

# CANADIAN MILITARY JOURNAL

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## Cover

**"Remembering Afghanistan"**

Credit: Painting by Charles Vinh /  
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# CANADIAN MILITARY JOURNAL

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### NOTE TO READERS

As a bilingual journal, readers should take note that where citations are translated from their original language, the abbreviation [TOQ] at the end of the note, which stands for "translation of original quote", indicates to the readers that the original citation can be found in the published version of the Journal in the other official language.



**D**emand for the skillset and capabilities of the Canadian Armed Forces seems relentless, whether for domestic operations in continuing to assist with mitigating the effects of the pandemic or in rushing to the assistance of British Columbians coping with the after-effects of repeated atmospheric river events; in defending the continent from conventional and new hypersonic weapons; or in reassuring allies and partners and deterring adversarial revisionist adventurism. All this while seeing the CAF's staffing levels fall 7,500 below authorized troop strength, reforming and transforming the organization and its culture, seeing critical procurement projects through, and working through complex policy issues such as NORAD renewal.

While a new Minister, a new Deputy, and permanent Chief of the Defence Staff are now at the helm, and the government has a renewed mandate from the people of Canada, the Defence Team is redoubling its commitment to its core values: integrity, loyalty, courage, stewardship and excellence. The Canadian Armed Forces is rolling out its new professional ethos doctrine: *Trusted to Serve*, which CMJ will cover in future issues.

In an effort to feature more Canadian artwork and photography, the cover of this issue is by Charles Vinh, an award-winning master painter, illustrator and teacher who resides in Montreal. Over the years, he has been retained by museums and the CAF for historical and aviation artwork. Having spent his youth in Vietnam during the war, where several members of his family served in the combat arms alongside the U.S. Army, Charles feels an affinity with military personnel. He has been profoundly affected by how events in Afghanistan unfolded over the past year: his family also ended up as war refugees. He feels that, to some degree, he is able to share the sentiments of the many Canadians who served.

The cover features "Remembering Afghanistan," which is part of a recent series of his paintings in honour of the women, men and diverse members who served in Afghanistan. Far from glorifying war, these images are instead meant to convey the human aspect of Canada's 40,000 uniformed and civilian members who served there over the course of the mission.

Vinh's cover on this issue of CMJ provides a fitting opportunity for reflection on the aftermath of the Afghanistan mission, contrasts with a prescient article on the future of the Royal Canadian Navy in great power rivalry that leads this issue. A doctoral candidate at Dalhousie University, Adam Macdonald's lead piece on the maritime domain is complemented by Captain Vladimir Kessia's article on the land domain: a robust analysis and reflection on the particularities of armoured reconnaissance in the Canadian Army.

The next three articles cover issues of personnel, leadership, institutional culture and professionalism. Associate Professor Danic Parenteau from Royal Military College St. Jean, doubles down on officers as instrumental in driving change in the organization's institutional culture. In the article that follows, Dr. Luc Pigeon of DRDC and Dr. Russell Glenn at U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command reflect on what it takes to build an effective

National Defence Team. The effectiveness of the Defence Team is indispensable to confront highly complex security challenges of today and tomorrow. To this end, the third article in this sequence calls for a more elaborate introduction.

CPO2 Michelle Seaman contribution depicts the opportunities and challenges that CPO/CWOs face in advancing gender inclusivity in the CAF. Many of the solutions the author proposes have been floated since... the 1970s. This powerful piece prompts us to reflect on why so many of these solutions have yet to be implemented. Implicitly, then, the article asks some very hard questions about professionalism and institutional culture, and the organization's commitment to genuine and sustainable change. CPO2 Seaman's article is the inaugural recipient of the CWO Dan Brissette Award. Award winners identify a complex problem, analyze it as part of their academic requirements, and propose recommendations that contribute in an innovative manner to the development of their area of activity within the Canadian Armed Forces.

The *Advanced Leadership Programme (ALP) Innovation Award* aims to spotlight the innovation and creativity of our recipients' work in identifying issues within the CAF and helping to make improvements. It was recently renamed in honour of CWO Dan Brissette, MMM, MSM, CD.

He served in The Royal Canadian Regiment from 1987 onward, and was a member of the Special Forces community from 1995 onward. Chief Warrant Officer Brissette served as the Regimental Sergeant-Major of the Canadian Special Operations Regiment, and rose to Command Sergeant-Major of Canadian Special Operations Command before retiring. As a Master Warrant Officer, in 2007, Chief Warrant Officer Brissette received the Meritorious Service Medal for his service in Afghanistan with the Special Operations Task Force. His leadership and decisive actions under fire, in the face of the enemy, demonstrated an exceptional degree of professionalism that ensured the success of the fighting force and the safety of his troops.

As sergeant-major of the Deputy Commanding General Operations organization, CWO Brissette received the Bar to the Meritorious Service Medal for his service in Afghanistan from April 2012 to April 2013. He mentored a key network of senior non-commissioned members that provided guidance to over 16,000 personnel dispersed throughout the country. CWO Brissette established himself as an eminent ambassador for Canada, and set a benchmark standard of leadership for all personnel.

Founded in 2003 as the Non-Commissioned Member Professional Development Centre (NCMPDC), the Chief Warrant Officer Robert Osside Profession of Arms Institute provides professional development to non-commissioned members in Developmental Periods (DPs) 3, 4 and 5. The Institute offers four programs: the Intermediate Leadership Programme (ILP; PO1/WO), the Advanced Leadership Programme (ALP; CPO2/MWO), the Senior Leadership Programme (SLP; CPO1/CWO) and the Senior Appointment Programme (SAP; SA CPO1/SA CWO). One of the objectives of the ALP is to begin the transition from leading people to leading the CAF and expanding our candidates' horizons. To that end, ALP candidates choose a professional issue

## FROM THE EDITOR

they have encountered, use the knowledge they have acquired throughout the semester to create a related work scenario, and prepare an analysis based on the course's key concepts and ideas, as well as final recommendations that could be presented to their chain of command. Featuring CPO2 Seaman's award-winning final ALP paper reflects my broader effort to expand the authorship and readership of CMJ by being more intentional about creating opportunities for the best and brightest minds in the CAF to showcase their inspirational work.

Never has inspiration and reflection been more important than at a time when the CAF is facing recruitment and retention challenges across a majority of its trades. The article that follows, by former history graduate student at the University of Ottawa and now federal civil servant Emmanuelle Cotton-Dumouchel, is illustrative of the persistent challenges the military has long faced in appealing to select ethnolinguistic groups, and related recruitment strategies among francophone Canadians during the First World War. Challenges of recruitment and the prospect of conscription are a good reminder that the military as a Canadian institution has inherently been controversial.

In the spirit of critical self-reflection, the final article by Lieutenant-Colonel Olivier Guillaume questions whether Canada's current defence policy, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, qualifies as a strategy, which raises attendant implications for its implementation. The government refers to *SSE* a defence policy rather than a White Paper; but for good reason?

As the coda to this issue, an insightful book review essay by Peter Kasurak highlights two highly relevant but widely under-appreciated books on the topic. The essay is meant to launch a conversation that is bound to resonate in forthcoming issues of CMJ. Given the many challenges that are confronting the organization, I hope this initial book review entices the CMJ's readership to weigh in on this important topic that ultimately frames the way DND and the CAF are governed and led. Dr. Kasurak's essay also reflects a shift towards review essays of books on a select topic, rather than just reviewing a single book at a time; this is meant to provide the CMJ readership with suggestions for books on particular topics they may want to pick up.

As part of ongoing efforts to renew CMJ, I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce two new interim Deputy Editors: Dr. Chantal Lavallée is an Assistant Professor in International Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences Department, Assistant Director of the Centre for security and crisis governance (CRITIC), Vice-President of the Research Ethics Board at Royal Military College Saint-Jean and Senior Researcher at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO); Dr. Bruno Charbonneau is a Professor in International Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences Department, Director of the Centre for security and crisis governance (CRITIC) at Royal Military College Saint-Jean and Director of the Centre Francopaix en résolution des conflits et missions de paix, Chaire Raoul-Dandurand, at the Université du Québec à Montréal. They will be assisting with operations while I work on drawing up a strategy for CMJ.

In lieu of CMJ's regular Commentary feature, I will close on a personal note. Traditionally, CMJ does not run obituaries because choosing among the many exceptional contributions and leaders proves difficult. Nonetheless, in my prerogative as editor, please indulge me in recognizing the late Fats, as he was known to his friends. His mentorship had an outsized impact on me, as a person and as a scholar, notably in my capacity as RMC's Class of 1965 Professor in Leadership. He championed the vision that enables RMC's only endowed professorship, and upon my appointment, took me under his wing as a mentor. The Class of 1965's endorsement is integral to my role as Editor-in-Chief of CMJ, so I thought it appropriate to take this opportunity to celebrate his life. Jim's exemplary life manifests the important contribution that a military college education and leadership skills allow officer-cadets to make, not only to the armed forces, but to Canadian society writ large. When you read his biosketch below, you will understand what I mean.

James (Jim) Carruthers was born and raised in Drumheller, Alberta, and entered the Canadian Services College Royal Roads in 1961. He graduated from Royal Military College Kingston in 1965 with a degree in Electrical Engineering. Commissioned into the Royal Canadian Navy, Jim spent his early years at sea, honing his practical engineering skills; afterward, he pursued higher education, gaining his Doctorate in Electrical Engineering. Bringing both his technical skills and academic knowledge into play, Jim became the driving force



James (Jim) Carruthers, 1965.

and champion behind the development and introduction of the SHipboard INtegrated Processing and Data System (SHINPADS) into the RCN. This revolutionary approach to systems integration in warships is still being used in the Canadian Navy and other major navies of the world, including that of the United States.

Captain (N) Carruthers retired from the Navy in 1982 and went to work for Norpak Corporation, a small Ottawa-based electronics firm that was on the verge of bankruptcy. He was soon appointed CEO, and by dint of effort and expertise, he managed to turn the fortunes of the company around. Under his leadership, the company became, and remains (under a different name), a recognized international centre of excellence for television closed captioning technology.

He left Norpak in 2006 to begin a new life advocating for two institutions close to his heart: RMC and the Navy. From 2015 to April 2016, he was President of the RMC Foundation, and between 2012 and 2017, he served first as President of the Ottawa Branch

## FROM THE EDITOR

of the Naval Association of Canada (NAC), and then as its national President. In 2001, Jim provided a substantial endowment to the RMC Foundation, and largely because of that, the RMC Class of 65 is acknowledged as one of the most active and generous graduating classes. Through his leadership and active involvement, the class established three highly successful award programs: the Teaching Excellence Awards (TEA) at RMC Kingston and at RMC St. Jean, and the Professor in Leadership Program.

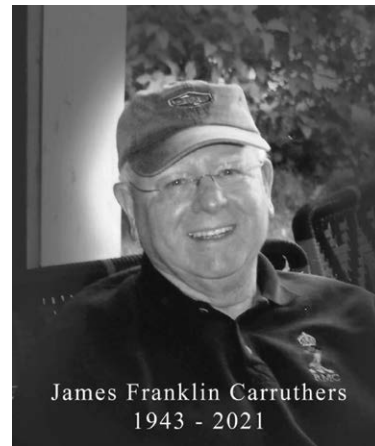
On his own initiative, Jim provided funding to the RMC Kingston Rowing Club to buy new boats, which are named after his three daughters. He annually purchased and presented naval swords to the top naval cadets in the graduating class. From 2001 to 2012, he provided scholarships for four Reserve Entry Training Plan (RETP) cadets every year and funding assistance for new cadets from his old hometown of Drumheller. In recognition of his generosity and commitment to supporting the Canadian Military Colleges, the RMC Club made him an Honorary Life Member.

As he worked with the NAC, Jim recognized the need for an important maritime country such as Canada to have a new organization for serious debate on naval issues, and to be the go-to source for media and academia for expert opinions on maritime matters. The model would be the US Naval Institute. When his attempt to amalgamate the then-Naval Officers Association of Canada (NOAC) with the maritime affairs arm of the Navy League of Canada (NLOC) did not succeed, Jim focused his sights on the NOAC itself. He joined the Board of the Ottawa Branch, and in due course was elected Branch President. He campaigned for the Branch to throw off its old ways and to re-make itself into a more effective advocate for the Navy.

Recognizing that the Branch did not have the power to make the fundamental changes he was seeking for the organization, Jim sought and gained election as President of the National NOAC, which gave him the platform to make real changes. The "O" was dropped from NOAC, and the association opened up to anyone with an interest in things maritime in general and the RCN in particular. Jim worked on establishing a firm financial footing for the NAC and expanded the annual general meeting into an opportunity for serious debates on the naval issues of the day. Another initiative was to launch an annual Battle of the Atlantic Gala, held at the National War Museum in Ottawa and attended by politicians and other senior authorities. These initiatives have

been instrumental in helping to educate the Canadian public and decision-makers on the need for a capable and efficient RCN. The legacy of Jim's brilliance, vision and enterprise for radically changing people's perspective – his genius – continues in today's Naval Association of Canada.

In 2015, he was awarded the Admiral's Medal, established in conjunction with the 75th anniversary of the Naval Service of Canada. The Admiral's Medal is bestowed upon individual Canadians to recognize the advancement of maritime affairs in Canada. Finally, Jim was a recognized leader within his own RMC Graduating Class of 1965. He and his wife Gail generously hosted large ex-cadet gatherings at their home. He organized regular lunches for Ottawa-based classmates at the Naval Mess in downtown Ottawa, and was instrumental in organizing an annual joint Ottawa/Montreal luncheon gathering for classmates from the two regions. In recognition of this leadership role, in 2010, Jim was honoured with the title of Honorary Class President.



Jim succumbed on 1 November 2021 after a lengthy and courageous fight with prostate cancer. He led a remarkable life of service, which saw the impact of his keen intellect, strong character and deep dedication resonate strongly and beneficially at the international and national levels, as well as locally and within his family life – a life that fully encompassed the virtues of Truth, Duty, Valour. His exemplary life should serve as an inspiration to current and future RMC cadets and CAF officers alike.

Christian Leuprecht  
Editor-in-Chief, *Canadian Military Journal*  
Class of 1965 Professor in Leadership, Royal Military College

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

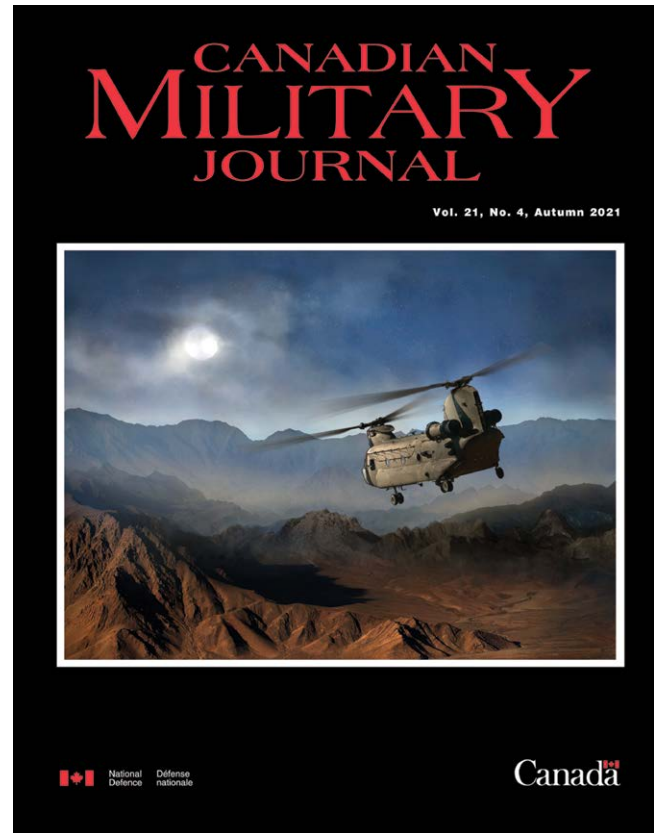
**B** Gen Binden and Col Coombs offer us a good run-down of the various studies and other initiatives over many decades to 'fix' the Reserve Forces. ("Serving the Nation's Interests: Creating an Integrated and Agile Canadian Reserve Force", *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol. 21, No. 4, Autumn 2021).

It is a laudable goal to try and integrate the CAF into one cohesive force. But is that really feasible? It would assume that all members of the force would have comparable levels of training and experience i.e.; that a sergeant in a Reserve Army battalion is interchangeable with a sergeant in a Regular battalion and that the Reserve member would gain the respect and support of all members with whom they are serving and fighting. The Total Force concept is fine in principle but we need to retain foremost in our minds that it consists of full-time and part-time military members.

We really need to go back to basics when we look at the development of Canada's Reserve forces. Canadians were citizen soldiers, sailors and airmen/women. We have risen to the occasion when need be: witness the First and Second World Wars and Korea. In both Afghanistan and Iraq Reservists provided useful augmentation to our troops operating in those theatres, all to everyone's credit.

But the realities continue to challenge us. Our Reservists at junior levels are still mainly students and they show high attrition rates. Few of our Reservists can devote the time to become fully qualified at the level of training and experience expected of Regulars. Those Reservists who can undertake continuous active duty to achieve optimal level of training and experience are probably destined to join the Regular Force, and they should. Admittedly some specialist occupations lend themselves to Reserve part-time service more than others: physicians and lawyers come to mind, perhaps.

Some specific roles can be earmarked for part-time Reservists but full integration at every rank level and role remains illusory. Our mindset in Canada is that of the Reservist as a part-time soldier or sailor and one who represents the CAF in their home community. We are not Switzerland or Israel with soldiers at home with rifles under their beds ready for immediate mobilisation. Admittedly, there seems to be a trend to use our military more for civil emergencies than actual expeditionary operations. Would most Regular Force personnel did not join for that; would Reservists be more content with that role? Bring on Brandon, MB rather than Baghdad, Iraq.



So why do we continue to go through the agony of trying to create something that can never be? Even if our national psyche and circumstances were to change to promote the part-timer as a quasi-fully trained Regular, I have never seen the Government allocate enough funds to allow the Reserve Forces to be fully *pareil* with the Regular Force in terms of equipment etc. And I doubt that will ever happen.

Our Reserve Force personnel do as good a job as they can given the circumstances and realities that exist. Let us allow them to be the part-time citizen sailors, soldiers and air people that they were envisaged to be!

Sincerely,

David B Collins, CD  
Lieutenant-Commander



Corporal David Veldman / Canadian Armed Forces Photo



Northern lights flare above HMCS *Harry DeWolf* during Cold Weather Trials near Frobisher Bay, 21 February 2021.

## Becoming an “Arctic-Capable” Navy: Not Just the Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ship

by Adam P. MacDonald

Adam P. MacDonald, a former naval officer in the Canadian military, is a PhD candidate in the Political Science Department at Dalhousie University. He is a Killam Scholar, holds a Department of National Defence MINDS Doctoral Scholarship and is a Fellow at the Canadian International Council. His doctoral work seeks to explain the differences in American strategic approaches towards Russia and China in the early post-Cold War era as a function of larger efforts to ensure its networked centrality in security and economic realms globally and within the core regions of Europe and East Asia.

The Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) is currently receiving the *Harry DeWolf*-class Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ship (AOPS),<sup>1</sup> its first purpose-built Arctic platforms in its history.<sup>2</sup> It is envisioned that this acquisition, the first new capability developed for the navy in decades, will decisively break the boom-and-bust cycles that have characterized the RCN's relationship with the region historically, by entrenching the Arctic, specifically the North American Arctic,<sup>3</sup> as a long-term priority. The procurement of the AOPS is part of larger, more sustained efforts by the RCN (and the entire

Canadian military) to develop Arctic operational competencies and capacities over the past two decades. The *Harry DeWolf* class is a major, meaningful development towards establishing an “Arctic-capable navy,” a requirement outlined in the RCN's leading strategic document: *Leadmark 2050*.<sup>4</sup> Counter-intuitively, however, achievement of this requirement may be inhibited if Arctic naval operations and responsibilities are solely assigned to these new platforms while the rest of the Fleet focuses on other regions. There are two main reasons for this concern, one practical and the other strategic.

First, the RCN is simply too small to be neatly demarcated into functionally differentiated fleets with distinct missions and operating areas, such as a continental, coastal, constabulary-capable force, and an expeditionary, blue water, warfighting-capable force. All RCN assets will have to continue to operate in the Arctic (and conversely the *Harry DeWolf* class will have to operate in non-Arctic regions, possibly quite extensively) out of the practical necessities of having a small navy; a navy whose operational areas are growing in number but whose fleet size is set to shrink under existing recapitalization outlined in the National Shipbuilding Strategy (NSS). Any such division, furthermore, seems at odds



with the “One Navy” concept: a Fleet comprised of highly integrated blue water forces, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the AOPS as its Arctic “appendage,” operating largely on their own. Second, as the Arctic becomes more accessible and interconnected into a changing but uncertain strategic global environment, Canada requires the full suite of its existing naval capabilities to exercise its sovereignty, contribute to continental defence and NATO commitments, and remain an important and autonomous actor in regional politics. The risk of war and conflict in the Arctic, specifically the North American Arctic, remains low, but that does not invalidate the utility of regularly deploying and exercising blue-water forces as these provide options for the Government of Canada in achieving the above listed interests. The entire RCN needs to remain engaged in the Arctic, retaining and furthering its regional competencies, rather than letting these atrophy by letting the baton pass fully to the AOPS.

The *Harry DeWolf* class should not be seen as the climax of these efforts, but rather their continuation, which must be accompanied by maintaining and furthering other measures. This includes continued and regular regional deployments and exercises for the entire fleet to integrate existing and new ships. This is not a call for a surge of naval forces into the Arctic nor a transformation of the RCN into an Arctic navy (with all of its ships being thick hulled/ice-breaking capable). However, ensuring coherent, long-term priority in building a truly Arctic-capable navy, one that must operate in the region even though large portions of it are not specifically designed to do so, necessitates a strategic plan. This calls for a *Leadmark*-style document to explain, justify and incorporate Arctic considerations into procurement, infrastructure, and force development and posture decisions and planning over the following decades to best position the RCN to operate in this emerging ocean region.

### Committed to the Arctic for Good?

The prioritization of the Arctic, specifically the North American Arctic, for the RCN has been demarcated by periods of intense interest and activity alternating with periods of almost complete neglect and absence. During specific periods in the Cold War, new Soviet military capabilities threatening North America and possible American challenges to

Arctic sovereignty, in particular the status of the Northwest Passage (NWP), drove periods of heightened interest and activity. Concerns reached a high-water mark in the late 1980s. In the 1987 Defence White Paper, the government declared that the Arctic had transformed from a buffer to a battleground. That required a greater military focus and purpose-built assets to operate there, most importantly nuclear-powered submarines.<sup>5</sup> However, resource constraints, competing priorities (especially supporting NATO in the North Atlantic) and uncertainty over what role the RCN should play there have obstructed the Arctic’s designation as a permanent, high-level priority.

For Canada, the end of the Cold War ushered in another period of overall retreat from and military disinterest in the Arctic, specifically for the RCN,<sup>6</sup> with the removal of superpower rivalry globally and regionally. After a decade-long hiatus, the RCN, along with the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) more generally, returned to the Arctic in the early 2000s with a series of deployments, largely designed to re-learn basic environmental skill sets to operate there.<sup>7</sup> These efforts reflected the growing priority of the region in both the RCN, with the 2001 release of *Leadmark 2020* directing the organization to extend its “reach” into the Arctic,<sup>8</sup> and government, evidenced in the 2005 defence policy that directed the CAF to be more present in the region.<sup>9</sup>

The security rationales underpinning these moves mirrored those of previous eras in some ways, specifically the implications that an increasingly accessible Arctic will create challenges to Canadian sovereignty due to expected resource scrambles and



Map of the Northwest Passage.

Ranier Lesniewski / Alamy Stock Photo

foreign demands to use emerging shipping lanes in Canadian waters.<sup>10</sup> Largely absent, however, were specific military and sovereignty concerns posed by great powers as there were during the Cold War. The overall motivation has been to augment the presence, competencies and capacities of the CAF in general to prepare for an altering Arctic ecological environment with uncertain implications for Canadian security and the overall security environment.

Framing of the Arctic security environment became more ominous after the Harper government came into office in 2006 and began using the “Use it or Lose it”<sup>11</sup> phrase. The Harper government is often portrayed as a major deviation in terms of defence policy in the Arctic, with an emphasis on an assertive, unilateralist and militaristic approach. In reality, its efforts largely furthered existing trends, specifically building baseline capacities and a regularized regional presence of the CAF.<sup>12</sup> For example, despite the government’s initial declaratory emphasis on *defending sovereignty* in the Arctic, in policy and practice, the focus remained on *exercising sovereignty*. This included the RCN’s continued priority on constabulary-type duties, including assisting Other Government Departments (OGDs) with respect to non-military security challenges. Yet, the establishment of permanent regional annual exercises, the Nanisivik refuelling station and procuring Arctic-specific ships during the Harper era cemented the region as an enduring priority for the RCN.

This priority was most evident in the decision to build ships for the RCN specifically designed to operate in the Arctic. This project was entirely a political decision, not one advocated by the RCN. The design features and characteristics have evolved over time, from the initial concept of armed icebreakers to the AOPS, but the procurement project set precedent. Canada decided to build naval assets to meet specific Canadian interests rather than fulfill NATO obligations, in a vein similar to the Mulroney government’s failed attempt to build nuclear-powered submarines for the Arctic, within a more “Canada First” defence policy.

The AOPS has been heavily critiqued since its inception. It has been characterized as awkward: neither an Arctic vessel (given that its polar-class designation means that it cannot operate year-round in the Arctic) nor a warship (with its lack of speed and light armament).<sup>13</sup> Such analyses, however, do not appreciate the project as a product of evolving thinking over the past two decades of the military requirements needed within the current North American Arctic security environment and the RCN’s gradual embrace of becoming “Arctic-capable” as a core mission.<sup>14</sup> Also, as the recent circumnavigation of North America by HMCS *Harry DeWolf* illustrates, this new class of ships possesses a number of capabilities to operate in diverse environments and missions, including large transport and configuration capabilities that enable OGDs training and operations, as well as strategic sealift. The AOPS is a significant augmentation of Canada’s control capabilities in the Arctic. It allows Canada to deploy assets in the region that can perform a number of functions, including support to scientific research such as hydrographic surveying.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, designated as Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ships, these ships will split their operational time in the Arctic when conditions allow and conduct missions in other operational areas.

Despite lingering debates about their suitability, the strategic importance of these platforms represents a renewed dedication by Canada, and the RCN, to be more present in the Arctic as a defence priority. This is a huge accomplishment, but the *Harry DeWolf* class should not be seen as a culmination of the RCN’s efforts to become “Arctic Capable.” Any move towards letting this class of ships fully take over Arctic duties would be counterproductive. For practical and strategic reasons, the entire RCN must remain involved in Arctic matters.

### Dividing the Fleet

The RCN is currently undergoing a major, multi-decade recapitalization program, modernizing elements of existing assets and building new ones, as the organization begins the transition from the current navy to the “next navy.”<sup>16</sup> Underpinning these developments is an unofficial strategy of demarcation, which is currently guiding Fleet development within the NSS and is a dominant line of logic, in both *Leadmark 2050* and the current defence policy, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, governing the future constitution and employment of the navy.<sup>17</sup> Specifically, the RCN Fleet can be divided into functional specific sub-components, each with differentiated missions and mandates as originally designed. On one side is a war-fighting-capable, task-group-oriented blue-water navy component—comprised of large surface combatants, replenishment vessels and submarines—focused on operations overseas with allies and partners. On the other side is a non-warfighting-capable, continental fleet tasked with coastal brown-water operations around North America that are more constabulary in nature, working in concert with other domestic security agencies such as the Canadian Coast Guard. The *Harry DeWolf* class would be the primary asset in this second category, while much of the rest of the Fleet constitutes the former. Such a division is logical in many respects given the varied missions and operating environments the RCN faces, and in general



balancing the needs of being a navy that is both blue-water and Arctic capable, which legitimates tailored designed assets and mission focus. However, such a division is impractical.

Despite the initial growth in total assets that the *Harry DeWolf* class will provide to the RCN, in the not-so-distant future the Fleet's size will shrink under current procurement and modernization plans. Most importantly, as there is no midlife refit program nor replacement for the *Kingston*-class Maritime and Coastal Defence Vessels (MCDVs); the *Harry DeWolf* class is anticipated to start taking over their duties and roles throughout the next decade. However, there are only six AOPSS compared to the 12 MCDVs. The result will be growing operational strains for the new ships to cover their missions and conduct Arctic duties.<sup>18</sup>

The MCDVs, furthermore, are themselves an instructive story of the likely future of the AOPSS. Although poorly designed to do so in terms of speed and hull design,<sup>19</sup> they have increasingly been used for missions throughout North America and overseas<sup>20</sup> given the chronic shortages of blue-water platforms to do these since the early 2000s. Nevertheless, these platforms have been able to adjust and conduct such operations well despite their limitations. The *Harry DeWolf* class will most likely confront such a reality as the MCDVs are taken out of service. The end of the service lives for the *Halifax*-class frigates (the primary blue-water asset in service) and *Victoria*-class submarines will lag their replacements becoming operational: the Canadian Surface Combatant and possibly an as-yet undecided replacement submarine type, throughout the 2030s. There will be great strains on the AOPSS to operate in various environments simultaneously. If the Arctic is to remain a priority, therefore, other assets will need to conduct regular operations there, as best they can. This will necessitate growing interaction and training between the "blue-water fleet" and the *Harry DeWolf* class. In doing so, the RCN needs to continue what it has been doing—sending frigates, submarines and even MCDVs to the Arctic to exercise and, in general, retain

organizational competencies and capacities of operating there with non-purpose-built as well as purpose-built assets. This will challenge the ability of the RCN to dedicate the forces necessary to deploy two blue-water naval task groups as currently planned, alongside commitments for Arctic operations and setting aside some assets for contingency planning.<sup>21</sup>

Given the long timelines of Canadian military procurement projects, the RCN's history is replete with ships doing different missions and operations other than those that they were originally envisioned to do. This is in part due to changing security environments and the reality of having a small navy where all vessels need to "cover off" for each other due to chronic shortages. Examples include: the *Halifax*-class frigates, originally designed to conduct anti-submarine warfare (ASW) in a Cold War environment, which became more multipurpose vessels in the post-Cold War world, conducting interdiction operations and fisheries patrols, in addition to more traditional alliance, blue-water roles; and the *Kingston*-class MCDVs, originally designed to conduct minesweeping and naval training, increasingly doing overseas and Arctic missions. The *Harry DeWolf* class will follow a similar course over its service life. Unlike previous projects, however, thinking about variability in environments and missions, what exactly these vessels will be expected to do, has been a key consideration throughout their procurement. Even with such adaptability, though, there is and will remain a shortage of vessels to meet the RCN's mandates, which means some operating areas may have to be marginalized for the Arctic to retain its priority.

### Having a Menu of Options

The Arctic occupies a unique place as it includes all three geographic environments that anchor defence policy and planning: domestic, continental, and global. Within each of these, several trends are altering the overall regional security environment. There are a number of unknowns about the dura-

bility, trajectory and overall impact these trends will have, but given their simultaneity the RCN must be prepared to be deployed and employed in a variety of functions within the North American Arctic and wider Arctic region. Having a "menu of options" in terms of numbers and types of naval assets that can be used (and in the future built) regionally is the best approach for Canada to achieve its interests in such an environment.

Navies can perform three functions: *policing* (constabulary type duties



A recent concept rendering for the Canadian Surface Combatant.





A Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat (RHIB) from HMCS *Harry DeWolf* speeds across Davis Strait while on a boat maneuvering exercise during Operation NANOOK-TATIGIIT, 16 August 2021.

to support domestic and regional/international order), *diplomatic* (to support larger foreign policy efforts through a variety of measures short of the employment of force) and *military* (to maintain favourable balances of power in peacetime and ability to use force in wartime).<sup>22</sup> The *Harry DeWolf* class is seen as a good capability fit—able to perform policing and diplomatic functions but not really military ones—for the Arctic given assessments that the risk of conflict remains low, especially in the North American Arctic. Some disagree, arguing assessments of growing military developments with Arctic implications by adversarial powers such as Russia and China warrant a re-examination of the weapons and sensors suite of the AOPs to conduct military-warfighting missions.<sup>23</sup> Such debates are limiting in two ways. First, in thinking that the AOPs can become a “super ship” where capabilities are added/removed easily as needed for Arctic operations—no ship can be endlessly flexible in this regard and that does not address the fact that there are too few AOPs to do both Arctic and other duties. Second, the presence/absence of “warships,” to perform military functions, should not solely depend on whether there is a legitimate state threat to deter. War-fighting assets (which are usually blue-water capable) can be, and have been, employed to achieve the other two functions. Furthermore, there is a blurring between peacetime military functions and diplomatic ones, especially within alliance contexts in terms of development and deployment of naval power that can be used to signal various messages to both competitors/adversaries and allied partners alike. Using naval forces in this way is becoming an increasingly important consideration as Canada tries to balance retaining degrees of autonomy and furthering solidarity efforts with allies in terms of defence matters in the Arctic.

Some of the current (and future) security issues Canada faces in the Arctic where sea power plays a role include:

**Emergency preparedness:** Canada has a dearth of emergency management capabilities in the Arctic. The *Harry DeWolf* class is well positioned to augment this capability, including reaching isolated communities, given the frequency and severity of natural disasters induced by climate change, and overall changes to the ecological environment in terms of the rise of sea levels and melting permafrost, which is expected to stress an already fragile infrastructure-logistics system.

**Increasing pattern of life monitoring:** Assessments of the Arctic, specifically the

North American Arctic, as a new superhighway for maritime commerce or site of intensive seabed extractive activities are premature, but there is a slow growth in the overall pattern of life that requires greater surveillance and control capabilities. Canada has a steady record of expanding and integrating its networks of sensors and information management in developing a Common Operating Picture, but lacks Arctic control capabilities. The AOPs will help address this deficiency. Limited subsurface surveillance could justify development of an Arctic submarine capability. Naval assets can also support regional capacity building—such as possible fisheries and environmental patrols, search and rescue, and overall pattern of life monitoring—making positive contributions to regional security.

**North American defence reconceptualization:** Given concerns about new military strike capabilities of adversarial powers that can reach North America, the Americans are pursuing an expansion and integration of information sources and assets into a system-of-systems network on the assumption of a more offence-as-defence approach to continental defence, possibly including pre-emptive strikes on forces. The Arctic is a primary vector for such attacks and thus may motivate American deployment of missile-defence and strike platforms closer to Russia at sea and on land; reopen debates in Canada about joining continental Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD); and possibly result in NORAD acquiring a maritime control mission.<sup>24</sup> These may all affect RCN deployments and the development of future capabilities. Canada is largely supportive of NORAD. However, because it is a defensive military command, any expansion of the operating area or assumption of offensive operations will be cause for trepidation about joining these new initiatives.<sup>25</sup> Canada should continue to augment surveillance and domain awareness capabilities, including underwater, throughout the North American Arctic but may be reluctant to work with the Americans to develop and implement

over-the-horizon strike forces or a forward naval and air presence close to Russia in the service of continental defence. Given the growing prevalence and importance of missile-versus-missile defence systems globally, however, Canada should explore how to participate in missile defence in a selective way beyond the controversial Ground-Based Midcourse Defense system. One route would be to participate in naval BMD, for which the surface combatants that are planned in the NSS will have the capacity to be fitted, equipping a number of platforms as a visible contribution in continental defence but retaining control of where and how these are deployed.<sup>26</sup> BMD-capable surface combatants could be positioned in and around the North American Arctic to bolster continental security but avoid being forward deployed in other Arctic sub-regions, specifically close to Russian territorial waters in the Eurasian Arctic.

**NATO support in the face of adversarial powers:** Russia is reconstituting its northern forces, including expanding its bastion strategy to protect its nuclear-armed submarine force and long-range missile capabilities in and around the Barents Sea. As a result, there is a renewed NATO effort to increase surveillance of and develop alliance capabilities in the European Arctic, specifically the air and water spaces between Greenland, Iceland, the United Kingdom and Norway (the N-GIUK gap). War-fighting platforms, specifically ASW-capable submarines, could assist in monitoring Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) between, and maritime approaches of, regional allies such as the N-GIUK gap. China is not at present a military concern in the Arctic, though it may become so in the future; instead, China is more a geo-economic concern regarding the strategic purposes underpinning its growing

investment, research and political activities in the Arctic. It is unclear what approach the alliance will take towards China, but there is a growing focus on China in deliberations about what policy and posture NATO should adopt for the Arctic, which includes possibly establishing a regionally dedicated fleet. Canada should position itself to contribute to these discussions. In particular, regular deployment of naval forces in various capacities throughout the region can help Canada frame itself as a NATO Arctic expert by influencing the purposes, composition and competencies of any sort of NATO Arctic force, given its experiences and forces dedicated to the region.

**Interested allies/partners:** There is growing interest from several non-Arctic NATO allies to operate militarily throughout the Arctic. While much of the NATO focus is on the European Arctic, with North America continental security lying squarely within the US-Canada relationship,<sup>27</sup> there is a growing desire from some powers to explore the possibility of training and operating.<sup>28</sup> Canada should not be completely opposed to these. Instead, having a balanced naval presence creates a position of strength in which Canada can invite other allies to train and operate there, crafting the conditions under which these exercises and knowledge-sharing events occur. This can include warfighting exercises, such as gun shoots and anti-submarine warfare exercises, as occurred during Op Nanook in 2020 between Canadian, Danish and French forces.

**Great power competition:** Canada shares similar concerns with its regional allies and partners regarding the challenges posed by China and Russia, domestically, regionally and globally. Given its power and hegemonic position, the US, as a reinvigorated Arctic power, will play a central role in growing cooperation and coordination to deal with these issues, especially militarily. The US has been and remains Canada's most important regional and continental defence partner.<sup>29</sup> But there are uncertainties about the implications of American approaches of viewing the politics of the region from the perspective of great power competition and in general their commitment to being the leader of the Western world, especially in terms of alliance commitments. Its divisive domestic politics are causing a rethink of the US role in the world. While still working closely with the US and NATO, amidst such uncertainty Canada

St Bryan Underwood / Canadian Armed Forces photo



Commander Christopher Rochon (left), the Commanding Officer of Her Majesty's Ship (HMCS) *Halifax*, along with Commodore Bradley Peats, the Commander of Standing NATO Maritime Group One (SNMG1) direct task group maneuvers with a German Naval Warship during Operation REASSURANCE, 26 January 2021.





HMCS *Harry DeWolf* sails alongside Canadian Coast Guard Ship *Captain Jacques Cartier* while a CH-148 Cyclone Helicopter patrols the area during Royal Canadian Navy Sea Trials, 22 October 2020.

should further and expand its relations with the other, smaller Arctic states to do more together, including bolstering their abilities to deal with local security issues and work together on regional governance. Naval diplomacy, such as port-of-call visits, exercises, and collaboration on dealing with common maritime challenges, can foster relations with these states, including leaning forward in addressing and providing institutional solutions to emerging economic and security issues.<sup>30</sup>

### Objections

There are arguments that the Arctic should remain a tertiary operational area for the RCN. First, the RCN is the wrong government instrument in this context. In light of the nature of the challenges, the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) is a better fit to assure Canada's maritime security interests in the North American Arctic, which are mostly human safety and constabulary in nature, especially given the organization's extensive operational experience there.<sup>31</sup> As the CCG is receiving two of their own Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ships, it may be prudent to transfer the RCN's allotment of these ships to them to augment the CCG's regional capacities.<sup>32</sup> Second, growing focus on and priority of the Arctic by the RCN could detrimentally affect Canadian regional security. Regular stationing and deployments of naval vessels would contribute to the ongoing militarization of the Arctic, risk contribution to security-dilemma dynamics and undermine regional stability. Finally, the focus on the Arctic is a costly diversion for the RCN away from its true purpose and missions. With Europe and East Asia increasingly becoming the main "frontlines" of the West's strategic competition against Russia and China, Canada must, with allies and partners, develop and dedicate more military assets to bol-

ster collective defence, regional stability and the "Rules-Based International Order." Given the maritime geography that bounds these critical regions, the RCN should play a major role in these efforts, including deploying and/or contributing to allied naval task groups in projecting power to preserve freedom of the seas and stifle efforts by adversarial powers to create closed regional hegemonies. Overall, these arguments posit that the RCN's growing presence and operational priority in the Arctic are of limited effectiveness in securing and furthering national interests and a distraction of resources that are already stressed; the RCN is facing personnel

and ship shortages that make it difficult to meet its current operational tempo in other priority regions.

One central tenet demands that the RCN remain involved in the region, now and in the future: the Arctic is an increasingly accessible maritime environment directly bordering Canada. That necessitates a naval presence as it does on its Atlantic and Pacific boundaries. Given limited government capacity there, Arctic maritime capabilities should continue to be developed by both the CCG and RCN, as well as strengthened training and operations between them which has, until quite recently, been somewhat limited. More, not less, of such interactions to build competencies and capabilities is needed to ensure that Canada



A member of the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) watched HMCS *Harry DeWolf* carry out Cold Weather Trials near Frobisher Bay, 23 February 2021.

Corporal David Veldman / Canadian Armed Forces Photo



has a diverse maritime security posture and capacity in the Arctic. Sustained efforts are needed to ensure the RCN can operate in and deploy to the Arctic as a primary operational area throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century, despite uncertainty about what the security situation will look like exactly in the decades ahead. The RCN should be present in the Arctic as an interest unto itself given that it is an emerging ocean region directly bordering Canada.

The destabilizing effects of rapid military buildups and deployments in the Arctic are a real concern, not just pertaining to Russian (and possibly in the future Chinese) military developments, but American and allied ones as well.<sup>33</sup> More assets and capabilities gives Canada options, not only in signalling to adversaries like Russia and China, but also in discussions with allies to push back or opt out of certain operations while still demonstrating an overall continental and regional commitment to alliance security and solidarity via tangible contributions. Finally, altering regional balances of power in Europe and Asia have global, strategic importance that legitimates continued and growing RCN involvement there; but this should not come at the expense of building an Arctic presence as this is a core region for Canada as a resident power. Naval power is a force enabler in navigating this strategically important region by ensuring that Canada retains an ability to act autonomously when desired, remain an important actor within Arctic regional politics and contribute to the defence of North America and NATO alliance commitments. A focus on the “home” versus the “away” game, furthermore, contributes to efforts to contain adversarial powers, with a specific focus on their activities and action in the Arctic being of direct value, not only to Canadian interests but appreciated by allies and partners, including the US.

### A Naval Strategic Plan for the Arctic

To become an Arctic-capable navy, the RCN must position itself to be present and operate in the Arctic in a dedicated (in terms of regular operations), diverse (in terms of the fleet assets deployed there) and eventually permanent (in terms of basing in the region) manner. The vast majority of RCN capability should and will remain dedicated to the Pacific and Atlantic coasts, and operating overseas from these bases; these are home to the dominant maritime economic flows and patterns of life for Canada. But the entire Fleet should continue to deploy regularly to and operate in the region, as part of a larger effort to create a sustainable

regional posture for the decades to come. These efforts, which are starting from a very low point, require a strategic, long-term plan—an Arctic specific Leadmark type document—to rationalize, advocate and prioritize Arctic considerations in procurement, infrastructure, and force development and posture decisions and planning. The goal should be to develop an Arctic-based force of a minimum number of platforms, with the ability to dispatch additional assets in short order if needed, by the latter part of this century.

A three-ocean navy will require a larger fleet than currently planned to station and operate assets in three maritime environments simultaneously. In the short term, a replacement for the *Kingston* class is needed to prevent the shrinking of the Fleet and ensure the *Harry DeWolf* class can spend as much time in the Arctic as possible and not be dispatched to cover for aging vessels elsewhere. The *Harry DeWolf* class, as well, offers a 20-year buffer for the RCN in terms of determining what Arctic requirements may be needed for future vessels to operate there, given uncertainty regarding what maritime conditions will look like in the region. The RCN will not become an “Arctic Navy,” where all its vessels are specifically designed for these conditions (specifically being thick-hulled), but minimum requirements to operate there should be taken into consideration for future ship development.<sup>34</sup> However, one procurement project that must immediately address these issues is replacing the *Victoria*-class submarines, provided a replacement project is decided at all.<sup>35</sup> If a replacement proceeds, there will be a real trade-off between Arctic versus other operational requirements for the new submarines: despite advancement in other technologies, only nuclear powered submarines are currently able to operate under ice, which was identified as a critical capability to effectively conduct underwater operations in the North American Arctic as early as the 1960s.<sup>36</sup>

Another critical component is infrastructure such as basing and other logistical hubs. Scarcity of infrastructure is perhaps the



A CH-148 Cyclone flies behind HMCS *Harry DeWolf* and a Multi Role Rescue Boat during Royal Canadian Navy Sea Trials off the coast of Halifax, Nova Scotia on 15 October 2020.

Corporal David Veldman / Canadian Armed Forces Photo



Polar bears patrol the ice near HMCS *Harry DeWolf* during Cold Weather Trials near Frobisher Bay, 20 February 2021.

greatest strategic challenge to developing an Arctic-capable navy. The costs and limited capacity of the Nanisivik refuelling station<sup>37</sup> demonstrate that stand-alone military sites are most likely not the best way forward, and that collaboration in developing dual-use sites with industry and local communities and governments will be needed. Appreciation of the socio-economic implications of stationing even relatively small numbers of predominately white southern sailors and workers at any naval installation in an Arctic community must be a central consideration in these processes, including meaningful consultations with local population and governments.

Finally, there must be a continued conceptual and psychological shift in Canada and the RCN to possessing a three-ocean navy. For the RCN, this requires a long-term organizational commitment to ensure its assets will eventually be able to be employed in all these environments.<sup>38</sup> Successful achievement of this capacity will require continued implementation of the “One Navy” concept in which there is one force which, based on its small size and limited resources, must be highly integrated and comfortable operating with one another, including in a wide variety of different environments.<sup>39</sup> Ingenuity and creativity from naval leaders will

the organization) about why continuing to integrate the “Arctic-capable” requirement throughout the RCN is necessary, even if/when this conflicts with other priorities and conceptions such as being a blue-water force that is largely focused on expeditionary operations.

The *Harry DeWolf* class is a major milestone and a step in the right direction in building an Arctic-capable navy, but ensuring the Arctic remains a priority for the RCN requires an entire organizational effort to achieve, not just a specific, purpose-built subset of it. It is unclear what the Fleet and overall structure of the RCN will be in the latter part of this century. At that time, when the public, military, bureaucratic and political leaders are thinking about recapitalization of the navy, hopefully the efforts and developments of the preceding few decades (from their perspective; the preceding decades from ours) will have locked in the Arctic as a naval priority, making it easier to build on these efforts to further the organization’s presence and capabilities in this new ocean frontier.



## NOTES

1 As is common practice currently in the RCN, the first ship of this new class—*Harry DeWolf*—is the name used to designate this entire class of warships. AOPS is the ship designation type. For this article both terms will be used interchangeably.

2 The icebreaker HMCS *Labrador* was transferred to the RCN from the Canadian Coast Guard in 1954, giving the navy its first Arctic-capable vessel. The AOPS, however, represent the first time an Arctic-capable vessel was specifically constructed for the RCN.

3 The Arctic is not one common region but rather is comprised of three distinct subregions—the North American Arctic, the European Arctic (or “High Arctic”), and the Eurasian/Russian Arctic—each with its own unique ecological, demographic, industrial, security and political characteristics. Unless stated otherwise, throughout the article the “Arctic” refers to the North American Arctic.

4 *Canada in a New Maritime World: LEADMARK 2050*, Canadian Armed Forces: Royal Canadian Navy, 2017, p.vi.

5 *Challenge and Commitment: A Defence Policy for Canada*. Department of National Defence, 1987, pp. 6, 50-54.

6 This is most evident in the government scrapping plans to procure nuclear-powered submarines, which would have been an Arctic-specific capability, due to costs, political concerns, lack of security rationale with the end of the Cold War and US opposition to sharing nuclear technology. Adam Lajeunesse. “Sovereignty, Security and the Canadian Nuclear Submarine Program.” *Canadian Military Journal* 8.4 (2007): 74-82.

- 7 Adam Lajeunesse. "The RCN in the Arctic: A Brief History," *Naval Association of Canada*, Niobe Paper No. 2, May 2019.
- 8 *Leadmark: The Navy's Strategy for 2020*. Department of National Defence, 2001, p. 66.
- 9 *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World*. Government of Canada, 2005, p. 17.
- 10 These concerns stem from the "sovereignty on thinning ice" narrative which has dominated public and academic debates about the nature and severity of security risks to the Canadian Arctic as it becomes more accessible. For example, see: Franklyn Griffiths, "The Shipping News: Canada's Arctic Sovereignty Not on Thinning Ice," *International Journal* 58.3 (2003): 257-282; Rob Huebert. "The Shipping News Part II: How Canada's Arctic Sovereignty Is on Thinning Ice," *International Journal* 58.3 (2003): 295-308.
- 11 Kristin Bartenstein. "Use it or Lose it: An Appropriate and Wise Slogan?" *Policy Options*, 1 July 2010, <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/fr/magazines/immigration-jobs-and-canadas-future/use-it-or-lose-it-an-appropriate-and-wise-slogan/>.
- 12 As well, over time the Harper Government's Arctic approach became more in line with previous governments' approaches, emphasizing environmental and social matters, and working with regional allies and partners. Petra Dolata. "A New Canada in the Arctic? Arctic Policies Under Harper," *Canadian Studies*, 78 (2015): 131-154.
- 13 For example, see Michael Byers and Stewart Webb. "Titanic Blunder: Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ships on Course for Disaster," *Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and Rideau Institute*, April 2013.
- 14 Adam Lajeunesse. "Canada's Arctic Offshore and Patrol Ships (AOPS): Their History and Purpose," *Marine Policy* 124 (2021): 104323.
- 15 Development of Arctic control capabilities has been a long sought-after goal, with mention of it appearing in the 2005 defence policy, but has lagged significantly behind Canada's successful maintenance and furthering of an impressive array of surveillance systems regionally. Benjamin T. Johnson, "Sensing the Arctic: Situational Awareness and the Future of Northern Security," *International Journal* 76.3 (2021): 404-26.
- 16 The RCN has successfully managed such large transitions before, specifically throughout the 1980s with the midlife refits to the *Iroquois*-class destroyers and the *Oberon*-class submarines while progressing the projects to procure the *Halifax* and *Kingston* classes, which entered service in the 1990s.
- 17 *Canada in a New Maritime World: LEADMARK 2050*, pp. 42-43; *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy*. Department of National Defence, 2017, pp. 34-35.
- 18 A possible solution would be to simply build more AOPS to make up the difference, but this is unlikely given the already considerable allocation of funds for various naval procurement projects and the fact that Irving Shipyards, the sole shipyard building the AOPS, will be quickly transitioning to construction of the Canadian Surface Combatant once the AOPS are completed.
- 19 These missions including regular counter-narcotics operations in the Caribbean, deployments to West Africa in support of regional maritime capacity-building efforts and being participants in major multinational exercises like RIMPAC.
- 20 This shortage was caused by the ending of the service life for the *Iroquois* class and intensive midlife refits of the *Halifax*-class frigates.
- 21 Besides competing operational demands, the ability to maintain such a capacity must take into consideration the need to have follow-on assets being trained and prepared to take over task group operations, regular work periods taking assets out of service for a number of months (especially pertinent for older class vessels), and sustaining losses, with assets knocked out of service indefinitely due to enemy action or most likely damage caused by training, mechanical and environmental issues. The last point is particularly critical as there is no depth built into the current recapitalization efforts, for as currently planned the RCN will have the bare minimum number of platforms to field the capacities required to meet its operational commitments and tempo.
- 22 Ken Booth. *Navies and Foreign Policy* (Croom Helm: London, 1977), pp. 15-25.
- 23 Rob Huebert, "The Case for a More Combat-Capable Arctic Offshore Patrol Ship," *Canadian Naval Review* 10:3 (2015), pp. 4-9.
- 24 Andrea Charron and James Ferguson. "NOARD's Maritime Warning Role: Origins and Future," *Canadian Naval Review* 17.2 (2021): 10-14.
- 25 Andrea Charron. "Responding to the Hardening the SHIELD: A Credible Deterrent and Capable Defense for North America," North American and Arctic Defence and Security Network, 11 September 2020, [https://www.naadsn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/20-Sept\\_Charron\\_Responding-to-the-Hardening-the-SHIELD\\_Quick-Impact.pdf](https://www.naadsn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/20-Sept_Charron_Responding-to-the-Hardening-the-SHIELD_Quick-Impact.pdf)
- 26 Adam P. MacDonald. "The Case for Canadian Naval Ballistic Missile Defence," *Canadian Naval Review* 14.3 (2019): 4-9.
- 27 This is evidenced by the standing up of the NATO Joint Force Command Norfolk, responsible for protecting sea lanes in the North Atlantic between Europe and North America. North American defence, which includes the Canadian Arctic, though remains exclusively a CANUS responsibility.
- 28 Murray Brewster. "Britain Offers Canadian Military Help to Defend Arctic," *CBC News*, 24 September 2021.
- 29 P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Rob Huebert. "Premier Partners: Canada, the United States and Arctic Security," *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 20.3 (2014): 320-33.
- 30 Adam P. MacDonald. "China-Russian Cooperation in the Arctic: A Cause for Concern for the Western Arctic States?" *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 27.2 (2021): 194-210.
- 31 This experience includes icebreaking services, interaction with local communities, and pattern of life monitoring through its management of the NORDREG reporting system. The CCG, as well, contributes to regional security efforts by liaising with other coast guards, including within the Arctic Coast Guard Forum.
- 32 Furthermore, the CCG could become an armed service for constabulary purposes and/or facilitate more integration with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to conduct these duties in the Arctic.
- 33 Michael Byers, and Nicole Covey. "Arctic SAR and the "security dilemma"," *International Journal* 74.4 (2019): 499-517.
- 34 Given the dearth of logistical and infrastructure networks, it could be argued it would be more prudent to invest in a smaller, more high-tech footprint comprised of Unmanned Aerial/Underwater Vehicles (UAVs, UUVs) which is more sustainable (less demanding of personnel and assets) and better for pattern of life monitoring and overall surveillance of the region. While the RCN, and CAF writ large, are and should continue to develop such capabilities, it is unlikely these unmanned systems will replace existing crewed ships and aircraft in the near-medium term. Instead, the most likely future is a hybrid one where UAVs and UUVs become part of the asset suite of crewed platforms, helping to extend the latter's capabilities, specifically Intelligence, Reconnaissance and Surveillance (ISR) ones. Such possibilities could be of great use and interest for Arctic operations to contribute to and expand upon the already extensive surveillance networks in existence there.
- 35 Jeffrey F. Collins. "Deadline 2036: Assessing the Requirements and Options for Canada's Future Submarine Force," *Macdonald-Laurier Institute*, September 2021.
- 36 Timothy Choi. "Nuclear or Bust: Canadians Face Uncomfortable Choice for New Submarines," *The Hill Times*, 17 November 2021.
- 37 Beth Brown. "Nanisivik Analysis," *Royal United Services Institute (NS)*, 16 February 2016, <https://rusi-ns.ca/nanisivik-analysis/>
- 38 For one of the first substantive examinations of this needed shift, see: Rob Huebert. "Canadian Arctic Maritime Security: The Return to Canada's Third Ocean," *Canadian Military Journal* 8.2 (2007): 9-16.
- 39 The One Navy concept usually is employed in reference to 1) the changing the nature of the relationship between Naval Regular and Reserve forces, specifically turning the latter into a "strategic" reserve which no longer has niche roles and duties, such as operating the MCDVs, but rather is a personnel pool to augment the requirements of the Regular force with the same training and qualifications; and 2) precluding the division of the organization into separate West Coast (based in Esquimalt) and East Coast (based in Halifax) "navies" by having each coastal command assume functional responsibilities throughout the entire RCN (training for the Maritime Forces Pacific and operational command for Maritime Forces Atlantic). This concept extends naturally towards precluding division of the fleet based on functionally different missions and mandates, and towards ensuring all RCN assets have regular experience training and operating with one another in a host of different environments and missions.





Members of the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps and 4 other countries (Poland, Chile, Denmark, New-Zealand) participate in Exercise WORTHINGTON CHALLENGE 2019 at 5th Canadian Division Support Base Gagetown, 22-26 September 2019.

## The Role of Armoured Reconnaissance Within the Canadian Army

by Vladimir Kessia

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(This article was researched and written in 2019-2020. Since then, the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps School has spearheaded an ongoing change to a cavalry model for the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps' medium armoured forces.)

### Introduction

The Royal Canadian Armoured Corps (RCAC) is divided into two streams; tanks and armoured reconnaissance, with approximately 30% of personnel specializing in the former and 70% in the latter. Recently, the role of those in armoured reconnaissance has come under scrutiny. The acquisition of the Textron Tactical Armoured Patrol Vehicle (TAPV) prompted this re-evaluation as it quickly became evident to many within the RCAC that the TAPV's armament and turretless configu-

ration made it too different from its predecessor, the Coyote, to simply replace it without changing tactics, techniques or procedures. The TAPV is fine for its original purpose, namely replacing the G-Wagon. However, its adoption as the RCAC's primary vehicle highlighted the fact that the RCAC does not have a clear vision as to how to organize, employ, train and equip its armoured reconnaissance forces for combat against peer forces.

One of the main reasons for the RCAC's issues is that its present employment concept is built on a series of institutional compromises rather than lessons learned in combat. During World War 2, reconnaissance within the RCAC was conducted by four vehicle troops in tanks.<sup>1</sup> Recce units differed from combat units primarily in assigned task, not composition. Not long after WW2, Canada's focus became centered on a possible conflict between First and Second World nations, but gradually peacekeeping missions in the developing world also gained importance and in time came to be closely associated with the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF).<sup>2</sup> The CAF had to compromise to fulfill multiple roles. For example, the two car patrol found in modern reconnaissance troops was initially used to permit more ground to be covered for a peacekeeping mission during the Suez crisis in 1956 using

ferret scout cars.<sup>3</sup> It was not a configuration ever used against a near peer force but was kept once that mission was over. This is only one example of many, and individually the impact might well have been minimal, but together they have made the RCAC drift from what makes a medium armoured force effective.

This article will focus its analysis on NATO allies and potential foes. The CAF can realistically send up to a brigade in an expeditionary role; therefore, armoured forces within a brigade context will be used as a basis of comparison.

**The Purpose and Method of Reconnaissance**

The purpose of reconnaissance can be summarily defined as: “to provide information to the commander so that he may make informed decisions.” Information is a resource; therefore, enemy commanders seek to deny its acquisition to friendly troops where they can, particularly with regards to enemy capabilities and disposition. Armoured reconnaissance units have to decide how aggressively they are willing to seek out this information and how detailed it needs to be. Reconnaissance can therefore be seen as being on a scale with “find” and “define” at its two ends. Higher definition of enemy forces requires an acceptance of higher risk because the unit conducting the reconnaissance needs to get closer and possibly even come into contact with the enemy. Higher risk requires higher risk mitigation which, for an armoured force, generally means more weight for weapons and armour. This is represented in the weight to definition chart (Figure 1).

Lighter forces are better fit to find whereas heavier forces are better suited to define. Main battle tanks (MBTs) may seem an oddity on this chart as they are not generally used as reconnaissance vehicles. However, the highest definition is usually gained during contact with enemy forces and MBTs are best at engaging enemy forces directly. More weight is not the only risk mitigation strategy. Stealth tactics or better optical instruments can aid, but more weight is the typical choice for armour as stealth will always be limited in a multi-ton vehicle. When adding weight, the limiting factor is sustainment, as the act of find-

ing the enemy does require covering large amounts of terrain. Balancing vehicle weight with reconnaissance requirements is no easy task.

On the offensive, the traditional solution for a brigade has been a light scouting force up front to find the enemy followed by a heavier covering force that defines the enemy and even shapes the enemy with direct fire for eventual destruction by the brigade’s main body of troops. The front scouts could be part of the brigade itself, but are also often part of a larger divisional reconnaissance unit. Additional tactical reconnaissance can also be attached to units within the brigade to provide even more definition under direct control at lower levels. This is represented in the echelons chart (Figure 2).

The doctrinal terms above were chosen to draw a link between battle rhythm and relevancy of reconnaissance, although terms can vary widely between military forces.

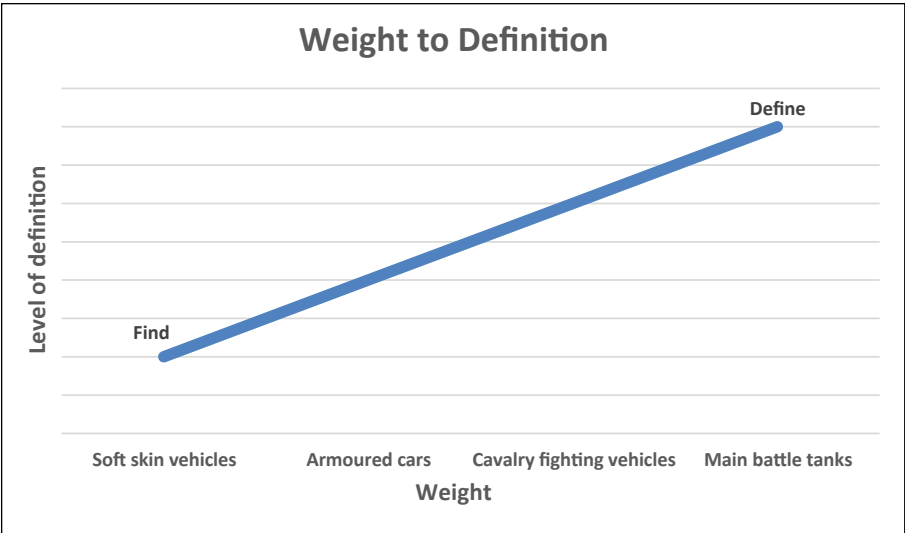


Figure 1: Weight to Definition Chart.

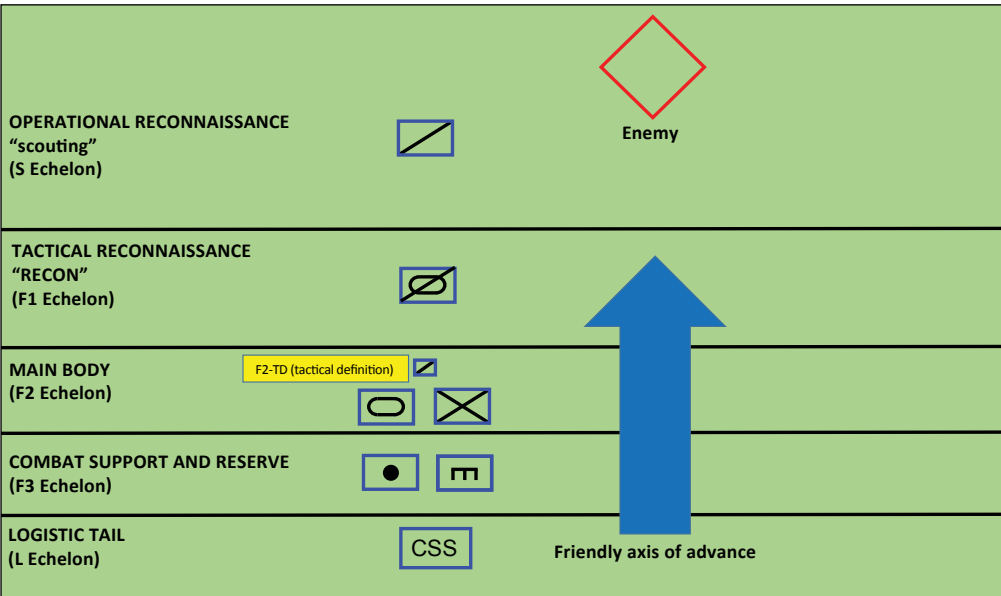


Figure 2: Echelons Chart.



A GAZ Tigr infantry mobility vehicle takes part in large-scale tactical drills in the Grodno area in western Belarus, 30 August 2020.

Operational reconnaissance (S echelon) is performed in front of the brigade. It is seeking information without fire, sneak and peek, screening, scouting, etc. These forces are launched during the brigade's operational planning cycle, when the brigade's main body of troops is still preparing for operations. There is no need yet to provide a high level of definition at this phase as the unit commanders of the main body cannot act on this information and it might no longer be relevant by the time they can. Why then, should armoured reconnaissance be risked? France and Russia do not use anything heavier than an armoured car in this echelon (the VBL,<sup>4</sup> and the GAZ Tigr,<sup>5</sup> respectively). The US Army relies more on non-armour assets in this role although it does have cavalry squadrons in their battlefield surveillance brigades (known as military intelligence brigades since 2015). The UK uses a cavalry fighting vehicle (Scimitar<sup>6</sup>), although in a manner so aggressive that it is arguably not scouting at all. Canada uses the Coyote, which is being phased out in favour of the LAV 6 and TAPV. The TAPV has the distinction of being heavier and larger than a Coyote with an armament that can only reach targets half as far away.

Behind this is the tactical reconnaissance (F1 echelon). Equipped with heavier vehicles, this echelon fights for information and acts on information acquired by the S echelon. Because of the requirement for contact, this echelon is generally equipped with heavier vehicles. Used properly, this echelon shapes the enemy and sends information that leads to decisive action by the main body.

Units in the main body (F2 echelon) are primarily infantry or tanks and can have tactical reconnaissance detachments attached

directly to them. Definition at this level is very detail oriented and uses stealth as the primary risk mitigation strategy.

### Reconnaissance Units Other Than Armour

**A**rmoured forces are only one element of a modern force's reconnaissance options. Aircraft, dismounted patrols and electronic warfare (EW) can all be used as sources of information.

#### Aircraft

Fixed wing aircraft first began being used for reconnaissance in WW1 although hot air balloons had been used as far back as the battle of Fleurus in 1794.<sup>7</sup> They replaced cavalry on the western front, which, after the

opening weeks of the war, had devolved into trench warfare (although, contrary to popular myth, trench warfare was not the norm in all theaters of war). Aerial reconnaissance provided the same advantages then that it provides now. It is far more difficult to shoot at an aerial scout than a ground-based one. It is also possible to quickly gain information over a wide area of land very quickly from the air, however, this information will tend to lack definition. Aerial reconnaissance, particularly smaller unmanned aerial vehicles, can also have limited endurance and are highly susceptible to bad weather.

#### Dismounted Patrols

Dismounted patrols are stealthy but inherently slow. Their ability to bring a set of human eyes close to a target makes them the best option for definition on a small target, but depends on a commander's foresight to send the patrols in time to affect operations. Due to the speed with which a mechanized force advances, a commander cannot solely rely on them. Dismounted patrols often provide the tactical definition role for infantry forces.

#### Electronic Warfare

Electronic Warfare's (EW) contribution to reconnaissance is the capacity to listen to and decrypt enemy communications. It is underutilized in many western states, especially considering how important decryption of enemy communications has been historically.<sup>8</sup> EW does not fit into any one echelon described above, but can be used to enhance all of them. The Russian military has made



extensive use of EW to great effect in the recent Donbass conflict.<sup>9</sup>

### ***Summation of ISTAR***

These reconnaissance assets, including others that have not been mentioned, such as human intelligence, all enhance the information available to a commander but are insufficient for the tactical reconnaissance role. A ground maneuver element conducting tactical reconnaissance needs to be able to fight for information if it is to provide the level of detail required by the main body. Only a medium-weight armoured force is suitable for this. Any force without a proper tactical reconnaissance element will be at an intelligence disadvantage versus forces that do have them.

### **Allies' Armoured Reconnaissance Forces**

This section analyses the reconnaissance forces of the United States of America, the United Kingdom and France through the reconnaissance model described above. Terminology from other nations often does not match Canadian terminology. To facilitate comparison, Canadian terminology will be used throughout.

#### ***The United States of America***

In the S echelon, the US employs elements of their expeditionary military intelligence brigade, which conducts military intelligence acquisition and analysis. The acquisition side includes human intelligence, aerial signals, ground signals and aviation assets. There is no dedicated armoured force to conduct reconnaissance above the brigade level although armoured forces can be part of military intelligence brigades.

In the F1 echelon, the US army has several variants. The US army is organized into regimental combat teams (RCT), which is the equivalent of a Canadian mechanized brigade group (CMBG), although smaller in size. There are three types of RCTs in the US army: the infantry brigade combat team (IBCT), Stryker brigade combat teams (SBCT) and armoured brigade combat teams (ABCT)—each built around units of their namesake type. The SBCT is most comparable to a CMBG, as the primary combat troops for both are mechanized infantry. The SBCT has a reconnaissance regiment that has 3x squadrons of 2x troops of 6x vehicles.<sup>10</sup> With the added command vehicles, a regiment has a total of 44 vehicles<sup>11</sup> in the F1 echelon to cover the frontage of the SBCT. For comparison, a Canadian reconnaissance squadron has only 24 F1 echelon vehicles, commanded by approximately



A M2A2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle kicks up plumes of dust as it leaves Forward Operating Base MacKenzie in Iraq for a mission, 30 October 2004.

American Photo Archive / Alamy Stock Photo

only 1/3 the number of officers. An SBCT also has, doctrinally 4,413 soldiers while a CMBG has just under 7,000; therefore, the ratio of armoured reconnaissance to main body troops is significantly lower for Canada.

“US Cav is equipped for and expected to fight for information, and operate for extended periods of time without explicit direction or orders”.<sup>12</sup> This is most evident when looking at the Bradley vehicle. Equipped with tracks and a TOW missile, the Bradley is an effective F1 vehicle, able to take on most reconnaissance forces it will encounter and even shape the battle against forces found in the enemy main body. The US Army also uses dismounted scouts but primarily in a tactical definition role; therefore, they can be seen as amalgamating the tactical reconnaissance and tactical definition functions into one element, rather than dispersing the tactical definition task to troops attached to the main body.

#### ***The United Kingdom***

In the S echelon, the British army has permanent division-level armour reconnaissance conducted by an armoured regiment<sup>13</sup> as well as brigade-level armour reconnaissance, which is squadron sized.<sup>14</sup> They use four car troops, presently equipped with the Scimitar (soon to be replaced by the Ajax), which is a tracked vehicle with a 30 mm cannon. The UK also has the Jackal, an armoured car with good counter-mine protection, but this is kept more as an option to be used in specific situations rather than a go-to vehicle.<sup>15</sup> Most recently, the UK used operational reconnaissance effectively during the 2003 invasion of Iraq, in Operation TELIC. Most of the UK ground forces fell under the command of 7<sup>th</sup> Armoured Brigade, 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Division, which had battlegroups composed of Challenger 2 tanks and Warrior infantry fighting vehicles. The 1<sup>st</sup> The Queen's Dragoon Guards formed part of the formation reconnaissance, but after the invasion phase were quickly re-assigned to security tasks.<sup>16</sup> Division

REUTERS / Alamy Stock Photo



British Commander of Scimitar Tank from Queen's Dragoon Guards 3 Commando waits behind enemy lines for US Air Strikes in Iraq, 26 March 2003.

reconnaissance is not intended to fight for information, but the speed of the invasion cannot be ignored. It took 19 days from the beginning of the advance to the capitulation of Baghdad,<sup>17</sup> an average rate of advance of 35 km per day, which is far faster than what can be achieved by armoured forces conducting simply scouting. The UK is unique in having armoured forces that are expected to operate far behind enemy lines, and there is acknowledgment by some of its personnel that this presents logistical issues.<sup>18</sup> Like other militaries, the UK relies primarily on non-armoured assets to conduct the find function.

In the F1 role, the UK brigade reconnaissance is equipped with the same Scimitar vehicle as division reconnaissance, but provides further definition and is kept closer to the brigade. They can do aggressive reconnaissance, but do not see that as their primary role. UK brigades will often combine armour and infantry into combat teams to fill the F1 role. In theory, it may seem that the UK has a lot of armour dedicated to reconnaissance, but in practice, much of the armour in the reconnaissance role ends up fighting for information as well and acts far more as an F1 echelon than an S echelon.

### France

In the S echelon, France differs in its approach to reconnaissance, using the light armoured vehicle, the VBL (Véhicule blindé léger), as part of its reconnaissance and intervention squadron,

there can be up to four ERIs in a brigade, which means that a French battlegroup will generally have its own scouts in the form of an ERI.<sup>21</sup> It is evident from reading French doctrine that COIN operations in Africa have greatly influenced the French military. For example, French doctrine was the only one that made allusion to armoured soldiers talking with the civilians to gain information, a staple tactic of COIN ops.<sup>22</sup>

In the F1 echelon, French doctrine is flexible, but typically employs a cavalry-based combat team, be it Leclerc tanks or AMX10-RCs, as part of the battlegroup. This combat team has the task of reconnaissance, but French reconnaissance would be more akin to Canadian recon in force as the ERIs do the scouting (éclairement). Behind the reconnaissance combat team, another combat team will be in support.<sup>23</sup> Although French soldiers



French soldiers prepare VBL armoured vehicles before departing in a convoy on a mission during Operation EAGLE in Sarobi, Afghanistan, 20 October 2008.

US Navy Photo / Alamy Stock Photo



train at the brigade level, all recent operations have been at the battlegroup level.

French doctrine emphasizes inter-arms groupings. It is rare to see them not operate as battlegroups or combat teams. Even the ERIs are far more inter-arms than equivalent reconnaissance squadrons in other nations. For example, engineers are always grouped with reconnaissance units on the advance, as this permits the rapid remediation of damaged infrastructure. In Canada, while engineers are often grouped with reconnaissance squadrons, this is generally considered a “nice to have” not a “must have.” Compared to a French troop leader, a Canadian troop leader graduates the RCAC with very little hands-on experience working with other trades.

### ***Summation of Allied Reconnaissance Forces***

The nations examined primarily employ armour as part of a mix of reconnaissance assets. They generally have a higher ratio of armoured forces to non-armoured forces than the CAF and within those, there is a divide between those who primarily scout and those who have to define and be ready for more aggressive tasks. Even when in a nominal scouting role, all three nations tend to use medium armoured forces very aggressively in practice. The rule of echeloning lighter vehicles followed by heavier vehicles is generally followed, with the notable exception of the British Scimitar and the acknowledgement that this poses certain unanswered logistical questions. All of these nations have an AT capability, in both the S and the F1 echelon.

### **Canadian Reality**

The Canadian Armed Forces are designed to be expeditionary and part of a coalition. Canada can send one CMBG, which, despite the name, does have 72 tanks in it per Canadian doctrine.<sup>24</sup> Canada can realistically field one tank squadron per brigade and so an F1 force does not have to be faster than the CAF’s primary infantry fighting vehicle, the LAV 6.

In the S echelon, CMBGs presently employ a single armoured reconnaissance squadron composed of three 8vehicle medium armour troops and one 8vehicle light armour troop, at least doctrinally.<sup>25</sup> The vehicles used, up until recently, were the Coyote and the G-Wagon. The Coyote was never truly adequate for an S echelon role. At 15 tons, it is too large and heavy to be a stealthy scout. Despite this, at the RCAC, “sneak and peek” tactics are taught while direct fire is often authorized for soft (not tanks) targets. This all leads to RCAC reconnaissance personnel practicing a form of “soft recon” that falls halfway between scouting and recon in force, on the fringe of the S and F1 echelons. The



Members of the Royal Canadian Dragoons work in muddy conditions with a Coyote Light Armoured Vehicle during Exercise MAPLE RESOLVE 17 at CFB Wainwright, Alberta, 23 May 2017.

Master Corporal Malcolm Byers / DND photo

addition of the TAPV has not made the situation better because despite increased weight, the TAPV has less firepower than a Coyote. The primary weapon of the TAPV, the 40 mm cannon, has a maximum range of 1,000 m compared to a Coyote’s 25 mm, which can fire up to 2,400 m.

A CMBG does not have a real F1 echelon, but battlefield realities tend to make a pseudoF1 echelon appear. Often, the single tank squadron of the brigade is grouped with an infantry battalion to form a battlegroup that, by virtue of being at the front, acts as the F1. This has several negative consequences.

A. The tanks in the F1 echelon are more mobile than the TAPV/LAV 6 of the S echelon or the infantry LAV 6’s of the F2 echelon but they cannot use their mobility to gain a battlefield advantage as they are bound to the infantry.

B. The tanks in the F1 echelon are placed such that they are likely to be among the first to come into heavy fighting. This means the CMBG risks losing its heaviest direct fire asset early on in the course of operations.

C. There are not enough tanks to provide an F1 echelon for the whole frontage of a CMBG. Most of the brigade is left only with “soft recon” screen provided by the reconnaissance squadron.

The LAV 6, with the addition of an AT capability such as a TOW missile, could effectively fulfill the F1 role for a CMBG. An effective F1 would mitigate the risk to the infantry to a degree that would allow them to be divorced from tanks. The lone tank squadron’s place in a CMBG should be to strike decisively, and it is best suited for this when placed on the flanks or in the reserve. This is not to say that inter-arms groupings are ineffective, there are simply not enough tanks for each infantry company or even battalion in a CMBG to have tanks attached to them in permanence.

### **Present Threats**



Strategic outlook is far beyond the scope of this article. Nevertheless, it is necessary to have a general idea of what the RCAC might be involved in to direct efforts. The author finds the two scenarios below to be the most likely contexts for future conflicts.

### *Most Likely – Insurgency*

Most war is not state-on-state warfare. Of the ongoing 45 armed conflicts at the time of writing, none have the characteristics of major combat.<sup>26</sup> It is, therefore, practical for the CAF to be prepared to act as an expeditionary counter-insurgency (COIN) force. The nature of the next insurgency is easier to predict than that of the next major war as there are only so many tactics an irregular force can effectively use.

The RCAC does not presently conduct COIN training. After the conclusion of CAF combat operations in Afghanistan, there was a major push to refocus training on near-peer threats and COIN training fell by the wayside. This is a missed opportunity as the RCAC has all the tools to be a very effective COIN force. The TAPV is a patrol vehicle whose predecessor, the M1117 Guardian, was designed for the military police.<sup>27</sup> It provides overall superior protection to the crew from typical threats found in a COIN environment as compared to a Coyote or even a LAV 6. The 40 mm grenade launcher is also a good weapon for urban environments as it has a small beaten zone compared to a LAV's 25 mm chain gun, mitigating the risk to the civilian population while still being effective against dismounted personnel.

There are also similarities between armoured combat against a near-peer threat and any sort of combat against insurgents. Success

in both requires that decision-making be delegated to lower levels as the situations encountered do not lend themselves to lengthy planning by higher echelons. An armoured recce sergeant is expected to lead a two-vehicle patrol out of the line of sight of their troop leader, which means they are often making tactical decisions with the same level of independence as a platoon commander.

Much of the hard-learned lessons in Afghanistan are slowly being eroded from the RCAC's collective knowledge base. There is a prevailing attitude within the CAF that major combat operations are more difficult than COIN ops; therefore, if a unit can do one, they can do the other. Although major combat operations are certainly more costly, the skills needed in COIN, such as interaction with local leaders, are very rarely practiced in regular training.

### *Most Dangerous – Limited War*

Major combat is unlikely to take the form of total war due to states' interdependence, and it would likely be limited in nature. The proof is in the numbers. Russia endured a financial crisis from 2014 to 2017 that saw its GDP go from US\$2.297 trillion in 2013 to US\$1.283 trillion in 2016. There were two major reasons for this. The first was the boom in American shale oil production that dropped the price of oil (Russia's main export) worldwide. The second was the Russian invasion of the Crimean Peninsula and support of separatist action in the Donbass region.<sup>28</sup>

The drop in Russian GDP shows that total war is counter-productive, but Russia has shown the willingness to make use of limited war. The 2014 invasion of Crimea and subsequent war in Donbass is an excellent case study of Russia's cultural strategy. Although there are other countries that have geopolitical goals

that run contrary to Canada's, Russia has shown the most willingness to use armed force in the last 30 years.

### *Objectives and Tactics*

Russia has historically expanded until it hit a natural physical barrier. Where no such barrier can be secured, Russia has created political ones and it can be argued that the destabilization of Ukraine by Russia fits this *modus operandi*.<sup>29</sup> Russia used a combination of old and new tactics in Ukraine that must be understood by all CAF personnel.

### *Blackmail (Kompromat)*

Russian handlers identified key personnel on the



A Tactical Armoured Patrol Vehicle (TAPV) travels along a road during Exercise MAPLE RESOLVE 2018 at CFB Wainwright, Alberta, 19 May 2018.

Master Corporal Malcolm Byers / DND photo

ground and used blackmail and threats to delay or stop them from reacting. Civilian and military officials in Ukraine experienced everything from bribes to having their children kidnapped and threatened. Ukrainian soldiers reported getting death threats on their personal cell phones while fighting in Donbass.<sup>30</sup> NATO commanders are likely targets. Other than strict no-cellphone directives while on operation, RCAC junior leaders must also learn to operate several days on end without further instructions from leaders. This is a dramatic shift from the current norm where situation reports are generally expected from troop leaders every 15 minutes.

### ***Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), EW and the 10-10-10 Rule***

Russian UAV tactics follow the same philosophy as all Russian weaponry—quantity has a quality of its own. Russians used multiple layers of UAV screens to direct artillery, often MLRS, unto Ukrainian forces. EW was used in conjunction with UAVs to acquire the targets. Ukrainians found that Russians were able to track and jam all of their communications. Once a target was acquired, Russians adhered to the 10-10-10 rule. 10 minutes from target acquisition to fire, 10 minutes of fire, and 10 minutes to relocate and be ready to fire again.<sup>31</sup> This invalidates many of the tactics currently used by the RCAC as they require vehicles to be static for more than 10 minutes. High emissions electronic entities such headquarters and the Light Armoured Vehicle Reconnaissance Surveillance System (LRSS) need to be kept far away from the front line as they are very visible high value targets. Security drills that are conducted upon encountering obstacles need to be rapid and mounted as opposed to the current norm of dismounting crewmen to scout. Ideally an RCAC squadron would advance at least one kilometer every 10 minutes. Though such a rapid pace carries risks of its own, a slow advance opens up the risk of annihilation by rocket artillery. Famously, in 2014, such an attack on a Ukrainian mechanized battalion in Zelenopillya caused between 100 and 150 casualties in the space of a few minutes, rendering it ineffective.<sup>32</sup>

### ***Communications***

If a unit conducting reconnaissance cannot communicate, it is neutralized. Currently, information gained by reconnaissance forces would likely not be transmittable back to headquarters due to extensive EW jamming.<sup>33</sup> Communications jamming also means that command and control methods need to be changed (although the particular military franglais spoken in some 12 RBC squadrons might just be the best crypto available). Reconnaissance squadrons are notoriously chatty and too reliant on radios, out



A Leopard 2A4 tank from Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) travels on the Black Route of the 3rd Canadian Division Support Base Garrison Wainwright Training Centre in preparation for Exercise MAPLE RESOLVE 21, 30 April 2021.

Seller First Class Camden Scott / Canadian Armed Forces photo

of convenience, often forgoing more discrete communications such as hand signals.

### ***Massed Anti-Air***

Russia is keenly aware of NATO air superiority and as a result has integrated anti-air from strategic weapons down to the lowest level. Russian AA systems presently cover over half of Poland<sup>34</sup> and this means that RCAC forces will have to be far more self-reliant, not only for close air support, but also for resupply and casualty evacuations.

### ***Tanks and Reactive Armour***

Russia has been described as an artillery army with lots of tanks. In the past few years, Russia has begun installing reactive armour and new fire control systems on its older T series tanks, making them once again relevant on modern battlefields.<sup>35</sup> Despite all the attention the T-14 received, thousands of T-72s, T-80s and T-90s are still the primary threat. The use of enemy armour accentuates the lack of Canadian armour. The reality is that the best anti-tank weapon is a better tank, which Canada does have in the Leopard 2, just not in sufficient quantities due to budgetary constraints.

### ***Politics***

The war in Afghanistan took the lives of 158 Canadian soldiers. The Canadian public's reaction to this loss shows a complete unwillingness to take any casualties in armed conflict. It is not the purpose of this article to debate the morality of unlimited liability. However, the unwillingness to risk casualties does have an effect on the employment of the RCAC, particularly as armoured reconnaissance has historically been one of the more dangerous jobs on the battlefield. Bluntly, a brigade can expect to take more than 158 casual-



ties on a single day of major combat and there will likely be a strong reaction from the Canadian public and its political representatives; therefore, action taken by the CAF must be decisive in the beginning of any conflict, as war weariness sets in very quickly for Canadians. High risk/high payoff tactics might be the only path to operational success in a conflict where political losses dictate strategy far quicker than battlefield losses.

### Counter Tactics – Colonel Zabrodskyi's Raid

The previous paragraphs may give the impression that NATO forces are outmatched, but that is not the case. Russia and most militaries from authoritative cultures possess several weaknesses. They are often very hierarchical, and decision-making power is concentrated at the upper levels. They also have large groups of conscripts or poorly trained soldiers, and while they do have elite regulars, these are not in large numbers. This means that the Russian army is most dangerous at the tip. This fact was exploited by Col (later Major-General) Mykhailo Zabrodskyi when he was commander of the Ukrainian 95th Air Assault Brigade. From 19 July to 10 August 2014, the 95th, with elements from other mechanized and air assault brigades conducted a 470 km raid to relieve forces trapped at the border.<sup>36</sup> They moved rapidly and used captured enemy armor and supplies to great effect, destroying three hostile enemy checkpoints on the way. The speed at which they advanced neutralized much of the Russian advantages as they were unable to react quickly to forces operating behind them. In the end, the 95th air assault brigade was able to create a corridor that permitted the evacuation of 3,000 personnel and 250 pieces of equipment, while destroying numerous Russian checkpoints.<sup>37</sup>

Col Zabrodskyi's method of warfare can be adapted by the RCAC. Reconnaissance squadrons, upgraded with an AT capability can form highly mobile raiding units that strike deep into enemy territory to take out key objectives. The LAV 6 is well suited for this, as the back of the vehicle can be used to store supplies to increase the amount of time that reconnaissance troops can act independently of their logistics echelons. A rapid counter-attack is the best option to swing the momentum of battle in a limited war where NATO forces are likely to start on the defensive. This method seems riskier at first glance, but the riskiest place to be is



A Light Armoured Vehicle (LAV 6) travels along a road during Exercise MAPLE RESOLVE 2018 (EX MR 18) at CFB Wainwright, Alberta on May 19, 2018.

Master Corporal Malcolm Byers / DND photo

at the tip of the Russian spear. It is far better to accept a lack of logistics support than to be constantly under the threat of enemy observation and artillery fire.

### Conclusion

The RCAC personnel must gain a better understanding of reconnaissance and, in particular, must understand where armoured reconnaissance forces fit on a modern battlefield. They must understand the difference between “finding” and “defining” the enemy and that these two tasks cannot simply be amalgamated into a catch-all reconnaissance task. Other NATO forces use their medium armoured forces in a markedly more aggressive manner and the RCAC must emulate this if it is to be an effective contributor in a NATO force.

The RCAC has the potential to be an extremely effective fighting force with relatively cheap modifications. Better camouflage, an anti-armour capacity and a focus on rapid aggressive recon and raids, as opposed to slow “soft recon,” would make RCAC reconnaissance squadrons significantly more effective in a limited war against an opponent such as Russia. The RCAC must also be ready for COIN operations, and the TAPV and current tactics are quite well suited for this. If the RCAC can unify behind the idea that it is primarily an aggressive tactical reconnaissance force, the tendency to saddle it with the wrong equipment, training, and ultimately employment, may well be reversed.





## NOTES

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MCpl J.W.S. Houck / JTF-1 – Public Affairs / DND

(Then) Major-General Jennie Carignan, departing Commander NATO Mission Iraq, speaks about her experiences to members of Joint Task Force IMPACT at Camp Canada, Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait, 25 November 2020.

## Officers Must Play Key Role in Transforming Organizational Culture

by Danic Parenteau

Danic Parenteau is an associate professor at Royal Military College Saint-Jean and holds a PhD in philosophy from the University of Paris 1 (Panthéon-Sorbonne). He is a graduate of the Royal Military College of Canada, and he joined the faculty of Royal Military College Saint-Jean in 2008, where he served as associate dean for university programs (2016–2019), notably working to reopen the institution's university training component. His main research focuses on political ideologies, Quebec politics and, more recently, the intellectual development of officers.

**T**he Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) is currently undergoing an unprecedented cultural shift. Lieutenant-General Jennie Carignan, the first person to hold the new Chief, Professional Conduct and Culture position, has been given an ambitious mandate to address issues related to “systemic misconduct [including] sexual misconduct, hateful conduct, systemic barriers, harassment, violence, discrimination, employment inequity, unconscious biases, and abuse of power in the workplace.”<sup>1</sup> This initiative is aimed at transforming

the *organizational culture*<sup>2</sup> of the CAF and recognizing that these various problems will not be solved by a few individuals being identified, reprimanded, or even fired. Rather, the issues are more deeply rooted in a culture that continues to tolerate unacceptable behaviour.

In private circles, this approach is not without its critics. Some members of the military feel that, although the situation within the CAF is problematic, it is basically no worse, and in some respects is actually better, than what is happening in civilian society in general, as shown by the results of the latest *Survey on Sexual Misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces*.<sup>3</sup> Others feel that this issue is taking up too much space and, however noble the intent, is distracting the CAF from its fundamental mission of maintaining a high level of readiness to defend the country. In our view, the current situation seems to be particularly favourable to finally tackling these persistent problems. On the geopolitical level, there is no serious or immediate threat to the security of the country right now. In addition, since the adoption of the *Strong, Secure, Engaged* policy four years ago, the CAF will have a



certain amount of institutional stability in the short and medium term. This is a particularly favourable environment for such an undertaking, which will affect generations to come.

We believe that these cultural changes within the CAF will not be possible without the strong leadership of officers—all officers—at all levels of the military structure. The success of this endeavour will depend in large part on how well officers are able to fulfill their role as the *primary agents of cultural change*. To do so, however, we must first acknowledge a reality that has not been discussed very often to date, namely the relative loss of influence of the officer corps within the CAF in recent years. For some time now, officers have been affected by what might be called a “symbolic demotion” within the military community as a whole, compared to the social status they may have enjoyed in the past or even compared to the status that their counterparts in other Western armed forces continue to enjoy. To act as true agents of cultural change, officers will most definitely need not only all the powers they formally possess according to their position in the chain of command but also the informal levers of influence over which they have lost some of their grip over time.

### Changing the Organizational Culture of the CAF: An Ambitious Undertaking

**W**e must admit from the outset that achieving such a cultural transformation will be an ambitious undertaking. It would be unwise to draw inspiration from past awareness campaigns, which have been the main methods that the CAF, like other public organizations, has favoured to bring about certain cultural changes. Some examples include campaigns against harassment, racism, or inappropriate sexual behaviour, such as those organized since the 1990s in garrisons across the country, as well as those now offered online on platforms such as the Defence Learning Network (DLN) or GCcampus. Despite twenty-five years of effort, these campaigns have not yet succeeded in eliminating these problems within the CAF.

The fact that such an approach has so far been able to achieve little is partly due to the questionable premise that “raising awareness” is the best solution to racism (to take just one example). According to this approach, overcoming racism would require getting people to shed their prejudices, unconscious biases and negative judgments about people from cultures other than their own. While such a campaign can certainly help to raise awareness of cultural realities that

some people have previously been ignorant or simply unaware of, thus helping to break down certain prejudices, its real impact on defusing a complex, tenacious and often deeply rooted system of thought such as racism appears to be limited, to say the least.

The other main weakness of such awareness campaigns is the nature of the target audience. This type of training is usually designed for a broad audience, that is to say, it is aimed at all members of the CAF, or even at all members of the extended Defence Team, indiscriminately. That approach is perfectly suited to training that is aimed at helping people acquire technical or intellectual skills (that are sometimes even quite complex), whether it is aimed at teaching people how to use software, for example, or learn a management method or foreign language. However, we feel that this approach is inadequate when it comes to achieving an objective such as the one targeted here, which is to transform an organizational culture. Its flaw lies in the fact that it implicitly suggests that all the people for whom such training is intended have a similar or equivalent role to play in achieving this objective. If we are to combat racism, then each individual, whether in uniform as an officer, non-commissioned officer or member of the troop, or as a civilian staff member of the Department of National Defence (DND), no matter the position, must of course be made to reflect inwardly on how they behave on a daily basis. But such work, from a strictly individual perspective, even if it were undertaken as seriously as possible by all members of the extended Defence Team without exception, would not in itself be able to definitively eradicate the values, beliefs and norms that have allowed racism to persist within the organization. Unfortunately, there is a risk that racism will re-emerge if the organizational culture that tolerates its existence is maintained.

Allow us to emphasize this point. The problem facing the CAF is profound in that it is rooted in an organizational culture that continues to tolerate behaviours, attitudes and actions that



Former Supreme Court Justice Marie Deschamps (R) speaks during a news conference with (then) Chief of Defence Staff General Tom Lawson upon the release of a report on sexual misconduct and sexual harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces in Ottawa, 30 April 2015.

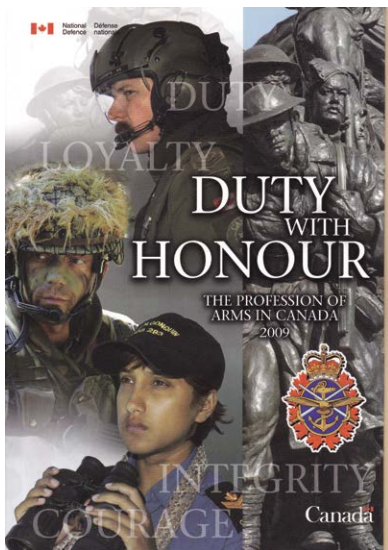
REUTERS / Alamy Stock Photo



have long been officially decried, condemned or prohibited by the military chain of command and the civilian authority to which the institution is subject. Official values, norms and codes, such as those expressed in the manual *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada*, which sets the high professional standards to which all military personnel are held, are not at issue. On a deeper level, the problem stems from the fact that, beneath this formal set of values, there persists an informal and discordant culture that is widespread within the organization at all levels and that continues to tolerate and even encourage such unacceptable behaviour. That finding has been confirmed by numerous reports over time, including the one written by Justice Marie Deschamps in 2015 following the *External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces* or, more recently, in 2019, the one produced by the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence.<sup>4</sup> One can be almost certain that the report currently being considered by Justice Louise Arbour will draw the same conclusion. Getting rid of this informal and discordant organizational culture once and for all will not be easy, as it seems to have resisted all the efforts made over time to eradicate it.

### Strengthening the Professionalism of the CAF

The current cultural transformation effort resembles a similar effort undertaken by the CAF in the 1990s in response to the Somalia scandal. Following the Létourneau (1997) and Young (1997) reports, as well as the report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces to Somalia,<sup>5</sup> DND undertook to address persistent racism within the organization. That included the disbanding of the Canadian Airborne Regiment that had been the source of the scandal, the adoption of the first *Statement of Defence Ethics*, which is still in effect, a harassment and racism prevention awareness and training program, and the creation of the guide *Duty with Honour – The Profession of Arms in Canada*.<sup>6</sup> In the 1990s, we saw the beginning of a certain cultural change within the



behaviour. Clearly, a professional soldier could not stoop to committing acts such as those that occurred in Somalia. While the issue of professionalism certainly implies the requirement for a high ethical standard of behaviour, it cannot be limited to that

CAF, when practices that were no longer considered acceptable, such as initiations at military colleges, were outlawed. However, those changes did not succeed in eliminating this problematic organizational culture for good.

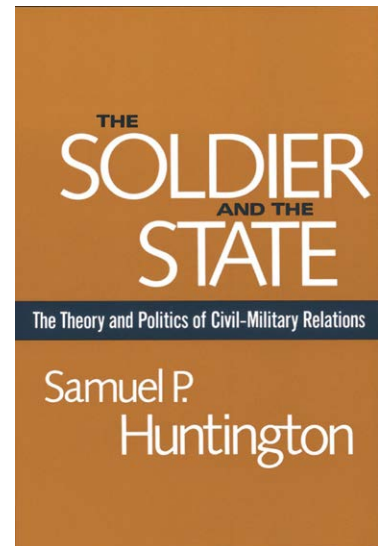
Bear in mind that those efforts were aimed at strengthening the “professionalism” of the CAF, meaning the requirement to get members of the military to meet a higher standard of ethical

aspect alone. The question goes back to the fundamental thinking that was laid down over half a century ago by the political scientist Samuel Huntington, in what has become a classic and still indispensable work for thinking about this issue, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil–Military Relations* (1957). In the 1950s, all over the West, but particularly in the political context of the United States of America, where this thinking originated, the challenge was to ensure that officers had a professional status comparable to that enjoyed by the members of other professions in society that were organized into orders, such as lawyers, represented by the Bar Association, doctors, organized into the College of Physicians, or engineers, grouped into the Order of Engineers. It was therefore a matter of recognizing that the body of officers forms a profession, as “managers of violence.” That status is linked to a clearly defined field of professional responsibilities grounded in a code of ethics, expertise and a well-established professional identity. In Huntington’s view, this symbolic recognition was the best way to ensure civilian control of the armed forces in a liberal democracy. In return for this professional recognition by the state, officers were called upon to refuse partisan political involvement more firmly than ever. The officer’s field of initiative and action was to be clearly defined within the confines of the armed forces alone, thus recognizing the need to maintain a relatively hard and fast boundary between this institution and the civil power or, more broadly, civil society as a whole, with all of this being consolidated by a kind of “moral contract” between the two parties.

With this brief reminder of the professional nature of officers, let us now attempt to better identify the crucial role that they play in the current initiative to transform the organizational culture of the CAF. We shall do that by raising three specific challenges.

### Encourage Officers to See Themselves as True Agents of Cultural Change

We believe that this cultural transformation will be impossible without strong leadership from those at all levels of command in the military hierarchical structure. It will certainly require all officers to set a personal example in these matters, which is a responsibility that they share with NCOs. The members of the troop, who make up most of the military, will only be able to adhere to these profound cultural changes if they feel that the hierarchical chain of command wholeheartedly endorses it. Let us not delude ourselves, the adoption of such exemplary behaviour by all officers and NCOs will not by itself succeed in eradicating the organizational culture at the root of the problem. That will also require the successful *dismantling of the mechanisms that have so far allowed it to persist*



within the CAF. It will not be a simple task, as these seem to be firmly entrenched in people's mindsets. Once that stage has been completed, it will still be necessary to *put in place a replacement organizational culture*, which will be based on ways of being, acting and thinking that will henceforth make the expression of reprehensible behaviour impossible. It is the officers, as the main agents of cultural change, who will be responsible for those two important tasks.

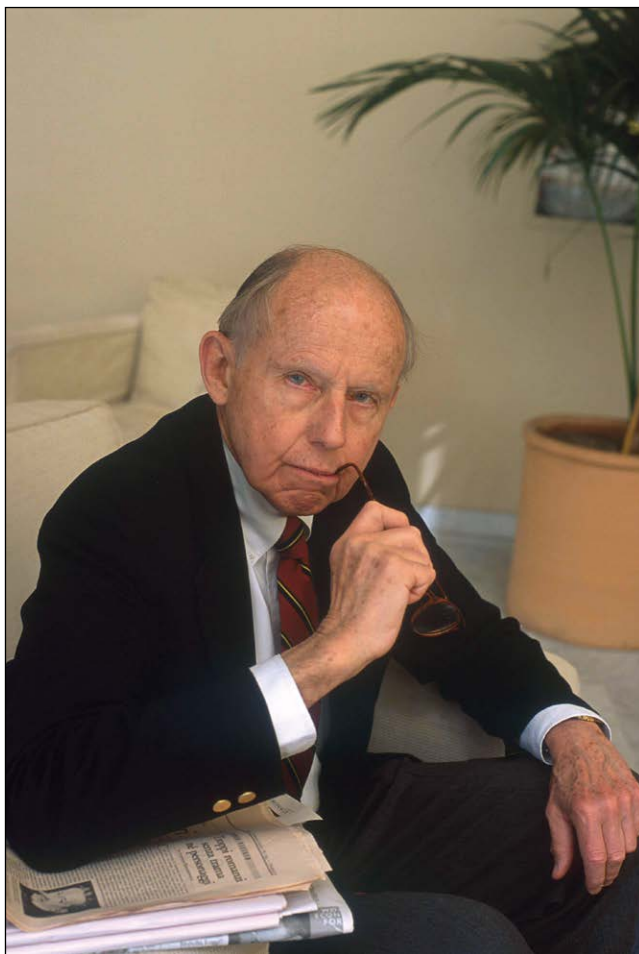
In order to carry out this vast undertaking, officers will need strong institutional support, which will require that their lost symbolic status be restored. The officer corps has been weakened in recent years by an informal loss of influence within the broader military community. This phenomenon seems to impact junior officers most especially, although it affects the entire officer corps as well. In the 1950s, Huntington developed his model of civil-military relations to counter the loss of influence of officers within US society. What we are talking about here is somewhat different, in that we are referring to a loss of influence not within civil society as a whole, but within the Canadian military community. We do not mean to say that there has been a reconsideration of the corps' professional status, which affects, among other things, the conditions of service and career progression of its members, or a weakening of its role or responsibilities in the command structure, or a re-examination of the legal authority it holds. Rather, it is a matter of recognizing the complex social dynamics that have slowly eroded the *informal influence* of officers

within the CAF community as a whole in recent years. An officer's real power is never based solely on the legal authority that they have as a person who holds a commission, as formally expressed through rank and position. It is also always based on the informal but very real influence that they can exert on non-commissioned officers and non-commissioned members. If the influence that a person can exert within a group is partly due to certain character or personality traits—including charisma, natural eloquence and quick-wittedness—it is also always the result of a social configuration governing informal relations among its members, which may or may not favour the expression of that influence by some of them. This is the case for officers in the CAF, who today must increasingly deal with a less favourable social situation.

This symbolic demotion of officers is rooted in several recent developments linked to the CAF, which it would take too long to describe in detail,<sup>7</sup> but which we cannot fail to mention briefly. Firstly, as the organization has become more and more bureaucratized, officers have seen their freedom of initiative and action shrink over time, particularly since they must, in the performance of their duties, submit to increasingly complex administrative procedures and a reporting process that has gradually become more and more all encompassing. This has led to a risk-averse organizational culture within the CAF, which may in the long run seriously undermine its operational capabilities in the event of a

major armed conflict, but that is another story. Far from the leadership image with which they were once associated, officers today are increasingly seen as simply civil servants in uniform. Although this phenomenon of bureaucratization affects the CAF as a whole, officers are more impacted than non-commissioned officers, insofar as they are responsible for the main administrative functions within the organization. Secondly, there is a strong social trend throughout the West towards egalitarianism, the effects of which are being felt in a growing number of institutions and organizations in society (think of schools, for instance). Until now, the CAF has been partly spared this trend because it is relatively independent from the rest of society and its own institutional traditions carry a lot of weight. Now, however, it seems that it is no longer immune to this pressure, expressed through the stigmatization of all markers of inequality and hierarchy so as to more fully reject them in favour of an increasingly egalitarian vision of the world. From a broader social perspective, there is reason to welcome

this trend, as it increasingly allows all citizens to realize their full potential and ambitions, free from the constraints of social status. However, from the point of view of the CAF, this social trend bumps up against the organizational principles on which the institution is founded. This helps to somewhat explain why the symbolic status of officers has weakened, when, for example, many recruits and officer cadets can no longer intuitively understand the justification for maintaining this fundamental structural difference between the officer corps and the NCO corps. Thirdly, this demotion is also evident in the "command team" approach that is now dominant in all units. This approach, which is perhaps more pronounced in the CAF than in other Western armed forces, contributes to a certain sense of equality, however artificial, between the two members of the team, namely the commander and their



Samuel Huntington.

Agence Opale / Alamy Stock Photo



Cpl Brian Lindgren / Canadian Armed Forces photo



Commander of Joint Task Force – IMPACT / Task Force – Central (JTF-I/JTF-C), (then) Brigadier-General Michael Wright, with the assistance of A/JTF-I/TF-C Chief Warrant Officer, CWO Richard Coltart, say goodbye to ROTO 3 members who served during Operation IMPACT, Joint Task Force – IMPACT / Task Force – Central, at Camp Canada, Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait, 16 February 2021.

politics and the political. “Politics” refers to partisan politics, that is to say, the politics of political parties in the electoral game that we play in a representative democracy. “The political” refers to power, understood in its broader sense, which is expressed beyond the game of partisan politics. It concerns the power of which the state and its governmental structure are the institutional custodians. In that sense, the CAF organization is at the heart of the political, as the guarantor of one of the highest governmental functions of the Canadian state: territorial defence.

senior NCO, when in fact the areas of responsibility of the two are not comparable. However important the responsibilities and duties of a senior NCO may be, the commander alone is in command.

Therefore, in order to have an officer corps that is up to performing its expected role as cultural change agent, it will first be necessary to restore the lost symbolic status of its members within the CAF. All officers, from second-lieutenant to general, will undoubtedly need to use all the resources of influence at their disposal to accomplish this ambitious task.

### An Eminently “Political” Approach

As cultural change agents, officers will have to take the full measure of the eminently “political” role expected of them. Let us add a few nuances to Huntington’s view of the apolitical nature of officers, as briefly mentioned above.<sup>8</sup> A school of thought in political science that goes back to the German thinker Carl Schmitt<sup>9</sup> distinguishes between

Thus, on the one hand, in order to fulfil their role as agents of cultural transformation, officers will of course have to stay away from “politics.” There is no need to belabour this requirement, as the apolitical reflex appears to be well established among officers today, as well as among non-commissioned members in general. On the other hand, it will be up to officers to understand the true political significance of this transformation. Being *apolitical* must not translate into officers adopting an *impolitical* stance,



Sgt Tanya Casey, a volunteer from the Camp Nathan Smith, greets an Afghan woman during the celebration of Eid al-Adha organized by the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team where bags of flour, prayer carpets and tea were donated. Eid al-Adha is a Muslim Holiday celebrated by Muslims worldwide, in Afghanistan, 21 November 2009.

Master Corporal Angela Abbey / Canadian Forces Combat Camera



which would mean not allowing themselves to understand the political stakes and the forces at work in the current cultural transformation process. To fully grasp the implications of such a process will first require officers to understand the mechanisms that have allowed the problematic organizational culture to persist in the CAF, despite efforts over time to eradicate it. Officers will then have to familiarize themselves with the abundant literature that exists on the subject. Then, they must work on fully understanding why this cultural transformation is essential for the CAF, before being able to serve as educators for non-commissioned members. It will then be easier

for them to understand how essential this cultural transformation is to an increasingly ethnoculturally diverse military community. A more inclusive vision of the organization will certainly contribute to the development of a sense of belonging and a stronger esprit de corps among those who continue to be marginalized or even excluded by certain cultural practices within the CAF and civilian society in general. Similarly, the officer will be better able to appreciate the merits of such an approach from an operational point of view. Indeed, since the military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, several studies tend to show that a more ethnoculturally diverse armed force is more effective when it comes to conducting operations in irregular theatres, where victory often depends in large part on winning the hearts and minds of civilian populations.

Moreover, it is precisely because they understand the political nature of this undertaking that officers will be able to overcome some of the opposition and resistance that such changes inevitably engender. The scale of these cultural changes may be perceived by some CAF members as a direct attack on their institutional identity. Members are protective of the distinct identity of the CAF, which is nurtured by customs and traditions that stem in part from its historical and cultural heritage but that are also forged through a deliberate, symbolic demarcation from civilian society. That is not to claim that the culture of sexualization, racism or discrimination is an integral part of the institutional identity of the CAF—if it were, then we would be dealing with a truly “systemic” problem.<sup>10</sup> However, as agents of cultural change, officers will need to counter this impression by demonstrating how important it is for the CAF to rid itself once and for all of this organizational



Major-General Craig Aitchison reviews the parade comprised of officer cadets and naval cadets during the badging ceremony that marked the conclusion of the First Year Orientation Program (FYOP) at RMC Saint-Jean, 11 September 2021.

Courtesy photo by Mr. Josué Plante

culture without sacrificing anything of its unique institutional identity; this culture is not only operationally counterproductive but is also incompatible with the mission of this institution in the service of the state.

## Conclusion

The CAF faces major changes in the years to come. These changes will, of course, call for a review of socialization processes, including those to which recruits and officer cadets are subjected upon enrolment. It will require a review of the disciplinary framework, including the handling of complaints about sexual behaviour. It will likely also involve a review of the training system. But above all, this cultural transformation can only ultimately be achieved by *placing a high value on education within the CAF*. Education will always remain the key to making changes of the nature and magnitude expected here. If, in the immediate future, it is important to emphasize the essential role of officers as agents of cultural change, in the end, it is of course only through education that the CAF will be able to rid itself once and for all of a culture that needs to be banished and subsequently put in place a new organizational culture that respects everyone's contribution, that is free of the most simplistic prejudices towards certain cultures, and that is capable of grasping the true complexity of the world through the most appropriate conceptual and analytical tools. That will involve fostering a culture of education for all military personnel, both for officers, notably through the programs offered by the military

colleges and the Canadian Forces College, and for non-commissioned officers and non-commissioned members, through the Robert Osside Profession of Arms Institute. In addition, outside of the institutional educational frameworks, that will have to be done by encouraging intellectual curiosity, reading and reflection among all military personnel. There is

no doubt in our minds that developing a capacity for critical thinking that is rooted in a broad general culture offers, among other advantages, the most solid way of making sure that the CAF does not fall back into a culture that more than twenty-five years of awareness campaigns has failed to eradicate.



## NOTES

- 1 Mandate of this new position: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/organizational-structure/chief-professional-conduct-culture.html>, page accessed on 10 July 2021.
- 2 For the purposes of this discussion, we understand “organizational culture” to mean: “A pattern shared assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive think, and feel in relations to these problems.” (Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Jossey-Bass, 2004, p. 17.)”
- 3 *Survey on Sexual Misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces* (SSMCAF), 2018, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-603-x/85-603-x2019002-eng.htm>, page accessed on 15 November 2021.
- 4 *External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces*, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/sexual-misbehaviour/external-review-2015.html>, report accessed on 16 November 2021, and *Sexual Harassment and Violence in the Canadian Armed Forces*, [https://sencanada.ca/content/sen/committee/421/SECD/Reports/SECD\\_Report\\_harassment\\_May\\_19\\_e.pdf](https://sencanada.ca/content/sen/committee/421/SECD/Reports/SECD_Report_harassment_May_19_e.pdf), report accessed on 16 November 2021.
- 5 *Dishonoured Legacy: The Lessons of the Somalia Affair: Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces to Somalia*, <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.700365/publication.html>, page accessed on 10 July 2021.
- 6 These efforts have continued over time, such as with the establishment in December 2020 of the Advisory Panel on Systemic Racism, Discrimination with a Focus on Anti-Indigenous and Anti-Black Racism, LGBTQ2+ Prejudice, Gender Bias and White Supremacy, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/defence-portfolio/minister-advisory-panel.html>, page accessed on 15 November 2021.
- 7 This loss of influence deserves further analysis; as to our knowledge, it appears as though it has never been addressed in the research.
- 8 The issue of officer apoliticism championed by Huntington is the subject of numerous analyses, including by Risa Brooks in “The Paradoxes of Huntingtonian Professionalism,” in Lionel Beehner, Risa Brooks and Daniel Maurer (eds.), *Reconsidering American Civil-Military Relations: The Military, Society, Politics, and Modern War*, Oxford University Press, 2020.
- 9 See *La notion de politique* (1931) [English title: *The Concept of the Political*] and *Théorie du partisan* (1962) [English title: *Theory of the Partisan*], trans. M.-L. Steinhäuser, Paris, Flammarion, 2009.
- 10 Without wishing to engage in a semantic debate, let us stress that a problematic phenomenon can be said to be “systemic” if it results from the intrinsic nature of the system in which it manifests itself, meaning that, in the organization within which this system unfolds, it finds the resources to develop, and explicit or implicit support from the organization’s leadership, by fulfilling a core function in the organization’s fundamental mission. Changes to systemic problems are not made without radically changing an organization. In other words, when dealing with systemic problems, what is needed is to change systems entirely, not just change “the” system. By contrast, the problems that this initiative seeks to address are not just about individuals, as has been amply emphasized so far. The problems, serious as they are, are not at the heart of any system that the CAF would be unable to dispense with without ceasing to exist. As we now recognize, these problems are rooted in an informal and discordant organizational culture that the CAF can very well get rid of without undermining its institutional identity.



(Then) Brigadier-General David Neasmith, Commander of Land Force Atlantic Area, talks to the soldiers of 36 and 37 Combat Brigade Groups in the training area of Fort Pickett, Virginia, USA, 5 March 2009.

## Can Ours Not Be a Great Generation? Building Effective National Defence Teams

by Luc Pigeon and Russell W. Glenn

Dr. Luc Pigeon received an International Joint PhD in Electrical Engineering (with High Honours) from the *École nationale supérieure des télécommunications de Bretagne* in Brest, France, and Geomatics Sciences, from Laval University, Quebec City, Canada, in 2001. For 20 years, he has been Defence Scientist at Defence Research and Development Canada. Over the years, he has provided advice in command, control (C2) and intelligence to develop capabilities for the conduct of urban operations, counter-insurgencies, CBRN and continental defence. He currently conducts research on the C2 aspects of the Pan-Domain Force Employment Concept.

Following his retirement from the military, Dr. Russell W. Glenn joined the think tank community for 16 years before accepting a position on the faculty of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University. He co-authored this article while serving with G2, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. Dr. Glenn is author-editor of the recently published *“Trust and Leadership: The Australian Army Approach to Mission Command”* and author of the forthcoming *“Come Hell or High Water: Ready the World’s Megacities for Disaster.”*

Using the analogy of a Formula One racing team highlights the risk of over-focusing on the individual parts of an initiative at the expense of recognizing and meeting the objectives of the whole. A piecemeal vision deprives managers at every echelon of the perspective that is essential to making correct decisions in the interest of national security and to those who serve in the field. The Second World War demonstrated the importance of balancing battlefield demands with those that are fundamental to winning that conflict. In so doing, it not only leveraged the skills and commitment of all the Allies’ governments—a whole of government approach—but enabled a broader participation that we can term ‘whole of nation’ or, broader yet, ‘a whole of alliance or comprehensive approach’ that crossed international boundaries and the seams between government and civilian enterprises. The current security threats to our nations are both similar to and very different from those in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Then as now, the threats are plain to see but sometimes too uncomfortable to confront. If one focuses only on military threats, they are even less obvious, for maneuver by those with ill intentions





Everett Collection Historical / Alamy Stock Photo

Maginot Line, on the French-German border, December 1939. British troops march over bridge into the French underground fortress.

is at present a devil's brew of economic, diplomatic, informational, and cyber interference in our countries' internal affairs with military activities being but one of many tools potentially employed. The West stands ready with the most formidable military capability in the world, but in future wars it might be deliberately marginalized by our countries' foes. A telling similarity was when France's soldiers stood ready between the world wars, manning their country's Maginot Line against the growing threat of the Wehrmacht. France fell when Germany flanked the defences on which it had staked the security of its people, much as those in the West now find their military superiority being out-manoeuvred in other arenas. More so than at any time since the Second World War, military preparedness alone is no longer sufficient. Canada, the United States, and their multinational partners need defence capabilities that exceed what departments (or ministries) of defence alone provide.

None of this argues for casting aside military preparedness. It remains a fundamental component among the elements of our national power. Military forces must stand ready to meet their responsibilities as one of the tools political leaders can use to defend against those maneuvering in the multiple domains identified above. While our armed forces are arguably the most proficient in the world, the capabilities development processes supporting them suffer from a fragmented approach that results in focus being placed on optimizing components at the expense of the comprehensive whole. The pages below consider the implications

approaches that must consistently complement each other if we are to succeed.

Whatever the quality and complexity of its component efforts, a racing team cannot expect to win by discretely considering its fuel, tires, communication systems, on- and outboard computers, pit crew, driver, and the myriad other pieces that must work together if its car is to be the first across the finish line. It is equally impossible for one person alone to manage all of the details essential to victory. Clear mission and intent statements that provide consistent guidance to all team members are essential in orchestrating the actions of the racing team as a whole. Constant exchanges between team managers and the rest of the team facilitate informed resource allocation from the top, advised by effective feedback from below. This communication must be continuous and balanced if all parts are to be as effective as possible in acting as one entity. Insight provided by the drivers and those most intimately involved in their vehicle's daily performance cannot be allowed to detract from the bigger picture, namely the complete system serving the goal of victory. Nor can those higher up afford to ignore the insights, for that system will misfire should individual components fail. Further, successfully meeting racing's present demands is a necessary but not sufficient accomplishment. The team must also simultaneously look forward in time to ensure both the individual parts and the collective whole anticipate, adapt, and respond to the constantly evolving demands of Formula One racing. Achieving this symphonic end during military capability development requires orchestrating

of this shortfall and how we might address it. Though the focus will be on military preparedness, the approaches proposed apply to those whose sphere of responsibilities are less armed forces-based than economic or otherwise circumscribed. Further, we will draw on the challenges associated with what is arguably the most difficult of combat environments for the soldiers—the urban areas—as we contemplate how to improve capabilities development. It is an appropriate choice given the demonstrated intractability in meeting urban operations challenges. Despite millions spent on improving technologies of use in those undertakings, today's soldiers and marines clear rooms and buildings much as they did during the Second World War. Solutions demand a wide range of

each military service's requirements (army, navy, air force, and marine...and, increasingly, other relevant parties such as those focused on space and cyber) that together comprise the totality of our racing team's components. Capabilities development must not only maintain balance between the demands of the whole and component effectiveness, but also those of the present and others yet to come. In practice, achieving the desired synergy implies that we consider all relevant participants' inputs throughout the capability development process.

### Exemplar: Urban Operations

Operation Just Cause in 1989-1990 Panama hinted at the evolution. The loss of two helicopters and 18 US soldiers in the dust-choked streets of Mogadishu in 1993 and many more Russians along Grozny's rubble-strewn avenues several years later made it impossible not to recognize the dangers—urban areas had become an environment, or perhaps *the* environment, of choice for those competing with the world's more sophisticated militaries. Baghdad, Mosul, Fallujah, and many subsequent urban battles have confirmed the trend. It is within and all around cities' buildings, and among their populations, that the less well-equipped and trained seek to deal more sophisticated armed forces a tactical defeat, one that could translate into strategic embarrassment and perhaps withdrawal. With cities' limited lines of sight; many routes of approach and egress; non-combatant populations providing concealment, support, and witting and unwitting human shields; ubiquitous means of communication; and concentrations of media only too willing to report an underdog's successes; they provide plentiful material for deliberately or inadvertently misrepresenting Western forces' intentions, material readily accessible to information consumers worldwide. No less troubling is

that urban areas are just as attractive for terrorists as for enemy combatants.

History has shown that a city's government can be overwhelmed by but a few insurgents, terrorists, or others with malfeasance at heart. (Recall the 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai perpetrated by only 10 individuals.) Recent events in Boston, Paris, London, and elsewhere demonstrate that even the world's better trained, led, and equipped security forces can be challenged by those with limited resources and dubious moral foundations. Notwithstanding instances of impressive intelligence coups that have interdicted terrorist intentions, urban theatres' complexity ensures that complete prevention will prove impossible. The presence of multiple layers of government—city, county, state, and national—aggravates the challenges of orchestrating the resources that are essential to preparing for these attacks and later coordinating responses in service of the victims. Obvious in its necessity, this cooperation is no less apparent in its frequent absence.

Urban operations require orchestration of all relevant resources at hand: civilian and military, government and otherwise, just as does our racing team. This is true across potential mission types that range from disaster relief and humanitarian assistance in benign environments to counterinsurgency and full-scale, peer-on-peer armed engagements (and, at times, all of these simultaneously). Urban areas' complexity makes disproportionate demands on decision-making processes that are essential to bringing these disparate assets together. The many interactions between urban areas' social and physical infrastructures—difficult to comprehensively identify and much less fully understand—can result in delayed responses or actions taken in the absence of key information that run counter to strategic objectives. It is a catch 22 for leaders, particularly in the case of megacities whose extraordinary system

of global interconnections means a decision's consequences can reverberate throughout that urban area's country, broader international region, and the world at large. The challenges to understanding the situation and, by extension, maintaining readiness, are significant obstacles in bringing necessary resources to bear. The nature of these deficiencies, and efforts to mitigate them are, therefore, a significant concern for the political master, policymaker, military strategist, capability development stakeholder, and operational- and tactical-level leader.

One such challenge involves the aforementioned intricacy of



Flames engulf buildings in Panama City during urban combat between the Panamanian Defense Force and US forces during the invasion of Panama, 21 December 1989.



interrelationships in large urban areas. This complexity can make the results of even first-order interactions difficult to forecast. Gauging the nature of second- and third-order effects—and the consequences of security decisions on them—is a quantum level harder yet. This makes it difficult to 1) anticipate, 2) adapt, and 3) respond effectively. The last is a consequence of the previous two. If a coalition cannot anticipate what lies ahead, its ability to adapt is handicapped. This in turn can imply overly slow, inadequate, or inappropriate responses. The events of 3-4 October 1993 in Mogadishu provide an example of these three deficiencies occurring simultaneously. American leaders in the Somali capital failed to anticipate that their adversaries would adapt their responses to US raids. Insurgent and criminal forces (often one and the same) had observed US tactics and put early-warning procedures in place. American planning assumptions were, therefore, invalidated. Previous successes had fogged the lens through which leaders saw ongoing activities. They were thus less able to perceive their foes' adjustments and adapt accordingly. The same can be said of Russian operations in Chechnya where early successes during the approach to Grozny blinded leaders to the conditions they would face in the capital itself. Mumbai's 2008 terrorist attack provides another case of failing to anticipate and, therefore, adapt and respond effectively. Despite it being the fourth most populous urban area in the world, local reaction forces were underprepared. Those more qualified were too distant. The responses of both were poorly coordinated.

Just as winning on the Formula One circuit requires an overarching understanding of how every aspect of racing supports the ultimate goal of victory, urban environments require an understanding of their very complex whole. Senior leaders face a conundrum when they grasp the possible implications of decisions made at lower levels. The difficulty of maintaining communications and awareness of conditions is especially challenging given line of sight obstructions, the multiplicity of users competing for bandwidth and frequencies, and rapid situation changes.

The dynamic nature of these environments makes it even more difficult to anticipate inevitable but unpredictable changes, meaning that demands on timely and well-judged adaptation are hard to replicate during training. The result is extraordinary demands on every part of a military or broader coalition's capabilities. The close physical proximity often experienced during urban operations can tax inter-partner trust as actions by one coalition member can undermine the objectives of some or all of the others. Frictions are more likely; nuanced differences in operational objectives and the number of parties involved makes it tough to achieve and maintain coalition cohesion (parties that include enemy, criminal, economic, local political, or other elements with objectives that might be in direct conflict with those of the coalition). The intertwined character of tactical, operational, and strategic considerations additionally compounds urban operations challenges. Understanding the implications of this extreme complexity is part of seeing the big picture and, therefore, fundamental to better meeting operator needs now and in the future.

### Addressing the Gap Between What Capabilities Development Provides and What the Operator Needs Now and in the Future

**I**t is always a good time to improve the effectiveness of our capabilities development process. The present is particularly auspicious as we continue to move forward with concept development for the Pan-Domain Force Employment Concept (in Canada) and Multi-Domain Operations/Joint All-Domain Operations (in the United States) with a look to transitioning those concepts to doctrine. This is in addition to the far broader spectrum of security requirements that include CBRN, missile defence, and the full scope of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief considerations.

Currently, the nature of both Canadian and US capabilities development too often focuses on the individual components

of our racing team without giving sufficient attention to the whole of which those pieces are a part. A key, perhaps *the* key, to addressing current and future shortfalls in this regard is an improved, more responsive, and better balanced relationship between representatives in the development community and operators in the field, including those assuming positions in fields that emerge in our short-, medium-, and long-term futures. Fundamental to establishing and maintaining this relationship is effective employment of mission command: "the practice of assigning a subordinate commander



Remains of a downed US Apache helicopter in back street of Mogadishu Somalia, 30 November 1993.





Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment, India Company, support provincial government and municipal authorities in preparation efforts during Operation LENTUS, in Maugerville, NB, 20 April 2019. Operation LENTUS is the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) response to natural disasters in Canada.

not necessarily associated with the moniker “mission command,” police in New York City and firefighters in California are among the many non-military organizations employing the approach in some form.) As in our racing metaphor, each service is a team of many parts, just as a country’s armed forces should collectively be a joint team of its component services. The top priority in service and joint capabilities development should be determining current and future needs with awareness of but not be limited by considerations of what resources are already on hand. Success in this regard requires clearly

a mission without specifying how the mission is to be achieved.”<sup>1</sup> As we address how capabilities development can better improve its value to both operators in the field and national security in general, open channels of communication between all parties are essential to maintaining the balance that avoids any one element dominating and thereby compromising the accomplishment of the primary objective.

Doing so will require an open and all-but-constant line of communication that keeps operators apprised of developers’ state of play. In turn, developers must be aware of field requirements, both current and as forecasted by those tasked to meet them, in the operational environment. The resulting balanced awareness should not only include the echelon(s) that directly employ developer outputs in the field but also the perspectives of leaders and operators at intermediate levels as, there too, requirements will evolve. Stated differently, capability developers, having received guidance from their seniors and political masters, communicate to operators what those in development understand are the requirements of end users. Operators in turn provide feedback regarding their perception of how accurate developer understanding is in terms of both current and evolving requirements.

### **Mission Command: Key to Operational Consistency**

**T**his dynamic relationship is inherent in the effective application of mission command. We suggest it is a culture that developers and operators need to adopt not only on the battlefield but during all aspects of capabilities development, training, and operations. (Use of the mission command concept in this manner would by no means be revolutionary. Though

articulated mission and intent statements for both the services individually and the joint force of which they are a part.

Mission command permits us to maintain consistency of purpose and approach even when it involves many parts and related considerations. Senior leaders clearly articulate what the mission subordinates are to accomplish along with an intent regarding how that mission supports a broader desired end state, that is, how the mission fits in the larger context of operations. (In our example, the intent would clearly describe what the ultimate objective of the racing team is in terms of their collective actions). Decision-makers at each echelon need to understand command guidance as provided by leaders at least two levels above their own if they are to grasp the context for their organizations’ actions. Properly executed, this provides subordinates and cooperating partners with the information they need to adapt their activities to serve higher-level objectives should mission guidance no longer suffice. Such adaptation will frequently be essential, particularly at lower tactical levels where conditions are most dynamic. The leader closest to the action will be best able to comprehend the imminent challenges.

Successful adaptation rests in their ability to discern how senior leader intents apply to situations in light of mission guidance. Properly practiced, the decentralized nature of mission command provides lower echelon leaders with the authority they need to take appropriate action in the face of evolving challenges. It further provides them with the flexibility that is fundamental to adapting orders to situations and provides senior leaders with an extent of operational reach otherwise impossible. The mission command philosophy provides a tool that supports maintaining



Corporal David Veldman / Canadian Armed Forces photo

A member of the Canadian Fleet Atlantic Headquarters prepares a Puma Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) for flight aboard HMCS *Harry DeWolf* during a proficiency sail, 4 November 2020.

effects well beyond the urban area itself. These effects will be difficult to gauge. That such operations involve more than military forces alone adds to decision-makers' challenges. There is little wonder that urban complexity continues to overwhelm organizational and technological progress. The result is that capability development is always in catch-up mode. Mission command provides a means of maintaining developer currency within the context of defence objectives.

As noted above, too little has changed in our manner of approaching urban operations despite history's recent lessons

strategic consistency (the goal of the racing team as a whole) even as capabilities (its components) act with sufficient autonomy to dynamically serve that purpose as effectively as possible.

Technologies increasingly help tactical leaders to see beyond or into the next building during urban operations, thereby decreasing the risk of surprise short-range contacts or facilitating finding victims in need of assistance after disaster strikes. Our armed services already possess unmanned aerial and ground vehicles (UAVs and UGVs, respectively) that provide "eyes," "ears," and other sensors without exposing soldiers. These systems proved themselves in Mosul, Raqqa, and elsewhere during recent urban operations. Combining UAV/UGV technologies with those of cloud or fog computing—whether via a single cloud or several cloudlets—further promises users better access to the data these sensors provide, access to a wider range of information, and improved resilience of communication networks. Eventually, individual person-to-person transmissions may become less necessary as leaders at any echelon are able to "reach" into a cloud and obtain what they need when they need it in a way that is meaningful to their respective contexts.

Both the geographic spread and populations of many of the world's largest urban areas continue to increase. This means more people, structures, and infrastructure are dispersed over a wider area (or, more accurately, over a more extensive volume given how much of these cities is well above or below ground). There are thus not only more civilians to avoid harming but these civilians, and other features of urban areas, are scattered over vaster terrain. A force traveling through or fighting in these highly complex environments may, therefore, find itself having to do so for greater distances and extended periods of time. We need to remember that if the urban area is a megacity,<sup>2</sup> its greater influence in terms of economics, politics, and other arenas means interrelationships between coalition actions will have second- and higher-order

and major investments in technology. Yes, we have access to data as never before, but that data is in so many forms, spread across so many organizations and databases, and reliant on so many (often incompatible) types of hardware and software that we often cannot determine what is of relevance and integrate it into decision-making processes in a timely and usable manner. The complexity of urban areas presents enough challenges without the continued self-inflicted wound of purchasing and developing incompatible software and hardware within our defence communities, much less more widely throughout government. The challenge is further complicated by the fact that relevant data must be put into context prior to exploitation. The loss of soldiers' lives in the examples above had many underlying causes. It behooves us to do all we can to avoid them in the future. Have we sufficiently addressed the information and communications challenges that plagued commanders during operations in Mogadishu in 1993 and again in Iraq and Afghanistan? Unfortunately, we have not.

The end result of introducing mission command's two-way exchanges of information between developers and operators would be improved relevance of capabilities development to those in the field and national security more broadly. Achieving this highly desirable end result requires a shared understanding of a common end state (as articulated in an intent) with the mission(s) clarifying what steps are essential to achieving that desired end result. Properly designed, both intent and mission will address not only requirements as they currently exist but adaptations needed to address evolving demands and those yet to be identified, adaptations that ideally occur consecutively rather than sequentially.

For a successful example in this regard we turn to Paul Kennedy's excellent description of the P-51 Mustang's development in the midst of the bombing campaign in Second World War Europe.<sup>3</sup> 14 October 1943 saw 291 B-17 Flying Fortress bombers and their crews depart England and turn toward targets in Regensburg and the



city of Schweinfurt. Only after their limited-range P-47 Thunderbolt turned back did the Luftwaffe send repeated waves amongst the bombers. Sixty Flying Fortresses and 600 aircrew did not return, all this in a single day. British aircraft and crew losses were similarly brutal against other targets on other days.

Akin to our racing team, producing a winning fighter aircraft requires all parts to come together in an effective form-fitting manner, both physically and ergonomically. That is also true in terms of the larger combat systems of which the fighter is a part, namely those conducting bombing raids, seeking to seize and maintain air superiority, or interdicting enemy ground forces trying to blunt Allied attacks, or any of the many means necessary to winning not merely a race but a war. The P-51 Mustang seemed to have potential as part of the various teams conducting these missions but it was somewhat limited when first introduced. The aircraft underperformed as initially designed and equipped, coming of age only after Royal Air Force test pilot Ronnie Harker flew a P-51 in the spring of 1942. Harker realized that not only would the Rolls Royce Merlin 61 engine dramatically increase performance but it would fit perfectly in the engine compartment of the American fighter, the specifications of which were very similar to those of the Spitfire featuring the Merlin 61 at the time.



Shawshots / Alamy Stock Photo

Second World War 1940's Bombing Raid by a B-17 Flying Fortress of the American 8th Air Force on a Focke Wulf aircraft manufacturing plant at Marienburg Germany 1943.



Everett Collection Historical / Alamy Stock Photo

North American Aviation's P-51 Mustang Fighter, 1942.



## Mission: As Quickly as Possible

Allied engineers developed an escort fighter capable of protecting bombers throughout their missions over Germany. Their intent was to provide Allied air forces with enough aircrafts to accompany its bombers to targets, defeat enemy fighters at any point during those flights, have a reasonable chance of surviving damage inflicted in battle by air or ground fire, and be sufficiently reliable without undue maintenance requirements.<sup>4</sup> Early WWII's horrendous losses over Germany and feedback from surviving pilots made clear what was necessary. British and American air force leaders, spurred on by the likes of Winston Churchill, made clear what they needed from their engineers. Those engineers, and test pilots like Harker, reached beyond the dictates of their missions, applying insights and understanding only they possessed to create an aircraft that met both the demands of mission and the intent. Just as the Merlin 61 fit perfectly into the P-51 engine compartment, so did the aircraft's armament, fuel, ammunition load, cockpit design, pilot training, and myriad other parts of the whole come together in a single, hyper-effective system thanks to what was effectively the exercise of mission command in a time of great hardship. What should not be lost in this focus on the P-51 is that its development was itself one part of a much greater race, a race to win the war. As developers moved fighter performance forward, they did the same for the bombers supported by the fighters through the introduction of chaff, bombsight development, and revisions in tactics and targeting. They likewise did so in the service of anti-submarine warfare, convoy survival, and the package that was ground combat and air support as the Allies invaded Northwest Europe and broke out from bocage country in northern France. Leaders and those being led continuously navigated the ever-changing currents that buffeted military forces as adversaries, and the changing theatres influenced the competition environment. Throughout, missions guided by an understanding of the grander objectives sought guided these developments. Developers—aided by insights from the field—were thus able to meet not only the demands of the day but to look forward and address those of the future. What would years later come to be known as mission command ensured all never lost sight of where they were going: the ultimate end result sought. One might ask whether such clarity exists in our capability development efforts today.

## Returning to Urban Operations: Capabilities Development and the Way Ahead for Operations in the World's Largest Urban Areas

Earlier paragraphs address the importance of a military being able to anticipate, adapt, and respond to changing conditions and do so in a timely manner. Future large-scale encounters in world megacities will be a new experience for our militaries. Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions in these environments will confront very different conditions

from megacity to megacity, making related challenges all the harder. Fortunately, we have much in the way of experience when it comes to operations in smaller urban areas...if we listen to its lessons. Mosul, Iraq, for example, may have had a population of less than two million, and Baghdad not even six, during recent operations in each, but such examples nonetheless provide a firm basis for developing tactical- and operational-level understanding of contingencies-to-come even should populations be larger and geographic spread greater. The importance of learning from these recent undertakings is all the more notable when we consider that those involving the larger urban struggles of the Second World War and the Korean War—Manila in 1945 and Seoul in 1950, for example—dealt with cities whose populations at the time were far smaller than our largest cities today. (Manila's population was only approximately 1 million and that of Seoul 1.1 million. Today, they are respectively 23.1 million and 21.8 million.)<sup>5</sup>

Urban operations' complexity is not lessening. Military

forces need to adapt. Megacities are not simply more populous than other urban areas. The systems of which they are a part are more complex. Megacities interdependency relationships do not connect them only to their immediate rural and other nearby urban surroundings as is the case with smaller cities. Their interconnectedness throughout the country of which they are a part, with countries in their vicinity, and often with the wider world is one that bestows inordinate influence by means of these economic, political, social, and other ties. The international outrage following the inadvertent bombing of the Chinese embassy in 1999 Belgrade more than hints at what the consequences of striking a particularly interconnected target might be. Urban operations—and those involving megacities in particular—thus demand a multidisciplinary, cooperative, and well-orchestrated approach

to activities at all levels. Success implies an understanding of the interrelationships between components of the urban area and the parties involved in executing operations, and then ensuring that all those with operational roles integrate this knowledge when undertaking their responsibilities. Reorienting our approach to capabilities development by putting mission command at its core offers a new paradigm that returns technology to its appropriate supporting role as a critical enabler in achieving desired end states.

Knowledge of mission critical information and understanding its importance in light of ongoing action creates a bridge between the current situation and a future of readiness we hope to maintain. Without it, execution in the complex megacity environment falls prey to stale and outdated guidance due to breaks in communications, an inability to address logistical shortcomings, and many other difficulties enhanced by urban environments' inherent interdependencies. Megacity complexity and broad interconnectedness strain both the ability of a unit to adapt and its headquarters' capability to control and support. Knowledge under such conditions is more than power. It is a necessary condition to successfully execute mission command, which in turn underlies the ultimate attainment of strategic objectives.

**“Reorienting our approach to capabilities development by putting mission command at its core offers a new paradigm that returns technology to its appropriate supporting role as a critical enabler in achieving desired end states.”**

## Summary and Recommendations: Making Mission Command Work on a Capabilities Development – Mission Execution Continuum

Military forces do not exist in a vacuum. Beyond defence and security, the requirement for the adoption of an integrated-systems perspective is already considered *sine qua non* to enable the “Fourth Industrial Revolution” (also known as Industry 4.0, in which industrial practices incorporate advances such as the Internet of Things)<sup>6</sup> and its derivatives such as manufacturing for the next generation and smart cities paradigms. These initiatives are taking place in all domains and are motivated by similar requirements regardless of organizational type.

Solutions to the challenge of improving defence (and more general) capabilities development will have several components, including:

- Improved application of a systems perspective.
- Constant awareness not only of how parts support a system as a whole, but also how the components might need to be adapted to meet future requirements.



A Canadian Armed Forces soldier guards his arcs of fire on board a CH-146 Griffon helicopter during an air mobility mission in Northern Iraq during Operation IMPACT, 4 November 2016.

Op IMPACT / DND photo

- Modularity in project management in lieu of a single massive prime contract or acquisitions process, modularity not only with respect to end products, but also in the sub-organizations (e.g., the components of a racing team), all guided by a unifying end as articulated in mission and intent statements. Some of these sub-organizations will be working to get a product out based on currently specified requirements (e.g., the P-51 airframe). Others are looking at how to improve some other component during ongoing product development (e.g., fitting the Merlin 61 engine into the Mustang). Finally, there should be those who are

looking well into the future and contemplating the next race car or the next fighter, namely those who are looking to bridge the now with the then. Anyone involved, such as primary management, sub-organization leadership, drivers/pilots, mechanics and others have the potential as a source of revolution during evolution.

Both continuous exchanges between developers and operators, and allocation of resources to look into future requirements, will be critical when dealing with the Pan-Domain/Multi-Domain Operations' competition component. Just as the West has been surprised by threat misinformation and disinformation attacks attempting to influence elections and Russia's use of surrogates to remain below NATO's commitment threshold in Ukraine, so will some future foe decide not to fight us on urban streets but instead



Cpl Blaine Sawell / DND photo

The Royal Canadian Navy's Enhanced Naval Boarding Party from Her Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Charlottetown* transits in a rigid hull inflatable boat to a cooperative boarding of motor vessel *Smit Yare* as the ship's CH-124 Sea King helicopter provides cover during Exercise JOINT WARRIOR in the Atlantic Ocean, 12 October 2016.

successfully convince sufficient members of the population that they should turn against us, thus removing us without having to fight. Whether the environment is urban or otherwise, there will always be the need to surge and develop a hyper-critical solution akin to the hedgerow buster in Normandy, counter-mine plows/rollers in 1991 Iraq, or the P-51 in Second World War Europe. Similar needs in the disinformation and cyber security arenas are arguably on the table currently just as they are for countering sub-threshold maneuver more generally.

Megacities and other urban areas are and shall remain complex environments for the aid provider, soldier at war, and public authority. Central as they are to nations' cultures, economies, governments, civil institutions, and other infrastructures, tactical level military actions in these environments have a greater potential to impact operational and strategic outcomes than during operations elsewhere. The military's unavoidable overlap with other organizations' spheres of responsibilities and objectives further complicates urban operations. Urban environments' interrelated networks are part of this complexity, which is further exacerbated by the ever-present potential for disruption of communications and impeded mobility, as well as the challenge of simply comprehending the potential effects of a force's decisions and actions on systems internal to and extending beyond the city in question.

These challenges highlight the need to be able to adapt to changing conditions while operating autonomously for extended periods of time (re-emphasizing the criticality of clear missions and intents). Those missions and intents will in turn benefit from a well-articulated strategic end state, one that includes overt specification of constraints as it clearly defines conditions reflecting how the many actions serving that end must complement each other. Given the multi-agency, multi-echelon, pan-domain/multi-domain, and military-civil character of undertakings in urban areas, an overarching authority—sometimes articulated in terms of a “supremo”—is highly desirable to oversee definition of this end state and these constraints. While mission command requires some extent of decentralization of decision-making and action, cross-organizational consistency in specifying strategic guidance will go far toward encouraging an orchestrated rather than fragmented operation. Put differently, there must be consistency in leaders' missions and intents laterally as well as vertically between organizations.

Effectively integrating disparate capabilities on urban and other battlefields is far easier if capability developers take a systems approach from the start of any initiative. Only with such an approach can those responsible for making our armed forces as effective as possible ensure the weaker links of the chain are identified and strengthened in lieu of unnecessarily augmenting the capabilities of those stronger, as too often occurs at present.

Just as mission command is essential to successful operations in urban areas, its principles should guide the development of the capabilities our armed forces will bring to bear during operations of all types and in any environment. Just as it is the man or woman on urban streets who knows best how to apply the assets at hand

in the service of mission and commander's intent, the widely dispersed efforts to equip and staff our forces demand clear guidance from above with a freedom to adapt within that guidance to meet the requirements of individual services and branches within those services. Just as the senior leader has the responsibility to check on his or her subordinates to ensure mission and intent are being followed, our senior military and civilian defence officials have the responsibility to ensure that capability developers and subordinate service and branch leaders do not ignore their guidance in the service of narrower interests.

In this light, the authors recommend the following to drive consistent capability development along the PRICIE (Canada) and DOTMLPF-I/P (NATO, US) lines:<sup>7</sup>

- Apply a mission command approach to the design, acquisition, and fielding of capabilities. These processes must be driven by a common integrating vision rather than one based on the branch, the service, or another traditional bureaucratic stovepipe. Capabilities-based planning and mission command should work together by employing compatible, if not identical, end goals to provide an overarching understanding of what each component of the racing team should aim to accomplish and how this serves to meet the end goal(s), and to include requirements needed today and in the future.
- Design or acquire decision-making aids, balancing the requirements of strategic/senior leader guidance and soldier requirements to the extent possible. Access to massive amounts of data/information is not synonymous with helping leaders make decisions.
- Ubiquitous awareness only exists in utopia. Urban operations—all operations—require timely and savvy adaptation to ever-changing conditions. Train leaders to lead via the application of mission command. Train subordinates to provide the feedback their leaders need to make informed decisions best serving the needs of those in the field.

**“Given the multi-agency, multi-echelon, pan-domain/multi-domain, and military-civil character of undertakings in urban areas, an overarching authority is highly desirable to oversee definition of this end state and these constraints.”**

Success on the battlefield requires armed forces to be committed to orchestrating their many capabilities no less than premier racing teams. While we have used urban operations challenges as our primary vehicle to demonstrate the importance of maintaining an overarching perspective during the capabilities development process, the above consideration applies equally to such development regardless of the field, be it the aforementioned chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) defence; strategic missile defence; or others such as shipbuilding, designing an aircraft, or developing a bombing campaign.

We need leaders as capable at managing teams as those who win Formula One races. We also need capability developers as attuned to operational requirements as those equipping these teams. It is people, not machines, who design, refine, and operate the technologies that are successful. It is people, not technology, who will continue to manage the application of wartime violence for decades to come. Well-defined strategic



end states, clear mission and intent statements, and information technologies purpose-built for and able to adapt to the demands of mission command decision-making are keys to success in wartime environments. They are no less so for capabilities development. We acknowledge that the Second World War is an exceptional case during which military and civilian, technologist and soldier, and politician and general officer came together as never before experienced in modern democracies. We also recognize that this accomplishment was necessitated by reaction to an existential threat, a threat too many leaders in North America and Europe were slow to acknowledge. One might ask whether that lethargy is again demonstrating itself in a world where threats are waging war via information operations, cyberattack, use of surrogates, and ways that potentially relegate armed conflict to a minor if any role. The Second World War's Greatest Generation won a war at great sacrifice. How great might a generation be if it were to recognize



Two CF-18 Hornets from 425 Tactical Fighter Squadron in Bagotville, Quebec fly over the mountains of Iceland after departing Keflavik, Iceland in support of NATO reassurance measures, 1 May 2014.

Master Corporal Roy MacLellan / DND photo

the nature of emerging threats and shield their countries from the worst consequences of new forms of warfare? The parts are there but the car misfires. The Greatest Generation warns us that perfecting the vehicle before the race costs far less than doing so once the race begins.



## NOTES

- 1 This article employs the Australian Army's definition of mission command given its clarity and conciseness. Understandings of mission command as applied in US and other militaries do not differ greatly in substance from Australian Army usage. The US joint doctrinal definition of mission command describes it as "the conduct of military operations through decentralized execution based upon mission-type orders." The Canadian doctrinal definition of mission command as officially approved by the Army Terminology Panel is: "The philosophy of command that promotes unity of effort, the duty and authority to act, and initiative to subordinate commanders." For more on mission command, see Russell W. Glenn (ed.), *Trust and Leadership: The Australian Army Approach to Mission Command*, Dahlonga, GA: University of North Georgia Press, November 2020. The US joint definition of mission command is from the *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, Joint Publication 1-02, Washington, D.C.: Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, May 2019, 148. The Canadian definition is from Allan English and Howard Coombs, "Effects-based Approaches to Operations: Canadian Perspectives," Defence Research and Development Canada CR 2008-019, 2007, 232, [https://archive.org/stream/DTIC\\_ADA485891/DTIC\\_ADA485891\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/DTIC_ADA485891/DTIC_ADA485891_djvu.txt) (accessed September 8, 2020).
- 2 While the common definition of a megacity is any urban area of ten million or more in population, a more helpful understanding for those whose operations involve these features is "an urban area of extraordinary population size, geographic spread, physical and social complexity, interconnectedness, and similarly exceptional characteristics, to include influence with at least broader regional scope." Definition from: Russell W. Glenn, "Ten Million is Not Enough: Coming to Grips with Megacities' Challenges and Opportunities," *Small Wars Journal* (January 25, 2017), <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/ten-million-is-not-enough-coming-to-grips-with-megacities%E2%80%9999-challenges-and-opportunities> (accessed May 7, 2020).
- 3 Paul Kennedy, *Engineers of Victory: The Problem Solvers Who Turned the Tide in the Second World War*, NY: Random House, 2013, 75-144.
- 4 The mission and intent wording are those of the authors. They are for demonstrative purposes only.
- 5 *Demographia World Urban Areas*, 16<sup>th</sup> annual edition, April 2020, 23, <http://www.demographia.com/db-worldua.pdf> (accessed October 21, 2020).
- 6 For more on the Fourth Industrial Revolution see Klaus Schwab, "The Fourth Industrial Revolution: What it Means and How to Respond," *Foreign Affairs* 94, (December 2015) <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2015-12-12/fourth-industrial-revolution> (accessed October 22, 2020); Rainer Schmidt, et al., "Industry 4.0 - Potential for Creating Smart Empirical Research Results," BIS 2015 18th International Conference on Business Information Systems conference paper, 2015; and Stephan Weyer, et al., "Towards Industry 4.0 - Standardization as the crucial challenge for highly modular, multi-vendor production systems," International Federation of Automatic Control conference paper, 2015, 579-584.
- 7 PRICIE stands for "P = Personnel (including individual training and leadership); R = Research and development/operations research; I = Infrastructure and organization; C = Concepts, doctrine and collective training; I = Information management; and E = Equipment and material" as defined by TERMIUM Plus®, the Government of Canada's terminology and linguistic data bank, <https://www.btb.termiuplus.gc.ca/tpv2alpha/alpha-eng.html?lang=eng&i=1&index=en&srchtxt=PRICIE> (accessed October 8 2020). DOTMLPF-I/P stands for "doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities-interoperability and policy."

Corporal David Veldman / Canadian Armed Forces photo



Chief Petty Officer Second Class Mark Stevens, Chief Boatswain Mate of Sea Training Pacific, listens to a pre-firing brief for a machine gun range aboard HMCS *Harry DeWolf*, 18 October 2020.

## Gender Inclusivity in the Canadian Armed Forces: The Role of the Chief Petty Officer Second Class/Master Warrant Officer

by Michelle Seaman

Chief Petty Officer Second Class (CPO2) Michelle Seaman joined the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve in 1986 as a Finance Clerk (now known as Financial Services Administrator). As a Class A Reservist, she is the National Military Occupation Advisor for Financial Services Administrators, as well as the Chief of the Training Department at HMCS CARLETON in Ottawa, Ontario. In her fulltime career, CPO2 Seaman is a civilian member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and leads the Victims of Crime Section, the centre of expertise for victims' issues for the RCMP. CPO2 Seaman is a recipient of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from McMaster University and a Human Resources Professional Management Certificate from Carleton University.

### Introduction

In August 2020, the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) announced the adoption of gender neutral rank designations to reflect "the modern, progressive Service that is the RCN today".<sup>1</sup> What should have been a watershed moment in the Navy's diversity and inclusion efforts

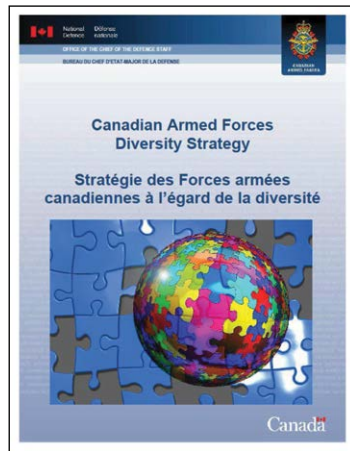
was marred by hateful online comments that prompted then Commander of the Navy to remark that the conversation around rank provided "greater insight into who we are, including the sober reality that we all need to do more, individually and collectively."<sup>2</sup> This is just one example of how the 2016 Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Diversity Strategy and Action Plan<sup>3</sup> has not gone far enough to eliminate systemic barriers and underlying prejudice that hinder the CAF's progress towards a culture that embraces gender diversity and inclusivity.<sup>4</sup> The role of the Chief Petty Officer Second Class (CPO2)/Master Warrant Officer (MWO) in leading organizational change is now, more important than ever given recent events that have shaken the trust in the highest echelons of leadership. Examination of this issue will look at some of the reasons why the CAF has not been successful in creating an environment of diversity and inclusion, recommendations for shared and individual actions, and the role that the CPO2/MWO can play in leading the change needed to create a gender inclusive culture.

To understand the role of CAF leaders in progressing culture change, the issue of gender diversity and inclusion must be

considered within the framework that guides behaviours necessary for leadership and organizational effectiveness.

## The Context

To date, the launch of the 2016 CAF Diversity Strategy and Action Plan has not created a culture that embraces diversity and inclusion because the intent signalled in the strategy has not been backed up by individual and collective actions that align with the Canadian Forces (CF) Effectiveness Framework of Member Well-being and Commitment and Military Ethos.<sup>5,6</sup>

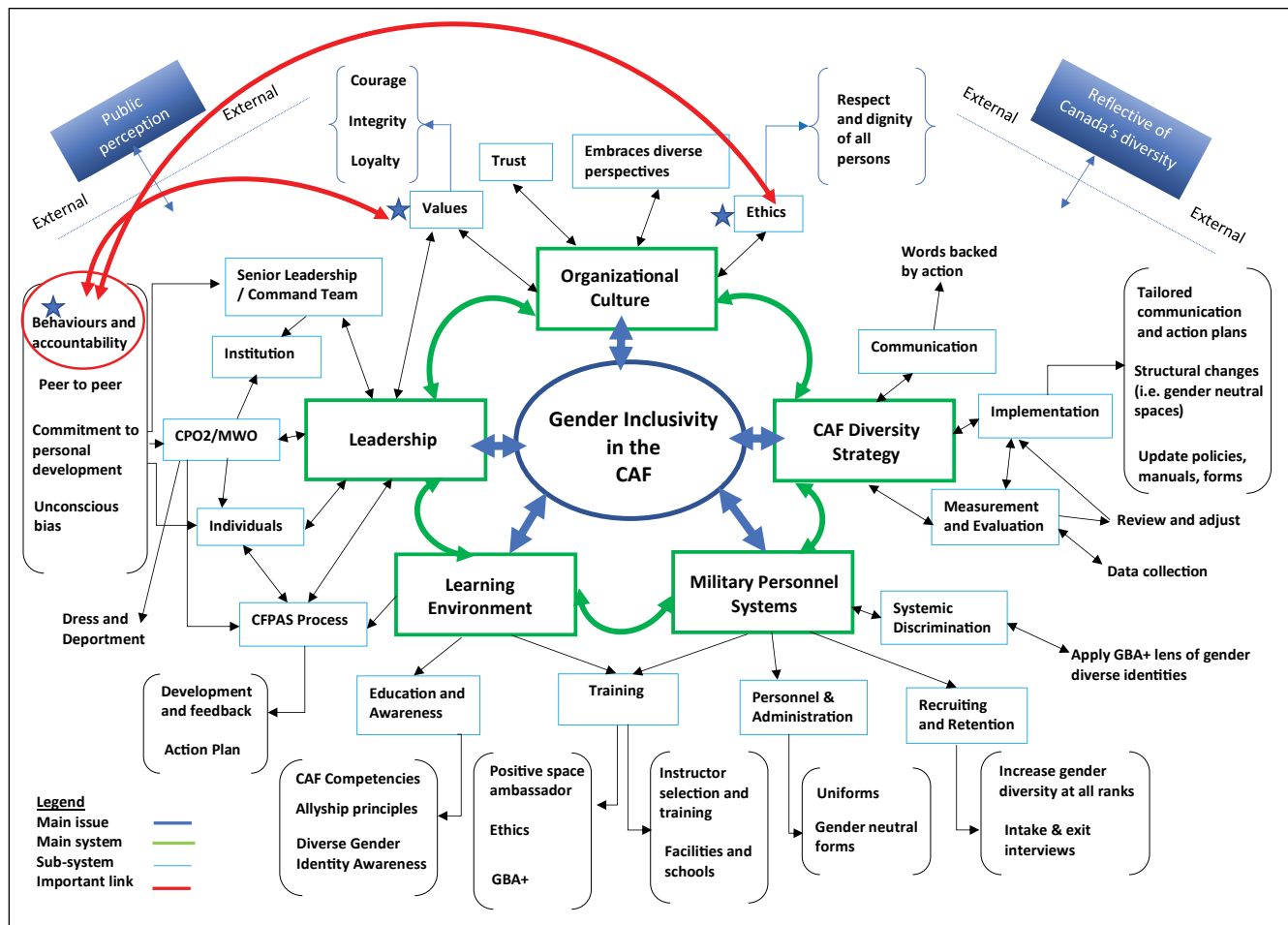


The CAF's diversity talk must be backed up by actions that will result in implementing systemic changes to policies, procedures, training<sup>7</sup> and development processes, otherwise it

perpetuates an exclusive rather than inclusive culture that negatively affects the well-being and commitment of members.<sup>8,9</sup>

At the institutional level, leaders are responsible for acting in ways that honour the social contract and maintaining QOL and member-support systems.<sup>10</sup> By championing concrete actions, such as eliminating gender binary only options and stereotypical depictions from all administrative and tactical documents, leaders can positively influence the organization to meet its obligation to the social contract by providing "respectful treatment during service"<sup>11</sup> for all CAF members.

At the centre of the CF Effectiveness Framework, Military Ethos guides conduct in line with ethical principles and military values.<sup>12</sup> For the CAF to embody a truly inclusive culture, senior leaders must lead both individuals, to ensure a climate of respect for individual rights and diversity,<sup>13</sup> and the institution, to establish an ethical culture<sup>14</sup> by aligning their own behaviour with these values. This will take courage and involve speaking up about the behaviours of others (intentional or otherwise), identifying organizational barriers to inclusion and creating opportunities to acknowledge, address and understand unconscious bias and experiences that have shaped these perspectives in themselves and others.<sup>15</sup>



Appendix A: Mind Map – Gender Inclusion in the CAF.



## The Environment

Cultural change is a difficult endeavour. To break the cycle of repeating approaches that garner the same unsuccessful result, an understanding of the CAF operating environment is key. A visual representation of the complex interrelationships of CAF systems affecting and affected by the issue of gender inclusivity is depicted on the mind map (see Appendix A: Mind Map - Gender Inclusivity in the CAF). The following section describes the mind map, which illustrates a systems approach to analyzing gender inclusivity in the CAF.

As a “system of systems”,<sup>16</sup> the CAF operates in an environment with external inputs that will influence gender inclusivity, including: public perception that the CAF is a trusted ethical organization and is reflective of Canada’s diversity (see upper left and right corners of the mind map). At the centre of the map is the issue of gender inclusivity (outlined in dark blue). Five primary CAF systems, namely Organizational Culture, CAF Diversity Strategy and Action Plan, Military Personnel Systems, Learning Environment, and Leadership (outlined in green); their sub-systems (outlined in light blue); and their interrelations branch out from the central issue.<sup>17</sup>

In 2016, the CAF Diversity Strategy and Action Plan was launched to create an Organizational Culture “that embraces diversity and inclusion.”<sup>18</sup> Five years later, multiple examples highlight that members continue to act contrary to the DND and CF Code of Values and Ethics.<sup>19</sup> If “core values rooted deeply within the people who make up an organization are the essence of its organizational culture”<sup>20</sup> then to achieve a truly diverse and inclusive culture, steps must be taken to align member behaviour with the ethical principle of respect and dignity of all persons and the values of courage, integrity and loyalty. This instills the trust not only of the Canadian public in the CAF but also the trust of CAF members in the institution.

The CAF Diversity Strategy and Action Plan has lacked effective implementation and, therefore, has not resulted in the organizational culture envisioned. Despite communication and initiatives launched, there has been little in the way of tailored communications and action plans for units, i.e., guidance for structural changes (e.g., gender neutral washrooms). Policies, manuals and forms have not been updated and continue to reflect gender binary language to the exclusion of gender diverse members. An evaluation conducted

in 2020, found that “more recent information and data are needed to report on the current state of diversity inclusion within DND and the CAF.”<sup>21</sup> These findings should trigger a review of and adjustments, if required, to the implementation plan.

Implementation of the CAF Diversity Strategy and Action Plan should include a review of Military Personnel Systems, i.e., such as recruiting and retention, personnel administration and training using Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) with a focus on diverse gender identities to recognize and address systemic discrimination. For example, intake and exit interviews can provide information that reinforces feedback loops that are essential to a learning environment. This information can be used to identify gaps in training, awareness or performance management mechanisms that can enhance inclusion, which may, in turn, increase recruitment and retention of diverse members.

A Learning Environment ensures “the provision of continuous feedback and knowledge into the planning and implementation”<sup>22</sup> of key systems that will influence gender inclusivity. Conventional and innovative approaches to sharing knowledge can be used, including: training courses, e.g., Positive Space Ambassador Course, scenario-based ethics training, GBA+; education and awareness, e.g., CAF Competencies, allyship principles; and Diverse Gender Identity Awareness sessions. The CFPAS process provides feedback on behaviours and the opportunity to integrate gender inclusive specific learning into action plans.

Leadership at all levels supports a learning environment by making a visible commitment to personal learning and development.<sup>23</sup> Leaders must do the difficult work of self-reflection, to uncover unconscious bias, acknowledge mistakes and make necessary changes. As leaders of individuals and the institution, CPO2/MWOs provide feedback to followers, peers and superiors and are accountable for their own actions that motivate and guide



Members of CFB Borden and the Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (RCEME) on parade at the RCEME 75th Anniversary Parade in Borden, Ontario, 15 May 2019.

Avr Caitlin Paterson / DND photo



Civil-Military Cooperation team leader, Master Warrant Officer Joel Alo, thanks Out-patient Acting Manager, Gracy Dcunha for the tour of Kivalliq Health Centre in Rankin Inlet, NU during Operation NANOOK, 18 August 2017.

behaviours<sup>24</sup> aligned with CF Ethics and Values and support a diverse and inclusive organizational culture.

### Analyzing the Problems

For the purpose of this paper, three main problems have been identified that have prevented the 2016 CAF Diversity Strategy and Action Plan from achieving the change necessary to create an organizational culture “that embraces diversity and inclusion.”<sup>25</sup>

First, the 2020 Evaluation of Diversity and Inclusion report found that a “lack of understanding of what diversity and inclusion entails (e.g., definitions and outcomes) has resulted in a lack of clear and consistent direction and guidance from senior management on how to progress on this agenda.”<sup>26</sup> The failure to achieve the intended cultural change is linked to ineffective communication during strategy implementation. This highlights a failure to recognize the complexity of cultural change and the importance of understanding that for members “to shift attitudes and internalize messages, (leaders) need to use influence and persuasion.”<sup>27</sup> The absence of clear messaging contributed to uncertainty about expected actions and outcomes.<sup>28</sup> Lack of trust in senior leadership resulting from a history of inaction on incidents of sexual misconduct put the reliability and trustworthiness of those delivering the message into question.<sup>29</sup> Appropriate attention was not paid to both the tailoring of the message and the appropriate means of delivering it to the specific audiences in the CAF.<sup>30</sup> The impact of this oversight cannot be overstated given the fact that even with a well-crafted message “the person on the receiving end will always understand it through the prism

of his or her own emotions, preconceptions, prejudices, and pre-existing beliefs.”<sup>31</sup> As a result, understanding the cultural change strategy was left to chance and leaders missed the opportunity to influence the communication of this vital initiative for “optimal impact and understanding.”<sup>32</sup>

Secondly, the 2015 External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces found the culture “hostile to women and LGTBQ members,” noted the disconnect “between the high professional standards established by the CAF’s policies on inappropriate sexual conduct...and the reality experienced by many members,” and that cultural change was paramount.<sup>33</sup> Recent headlines concerning inaction regarding allegations of sexual misconduct at the highest levels of the military show the 2016 CAF Diversity Strategy and Action Plan has been ineffective because the concept of military professionalism has not evolved to keep pace with the change required. “Professions are socially constructed concepts (Ewles et al. 2017; Rudvin 2007) and defined by the social biases of the dominant culture (Davies 1996),”<sup>34</sup> which, in the case of the military, is primarily male-dominated.<sup>35</sup> Systems and policies reflective of this dominant culture remain despite efforts to reform, such as applying GBA+ analysis to change activities. As pointed out in the Deschamps Report, “There is also a strong perception that senior NCOs are responsible for imposing a culture where no one speaks up.”<sup>36</sup> Whether through willful disregard, habituated acceptance, or survival, officers and senior Non-Commissioned Members (NCMs) who do not exemplify the core ethic of respect for all persons have not fulfilled their responsibilities as stewards of the profession to ensure it continues to evolve to meet the expectations of Canadians.<sup>37</sup>



A third reason why the CAF Diversity and Inclusion strategy has not achieved the envisioned cultural change is that systems thinking was not applied to the implementation of this initiative. Senior leadership's ability to "optimize the capacity for systems thinking is linked to the broader culture changing goals."<sup>38</sup> Had a learning environment been in place with established processes and feedback mechanisms to ensure lessons learned informed ongoing practices and organizational learning,<sup>39</sup> the lack of clearly defined measures, expected outcomes and departmental plans that stalled progress on gender inclusivity may have been identified sooner than the 2020 Evaluation of Diversity and Inclusion.<sup>40</sup> The lack of progress on strategic outcomes is evident from examples that include: administrative forms that continue to reflect only gender binary (male and female) options, micro-aggressions in the form of greetings that exclude gender diverse individuals, and outright expressions of hateful attitudes. The disconnect between the intent of the strategy, based on the ethical principle of respect for all persons, and day-to-day examples of exclusion was not addressed or mitigated due to the absence of a learning environment where leaders commit to personal learning<sup>41</sup> and conduct critical analyses "to determine how the 'taken for granted' cultural beliefs, assumptions and associated practices influence CF systems, system relationships and the nature of system outputs."<sup>42</sup>

Common to each of these problems is that actions taken by the institution and individuals are not aligned with the principle of respect and dignity for all people. A key reason for this disconnect is the priority of competencies identified in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Competency Dictionary.<sup>43</sup> The CAF Competency Dictionary presents competencies "in order from most to least important based on the ranking scores averaged across all officers and NCMs."<sup>44</sup> Tellingly, Commitment to Military Ethos ranks fourth behind Communication, Credibility and Influence and Teamwork<sup>45</sup> pointing to the fact that the CAF has veered off course and that Military Ethos no longer guides conduct in line with ethical principles and military values<sup>46</sup> as the foundation from which all other competency behaviours flow.

## Recommendations

We know from past reports, such as the 2015 Deschamps Report<sup>47</sup> into sexual misconduct, the 2020 Evaluation of the CAF Diversity Strategy and ongoing scandals involving the highest levels of leadership, that the organization continues to repeat past mistakes, and this is eroding our members' and the public's trust in the organization. We can no longer wait for a CAF-led approach to collective action. The time to take responsibility for personal actions that can affect change is now.

As leaders of people and the institution, CPO2/MWOs are not only well positioned, but have a duty to take individual action in leading cultural change. The recommendations that follow are not exhaustive. They are intended to identify specific actions that the CPO2/MWO cadre can commit to in order to begin to address the main problems identified within the scope of this paper and influence change.

These specific recommendations are based on the notion that actions are guided by the "the concept of military ethos"<sup>48</sup> (which) is founded upon respect for the values protected by the *Canadian Charter of Human Rights*<sup>49</sup> (the Charter), including the right to dignity and security of the person<sup>50</sup> and is the overarching competency from which all other CAF competencies must follow.<sup>51</sup> In addition, the notion of supportive allyship is introduced as an important new competency to support leaders.

According the Harvard Business Review, "allies endeavour to drive systemic improvements to workplace policies, practices and cultures" and this change "starts with individual leaders taking responsibility for our own actions and behaviours."<sup>52</sup>

The intent signalled in the Diversity Strategy has not been backed up by individual and collective actions that are needed to achieve the cultural change necessary, which is why the CAF continues to fall into performative allyship, which involves professing support for the cause of diversity, without any tangible work required for supportive allyship, which is what is need to drive change.

## Recommendation Issue 1

The absence of effective communication led to the failure to implement the Diversity Strategy due to confusion as to what "diversity and inclusion entails (e.g., definitions and outcomes) resulting in a lack of clear and consistent direction and guidance from senior management on how to progress on this agenda."<sup>53</sup>



Members of Her Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Winnipeg* participate in a Replenishment-at-Sea (RAS) with United States Navy Ship (USNS) *Charles Drew* (T-AKE-10 a *Lewis and Clark*-class dry cargo ship) in the Asia-Pacific region during Operation NEON, 16 November 2020.

Sailor 1st Class Valerie LeClair / DND photo



It is recommended that CPO2/MWOs engage senior leadership at their unit to establish Diversity and Inclusion Advisor Teams (DICAT) that report directly to the Commanding Officer. As an example, the Naval Reserve (NAVRES) recently established new Diversity and Inclusion Commander's Advisor Teams (DICATs)<sup>54</sup> to influence action at the unit level. DICATS will establish effective communication through common understanding of terms and expected outcomes; feedback mechanisms to impact orders, procedures and training that need to be created/adapted to reflect unique diversity of the unit; and an opportunity for diverse voices to be heard and influence change. CPO2/MWOs are also encouraged to support and participate (when appropriate) in informal discussions such as Town Halls or Fireside Chats that can vary by size, community of interest, and rank, to ensure the voices of all ranks and perspectives are heard. To monitor the effectiveness of these activities, a climate survey of the entire unit can be used to gauge the understanding of and feelings related to diversity and inclusion to establish a baseline. Follow-up surveys could be conducted every 12 months to gauge progress.

### ***Recommendation Issue 2***

Military professionalism has failed to evolve and reflect diversity; therefore, systems and policies reflective of the male dominant culture remain despite efforts, such as applying GBA+ analysis to change activities, to reform.

As stewards of the profession, it is recommended that CPO2/MWO look within their sphere of influence for changes that can be made or advocated in systems or the application of policies that better reflect principles of inclusion. Examples of possible actions include, but are not limited to: identifying personal pronouns when introducing one's self; reviewing training materials for gender binary language or stereotypes; facilitating the issue of both male and female uniforms to gender diverse individuals; encouraging education and awareness opportunities beyond conventional training approaches to support learning,<sup>55</sup> such as informal discussions, expert lecturers, interactive and scenario-based learning experiences; and mentoring supervisors on interpretation of dress regulations in light of diverse gender identities.<sup>56</sup> Professional networks should be leveraged to optimize knowledge sharing across the CAF, including environments and components (Reserve and Regular Force units).<sup>57</sup> Feedback should be solicited regularly from unit members at all levels, providing the opportunity to submit anonymous comments regarding the positive or negative impact of these activities.

### ***Recommendation Issue 3***

The CAF Diversity Strategy and Action Plan has not achieved the envisioned cultural change because systems thinking was not applied to create a learning environment to achieve this outcome. This recommendation calls on CPO2/MWOs to make a personal



Master Corporal J.W.S. Houck / Canadian Armed Forces photo

Master Warrant Officer Geneviève Couture, sergeant major of the Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve's National Support Element, briefs US Army members on developments over the Middle East during Operation IMPACT, in Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, 20 August 2020. (Photo has been digitally altered for operational security reasons)

commitment to learning to ensure alignment of personal actions with the core values and the principles of supportive allyship. The CPO2/MWO cadre is likely to be less diverse and, as a result, naturally have an ingrained bias and prejudice based on their lived experience and length of service, many having joined before gender diversity and inclusion were priorities of the CAF. This group has the potential to influence change by committing to “personal learning”<sup>58</sup> and to conduct critical analyses “to determine how the ‘taken for granted’ cultural beliefs, assumptions” impact their actions.

By leading from the front, CPO2/MWOs can be a catalyst for change<sup>59</sup> and set the example for superiors, peers and followers. This will be difficult and uncomfortable because it will require putting oneself in a vulnerable position. But is important that CPO2/MWOs be willing to demonstrate this courage by educating themselves on gender issues and listening to experiences and voices of those with lived experiences; being prepared to accept feedback that may be difficult to hear with humility; and acknowledging that with this awareness comes the commitment to do better. CPO2/MWOs must also be prepared to provide respectful but frank feedback to peers/followers and superiors. CPO2/MWOs can measure their own progress through implicit bias testing before and throughout their learning journey.<sup>60</sup>

## Conclusion

The 2015 Deschamps Report states: “the CAF needs to engage in broad-based cultural reform to change the underlying norms of conduct that are giving rise to pervasive low-level harassment, [and] a hostile environment for women and LGTBQ members.”<sup>61</sup> The CAF has not made discernable progress towards this goal despite the launch of the 2016 CAF Diversity and Action Plan. Recent events continue to erode trust and confidence of both the public and CAF members that cultural change can be achieved. While the CAF struggles to improve diversity and inclusion efforts, CPO2s/MWOs have an important role to play to facilitate change now. As leaders of both individuals and the institution, the CPO2/MWO cadre has a duty to become directly engaged in and role model cultural reform.<sup>62</sup>

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The 22nd French Canadian Battalion crossing the Rhine River at Bonn, December 1918.

## French Canada and Enlistment in the First World War: A Study of Recruitment Posters

by Emanuelle Cotton-Dumouchel

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(This article is based on her master's thesis, which was supervised by Serge Durflinger, PhD, and edited by her colleague, Ariane Gauthier.)

**I**n Canadian historiography and collective memory, French-Canadian military participation in the First World War is overshadowed by low enlistment rates and the Conscription Crisis.<sup>1</sup> In the decades leading up to the war, tension between the “two Canadas”<sup>2</sup> had risen as a result of attempts to assimilate French Canadians through the repression of their language rights. The absence of French-speaking units in the Permanent Force from 1867 onwards, the separate schools issue in Manitoba and Ontario,

and the deep roots that French Canadians had in the country were just some of the reasons for their low participation rate in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Between 1914 and 1916, nearly 60 percent of Canadian Expeditionary Force members were first-generation British immigrants with strong ties to their homeland. Understandably, most French Canadians (and even a substantial number of English Canadians with deep roots in the country) saw no reason to sacrifice themselves in a European and imperialist war, a position that journalist and politician Henri Bourassa fervently advocated.

Nevertheless, there were nearly 36,000 volunteers and more than 39,000 French-Canadian conscripts, of whom hundreds, if not thousands, were wounded or killed in action.<sup>3</sup> Yet those individuals are often forgotten, and we prefer to remember the victims of the Quebec riots. In the words of historian Desmond Morton, [translation] “Why do Quebecers remember the four people who died in the conscription riots, while the soldiers of the 22nd Battalion who died in the First World War (all of whom were French Canadian) have been forgotten?”<sup>4,5</sup> The French-Canadian military experience of the Great War has been addressed in a few

academic works, but otherwise it has remained largely unexplored. In light of those findings, the following study examines some of the posters that were used for recruitment efforts in French Canada. Revealing nuances of identity, this article offers insights into what motivated some French Canadians to support the country's military participation in the overseas conflict.

The issue is twofold: why did French Canadians enlist and why did some of them support the country's participation in the war? It is impossible to provide a succinct answer that would encompass the experience of all French Canadians, since they did not all have the same motivations and most of them did not leave any records that would explain those motivations. However, an analysis of twenty recruitment posters<sup>6</sup> held at Library and Archives Canada and the Canadian War Museum reveals some oft-overlooked perspectives. The posters, which have frequently been disregarded because of their propagandistic purpose, are relevant historical sources because they were issued by French-speaking battalions and by civilian recruiting committees composed mainly of French Canadians. Moreover, several personal accounts by French-Canadian soldiers are in the same vein.

Even if it is not possible to study the effectiveness of recruitment posters in concrete terms, we can posit that they had little effect: the majority of French Canadians, despite their moral support for the Allies, did not feel called upon in a way that would justify their sacrifice. Moreover, visual propaganda was not prominent until the autumn of 1915, and Canada's expectations for enlistment (half a million men starting in 1916) were disproportionate, given that the country's population was only 8,000,000.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, while it is true that the analysis of the recruitment posters reveals that there was a "nationalist"<sup>8</sup> perspective, it also shows that there was a French-Canadian loyalist perspective, and it also demonstrated the attachment that French Canada had to France. All of those factors favoured the country's military participation. More generally, this study disproves the simplified version of history that erases French Canadians from the ranks of the Canadian Expeditionary Force from 1914 to 1918.

### Nationalism, French Canadian Loyalty and Attachment to France

According to historiography and collective memory, **A**pan-nationalism and Henri Bourassa encapsulated the perspective of all French Canadians during the First World War. That movement worked for the country's independence from Great Britain and also for the respect of the French language in provinces other than Quebec, which allowed the two Canadas<sup>9</sup> to peacefully coexist. On the question of imperial defence, which arose with the Boer War of 1899–1902, the nationalists wanted the Canadian militia to be employed solely for the defence of the country and not serve the imperialist interests of Great Britain.<sup>10</sup> Historiography shows that this perception of Canada was shared by a large proportion of the French-Canadian population: in general, despite feeling sympathetic to the cause, a long-time Canadian had no ties to

the old continent that would justify such a sacrifice. However, there were ideologies in French Canada that diverged from the "Bourassian" nationalist rhetoric, without abandoning the French-Canadian "identity" and sense of pride.

On the one hand, French-Canadian loyalism—the idea that French Canada had survived thanks to the British Crown—was present among the French-Canadian elite of the time. In that circle, the Conquest of 1760 was seen as a blessing: French Canada had been spared the French Revolution of 1789, and British institutions had protected the French-Canadian people and allowed them to flourish. Historian Jacques Monet argues that the relationship between the two groups was symbiotic: French Canadians could count on the protection of the British regime, but the British regime had survived in North America thanks to French Canadians (especially after the American Revolution of 1776).<sup>11</sup> The Catholic clergy, who wanted to maintain their status, were the first among the French-Canadian elite to understand the importance of collaboration between English and French Canadians. In the late nineteenth century, although the tradition of loyalty to the Crown was waning, many members of the elite, particularly the liberals, continued this colonial relationship of goodwill until the start of the twentieth century.<sup>12</sup>

On the other hand, many French-Canadian intellectuals, such as Bourassa and Abbé Lionel Groulx, saw French Canada as the remnants of an idyllic pre-revolutionary France. Most of the French-Canadian bourgeoisie were educated in seminaries and classical colleges that focused on French culture and Catholicism, resulting in an admiration for France; in the words of historian Gérard Bouchard, that translated into "intellectual dependence."<sup>13</sup> Out of nostalgia rather than realism, French Canada would embody the old France through its Catholicism and French language. New France needed to retain its ties to its former mother country, despite its republicanism and anticlericalism, to allow it to flourish intellectually. This idea, which was grasped to varying degrees, was moderately supported by some people, such as Bourassa, while a minority that included journalist Olivar Asselin was prepared to put their lives on the line to defend it.<sup>14</sup>

### Contextualizing the Posters

**T**he provenance of the recruitment posters has not been extensively studied and has resulted in the posters being misunderstood, as they are often seen only as propaganda tools. The posters were not part of a centralized recruitment campaign. Rather, they were produced by the battalions, the Association civile de recrutement du District de Québec [Quebec District civilian recruiting association], the Comité de recrutement canadien-français [French Canadian recruiting committee] and the Citizens' Recruiting League.

Although the posters are not dated, we know that most of them were produced between the fall of 1915 and August 1917.<sup>15</sup> Before July 1916 the battalions, which were under-funded, avoided producing coloured posters because of the cost. However, the corpus studied does not support that observation.<sup>16</sup> The prolific

**"This study disproves the simplified version of history that erases French Canadians from the ranks of the Canadian Expeditionary Force from 1914 to 1918."**





Library and Archives Canada / Acc. No. 1983-28-779

"Le 178ième Bataillon canadien-français des Cantons de l'Est - Les purs Canayens" [The 178th French Canadian Battalion in the Eastern Township - Pure Canadians], n.d (1914-1918).

period of poster production coincided with the "recruiting war" that the battalions were waging. Six of the twelve French-speaking infantry battalions used posters: the 150th, the 163rd, the 167th, the 178th, the 230th and the 233rd. An analysis of the creation and recruitment dates of those battalions reveals their geographical and temporal overlap,<sup>17</sup> such that several of them were in competition with each other. The first four battalions were authorized and raised in Quebec within weeks of one other, between November 1915 and July 1916. In theory, the military districts should have been responsible for recruiting, but as they were unable to supply the required number of men, it was the units themselves that did the enlisting. The competition was such that some battalions recruited outside their authorized territory: this encroachment led to "recruit theft." Ironically, the majority of those battalions failed to fill their ranks and were therefore disbanded to reinforce existing units, notably the 22nd Battalion when it was at the front. As historian Jean-Pierre Gagnon explains, the authorization of several French-speaking battalions [translation] "showed the incoherence of the system, led to anarchy, complicated the task of the military authorities and created a great deal of discontent."<sup>18</sup> Needless to say, these battalions needed a more aggressive recruitment campaign to keep up with their "opponents" but also to counter people's reluctance to join the army.

The French-Canadian civilian recruiting committees, which were made up of members of the elite, produced and distributed mostly generic posters that, with a few exceptions, conveyed their cultural, political and identity-based ideas. Let us take the example of the French-speaking branch of the Citizens' Recruiting League. Founded in 1914, it was headed by politicians and influential men from the upper echelons of French-Canadian society. Its honorary president was Alexandre Lacoste,<sup>19</sup> a law professor at the University of Montreal, owner of the Conservative newspaper *La Minerve* and former Chief Justice of Quebec. Among the branch's honorary vice-presidents was Conservative MP Thomas Chase-Casgrain, a staunch French-Canadian loyalist who had attempted to join the Canadian Expeditionary Force at the age of 63. He owned the Conservative newspaper *L'événement* and used it to promote enlistment in Quebec.<sup>20</sup> There was also the former Liberal MP Rodolphe Lemieux, Sir Wilfrid Laurier's right-hand man. He encouraged voluntary enlistment, but was vehemently opposed to compulsory service.<sup>21</sup> In addition, there were the nationalist Liberal doctor Emmanuel-Persillier Lachapelle<sup>22</sup> and the president of the Montreal District Chamber of Commerce, militia officer Frank Pauzé.<sup>23</sup> Lastly, the president of the branch was Liberal Senator Raoul Dandurand.<sup>24</sup> These were all well-to-do and educated men of influence who disseminated ideas. The members of this league had a loyalist background in many cases and were open to French ideas.

Both Liberals and Conservatives advocated for Dominion participation in the war. In fact, many Canadians saw Canada's involvement as a way of demonstrating their loyalty to Britain and potentially gaining greater autonomy and a partnership that placed them on an equal footing. Some believed that the war was a religious crusade and that their sacrifice for their fellow soldiers was God's work. Participation in the war was also seen as essential to the defence of democracy, freedom and equality.<sup>25</sup> Thus, at various levels, many men of the French-Canadian elite sided with Britain in the conflict. As models of French-Canadian loyalty, they encouraged voluntary enlistment. That allegiance to the British Empire is visually represented in many of the recruitment posters. Despite their divergence from Bourassa's ideology, the civilian recruiting committees extolled the identity and rights of Francophones, as did many military personnel, including the commander of the 22nd Battalion (Canadien-Français), Thomas-Louis Tremblay.<sup>26</sup>

As vehicles of visual communication, recruitment posters reflect various takes on Canada: a Canada in which biculturalism had flourished through British institutions; a French Canada with ties to France through its French heritage; a Canada that had found its national identity in a blend of European and North American influences. These were elitist perspectives from educated people. The intellectual link with France was abstract and sentimental rather than concrete, as was the link with Britain, which appealed to a smaller segment of the population. Those two European entities represented, on the one hand, institutional survival and, on the other hand, the cultural survival of French Canada.

## Analyzing the Recruitment Posters

After analyzing twenty recruitment posters, we can observe three main motivations: attachment to Great Britain, attachment to France and attachment to Canada. In the poster designs, those three “mother countries” made it possible to express real nuances of identity and, although the nuances are sometimes exaggerated, that translated into a source of motivation.

Appearing in nine posters, French-Canadian loyalists perceived England not as a mother country out of sentimental attachment, but rather as an institutional entity that guaranteed “modern” values such as freedom, equality, democracy and progress. Illustrating the British regime as preferable to the German one, the poster “Canadiens français, enrôlez-vous!” [French Canadians, enlist!] exemplifies this perspective by describing England as the “rempart de nos libertés” [the bulwark of our freedoms].<sup>27</sup> The message implied that sacrificing for England would ensure Canada’s longterm well-being. The fate of the two countries was thus linked. Moreover, some battalions explicitly illustrated their loyalty to the king. This was the case with the 178th (Canadiens-Français) Battalion<sup>28</sup> and the 230th (Voltigeurs Canadiens-Français) Battalion,<sup>29</sup> which emphasized “duty” to the British king in their posters.

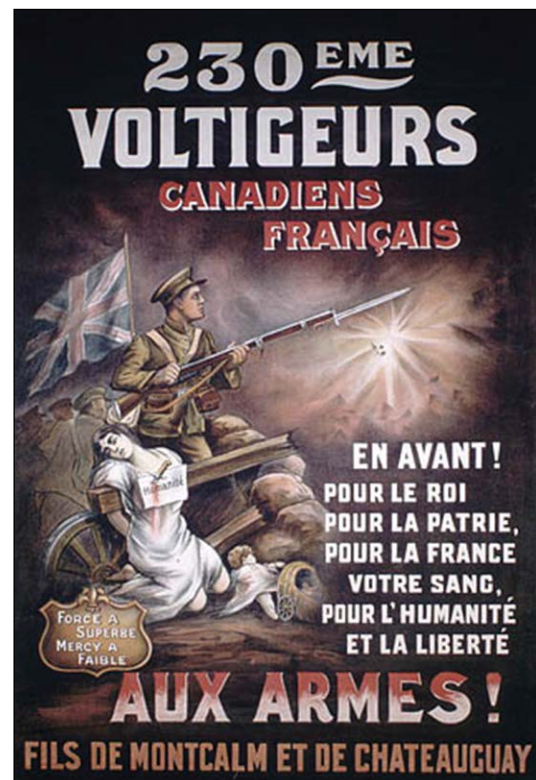
Britain and Canada had the same flag at that time—as a dominion, Canada had maintained the British flag, the Union Jack. That blending of identities can create a methodological problem in distinguishing sources of motivation. In fact, however, it supports the imperialist English-Canadian idea of the time that Canada was an extension of Britain. The intermingling of identities is further complicated by the fact that the Union Jack, which appears in seven posters, is placed alongside a symbol of France, such as the Tricolour or the Gallic cockerel, in five of them. The two colonial powers certainly represented “modern values,” but, more than that, they are the two colonial mother countries of North America. Thus, an analysis of the posters shows France symbolizing the cultural motherland of French Canadians, with a strong emotional link.

In addition, the theme of France is present in nine of the twenty posters. The figure of nationalist journalist Olivar Asselin represents the intellectual attachment to France. While he argued that British institutions should be protected, he wanted above all to fight for the mother country.<sup>30</sup> Seeing France as the cradle of French civilization and therefore essential to the [translation] “survival of the French-Canadian race,” he saw French spiritualism and thought as weapons to combat the negative influence of American materialism.<sup>31</sup> Having failed to enlist as an interpreter in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, Asselin founded the 163rd (Canadiens-Français) Battalion, known as the Poils-aux-pattes,<sup>32</sup> and attempted to exclusively recruit members of the French-Canadian elite. The recruitment poster illustrates the relationship between the two French-speaking peoples as seen by this nationalist: it shows a French soldier, rather than a Canadian or a British one, exclaiming “VICTOIRE! Les poils-aux-pattes s’en viennent” [VICTORY! The Poils-aux-pattes are on their way] accompanied by the phrase “C’est un peuple qui se défend” [a people that defends itself].<sup>33</sup> The image does more than illustrate camaraderie—it welds the two entities together as one. Referring to the



Library and Archives Canada / Acc. No. 1983-28-784

“Canadiens-français, enrôlez-vous!” [French Canadians, enlist!], n.d (1914-1918).



Library and Archives Canada / Acc. No. 1983-28-798

“230<sup>ème</sup> Voltigeurs canadiens-français aux armes!” [230th French Canadian Voltigeurs call to arms], n.d (1914-1918).





"Tous les vrais Poils-aux pattes s'enrôlent au 163e C.-F." [All the real Poils-aux-pattes enlist in the 163rd French Canadian Battalion], n.d (1914-1918).

French-Canadian elite, the Poils-aux-pattes are portrayed as part of the [translation] "larger French family," which would justify their sacrifice. Similarly, the notion is echoed in the 167th Battalion's poster, which states "La France appelle tous ses enfants" [France calls upon all its children].<sup>34</sup>

However, since Canada had been separated from its mother country in 1760, and France had become anticlerical in 1789, French Canada did not have any concrete ties to France. The frequent appearance of France as a theme in the visual recruitment campaign was due in part to the views of the French-Canadian intellectual elite but also, despite being exaggerated for propaganda purposes, to the natural sympathy of the French-speaking people of North America for their European "cousins" and, to a lesser extent, to the shared experience of these two groups of soldiers and civilians in Europe.<sup>35</sup>

These sources of motivation reached only a fraction of the French-Canadian people, mostly the elite, not the majority of the population: for them, Canada was their home. Just as the British took up arms to defend Britain, so too would native-born Canadians if North America were attacked. The idea was explained by Henri Bourassa: [translation] "If English-speaking Canadians enlist in much smaller numbers than newcomers from England, it is because they are much more Canadian; if French Canadians enlist in smaller numbers than English Canadians, it is because

they are totally and exclusively Canadian."<sup>36</sup> That idea was taken up and adapted for the visual recruiting campaign.

Moreover, the theme of Canada recurs in fourteen of the twenty posters in various forms, in ideas such as the defence of "home" and the pride and honour of representing one's "race," and in symbols of identity. The common people, who were Catholic and rural, were influenced by these symbols of steeples and picturesque villages. The omnipresence of the Catholic Church in French-Canadian society at the time was reflected in the visual recruiting campaign by allusions to the faith, the Virgin and the saints embodied in the female figure. According to the propaganda, Catholicism was under threat by Germany and therefore had to be protected.

With the exception of the 163rd Battalion, which aimed to recruit the French-Canadian elite,<sup>37</sup> the battalions did not seem to vie for the enlistment of a specific social class, aiming instead for the unity of the "race." This is why the French term "Canayen" appears in the 178th Battalion's poster "Les pur Canayens" [Pure Canadians].<sup>38</sup> This term refers specifically to French Canadians who are of the common people, not the elite.<sup>39</sup> However, despite this allusion to social inferiority, the term "Canayen" had a positive connotation among members of the general population, designating someone who was fun-loving and valiant. Lieutenant-Colonel Tremblay testifies to that in his diary. Despite his high level of education, he uses the term when he is proud of his soldiers (otherwise he simply uses "Canadians" to refer to his men). For



L'Association civile de recrutement du District de Québec [Quebec District civilian recruiting association], "La France appelle tous ses enfants! Enrôlez-vous dans le 167e Bataillon F.E.C. canadien-français", [France calls upon all its children! Enlist in the 167th French Canadian Battalion, CEF], n.d (1914-1918).

example, he called Sergeant Lavoie a [translation] “good man and a true Canayen” after Lavoie had lectured the British who were belittling the “darn colonials.” Lieutenant-Colonel Tremblay said that force was the only way to command respect from those who felt superior.<sup>40</sup> He represented the will of many men who were working to see the “French Canadian race” acknowledged and appreciated.

Similarly, memory is used in the service of recruiting to shape a military tradition perpetuated in the present through the instrumentalization of historical heroes.<sup>41</sup> Although it does not mention any specific historical figures, the 178th Battalion poster represents that tradition. Its header reads “comme toujours nous y sommes” [as always, we are here] and goes on to say “Fais ce que doit advenir que pourra [...] montrons que nous sommes une race fière et loyale” [Do what you ought, come what may [...] let us show that we are a proud and loyal race],<sup>42</sup> highlighting the military participation of French Canadians in conflicts since the Conquest and, therefore, their loyalty to the British Crown. The soldiers at the front are supposed to illustrate that continuity, but sometimes the comparison seems strange. Of the four heroic figures employed, only one proved victorious: Lieutenant-Colonel Charles de Salaberry at the Battle of Châteauguay in 1813. Dollard des Ormeaux lost the Battle of Long Sault in 1660, and Brigadier General Louis-Joseph de Montcalm and Colonel Chevalier de Lévis were responsible for the loss of New France to the British in 1759 and 1760. So why use these figures? To answer that question, let us take the examples of de Salaberry and Dollard des Ormeaux.

The embodiment of French-Canadian loyalism, de Salaberry is known for leading the Voltigeurs and standing up to the Americans at Châteauguay with the help of warriors from Kahnawake. A role model, this French Canadian<sup>43</sup> fought alongside the First Nations, of course, but most importantly alongside the British against a common enemy, the American invader, for the common good—the preservation of Canada. During the Great War, propaganda attempted to compare the mutually beneficial collaboration during the War of 1812 to that which had endured in Europe since 1914. This time, however, it was not Canada’s territory that was under attack. There was concern for the fate of the country in the event of a German victory: not only would the emotional ties of English Canadians and the institutional ties of French Canadian loyalists be severed, but Canadian economic interests would be at risk. However, Canadian territory, especially for native-born Canadians, elicited above all an emotional attachment characterized by the concept of “home.”<sup>44</sup> Recruiting efforts exploited that affection by amplifying the threat of a possible German attack on the country.

It was in that sense that the defeat of the surprise offensive by Dollard des Ormeaux and his men for the [translation] “protection of the colony”<sup>45</sup> was used for recruitment. In fact, it was not until

1910, on the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Long Sault, that the forgotten figure of Dollard des Ormeaux resurfaced to serve the beliefs of the ultramontane Church and nationalist discourse, turning these men into fervent French-speaking Catholics who were sacrificed for the defence of New France.<sup>46</sup> Thus, in the context of war, the figure of Dollard des Ormeaux served as an example of proactivity, asking the people to act like him: rather than waiting for the enemy to attack their territory, take the battle to the enemy.

So, despite the failures of Montcalm, Lévis and Dollard des Ormeaux, what must be remembered is the sense of duty and sacrifice displayed by these men in protecting their homeland—not their victories, which were few and far between. Having protected New France, they were part of the idealized “Golden Age.”<sup>47</sup> These three men, together with de Salaberry, represent the values that the recruiters were trying to instill in people at the time. The modern soldier was part of that military tradition: Festubert, Saint-Julien, Ypres and Givenchy were the new Châteauguay and Long Sault.

**“Dollard des Ormeaux served as an example of proactivity, asking the people to act like him: rather than waiting for the enemy to attack their territory, take the battle to the enemy.”**

For propaganda purposes, the 22nd Battalion embodied the new French-Canadian fighting generation. In early 1916, the 178th Battalion poster<sup>48</sup> described the 22nd Battalion as “heroic.” However, before September 1916, the date of the well-known Battle of Courcelette, the Van Doos had not yet proven themselves. Rather, it was the French Canadians scattered mainly in the 12th and 14th Battalions who, having taken part in the

first battles of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, had earned a prestigious reputation.<sup>49</sup> The glorification of the Van Doos was premature and resulted in failure to acknowledge the sacrifice of the French Canadians who made up the minority in the other battalions.

In short, recruiting propaganda distorted, amplified or omitted the reality of war in order to achieve a specific goal. However, the ideas put forward came from French Canadians who often identified with them. Recruiting posters illustrate the different French-Canadian mindsets at the time. Sometimes they resembled the truth, but at other times they were closer to fiction, since they were, after all, tools of persuasion.

## Conclusion

The historian and sociologist Benedict Anderson, in asserting that the nation is an “imagined community,” questions the homogeneity implied by this concept. Despite its fluctuating and emotional societal links, the concept of nationalism has led to millions of men being sacrificed throughout history.<sup>50</sup> The analysis of recruiting posters challenges the simplified representation of the French-Canadian people during the Great War by emphasizing certain motivations in favour of the country’s military participation and the enlistment of French Canadians. Since those nuances did not fully adhere



to a Bourassian ideology, they have often been overlooked or even perceived as a misunderstanding of the French-Canadian people,

Henri Bourassa has been called [translation] “the undisputed leader of French Canadians”<sup>51</sup> by many historians. However, a portion of French Canada disagreed with his views, including some members of the elite and some volunteer soldiers. In fact, in 1919, the celebrations in honour of the 22nd Battalion’s homecoming showed that a large part of the country’s French-speaking population supported its soldiers. They were opposed to compulsory service, a position shared by many French-Canadian politicians and public figures of the time.<sup>52</sup>

Do the recruitment posters represent the views of all French Canadians? Certainly not. Bourassa’s nationalism stands out in most of them. But they do raise several aspects of identity that

are shared by different segments of the population. Although the rate of enlistment was lower among French Canadians than it was among English Canadians, it would be false to reduce the history of French Canada from 1914 to 1918 to its opposition to the conflict and the Conscription Crisis. French-Canadian patriotism and nationalism are nuanced and cannot be condensed into a majoritarian ideology; the pride and perpetuity of the “French-Canadian race” play a central role in the recruitment posters and many of the testimonies left by influential men and soldiers. Illustrating this complex identity, Lieutenant-Colonel L.-G. Desjardins stated, [translation] “In defending with the most sincere conviction the sacred cause of the Allies, I am doing my duty as a free subject of the British Empire, as a citizen of Canada and of the Province of Quebec, as a son of France, as a devoted servant of Justice and Right.”<sup>53</sup>



## NOTES

- 1 See Chris Young, *Sous les balles des troupes fédérales: Representing the Quebec City Riots in Francophone Quebec*, Master’s thesis (Montreal: Concordia University, 2009), 129.
- 2 At that time, Canada was seen as a country founded by the French and the English. White and Eurocentric supremacy excluded First Nations from this discourse.
- 3 Jean Martin, “Yes, French Canadians Did Their Share in The First World War,” *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol. 17, No. 4, Autumn (2017): 50.
- 4 Desmond Morton quoted in Robert Comeau, “L’opposition à la conscription au Québec,” in Jean Lamarre et al., *La Première Guerre mondiale et le Canada: Contributions sociomilitaires québécoises* (Montreal: Éditions du Méridien, 1999), 93.
- 5 Chris Young points out that, from the 1960s onwards, after the publication of Jean Provencher’s work *Québec: sous la Loi des mesures de guerre: 1918*, the collective memory of French Canada, particularly Quebec, put forward a narrative of victimization shaped by the works of amateur historians. C. Young, op. cit.
- 6 This corpus of twenty recruiting posters in French constitutes the full extent of the visual sources that I found.
- 7 Robert Brown and Donald Loveridge, “Unrequited Faith: Recruiting the CEF 1914–1918,” *Canadian Military History*, Vol. 24, No. 1, Winter/Spring (2015): 65.
- 8 By “nationalist,” I am referring to the idea of a people immersed in their own culture and language, so I am talking about the “typical” characteristics of French Canadians: Catholic, French-speaking and rural.
- 9 Robert Rumilly, *Henri Bourassa* (Montreal: Éditions du Marais, 2000), 160.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 125.
- 11 Jacques Monet, referred to in Damien-Claude Bélanger, “Thomas Chapais, loyaliste,” *Revue d’histoire de l’Amérique française*, Vol. 65, No. 4, Spring (2012): 441.
- 12 *Ibid.*
- 13 Gérard Bouchard, “Une nation, deux cultures: Continuités et ruptures dans la pensée québécoise traditionnelle (1840–1960),” in Gérard Bouchard and Serge Courville (eds), *La construction d’une culture: Le Québec et l’Amérique française* (Quebec City: Presses de l’Université Laval, 1993), 9.
- 14 Carl Pépin, *Les relations franco-québécoises pendant la Grande Guerre*, Doctoral thesis (Quebec City: Université Laval, 2008), 44–46.
- 15 This is inferred from the date of the battalion authorization, battalion recruitment (normally done within five months) and the events mentioned in the posters. The introduction of compulsory service in August 1917 put an end to battalion-led enlistment and therefore to the posters. Jean-Pierre Gagnon, *Le 22e Bataillon (canadien-français) 1914–1919: Étude socio-militaire* (Quebec City: Les presses de l’Université Laval, 1986), 166.
- 16 Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Propaganda and Censorship During Canada’s Great War* (Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press, 1996), 41.
- 17 Based within the 65th Regiment of the Montreal Militia and named after the Carabiniers du Mont-Royal, the 150th was authorized on 26 November 1915 and recruited its men mainly in and around Montreal. The 163rd was also created on the same date and also recruited in Montreal. The 167th was authorized on 17 December 1915 and could recruit in the whole province. The 178th was authorized on 12 January 1916 and recruited in the Eastern Townships and in Montreal. The 230th was authorized on 9 March 1916 and recruited its men in Military District 3 (Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec), and the 233rd was authorized on 14 March 1916 and recruited in Western Canada, in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. J.-P. Gagnon, op. cit., 161–185. LAC, MD4 6-58-1 to 6-84-1 RG24 VOL 4462, “150th Canadian Infantry Battalion,” LAC, MD4 6-85-1 to 8-2-1 RG24 VOL 4463, “178th Canadian Infantry Battalion.”
- 18 J.-P. Gagnon, op. cit., 160.
- 19 Sylvio Normand, “Sir Alexandre Lacoste” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. 15, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003.
- 20 René Castonguay, “Thomas Chase-Casgrain” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. 14, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003.
- 21 René Castonguay, “Rodolphe Lemieux” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. 16, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003.
- 22 Georges Desrosiers, Benoît Gaumer and Othmar Keel, “Emmanuel-Persillier Lachapelle” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. 14, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003.
- 23 J.-P. Gagnon, op. cit., 200.
- 24 Jean-Yves Grenon, “Raoul Dandurand: Pionnier de la diplomatie canadienne,” *Cap-aux-diamants: La revue d’histoire du Québec*, Vol. 5, No. 4, Winter (1990), 61–64.
- 25 J.A. Keshen, op. cit., 3.
- 26 In his diary, Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas-Louis Tremblay explains how he made it his duty to make the 22nd Battalion a symbol of the glory of “the French-Canadian race.” He instituted iron discipline. He volunteered the Van Doos for the Courcellette offensive and claimed that they were representing the entire French-Canadian “race.” Courcellette forged the battalion’s reputation. However, in February 1917, when Tremblay returned to the front after being wounded, he found himself faced with an undisciplined battalion, such that he had five of his soldiers executed. One of the reasons for this lack of discipline was that new recruits were being sent in to make up for losses, many of them from battalions such as the 41st. Thomas-Louis Tremblay and Marcel Cinq-Mars, *Journal de guerre, 1915-1918* (Outremont, Quebec: Éditions Athéna, 2006), 153.
- 27 LAC, “Canadiens-Français Enrolez-vous!,” n.d. (1914–1918).
- 28 LAC, “Le 178ième bataillon canadien-français des Cantons de l’Est ‘Les purs Canadiens,’” n.d. (1914–1918).
- 29 LAC, “230ème Voltigeurs Canadiens-Français aux armes!,” n.d. (1914–1918).

- 30 Olivar Asselin explains this vision in his speech "Pourquoi je m'enrôle. Discours prononcé au Monument national à Montréal, le 21 janvier 1916, par Olivar Asselin, major au 163<sup>ème</sup> Bataillon à l'armée expéditionnaire canadienne; suivi de trois lettres de Sir Robert Borden, de Sir Wilfrid Laurier et de Sir Sam Hughes," Montreal, 1916, 30–32.
- 31 *Ibid.*, 30–40.
- 32 There are few books that concretely explain the meaning of "Poils-aux-pattes." The only source I have found is the McCord Museum, which states that it was a nickname used by the young French-Canadian elite amongst themselves. It might be a derivative of the colloquial term "poilu," which refers to unshaven French soldiers in the trenches. McCord Museum, "Tous les vrais Poils-aux-pattes s'enrôlent au 163<sup>e</sup>." LAC, "Tous les vrais Poils-aux-pattes s'enrôlent au 163<sup>e</sup> C.-F.," n.d. (1914–1918).
- 33 LAC, "Tous les vrais Poils-aux-pattes s'enrôlent au 163<sup>e</sup> C.-F.," n.d. (1914–1918).
- 34 LAC, L'Association civile de recrutement du district de Québec, "Enrôlez-vous dans le 167<sup>ème</sup> Bataillon F.E.C. Canadien-Français," n.d. (1914–1918).
- 35 Far from home, many French Canadians were delighted to be so well received by the French. The testimony of these soldiers illustrates the camaraderie between the two French-speaking peoples. See Raphael Dallaire Ferland, "Patriotisme et allégeances du 22<sup>ème</sup> Bataillon (Canadiens-français), 1914-1918," *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol 13, No. 1, Winter (2012), 51–60.
- 36 Henri Bourassa, "Mr. Bourassa's Reply to Capt. Talbot Papineau's Letter. Montreal, August 2nd, 1916," in R. Douglas Francis and Donald B. Smith, *Readings in Canadian History: Post-Confederation* (New York: Holt Rinehart & Winston, 1982), 271.
- 37 Although the poster for the 150th Battalion states that it is "un régiment d'élite composé d'hommes de choix" [an elite regiment of select men], my research has not allowed me to confirm that statement. Jean-Pierre Gagnon explains that the 163rd Battalion had a number of problems related to discipline and desertion. In addition, the recruiting war between the French-Canadian battalions somewhat removed the luxury of being able to select one's men. J.-P. Gagnon, *op. cit.*, 161–168.
- 38 LAC, "Le 178<sup>ème</sup> Bataillon canadien-français des Cantons de l'Est 'Les purs Canadiens'," n.d. (1914–1918).
- 39 Prior to Confederation, the French term "Canadien" was used to refer to inhabitants of Canada who were of French descent. However, after 1867, the term "Canadian" was extended to the entire population of the country. Thus, in order to regain their distinct identity, the country's Francophones identified themselves as French Canadians and/or "Canayens." The former term was used by the intellectual elite, while the latter was used by the common people because of its colloquial pronunciation. Geneviève Joncas, "Virage à 180 degrés: Des Canadiens devenus Québécois," *La Revue d'histoire du Québec*, No. 96 (2009), 25–28.
- 40 T.-L. Tremblay and M. Cinq-Mars, *op. cit.*, 103 and 135.
- 41 That is to say that memory is basically emotional and fluctuates according to the societal issues of its time. It is subjective and provides a link between the past and the present in order to serve a current interest. History, on the other hand, is a methodological discipline that aims at objectivity in order to reconstruct past events. See Pierre Nora, "Entre histoire et mémoire. La problématique des lieux," in Pierre Nora (ed.), *Les lieux de mémoire. Tome 1: La République* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984), xv–xlii.
- 42 LAC, "Le 178<sup>ème</sup> Bataillon canadien-français des Cantons de l'Est 'Les purs Canadiens'," n.d. (1914–1918).
- 43 Charles de Salaberry was born in Chambly, Quebec, and had a career in the British army, which allowed him to travel before being assigned to lead the Voltigeurs in 1812. Michelle Guitard, "Charles-Michel d'Irumberry de Salaberry," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. 6, Université Laval/University of Toronto, 1987.
- 44 Chris Sharpe, "Enlistment in the Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914–1918," *Canadian Military History*, Vol. 24, No. 1, Spring/Fall (2015), 24–25.
- 45 An example of how history can be distorted to serve memory, this motive is disputed by several historians; it was surely related to fur trading.
- 46 Arthur Lapointe and R.C. Fetherstonhaugh, *Soldier of Quebec (1916–1919)* (Montreal: Éditions Édouard Garand, 1931), *op. cit.*, 23–27.
- 47 Fernande Roy, "Une mise en scène de l'histoire: La fondation de Montréal à travers les siècles," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, Vol. 46, No. 1, Summer (1992), 30.
- 48 LAC, "Le 178<sup>ème</sup> Bataillon canadien-français des Cantons de l'Est 'Les purs Canadiens'," n.d. (1914–1918).
- 49 See Tim Cook, *At the Sharp End, Volume One: Canadians Fighting the Great War, 1914–1916* (Toronto: Viking Canada, 2007–2008), 161–183.
- 50 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: American Council of Learned Societies, 2006), 6–25.
- 51 Jean Pariseau and Serge Bernier, *Les Canadiens français et le bilinguisme dans les Forces armées canadiennes*, vol. 1, 1763-1969: Le spectre d'une armée bicéphale (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 1987), 73.
- 52 Serge Durlinger, "'L'honneur de notre race': The Return of the 22nd Battalion (Canadien-français) to Quebec City, May 1919," in J.L. Granatstein and Tim Cook (eds), *Canada 1919: A Country Shaped by War* (Vancouver and Toronto: UBC Press, June 2020).
- 53 L.-G. Desjardins, England, *Canada and the Great War*, Quebec, 1917, 10.





## Canada's Strong, Secure, Engaged: Are You Sure You Have a Strategy?

by Guillaume Olivier

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In 2017, the Department of National Defence (DND) published *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy* (SSE). It has *de facto* served as the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) strategy. It is an ambitious document meant to convey "clear direction on Canadian defence priorities over a 20-year horizon".<sup>1</sup> Canada's active military role in Afghanistan ceased almost a decade ago (2011). Since then, the CAF have faced a rapidly changing Canadian landscape and an increasingly "unpredictable and complex security environment",<sup>2</sup> while its ability to perform and continue to serve the numerous and diverse interests<sup>3</sup> of Canadians has raised questions. The institution's internal fit and old logics have remained, but the external fit has altered, further indicating that Siggelkow's "fit-conservation change and playing a new game"<sup>4</sup> is necessary. In other words, the existing organizational system can and should remain.

However, further capabilities and capacity must be developed to increase performance.

SSE simultaneously signals change and stabilizes the CAF environment to offer consistency<sup>5</sup> during its planned and long-lasting transformation. SSE provides strategic orientation and direction with regards to the management of four areas: people, i.e., public servants (non-military) and CAF members; materiel, both existing and new; expected contributions of the force; and funding. It provides Canadians and DND personnel<sup>6</sup> with global context, which underpins SSE. The strategy addresses the internal contingency factors of structure, integration, size or capacity, capabilities, task, people, and resource uncertainties. Thus, the institution is committed to "fit its structure [and other organizational elements] to the contingency factors of the organization and thus the [external] environment".<sup>7</sup>

SSE offers fresh opportunities, such as the significant materiel acquisition program being implemented by DND. It represents a "mediating force ... between the internal and the external context".<sup>8</sup> SSE is an intended strategy to be managed deliberately and realized iteratively over the next two decades.<sup>9</sup> For the reasons discussed below, Canada's defence strategy is already a widely accepted

document, especially with DND personnel, for the CAF was given renewed focus and a restored “sense of being in control”,<sup>10</sup> which had gradually faded since the Afghan conflict. *A priori*, SSE and its prescribed transformation are desired and aligned with the driving forces of the whole environment.<sup>11</sup> It appears to be a solid plan, based on preliminary observations. Nevertheless, as Hambrick and Fredrickson<sup>12</sup> ask in their seminal article: Are you sure you have a strategy?

Conceptually, answering this question should provide DND/CAF with the in-depth understanding necessary to focus on areas for improvement to sustain SSE. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically the significant disruption in social and governmental affairs that it has caused, is anticipated to affect DND funding in the mid-term.<sup>13</sup> This too will require the defence community to understand what SSE can or cannot provide. Consequently, the debate surrounding SSE will only intensify in the months ahead. I believe looking back at the defence strategy as it was released in June 2017 can only help DND/CAF to face both the present and the future.

### A Strategy for Organizational Coherence

Hambrick and Fredrickson posit strategy as “an integrated, overarching concept of how the business will achieve its objective”.<sup>14</sup> They propose a framework for the design of strategy that considers five major elements, each answering a question: Arenas – Where will we be active and with how much emphasis? Vehicles – How will we get there? Differentiators – How will we win the marketplace? Staging – What will be our speed and sequence of moves? Economic logic – How will we obtain our returns?<sup>15</sup> Strategy is the narrowed ensemble of intentions, choices, and targets arrived at from analysis. It is how the organization endeavours to reach goals by re-arranging internally to develop and integrate dynamic capabilities and/or acquire additional capabilities and/or capacity that are characterized as the deliberation and implementation of goals.<sup>16</sup> Dynamic capabilities are the managerial mixing and matching and scaffolding of existing competencies to produce new ones.<sup>17</sup> Hambrick and Fredrickson’s theory also identifies strategy as a make-or-break journey. Success depends on how the five elements have merit and cohere. In other words, how they are integrated, in and of themselves answers each of the questions.

So, in what ways is Canada’s defence strategy conforming to the prescriptions outlined in the Hambrick and Fredrickson’s framework for strategy design (Figure 1)? What are the related similarities and differences and their implications?

### Five Elements of Strategy

#### Arenas

Arenas are positions of competitive advantage. They connect with the product categories, core technologies, and value-creation stages, i.e., product design, manufacturing, selling, and so on that an organization intends on using or developing to achieve and maintain advantageous market positions. Arenas are further linked to geographic areas, for instance a company enlarging its product distribution and offering to care for customers at some location(s)



Figure 1: Donald Hambrick and James Fredrickson Strategy Diamond.

outside its usual reach. Arenas should be specific for the organization to mobilize its workforce and other resources towards clear goals and destinations.<sup>18</sup>

SSE has eight core missions representing four arenas: Assistance to civil authorities; detect, deter, and defend against threats; conduct search and rescue; and contribute expeditionary forces. For operations abroad specifically, the defence strategy articulates the requirement for CAF to contribute six mission sets and be prepared to employ all six simultaneously. SSE explains each broadly in terms of function, the approximate number of personnel involved, and duration of deployment.<sup>19</sup>

The four arenas extracted from SSE indicate a measure of conformity to Hambrick and Fredrickson. Nevertheless, SSE arenas lack specificity, which expose the defence strategy and its implied transformation to “corruption, which means that changes [could] appear to have been made”,<sup>20</sup> but in fact reinforces the status quo. For instance, one mission set is described as a “limited deployment of 500-1500 personnel for 6-9 months”.<sup>21</sup> Such a general task statement allows for a more granular solution to emerge from the organization’s “expertise and creativity”.<sup>22</sup> However, SSE differs from Hambrick and Fredrickson, who require arenas “to be as precise as possible”.<sup>23</sup> The CAF have worked since 2017 on preparing a viable solution<sup>24</sup> to employ concurrently all six expeditionary operations, correctly adding precision to arenas. However, a sustainable plan has yet to be published.

#### Vehicles

Vehicles are the means to enter arenas. They are the internal changes, the creation of dynamic capabilities based on existing competencies that enable the phased pursuit of the successive and interconnected goals leading to mission attainment.<sup>25</sup> Goals are prescriptive or descriptive, in other words planned or emergent.<sup>26</sup>

Adapted from Hambrick, D.C. & Fredrickson, J.W. (2001). Are you sure you have a strategy? *Academy of Management Executive*, 15(4), 51-62.



Vehicles are the acquisition or re-arrangement of new or existing ability “to mitigate external resource dependencies”.<sup>27</sup>

SSE is prescriptive. It connects strategy to desired outcomes, specifically 111 initiatives or goals split in the following main categories:<sup>28</sup> Materiel investments, such as the acquisition of five to six Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ships for the surveillance of the Northwest Passage; a re-affirmation of Canada’s commitment to multilateralism; the need for a system-of-systems approach, such as procuring and integrating additional Joint Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance capabilities to enhance coherence amongst CAF actors; the clarification of roles between the larger CAF components, for instance solely assigning to Reserve Force units the function of Light Urban Search and Rescue; and hiring additional DND personnel, along with other strategic human resource management (SHRM) initiatives, for example the “promotion of diversity and inclusion as a core institutional value”.<sup>29</sup> In order to transform DND’s existing competencies to meet this ambitious challenge, SSE prescribes a new overarching approach: Anticipate, Adapt and Act, represented as a fundamentally different way “to deliver tangible results by launching a range of initiatives”.<sup>30</sup>

As a result, SSE initiatives are numerous, however some are detailed while others are not. They represent end goals more than vehicles, which are supposed to enable arenas to be reached. Such a large scope of initiatives (111) also demands the internal development of dynamic capabilities. On this aspect though, SSE is silent, as if the identification of distant targets suffices. In fact, “overall goals [should] provide a direction for subordinate goals in the sense of a target cascade”.<sup>31</sup> For instance, stating that “the CAF is committed to further increasing the representation of women in the military towards a goal of 25 per cent in 10 years”<sup>32</sup> does not specify how to get there. Also, despite eliciting a tangible mindset for practitioners, the new CAF Anticipate, Adapt and Act, remains conceptual. And this is bound to solidify previous practices rather

than mobilize the CAF leadership to generate change. Just as it does to arenas, Hambrick and Fredrickson’s question as it relates to vehicles is answered only in part.

## Differentiators

Differentiators are actions or plays that change the game. Like all elements of strategy, they require a comprehensive understanding of the external environment. Differentiators should be “mutually reinforcing, consistent with the firm’s resources and capabilities, and of course highly valued in the arenas”.<sup>33</sup> In the CAF, they signify the alignment of the institutional *ethos* and image to serve Canadian interests. A differentiator is an organization’s ability to sustain its positional advantage, to keep the game going.

SSE recognizes that “investing in our people is the single most important commitment we can make”,<sup>34</sup> for the profession of arms imposes service before self and therefore unlimited liability on CAF members and their family. It also recognizes that a similar stress is imposed on public servants. Twenty-eight of the 111 initiatives aim to ensure “well-supported, diverse, resilient people [CAF members] and families”.<sup>35</sup> The defence strategy rightly singles out the recruiting, training, employing, and retaining of quality DND personnel. In all, SSE chooses its workforce as the differentiator for the CAF to align its competencies, to gain and maintain a competitive edge in the arenas. That is, DND makes it mostly an internal affair<sup>36</sup> of “human actors making the system respond”,<sup>37</sup> which matches contingency theory, i.e., the organization adapts to external influences by rationalizing internal fit.

Nonetheless, in spite of these 28 initiatives that relate to the CAF workforce as its differentiator, only one third are SMART,<sup>38</sup> while the rest lack immediate applicability. For example, the general CAF SHRM initiative “to reduce significantly the time to enroll ... by reforming all aspects of military recruiting”<sup>39</sup> is likely to get lost in the thrall of bureaucratic confusion. So, Hambrick and Fredrickson’s differ-

entiators as an element of the defence strategy lack clarity. For this reason, SSE is not achieving the gardener test of strategy, i.e., “can it be translated...[so] that the gardener...[knows] about what he/she must do differently”.<sup>40</sup> Three years after SSE was published, it should translate tangibly into each CAF member’s situation in the organization, but it is still a distant proposition for the soldier.

## Staging

Staging is akin to Camillus’ “(1) distinct stages in the process of converting strategy into action and (2) distinct ways in which these



The 1<sup>st</sup> Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ship, HMCS *Harry DeWolf* sails in Conception Bay, Newfoundland, during a proficiency sail, 16 November 2020.

Cpl Manuela Berger / DND photo



In support of the Province of Alberta, members of 417 Combat Support Squadron prepare to depart for Fort McMurray at 4 Hangar, 4 Wing Cold Lake, Alberta, 4 May 2016.

stages can be linked”.<sup>41</sup> Staging depends on resources. As a result, not all initiatives can or should be implemented at the same time, as the development of some vehicles might influence others. The entry of vehicles into arenas might be time-sensitive too. Consequently, staging is associated with trade-offs, deemed essential for the sustainability of strategy.<sup>42</sup> Adequate staging procures the organization with the visibility and legitimacy early in the strategy-implementation process to influence and entice other stakeholders to join in.<sup>43</sup>

Canada’s defence strategy spans 20 years and risks experiencing fatigue. Again, SSE discusses some initiatives at length, others more briefly. As an example, the integration of women in “all defence activities across the CAF and DND”,<sup>44</sup> notably by implementing Gender-Based Analysis (GBA), is the object of comprehensive explanations; five initiatives altogether talk about the inclusion of women and GBA indirectly. On the other hand,

much focusses on change”,<sup>46</sup> which implies sequencing moves and activities by considering time, effort, and task dependencies. The strategy omits all of the above, as if it were a static enterprise. SSE’s implementation has undoubtedly progressed since 2017. However, short of having a clear path to realization—the phased

“Improve Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE)...”<sup>45</sup> is hardly broached other than to state what the initiative is. Would it consequently seem correct to infer that the integration of women trumps CBRNE? However, SSE initiatives are not ranked in importance, nor are their relationships to one another or to the arenas specified. The defence strategy does not prioritize nor sequence these activities.

Thus, SSE differs from what Hambrick and Fredrickson advocate as proper staging. Despite the fact that “the concept of strategy is rooted in stability, so



Corporal Valérie Côté / DND photo

Canadian Armed Forces members arrive at the Chemical, Biological, Radioactive, Nuclear (CBRN) decontamination point during Exercise SILVER ARROW at Adazi Military Training Area during Operation REASSURANCE in Kadaga, Latvia, 27 September 2015.





Lockheed Martin

Concept rendering of the Canadian Surface Combatant.

pursuit of the successive and interconnected goals mentioned earlier—DND/CAF is in a “participation only” mode, as opposed to owning the strategy completely. Such “participative strategies either waste critical resources by unnecessarily involving people or take a limited view of the participation necessary for success”.<sup>47</sup> Further, DND’s inclination towards using its existing functional set up, vertically integrated and imbued with the old business identity and norms, likely inhibits the additional unity of effort required of SSE, which compounds this “participation only” effect. Once more, where is the establishment of a commensurate and permanent dynamic capability solely dedicated to SSE’s integration?

### ***Economic Logic***

Strategies that yield the most return have “a central economic logic ... as the fulcrum of profit [value] creation”.<sup>48</sup> How to lower costs and maximize profit margins are what preoccupies the industry. For a public organization, this logic only considers funding *versus* value,<sup>49</sup> linked to: economies of scale; finding efficiencies and savings; and accurate longer-term business planning that considers the implementation of strategy initiatives on an accrual basis.

SSE costed its 111 initiatives. It is committed to maintaining both commitment and funding over the full 20 years, in all \$62.3 billion of new funding on a cash basis, meaning that funding is available at the time needed.<sup>50</sup> This innovative method shields defence investments from cuts, a change in the way allocations fluctuated in the past from one year to the next. Nevertheless, SSE’s economic logic is all numbers and limited explanations, let alone a detailed description of how such estimates were calculated.

As for economies of scale, SSE planned for the acquisition of numerous technologically advanced combat platforms: 15 Canadian Surface Combatants and two Joint Support Ships to replace the aging fleet currently in service.<sup>51</sup> This signals business opportunities, as well as increasing interest and competition within the defence industry, which means DND has more product options at better pricing.

On the one hand, to find efficiencies and savings, SSE offers little logic. It is akin to an investment portfolio, for instance SSE directing an increase of 5,000 Regular and Reserve Force soldiers combined<sup>52</sup>. Adding personnel is but one aspect of restructuring the organization, as finding efficiencies entails a more comprehensive structural re-alignment, which is left out of SSE completely.

On the other hand, as it pertains to the business component of the department, i.e., procurement, infrastructure, innovation, and greening, SSE offers more. The Government of Canada recognizes that “cumbersome decision-making and approval process have introduced undue delays” in procurement and especially the delivery of major equipment projects and that “accountability between departments has been diffuse and at times unclear”,<sup>53</sup> thus causing missed opportunities. So, to gain efficiency and save, DND is working to increase its contracting authority to manage 80 per cent of defence procurement contracts solely,<sup>54</sup> instead of relying on another federal department, namely the Public Services and Procurement Canada.

Notwithstanding DND’s not-for-profit character, Hambrick and Fredrickson’s economic logic is addressed well by SSE. Having said that, it is a funding exercise rather than an extensive restructure of the enterprise in terms of a new economic logic that is concerned with savings too; hence, it only partially answers the authors’ question on how to optimize economic returns. Considering that a “strategy-in-practice perspective is concerned with how ... [the] multiple organizational levels affect strategic outcomes”,<sup>55</sup> SSE does not address the economic logic comprehensively, which is likely to cause waste either through misguided excitement or contradictory actions in spending public funds.

### **Discussion**

#### ***Findings and Implications***

SSE covers the five major elements of strategy defined by Hambrick and Fredrickson with varying prominence, except that



staging is missing almost entirely. In all, the defence strategy is compelling. It provides the global context, which allows DND/CAF to have a needs-based positioning and find purpose.<sup>56</sup> The detailed portrait of the external environment presented by SSE—from discussing state competition in the space and cyber domains to the changing Arctic and more<sup>57</sup>—is the external fit or beacon that serves the organization's internal fit development.<sup>58</sup>

In addition, the fact that SSE identified arenas is praiseworthy. Before 2017, troops and equipment were employed, first coinciding with a smaller core of traditional and critical tasks, for instance territorial sovereignty, then committed to other mission sets based on feasibility and availability of resources, which makes the CAF a permanent resource-dependency problem to solve. By establishing arenas, DND is staking out SSE's terrain. Nevertheless, SSE arenas lack granularity. The mosaic of broadly defined arenas represented by the eight core missions cannot inform completely how “to best craft strategic plans or develop dynamic capabilities”.<sup>59</sup> This SSE deviation from the Hambrick and Fredrickson framework implies additional confusion over the already wide-ranging Anticipate, Adapt and Act approach and the massive realization of SSE's 111 initiatives; hence the need for DND to enact an overarching detailed strategic plan to complement the incomplete defence strategy.

As for vehicles, like arenas, SSE partially conforms to the conceptual framework. As inferred from SSE, DND relies on its pre-2017 organization and competencies for their implementation instead of creating new institutional logics, including dynamic capabilities, to supplement the old logic. This signifies the unlikely sustainment of the transformation. As an example, throughout 2020, DND could not find enough project managers with the requisite competence to implement SSE's ambitious materiel acquisition program efficiently. This is just one of many factors that complicate the procurement of equipment, and “capital spending thus far is falling short of expectations”.<sup>60</sup>

The defence strategy picks quality DND personnel as its principal differentiator. Undoubtedly, “leveraging Canada's diversity” and “promoting a culture of leadership, respect, and honour”,<sup>61</sup> are worth investing in. But the numerous SHRM initiatives set forth in SSE, albeit relevant from a macro perspective, lack clarity, which is a recurring theme. As a result, the whole SHRM transformation represents both, opportunities and threats, which makes it SSE's single point of failure, thus necessitating increased attention, especially as it relates to the CAF ethos/profession of arms, and more importantly its preservation. Acquiring and retaining DND personnel is an unwavering challenge

that is likely to continue to escalate, given the intensifying flux and growing complexity of the external environment. Moreover, a significant percentage of CAF members remain unfit for combat duty, which contradicts the organization's very purpose and the related readiness culture that it is trying to maintain, and strains the CAF's overall effectiveness. So, there exists an inherent difficulty and tension in reconciling SHRM initiatives with this readiness imperative, which adds further to the unwavering challenge of attracting/retaining quality personnel.

As for staging, SSE is found wanting. Strategy is in the organization's activities,<sup>62</sup> how they are linked by a target hierarchy of predetermined goals,<sup>63</sup> and how they are monitored and controlled in time with key performance indicators. SSE provides for Hambrick and Fredrickson's arenas, vehicles, and differentiators, but fails to prioritize and sequence it all. What is more important? “15. Augment the CAF Health System...”<sup>64</sup> or “31. Operate and modernize the four *Victoria*-class submarines”?<sup>65</sup> When everything is a priority, nothing is. For the defence strategy, this indicates a potential misalignment of priorities and difficult synchronization of activities ahead, adding to the waste previously mentioned, specifically the misuse (or underuse) of departmental resources. As well, given the COVID-19 pandemic's strain on the federal government and its likely impact on DND funding over the medium-term, prioritizing SSE activities should not wait.<sup>66</sup>

Lastly, economic logic is SSE's strength, for it sets aside the necessary funding for the strategy's entire realization. SSE is also intent on tangibly improving the internal business component of DND, as well as the department's relationships with the defence industry. This logic makes sense, however there are gaps. SSE is an investment exercise that is unconcerned with savings. The total re-alignment of financial structures and resource allocation still corresponds to pre-2017 institutional logic, except for an increase in the availability of capital funding. This too should generate friction amongst the CAF leadership during implementation and dilute accountability altogether by, for example, ignoring the provisioning of ammunition to support SSE's six mission sets.



Her Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Victoria* departs Her Majesty Canadian Dockyard Esquimalt, 14 February 2014.

DND photo

Overall, “all five [elements of strategy] require certain capabilities that cannot be generated spontaneously” and they should be “considered the hub or central nodes for designing a comprehensive, integrated activity system”,<sup>67</sup> which SSE has for the most part overlooked. However, SSE is ambitious and qualifies as a strategy.

### Limitations

The findings in this article are meant only for the defence and security community to think critically about SSE, so as to improve its implementation. Additional research is needed to validate these findings. Hambrick and Frederickson’s conceptual framework for strategy design is one among many, its cogency to an extent assumed, while it might not fully apply to the military context. Moreover, SSE is a keystone document of a political nature more than a comprehensive strategy; therefore, it intentionally eschews the full details to be developed. Lastly, since 2017, the vast scope of Canada’s defence strategy notwithstanding, valuable work has started in many places and the minutiae of progress, as well as the benefits already realized so far, remain partially unknown.

### Conclusion

The five major elements of strategy by Hambrick and Frederickson proved an adequate framework to assess SSE 2017. SSE addresses all their elements, albeit to varying degrees. Between staging, which is almost absent, and economic logic, which is better addressed, this article’s assessment of SSE discovered both strengths and weaknesses, by identifying what needs to be improved. So, despite this article being inclined to discover the implications of SSE as it deviates from a theory, Canada has an ambitious and to a large extent coherent defence strategy with overall merit. Nevertheless, DND should be concerned with crafting a detailed integrated strategic plan to include the development of dynamic capabilities for its implementation, so as to supplement SSE and care for the deficiencies exposed. Finally, this study’s findings and relevance are even more salient now, given the disruption in social and governmental affairs that COVID-19 has caused and the anticipated impact to SSE’s funding in the medium term.



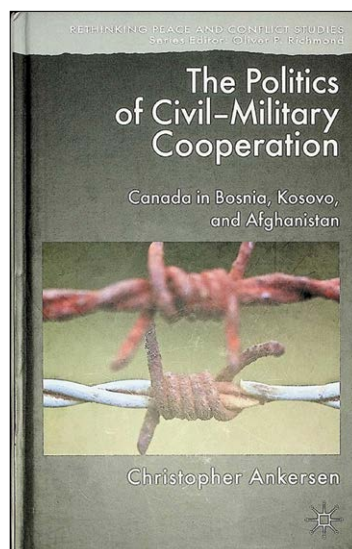
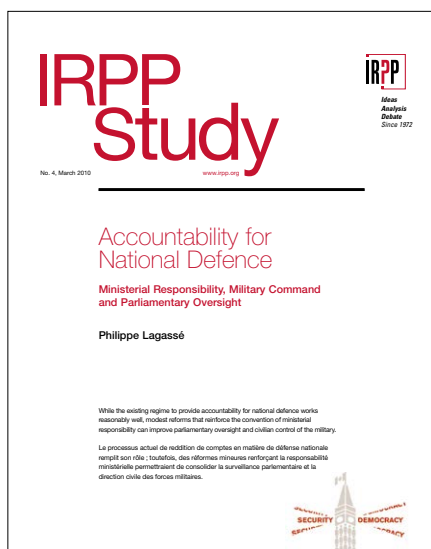
Corporal Richard Lessard / DND photo

Members of Operation PRESENCE-Mali conduct their eleventh aeromedical evacuation mission, treating two civilian contractors involved in an IED attack before transferring the casualties to a MINUSMA Role 2 hospital in Gao, near Camp Castor, 16 August 2019.



## NOTES

- 1 Strong, *Secure, Engaged – Canada's Defence Policy*. Ottawa: National Defence, 2017, 11.
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- 3 "Interests" here should be broadly construed to include not only defence and security concerns, but also those related to Canadian values.
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- 6 When used in the text, "DND personnel" refers to both the public servants or civilian employees and CAF members, including reservists, i.e., both non-military and military personnel of the DND.
- 7 Donaldson, Lex. "The normal science of structural contingency theory." In *Handbook of Organization Studies*, by Stewart R. Clegg, 57-76. Reprint. ed. (London: Sage Publ, 2003), 57.
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- 10 Mintzberg, "The strategy concept II," 29.
- 11 Greiner, Larry, Thomas Cummings, and Arvind Bhambri. "When new CEOs succeed and fail: 4-D theory of strategic transformation." *Organizational Dynamics* 32, no. 1 (2003): 2.
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- 16 Gagné, Marylène. "From strategy to action: Transforming organizational goals into organizational behavior." *International Journal of Management Reviews* 20 (2018): S87.
- 17 Harreld, Bruce J., Charles A. O'Reilly III, and Michael L. Tushman. "Dynamic capabilities at IBM: Driving strategy into action." *California Management Review* 49, no. 4 (2007): 24.
- 18 Ibid., 50.
- 19 Strong, *Secure, Engaged*, 17.
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- 22 Kerber, Kenneth, and Anthony F. Buono. "Rethinking organizational change: Reframing the challenge of change management." *Organizational Development Journal* 23, no. 3 (2005): 27.
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- 26 Köhler, Karolin, and Ansgar Zerfass. "Communicating the corporate strategy." *Journal of Communication Management* 23, no. 4 (2019): 350.
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- 28 Strong, *Secure, Engaged*.
- 29 Ibid., 23.
- 30 Ibid., 63.
- 31 Köhler and Zerfass, "Communicating the corporate strategy," 350.
- 32 Strong, *Secure, Engaged*, 23.
- 33 Hambrick and Fredrickson, "Are you sure you have a strategy?" 52.
- 34 Strong, *Secure, Engaged*, 19.
- 35 Ibid., 107.
- 36 Donaldson, *The normal science of structural contingency theory*, 61.
- 37 Ibid., 69.
- 38 The acronym SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Realistic, and Time-related.
- 39 Strong, *Secure, Engaged*, 107.
- 40 Greiner, Cummings, and Bhambri, "When new CEOs succeed," 7.
- 41 Camillus, John C. "Corporate strategy and executive action: Transition stages and linkage dimensions." *Academy of Management Review* 6, no. 2 (1981): 254.
- 42 Porter, Michael E. "What is strategy?" *Harvard Business Review* 74, no. 6 (1996).
- 43 Hambrick and Fredrickson, "Are you sure you have a strategy?" 53.
- 44 Strong, *Secure, Engaged*, 23.
- 45 Ibid., 41.
- 46 Mintzberg, "The strategy concept II," 31.
- 47 Kerber and Buono, "Rethinking organizational change," 25.
- 48 Hambrick and Fredrickson, "Are you sure you have a strategy?" 53.
- 49 Here, the concept of value creation is referred to. In terms of CAF, value creation is difficult to qualify, even harder to quantify. Simply put, if CAF fulfills its mandate based on existing capability/capacity and funding, it creates *de facto* the necessary value. Thus, if funding allocated is spent entirely, value creation is simply assumed. Given this assumption, the economic logic of the federal government is that value creation should augment proportionally to funding increases. This is rarely nuanced properly though, for value is created by gaining efficiencies as well.
- 50 Strong, *Secure, Engaged*, 43.
- 51 Ibid., 108.
- 52 Ibid., 19.
- 53 Ibid., 64.
- 54 Ibid., 75.
- 55 Stensaker and Falkenberg, "Making sense of different," 141.
- 56 Porter, "What is strategy?" 66.
- 57 Strong, *Secure, Engaged*, 49.
- 58 Siggelkow, "Change in the presence of fit," 839.
- 59 Gagné, "From strategy to action," S89.
- 60 Lang, Eugene. "RIP SSE: What the COVID-19 pandemic means for defence funding."
- 61 Strong, *Secure, Engaged*, 23-25.
- 62 Porter, "What is strategy?" 64.
- 63 Köhler and Zerfass, "Communicating the corporate strategy," 359.
- 64 Strong, *Secure, Engaged*, 26.
- 65 Ibid., 25.
- 66 Perry, David. "Strong, Secure, and Engaged: A two-year review." [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmxc.cloudfront.net/cdfai/pages/4171/attachments/original/1557259787/Strong\\_Secure\\_Engaged\\_A\\_Two-Year\\_Review.pdf?1557259787](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmxc.cloudfront.net/cdfai/pages/4171/attachments/original/1557259787/Strong_Secure_Engaged_A_Two-Year_Review.pdf?1557259787) (accessed June 21, 2020)
- 67 Hambrick and Fredrickson, "Are you sure you have a strategy?" 54.



## Understanding Canadian Civil-Military Relations: Two Essential Authors

by Peter Kasurak

**Philippe Lagassé, *Accountability for National Defence: Ministerial Responsibility, Military Command and Parliamentary Oversight, IRPP Study No. 4* (Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2010).**

**Christopher Ankersen, *The Politics of Civil-Military Cooperation: Canada in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).**

Canada's civil-military relations revolve around two main questions: what are the Canadian Armed Forces *for*, and how should they be governed? The first question – the essential purpose of the CAF – has been contested since the withdrawal of British Imperial forces in 1872. During the twentieth century, the issue again came to the fore early in the government of Pierre Trudeau through his 1969 Defence Policy Statement, which attempted to define a domestic role for the armed forces and de-emphasized NATO. Military recalcitrance in implementing the government's policy resulted in the infamous Management Review Group, which merged Canadian Forces Headquarters with the Department of National Defence and led to two decades of distemper. The CAF has also been perpetually dissatisfied with the general public's view that the primary job of the Canadian military is peacekeeping. No little amount of ink has been spilt and testimony given to underline the idea that the job of the military should be war.

The second question – governance – has been marked by attempts to assert that Parliament is (or should be) in charge of the CAF, that the chief of the defence staff has a constitutional

status equal, or near-equal, to that of the minister, that the military has “rightful authority” for doctrine and personnel policy derived from custom and tradition rather than law, and that the chief of the defence staff has at least some powers independent of ministers. Much of the debate around governance has centred on the allegation that the CAF has been subject to illegitimate “rule by the civil service.” General Rick Hillier famously complained about civilian “field marshal wannabes” during his tenure as CDS.

The link between the two questions is obvious: if the military and civil society disagree on its role and character, then the government, as principal, will use stricter means of enforcing its agent to do its will. This includes creating offsetting power centres in the bureaucracy and policing by the civil service.

Two very different works are key to understanding this problem. The first, by Christopher Ankersen, lays out a new set of principles and a rationale for the CAF that could end the warriors vs. peacekeepers impasse. The second, by Philippe Lagassé, provides a comprehensive and definitive outline of the constitutional and legal authorities that form the governance structure of the CAF. Taken together, they could move the discussion of civil-military relations to a more useful level.

Christopher Ankersen's *The Politics of Civil-Military Cooperation: Canada in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan* is one of the most important books on Canadian civil-military relations published in the last decade. However, its UK publication, its forbidding purchase price of \$109, and its presence in only eight libraries in Canada has meant that it has gained little or no attention on this side of the Atlantic.

Ankersen focuses on “civil-military cooperation,” or the relationship between military forces, national governments and civil populations in areas where military forces are deployed,



supported or employed. Its scope would therefore appear to be limited to peacekeeping, peace support, stabilization operations and “small wars.” In fact, the scope of the book extends far beyond operations and centres on the core elements of civil-military relations: the armed forces, the population and the state.

The author explains that he selected Canada as a case study, not only because of personal familiarity (he was an infantry officer for 12 years in the Canadian Army), but also because of Canada’s extensive involvement in international security operations, and because Canada is representative of middle and small powers. His ideas regarding the state and evolution of civil-military relations should therefore be considered relevant to other smaller liberal democratic states.

Ankersen sets out his analysis in the framework of the Clausewitzian trinity of the people, the commander and the army, and the government. The people engage war through their passion, the military employs its professional skills, creativity and talent to manage war risks, and the government selects the aim. These three forces are in balance and in dynamic adjustment and therefore require constant attention. In the case of the armed forces, it is essential that they maintain their legitimacy in the eyes of both the people and the government. This is especially so as the military is increasingly non-representative of the population at large, while it consumes a considerable proportion of state resources. Ankersen comments that “without political legitimacy, the armed forces within a democratic system would be fish without water, unable to concentrate on their assigned tasks.”

In the case of Canada, legitimacy of the armed forces centres on the “myth” of peacekeeping. Ankersen demonstrates how deeply held the image of the Canadian soldier as a peacekeeper is by the population at large and by political elites. He rejects the efforts of Douglas Bland, Sean Maloney, Jack Granatstein and other military historians who have attempted to re-educate the Canadian public that Canada is actually a warlike nation that requires a combat capable military. He finds this to be “neither sensible nor helpful.”

The military, in opposition to civil society, has gravitated toward the model of soldier as “warrior.” This then creates an obstacle to efforts to maintain legitimacy. Analyzing major Canadian Army doctrinal documents following the 1997 Somalia Inquiry, Ankersen shows how the Army first tried to reconnect to the public’s values, but began to retreat after the Kosovo mission established a larger place for warfighting. The Afghanistan mission resulted in the Army abandoning values-based goals and arguing for legitimacy exclusively on the basis of warfighting capability.

The government, meanwhile, is caught between the other poles of the trinity: the military and the public. Members of the government elite, such as Lloyd Axworthy, the minister of Foreign Affairs from 1996 to 2000, put human security at the centre of Canadian foreign policy, but there were few resources available to back up policy. Moreover, there were obvious disconnects between operations, such as the 1999 bombing campaign in Serbia and the stated concerns of government policy. The later Harper government

was caught on the other side of the policy divide when Chief of the Defence Staff Rick Hillier speechified about how “our job is to kill people” and that Canada’s job was to “take out” “detestable murderers and scumbags.” Prime Minister Stephen Harper piled on in a speech of his own where he condemned those who would “cut and run” from Afghanistan. Public opinion retribution was swift, and the government returned to messaging more consistent with the peacekeeping myth. Ankersen finds the Canadian government condemned to “delicious ambiguity.”

Ankersen’s solution is a realignment of what Huntington called the functional and social imperatives of the military: that is, bring the qualities of the military necessary to provide security and those required to maintain social and political legitimacy into consistency with each other. As he puts it, “if the function of the military is defined by the government and society in such a way as to demand that humanitarian or peacekeeping tasks are performed, we can begin to see a merging of the imperatives.” He believes this is possible because the warrior ethos of the Canadian Armed Forces “has eroded enough through years of neglect and lack of practice, to be ripe for redefinition.” Ankersen suggests that if the highest calling of the CAF is “duty with honour” as stated in the title of the capstone profession of arms manual, honour can only be bestowed if soldiers act to

reflect the values and beliefs of fellow Canadians. Canadians expect their military to go beyond discipline and martial competence to embrace such qualities as compassion and humanitarianism. Canadian heroism is sacrifice for the sake of these values. The move towards concordance of values would provide a new basis for a Canadian military ethos.

The *Politics of Civil-Military Cooperation* is about far more than the management of low intensity operations. It is a fresh analysis of Canadian civil-military relations overall, and offers a path to improve how the government, society, and the armed forces work together.

Philippe Lagassé’s *Accountability for National Defence* is better known, and has become the go-to resource on defence governance for scholars, but it deserves a wider audience, especially among practitioners. Lagassé puts National Defence squarely within the context of Canada as a constitutional monarchy with a Westminster system of government, and goes on to describe how each component – politicians, the military, the departmental public service, and the wider federal government, including central agencies – functions.

Critical to understanding who is responsible for what is that defence is the prerogative of the Crown. Lagassé explains that the 1867 drafters of the *Constitution Act* continued the British practice of leaving the Crown’s prerogative powers of war and peace and the disposition of military forces intact. The Command-in-Chief of military forces was vested in the Queen. What is important to recognize is that, within the Westminster system of government, the convention of ministerial responsibility vests the Crown’s powers in the defence minister, who is “individually responsible and accountable for the state of the armed forces and Canada’s

**“if the function of the military is defined by the government and society in such a way as to demand that humanitarian or peacekeeping tasks are performed, we can begin to see a merging of the imperatives.”**

defence affairs.” Lagassé calls this “the bedrock of responsible government” and defends the placing of clear accountability for defence with the defence minister and the prime minister against theories of Parliamentary responsibility that claim a wider role for Parliament would be “more democratic.” He regards any division of powers and responsibility as not only contrary to the Canadian system of government, but prone to irresponsibility as parties may blame failures on others.

Lagassé points out that Parliament has no independent authority over the armed forces, no power to declare war or peace, and no role in directing defence policy. While Parliament passes the Defence budget, only the government can table a money bill in the Commons and Parliament cannot use legislation to alter it. Nevertheless, Parliament does perform vital functions related to Defence governance. Only a Cabinet that maintains the confidence of the Commons can remain in power; therefore, the House chooses the ministers that exercise Crown powers. Parliament passes and amends the *National Defence Act* and other national security laws, can debate defence policy questions, and can pass non-binding resolutions to influence defence decisions. If the government has invoked the *Emergencies Act*, Parliament can terminate the state of emergency after seven days. Finally, the Opposition maintains surveillance on government decisions and raises warnings if there are errors of commission or omission, as well as proposing alternative policies to the voting public.

The trend towards the government tabling deployment votes is discussed at some length. Lagassé notes that this is not a legal requirement, but that it appears “an appealing reform” to many who see an opportunity to mend the “democratic deficit” in the federal government. However, he rejects this as transferring too much to Parliament, diluting the responsibility of the minister and Cabinet and allowing a government to evade responsibility if things go badly. It could also lessen the Opposition’s ability to scrutinize military operations and to criticize the government since they, after all, had had a opportunity to vote on a mission. The case of the co-option of the Liberal Party by Stephen Harper over the extension of the Afghanistan mission is given as an example.

Likewise, Lagassé is not a fan of increasing the military’s scope of answerability to Parliament. In the American division of powers model, the military can discuss the advice it has given the government and state its own views on matters of policy. In the Westminster system, only ministers can make policy, and public servants, including the military, are limited to providing Parliament with facts and with explanations. Lagassé again acknowledges that although the idea of the military being fully answerable to Parliament seems “appealing,” it is contrary to the principles of responsible government. Moreover, it undercuts ensuring that the military serves ministers. Overall, Lagassé is a strong defender of responsible government and the status quo regarding Parliament’s role in defence governance.

*Accountability for National Defence* closely examines the legal governance structure at the top of the Defence pyramid: the minister, the CDS and the deputy minister. It dismisses the contention by some that accountability is “shared” by the minister and the CDS, and demonstrates that no matter regarding national defence is beyond or outside the minister’s authority. It notes

that under the *National Defence Act*, the appointment of a CDS is discretionary. The CDS is responsible for providing military advice to the minister, prime minister and Cabinet, who are all expected to listen and respect the CDS’s views, whether they are followed or not.

The CDS is further constrained by the fact that the Canadian Armed Forces do not have any financial control over Defence funds. Parliament votes money to the Department of National Defence, and it is the responsibility of the deputy minister to ensure that it is spent according to government direction and financial regulations. In addition, although the CDS is responsible for the control and administration of the armed forces, the *National Defence Act* allocates the responsibility for regulations to the governor-in-council – that is, Cabinet. The CDS must therefore follow civilian direction regarding the internal administration of the CAF. Lagassé points out that the governor-in-council could directly administer the armed services if there were no CDS, thus guaranteeing that Cabinet will never be beholden to a single military official.

Deputy ministers have occupied a particularly problematic space in Canadian civil-military relations. Several have been charged with interfering in military matters beyond their legitimate powers and expertise. A few deputies have not been shy about pointing the finger the other way and complaining that the military has lacked the competence to manage a strategic headquarters or efficiently run a high-tech organization. Lagassé provides a thumbnail history of how government-military relations evolved during the post Second World War period and why, due to military unresponsiveness to policy direction and inability to manage efficiently, the role of the civil service and the responsibility of the deputy minister grew. As long as there is a Department of National Defence, there must be a deputy minister who, under the *Interpretations Act*, is the alter ego of the minister. The deputy minister is not only responsible for ensuring that the department implements government direction in Defence, but also all the horizontal policies and initiatives that cut across government. The deputy is the Defence delegate to central agencies and other departments on behalf of the CAF. Rather than illegitimate “control by the civil service,” Lagassé makes it plain that the governance structure of Defence provides a large role for the deputy minister and supporting civilian managers.

Ankersen and Lagassé are as different as it is possible to be in their writings on Canadian civil-military relations. Ankersen takes a philosophical and theoretical approach to probe the nature of the military profession in Canada. Lagassé uses structural and legal analysis to define who is accountable for what in Canada’s defence system. Nevertheless, both of them address central issues that have roiled Canadian civil-military relations for the past fifty years or more. Both should be on a professional reading list.

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