

**A MILITARY IN SUPPORT OF CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY:
SOME FUNDAMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS**

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Introduction

Historically, Canadians and their governments subscribe to the fiction that their foreign policy determines Canada's defence policy. In reality, as Lewis MacKenzie has put it, Canada is the only Western democracy whose defence policy actually determines the scope and limits of its foreign policy.¹ And these limits of late have mightily constrained the ability of Canadian political leaders to follow through on the seemingly limitless presumptions of Canadian engagement abroad in support of our interests and values. In short, the often self-congratulatory and self-serving rhetoric of Canadian involvement in solving the world's many problems increasingly outstrips by far Canada's very limited capacity to use its military to these ends.

Nor is this commitment-capability chasm likely to be reversed through increased funding of the Canadian Forces (CF) or via diminished aspirations of Canadians to send their troops to the world's many trouble spots. As the quintessential "post-modern" state, Canada has long ago abandoned any pretense of robust self-defence, and has given but token acknowledgment to the military defence of its sovereignty at home. In addition, a number of studies, some by the Canadian Parliament, have demonstrated that the CF are badly over-stretched and has less and less capacity to respond, or having responded, to sustain operations overseas. In short, Canada is wholly dependent on the United States for its physical protection, and has largely taken on the trappings of a vassal state, without, of course admitting this to itself. That being so, most of its forays into the foreign policy realm constitute proxy deployments for or with its chief ally to the south. Given these realities, how then might the Canadian military be re-oriented or re-structured to serve the goals of Canadian foreign policy?²

Basic Assumptions

The underlying assumption guiding this analysis is that any "new" foreign policy environment will be constrained by the "old" domestic political environment in Canada. As a consequence, *no fundamental changes* should be expected with respect to the basic policy framework pertaining to the use of the CF to support Canadian foreign policy objectives. This is a crucial caveat, but it is designed to obviate the tendency in most analyses of the limitations of Canada's military to 'assume away' the purported problem by calling for vast infusions of political leadership and funding that successive Canadian governments simply have been unwilling to provide. Moreover, this extrapolation appears to be reasonable based on the evidence of the past decade or so. This approach leaves this

analysis open to the charge that, given the centrality of a ‘no fundamental change’ assumption, we can only expect more of the same in the near term. To a degree, this is a fair criticism. Nevertheless, it will be argued that given roughly the same political and resource constraints, some change is possible at the margins of policy. Moreover, our analysis can also indicate what even a modestly re-configured Canadian military cannot be expected to do absent a major, and unexpected, change in the proclivities of our political and bureaucratic masters in Ottawa. Flowing from this overarching assumption of no major policy change are some related subordinate assumptions:

- the CF should not expect any clear, authoritative policy framework to govern when, where, and how they will be deployed, nor clear guidance on the appropriate level of operational readiness. Canadian foreign policy will continue to be bereft of clear statements of overarching national interests or of meaningful principles from which firm priorities can be deduced to guide practical deployment decisions. Wilful ad-hocery will remain the order of the day. As a corollary, the CF will be unable to fashion a realistic doctrine with which to marry military means to foreign policy ends.
- CF funding will remain relatively ‘stable’, with few sharp annual budgetary increases or decreases
- the capital portion of the defence budget will remain well below the 23% envisioned by *Strategy For 2020*³; this low rate of re-capitalization will inhibit any far-reaching or rapid modernization of the CF.
- individual missions abroad will tend to follow the current trend of being partially or wholly financed after-the-fact
- CF and DND planners can expect that the government will continue to deploy Canadian troops abroad with little or no regard to their capabilities or readiness
- the CF will seldom, if ever, be called upon for medium to high intensity combat missions
- that the government of Canada will seek some political recognition from any Coalition-type deployment

Deployment Options

Of the CF’s eleven Force Planning Scenarios, four currently stand out as relevant with respect to the use of the military in support of foreign policy: 3 International Humanitarian Assistance; 5 Protection and Evacuation of Canadians Overseas; 6 Peace Support Operations (Chapter 6); and 9 Peace Support Operations (Chapter 7).

(a) Independent (or ‘Go-It-Alone’) Operations

It may come as a surprise to many Canadians that Canada has often deployed its forces abroad in support of its foreign policy and independently of other nations. Indeed, one analyst notes that between 1960-1998, Canada deployed its military on at least 26 occasions to the Caribbean alone.⁴ Examples of such independent deployments include: naval “goodwill” missions to foreign ports (e.g. a Task Force of 3 Canadian ships sailed to Vladivostok, USSR in 1989⁵), as a diplomatic “presence” to convey a tangible demonstration of official government concern where Canadian national interests are at stake (e.g. the 1987-88 naval deployments to Haiti during the uprisings in that country⁶), and in support of occasional DFAIT trade initiatives (e.g. the around-the-world attempt to interest other states in the navy’s new frigates mid-1990s⁷); military officer exchanges; other “showing the flag” operations (e.g. the Snowbird air demonstration team at international air shows); military and civilian personnel rescue and evacuations (e.g. the navy was deployed for such purposes to Puerto Rico in 1963, Grenada in 1974, Jamaica in 1988, and Haiti in 1987-88⁸). However, because these operations are conducted with standard CF units, there are no unique demands for specialized personnel, equipment, and training for the forces, other than the capacity to deploy them over long distances. In particular, there is no need for a dedicated, major strategic lift or sustainment capability. In short, it is highly unlikely that the government would decide to acquire a specialized capability for these types of diplomatic support operations if such a capability did not already exist. Consequently, this deployment option can readily be handled by the CF’s current force structure configuration and requires no further analysis.

(b) Coalition Operations⁹

There are two major variants of this option. First, Canada may wish to deploy its forces with its traditional alliance partners, most notably those which are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and of these, most likely with our two principal allies, the United States and Great Britain. Examples of this approach include the 1990-91 Gulf War, the 1999 air campaign against Serbia, and the post-9/11 war against terrorism focused in and around Afghanistan. Secondly, Canada may opt to deploy its military abroad with non-traditional multinational units, most likely under the auspices of the United Nations (UN). For example, during much of the post-World II cold war era, Canada was a regular, and sometimes sizeable, contributor to UN peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and humanitarian peace support operations. In these operations, Canada will most probably be

deploying its troops alongside those of the smaller NATO states, as well as Australia, certain Scandinavian, African, and possibly even Asian, South and Latin American countries.

However, Canada may be at a major turning point with respect to major coalition operations. In unprecedented fashion, in 2003 alone, Ottawa has turned down two invitations from the United States to contribute militarily to the war against Iraq: the first to join the coalition in the war campaign itself, and the second to contribute peacekeeping troops to help stabilize the situation following the end of major hostilities. Thus, if Canada takes from this experience the lesson that it can refuse US requests without suffering major political and economic repercussions, and that the UN will henceforth have only a minor role in resolving major conflicts involving the United States, it may very well conclude that the scope for using its forces in support of foreign policy has significantly narrowed. If this proves to be the case, then the transformation of the CF into a purely constabulary force may not be far behind.

Required Capabilities¹⁰: A General Overview

What are the essential, core capabilities required for these deployment options? Are there unique capabilities/equipment required for either? In very general terms, CF will require the following capabilities for operations abroad in support of Canadian foreign policy: readiness; rapid deployment; interoperability; sustainment; flexibility and robustness.

By their nature, political crises are prone to erupt with little advance warning, although this problem can be reduced somewhat with adequate military and political intelligence – an area that should be examined more fully in the Canadian context. Ideally, the CF should be able to send at least some units on very short notice to any of the world's potential trouble-spots. In practical terms, this requires at least some forces at high readiness status,¹¹

combined with the capacity to deploy these troops and their equipment. This is a vital requirement for any deployments that Canada may undertake on its own. However, because we do not expect Canada to deploy for high-intensity combat abroad, Canada will retain considerable latitude concerning the timing of its deployments, and as a result should be able to make the necessary transportation arrangements through military or commercial channels. Moreover, for emergencies, such as those entailed in the urgent evacuation of Canadian nationals from trouble-spots, the CF's current capabilities suffice, and, when necessary can be augmented by charters or third-party assistance.

Rapid deployment becomes a far more crucial constraint for the CF when there is a decision to operate along with coalition allies. In this context, Canada must be able to deploy its high-readiness forces in concert with, and perhaps more importantly, in addition to, those of its coalition partners. They cannot be kept waiting for the CF, and the use of their transportation assets may be the main or only way Canadian forces can deploy to certain remote regions of the world. For example, US army doctrine envisions the deployment of medium-weight, Interim Brigade Combat Teams (IBCTs) anywhere in the world in 96 hours after liftoff.¹² Thus, to the extent that Canada wishes to be viewed as an independent and reliable contributor to foreign operations, it may need to procure or to assure in advance an independent strategic lift capability for coalition operations.

In any coalition context, clearly interoperability is, and will remain, a very high priority concern for the CF. In practical terms, this means interoperability with Canada's principal defence partner, the United States. Certainly this is one of the guiding principles of *Strategy For 2020* and it is a cornerstone of each of the three services' 'vision' statements.¹³ While maintaining its current high degree of interoperability with the US military will be a financial challenge for the CF, such a capability will not, in itself, limit Canada's ability to operate with non-US coalition partners. In fact, because the CF maintain many 'legacy' systems and have operated with other states in NATO and UN missions, Canada can be valued coalition "facilitator" inasmuch as many less capable militaries will be able to "plug-in" to CF systems and through these, operate alongside US forces. The most obvious examples of this "force multiplier" role of the CF are the navy's mission in the first Gulf War and its important role in OP APOLLO which began late in 2001 and which continues today with its current command of the multinational Task Force 151 as part of the campaign against terrorism.¹⁴

From an operational standpoint, interoperability has become the *sine qua non* of Canadian participation in coalition operations. To be a significant 'player' in international crisis operations, a military must bring interoperability to the table. This is an attribute that the CF has worked hard to acquire, and currently it has been most fully achieved in the Canadian navy. As one senior naval officer observes, the political benefit to Canada of having an effective, fully interoperable, and self-contained Canadian naval Task Group working with the Americans in OP APOLLO is that the United States "thought in Coalition terms from the beginning of their deployment."¹⁵

The sustainment of any Canadian contribution to coalition operations may become the most critical requirement for the CF.¹⁶ This has been, and continues to be, the area in which the CF is most deficient. Canada's

inability to re-new its commitment of some 850 troops to OP APOLLO in Afghanistan after their initial six month deployment is a stark reminder of just how stretched the army is in its overseas deployments. Moreover, even before the government has dispatched its latest announced contribution of some 1,500 troops by late summer 2003 to Kabul as part of the UN International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), there are already reports that the CF may have difficulty in finding sufficient troops for the pledged second rotation.¹⁷

From an operational standpoint, the key requirements are that the deployed units be robust enough yet sufficiently flexible to accomplish the mission in changing circumstances. Politically, the key requirements are first and foremost that any deployed force not take significant casualties, and secondarily that it should be perceived as accomplishing some useful tasks. In practical terms, this means that units have adequate self-defence capabilities (“force protection”), and that they be flexible enough to adapt to changing mission requirements in the field. With respect to mission objectives, Canadian governments have been, and will continue to be, less concerned with achieving meaningful military goals, and far more with being viewed as contributing to a worthwhile diplomatic endeavour. These days, the relevant ‘audience’ will more likely be domestic (‘pursuing Canadian values abroad’) than foreign.

A related question is whether the general capabilities required for a foreign policy military *preclude* the military being employed in other roles. In short, are there significant “opportunity costs” arising from a military that is capable of being deployed abroad either on its own, or in combined operations with other coalitions?

As implied in the section on “basic assumptions”, deployments abroad in support of Canadian foreign policy will become the *raison d’être* of the CF. That is, the CF today and for the foreseeable future cannot expect to be engaged in high intensity combat operations even as part of an allied coalition. The Forces are not postured for such an eventuality, could not be transported to the battlefield in a timely manner, nor could they be sustained for any length of time. The inability of the army to deploy the 4th Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group from a forward Canadian base in Germany in less than 135 days in time for the coalition ground operations during the first Gulf War marked the end of any real possibility of a true ‘power projection’ expeditionary capability for the army.¹⁸ However, this does not necessarily mean that the CF will not continue to be tasked for a variety of sovereignty protection, aid to the civil power, search and rescue, disaster relief and other domestic support roles. But, because size and numbers do matter, CF units employed in such domestic roles or in diplomatic support operations will act

as a constraint on Ottawa's ability to shift forces to a new foreign policy mission or to embark on new missions. For example, citing onerous commitments elsewhere, in mid-February 2003 Canada reportedly rejected a UN request to take command of the international peacekeeping force that has been monitoring the 1999 cease-fire in the Democratic Republic of Congo.¹⁹ Similarly, units that have recently returned from such missions will not be available for new ventures under the CF's current unit and personnel rotation policies.²⁰

Current and past experience provides compelling evidence that the navy will continue to be the 'first-responder' of choice, and perhaps necessity, for any Canadian foreign policy deployment to a state bordering upon the seas or that is critically dependent on seaborne supplies. This underscores the inherent flexibility of navies in providing an early – and sustainable – foreign policy "presence" for any state. Navies also are a politically attractive deployment option because their operations, short of war situations, seldom hold the prospect of battle casualties. Nevertheless, individual ships cannot be sustained in a foreign theatre indefinitely. In particular, their Sea King helicopters require routine maintenance (e.g. for their engines after 600 flying hours). A more pressing limitation is the need to rotate ships' crews after approximately six months at sea.

The Air Force also has politically acceptable and useful deployment resources. Because combat aircraft numbers are low relative to troops on the ground, and because current technology and doctrinal procedures ensure a relatively safe operating environment, the deployment of aircraft in support of foreign policy missions is another attractive option for Canadian politicians.²¹ However, aircraft require in-theatre basing and re-supply arrangements, plus some ground perimeter security. The absence of basing was a critical limitation which prevented Canada from initially deploying CF-188 Hornet fighter jets for use in the OP APOLLO campaign against Al-Qaeda units in Afghanistan. Moreover, for most missions, these aircraft would have required air-to-air refueling support, and, because Canada currently is acquiring only two CC-150 Polaris refuelers, this would have made them dependent on coalition air tankers.²² Furthermore, because of several interoperability shortcomings revealed in the first Gulf War and later in the Kosovo air campaign, Canada's 80 CF-188s are currently undergoing major upgrades.²³ However, these are not scheduled to be completed until 2006. Consequently, Canada will not be in a position to make a major fighter contribution to any coalition operation abroad until these upgrades are completed.

The army is the least able to deploy abroad at short notice, especially its heavier mechanized units and equipment. Hence, strategic lift is a crucial factor in any major army deployment, and this is perhaps the Achilles

heel of the army's current force posture.²⁴ Recent experience bears this assessment out. For example, one analyst reports that the deployment of some 850 Canadian troops and their equipment to Afghanistan was estimated to require some 400 CC-130 flights – a massive number given that Canada possesses only 32 of these aircraft, and at the time had only about one-third of these available for duty.²⁵ Eventually, Canada had to pay \$18 million to rent US C-17 Globemasters (67 flights in all) to get the battalion deployed to Afghanistan.²⁶ Moreover, the spectacle of the G.T.S. *Katie* episode in mid-2000 when a DND-chartered Ro-Ro (roll-on/roll-off) vessel laden with some 580 military vehicles, 500 tons of ammunition, and 390 containers of other sensitive support equipment worth about \$223 million being returned from the CF's Kosovo deployment, eventually had to be tracked and finally boarded by two Canadian naval ships following a payment dispute, underscored the “cost” to Canada – at least \$2 million and much political embarrassment – of inadequate strategic lift capability for the CF.²⁷ Canada's recent decision to send some 1,500 troops to take over command of the UN ISAF in Afghanistan is reported to be encountering a similar transportation problem.²⁸

Personnel and Unit Requirements

Current policy, derived from the 1994 White Paper on Defence and amplified somewhat in *Defence Plan Online 2002*, requires the CF to be able to deploy “Main Contingency Forces” (MCF), as well as “Vanguard Elements” of these within certain specified time frames.²⁹

Current CF doctrine stresses the concept of Tactically Self-Sufficient Units (TSSUs).³⁰ Essentially, this is a concept designed to garner the maximum possible political impact from any CF deployment abroad, given that any such sizeable deployment will likely be in concert with other major coalition partners. As one DND planning document puts it:

the fundamental asset that the CF requires for international operations (also a key contributor to domestic responsibilities) is what may be termed a tactically self-sufficient unit (TSSU). It follows that TSSU's must be capable of integrating into a Combined Force package as a “task-tailored” component. The consequences of [this] requirement...is that TSSU's must be modular and adaptable, capable of integrating with other international and national forces that are likely to be involved in a joint and combined operation. *The most likely coalition leader for CF TSSUs is the US, which leads to the emphasis placed on interoperability with US forces by CF leaders. A corollary of the coalition nature of Canadian military operations is that decisions regarding commitments of Canadian TSSUs are vitally important, highlighting the importance of military strategic level command capability in the CF.*³¹

For the navy, a single frigate or destroyer is a self-contained and viable fighting or

diplomatic support unit and thereby qualifies as a TSSU. However, for greater political impact, the navy has for years preferred to operate in Task Groups of three to four ships.³² A current example of this concept is the three-ship Canadian contingent to Task Force 151. This is a multinational task force commanded by a Canadian Commodore, and represents part of Canada's ongoing contribution to the war against terrorism. In many cases, a navy replenishment ship (AOR) is called upon to support and sustain air force and/or army operations abroad. Just such a vessel, HMCS *Preserver*, and its three embarked Sea King helicopters, played a vital role in support of the UN's OP RESTORE HOPE mission in Somalia in 1992.³³ Similarly, in September 1999, HMCS *Protecteur* spearheaded a valuable Canadian joint force contribution to the Australian-led UN operation to quell violence in newly-independent East Timor.³⁴ Maritime helicopters have proven to be an essential force enabler for these naval Task Forces, and their significant and versatile capabilities must be retained for the navy as a very high priority.

To ensure a sufficient rotation ratio, the navy needs to maintain the current fleet of at least 12 frigates. Because command and control (C²) has been, and is likely to continue to be such a vital aspect of both independent and coalition deployments for the navy, the CF also need to retain the important C² – plus the area air defence – capabilities of the current four Tribal-class destroyers.³⁵ Finally, to maintain the Task Group concept, the navy must also retain the refueling and re-supply capabilities of its two remaining AORs, both of which are approaching the end of their useful life. There is considerable professional debate within the navy about what should follow: dedicated AORs to service the surface task groups, or some hybrid vessels that could provide more versatility by incorporating additional strategic lift capacity. This debate has as its focal point the requirement for Afloat Logistical Sea-Lift Capability (ALSC) program, the present status of which remains uncertain.³⁶ Ultimately, the choice between these two approaches must revolve around the future role, character and size of the army in future foreign policy deployments.

For the air force, Canada occasionally deploys its CF-188 Hornet fighter aircraft to support foreign policy missions. However, the air force has never deployed its MCF of a wing

(36-plus aircraft) abroad. More usually, the preference will be for a small detachment of CC-130 Hercules transport aircraft to support the re-supply and logistics aspects of a Canadian army contribution to a UN peacekeeping, peace enforcement or humanitarian relief mission. These aircraft can also be deployed on standby missions to evacuate Canadian nationals from trouble spots around the world. Nevertheless, during the 1991 Gulf War and the 1999 Kosovo air campaign, the air force eventually deployed 26 and 18 CF-188s respectively. In 1997, six CF-188s operating out of Aviano, Italy were deployed on a three-month tour to conduct air patrols over Bosnia in support of NATO ground forces and to protect airborne warning and control aircraft (AWACS), and in June 1998 another rotation of six Hornets was again sent to Aviano to support peacekeeping forces in Bosnia and as a contingency in case of allied operation in Kosovo.³⁷ These have been the only instances in which Canadian fighter aircraft have been detached from their home bases for deployment to a distant theatre of operations. As already noted, because of interoperability shortcomings discovered during the Gulf war and Kosovo conflicts, the CF-188s are currently undergoing major component upgrades; these, estimated to amount to \$1.7 billion, are not scheduled to be completed until 2006.

It is also worth noting that deploying and sustaining modern fighter jets abroad is far from a quick or simple matter. For example, there was a delay of 14 days before an airport in Qatar could be found to accommodate the initial 18 Hornets for the Gulf War deployment. These aircraft then required carefully coordinated air-to-air refueling by the CF's sole CC-137 aerial tanker (later assisted by coalition tankers) in 'leapfrog' fashion, first from CFB Lahr, Germany to Akrotiri, Cyprus and from there to Doha, Qatar. In the initial transport phase, some 550 people plus equipment stocks, machine tools and spare parts had to be airlifted to the theatre base via some 22 cargo flights by CC-130 and CC-137 transport aircraft from a Canadian base in Germany. This was later augmented by a total of 79 cargo loads by 12 Hercules and two CC-137 aircraft flying continuously with pilots and crews being rotated. In all, 700 tonnes of materiel and nearly 600 passengers had been airlifted to Qatar.³⁸ The Boeing tanker then remained to refuel allied aircraft during the air phase of the war, while the other two CC-137 and four CC-130

aircraft conducted a continuous resupply shuttle.

Canada clearly needs to address its limited tactical and strategic airlift capabilities. The CF's fleet of 32 Hercules is overworked and the 20 oldest of these aircraft are rapidly approaching the end of their effective operational life.³⁹ However, because a stretched, and far more capable, Super Hercules C-130J-30 model is being produced for the United States, United Kingdom, Italy, Denmark, and Australia, Canada now has an extended procurement window to replace its aging Hercules fleet and thereby enhance the CF's lift capability.⁴⁰

The army is the most difficult of the three service environments for which to determine the most suitable unit size and type for diplomatic support missions. For many of its past and present peacekeeping and monitoring missions, the army has deployed anywhere from a single soldier to several hundred. Current policy also requires the army to be able to deploy a MCF comprised of "three separate battle groups or a brigade group" [5,500 persons] (*WP*, pp.34, 39) within 90 days, and to sustain the "Vanguard Element" [2,350 persons] "indefinitely in a low-threat environment" or the entire MCF for 60 days "in combat operations" (*DPO 2002*, p.20 [numerical figures from p.33]). But as the Chief of the Land Staff notes, nowhere is there clear guidance on how long the MCF is to be sustained in operations falling between the low-threat and full combat range or how long the Vanguard Element is to be sustained above the low-threat range.⁴¹ One consequence of this policy lacuna is that the size and capability of army units deployed abroad seem somewhat arbitrarily determined. Thus, owing to the ambiguity over what constitutes what has been variously described as a "brigade", "brigade group", or "infantry battalion group" (or sometimes all three interchangeably!), rarely, if ever, has the army deployed units of more than 1,000-1,900 soldiers at any one time, with the ultimate number seemingly determined more by political expediency or personnel availability than by clear principles of military doctrine.⁴² This does not appear to be a rational way to plan for these deployments.

In any case, post-Korean War experience and current contingency planning suggest that the army will never deploy its brigade-sized MCF abroad for any reason, including foreign policy support. Such a formation, as currently configured, is simply too "light" in firepower and other

combat capabilities to be integrated into any US or British unit, and is too “heavy” in its numbers and mechanized equipment to be readily deployed and re-supplied abroad with the CF’s own assets. Moreover, the fact that Canada possesses only three such mechanized Brigades means that the army cannot sustain a Brigade under its own rules regarding unit rotation ratios.⁴³

Currently, there is no shortage of proposals for re-shaping the army to meet the needs of tomorrow. Whether it be for commando-type small brigades, super-DART (Disaster Assistance Response Team), or super-SWAT elements, most of these suggestions envision a lighter, more flexible and readily deployable, yet still potent army. The army itself appears to agree as it now addresses how it should transform itself for the future. Central to its thinking is the idea that the new army’s “field” force should be based on smaller, lighter and more mobile “modular” units and sub-units⁴⁴ that can be grouped into formations which represent “task-tailored capability packages” as the army’s version of a TSSU.⁴⁵

The army faces a difficult balancing act between its required capabilities. The army is moving towards the navy’s tri-level readiness management system to match the need for quick reaction force generation with the need to ensure proper rest and reconstitution for previously deployed units. The army is also on the right track in reducing the variety of its weapons systems as it lightens its force structure. This will assist in rapid deployment, improve commonality of spare parts, and will reduce the need for bulky supply items. Greater flexibility in the size and composition of force components should permit responses to a wider range of scenarios. The modular approach should include small numbers of elite, special operations forces capable of operating with Canada’s chief allies. Obviously this type of capability was crucial for US allies in Afghanistan as well as in the recent Iraq conflict. However, Colonel Peters correctly cautions that providing this type of operational flexibility comes at the price of upsetting otherwise standardized routine unit rotations central to sustainment (i.e. it would be simpler to sustain Canada’s current battle task group in Bosnia on a 9 mechanized battalion model than it would be on the proposed 3 battalions of light infantry and 6 of mechanized infantry). In addition, non-standardized units tend to reduce readiness by requiring lengthier pre-deployment familiarization and training.⁴⁶ Finally,

Ottawa must be aware that a considerably lightened force structure, while greatly easing the deployment problem, may reduce the army's robustness and effectiveness to the point that it may not be viewed as a credible partner in coalition operations.

On balance, the army's ten-year target of transforming itself into a "medium-weight, information-age" organization that is "agile, lethal, and survivable" seems reasonable and achievable provided that personnel numbers are there to sustain the force structure, and army planners do not become mired in the usual internal debates about what a "medium-force structure" means in equipment terms. In its planning for a next-generation 'family' of combat vehicles, the army needs to take note of the US army's requirement that every element of its own Future Combat System equipment be compliant with the cargo hold dimensions of the new C-130J Super Hercules.⁴⁷ "Joint-ness" must become more than a new buzzword in this regard, otherwise additional firepower will undermine the requirement for ready deployment.⁴⁸

With respect to the training requirements for these two deployment options, the issue here essentially hinges on the types of missions envisioned for the CF. If we retain our initial assumption that ruled out high-intensity combat roles for the CF, then current training doctrine would seem to be adequate for the future, although there clearly seems to be a shortage of training staff for the army.⁴⁹ An additional consideration relates to the appropriate balance between combat training, and that which is more oriented to peace support and quasi-policing duties. The balance of professional judgement is that while combat-capable troops can perform reasonably well in peace support roles, those who are specifically trained for police work cannot perform combat operations.⁵⁰ As appears to be demonstrated in Bosnia, Afghanistan, and now Iraq, well-trained military personnel can and should provide vital security and other logistical support to non-military personnel engaged in peace-building operations, but the distinction should be preserved between those engaged in military and non-military operations. But, as noted above, the more non-standardized units and operations, the greater the demand for lengthier training and deployment cycles.

Equipment Requirements

A major consideration in the CF's future equipment requirements for expeditionary operations in support of Canadian foreign policy relates to the degree of readiness required for rapid deployment abroad. The Forces' current readiness standards are set down in the Defence Plan Online 2002.⁵¹ Much depends on how the CF is planning to deploy and to support its forces.

As noted earlier, high readiness naval vessels are largely self-deployable and, when accompanied by an AOR, can sustain themselves for months at a time abroad. High readiness aircraft can also deploy on fairly short notice, although basing, refueling, and in-theatre support become critical factors in their early deployment and continuing sustainment. The issue of exactly how Canada will transport and re-supply whatever ground units it chooses to deploy abroad is perhaps the most difficult issue to resolve. This is fundamentally a question of cost-effectiveness, and opinions vary widely on the relative merits of the three principal approaches: (a) dedicated CF airlift/sea-lift; (b) chartered transport; and (c) coalition or other third-party transport. At present, the CF has only a limited capacity to ship any military personnel to the far corners of the world on short notice in response to a crisis. Moreover, the CF cannot transport anything but small arms, ammunition, and very light vehicles and helicopters in a crisis. Furthermore, MND McCallum's February 2003 rejection of the CF's plans to procure large transport aircraft at an estimated cost of \$3-5 billion, means that for the immediate future Canada will not have the dedicated strategic airlift to respond rapidly and independently with major army units to foreign crises.⁵² In rejecting the air force's preferred C-17 procurement option, McCallum added, "We will consider other, much more cost-effective options, such as the strategic lift capability shared with NATO allies, including the United States."⁵³

Given the resource constraints posited initially, the Minister's position seems justified. However, there remains a pressing need to replace both the current theatre and tactical airlift/aerial re-fueling capabilities of the present CC-130 fleet, and the tanker/replenishment capabilities of the navy's two remaining AORs. The acquisition of 3-4 ALSCs would accomplish this and provide the added benefit of a modest, but useful sea-lift capability for the army. For "joint" as well as

“combined” operations to have any meaning, the various Canadian services in future must dovetail their equipment programs to this extent at least.

The army should actively investigate the follow-on Stryker family of armoured combat vehicles. Designed to be compatible with the C-130, and designed by General Motors, the manufacturer of Canada’s LAV III and Coyote vehicles, the Stryker family is the backbone of the US Army’s ICBTs and, with a versatile, and easier to support medium-weight capability across ten different vehicle types, would provide the Canadian army with badly-needed indirect fire support and a more lethal combat punch than it currently possesses.⁵⁴

Finally, although Canada is a member of the US Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) program team, in future operations in support of Canadian foreign policy it will become increasingly difficult to justify the cost of a modest fleet of JSFs for the air force. There would be almost no requirement for such aircraft to support Canadian naval or army deployments on a “stand-alone” basis, and, while they would be useful – and fully interoperable – augmenters to coalition forces, their high acquisition and sustainment costs (which would include the sky-rocketing cost of “subsidies” to attract and retain fighter pilots) might rule them out as cost-effective contributors to Canadian expeditionary operations.

However, given the increasing information, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) demands of operations in unfamiliar theatres, all three services should be encouraged to explore emerging concepts of operations involving Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles (UCAVs) to determine their cost and applicability to future Canadian military operations in support of Canadian foreign policy. In coalition operations of tomorrow, the possession of an interoperable ISR capability will be a crucial determinant of the acceptability of any Canadian contribution to the coalition; anything less will be regarded as a liability.

Additional Observations

The greatest challenge regarding the continuing ability of the CF to operate in support of Canadian foreign policy is the uncertainty of its funding over the near-to-medium term. As it is

currently configured, the CF possesses a modest diplomatic support capability. The central issue is: will it be able to retain its existing capabilities over the next ten years? Effective troop strength is declining and several vital capabilities may be eroded to the point of operational insignificance and/or danger if certain major procurement decisions are not made in the near term. In some cases, there are critical trade-offs to be made between programs based on the roles to be fulfilled; in other instances, the choice is starkly between the retention of some capability or the abandonment of that capability altogether. One important issue is whether or not such questions should be left to the military to decide on its own, as appears to be the case with the interoperability/coalition emphasis of *Strategy For 2020*, or whether such matters need to be resolved at the highest political levels of government.

- To ensure that the CF are operationally ready to undertake such operations in support of Canadian foreign policy, consideration should be given to the following pre-deployment measures:

- (i) If the CF are to be deployed to deal with international crises, Parliament should be convened prior to these deployments, under the terms and conditions of Part III, “International Emergency” of the 1985 Emergencies Act.⁵⁵ This would ensure that such deployments are debated and held accountable to Parliament as a whole, and that authorization for such deployments have the continuing support of Parliament. [note: under 29(2) of this Act, a declaration of an international emergency would expire after 60 days unless the previous declaration is revoked beforehand or else continued in accordance with the Act] After all, it appears more than a little strange that Canada has deployed forces to at least three warlike conflicts – the 1991 Gulf War, the 1990 Kosovo air campaign, and the post-9/11 war against terrorism in and around Afghanistan -- without ever invoking this Act. It should be recognized that a resort to this emergency legislation may require an amendment or revocation of parts of other applicable acts, such as the National Defence Act.

- (ii) As part of the above process, the CDS and/or VCDS and the environmental service commander(s) responsible for the mission should be required to testify before the relevant House

of Commons and Senate committees concerning to the readiness of their forces to carry out the specific mission. Their testimony should not be construed as a commentary on government policy, as per the appropriate QR&Os, but simply as their professional opinion concerning the ability of the CF to undertake the mission successfully.

(iii) As part of (i) and (ii) above, Parliament should ascertain whether or not the CF's own policies regarding the proper rotation of service personnel after rest and recuperation in Canada between foreign deployments are being followed.⁵⁶

- To ensure transparency and after-the-fact accountability, consideration should be accorded the possibility of direct, post-deployment auditing of major foreign deployments of the CF by the Auditor General of Canada. This is currently done only in an ad hoc, fragmentary, and tangential manner.⁵⁷

Preferred Conditions for a FP Military

- Clear policy guidance and priorities
- Suitable military doctrine to match military means to political goals
- Funding adequate to support the personnel numbers, training, and equipments requirements dictated by the doctrine

One final domestic political imperative concerns managing public expectations about what the CF can and cannot do in future. This is perhaps the area of the greatest failure of political leadership today with respect to the Canadian military, and is a chief contributor to the so-called commitment-capability gap. Put simply, Canada can no longer pretend to its own citizens nor to those of other states that it can be the world's "911" service.

Endnotes

¹ Lewis MacKenzie, "Making foreign policy on the fly," *National Post*, 17 February 2003.

² In undertaking this analysis, I am aware of my limited suitability for the task. I am not, nor have I ever been, a military professional, therefore the latter will rightly reject the following attempt to sketch the outlines of a military posture on "the back of an envelope", so to speak. Nevertheless, I take as my task a sort of extended thought experiment to link the reality of what is, to somewhat fuzzier inferences of what is likely to be, and finally to the admittedly speculative realm of what might make military sense for Canada. In so doing, my purpose will be as much to indicate what cannot be done given the parameters I have set out, more so than to try to persuade others of what could be done if these constraints did not exist. Put another way, what I am attempting is to demonstrate what sort of force structure makes sense for Canada given the past processes, both external and internal, that have created the conditions of today. Essentially, this amounts to a form of intellectual reverse-engineering.

³ DND, *Shaping the Future of Canadian Defence: A Strategy for 2020*, (Ottawa, ON: June 1999), [Hereafter *Strategy for 2020*] 6.

⁴ Sean M. Maloney, "Maple Leaf Over the Caribbean: Gunboat Diplomacy Canadian Style?," Ann L. Griffiths, Peter T. Haydon, and Richard H. Gimblett, editors, *Canadian Gunboat Diplomacy: The Canadian Navy and Foreign Policy*, (Halifax, NS: Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University, Fall 2000), 147-183.

⁵ Lieutenant (N) Bruce Fenton, "Foreign Policy and Naval Forces: A Canadian Perspective," Ann L. Griffiths, Peter T. Haydon, and Richard H. Gimblett, editors, *Canadian Gunboat Diplomacy: The Canadian Navy and Foreign Policy*, (Halifax, NS: Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University, Fall 2000), 141.

⁶ Fenton.

⁷ Fenton.

⁸ Maloney, *Op. cit.*.

⁹ For a slightly different perspective on these types of coalition options, see Douglas Bland, "Canada and Military Coalitions: Where, How, and With Whom?," *Policy Matters*, 3:3 (Montreal, QC: Occasional Paper, Institute for Research on Public Policy, April 2002), 19-28.

¹⁰ For a general definition of "capability", see Bland, 30.

¹¹ See, Minister of National Defence, DND, *Defence Plan Online 2002*, (Ottawa, ON: n.d.), 30, for the following definition: "Readiness, which consists of both operational capability and response time, is a measure of the ability of an element of the CF to undertake an approved task. Operational capability is the actual capability of the CF element compared to its authorized strength, measured by the relative state of its personnel strength, serviceable equipment holdings, training, service support and command and control components. Response time is the time between the issuance of a warning order and the requirement of a tasked element to be fully ready in its normal location to respond to a task. It does not include transit time to the area of operations. Readiness levels link a scenario or tasked CF element to a designated response time, and may be raised or lowered in response to fluctuations of the situation, specific threat levels, or resources." See also Bland, 31-32.

¹² Chief of Staff, US Army, *United States Army White Paper: Concepts For the Objective Force*, (The United States Army, no date), 9-10.

¹³ For a broad discussion of the concept of interoperability and where it may be taking the CF, see, Danford W. Middlemiss and Denis Stairs, "The Canadian Forces and the Doctrine of Interoperability: The Issues," *Policy Matters*, 3:7 (Montreal, QC: Occasional Paper, Institute for Research on Public Policy, June 2002).

¹⁴ For a first-hand and informative account of Canada's naval role in OP APOLLO see, Commodore Drew W. Robertson, "The Canadian Naval Task Group in Operation Apollo," *Maritime Affairs*, (Autumn 2002/Winter 2003), 5-9.

¹⁵ Robertson, 9.

¹⁶ Minister of National Defence, DND, *Defence Plan Online 2002*, (Ottawa, ON: n.d.), 31, offers this definition: "Sustainment is the capacity of a military force to maintain its operational capability for the duration required to achieve its tasks. Sustainment consists of the continued supply of consumables, maintenance and replacement of combat and non-combat attrition of equipment, military civil engineering services, health services support, and personnel support services including replacements."

¹⁷ Sheldon Alberts, "Ottawa asks NATO for lighter load in Kabul," *National Post*, (4 April 2003), and Stephen Thorne, "Canadian army strapped by Afghanistan mission, says retiring general," *Canada.com News*, (1 April 2003).

¹⁸ See the account of CF planning for the proposed OPLAN BROADSWORD by Sean M. Maloney, *War Without Battles: Canada's NATO Brigade in Germany, 1951-1993*, (Toronto, ON: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1997), 448-460. Note that this 135 day deployment estimate was based on the optimistic assumption that sufficient heavy lift could be found, even in the face of early evidence to the contrary. As Maloney notes, "But the lack of a heavy lift capability would probably have imposed a significant time delay on the deployment of 4 CMBG had BROADSWORD been implemented," 455. [emphasis added]

¹⁹ Allan Thompson, "Canada stretched too thin to accept Congo mission: Asked by U.N. to lead peacekeepers Military committed to Afghanistan duty," *Toronto Star*, (14 March 2003).

²⁰ These rotation policies become a critical factor in determining the optimum size of the forces to be deployed, and will be discussed more fully below in the section "Personnel and Unit Requirements."

²¹ Note that Canada has not lost any aircraft or air crews in combat operations since the end of the cold war.

²² Following the Gulf War, the Air Force also has retrofitted five Hercules as tactical air-to-air tankers. But this is a strictly limited capacity.

²³ See, Lieutenant Colonel Samuel J. Walker (USAF), "Interoperability at the Speed of Sound: Modernizing the CF-18 Hornet", David G. Haglund, ed., *Over Here and Over There: Canada-US Defence Cooperation in an Era of Interoperability*, (Kingston, ON: Centre for International Relations, Queen's University, special issue of *Queen's Quarterly*, and published in cooperation with the Conference of Defence Associations Institute, 2001), 259-61. See also, Major Jean Morin and Lieutenant Commander Richard H. Gimblett, *Operation Friction, 1990-1991: The Canadian Forces in the Persian Gulf*, (Toronto, ON: Dundurn Press, 1997), 131, 158-59.

²⁴ See the assessment by David Pugliese, "Canada's 'critical' weakness: Forces have to hire transportation or hitch rides with allies: report," *Ottawa Citizen*, (17 January 2002).

²⁵ Roy Rempel, *The Chatter Box: An Insider's Account of the Irrelevance of Parliament in the Making of Canadian Foreign and Defence Policy*, (Toronto, ON: Dundurn Press, 2002), 32-33.

²⁶ Ray Dick, "The Need to Lift Our Weight," *Legion Magazine*, 78:3 (May/June 2003), 21. Dick also notes that it would have taken three CC-130s to transport just two LAV III armoured fighting vehicles, and even in that instance, the LAVs would have had to have been disassembled, their turrets removed, in order to fit into the available cargo space.

²⁷ For an incisive account of this particular incident and some of the sea-lift transportation options open to Canada, see Heinz Gohlish, "G.T.S. Katie: The High Cost of Cut-Price Transport," *Maritime Affairs*, (Fall 2000), 20-23.

²⁸ See several reports by Stephen Thorne of the Canadian Press, including, “Top-level commander quits Defence Department after peacekeeping announcement,” *Canada.com News*, 15 February 2003. This strategic lift problem was also confirmed in confidential interviews. Canada’s ISAF lift requirement is exacerbated by the ongoing transportation demands made by the coalition allies fighting in Iraq.

²⁹ See, Canada, Department of National Defence, *1994 Defence White Paper*, (Ottawa, ON: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1994), 38-39, and Minister of National Defence, DND, *Defence Plan Online 2002*, (Ottawa, ON: n.d.), 30-33.

³⁰ Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, *Strategic Capability Planning for the Canadian Forces*, (Ottawa, ON: VCDS, the Department of National Defence, June 2000), 18-21.

³¹ *Strategic Capability Planning for the Canadian Forces*, 18. [emphasis added]

³² For more on the evolution and practice of the Canadian naval Task Group concept see, Peter T. Haydon, “The Evolution of the Canadian Naval Task Group”, and David Morse, “The Canadian Naval Task Group,” Ann L. Griffiths, Peter T. Haydon and Richard H. Gimblett, eds., *Canadian Gunboat Diplomacy: The Canadian Navy and Foreign Policy*, (Halifax, NS: Centre For Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University, 2000). Also, Doug Thomas, “The Canadian Naval Task Group: What is it, what can it do?,” *Maritime Affairs*, (Summer/Fall 2001), 4-6.

³³ For more on Canada’s OP CORDON Somalia mission see: Laura J. Higgins, “Canadian Naval Operations in the 1990s: Selected Case Studies,” *Maritime Security Occasional Paper No. 12*, (Halifax, NS: Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University, 2002), 50-56; Douglas S. Thomas, “The Canadian Contribution to Peace-Support Operations,” Ann L. Griffiths, Peter T. Haydon and Richard H. Gimblett, eds., *Canadian Gunboat Diplomacy: The Canadian Navy and Foreign Policy*, (Halifax, NS: Centre For Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University, 2000), 215-218; and Captain (N) R.W. Allen, “Combined and Joint Operations in Somalia,” Peter T. Haydon and Ann L. Griffiths, editors, *Multinational Naval Forces*, (Halifax, NS: Centre For Foreign Policy Studies, 1996), 203-230.

³⁴ For details on this deployment, see Captain(N) Roger Girouard, “OP TOUCAN”, *Maritime Affairs*, (Fall 2000), 26-29. Also, Higgins, 56-61.

³⁵ For a useful discussion of some of the options for retaining this capability, see LCdr D.S. Thomas, “Command/Control and Air Defence Replacement Program (CADRE): A capability for the 21st Century,” *Maritime Affairs*, (Winter 2000), 11-12.

³⁶ For an analysis of the ALSC options see: Commander Greg Aikens, “Beyond ALSC: We Need to Get Amphibious and Joint to Stay Relevant,” *Maritime Affairs*, (Winter 2001), 12-13; Joe Varner, “Logistic Support Ships,” *Maritime Affairs*, (Winter 2001), 3-4 ; Peter Haydon, “Canadian Amphibious Capabilities: Been there, Done it, Got the T-shirt!” *Maritime Affairs*, (Winter 2001), 14-19; Colonel B.K. Wentzell, “Military Sea-lift: A Reply to Amphion,” *Maritime Affairs*, (Winter 2000), 3-4; Amphion, “Military Sea-lift,” *Maritime Affairs*, (Fall 1999), 3-4 ; Peter Haydon, “Editorial,” *Maritime Affairs*, (Spring 1999), 1-2,6; Lieutenant Commander Bruce T. Irvine, “Afloat Logistics and Sealift Capability for the Canadian Navy,” *Canadian Defence Quarterly*, (Summer 1997), 14-19.

³⁷ Joseph T. Jockel, *The Canadian Forces: Hard Choices, Soft Power*, (Toronto, ON: Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 1999), 21, 95.

³⁸ For details of OP SCIMITAR, the CF-188 deployment to the Persian Gulf, see Major Jean Morin and Lieutenant Commander Richard H. Gimblett, 97-111.

³⁹ “Air Force finds cracks in aging Hercules planes,” *CTV.ca*, (18 April 2003).

⁴⁰ Bill Sweetman, “New lease on life for the C-130J?,” *Janes’s International Defense Review*, (February 2003), 56-61. The UK deployed a variant of this aircraft for special operations in the recent conflict in Iraq. In addition, there

is an air-to-air tanker version (KC-130J) of this aircraft which would be useful for the CF's needs.

⁴¹ See the testimony of Lieutenant-General M.K. Jeffrey, Chief of the Land Staff, DND, Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs [hereafter SCNDVA], *Evidence*, Number 4, (4 December 2002).

⁴² This at least is the impression given by Jeffrey.

⁴³ The CF's guidelines state that the preferred unit rotation ratio is 4:1 for high tempo land force operations. This would mean that Canada would need five times the number of units to be deployed with a 2-year pause between successive rotations. Individual CF members are supposed to be guaranteed a minimum of 12 months in Canada between rotations. See, Minister of National Defence, DND, *Defence Plan Online 2002*, (Ottawa, ON: n.d.), 33.

⁴⁴ DND, *Capability Outlook 2002-2012*, (Ottawa, ON: July 2002), 17. According to a key army planner, the future unit "building block" for the army will be 100 people rather than the current 700-plus. Colonel W.N. Peters, former Director, Land Strategic Planning, National Defence Headquarters, "Army Expeditionary Forces: Can We Get There With Enough?", Robert H. Edwards and Ann L. Griffiths, editors, *Intervention and Engagement: A Maritime Perspective*, (Halifax, NS: Centre For Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University, 2003), 247.

⁴⁵ Lieutenant-General M.K. Jeffrey, Chief of the Land Staff, *Advancing With Purpose: The Army Strategy*, (Ottawa, ON: Commander, Land Force Command, National Defence Headquarters, May 2002), 20.

⁴⁶ Colonel Peters, 247, 254.

⁴⁷ Sweetman, 61.

⁴⁸ Note also that the new, US Army Stryker family of vehicles are roughly the same weight (38,000 pounds) and size as the LAVs; this should cast some doubt on the C-130 compliancy standard set by the army for airlift.

⁴⁹ Again, this is the assessment of Jeffrey.

⁵⁰ Lewis MacKenzie, "We need light, lethal and mobile forces," *National Post*, (15 January 2003).

⁵¹ Minister of National Defence, DND, *Defence Plan Online 2002*, (Ottawa, ON: n.d.), 30-33.

⁵² "Speaking Notes for The Honourable John McCallum Minister of National Defence at the Conference of Defence Association's Annual General Meeting", *SP-27.02.03*, (Ottawa, ON: 27 February 2003). See also, Daniel LeBlanc, "Defence chief vetoes buying transport planes: McCallum rejects air force's No. 1 project," *Globeandmail.com*, (21 February 2003).

⁵³ McCallum, *SP-27.02.03*.

⁵⁴ For details see, "Army Announces Name For Interim Armored Vehicle," *U.S. Army News Release*, #R-02-009, (27 February 2002).

⁵⁵ Canada, Chapter 22, *Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985, 4th Supplement*, (Ottawa, ON: Queen's Printer, 1989). The Emergencies Act was assented to 21 July 1988.

⁵⁶ For concerns on this point see, The Conference of Defence Associations of Canada, *A Nation At Risk: The Decline of the Canadian Forces*, (Ottawa: ON: The Conference of Defence Associations Institute, September 2002), 12, 18.

⁵⁷ See the assessment by Peter Kasurak, "Sorting Out the Essentials of Readiness: A Look At The Canadian Forces," *On Track*, 6:2 (29 June 2001), 9-12.