

Ottawa Journal by David Tilson MP ? Trudeau government must take action on national defence

There's been significant news coverage in recent months and weeks of North Korea dramatically ramping up its nuclear program and missile tests.

There is also no doubt that North Korea's leader, Kim Jong-Un, poses a direct threat to Canada and our allies. This raises legitimate concerns for Canadians about our country's defence capabilities, given the gap left by the current Liberal government to modernize the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD).

Canada's highest ranking generals confirmed that North Korea has the capability to strike continental North America with an inter-continental ballistic missile (ICBM). More specifically, NORAD Deputy Commander Lieutenant-General Pierre St-Amand informed Canadians when he appeared at the Defence Committee last month that the U.S.A. currently doesn't have a policy to strike down a missile aimed toward Canada, which essentially leaves our country defenseless in the event of a missile attack. In light of the Lieutenant-General's statement before the Committee, Canada cannot assume the U.S.A. will come to our defence should a missile strike occur, which essentially means we're left defenceless.

North Korea poses a direct threat to Canada and its allies. Its recent missile tests demonstrate an ability to hit the North American continent. The threat has, therefore, evolved and so too should Canada's response. The current Liberal government must act now to fill the gap in our national defence.

The Conservative Opposition remains committed to protecting Canadians from all threats now and in the future. We call on National Defence Minister Harjit Singh Sajjan to initiate discussions with U.S. Secretary of Defence Mattis on the modernization of NORAD and explore the option of Canada joining the anti-ballistic missile program. We have been partners in NORAD for 60 years; we must continually work with the U.S. to modernize the world's strongest defence partnership. We also continue to support the economic sanctions that have been placed on the North Korean regime. However, it is clear that economic sanctions are not deterring Kim Jong-Un's nuclear ambitions.

The time is now for the current Liberal government to take action to ensure the gap in our national defence is filled to protect Canada from threats today and in the future. Canadians deserve this from their government.

