a role in BMD plan. Such a separation between early warning of a ballistic missile and the command and control (C2) of a BMD interceptor, would allowed to distinguish 'involvement' from 'participation' in any missile defense scheme.

Therefore, another *volte face* on the missile defense issue could occur. Whatever the federal party winner of potential elections, a policy reversal is not to be dismissed, even in case of Liberal Party's success, led now by Stéphane Dion. The previous Liberal government was indeed close to participate. Otherwise, the debate on substantive Canadian participation in American missile defense plans is far from being over. Analysing the declaration of Foreign Minister Pierre Pettigrew⁴, pronounced on 24 February 2005, in the House of Commons, Dr. Fergusson underlines a relevant sentence ended with the phrase "at this time", which allowed the researchers to think that there is still a room for a possible re-consideration in a different political environment for any next government⁵.

Canada has had a difficult time deciding on a position regarding the US missile defense plans. Like the United Kingdom and, maybe more than in other allies countries⁶, conflicting pressures were at work in Canada: country's traditional policy towards the American close partner, ever narrower trade linkage, military cooperation through the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), the setting-up of a new military command, US Northern Command (NORTHCOM), in 2002, and concern that American missile defense plans might lead to global instability and heightened international tension. Canada's characteristic indecision and uncertainty seemed to have further complicated matters. This indecision

³ Radio-Canada.ca, "Bush louange Harper," 5 July 2006, <http://www.radio-canada.ca/nouvelles/International/2006/07/06/004-harper-bush.shtml>;

⁴ Pettigrew, Pierre: "Statement to the House of Commons". *Hansard*. February 24, 2005.

⁵ Fergusson, James: "Shall We Dance? The Missile Defence Decision, NORAD Renewal, and the Future of Canada US Defence Relations," *Canadian Military Journal*, 8, 2 (Summer 2005), p. 14.

⁶ Richter, Andrew: "A Question of Defense: How American Allies are Responding to the US Missile Defense Program", *Comparative Strategy*, (2004) 23:2, 143 - 172

caused some contradictory statements issued with such frequency that US administration might no longer care what Canada ultimately decides.

Early Canadian thinking on NMD recognized the dramatic implications that American missile defenses would raise. For example, it was quickly realized that the US plan (regardless of what form it would ultimately take) would cover Canadian territory, although in the absence of direct Canadian participation, a range of questions needed to be addressed, including: (1) where would the intercepts take place?; (2) would Canadian territory be affected and/or defended?; (3) was Canadian territory necessary for any proposed NMD radars and missile launchers?; and (4) what effect would NMD have on existing security architecture, and in particular NORAD?

NMD issue raises a number of particularly interesting questions for Canada in terms of its possible or potential participation. They included:

- The consequences for NORAD in case of non-participation;
- How to deal for Canada with U.S. arguments about the legitimacy of the current and potential threats?
- What would happen to the whole concept of mutually assured destruction?"⁷

These questions and others have been explored to reach an appropriate action for Canada. So far, Canadian activities regarding NMD were limited only to research and consultation with the United States and other nations.⁸ This way, Canada is in keeping with the spirit of *1994 Defense White Paper*. This document indicated that such activity could be conducted to gain a better understanding of missile defense along with the future evolution of North American, and perhaps even NATO-wide, aerospace defense arrangements.⁹ Further, it is important to notice that the choice made by the U.S regarding the proposed and developed missile defense system will have an impact on global strategic stability, existing non-proliferation, arms control, disarmament and other issues concerning Russia, China, and South Asia.

Main issues to consider for Canadian leaders in evaluating the implication of Canadian participation/non participation in NMD project cover State sovereignty, national territory's defense and the achievement of foreign and defense policy goals.

In terms of defending Canada, military aspects such as NORAD, the U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM), and the issue of interoperability with U.S. forces should also be taken into consideration. NORAD, owing to its missions and tasks in terms of continental Northern American surveillance

⁷ Pratt, David: "Canada and National Missile Defence", *Proceedings of the Annual Spring Seminar*, in Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies (Ottawa, Canada, 20 April 2000), p. 5.

⁸ Department of National Defence, "Canada-United States Defence Relations—Canada's Policy on Ballistic Missile Defence," October, 7th 2002, p. 2.

⁹ *Ibid*, p. 2.

and defense, and its co-location with U.S. Space Command, can be regarded as natural focal point for a potential missile defense program.¹⁰ More broadly, issues dealing with Canadian political and economic concerns are to be considered.

- Canada-U.S. Relationship: “*Sleeping with the Elephant*”¹¹

A number of important background factors including Canada’s defense relationship with the United States have to be considered to undertake an analysis of Canadian NMD participation / non participation. Other factors consist in Canada’s foreign and defense policy goals, which is part of a fundamentally sound economic and friendly partnership. According to the U.S. Department of State, the US-Canada relations appear to be one of the “closest and most extensive in the world... U.S. defense arrangements with Canada are more extensive than with any other country.”¹² These include NATO mutual security commitments, information sharing, as well as, bridge-building between U.S. and Canadian military forces on continental air defense within the NORAD framework.

From a Canadian perspective we can observe the same evaluation as found in Washington. Such relations are regarded as longstanding, well developed and very successful. Moreover, they reflect a unique friendship, shaped during the 20th Century around close economic ties and a set of common values, namely the continental defense and security.¹³ More than 80 treaty-level defense agreements, over 250 memoranda of understanding, and approximately 145 bilateral committees constitute the basis of Canada-U.S. defense cooperation.

Initiated with the 1940 Ogdensburg Agreement, such cooperation is based nowadays on the North American Aerospace Defense Agreement, which provides both countries with aerospace warning and control (NORAD).¹⁴ Based in Colorado Springs like Fort Carson, the U.S. Air Force Academy, Peterson Air Force Base, and the Schriever Air Force Base as well as the U.S. Space Foundation, this bi-national cornerstone of Northern American continent defense employees around 600 Canadian military personnel. In parallel Canadian government and industry representatives visit the United States 20,000 times every year on defense matters. These talks regularly deal with a large range of issues considered as significant, e.g.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 5.

¹¹ Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau described relations as being like "sleeping with an elephant. No matter how friendly and even-tempered is the beast, if I can call it that, one is affected by every twitch and grunt". From a speech by Trudeau to the National Press Club in Washington, DC, on 25 March 1969; authorship of the speech was later attributed to Ivan Head, Trudeau's adviser.

¹² U.S. Department of State, “Background Note: Canada”, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, June 2002, p. 2.

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 1.

¹⁴Macdonald, George (Lieutenant-General), “Canada-U.S. Defence Relations, Asymmetric Threats and the U.S. Unified Command Plan.” *Senate Committee Speech*, DND Canada, 6 May 2002, p. 1.

planning, operations, combined exercises, defense production, logistics, research and development, communications and intelligence sharing.¹⁵

The importance of Canada-U.S. bilateral relations, including the NMD issue, was highlighted after President George W. Bush took office when Foreign Minister John Manley and Prime Minister Chrétien traveled to the U.S. in early 2001 to review the bilateral agenda.¹⁶ The non participation /participation debate was the opportunity to put a new “continentalist way” to the test.¹⁷

The nature of Canada’s defense relationship with the United States and the importance of the NMD issue were most succinctly summarized by former Canadian Ambassador to the U.S., Allan Gotlieb. As important before as during the Cold War, the defense relationship between Canada and the United States remains important after. But every time Canada takes a position that may be seen in Washington as having a material impact on U.S. national interest, this decision must be made very carefully¹⁸ to not affect its owns.

As written above, according to the key strategic documents (1994 Defense White Paper, 2005 Defense Policy Statement) Canadian memberships in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the North American Aerospace Defense (NORAD) are considered as the main pillars of Canadian military security.

From a Canadian perspective, to have allies to rely on ensures Canada’s defense, which has relatively small military weight and, consequently, limited ability to defend itself. In regional security area, the Canadian government declared:

“Our defense relationship with the US is key for the security of Canadians. Canada’s longstanding cooperation with the US through the Permanent Joint Board on Defense and NORAD has enabled us to share the security burden for North America at a significantly lower cost and with more effectiveness that Canada could achieve on its own.”¹⁹

These statements point out the Canadian dependence in global and regional relationships to ensure its own security. Further more, with the

¹⁵ The Honourable Colin Kenny *Report of the Standing Committee on National Security and Defence*, chairman. Ottawa, Canada, September 2002, p. 39.

¹⁶ Fen Osler Hampson, Normand Hillmer, and Molot Appel, eds. “The Return to Continentalism in Canadian Foreign Policy,” *Canada Among Nations 2001: The Axworthy Legacy*. (Oxford University Press, Don Mills, Ontario, 2001), p. 11.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁸ Gotlieb, Allan: “How to Talk to Washington”, in David Rudd, Jim Hanson and Adam Stimson, eds. “Playing in the ‘Bush-League’: Canada - US Relations in the New Era”, the Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 2001 p. 40.

¹⁹ Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, “Canada in the World,” April 2002, p. 2

United States at its side; Canada is in the situation to reach a high degree of security, higher than which it could expect to achieve on its own. As written before, such a posture was already adopted since 1940 Ogdensburg Agreement²⁰ and appears in the 1994 White Paper which quotes:

“A longstanding principle of Canadian defense policy is that defending Canada is best done in a collaborative manner with the United States. Canada and the United States rely on each other for help in protecting their territory and approaches. If this collaboration is not maintained, the United States will defend the continent on its own, leaving Canada without the influence we currently enjoy as a result of this defense partnership.”²¹

In September 2002, the *Standing Committee on National Security and Defence* confirmed that Canada recognizes that its security depends to a large extent on world security, and particularly the security of North America.²²

- Canadian Political Expediency on Missile Defence

During the Cold War, successive Canadian governments stayed well away from the different American ballistic missile defence (BMD) initiatives, from the *Sentinel and Safeguard* programmes to Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI). The reason would be that such a system would have been inimical to the Canadian support for mutually assured destruction. The issue was held in abeyance for most of the post Cold War period.

The Clinton administration was far more eager to emphasize research in theatre missile defence (TMD) systems designed for kinetic 'hit-to-kill' interception of shorter-range missile threats from aggressive regional powers and 'rogue states'. This TMD neither violated the ABM Treaty nor was seen to endanger strategic nuclear stability between the established nuclear powers. While noticeably silent on the TMD issue, some surprising interest in this type of technology were displayed by Canadian policy makers as shown by Canada's participation in several projects. Canada takes part to North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) studies on TMD in the mid 1990s, the examination of a missile defence role in its initial proposal for a Command and Control Area Air Defence Replacement for its *Iroquois* class destroyers and even the contribution to the Dutch Advanced Phased Array Radar programme²³.

²⁰ Signed in 1940 between Prime Minister Mackenzie King of Canada and United States President Franklin Roosevelt in Heuvelton near Ogdensburg, New York, this agreement primarily inaugurated closer Canadian-American military co-operation and established the Permanent Joint Board of Defence.

²¹ Department of National Defence, "1994 White Paper on Defence," p. 8.

²² *Report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence*, The Honorable Colin Kenny, chairman. Ottawa, Canada, September 2002, p. 6.

²³ James Fergusson, "Not home alone: Canada and ballistic missile defence," *International Journal*, 56, 4 autumn 2001, 680.

In quest to a more robust policy against this 'imminent' intercontinental threat, the increasingly influential Republican Party exerted in the mid to late 1990s a growing pressure on the Clinton administration, to make it move intermittently towards a 'national' missile defence (NMD) system.

Gradually the idea of a continental area defence system was embraced as shown by the 1996 adopted NMD designation. In 1999 President Clinton formally endorsed this NMD project with the signing of the National Missile Defence Act. Capability 1 (C1) and Capability 2 (C2) phases of the NMD programme were designed to field a limited midcourse area defence of the continental United States, based on a single interceptor site – which would either be in North Dakota or Alaska – alongside xband radar and an advanced space based, infrared sensor, low altitude (SBIRSlow) surveillance satellite constellation²⁴.

After having differed deployment decisions for the subsequent administration due to the failure of various interceptor tests, his programme would remain a research programme, as the Clinton administration deferred. The delay in any deployment decision was a critical one for Canada, as the Chrétien government was quick to refrain from making a decision on participation in missile defence until interceptor deployments had begun²⁵.

Canada's ambiguous policy on BMD came to end after the Bush administration's unilateral decision to withdraw from the ABM Treaty in December 2001, and the followed gradual deployment of a limited number of ground-based interceptors (GBIs) at Fort Greely, Alaska and Vandenburg Air Force base, California.

The Bush administration's ground-based missile defence (GMD) system – which in the short term will utilize these two GMD sites alongside Cobra Dane radar in Shemya Island, Alaska and mobile sea-based xband radar – constitutes the successor system to the previous administration's NMD efforts. GMD became a critical issue for the Canadian government, and it appears that there was strong movement towards some kind of bilateral missile defence agreement. The Chrétien government did initiate some small, still hesitant steps in this direction. Minister of National Defence, John McCallum, announced the beginning of discussions on Canadian participation in the GMD system in May of 2003.

²⁴ Further information on this system, see James M. Lindsay and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Defending America: The Case for Limited National Missile Defense* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001), Chap. 4.

²⁵ Dr. James Fergusson, "Shall We Dance? The Missile Defence Decision, NORAD Renewal, and the Future of Canada / US Defence Relations," *Canadian Military Journal*, 8, 2 (Summer 2005), 14. Dr. Fergusson summarized this way: "No architecture, no deployment decision, no invitation and nothing to decide."

Under the Paul Martin's first government, first formal negotiations on possible participation in the GMD system was marked by an exchange of letters between the defence ministers of both countries. In parallel NORAD agreement came to its renewal term in August 2004. Amended, it now allowed for the information from NORAD's Integrated Tactical Warning/Attack Assessment (ITW/AA) to be used by the GMD system. There may have been some qualms over the system, specifically whether it entailed space weaponization, interceptors on Canadian territory, or some kind of asymmetrical Canadian contribution, but Canada's response was for the most part positive.

This was the backdrop to Prime Minister Paul Martin's half-surprising declaration in February 24, 2005 which announced Canada's non participation in American plans for continental GMD. While its own Liberal Party had been divided on the issue of missile defence, other political parties, namely the Bloc Quebecois and the NDP, have displayed constant opposition to any defence cooperation initiatives with the Americans. Forced into minority status and driven by his priority of gaining a parliamentary majority, and particularly by his hopes of regaining seats in Quebec, where opposition to ballistic missile defence is strongest, the Liberal Party was simply in an untenable position to make any other decision than to refuse the U.S. proposal. Despite the Conservative's generally more supportive stance towards such defence cooperation – and, certainly their aspirations to win the next elections– it became politically infeasible for the Liberals to participate in any continental GMD programme. This Canadian posture was analyzed by Canadian observers like Dr. David Rudd²⁶ as a decision taken in an electoral campaign context and “determined by party politics rather than an appreciation of the strategic landscape.”

In parallel of a less than polite ‘no’ to the US, The Liberal government announced substantial infusion of resources for the Canadian Forces (CF) – likely as a means of offsetting any American criticisms of its missile defence decision. At the same time, in the absence of a political endorsement, it was however keen to transfer the critical NORAD ITW/AA role for use in the GMD system, which safeguarded the bilateral command's early warning role and offered the US what it arguably was most interesting in obtaining. Finally, NORAD remains a reasonably stable organization that, in an environment of homeland security addiction and air breathing threats (from hijacked planes to cruise missiles), and continue to play an important air defence role.

It should be noticed that an expanded NORAD precisely follows one of the many recommendations offered by the Bi-national Planning Group (BPG)²⁷.

²⁶ Rudd, David: “Muddling through on missile defence: the politics of indecision” *Policy Options*, May 2005, p. 30-34.

²⁷ Set up in 2002 in order to examine issues of bilateral defence cooperation, the BPG's tasks include the improvement current U.S.-Canada arrangements to defend against

Reasons in favor of a Canadian participation in NMD

- Protection of Canadian Sovereignty

Canada's sovereignty and integrity protection appears for many Canadian researchers as one of the most important aspect to be taken into consideration for Canadian participation in the NMD program.

With such neighbor like the United States, Canadian officials have been desperately trying to avoid the impression that Canada is subservient to any U.S. security initiative²⁸. Therefore, Canadian policies are, first, guided by the requirement to remain "distinct". Basic mission of the government is ultimately to protect and defend Canada and its citizens. Participation in bilateral and multilateral operation with Canada's allies can be considered as part of this mission²⁹. Thereby, to play a role in NMD could be an essential element for the continuity of Canadian soil defense.

Dr. James Fergusson argued that Canada's vital interest must lead the policy-makers to seriously consider the U.S. development and deployment of a limited ballistic missile defense system for North America. By offering support, Ottawa should indeed be in a better position to ensure that Canada's security interests.³⁰

Geographic proximity of major Canadian and American cities should have been an important, if not critical, factor in the NMD debate. As described by a former NORAD Deputy Commander, Canadian Lieutenant-General

primarily maritime threats to the continent and respond to land-based attacks. The BPG also aims to enhance both countries' response to natural disasters by providing well-coordinated, bi-national support to civilian authorities. More precisely, the BPG's activities include: preparing contingency plans to ensure a cooperative and well-coordinated response to national requests for military assistance in the event of a threat, attack, or civil emergency in the U.S. or Canada; coordinating maritime surveillance and intelligence sharing to enhance our overall awareness of potential maritime threats; assessing maritime threats, incidents, and emergencies and advising the two governments; establishing appropriate planning and liaison mechanisms between the militaries and civilian authorities involved in crisis response, such as police, fire fighters and other first responders; designing and participating in exercises; conducting joint training programs; and validating the practicality and effectiveness of plans prior to their approval.

²⁸ U.S. President John F. Kennedy noted that "Geography has made us neighbors. History has made us friends. Economics has made us partners. And necessity has made us allies. Those whom nature hath so joined together, let no man put asunder." John F. Kennedy. *Address Before the Canadian Parliament in Ottawa*. The American Presidency Project.

²⁹ Department of National Defence, "Shaping the Future of the Canadian Forces: A Strategy for 2020," Ottawa: DND Canada, June 1999, p. 2.

³⁰ James Fergusson, Frank Harvey and Robert Huebert, "To Secure a Nation: The Case for a New Defence White Paper," Centre for Military and Strategic Studies, University of Calgary, 2001, p. 7.

Robert Morton³¹, direct threats from missiles aimed at major American population centers have to be considered for Canadian territory. Launched from the Middle East or East Asia area, any hostile ballistic missile with a small error in direction or distance could end up falling short and landing in Canada. So, whether Canada is involved as a partner in a missile defense system or not, it remains an unintended target.

- Canada's increased role in North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD)

Since the late-1950's, NORAD defense relationship has been at the heart of continental defense for Canada. Bi-national Canadian-American organization, NORAD is originally in charge with a large range of missions relative to Northern American aerospace warning and aerospace control. Aerospace warning tasks cover not only the monitoring of man-made objects in space, and the detection, validation, but also warning of attack against the Northern American continent whether by aircraft, missiles, or space vehicles, through mutual support arrangements with other commands. Aerospace control includes ensuring air sovereignty and air defense of the airspace of Canada and the United States. More recently, was added in May 2006 on the occasion of the NORAD Agreement renewal maritime warning mission, which entails a shared awareness and understanding of the activities conducted in U.S. and Canadian maritime approaches, maritime areas and inland waterways. Significant example of Canada-U.S. defense narrow cooperation, this continental security organization has to face the challenge of NMD project. This project cannot avoid affecting the evolution of the organization. First because NORAD's role has continually evolved as the NORAD agreement has been renewed every five years since its beginnings. Then, NORAD, because of its missions for aerospace surveillance and defense and its co-location with the U.S. Space Command, appears to be considered as a natural focal point for NMD. But NMD is not part of NORAD's current missions. Dr. Jack Lawrence Granatstein indicated that "the changing thrust of NORAD is best demonstrated by the replacement a number of years ago of "air defense" in name by "aerospace defense³²." To add it to NORAD's vocations would require however Canadian consent.³³ If yes, this way, Canada could be conducted to play a role Canada plays in NMD affairs within NORAD.

Dr. Granatstein and many other researchers noticed that the United States would likely place NMD under NORAD control since it would want to take

³¹ Lieutenant-General Robert Morton, Canada and National Missile Defence, in Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, Proceedings of the Annual Spring Seminar, (Ottawa, Canada, 20 April 2000), p. 72.

³² Granatstein, Jack Lawrence: "A Friendly Agreement in Advance--Canada-U.S. Relations Past, Present and Future." *C.D. Howe Institute Commentary*, No. 166, June 2002, p. 10.

³³ Canada governmental documents, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. "Canada in the World," p. 5.

advantage of the existing warning systems that NORAD possesses.³⁴ Researcher at the *Centre for International and Security Studies*, Dr. J. Marshall Beier confirmed this claim arguing that NMD was going ahead and would involve NORAD with or without Canadian agreement.³⁵

Dr. Joseph T. Jockel argued that “without Canadian participation in NMD, NORAD has no real future”.³⁶ NORAD’s very heart would be the process by which it would warn of and assess an attack on this continent. To reach this goal and accomplish this mission, data exchange from national air defense operations and collected information systems operated by the U.S., which detect and track ballistic missiles and other activity in space, are vital. Creating a linkage NMD – NORAD by placing the first under the responsibility of the second could, therefore, appear to be a logical manner to proceed. And it cannot be avoided. As indicated earlier, the U.S. plans to link operational command of the NMD system to the NORAD warning and assessment process since only minutes are available for decision-making in the event of a missile launch towards North America.³⁷ If Canadians do not participate in the operation of the NMD system, they could no longer fully play their traditional role in the warning and assessment process. Indeed, inside NORAD’s tasks allocation, an “assessor”, Canadian general officer provides confirmation of an attack and an assessment of it. This would mean that NORAD, as bi-national security organization, would lose its *raison d’être*.³⁸

Recognizing the link between NMD and the continued evolution of NORAD would allow Canada to consider participation as an opportunity to further develop and enhance its defense relationship with the United States.

Moreover, from a military operations point of view, Dr. Morton strongly argued that NMD should become a NORAD mission, integrated into its command and control structure. According to him, the essential capabilities are already established in NORAD and that these capabilities, including space-based sensors and ground-based missile detection radars and the present system, when upgraded, will cue and direct the NMD kinetic kill interceptors.

- Linkage Canada, US NORTHCOM, interoperability and NMD

³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 10.

³⁵ J. Marshall Beier, “Postcards from the Outskirts of Security: Defence Professionals, Semiotics, and the NMD Initiative,” *Canadian Foreign Policy*, Vol. 8 No. 2, winter 2001, p. 39.

³⁶Jockel, Joseph T. “After the September Attacks: Four Questions about NORAD’s Future.” *Canadian Military Journal*, spring, 2002, p. 15.

³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 15.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 16.

Canadian NMD participation also raises the issue of the development of a successful military relationship with the U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM). Established in April 2002 after an U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's address, this recently unified command, U.S. NORTHCOM occupies a key part of the U.S. global unified command system. Directly resulting from 9/11 terrorist attacks, NORTHCOM was formally established in October and has been assigned the responsibility for homeland security including aerospace, land and sea elements, as well as civil support.³⁹ Canada also created its own equivalent homeland defence headquarters to the U.S. Northern Command, Canada Command.⁴⁰

Noteworthy is the fact that, like NORAD important to note that NORTHCOM is co-located with NORAD in Colorado Springs and that its head commander is the same officer who commands NORAD.⁴¹ This clearly reveals a direct relationship which connects NORAD to NORTHCOM. NMD by being organized under NORAD would this way become a component of U.S. homeland defense as part of NORTHCOM. And ultimately Canadian personnel within NORAD could indirectly participate in NORTHCOM processes. In other words, the participation in NMD, would involve Canadians, who could expect to play a greater role in the continental defence missions of both institutions NORAD and, indirectly, NORTHCOM, namely through all the information and intelligence sharing .

Of equal importance is the connected issue of military interoperability. Military interoperability with the United States remains one of the major priorities for the Canadian Armed Forces. The standard definition used by the military bi- and multinational institutions including Canada and the United States (NORAD, NATO, Multinational Interoperability Council, ...) considers that interoperability is to be understood as the "*ability of systems, units or forces to provide services to and accept services from other systems, units or forces and to use the services so exchanged to enable them to operate effectively together.*"

The Canadian *1994 Defense White Paper* poses as goal of Canada's defense policy a continuous and constant support to "*the stability and flexibility of its relationship with the United States to help meet defense requirements in North America and beyond.*"⁴² Otherwise, Canada must be able to operate with the U.S. military armed forces, in a effective manner at sea, on land and in the air. Raising the question of NMD as factor of interoperability enhancement, some experts among which Middlemiss and Stairs pointed out that National Missile Defence System is a greatly elaborated system of interoperability at many levels, and it would be very

³⁹ Lieutenant-General George Macdonald, "Canada-U.S. Defence Relations...", p. 5.

⁴⁰ Joseph T. Jockel and Joel J. Sokolsky, "Renewing NORAD – Now if not forever," *Policy Options*, (July-August 2006), p. 53.

⁴¹ J.L. Granatstein, "A Friendly Agreement in Advance...", p. 11.

⁴² Department of National Defence, "1994 White Paper...", p. 5.

difficult for the Canadian government to express open opposition to NMD participation since it would be inconsistent with the underlying premises of interoperability.

It would also quite complicate the military's attempt to maintain credibility with its American counterpart upon which the implementation of interoperability ultimately depends.⁴³ This argument shows the importance of participation in NMD as part of maintaining required interoperability with the U.S.

Arguments against a Canadian participation in NMD

While some convincing reasons exist for Canada to participate in NMD system, critics have been raised suggesting that it should not take this course of action: the continued value of deterrence, the effect of NMD on global and regional stability, perceptions of technological limitations, and undesirable increases in defense spending. Effect on Global and Regional Stability and the expense/increase in Defense Budget issues are the most mentioned.

- Effect on Global and Regional Stability

Some experts have expressed concerns about NMD deployment causing renewed nuclear arms proliferation not only in Russia, but in Southern Asia as well. Nuclear arms control has been the goal of many agreements including the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties (START), the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty.

The U.S. appears to have concluded that arms control is no longer effective as a stabilizing element. Canada, on the other hand, as previously discussed, has long supported arms control as a method of ensuring non-proliferation, security and stability. The complexity of the issues and the potentially destabilizing effect in South Asia of NMD deployment might have had an impact on Canada's decision to non-participate in the NMD program. It would seem that while Russian concerns appear not to have been allayed with regard to President Putin's recent declarations, the Chinese question is still a factor to consider. China has expressed serious misgivings over the U.S. NMD program. It has rejected arguments regarding missile threats against America and believes that the threat of attacks from "rogue" states is exaggerated. It considers that the real aim of NMD is to contain Chinese power and influence.⁴⁴ This position is probably due to the belief that NMD could provide an effective strategic

⁴³ Danford W. Middlemiss and Denis Stairs, "The Canadian forces and the Doctrine of Interoperability: The Issues," *Policy Matters*, Vol. 3 No. 7, June 2002, p. 32.

⁴⁴ Elizabeth Speed, "Spotlight on...China," in Department of National Defence, Directorate of Strategic Analysis, *Strategic Assessment 2001*, Ottawa, Canada, 2001, p. 33.

defence against its currently small arsenal of approximately 24 strategic missiles.

For Canada, it will be important to determine whether this issue is significant enough to be considered as a “show-stopper”, or one that should be addressed through diplomatic or other means.

- Expense/Increase in Defense Budget

Canadian current declining defense budgets result in considerable financial pressures on the Defense Department undergone in the 1990s. During that time, it was often reported that cuts in defense funding made it difficult for DND to fulfill its requirements and maintain the demanding tempo that resulted from operations after the end of the Cold War. In fact, in February 2003, the Department was still facing a shortfall of over \$900 million for the fiscal year ending in March 2003.⁴⁵ It would therefore not be unreasonable to expect that there would be concerns with the financial implications regarding a decision for Canada to participate in NMD. If it were determined that the cost of participation would be unacceptably high, it might be a valid reason to question Canadian participation in the NMD program. Granatstein points out that the *Finance Department* might have some concerns that if Canada expands NORAD to cover homeland defense, financial pressures might be strong enough that they could be difficult to ignore.⁴⁶ However, it is expected that increased attention in terms of Canadian participation in NMD will likely be directed to the budgetary costs for Canada, especially considering the continuing financial strain in the defense budget.⁴⁷

Les opinions exprimées ici n'engagent que la responsabilité de leur auteur.

⁴⁵ Honourable John McCallum, “Speaking Notes for the Minister of National Defence at the Conference of Defence Associations Annual General Meeting,” 27 February 2003.

⁴⁶ J.L. Granatstein, “A Friendly Agreement in Advance...,” p. 11.

⁴⁷ James Fergusson, “Déjà Vu: Canada, NORAD...,” p. 20.