Focus
In February 2005, Prime Minister Paul Martin announced that Canada would not take part in the U.S. ballistic missile defence plan. This News in Review module explores the pros and cons of the Canadian decision, with specific emphasis on the part Canada plays in the defence of North America.

Definition
Ballistic refers to projectiles that return to earth through the force of gravity. Ballistics is the study of projectiles and firearms.

Introduction
The president leaned across the table and said to the prime minister, “I’m not taking this position, but some future president is going to say, ‘Why are we paying to defend Canada?’” This is what U.S. President George W. Bush said to Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin at a meeting in December 2004—at least that is what the Washington Post says happened (The Globe and Mail, January 25, 2005). The hottest military topic at the time: Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD). Canada had vacillated on the issue for long enough; the United States wanted Canada on board as a confirmation of the strong defence partnership the two nations had maintained since 1940. The comment by the president was seen by some as a gentle nudge toward Canadian endorsement of U.S. missile defence plans. Others saw the comment as the U.S. strong-arming Canada into co-operation in a highly controversial weapons project.

Defence in the Nuclear Age
BMD finds its origins shortly after the dawn of the nuclear age. Once it had been established that several nations either had or would have the ability to deploy nuclear weapons, defence scientists worked on a way to defend against such attacks. The greatest threat came from the intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), a weapon that could travel from the USSR to the U.S. or vice versa and deliver its nuclear payload on the perceived enemy. From about 1960 onward both Cold War rivals tried to come up with a workable defence shield that could counter the ICBM threat. Efforts seemed futile—the technology just wasn’t there—so in 1972 the U.S. and the USSR signed the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. Seen by many as the blueprint for peace and deterrence in the Cold War era, the ABM Treaty marked a diplomatic breakthrough in the arms race. Both sides agreed to abandon the idea of constructing a defence shield. The ABM went virtually untested until the Cold War heated up in the 1980s. U.S. President Ronald Reagan proposed the construction of a complex weapons system known as the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI). Referred to as “Star Wars” by some critics, SDI was an ambitious program designed to defend the U.S. from ballistic missile attacks. SDI was widely criticized because of its plans to put weapons in space.

NMD: Son of Star Wars
The SDI was reorganized into the Ballistic Missile Defence Organization in the 1990s, with President Bill Clinton proposing a toned-down version of the original plan, sometimes called “son of star wars.” Clinton’s National Missile Defence (NMD) plan called for the construction of a missile defence shield co-ordinating land, sea, and air commands in the interception and destruction of ballistic missiles aimed at the U.S. By the end of his presidency, Clinton decided to let his successor, George W. Bush, determine the fate of the project, since testing indicated that the missile defence system didn’t work and the appetite for spending money on the program had waned. However, after September 11, 2001, Bush gave the NMD the resources it needed. By fall 2004, the first interceptor missiles were in place at the U.S. military base in Fort Greely, Alaska.
Canada and BMD
The Canadian and U.S. militaries have been closely linked since the formation of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence (PJBD) by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister King in 1940. The formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) followed in 1949 and the North American Aerospace Defence Agreement (NORAD) in 1958. Clearly both countries have viewed the defence of North America as being of pre-eminent importance. However, the issue of BMD has led to a political and military impasse between the two allies. The Americans view BMD as being a non-negotiable national security strategy that they will pursue with or without Canada’s involvement. Many Canadians see BMD as leading to a new arms race and the weaponization of space—a non-negotiable proposition in Canadian politics. Critics suggest that this strategy is equivalent to trying to hit a bullet with another bullet—an idea that is highly improbable with today’s technology.

The Politics of Missile Defence
By February 2005, Canada felt compelled to make a decision on BMD. Canadian Ambassador to the U.S., Frank McKenna, forced the issue when he made a public statement claiming that Canada was already on board with the U.S. missile defence plan. McKenna cited an amendment to the NORAD protocol giving military personnel at Peterson Air Force Base permission to share information with the U.S. missile defence command. Since the Americans did not expect Canada to pay a dime for BMD, McKenna reasoned that Canadian participation would take the shape of information sharing. The ambassador’s comments sent Liberal politicians in Ottawa into damage control. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Defence emphasized that no firm decision on BMD had been made. Opposition members accused the government of making a secret deal with the U.S., promising Canadian involvement in BMD. Within days of the McKenna comment, Prime Minister Martin announced that Canada would take a pass on BMD. Many Canadians breathed a collective sigh of relief; the Americans expressed their displeasure. U.S. Ambassador Paul Cellucci claimed that Canada was blindly giving up its seat at the table when it comes to missile defence; U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice abruptly cancelled a trip to Canada. However, for Prime Minister Martin staying out of BMD became a matter of political survival. A torrent of opposition in Ottawa had put his minority government on thin ice. It was likely that the Liberal government would fall given the opposition to BMD from within the Liberal caucus and from other members of the House of Commons.

Questions
1. What do you think of Bush’s comment to Martin at the beginning of the article? Was it a fair comment for him to make?
2. Identify the following acronyms. BMD, ABM, SDI, PJBD, NORAD, NATO, and NMD.
3. What is ballistic missile defence? How did it develop? Where do things presently stand with regard to missile defence for Canada and the U.S.?
4. Describe Canada’s defence relationship with the U.S.
MISSILE DEFENCE: CANADA TAKES A PASS

Video Review

As you view the video, carefully respond to the questions.

1. a. What was President Ronald Reagan’s SDI?

   b. What was it popularly called?

2. How did the events of September 11, 2001, elevate the status of missile defence?

3. What threats exist that have prompted the U.S. to pursue the construction of a missile defence shield?

4. Why does the U.S. want Canada to join the missile defence plan?

5. Why do some critics think that the missile defence shield will never work?

6. What agreement did many believe showed that Canada was on board with missile defence?

7. How did the U.S. turn up the pressure on Canada to join the missile defence plan? How did Canada respond?

8. What did Canadian Ambassador to the U.S., Frank McKenna, say that brought the issue to a head?

9. What decision did Prime Minister Paul Martin eventually make regarding missile defence?

10. How did the U.S. respond to Canada’s decision regarding ballistic missile defence?

11. What role will Canada play if the Northern Command has to deal with a ballistic missile threat?

Quote

“We don’t get it. We don’t understand why Canada would want to give up sovereignty on this issue to the United States.” — Paul Celluci, American Ambassador to Canada, from News In Review video module

“I think, with some justification, the United States of America has looked at us and felt that we have not been carrying our full share of the load in terms of defence.” — Frank McKenna, new Canadian Ambassador to the United States, National Post, March 3, 2005
12. Who decided not to visit Canada after the Canadian decision on ballistic missile defence was made?

13. How would you describe the relationship between Canada and the U.S. at the present time?

14. Outline your own position on Canadian involvement in BMD.
MISSILE DEFENCE: CANADA TAKES A PASS
What Is It? Why Does the U.S. Want It?

The National Missile Defence (NMD) program is a strategy designed to defend the U.S. against a ballistic missile attack. Experts equate the strategy to trying to hit a bullet with another bullet. According to the Pentagon, the NMD initiative is vital due to threats from “rogue states” like North Korea that are attempting to develop nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, and the possibility of an accidental nuclear attack by Russia or China. Once in place, the NMD system would shoot down incoming missiles before they could reach American soil. Here are the component parts of the technically complex NMD plan.

Battle Management Command, Control, and Communication (BMC3) is the overall battle management structure of the NMD system. BMC3 includes:
- Battle Management Command and Control (BMC2) — considered the “brains” of NMD. Designed to detect, monitor, and deploy against any incoming threat against the U.S.
- In-Flight Interceptor Communications Systems (IFICS) — ground-based stations that would provide data to ground-based interceptors moving to destroy incoming ballistic missiles.
- Ground-Based Interceptors (GBIs) — when word of a ballistic missile attack reaches NMD command, ground-based interceptors would be deployed to intercept and destroy the incoming missile outside the earth’s atmosphere. This is called an exoatmospheric (beyond the earth’s atmosphere) interception.
- X-band/Ground-Based Radars (XBR) — multi-function radar that would gather tracking, discrimination, and kill assessment information about incoming missiles. The data would be shared with the BMC2 to guarantee the destruction of the incoming ballistic missile.
- Upgraded Early Warning Radar (UEWR) — upgrading existing early warning systems in an effort to track ballistic missiles targeting the U.S.
- Space-Based Infrared System (SBIRS) — satellite tracking of ballistic missiles heading toward the U.S.
- Sea-Based Interceptors — the NMD plan also calls for the installation of 20 interceptors on AEGIS-class naval cruisers and destroyers.
- Air-Based interceptors — some aircraft would also be equipped with Patriot missiles to intercept incoming ballistic missiles.
- Space-Based Laser and Interceptors — in the future, the NMD plan will also include the construction of space-based tracking and interception capabilities.

Most of this technology is being developed by the U.S. military in an effort to provide an impenetrable ballistic missile defence shield by the middle of the 21st century.


Activity
Write a five- to eight-sentence paragraph that answers the following question:
Based on your analysis of the information presented above, does the NMD seem impenetrable? Explain clearly.
The Cost of NMD

NMD is not an inexpensive proposition. The U.S. Department of Defence estimates that the price tag for the project will exceed US$100-billion. See the chart below for a list of costs.

The United States National Missile Defence (NMD) Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ballistic Missile Defence System</th>
<th>Estimated cost through 2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>250 ground-based interceptors able to shoot down missiles in space</td>
<td>$49-billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Navy system able to shoot down missiles shortly after launch</td>
<td>$16 – 43-billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space-based lasers</td>
<td>$15 – 18-billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space-based interceptors</td>
<td>$12 – 15-billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New missile-tracking satellites</td>
<td>$11-billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven aircraft equipped with lasers</td>
<td>$6-billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$109 – 142-billion</strong></td>
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Analysis

1. Outline your arguments for and against NMD.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arguments For NMD</th>
<th>Arguments Against NMD</th>
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2. In a five- to eight-sentence paragraph, answer the following question:

Is the NMD worth it? Develop a fully supported response.
MISSILE DEFENCE: CANADA TAKES A PASS

The Pros and Cons of BMD

Arguments For Canadian Involvement in BMD

- Canada needs to acknowledge the fact that it is as likely a terrorist target as any other Western democracy. Defending against attack is simply the intelligent and responsible thing to do.
  A ___ D ___

- While terrorists do not have ballistic capabilities today, they may have those capabilities in the future. The U.S. BMD strategy is a long-term defence strategy against such attacks.
  A ___ D ___

- Involvement in BMD guarantees Canada’s future participation in North American defence initiatives put forward by the U.S.
  A ___ D ___

- Participation in the BMD plan will prevent unilateral U.S. action in the defence of North America and reinforce our defence partnership with the U.S.
  A ___ D ___

- BMD is a necessary step in the defence of Canadian sovereignty.
  A ___ D ___

Arguments Against Involvement in BMD

- BMD will lead to an arms race, as nations like Russia and China will feel compelled to develop a missile shield of their own and develop weapons that will dodge the U.S. missile defence shield.
  A ___ D ___

- BMD will lead to the weaponization of space. The U.S. plan already calls for the destruction of incoming ballistic missiles outside of the earth’s atmosphere. The U.S. Department of Defence has been very clear in its desire to control space as a matter of national security. Some critics feel that the BMD plan will evolve to eventually include weapons in space.
  A ___ D ___

- BMD doesn’t work. Tests to date have been overwhelmingly unsuccessful, as the ground-based interceptors have had difficulty distinguishing the target missile from corresponding countermeasures or decoys. If the interceptors mistakenly go after decoys, the ballistic missile would reach its target unimpeded (see the Federation of American Scientists Web site at: www.fas.org/spp/starwars/program/nmd).
  A ___ D ___

- BMD is a threat to international peace; it will lead to the violation of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty and has already led to the U.S. withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972, seen by many as the blueprint for peace in the nuclear age.
  A ___ D ___

- There is no real threat of missiles being fired on the U.S. Any “rogue state” that fires on the U.S. would draw the might of the American military, with nuclear annihilation the likely result. Also, the chances of a nuclear power like Russia or China accidentally firing a ballistic missile at the U.S. is considered remote, with the same retaliatory threat hanging over them as the so-called rogue states.
  A ___ D ___

Quote

“The security of North America is indivisible.” — John Manley, former deputy prime minister, Toronto Star, March 15, 2005

Additional Activity

Use the information on this page to make a determination as to whether Canada should or should not become involved in BMD. Present your findings in the form of a letter to the editor. Consider sending it to a local paper in your community.
NORAD is a joint venture of both the U.S. and Canadian militaries. Founded in 1958 in response to a potential Soviet nuclear bombing of North America, NORAD has evolved into a complex system of ground-based radar installations, satellite intelligence gathering systems, fighter aircraft, and a command structure that combines high-ranking American and Canadian personnel. In fact the commander-in-chief of NORAD is directly responsible to both the prime minister of Canada and the president of the United States. From the NORAD command centre at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs, highly trained military staff seek to detect threats against North America, defend against such threats, and with the might of the Canadian and American military apparatus behind them, deter potential attacks. This is how NORAD seeks to live up to its mandate.

Post 9/11 NORAD

On September 11, 2001, the role of NORAD came under scrutiny when terrorists hijacked commercial aircraft and slammed them into the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon. NORAD was blindsided by the terrorist attacks; they didn’t see them coming because they were trained to deal with attacks coming from the armies of hostile nations, not terrorists groups operating inside the U.S. Canada’s most senior NORAD official, Lieutenant-General Ken Pennie explains, “I don’t think anyone really imagined that anyone would hijack a plane full of innocent people... I can understand why we weren’t prepared to deal with that specific threat, but we are now” (CBC News Indepth: Canada’s Military: www.cbc.ca). Pennie is referring to a renewed sense of purpose at NORAD. Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, NORAD has sought to redefine itself and extend its mission. For example, NORAD has received permission for senior personnel to authorize the shooting down of commercial aircraft that pose a threat to U.S. cities without presidential consent. NORAD is vowing to not be blindsided again.

NORAD and Ballistic Missile Defence

NORAD also stands to play a major role in the U.S. National Missile Defence (NMD) plan. In August 2004, Canada agreed to amend the NORAD agreement to allow commanders at Peterson Air Force Base to share information with military personnel running the missile defence system. This was seen by some as a tacit admission that Canada was on board with ballistic missile defence. The amendment was also the reason, when asked if Canada should be part of the NMD, that Canadian Ambassador to the U.S., Frank McKenna, answered, “We are. We’re part of it now and the question is what more we need” (CBC News in Review, April 2005). McKenna went on to say that the NORAD amendment gives the U.S. the information gathering capacity it needs to put together a successful ballistic missile defence shield for North America.

McKenna’s comments sent the gov-
erning Liberals into damage control. Within days, they had to formally announce that Canada would not take part in the NMD. However, many wonder, with the NORAD amendment in place, how Canada can claim that it is not part of the ballistic missile defence plan.

Analysis

1. What is the mandate of NORAD?

2. How did NORAD’s role in the defence of North America change after September 11, 2001?

3. What role will NORAD play in the NMD?
MISSILE DEFENCE: CANADA TAKES A PASS

The Five Ds of Security

In a brief presented to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance in the winter of 2004, Project Ploughshares proposed the Five Ds of Security. According to Project Ploughshares’ director Ernie Regehr, an effective peace and security strategy should include five basic elements:

• Development — Introduce measures to end local and global poverty. When people have their basic needs met they are less likely to want to wage civil war against the citizens of their own nation or wage international war against their neighbour.

• Democracy — Promote good governance that is highlighted by inclusiveness and mass participation. The promotion of democracy would have fundamental human rights as its bedrock.

• Disarmament — Limit the availability of weapons to nations looking to wage war.

• Diplomacy — Encourage diplomatic efforts aimed at the prevention of armed conflict.

• Defence — Be prepared to resort to the use of force if the full range of peace and security efforts—the other four Ds—have failed.


A Shift in Emphasis

According to Regehr, Canada could establish itself as a world leader if it fully embraced the Five Ds. He calls for a shift in emphasis from defence-dominated spending to a more balanced approach to spending that incorporates the other four Ds. First, let’s examine Canada’s current security spending model:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Security Spending—2004*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3.1-billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$320-million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disarmament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$197-million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diplomacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$187-million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$12.4-billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Security Spending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$16-billion</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*The February 2005 budget called for a $12.8-billion boost in defence spending over the next five years, in addition to modest increases in aid to developing countries.

Regehr claims that Canada could make the world more secure if it increased its security spending from 1.3% to 2% of its gross domestic product (GDP). Canada’s GDP is the value of all goods and services produced in Canada by Canadians. According to Regehr, the bulk of the money should go to development and defence. The rest would be divided between security interests relating to democracy, disarmament, and diplomacy. A new model of security spending would look like this:
It is interesting to note that Project Ploughshares, an ecumenical (containing representatives of several different Christian denominations) peace group, is proposing an increase in security spending. However, Regehr’s proposal calls for the promotion of a balanced approach to security spending, with the goal being to mitigate the number of conflicts in the world. The question is: would such an approach prove more effective than the current model used in Canada?

**Activity**

Assume that you are a member of Parliament trying to get the government to embrace Regehr’s plan. Write a 250- to 500-word report that convinces your fellow parliamentarians to buy into the deal.

Or

Assume that you are a member of Parliament who opposes Regehr’s idea. Write a 250- to 500-word report that convinces parliamentarians that Regehr’s plan is naïve, idealistic, and costly.

**Notes for Report:**

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### MISSILE DEFENCE: CANADA TAKES A PASS

**Who Said It?**

Try to match the following quotes (Column A) with the proper speaker and situation (Column B). Place the letter of the speaker in the space following the quote. The answers follow at the end of the exercise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column A</th>
<th>Column B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. “We will continue to work in partnership with our southern neighbours in the common defence of North America and on continental security. However, ballistic missile defence is not where we will concentrate our efforts.”</td>
<td>a. Prime Minister Paul Martin commenting on concerns that Canadian sovereignty over its airspace might be violated by the U.S. since Canada decided not to participate in BMD (CBC News in Review)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “Canada is a sovereign nation, and we would expect and insist on being consulted on any intrusion into our space.”</td>
<td>b. U.S. President George W. Bush during his December 2004 visit to Canada. Prior to the visit, Bush said he would not bring up the topic of missile defence while in Canada. (CBC News in Review)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. “We’re part of it now and the question is what more we need. There is no doubt in looking back that the NORAD amendment has given . . . has created part of, in fact, a great deal of what the United States means in terms of being able to get the input [it needs] for defensive weaponry.”</td>
<td>c. Prime Minister Paul Martin announcing that Canada would not be part of the missile defence plan. (CBC News in Review)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. “I hope we’ll also move forward on ballistic missile defence co-operation to protect the next generation of Canadians and Americans from the threats we know will arise.”</td>
<td>d. U.S. President George W. Bush at a meeting of North American leaders a month after Canada made its decision regarding BMD (CBC News in Review)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. “There [are] going to be disagreements and differences, and the fundamental question is do we have the capacity to continue moving forward with the relationship, and the answer is absolutely”</td>
<td>e. U.S. Ambassador to Canada, Paul Cellucci after hearing Canada’s decision to take a pass on the American BMD plan. (CBC News in Review)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. “I personally don’t think it’s in Canada’s sovereign interest to be outside of the room when a decision is made about a missile that might be incoming towards Canada. We don’t understand that.”</td>
<td>f. Canadian Ambassador to the U.S., Frank McKenna, referring to the amendment to the NORAD agreement that allowed for the sharing of information with the American missile defence command. (CBC News in Review)</td>
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**Answers:** 1-c; 2-a; 3-f; 4-b; 5-d; 6-e
MISSILE DEFENCE: CANADA TAKES A PASS

Activity: The BMD Debate

For this activity it will be your task to organize and participate in a class debate on the issue of Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD).

Step One: Know Your Topic
Prepare for the debate. Consult the following sources:

• The information found in this News in Review package
• Federation of American Scientists Web site: www.fas.org
• A good debater gets to know both sides of the issue in detail. That way they can prepare an effective argument and can prepare to counter any arguments against their position.

Step Two: Prepare to Debate
You will participate in a role-play debate. This activity asks participants to play the role of one of the stakeholders in the ballistic missile defence debate. See the format explanation below and on the next page for more details.

Step Three: It’s Time to Debate
The debate will focus on Canada’s decision not to participate in the U.S. ballistic missile defence plan.

Role Play Debate Format
• Stakeholder group size: two to three
• Each group member must speak at some point during the debate.
• Each person should assume an identity. Make a name card for the role you are playing, (e.g., New Democratic Party—Jack Layton) and place the card on your desk as part of the debate.

Stakeholders in the BMD debate:
A) Against Canadian Involvement in BMD
The Government of Canada — represented by the Liberal Party
The New Democratic Party
The Bloc Québécois

B) For Canadian Involvement in BMD
The Government of the United States of America — represented by the Republican Party
The Conservative Party (although not all members are supportive)
Structure of the Debate

- Phase 1: Presentation — each group has four minutes to present their position.
- Phase 2: Challenge — each group has two minutes to challenge the position taken by one of the other groups.
- Phase 3: Question Period — each group is invited to pose a question to one of the other groups. Groups that are asked a question have one minute to respond.
- Phase 4: Closing arguments — each group will have two minutes to present a summary of their position.

The teacher or a student may act as the debate moderator in order to guarantee that the debate proceeds in a timely fashion and that the debaters stay on topic. The moderator will select a debate winner based on the strength of the argument made by the victorious group.

The debate moderator may invite Project Ploughshares and the Federation of American Scientists to make submissions to the debate as well.

Those not actively taking part in the debate will play the role of reporters witnessing the event and will write a 200-400 word newspaper article outlining the many arguments and interesting exchanges that take place during the debate. Articles are due the day after the debate.