

Since the mid-1950s, successive Canadian governments have grappled with the issue of Canada's participation in US ballistic missile defence programs. Until Paul Martin's Liberal government finally said no, policy-makers responded to US initiatives with fear and uncertainty as they endlessly debated the implications - at home and abroad - of participation. However, whether this is the end of the story remains to be seen. Drawing on previously classified government documents and interviews with senior officials, James Fergusson assesses Canada's policy deliberations and rationales for avoiding a definitive commitment in response to five major US initiatives. He reveals that a combination of factors resulted in indecision: weak leadership, wrangling between the Departments of External Affairs and National Defence, a belief that the United States would defend Canada without much Canadian participation, and a tendency to place uncertain and ill-defined notions of international security before national defence. Successive Canadian governments have failed to transform the debate over ballistic missile defence into an opportunity to define Canada's strategic interests at home and on the world stage. Balanced and engaging, *Canada and Ballistic Missile Defense* offers the first full account of Canada's uncertain response to US ballistic missile defence initiatives and an exploration of the implications of this indecision. It is essential reading for policy-makers, students, and scholars of Canadian foreign and defence policy as well as anyone who wants a fuller understanding of Canadian-American relations. Published in association with the Canadian War Museum.

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