

The Future of Canada's Role in Hemispheric Defense

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After 9/11, the Bush Administration moved rapidly to form the Office of Homeland Security and a new military organization responsible for homeland defense, US Northern Command (NORTHCOM). In accordance with US law, NORTHCOM was established as a US-only military organization, one with unique hemispheric responsibilities. Upon the command's activation in October 2002, the United States now had inescapable influence on a newly defined geographic area of responsibility that included Canada and Mexico.¹ This unilateral move did not go unnoticed either to the north or south, and it revived within Canadian political circles long-standing concerns about Canada's national sovereignty. The Canadian government was concerned about how US Northern Command would affect both the Canada-US defense and security partnership and its own role in this relationship.

On 5 December 2002, then-Secretary of State Colin Powell and the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, William Graham, signed the Diplomatic Agreement for Enhanced Military Cooperation between Canada and the United States. Although heralded as a significant geopolitical event, the reality was that the agreement was politically and strategically more important for Canada than it was for the United States.² Once again, the defense of the North American continent, the Canadian-US defense and security partnership, the issue of Canadian national sovereignty, and the historical tendency of the United States to act unilaterally returned to the forefront of Canadian politics. Because of the unilateral actions taken by the United States after 9/11, Canada believed it was on the verge of being marginalized. The reason was that with the establishment of Northern Command, the utility of the long-standing North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), a diplomatically

crafted strategic partnership, was also being questioned. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, NORAD had not taken the necessary steps to adapt to the new defense and security paradigm that had started to emerge because of a new strategic threat—global militant Islamic extremism. The reality was that the NORAD Agreement, and its associated organizational structure, had been formulated based on the concept of deterrence and a binational response to an attack by the Soviet Union. On 11 September 2001, this 44-year-old Canadian- US defense and security paradigm was unceremoniously altered, and a new one had now taken its place.

The purpose of this article is threefold: First, to address what Canada's future role will be in continental defense, both short and long term, in a post-9/11 defense and security environment. Second, how will Canada adapt to the new mutual national security issues that have emerged as a result of 9/11? Finally, what might the ramifications be if the foundation that supports Canada's position as a strategic partner continues to erode? Since 9/11, Canada's role in this long-standing defense and security relationship has slowly atrophied, and it could even be in doubt.³ A couple of key factors are the reasons why this particular situation has manifested itself. One is that since the end of the Cold War, the capabilities of Canada's armed forces have steadily declined—so much so that questions are now being raised by the United States concerning interoperability. A second is that the US Office of the Secretary of Defense—rather than the Office of the Secretary of State—seems to have become the more dominant and influential organization concerning how the United States will continue to behave and operate in this long-standing defense and security alliance. This shift in emphasis is directly linked to the United States' unilateral approach to security that emerged following 9/11. That change caused a gap to form in the Canada-US defense and security partnership. How did that happen, what were the factors that led to this situation developing, how did Canada respond, and what are the implications for Canada as a mutual player in this defense and security partnership in the post-9/11 world?

To provide a basis for a better understanding of what the future holds for Canada in hemispheric defense, the next section of this article examines the history of the Canada-US security partnership. It addresses Canada's long-standing concerns about national sovereignty, the tendency of the United

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States to periodically take unilateral action on the continent in support of its own interests, and the documented cooperative spirit of both nations in defending North America. This historical summary will highlight both the roots of the Canada-US defense alliance and Canada's role in hemispheric defense. History shows Canada's inherent willingness to cooperate with the United States and a comparable willingness on the part of the United States to accept Canada as a worthy continental defense and security partner even though Canada contributes fewer resources to the task.⁴

The subsequent section addresses Canada's response to US unilateralism after 9/11—the championing of an initiative to enhance military cooperation. The purpose of the effort was to redress a gap that had emerged in the Canada-US security relationship following 9/11, and to reinvigorate Canada's apparently atrophying position. The final section of the article will address Canada's future prospects as a partner in hemispheric defense and whether the initiative to enhance military cooperation has had a positive long-term effect. For the short term, Canada has tried to strengthen its position as a mutual partner. For the long term, Canada's role as a productive partner in this relationship could be in doubt because of two key factors. The first of these is that the capabilities of Canada's armed forces since the end of the Cold War have atrophied because of numerous peacekeeping missions, years of neglect, and the nation's inherent reliance on the United States to provide a majority of the resources for hemispheric defense.⁵ Second, with the forming of US Northern Command, the United States has seriously started questioning both the utility and need for NORAD. The reality of the situation, then, is this: if Canada permits doubt to continually creep into the Canada-US defense and security partnership in the post-9/11 environment, it may find itself being slowly ushered out.

Balancing Cooperation with Sovereignty

To properly characterize Canada's role in defending North America, it is necessary to examine how both Canada and the United States have historically approached cooperative defense, as well as the trends in Canadian-US foreign and defense policy. Despite a tendency on the part of the United States to act unilaterally, Canada has made concerted efforts to maintain this relationship without seriously jeopardizing its own sovereignty. Historically, it has been Canada's Department of National Defence which advocates cooperation with the United States, while Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs advocates protecting Canadian sovereignty.⁶ Over the years, the Canadian military has been successful in convincing Canada's political leadership, especially its diplomats, of the necessity for collaborating with the United States on matters of continental defense.

Long before the establishment of the 1940 Canadian-US defense partnership, Canada had continually opted for the more secure policy of cooperation with the United States in order to maintain her sovereignty, instead of taking a more rigid and vulnerable stance.⁷ If there is one theme that best characterizes the Canada-US partnership, it is the issue of sovereignty versus cooperation in continental defense. This issue has been the centerpiece of the relationship that has governed the actions of both nations, and it is a principal concern for one. For example, in 1938 President Franklin Delano Roosevelt gave a speech at Queens University in Kingston, Ontario. President Roosevelt told his Canadian audience that in the event of an attack, “The people of the United States will not stand by if domination of Canada is threatened by any other Empire.”⁸

The purpose of President Roosevelt’s speech, evidently, was to give assurances to Canada that the United States, even though it was following a strict isolationist policy, would not idly stand by if its neighbor to north needed help. Another possibility was that President Roosevelt was sending a signal to Canada that it needed to do more to ensure a strong defense or else the United States would take matters into its own hands. Whatever the intent, the speech caused a political stir in Canada. In response, Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King issued a statement promising that Canada would not allow an enemy to march south unopposed. The reality was that Canada faced the possibility that the United States might act unilaterally to protect the continent. The realization set in that “Canada had to bolster its own defences to alleviate its neighbor’s concerns.”⁹

Regardless of any extant political differences, President Roosevelt believed that mutual cooperation was essential. In June 1940, he proposed the forming of a binational defense board; its function would be to develop plans for continental defense. Canada accepted the proposition willingly and without hesitation. The President and the Prime Minister then released a joint press statement, with Prime Minister King dubbing the new defense and security arrangement as the “Ogdensburg Agreement.” With this single act, Canada and the United States established a joint board for addressing matters of continental defense and security—the Permanent Joint Board on Defense (PJBD)—and a new strategic collaborative partnership was born. Throughout the remainder of World War II, the PJBD was the key link between Washington and Ottawa.

Although this new strategic partnership served both nations well, the building of the Alaskan Highway by the United States during World War II demonstrated the need for a measure of caution on the part of Canada. While the highway was under construction, the United States positioned a large number of forces on Canadian soil. Over time, Canadian politicians and diplomats became vocal about this large American presence in the western part of Can-

ada. Canadian High Commissioner Vincent Massey issued an unapologetic statement from his post in London, remarking that “Canada has been too preoccupied with her own war effort to cope with the Americans who unfortunately under the cover of the needs of war are acting in the Northwest as if they owned the country.”¹⁰ Before the war’s end, Canada had obtained guarantees of withdrawal from both the Roosevelt and the Truman administrations. Although the Canadian political leadership recognized that the US actions were anchored in good faith, the relative ease with which they occurred signaled a need for Canada to guard itself against future intrusions on its national sovereignty.¹¹

With the forming of the new Joint Military Cooperation Committee (MCC) in 1946, the cooperative approach to continental defense continued after the end of World War II, but not at the same level of effort. With the perceived absence of any real threat, the MCC had trouble convincing officials in either government of the need for improved defense plans. New defense and security needs for North America did not become readily apparent until 1948 with the onset of the Cold War. Subsequently, Canada and the United States strengthened their defense and security relationship in two ways. In 1949, both Canada and the United States became partners in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Almost a decade later, the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) was established.

The Canadian Parliament accepted the NATO Treaty with little discussion or debate. When it came time to adopt the NORAD Agreement, Canadian diplomats expressed serious reservations centered on two issues. First, an American general would be the NORAD commander, and this had implications for Canadian national sovereignty. Second, there was no diplomatic language in the NORAD Agreement linking it to the NATO Treaty.¹² The Department of National Defence saw the need for NORAD and became a strong advocate for Canadian involvement. Canadian military leaders believed that Canada needed to be an active participant in this initiative or else face the possibility that the United States could and would take action against an impending strategic bomber attack without Canada’s help. In the end, the Department of National Defence, working in collaboration with the US Joint Staff, got the NORAD Agreement pushed through the Canadian parliamentary system. After almost a year of internal Canadian political debate, the NORAD Agreement was signed in 1958.

For more than 40 years thereafter, little happened to shake this lasting strategic partnership. Then came the attacks of 11 September 2001. In the weeks that followed, the US Office of the Secretary of Defense took the lead in initiatives for enhancing the defense of the United States. On 21 September 2001, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Hugh Shelton, the Vice Chairman, General Richard Myers, and the other service chiefs signed a

letter to the Secretary of Defense recommending a new approach to homeland security.¹³ The objective was to establish a single US organization responsible for conducting the full spectrum of security actions related to homeland defense, to include serving as a focal point for interagency coordination as well as orchestrating cooperative actions with neighboring governments—i.e., Canada and Mexico.¹⁴ Although it was not readily apparent at the time, a profound large-scale change had just occurred in the Canadian-US defense and security relationship. With the Office of the Secretary of Defense taking the initiative after 9/11, a power shift occurred wherein the Department of Defense, rather than the Department of State, had become the more dominant and influential player in setting the tone for how the United States would conduct itself in future matters of North American defense and security.¹⁵

In mid-February 2002, a Pentagon-sponsored joint planning and implementation team told Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld that if the DOD hoped to achieve a 1 October 2002 Initial Operational Capability (IOC) milestone for this new organization, it would need an answer back from Canada no later than late May 2002. By early to mid April 2002, a draft concept calling for a new US homeland defense command (Northern Command), which included an expanded NORAD, was ready to be presented to both governments. The US Department of Defense contacted the Canadian Department of National Defence on this new approach to North American security. It emphasized that the US government would need an answer back from Canada no later than the end of May. At a press conference on 17 April 2002, Secretary Rumsfeld announced the development of the new North American defense and security organization, describing the change as “the most significant reform in our nation’s military command structure within the last 50 years.”¹⁶

Unfortunately, the Canadian government did not provide a timely response to Secretary Rumsfeld’s proposal. The United States then pressed forward without Canadian participation. In view of these events, one readily wonders why Canada was slow to respond, and why the United States decided to take a unilateral approach. From the perspective of diplomacy, one would reasonably assume that government-to-government consultations were taking place as the DOD’s deadline drew near. Was this a case of Canada needing another month or longer, or was it simply that the United States did not care whether Canada joined or not?

Senior Canadian and US military officers assigned to the NORAD and NORTHCOM headquarters have provided insights into these questions.¹⁷ These officers have explained that a number of factors contributed to the reason why Canada was slow to respond, and why the United States pressed ahead unilaterally. One was that Canadians in general did not understand or fully appreciate how traumatized America was, and that the United States

was on a war footing. For the United States, time was of the essence. The Canadian officers also believed that their political leaders had not done a very good job of explaining the situation to the country as a whole, and because of this, the swift action taken by the United States caught Canada off guard.

Another factor relates to Canada's parliamentary form of government. In the Canadian system, an issue before Parliament has to be thoroughly debated and a consensus reached before a decision is made. This is different from the US system, where Congress does not have to reach a complete consensus on an issue before passing legislation. The issue of sovereignty forced the Canadian Parliament into a lengthy debate over what to do about the US proposal to expand NORAD. This situation was similar to the long discussions that took place in the Canadian Parliament in the late 1950s over the original NORAD Agreement. As the debate dragged on, inertia set in, and the deadline came and went without the Canadian government's giving a reply. Could the United States have given Canada more time to respond, knowing that discussions on such important matters historically take time? The answer is probably yes. Evidence to support such a contention came from one senior US officer at NORAD who believed that because of the swift US action to make Northern Command operational, the United States actually had stood up this new organization "in Canada's face."¹⁸

In early June 2002, the Office of the Secretary of Defense officially announced the formation of the new US-only unified command called Northern Command (NORTHCOM). With this unilateral move, the United States defined an entirely new approach to military operations on the North American continent. This action was historically significant because for the first time, the "United States, Canada, and Mexico were included within an area of responsibility for a [US only] geographic combatant commander."¹⁹

Canada's Reaction and Response

According to senior military officers at NORAD, Canada's sense of urgency after 9/11 was not as great as was that of the United States, even though Canadians and their government were intensely sympathetic in response to what had just happened.²⁰ With the forming of Northern Command, those in the Canadian government recognized that they had underestimated the seriousness of the intentions of the Bush Administration. Canada then understood that if it were to continue its long-established role in hemispheric defense, it would have to become a more active player in this newly crafted defense and security paradigm. Indeed, for the first time since the establishment of the Canadian-US defense partnership in 1940, Canada was now on the verge of not only exclusion from decisions relating to continental defense, but decisions relating to its own territory as well. In addition, the unilateral moves of the United States had

jeopardized the viability and utility of the NORAD Agreement. Canadian and US officers at NORAD headquarters, and Canadian officers at the National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa, recognized that Canada had missed an important strategic opportunity.²¹ Action was now required to demonstrate to the United States that Canada could be trusted to remain a serious defense and security partner in the post-9/11 milieu.

On 11 July 2002, the Canadian Cabinet authorized the creation of a negotiating team to enter into discussions with the United States on the need to enhance Canadian and US military cooperation. The lead organization for the US side was the Department of Defense. Likewise, the Canadian Cabinet named the Department for National Defense as the lead agency for the Canadian side, with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) serving as cosponsor. At their first meeting, the US team informed its Canadian counterparts that the only option the US government would consider was an expanded NORAD. This unexpected announcement had the immediate effect of polarizing the Canadian team over the issue of cooperation versus sovereignty. Once again, Canadian concerns about national sovereignty stalled all discussions on enhancing military cooperation. Eventually, DFAIT became convinced that the initiative was in Canada's best interest. Negotiations resumed between Canada and the United States regarding the drafting of an agreement for enhanced military cooperation. On 5 December 2002, the Diplomatic Note for Enhanced Military Cooperation was signed.

The initiative for enhancing military cooperation between Canada and the United States was concluded at the end of May 2006.²² Although the final report contains many bold, visionary, and innovative recommendations for implementing large-scale change, such as the one calling for transforming NORAD, the planning group has not been successful in gaining acceptance for any of these by either government. Because of this situation, the planning group has unfortunately produced very little in terms of tangible products beyond an interim and final report. The problem is that a number of high-level political factors, which were resident from the start and were beyond the control of the planning group, prevented it from gaining full acceptance for its stated recommendations.

Two factors in particular were how Canada and the United States each viewed the initiative to enhance military cooperation, and their subsequent attitudes toward the Bi-National Planning Group. Government and military officials at both the Canadian National Defence Headquarters and the Pentagon recognized that Canada had more to win or lose out of this joint venture than the United States. Why? Because the United States now had Northern Command, and Canada had nothing comparable except the existing NORAD defense and security model that after 9/11 had been rendered almost

obsolete. All parties understood that the effort to enhance military cooperation was strictly a Canadian-sponsored initiative, of which the main objective was to assist Canada in stemming the tide of marginalization that had emerged after it had failed to join Northern Command.

What further complicated the situation was the stated policy of the United States that it would resort to unilateral preemptive action to defend itself. This policy had been spelled out in its 2002 *National Security Strategy* (and has been reaffirmed in the 2006 *National Security Strategy*). When taking all of these factors together, what emerged was a situation where on the surface the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff were providing what appeared to be a modest level of support. But what was actually brewing underneath may have been a completely different matter. It is safe to say that the Pentagon's attitude toward the initiative as a whole was not one of unbridled enthusiasm.²³ In any strategic collaborative alliance, both parties must be pulling hard and in the same direction in order for the organization to have any measure of success. If one of the partners is pulling hard and the other is just giving half measures, the effort will not get very far down the road. Unfortunately, this was the political environment that the Bi-National Planning Group was forced to contend with during its life span. What made the situation for the planning group even more problematic was that these political hurdles had been embedded long before the planning group began functioning in February 2003, so right from the start it was condemned to fighting an uphill battle.

One central question remains, and that is whether the work of planning group has led to a long-term strengthening of Canada's role in hemispheric defense simply because of its very existence and what it tried to accomplish. What is notable about the initiative to enhance cooperation is not that it became a catalyst for making large-scale change stick. Rather, the work of the planning group has helped push people on both sides of the border to start engaging in dialog regarding the future of the Canada-US defense and security partnership. In addition, the increased Canadian presence on US soil supported Canada's short-term goal of ensuring it is not excluded from the North American defense and security decisionmaking process.²⁴ In other words, the qualitative intangibles that have emerged because of the planning group's work may become more important in the long run than any quantitatively defined tangible products that it might have ever produced.

As previously addressed, the effort to enhance military cooperation was a Canadian-crafted diplomatic response to a profound change that had occurred in the Canada-US security relationship. This change constituted a shift in geopolitical power, where the US Department of Defense and not the Department of State had become the more dominant and influential organization concerning how the United States would approach both current and fu-

ture continental defense and security matters. Such a statement, however, begs an important question, because on the surface it makes logical sense that the Department of Defense would be the lead organization to guide matters of continental defense. When delving deeper into the phenomenon, however, another picture emerges.

The reason why such a change is important is directly linked to the NORAD Agreement—a diplomatic document that both nations have signed. As noted, this agreement is one of the main pillars of the Canada-US defense and security partnership. After 9/11, the Department of Defense, due to its nature and characteristics, moved rapidly to address the emerging issues of homeland defense. The State Department, by its nature and characteristics, was not able to respond as fast. By taking quick action, the Department of Defense was able to seize the political high ground, both domestically and internationally, on matters of defense and security. With the establishment of US Northern Command, the Department of Defense had, in a single stroke, trumped a long-standing diplomatic agreement, rendering it nearly, if not completely, irrelevant. The new Northern Command's mission statement included some of the same functionalities that were previously handled by NORAD, such as air defense, and included a number of new ones, such as maritime operations, land operations, and consequence management support to civil authorities. These latter mission activities were functions that NORAD was not chartered to do. Additionally, and of equal importance, was that Northern Command was a US-only organization that could accomplish both the overlapping and new mission areas without Canadian participation.

As a result, Canada realized that it had to demonstrate to the United States its intention to remain a serious and trusted partner in hemispheric defense. The incontrovertible reality was that the United States now had the will, the means, and the instruments to perform the mission of continental defense without Canada's input or assistance. What was uncovered, then, was Canada's "hidden-hand objective" for promoting and championing the initiative to enhance military cooperation. This fundamental objective was the need to bolster its own role in hemispheric defense while bridging a defense and security gap that had emerged because of a shift of political power and America's unilateral actions after 9/11.²⁵

What Does the Future Hold?

Before 9/11, the defense of North America was still oriented on a Cold War paradigm—responding to a possible strategic bomber and missile attack. Canada's role in that activity was as a strategic defense and security partner, working in conjunction with the United States to defend the continent by executing the aerospace mission areas that were outlined in the NORAD

Agreement.²⁶ These functional mission areas included tactical warning, assessment, and response. Each was constructed and formulated according to the premise of a well-defined, symmetrical, and unambiguous enemy and threat.

The events of 11 September 2001 completely altered this ingrained Cold War defense and security mindset. Overnight, Canada's role in continental defense expanded from one based on a peacetime environment to a wartime footing, even though a majority of Canada's populace has not yet come to grips with this new normal state and America's sense of urgency.²⁷ A new continental defense paradigm would have to be formulated according to a 21st-century threat and enemy that is now unambiguous, amorphous, amoeboid, cellular, and asymmetrical. The events of 9/11 have expanded Canada's defense and security collaborative role beyond the traditional bomber/missile scenario to one that now includes law enforcement, border security, the projection of armed combat overseas, land operations, binational consequence management support, maritime information-sharing, and integrated maritime and land intelligence analysis and assessment.²⁸ More important, Canada must continue to demonstrate to the United States, by its words and deeds, that it can be trusted to do its part in this new 21st-century continental security environment.

After 9/11, the role of trusted partner in continental defense was tested and then strained when Canada failed to join the new Northern Command, when the United States began undertaking a unilateral approach to defense and security, and when the Canadian political leadership decided not to support the invasion of Iraq. The events of 9/11 also brought to the forefront what many defense officials on both sides of the border knew to be true, even if it was not openly discussed. The fact was that a chasm existed between the capabilities of the US military forces and those of Canada.²⁹ A less-capable Canadian military has serious ramifications not only from the perspective of interoperability, but also with regard to trust. Doubts have started to emerge on the US side whether Canada could even punch below its weight, let alone above it.³⁰

Through the efforts of senior officers in the Department of National Defence and NORAD, Canada has taken action to demonstrate to the United States that it is and will continue to be a trusted partner in matters of North American defense, and that it is serious about closing the "capabilities gap." It accomplished this by demonstrating Canadian political will through action. Canada championed the establishment of a binational planning organization to address enhancing military cooperation between Canada and the United States. In addition, it has recently announced plans to increase defense spending in the out years. Canada has cooperated with the United States in securing the borders, has made improvements in intelligence sharing, and has assisted in tracking down terrorists.³¹ In the short term, these actions have helped to shore-up the sagging Canadian-US defense relationship, and cooperative efforts have been under-

taken to improve maritime information-sharing at the tactical and operational levels. From a long-term perspective, however, the picture is less clear.

Looking into the future, Canada's role as a trusted partner in continental defense is being seriously reexamined. Recent Canadian political actions have overshadowed whatever capital gains might have been made by the concerted efforts of the planning group and previous announcements on plans to increase military spending. These actions include Canada's decision not to collaborate with the United States on ballistic missile defense and its unwillingness to accept the planning group's recommendation that the current NORAD organization be transformed to include land and maritime forces.³² Additionally, there is a debate brewing within the Canadian public and press about what the country's long-term commitment and role should be in Afghanistan.

Because of these factors, doubt has crept back into the Canada-US defense and security relationship. That doubt could drive the United States to seriously question whether its northern partner has the political will to pull its share and to do its part to secure the continent from attack.³³ Historical and recent events demonstrate a willingness on the part of the United States to take unilateral action on the continent if it believes such is necessary to protect its own interests. In terms of either a ballistic missile or maritime attack, the possibility exists that the United States would consider defecting from the partnership if Canadian policymaking causes the United States to lose confidence in its partner's willingness, resolve, or ability to take action.³⁴

In the long run, Canada's role could become more marginalized as the United States slowly begins to abandon Canada as trusted partner and follows a unilateral approach if the situation warrants such action. Currently, there is evidence to indicate such a change in attitude. One instance in particular involves Canadian military personnel assigned to NORAD, working in offices responsible for missile defense. For political reasons, Canada has been forced to remove its staff officers from those agencies.³⁵ Additionally, as the work on missile defense moves forward, national politics could have serious implications for the 24/7 work centers contained within the Cheyenne Mountain Complex—the nerve center for defense of the North American continent. Various work centers within the complex, such as the Command Center, Missile Warning Center, and Air Operations Center, have both Canadian and US military personnel assigned. If a missile defense event occurs either in training, testing, or as a real-world attack, Canadian personnel working in these centers could be asked to leave until the event is over.³⁶

The inability of the planning group to effect large-scale change, and to gain acceptance for its recommendation that called for expanding military cooperation between Canada and the United States by transforming the aging NORAD, is truly unfortunate. Canada's decision not to participate in missile

defense is probably the principal contributing factor for the demise of the planning group's efforts. The group was established to help bridge a defense and security gap that had emerged between Canada and the United States after the forming of Northern Command. Due to the high level of mutual respect, innovation, positive attitudes, and dedicated professionalism that existed among the Canadian and US staff officers assigned to the unit, the organization was instrumental in helping to close that gap. The effort in the short term has also helped to strengthen Canada's role in continental defense. The long-term outlook, however, is another matter.

General Rich Hillier, Chief of the Canadian Defense Staff, and Rear Admiral Ian Mack, commander of the Canadian defense liaison staff in Washington, D.C., have tried in recent statements to put the inability of the planning group to gain acceptance of its recommendations for transforming NORAD and securing large-scale change in a positive light. Both have praised the work of the planning group in enhancing cooperation, and they have stated that in lieu of a revamped NORAD Agreement, a scaled-down plan will be implemented that is oriented toward greater cooperation in maritime information-sharing.³⁷ A closer examination suggests that these senior officers are concerned about what the ramifications might be for Canada for its failure to embrace large-scale change to the current NORAD defense and security paradigm, because the opposite of transformation and growth within an organization is atrophy, stagnation, and irrelevance.³⁸

In the final analysis, the reality is that a strategy-based planning organization and initiative was not needed to extract such modest operational and tactical information-sharing results. Those ends could have been achieved through the normal processes and protocols that already existed between the headquarters staffs of NORAD and Northern Command. A strategic planning organization is one that has the political influence to make recommendations for large-scale change, and then to make those changes stick. Unfortunately for the Canada-US Bi-National Planning Group, this did not happen before it adjourned at the end of May 2006.

The inability of the Canadian government to overcome anxieties about preserving its national sovereignty and accepting the planning group's visionary recommendations for strategic large-scale change, coupled with a mundane increase in maritime collaboration, cooperation, and information-sharing, are factors that may cast doubts on what Canada's future role will be in matters of continental defense and security. On the other hand, the possibility exists that the seeds planted by the Canada-US Bi-National Planning Group may eventually bear fruit, thus ushering in a new era for Canada as a partner in the defense of North America. When taking everything together, only time, history, and politics will tell which way the pendulum will ultimately swing.

NOTES

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