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Missile Defence & Canada

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT PETER GOLDRING

Canada has been asked to participate in a missile defence system with the United States. Common opinion is that it is one system, one task. Peter Goldring, Member of Parliament for Edmonton East suggests that it is two distinctly separate systems and that the actual missile deployment need not be part of Canadian involvement in a continental intrusion alarm system.

Should Canada be involved with the United States in their missile defence plans? The truth is that Canada has been involved with the United States in missile defence plans for about half a century. The Continental Homeland Intrusion Alarm system of fifty years ago was the "Pine Tree Line" and the Distant Early Warning (DEW) line of dozens of radar bases located across Canada. Ground-based radar systems are still needed to monitor some limited coastal areas and deep water sensors are still needed to monitor our coastal approaches. However, satellites in greatly increased numbers would provide Canada with significantly improved detection and identification of intrusions by offshore threats, such as inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBM), long range bomber aircraft, and ship or submarine born missile intrusions. In fact, satellite surveillance technology of today has the capability to detect and monitor ICBMs or other threat potentials at the earliest stages of possible threat. Forty years ago, this task was given to a very limited number of pilots in U2 spy aircraft, who photographed the missile threat in the building stage in Cuba—i.e. the infamous Cuban Missile Crisis.

A Bomarc "B" anti-ballistic missile at an aircraft museum in Edmonton. Bomarcs were used in an earlier form of "missile defence" in the 1960's.

Canada has also participated in the 1950's version of missile defence with a "bullet" or intruder missile destruction delivery system. In the late 1950s, it was decided that ICBM missile defence would be through anti-ballistic missiles (ABM), rather than by manned, interceptor fighter bomber aircraft, such as the Avro Arrow. Bomarc "B" ABM missiles were installed in batteries in North Bay, Ontario (446 Squadron) and La Macaza, Quebec (447 Squadron), and were fitted with nuclear weapons. They were placed under control of NORAD, based in North Bay and Colorado, with shared Canadian-American command for a similar sounding purpose to today's discussion: to

bring down incoming ICBMs and manned bombers.

The Bomarcs were armed with a rather dirty nuclear device designed to proximally explode miles from the target, in hopes of destabilizing or destroying the incoming ICBM missile. Our government of the day, the Liberals, subscribed to this defence mechanism through the Pearson and Trudeau years, up to 1972. When nuclear weaponry was removed from the Canadian ABM missiles, their usefulness ended. Even the much-vaunted Patriot missile of the 1990 Gulf War with conventional explosives had a very poor success ratio against Iraq's rather primitive, 700 mile range, SCUD missiles. These weapons are now intended to be replaced with newer ABM's of improved accuracy, although admittedly these will have a lengthy design curve to become a fully satisfactory weapon.

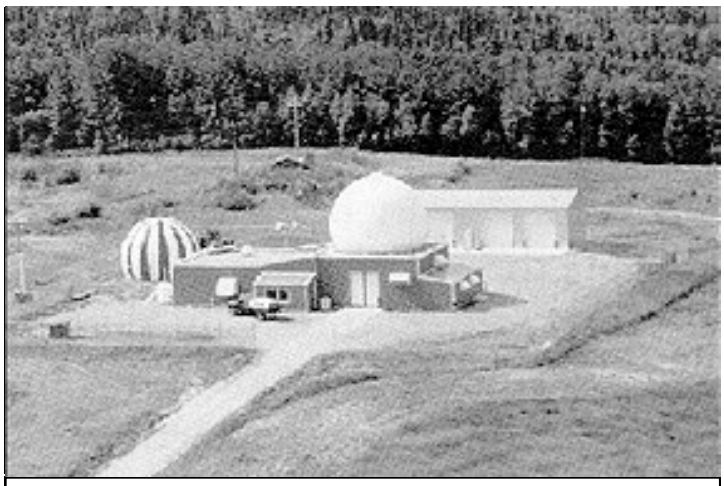
Patriot Missile Batteries used during Gulf War 1 to protect Israel and Coalition troops against Iraqi Scud missiles. It was later determined the missiles were largely ineffective.

Many Canadians are uncomfortable, primarily with the weapons portion or "bullet" component of missile defence, though they need not be too concerned. With our limited resources, missile development and launch sites will be left up to the Americans. There really is no need to have missiles on Canadian soil. Our area of commitment should be to expand the detection portion of the system for more regular and frequent monitoring of Canada's land and sea-based concerns, which would be integrated through NORAD in North Bay and Colorado. The missile or "bullet" to be deployed will necessarily need the input of this intrusion detection system. However, the missiles themselves and guidance systems need not be deployed from Canada for effective threat management. The technologically complex and expensive Bullet or ABM destruction method can be a separate system that should be under NORAD control, but developed and deployed from American soil.

Canada's contribution of intrusion detection satellites would allow the monitoring and patrolling of shipping lanes, offshore fisheries, and arctic areas inaccessible by land forces. Expanded and developed in sufficient numbers, the never blinking "eye in the sky" can increase national and international security monitoring and have many other practical social and economic purposes. Replacing limited range ground radar systems and manned military aircraft with sensitive satellite detectors will greatly increase surveillance and monitoring capabilities, plus it will provide the space orbiting surveillance vehicle for a number of non-defence uses. Canada's contribution of expanded orbiting satellites need not have a singular purpose.

For those who doubt the need to at least develop the capability to detect intrusive threats, Jane's Defense Weekly recently reported two new

missile threats being built by North Korea, capable of hitting North America either by land base or submarine. The worry is that an unstable North Korean government and leader in desperate need for cash may package and sell their offensive missile technology to the highest bidder. North Korea also maintains one of the world's largest submarine fleets, estimated to be more than 75 subs strong, posing a significant nuclear and conventional missile delivery system threat to North America. By comparison, Canada's largest submarine fleet of 8 boats is at West Edmonton Mall, while our Navy has but 4 second hand boats. Missile and incoming threat detection in this context is not a luxury or abstract concept, but a vital necessity for the defence of Canada from coastal, space, air and seaborne incursions predicated by our abysmal capability to perform the duty by conventional military surveillance means.



A radar site of the Pine Tree Line Radar System located in Cold Lake Alberta (1993). Many similar radar sites were spread across Canada.

Over the last 50 years, we have come a long way in international missile threat and intrusion detection, from blips on a radar screen with vacuum tube technology used by NORAD in the 1950s, to today, where satellite micro and nano-chip imaging technology can identify a single car on any street in the world. This technology, refined for military usage, should be expanded to provide Canadian intelligence and defence forces with an accurate picture of today's world threats. Domestically, satellite surveillance is the only viable answer to our rapidly deteriorating coastal and arctic defence operations. The ancient Aurora/Arcturus coastal patrol aircraft are being drastically cut back or eliminated from active duty, leaving our coastal expanses and sparsely populated arctic regions poorly monitored, save for weekend Arctic Ranger patrols on skidoos armed with WW II .303 rifles. Satellite technology can help fill the holes of our present coastal and arctic security gap.

With the distinct possibility of Canada's Arctic waterways opening to regular Trans-Arctic commercial navigation, given the global warming trend, there is a prudent need to better assert Arctic sovereignty, even if only to better direct our isolated skidoo or seadoo patrols to intercept (during ice melts) in the high Arctic. One could imagine from the bridge of the modern-day Manhattan tanker plowing through the waters of the high Arctic recently liberated from the perennial choking ice, a surprised voice saying:

"Captain, there's a small blip on the radar in the water dead ahead. I'm afraid it might be another of those pesky well armed 'Canadian Rangers' on his sovereignty patrol seadoo. Should we prepare to stop for boarding if he signals us to?"

Clearly, we should be doing better and satellite intrusion technology is one way to help.

Canadians have accepted the benefits of the peace of mind of an early warning detection and protection system in the past. Whether we like it or not, Canadian water and land will be monitored from space by satellites of many other countries. We must receive our own signals for our own use and appropriate security responses. For my family, I want to at least have a decent home intrusion alarm system, centrally monitored and capable of providing a quick response by authorities to intrusion threats. Similarly, designing and installing a continental homeland intrusion alarm system is little more than a prudent precaution that gives us peace of mind.

Limited weekend high Arctic Ranger patrols, 50 year-old Sea Kings, ancient Hercules transport aircraft, rusty second-hand submarines, decimated, over-worked Armed Forces personnel, closed bases, decommissioned destroyers. All of these collectively want me to seek something better to give confidence that at least our borders and territory are being monitored. Can Canada have a homeland intrusion alarm system, without missiles? Yes it can. Split the so called missile defence project into two parts: American and Canadian fully integrated Continental Homeland Intrusion Alarm System, and the, American Based Anti-Ballistic Missile Destruction System.

Update: Recently, the Liberal Government vacillated again on Canada's involvement in the missile defence of North America. Clearly the concept needs to be broken down into two parts: 1) A shared continental intrusion detection system, and 2) An American designed and deployed anti-ballistic missile system.

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This brochure series is intended to highlight special issues that Member of Parliament, Peter Goldring, has been involved in. If you wish to comment, please take a moment to fill out the survey below, write or call to the address above.

Your Opinion Matters...

Question #1 Should Canada only be part of the continental intrusion detection system of missile defence with the United States?

☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Question #2 Should Canada be part of both the continental intrusion detection system, and of the missile deployment system with the United States?

☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Comments:_____
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