



to affirm its imperial bona fides by dominating the stratosphere. Although “security” will remain a mantra within the Beltway, the President’s determination to deepen tax cuts for the rich and privatize Social Security accounts for the rest will leave him little cash with which to implement the extremely costly measures required to achieve the “homeland’s” invulnerability to terrorist attacks that current discourse demands. As Prime Minister Paul Martin prepares to welcome the American president to Ottawa, how he handles his discussion of security matters with his US counterpart will be his second greatest challenge as host after handling his political security problem otherwise known as Carolyn Parrish, MP.

We need to review the background to Canada’s bilateral and multilateral security problems before passing briefly to look at the key issues on the present agenda and its flash points that Martin, fronts.

## **Background**

Ever since the first European settlement, Canadians have had to strive for peace, order, and good government in the shadow of an economically nourishing, politically controlling imperial power whose security needs they have had to accommodate in order to receive its military protection.

In the nineteenth century, London’s military strategy for British North America amounted to defending the colonies, later the Dominion of Canada, from the constantly looming possibility of an American invasion. By the 1930s, when the United States had displaced the United Kingdom as its effective centre of political and economic gravity, Ottawa’s strategic position experienced a sea change. In return for President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s assurance that Washington would not “stand idly by” if his northern neighbour were attacked by enemy forces, Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King realized he had to promise that Canada would not allow enemy troops to use its territory to attack the United States.

During World War II, when they agreed on the danger coming from Germany and Japan, the two countries formally committed themselves to adopting a continental approach (through the Permanent Joint Board of Defence) to their regional strategic planning against a possible invasion of their own soil and to integrating their military-industrial capacity for pursuing hostilities in Europe and Asia.

By the time of the Cold War with the Soviet Union, nuclear weapons had been integrated in intercontinental missiles and the United States had become the liberal-capitalist countries’ champion against an expanding socialist bloc. During this stand-off, Canada was the buffer zone, the principal route over which Soviet and American weapons would be directed and, possibly, shot down. In this situation, security policy north of the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel was a

- Bilaterally, the most notable institution in what one could call the country's "external constitution" – that is, the transnational structures in which its system participates – is the North American Air Defence Command (NORAD, 1957), a joint operation in which Canada's air forces were integrated under the US Strategic Air Command. Symbolically, a Canadian officer was made second-in-command. Though no one doubted that the Pentagon remained in absolute control, participation in NORAD gave the Canadian military some involvement in US military planning and access to some US intelligence.

- Multilaterally, Ottawa tried to mitigate the deep asymmetry of this military relationship with Washington by taking an active part in the deliberations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO, 1948) where it could voice such doubts about American strategic thinking as the doctrine of nuclear first strike. In other fora such as the annual Economic Summit, the two countries' formal equality permitted some debate about the Americans' military posture. A famous example of this occurred at the 1982 Summit in Williamsburg when Pierre Trudeau provoked a heated argument with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and President Ronald Reagan about what he considered Great Britain and the United States' dangerously hawkish approach to Soviet relations.

Thus for the last five decades of the twentieth century, the "constitutionalization" of Canada's military orientation was more externally than internally determined. Its norms were frankly to support the US strategic vision, whatever that might be. Its transnational institutions legitimated US dominance through a largely symbolic Canadian participation that was supplemented by membership in other, multilateral institutions. Its administration remained binational, and conflict resolution stayed in the gray zone of inter-governmental relations where muscle and intelligence vie for mastery.

### **Key Issues**

Although the peace dividend resulting from the end of the Cold War allowed for a weakening of this continental military constitution, a decline in Canadian defense capabilities, and a distancing from Washington's strategic thinking, the US catastrophe of September 11, 2001 forced Ottawa to confront a profound dilemma. If it was to keep the Canadian-American economic border open to the trade, investment, and labour flows necessary to sustain the continental economy constitutionalized by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA, 1994), it had to dust off the "Defence against Help" doctrine in order to assure Uncle Sam that terrorists could not use Canada as a base from which to mount another attack on the United States.

Although global terrorism is generally understood as a threat from non-state actors, the administration of George W. Bush constructed its war on terror less as a matter for counter intelligence than as a conventional military attack on two states which it identified as hosts to terrorists, Afghanistan and Iraq. As part of its remilitarization, the US administration also reorganized its territorial defences into a new Northern Command and pushed ahead with the Pentagon's long-gestating plans to provide for land- and then space-based National Missile Defence (NMD).

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expected to lavish rewards on what after all is still a “liberal” government in Ottawa.

As long as an ideologically extreme neoconservative administration runs Washington, Canada will continue to face a difficult military choice. It can accept the logic of belonging within the perimeter of a Fortress America and return to the comfortable dependence of its Cold-War continental constitution. But it could choose the alternative of pursuing its post-terrorist involvement in a globally constituted network of non-hegemonic states trying to establish human security around the world. A multilateral approach which incorporated US concerns about terrorism within a primarily non-military paradigm would continue to be as hard a sell in a second Bush administration as it was in the first.

Dealing with a Kerry administration might have given Ottawa greater room for manoeuvre, particularly in making the case that a serious defence against Islamic terrorism requires an information-technology based, international cooperation at the level of intelligence services, immigration officers, and police work, rather than the unilateral installation of a Star-Wars technology aimed at countering a negligible military risk. Four years is too long a period for Canadians to hold their breath and wish things were not as they are. They have no grounds