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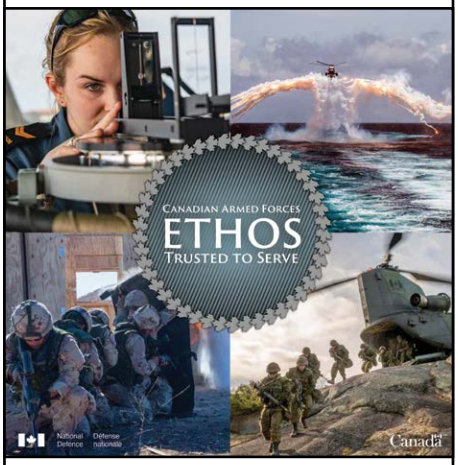
"Canadian soldiers remain alert during a NATO exercise to demonstrate the unified resolve of alliance members."
Credit: Artwork by Silvia Pecota / http://www.silviapecotastudio.com



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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.

FROM THE EDITOR

The artist's caption for the original artwork on the cover is a sign of the times that captures the spirit of this issue of the Canadian Military Journal: Canadian soldiers remain alert during a NATO exercise to demonstrate the unified resolve of alliance members.

Credit goes to creator Silvia Pecota, an award-winning photographer and artist. She has exhibited in Canada, Italy, Germany, the United States, the former Soviet Union and Afghanistan. In 2003, Silvia participated in the Canadian Forces Artist Program. She has travelled to Afghanistan five times, where she was embedded with the troops, documenting their efforts, appreciating their dedication to service and witnessing the sacrifices of soldiers who put themselves in harm's way. Her experiences from the Afghan mission have inspired over 80 compositions, six large format art calendars (from 2009 to 2018) and end-of-tour gifts and medallions. Copies of her 2007 relief dedicated to the fallen are on display at the Royal Canadian Air Force Museum in Trenton and the Afghanistan Memorial Hall (DND) in Ottawa. In 2014, she designed a monument for the city of Windsor, Ontario (located at Reaume Park), honouring more than 250 fallen Canadian soldiers and peacekeepers from the Afghan and UN missions. In 2012, Silvia became the first female and non-American artist to be commissioned by the United States Army War College when the Class of 2012 commissioned her to create a work of art representing "Fallen Comrades." Since 2013, she has been commissioned to design coins for the Royal Canadian Mint, most of which are on the theme of Canadian military history. Alberta Motor Vehicles selected Silvia's artwork, "Fallen Comrades: PPCLI," for a licence plate that was named best License Plate in North America for 2014 by the Automobile License Plate Collectors Association. Her 2015 book *Remembering Our Fallen* incorporates poetry and artwork dedicated to Canada's fallen, from colonial wars to the present day.

As the pandemic turns into an epidemic, transformative disruptions continue to shape 2022. Russia's invasion of Ukraine poses a fundamental challenge to the post-World War II order. It challenges the inviolability of sovereign territorial integrity as a fundamental principle of the international rules-based order. Yet democratic allies have shown themselves resilient and resolute in the face of Russian coercion and in responding to repeated waves of the pandemic. The Government of Canada has made several key policy decisions in aligning with allies on sanctions against Russian interests and on a host of supports for Ukraine in its struggle, including as a major external financial backer and supporter of the legitimate government of Ukraine.

Ongoing CAF transformation and adaptation are key to meeting those challenges, as well as dealing with the impending compounding effects of disruption brought on by exponential technological and climate change. After 20 years of heavy focus on resource allocation on operations, where governments had the luxury of choosing their missions and the force packages they sent, the CAF is now undergoing reconstitution. That process is focused on force generation and sustainment to ensure current and future CAF readiness. As of February 2022, the CAF had a shortfall of 7,600 members from its authorized troop strength, but 10,000 members operationally, which means the CAF has been operating at only 85% of staffing to meet its mandates and missions. This necessarily has deleterious effects on the Force. The challenges are particularly significant for junior leaders, at the level of senior Captain and Major, as well as Master Corporals and Sergeants, and across the roughly one hundred occupations and specialized leadership positions where the CAF is critically short-staffed.

The CAF's new profession of arms manual, *Trusted to Serve*, provides an overhauled and innovative framework to guide the profession and its members. Articles in this and future issues of CMJ introduce *Trusted to Serve* together with an ongoing dialogue and critical engagement with the manual and the profession of arms. This spring also saw the release of a new *Total Health and Wellness Strategy* for the Defence Team and the introduction of the new *CAF Journey*, whose six pillars will guide the Defence Team's attention and priorities for its membership. There is a renewed focus within the CAF on recruitment, retention and institutional culture. The federal government's budget reinforced its policy and budgetary commitment to *Strong, Secure, Engaged* and included additional investments which show that, in an uncertain world, the government understands not only the importance of the CAF as an instrument of international policy and national power, but also the importance of ensuring that the CAF can deliver on capabilities and commitments to domestic operations, continental defence, allied deterrence and international stability. At the same time, Parliamentary committees are holding hearings on a host of priority issues, including the House of Commons Standing Committee on Government Operations (OGGO) on air defence procurement and the National Shipbuilding Strategy, the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence (NDDN) on recruitment and retention as well as on domestic operations, and the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU) on preparedness for threats posed by Russia. The ensuing committee reports will provide insightful and helpful guidance for political authorities in providing appropriate direction and funding for CAF transformation and renewal.

Indeed, there is significant opportunity for improving how the Canadian Parliament scrutinizes defence policy. Phil Lagassé's exceptionally insightful article on civil–military relations offers three concrete steps to this effect.

Contributions by Guilherme Martinelli *et al.* and by Nancy Taber discuss culture change in the context of the new profession of arms manual, *Trusted to Serve*. Taber affords the reader a critical perspective on the organizational context of *Trusted to Serve* and how it addresses concerns within its precursor, *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada*. Martinelli details the strategic evolution of the *Canadian Armed Forces Ethos: Trusted to Serve*.

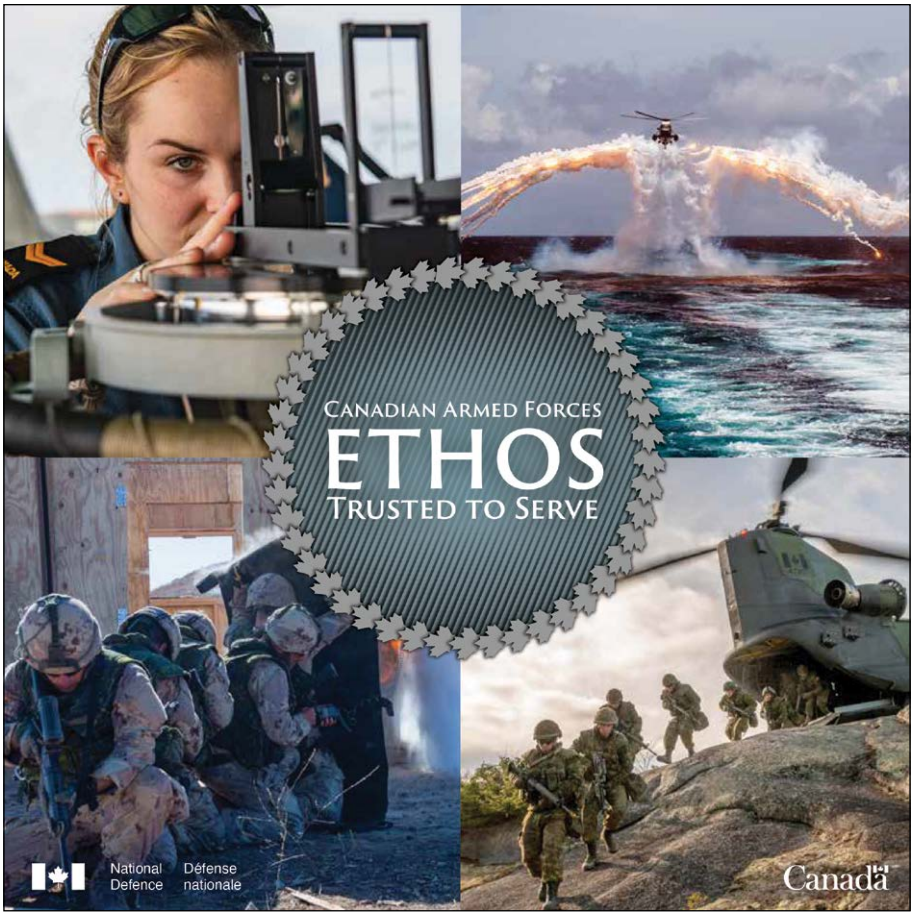
Several contributions in this issue address how the West's and Canada's relationship with allies and partners in Eastern and Central Europe is shifting, from forward presence to forward defence. Stalwart CMJ commentator Martin Shadwick discusses how Russia's invasion of Ukraine might signal a turning point in post–Cold War power relations and considers how this paradigm

shift affects Canadian military readiness and defence policy. Beyond Op UNIFIER, RCMP police officer Sergeant Sean O'Brien and Sûreté du Québec police officer Sergeant Grégory Gomez del Prado show the role Canadian law enforcement expertise and experience had been playing in stabilizing Ukraine and reinforcing its path towards a more robust application of the rule of law. Tyler Wentzell offers a well-considered yet critical reflection on the involvement of Canadian civilians in the Ukraine conflict. Foreign enlistment is highly topical yet controversial, and its implications call for informed debate: how civilian involvement in foreign conflict raises the stakes for neutrality, legal distinctions, and how to conceptualize foreign fighters. Chris Young rounds out the collection of articles on the northeastern flank in his review of experiences and best practices in strategic communications as implemented by Task Force Latvia.

Greg Smith's article reflects on NATO's evolving *raison d'être* in the current threat environment and the alliance's persistent strategic necessity for Canada and Canada's ability to assert its strategic interests. Juan Castillo explores the complex Greater Caribbean Basin, its role in the broader security environment, and how leaders should view it as an area of operations. Jason Thompson drives home how globalization has exacerbated hybrid warfare as a significant and emerging threat to Canada and the West. This issue closes with a vivid review essay by Randy Wakelam and Trevor Teller on Larry A. Freeland's book about tactical rotary-wing pilots, *Chariots in the Sky: A Story About U.S. Assault Helicopter Pilots at War in Vietnam*.

I close this editor's note by welcoming Ms. Alexandra Green, on assignment to the CMJ team. She complements our dedicated publication manager, Claire Chartrand, and our interim deputy editors, Dr. Chantal Lavallée and Dr. Bruno Charbonneau. Ms. Green has been a member of the RMC community since her time as a research assistant while completing her undergraduate degree at Queen's. She is in the process of completing her Ph.D. in War Studies with a focus on cyber terrorism. Ms. Green is quite enthusiastic about joining the CMJ team, where one of her primary tasks will be shoring up CMJ's operational capacity to ensure robust peer review of all submissions. As editor-in-chief, I continue to work on CMJ transformation with a strategic plan about which I shall have more to say in the next issue.

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



It's About Time: The Renewal of the Canadian Armed Forces' Ethos

by Guilherme Martinelli, Bill G. Cummings, Mélanie Denis, T. Kent Gregory and Lee T. Jarratt

Guilherme Martinelli *has been a federal public service employee since 2007 and has worked in a variety of government departments as a social science researcher. He is currently working for the Canadian Defence Academy, Professional Concepts and Leader Development Section, in a range of doctrine-related topics. He completed a Master's in Sociology with Specialization in Survey Methodology at the University of Waterloo.*

William (Bill) G. Cummings *served as an Infantry Officer in the Canadian Armed Forces for 36 years before retiring. Since 2020 he has been employed with the Professional Concepts and Leader Development Section at the Canadian Defence Academy, working on CAF common doctrine.*

Mélanie Denis, B.Sc., *has been with the federal public service for over 20 years, many of them with the Canadian Forces Leadership Institute. Now, as a Managing Editor with the Professional Concepts and Leader Development team of the Canadian Defence Academy, she works on the communication aspects of the leadership and profession of arms doctrine that is created for the CAF.*

Thomas Kent Gregory, CD, *served in the Royal Canadian Navy for 37 years as a Finance Clerk and a Resource Management Support Clerk, before retiring in September 2021 as the Base Chief Petty Officer of Canadian Forces Base Halifax. Immediately following his retirement, he joined the Professional Concepts and Leadership Development team at the Canadian Defence Academy.*

Captain Lee T. Jarratt *is a Training Development Officer and is currently in her twenty-ninth year with the Canadian Armed Forces. Since 2020, she has been employed as a Research Officer in the Professional Concepts and Leader Development Section at the Canadian Defence Academy, where she works on CAF common doctrine.*

Special contributions: C. Thibault, D. Buchanan and D. Beyer

Introduction

Much like its predecessor ethos[1] embedded within *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada (2009)*, the *Canadian Armed Forces Ethos: Trusted to Serve* was written during a tumultuous time in

Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) history. This article aims to capture the strategic evolution of the CAF Ethos during this period (2018–2022) and outline the key challenges and opportunities that this renewal has afforded.

Background

Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada[2] (DwH: PoA) was first developed in 2003 as a response to many professional issues that were exposed during operations in the 1990s. One of the contentions that arose from the Commission of Inquiry into the deployment of Canadian Forces to Somalia was that the "ethos of the Canadian Forces is weakening." [3] This and other issues precipitated a short-lived but significant Ministerial Monitoring Committee to oversee the progress of Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) senior leadership implementation of proposed reforms[4] as directed in then Minister of National Defence and Veterans Affairs Douglas Young's 1997 report to the Prime Minister. One of the key recommendations from that report was to establish a formal ethos for the profession.[5] As a response, DwH was written to primarily codify the Canadian profession of arms as a legitimate profession with a succinct ethos and sought to frame its organization, societal functions and relationships, and how it adapts to future challenges. The publication of DwH was well received at the time by Canadians and allies alike, and to this day it remains a respected part of the canon of Canadian profession of arms doctrine.

Significant changes to military structure, as well as a full commitment to combat and stability force capacity building in Southern Afghanistan in 2006–2009, drove minor updates to DwH in 2009. These updates included the description of a military functionally organized around commands and added physical fitness as a new fundamental belief and expectation. From the initial introduction of DwH in 2003 until 2014, the military was extraordinarily occupied with prosecuting the NATO campaign in Afghanistan. In addition, 2013–2014 brought new resource challenges as the CAF actively implemented a Governmental Strategic Review and Deficit Reduction Action Plan which saw significant reductions in the Department of National Defence (DND) budget.[6] One such impact was the complete elimination of the Canadian Defence Academy (CDA) Canadian Forces Leadership Institute (CFLI), the organization which had produced DwH and all CAF foundational leadership doctrine.

In 2015, the Justice Deschamps[7] inquiry into sexual misconduct in the Canadian military revealed a highly sexualized subculture within the CAF that had led to substantial military sexual trauma, as had been highlighted in prior media reports from 1998[8] and 2014.[9] Adding to the climate at the time were no less than four class action lawsuits against National Defence and Veterans Affairs, two of which have since been resolved. A class action lawsuit initiated in 2017 based on discrimination, sexual harassment and sexual assault allegations[10] received nearly 19,000 claims.[11] Another class action addressing the wrongs of the CAF's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and two-spirit (LGBTQ2) purge came to a head in 2018 with 629 military claimants.[12] A class action lawsuit launched in 2016 related to systemic racism in the CAF remains to be settled,[13] as does one filed in 2019 by approximately 300,000 class members against Veterans Affairs alleging miscalculation of disability benefits.[14] As part of CAF efforts to address the harmful subcultures that led to such class actions, the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) ordered the renewal of DwH.

Renewing *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada* (2009)

In May 2018, the CDS issued a directive to renew the 2009 version of DwH. The directive clearly framed the rationale for renewal. Much change had occurred within the CAF, and similar changes outside the CAF presented significant challenges. In this environment, initiatives such as Operation HONOUR to combat sexual misconduct; new policies on diversity, health and wellness, and suicide prevention; and initiatives to improve recruitment, transition and employment equity were evolving CAF culture. The contemporary security environment had become more complex, with pervasive 24-hour news cycles, child soldiers, and a diversifying and active set of adversaries. The CDS directive required that the CAF Ethos stay in step with such change and that it inform new leadership doctrine. Significant shifts in societal fabric were having an impact on our people and needed consideration if the renewal initiative was to succeed in articulating the expected professional conduct and behaviour in a way that would be clear and compelling for the next generation of military recruits. The CDS directive mandated comprehensive consultation with all key stakeholders and a novel methodology, starting from a series of cross-country face-to-face consultations with military personnel from all ranks.

"The publication needed to be more clearly articulated in language that would resonate with junior ranks and that, as pointed out by the junior ranks, accountability was applied unevenly across ranks."

During the 2019 cross-country tour, consultations were held with close to 2,000 personnel in uniform, from Sailor 3rd Class/Private to Commodore/Brigadier-General. Based on those consultations, a new version of the Profession of Arms (PoA) document was produced in February 2020 for the CDS to review. Several themes had emerged from the consultations; the most prominent were that the publication needed to be more clearly articulated in language that would resonate with junior ranks and that, as pointed out by the junior ranks, accountability was applied unevenly across ranks. After much consultation and analysis, the renewed and reorganized draft was a minor evolution of the 2009 publication. The final draft publication never made it to the CDS's desk for review; instead, due to changes in 2020 to functional authorities for professional development, it was reviewed by the Vice-Chief of the Defence Staff (VCDS).[15]

Change in Focus for the Renewal

Led by the VCDS, the Armed Forces Management Board (AFMB) revitalized the focus for the Profession of Arms publication renewal. This October 2020 engagement provided critical guidance that resulted in a significant reorientation for the publication. Renewed emphasis was placed on the profession's desired military culture, the level of language was changed from academic to applied in order to better connect with and inspire those in uniform, and it was directed that the document not be longer than about 50 pages.

DND/CAF photo by Corporal Keith Wazny/Task Force Kandahar, Afghanistan

Members of the Canadian Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT) and Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) personnel speak with local children and village residents while on a dismounted foot patrol in the Panjwa'i District during Operation ATHENA, 25 October 2010.

The global COVID-19 pandemic also brought other changes in 2020. The pandemic radically altered the Professional Concepts Team's working methods.[16] Virtual workspaces rapidly replaced the business travel and face-to-face meetings that had been the modus operandi of earlier cross-country consultation and collaboration efforts. The team was faced with adjusting its working methodology to adapt to the new environment and the reorientation of focus for the publication, but first an assessment of AFMB's redirection had to be considered.

Initial Assessment

Re-invigorated guidance from AFMB provided the catalyst for a significant departure from previous reviews of DwH. Research and analysis led to several insights. DwH was primarily designed as an educational text rather than a user's guide for its ethos and hence was intentionally academic in tone.[17] This insight was reinforced by the fact that DwH did not devote much space to its ethos: only 10 pages out of 84. Further analysis revealed that although the 2003 and 2009 versions had been published and distributed, they had never been adequately socialized, which was a fundamental mistake for a normative doctrine. One might argue that the CAF was too busy with operations in Afghanistan (2001–2014) to implement a socialization program for DwH, despite any good intentions. The reality was that the leadership of the CFLI and that of the CDA at the time prioritized the publishing of books by the Canadian Defence Academy Press over publishing doctrine.[18] This reaffirmed that the renewal of the CAF Ethos demanded a vigorous socialization plan if the CAF was to align existing military culture more closely with that of a renewed ethos.

The team found that all doctrine which guides desired military culture, otherwise known as professional conduct and performance (professionalism), resides in five separate documents, namely the *CF and DND Code of Values and Ethics*,[19] DwH, and three leadership doctrine publications: *Conceptual Foundations*,[20] *Leading the People*[21] and *Leading the Institution*.[22] The team's assessment was that in order to achieve AFMB's direction, all relevant doctrine would have to be curated from those five documents and integrated into one concise publication to focus the CAF on professionalism. As a result, the renewed ethos comprises ethical principles in addition to military values and professional expectations, because it has taken in the whole of the *DND and CF Code of Values and Ethics* as well as adding new elements.[23]

A review of where the CAF teaches DwH, and hence ethos, revealed additional gaps. For example, even though it was introduced on every professional development (PD) course for career progression, it was questionable whether DwH enjoyed the same engagement in unit lines. This was confirmed through the team's cross-country consultation in 2019. In fact, the Deschamps Report had revealed in 2015 that subcultures antithetical to the CAF Ethos were allowed to grow and fester within such units. That is not surprising, as there has always been a discontinuity between what is taught and what is practised throughout the institution. Such evidence demonstrates that teaching the ethos solely on PD courses is insufficient to ensure that everyone understands and fully commits to living by the 2009 ethos. The renewed CAF Ethos would have to be reinforced not only in training and educational courses but also in other professional development areas such as employment experience (unit lines) and through self-development (personal) areas if it was to have greater effect than previous ethos publications on CAF operant culture and professionalism.[24]

The initial assessment drove the team's new direction towards a more holistic approach to propagating professionalism across the CAF via its ethos. The team realized the need for more than just a broad academic textbook for PD courses and conceived of a bespoke CAF Ethos user handbook bringing all behavioural doctrine related to the ethos into one publication. In addition, it realized the need to support socialization across the employment experience and self-development areas of professional development with relevant digital multi-media content for consumption on ubiquitous smartphones and tablets. This initial analysis framed the direction for the renewed ethos.

However, if the renewed CAF Ethos were to take shape more purposefully than previously, the team needed to adopt a different consultation process in line with the CDS Directive but adapted to the new pandemic environment. A series of virtual tiered reviews were scheduled for 2021, beginning within the CDA, spiralling out to subject matter experts and vested stakeholders across DND to gain consensus, moving up the chains of command starting at deputy commanders of level 1 commands to ensure its socialization, and eventually being sent to AFMB for endorsement, then to the CAF leadership team for approval, the CDS and the CAF Chief Warrant Officer (CWO). Final endorsement was sought from the Minister of National Defence.

Change in Strategic Climate

The consultative development process to produce a renewed CAF Ethos in line with AFMB direction proved quite nonlinear due to several challenges and shifts in the strategic climate within DND in 2021. High-profile misconduct allegations that generated media coverage from February 2021 onwards created significant pressure to reconsider *in toto* the elements within the 2009 CAF Ethos. The crisis in public confidence created around the office of the CDS and General Officers caused the subsequent phasing out of Operation HONOUR (now *The Path to Dignity and Respect*). The use of the term "honour" no longer resonated within the CAF. Consequently, the team pivoted to focus the publication on the more humble concept of trust, and the renewed CAF Ethos was re-titled the *Canadian Armed Forces Ethos: Trusted to Serve* (TtS). The vast majority of the consultative process took place in a highly charged media environment. While it would be impossible to quantify the impact of that climate on the development of a renewed CAF Ethos, it was glaringly evident that the status quo was no longer acceptable. This change in environment produced considerable challenges, but it also provided considerable opportunities to bring the CAF Ethos into the 21st century.

Challenges and Opportunities

The challenges and opportunities are largely presented here in the order in which they arose, so as to contextualize them within the team's review process and in line with public events as they unfolded. They range from the conceptual to the specific and from the significant to the minor in nature. All are important evolutions in the CAF Ethos if we are to move the profession forward towards a better future. The benefits of incorporating inclusion have already been borne out through subsequent Chief of Professional Conduct and Culture (CPCC) initiatives related to inclusive teams and inclusive leadership.

Target Audience. From the outset, the team understood that it would be necessary to diverge from traditional doctrinal or academic texts. Previous efforts were reviewed, stripped of language that excluded or was seen as service-centric, and completely rewritten more naturally and in a way that would make them instinctively applicable. Repeated reviews by academic experts and members of the defence team refined the discussion of ethics, re-examined all of the content from an intersectional (Gender-based Analysis Plus, or GBA+) perspective, and ruthlessly eliminated linguistic flourishes. Terms that were overly academic, self-righteous or grandiose, or had religious connotations, such as "ideology," "beliefs" and, in French, "*abnegation*," were removed; beliefs and expectations became *professional expectations*. Part of this rationale was that a belief cannot be seen unless it is manifested in behaviours; therefore, this renewed ethos focuses only on the observable. Various departmental sections, such as the Defence Advisory Groups and the Anti-Racism Secretariat, were consulted to harmonize with other programs and policies and ensure that the publication's terminology was as inclusive as possible.

DND/CAF photo by Corporal Gary Calvé

Members of the Canadian Armed Forces and the Jamaican Defence Forces Disaster Assistance Response Team load supplies into the CC-130J Hercules in Kingston, Jamaica during Operation RENAISSANCE IRMA-MARIA, 27 September 2017.

DND/CAF photo by Master Sailor Dan Bard/Canadian Forces Combat Camera

Clearance Divers from Fleet Diving Unit Pacific and port inspection divers from the Royal Canadian Navy conduct mine countermeasure missions on the ocean floor in the area of Juneau, Alaska during Exercise ARCTIC EDGE 2022, 8 March 2022.

"Warrior". Through the release of the *Brereton Report*[25] in November 2020, the team became aware of the contentious nature of the term "warrior." That initial awareness was then refined through interpretation and discussion by Dr. David Whetham,[26] Dr. Christopher Ankersen[27] and Dr. Christian Breede,[28] and it became apparent that "warrior" is a loaded term. *The Brereton Report* was clear in indicating that a key factor in the war crimes perpetrated by the Australian Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) in Afghanistan was the development of a "warrior hero" subculture that believed itself exceptional and above ordinary rules and oversight.[29] For some, feeling like a "warrior" can be energizing and full of positive meaning. However, for many, it is an exclusionary term and one that can easily be taken out of context. Moreover, through the Concepts Team's 2019 cross-country consultation and in its 2021 consultations and tiered review, "warrior" was generally not seen as a unifying term across all services in the CAF. The original CDS direction was to retain the term, but subsequent consideration and decisions led to excluding it from any further drafts.

Inclusion. It was clear that, as the CAF struggled to deal with both historic and recent issues of sexism, racism and discrimination related to sexual preference or identity, diversity and inclusion would be issues of significant import. The initial focus on "diversity" covered the well-understood benefits of diverse teams, both internally and externally, but over time, with the help of the Dallaire Centre of Excellence for Peace and Security (DCoE-PS), this shifted to "inclusion." Inclusion refers to each service member who joins a team being received in a manner that allows them to bring themselves, their talents, their life experience and eventually their potential to bear in the service of Canada. A contributing factor to this discussion was a side activity undertaken with the DCoE-PS in early March of 2021 dealing with culture change in the CAF as a response to sexual misconduct allegations against two very senior officers. This side activity, as directed by Comd MPC, was to develop a product on culture change for all CAF personnel to consume in order to raise awareness on issues affecting culture. The team's research into why the CAF's operant culture was not entirely in line with its ethos to develop this product influenced the addition of inclusion into the draft manuscript.[30]

Imagery. Diversity of imagery had always been a requirement for the renewed ethos, in order to ensure a visual representation of various services, occupations, roles, diversity and demographics. Although DwH had contained diverse images, the overall look and feel were Army-centric. Therefore, attention was paid to ensuring that the photography was indicative of more aspirational demographics and a more representative set of work environments and functions. The Concepts Team made a great effort in the design and layout stages to ensure that the look and feel of the publication were more inclusive of all military members.

Readiness and Physical Fitness. For the renewal to be effective, extant elements within the CAF Ethos needed to be reconsidered. One such element was physical fitness. Though vital to the effective functioning of the profession of arms, the requirement to be physically fit was not considered sufficiently robust to stand on its own. Rather than over-focusing on the appearance of physical fitness as a proxy of health, a more holistic approach was taken, emphasizing all facets of health and wellness, including bona fide operational requirements of mental, spiritual and physical fitness and resilience, as a complete package. Thus, the CAF Ethos was brought into alignment with that of the recently released Defence Team Total Health and Wellness Strategy.[31] In line with the strategy, the organization needs physically, mentally and spiritually fit and resilient people and teams who are able to endure the hardships of service to achieve mission success. Ultimately, readiness is what the CAF seeks to achieve: the full potential of its people and its military capabilities as a holistic goal in preparation for duty, wherever that may be.

Leadership. Leadership is defined as directing, motivating and enabling others to accomplish the mission professionally and ethically, while developing and improving capabilities that contribute to mission success.[32] The team included "leadership" as a critical professional expectation. (Surprisingly, it had been omitted from previous works.) The key to framing this concept for the profession was to emphasize that leadership is a responsibility for everyone

in uniform regardless of rank. Whether sailor, soldier, aviator or operator, a military professional must understand that, for the CAF to be genuinely effective, leadership can and must be demonstrated by all. This is a more inclusive and empowering framing of leadership so that all might be encouraged to influence those around them for the better—meaning better in terms of conduct as well as performance. Leadership is also emphasized in leaders' responsibilities regarding the ethos, both on operations and institutionally.[33] The responsibility of embodying and reinforcing the CAF Ethos is rightfully placed upon all leaders' shoulders, while institutional leaders bear the additional responsibility of ensuring that all institutional policies, programs and regulations are in line with the ethos.

Photo: DND/CAF photo by Cpl Andrew Wesley, Directorate of Army Public Affairs LF03-2017-0152-001

Sergeant Moogly Tetrault-Hamel carries the Canadian Armed Forces Eagle Staff at the Indigenous Sunrise Ceremony in honour of the 75th anniversary of the Dieppe Raid in Dieppe, France, 18 August 2017.

Accountability. The notion of "accountability" permeated DwH, and it is now a new military value in TtS. The key values for its inclusion were the responses from the team's cross-country tour in 2019 regarding disparity in the application of accountability depending on rank, as well as AFMB's endorsement. The framing of this new military value is closely aligned to that of leadership. Its message is clear: everyone, regardless of rank, must be responsible for their actions and inaction, and accountable for them to their chain of command. Members of the profession need to come together and help one another fulfill this vital obligation in a healthy manner. Though the ethos states that leaders have the highest level of accountability, together with responsibility and authority, the profession of arms belongs to all serving members, who must hold each other to account for the health of the profession, even in difficult circumstances where subordinates are left to ensure that their superiors are also held accountable.

Incorporation of Behavioural Tables. TtS was originally intended to contain specific examples of CAF personnel who best exemplified the ethos. However, challenges and complications associated with finding such examples proved too troublesome, and that approach was quickly abandoned in favour of another. An external scan of other militaries' ethoses enabled the team to draw inspiration from *Way of the New Zealand Warrior*.[34] The New Zealand Army Ethos contains a clear and visually appealing discussion on acceptable and unacceptable behaviours and provides short, realistic examples of military duty in addition to personal examples. This NZ Army document greatly inspired the two matrices presented in TtS.

External Review. As the manuscript underwent the approval process, the CDS and the CAF CWO recognized in August 2021 that an external review was necessary. Given that TtS was to be accessible to the public, it had to be clearly understood by and resonate with Canadians. Dr. Elspeth Murray and Dr. Stéfanie von Hlatky from Queen's University and Dr. Mary Crossan from Western University generously reviewed the manuscript and provided valuable input to ensure that it would connect with Canadian society as a whole.

Character. The CDS and the CAF CWO also directed that the concept of character be incorporated into the ethos. They viewed the many allegations of misconduct in the media in 2021 as failures of character which needed addressing. The CDS, as the head of the profession of arms, made it abundantly clear that character is just as important as competence in generating trust. Dr. Crossan, as an expert on character, engaged further to clarify the concept fully.[35] One of her key ideas was that character can be measured and hence deliberately developed. This was combined with author Stephen Covey's trust model, whereby trust is created through a combination of character and competence.[36] Using this model of character and competence to frame the ethos, the team had to re-align its various ethos elements to best fit with the model.

Implementation Plan. After all of the research, thought, consultation and direction, there remained a real concern that the document would be left to gather dust alongside other capstone doctrine, pulled out only to refresh a master lesson plan every few years. To be an effective tool for effecting culture change, TtS could not be left to a few keen scholars and military professionals to discover—and it certainly could not become yet another mandatory, page-flipping distance-learning course. Instead, its publication is to be accompanied by informal, ongoing, periodic

but continual discussion within military units, between leaders, subordinates and peers. The CAF Ethos must be an integral, living part of the experience of being a sailor, soldier, aviator or operator. It provides a metric against which one will measure one's own and others' actions—successful or not—and judge them accordingly. To that end, considerable investment has been made in progressively complex digital and print content to enrich and support contemplation, discussion and learning. The success of TtS will not be measured in copies printed, or even in copies read, but in the ongoing quality of ethos-related discussions, even after mandated discussion sessions have ended.

"The key to success will be developing everyone's strength of character."

Conclusion

Duty with Honour remains an excellent guide to the profession of arms in Canada. Re-writing it was initially seen as a simple update to reflect a few changed expectations and lessons learned, but it quickly became apparent that a prolonged, deliberate and deep dive to produce a CAF Ethos was imperative. The tumultuous experience that the CAF has gone through over the last several years has only served to challenge, refine, and re-emphasize the import of a cohesive CAF Ethos.

The growing change of climate within the CAF since the publication of the Deschamps Report, as ell as the most recent allegations of misconduct at the highest levels of the CAF, have certainly influenced the tone and approach of this renewed ethos. The message within this ethos is clear. It is empowering to all ranks as members of the profession of arms that they have equal agency in this profession: agency to respectfully hold each other to account and agency to make the necessary changes to ensure the health and reputation of the profession, both on and off duty. The key to success will be developing everyone's strength of character, given that the vast majority of those in uniform are already competent in their occupations and trades.

This renewed ethos represents a logical and coherent evolution of the profession of arms. DwH speaks of balancing continuity and change; TtS reflects continuity with an ethos worthy of the past but is aimed at moving CAF professional culture forward. None of the elements that would have formed an ethos worthy of those who fought in the Great War or the Second World War has been removed. Instead, elements and concepts have been added in areas where the CAF needs to evolve if it is to realize its envisioned future as a relevant and professional institution in the eyes of Canadians and the nation.

Authors' Note

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NOTES

1 An ethos is a characteristic spirit of a culture, community or organization as manifested in its beliefs and aspirations. It is aspirational in nature and is normally based on values, principles and expectations. Therefore, a formally written ethos would represent the ideal spirit of an organization. How that ethos is lived within that organization represents the operant culture, which often falls short of achieving the aspirational goals set within the ethos.

2 Department of National Defence, *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada* (Kingston: Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2009).

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4 Colonel Bernd Horn, Dr. Bill Bentley and LGen (ret'd) Romeo Dallaire, *Forced to Change: Crisis and Reform in the Canadian Armed Forces* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2015), p. 60.

5 Honourable Douglas Young, Report to the Prime Minister: Ethos and Values in the Canadian Forces (1997). Retrieved 17 March 2022 from https://www.ourcommons.ca/content/archives/committee/352/defa/evidence/09_97-02-12/defa09_blk-e.html.

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7 Department of National Defence, External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces (4 May 2015). Retrieved 17 March 2022 from https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/sexual-misbehaviour/external-review-2015.html.

8 Jane O'Hara, "Rape in the military," *Maclean's*, 11 May 2018. Retrieved 17 March 2022 from https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/rape-in-the-military.

9 Noémi Mercier and Alec Castonguay, "Our military's disgrace," *Maclean's*, 16 May 2014. Retrieved 17 March 2022 from https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/our-militarys-disgrace.

10 Department of National Defence, Heyder–Beattie Final Settlement Agreement (8 July 2020). Retrieved 17 March 2022, from https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/proactive-disclosure/supplementary-budget-b-2019-2020/supp-est-b-items/voted-appropriations/heyder-beattie.html.

11 J. Gallant, "Almost 19,000 claims submitted in Canadian Military Sexual Misconduct lawsuits," *Toronto Star*, 25 November 2021. Retrieved 17 March 2022, from https://www.thestar.com/politics/federal/2021/11/25/almost-19000-claims-submitted-in-canadian-military-sexual-misconduct-lawsuits.html.

12 Department of National Defence, LGBT Purge Class Action Final Settlement Agreement (8 July 2020). Retrieved 17 March 2022 from https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/proactive-disclosure/supplementary-budget-b-2019-2020/supp-est-b-items/voted-appropriations/lgbt-purge.html.

13 Attorney General of Canada, "Federal Court Proposed Class Proceeding between Marc Frenette, Wallace Fowler and Jean-Pierre Robillard and Attorney General of Canada, Statement of Claim" (filed 14 December 2016). Retrieved 17 March 2022 from https://cbaapps.org/ClassAction/PDF.aspx?id=8257.

14 Murphy Battista LLP, "Miscalculation of Disability Pensions Class Action" (23 February 2022). Retrieved 17 March 2022 from https://vetspensionerror.ca/.

15 Defence Administrative Order and Directive 5031-8, Canadian Forces Professional Development, designates the Commander of Military Personnel Command (Comd MPC) as the functional authority for professional development for the Canadian Armed Forces. In 2020, due to organizational changes and VCDS interest in this area, functional authority was transferred from Comd MPC to VCDS.

16 The Professional Concept Team consists of a number of DND civilian researchers and analysts with academic and military credentials and experience tasked with conceiving and publishing Profession of Arms manuals related to the profession and its ethos, leadership, and coaching and mentoring doctrine.

17 Interview with Dr Allan Okros, 11 March 2022. Dr Okros, an original member of the Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, confirms that the academic style of writing in *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada* was intentional. It had always been the plan to produce a companion manual to *Duty with Honour* that would be written in more accessible and applied language. However, the project was never completed and still lay moribund when the Canadian Forces Leadership Institute was eliminated.

18 Ibid. A plan was designed in 2004–2005 for the socialization of the CAF Ethos based on *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada*. However, due to the change in priorities, the socialization plan was never implemented and, at the time, those in uniform were not looking for one as they were preoccupied with the all-consuming nature of operations in Afghanistan.

19 Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, "Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector" (Ottawa: Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer, 2011); at Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector (tbs-sct.gc.ca).

20 Department of National Defence, Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy – Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2005).

21 Department of National Defence, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Leading the People* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy – Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2007).

22 Department of National Defence, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Leading the Institution* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy – Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2007).

23 The DND and CF Code of Values and Ethics is a Defence Team doctrine which all DND civilians and CAF personnel must uphold. It comprises three ethical principles, five values, and twenty-one expected behaviours related to the specific values. At https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/benefits-military/defence-ethics/policies-publications/code-value-ethics.html.

24 The military doctrinally delineates four areas where professional development or learning occurs. These four areas are education (primarily through military academic institutions and courses), training (both individual and collective training courses and exercises), employment experience (on-the-job learning through socialization) and self-development (on one's own time, normally through the pursuit of educational courses or training).

25 Commonwealth of Australia, *Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force Afghanistan Inquiry Report* (2020); at https://afghanistaninquiry.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-11/IGADF-Afghanistan-Inquiry-Public-Release-Version.pdf.

26 David Whetham, comments at a panel discussion, "Military Ethics and Special Forces – What can we learn from the Brereton Report?" (Kings' College London, 10 December 2020).

27 C. Ankersen, "Warrior Culture." Lecture delivered at Canadian Army Staff College, Toronto, 9 December 2022.

28 H. Christian Breede and Karen D. Davis, "Do You Even Pro Bro? Persistent Testing of Warrior Culture Identity and the Failure of Cohesion," in *Why We Fight: New Approaches to the Human Dimension of Warfare*, eds. Robert C. Engen, H. Christian Breede and Allan English (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020), pp. 116–138; at https://cradpdf.drdc-rddc.gc.ca/PDFS/unc356/p812804_A1b.pdf.

29 Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force Afghanistan Inquiry Report (Commonwealth of Australia 2020), p. 325; at https://afghanistaninquiry.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-11/IGADF-Afghanistan-Inquiry-Public-Release-Version.pdf.

30 The Concept Team expended considerable effort researching the psychology behind the behaviours highlighted by the Deschamps Report and the 2021 and ongoing media reports of alleged misconduct by very senior officers within the CAF. Research ranged into areas such as bias, racism, power differentials, persistent benchmarking, warrior culture, exceptionalism, ableism, psychological disorders, victims' testimonials and victims' rights.

31 Defence Team Total Health and Wellness Strategy; https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/benefits-military/health-support/total-health-and-wellness-strategy.html.

32 Department of National Defence, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Doctrine* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy – Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2005); p. 5.

33 *Trusted to Serve*, Chapter 3, "Ethos and Leaders," is an amalgamation of all leaders' responsibilities related to the military ethos as expressed in CAF leadership doctrine and in *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada.*

34 New Zealand, *Way of the New Zealand Warrior* (N.p.: New Zealand Army, 2020); at https://kealearning.nz/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Way-of-the-New-Zealand-Warrior-2020.pdf. It is worth noting that while the word "soldier" appears in this document 103 times, "warrior" appears just 22 times, and then only in reference to the Indigenous peoples of New Zealand.

35 M.M. Crossan et al., "Toward a Framework of Leader Character in Organizations," *Journal of Management Studies* 54, 7 (November 2017), 986–1018. At https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12254.

36 Stephen M.R. Covey, *The Speed of Trust: The One Thing That Changes Everything* (New York:,Free Press, 2006); pp. 27–31.

DND/CAF photo by Corporal François Charest/TM02-2019-0021-0001

Task Force members in Mali, together with German and French allies, participate in a CH-147F Chinook helicopter crash simulation exercise during Operation PRESENCE-MALI, 6 March 2019.

Trusted to Serve: Rethinking the CAF Ethos for Culture Change

by Nancy Taber

Dr. Nancy Taber's *research explores the ways in which learning, gender and militarism intersect in daily life, popular culture, museums, militaries and educational institutions, with a particular focus on women's experiences in the Canadian Armed Forces related to organizational culture, official policies and informal everyday practices. She is a retired military officer who served as a Sea King helicopter air navigator. Dr. Taber is a former President of the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education and the former Editor-in-Chief of the* Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education.

In the fall of 2021, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) announced that, among other efforts to promote inclusivity and engage in culture change, it was working on a publication called the *Canadian Armed Forces Ethos: Trusted to Serve*, explained as a "renewal of the CAF Ethos [which] includes core ethical principles including recognizing and embracing the diversity of our team's talents and perspectives, challenging unacceptable behaviour, an d making difficult but necessary decisions to support and champion cultural change."[1]

Trusted to Serve is of great interest to me as a former military officer and current feminist academic with expertise in the gendered policies, practices and culture of the CAF. It should also be of great interest to military members, veterans and civilians alike, since any document that prescribes the core of military service is a powerful one. It presents the guiding principles, beliefs and actions that the organization values, nurtures and promotes. The ethos answers the question "Who is an ideal military member?" and there are concomitant implications for recruitment, retention, training, education and promotion, as well as policies, practices and culture.

This article describes the organizational context in which *Trusted to Serve*[2] was created and published; examines the ways in which its precursor, *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada*,[3] promoted a narrow view of military service; and engages with the contents of *Trusted to Serve*. I employ a Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens, which is "an analytical process used to assess how different women, men and gender diverse people may experience policies, programs and initiatives"[4] that the government of Canada has committed to use in the "development of

policies, programs and legislation since 1995."[5] Although this approach has been rightly critiqued for the ways in which it can sometimes be construed as "compliance-seeking and box-ticking,"[6] it serves my purposes in this article because it is a process with which readers of this journal may be familiar and it is intended to assist in feminist intersectional analyses.

Setting the Context: CAF Culture

At the time of this article's writing, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) is engaged in a deep reckoning[7] of the ways in which its hypermasculine and sexualized culture is responsible for the discrimination, sexual harassment and sexual assault perpetrated against women and diverse people[8] in its ranks.

It may seem to some that this reckoning is of a contemporary nature, due perhaps to Canadian society's attention to sexism, racism and colonialism as a result of the ongoing #metoo, Black Lives Matter and Idle No More movements. Undoubtedly, the current environment has informed the CAF's critique of its culture and actions to change it. However, academics, advocacy groups, government commissions, legislation and journalists have called attention to issues related to gender discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, homophobia and racism in the CAF for decades—in some cases, as long ago as 1970.[9] The CAF responded to this external pressure with research trials, reviews, policies and orders, but these were generally reactive and insufficient, and in many cases they were resisted at individual and organizational levels.[10]

"When gender and other forms of discrimination are present, sexual harassment and sexual assault are more likely to occur."

Since 2015, DND/CAF appears to have taken a more proactive approach to sexual harassment and assault in its ranks, including giving a mandate to an External Review Authority to "examine CAF policies, procedures and programs in relation to sexual harassment and sexual assault";[11] creating Operation HONOUR "to eliminate harmful and inappropriate sexual behaviour within the CAF";[12] requesting a Statistics Canada survey on sexual misconduct in the CAF;[13] and examining the issues through a GBA+ lens. These efforts also proved insufficient and encountered much resistance.[14]

In 2016, two lawsuits (now collectively referred to as Heyder–Beattie) were launched, with claims of gender discrimination, sexual harassment and sexual misconduct experienced by women as well as sexual harassment and sexual misconduct experienced by men in the CAF. Those lawsuits were settled in 2019, and the settlement included the establishment of consultation groups to proactively address culture change and sexual misconduct.[15] In 2021, allegations of sexual misconduct were filed against several male general/flag officers, including two Chiefs of the Defence Staff and two Chiefs of Military Personnel, who were directly responsible for eliminating sexual misconduct in the CAF. In addition, the commander of Canadian Special Operations Forces Command, who had been criticized for his support of an officer accused of sexual assault, had nevertheless been appointed to review sexual misconduct files.[16] At that time, DND/CAF commissioned another external review to "take a broader look at how and why our existing workplace dynamics enable harmful behaviours, and make recommendations on preventing and eradicating harassment and sexual misconduct."[17] Although much had changed in the CAF over the decades with respect to women's inclusion and policies dealing with inappropriate conduct, much remained the same with respect to the CAF's hypermasculine and sexualized culture.

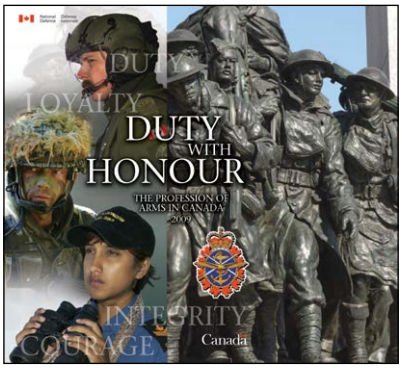
Perhaps this is not surprising, as the CAF was created by and for white, cisgender, heterosexual, able-bodied men, with the expectation that female spouses would engage in organizational support and domestic work.[18] This creation is reflected in the organization's policies, practices and culture, as well as its current demographics. In 2021, the CAF (Regular Force and Primary Reserve) included 16.1% women, 2.8% Indigenous people, 9.6% visible minorities and 1.2% persons with disabilities.[19] The 2021 census data is still being reviewed, but Statistics Canada 2016 data indicated that the Canadian population as a whole was 50% women, 4.3% Indigenous people and 19.1% visible minorities.[20] These figures make it clear that white able-bodied men are still overrepresented in the CAF.[21] Their overrepresentation is tied to the CAF's "combat masculine heterosexual warrior identity"[22]—which privileges those who are "male, masculine, and possessed of unique and superior moral and physical attributes including an aggressive nature and proclivity to violence"[23]—and intersects with a culture that discriminates against women and diverse people.

Research demonstrates that, when gender and other forms of discrimination are present, sexual harassment and sexual assault are more likely to occur.[24] Therefore, it is crucial that the CAF's policies, practices and culture be inclusive and equitable: in other words, not be based on the assumption that a CAF member is a white, masculine, male, able-bodied, cisgender, heterosexual man with a (female) spouse caring for the home and family. The CAF's work to achieve this aim includes establishing the new position of Chief, Professional Conduct and Culture (CPCC) to, among other things, "develop a professional conduct and culture framework that holistically tackles all types of discrimination, harmful behaviour, biases and system barriers."[25] Work is also ongoing to eliminate the gender binary in dress instructions, introduce inclusive rank terminology, begin a Women's Health Framework, create new compassionate leave sub-types, develop education for cultural change, further employment equity and implement a GBA+ analysis of promotion-scoring criteria.[26]

It is within this context that the rethinking of the CAF ethos in the form of *Trusted to Serve* occurred. In order to understand and explore this rethinking, it is important to discuss the ethos's precursor, *Duty with Honour*.

Precursor: *Duty with Honour*

Duty with Honour was published in 2003 and updated in 2009.[27] It is just over 80 pages long and is divided into four parts: "The military profession in Canada," "The statement of Canadian military ethos," "The organization and functioning of the profession of arms in Canada" and "Adapting to future challenges." As stated in the preface, signed by the CDS at the time, "Duty with Honour" was intended as a "cornerstone" and "defining



document" [28] which, as the foreword explains, "presents the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of the profession, shows how in practice it serves Canada and Canadian interests, and codifies, for the first time, what it means to be a Canadian military professional."[29] The aim of *Duty with Honour* was to "provid[e] an understanding and vision of the Canadian military professional. Intended to be both inspirational and educational, it therefore establishes the intellectual and doctrinal basis for all personnel and professional development policies in the Canadian Forces."[30] The military ethos contained within is based on the ethical need "to respect the dignity of all persons, to serve Canada before self, and to obey and support lawful authority."[31]

> The ethos itself
>
> comprises values, beliefs, and expectations that reflect core Canadian values, the imperatives of military professionalism, and the requirements of operations. It acts as the centre of gravity for the military profession and establishes an ethical framework for the professional conduct of military operations. In establishing desired norms of behaviour, the military ethos acts as an active and unifying spirit.[32]
>
> Additionally,
>
> the ethos is intended to…guide the development of military leaders…; create and shape the desired military culture…; establish the basis for personnel policy and doctrine; enable professional self-regulation…; and assist in identifying and resolving ethical challenges.[33]

As such, *Duty with Honour*, with the ethos it promotes, serves as a "boss text" at the top of an "intertextual hierarchy"[34] because it regulates policies and practices within the CAF culture, with concomitant expectations for what members value and how they act, with specific expectations for military service.[35] The ethos—framed within a "warrior's honour"—includes fighting spirit, discipline, teamwork, physical fitness, and accepting unlimited liability.[36]

In my analysis[37] of *Duty with Honour* with its associated video (2003 version), I found that the document as a whole was based on the valuation of three concepts: duty, honour and service before self, with the expectations that military members display only duty to the mission, loyalty to the CAF, the integrity to put the mission first and the courage to be a hero. A first glance at these concepts[38] may cause readers to assume that they should be the expected ideals of military service, and they may serve a purpose in certain contexts and situations. However, a deeper analysis reveals that the ways in which these concepts are operationalized promotes a warrior ideal[39] that works in two interconnected ways:

- it privileges the ideal military member as one who is hegemonically masculine,[40] i.e., members who identify as male, white, able-bodied, cisgender and heterosexual, are employed in operational roles, and have deployed internationally; and
- it marginalizes members with disabilities, those who require time away from service for childbearing, childrearing, or elder care, those who worship, eat and pray in a manner inconsistent with a Christian schedule and calendar, people of colour, Indigenous people, those viewed as not performing masculinity and femininity in expected ways,[41] particularly LGBTQ2S+ people, and those in support roles (with intersectionality between these categories).

"This military ethos—intended to promote professionalism—organizationally discriminates against women and diverse people."

This military ethos—intended to promote professionalism—organizationally discriminates against women and diverse people. Therefore, it is a contributing factor in the sexual harassment and sexual assault of women and diverse people.

The *CAF Ethos: Trusted to Serve*

Trusted to Serve is a 61-page document divided into three parts: "The importance of trust," "What is the Canadian Armed Forces ethos, and how do I use it? (subdivided into "Ethical principles," "Military values," and "Professional expectations") and "Ethos and leaders." The preface, signed by the current CDS and Chief Warrant Officer, explains that, while *Duty with Honour* "emphasized the profession, organizational aspects and future challenges … *Trusted to Serve* is focused on expanding and refining our shared understanding of our military ethos."[42]

The ethos is positioned as "the most essential doctrine in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF)[, which] …. must guide our conduct and performance at all times," with "military effectiveness and credibility depend[ing] on it."[43] Furthermore, "respecting the dignity of all persons" is the "foundational ethical principle" which "serves as the basis for building the CAF Code of Professional Military Conduct."[44] As such, *Trusted to Serve* is as much a boss text as *Duty with Honour*; however, the focus of the two documents and the ways in which the ethos itself is conceptualized, described and applied to the CAF differ.

The introduction states clearly that "the fundamental purpose of the Canadian Armed Forces remains the lawful application of military force as requested and authorized by the Government of Canada."[45] CAF personnel are expected to "conduct themselves ethically and professionally," including while off-duty (which is important because of the ways in which work and personal life blurs in the military[46]), while "the CAF leadership and the Canadian government assume responsibility for their well-being and the well-being of their families."[47] It also acknowledges that "military performance can quickly be overshadowed by inappropriate conduct" and states that "character is just as

important, and indeed often more impactful, than competence."[48] Although this last statement, made in an announcement by the CDS, General Wayne Eyre, ahead of the document's release, drew some disdainful comments on social media, his explanation that "character has to lead, competence can follow"[49] is of crucial importance.

The current allegations of sexual misconduct against general/flag officers, combined with background information on their service, demonstrates that, in these instances and likely others (though certainly not all), competence and adherence to a warrior narrative too often led in promotion decisions, while character sometimes followed.[50] A central focus on character, through the ethos explained in *Trusted to Serve*, represents a quite different way of thinking.

The ethos comprises the following:

- "ethical principles" – "respect the dignity of all persons," "serve Canada before self," "obey and support lawful authority"
- "military values" – "loyalty," "integrity," "courage," "excellence," "inclusion," "accountability"
- "professional expectations" – "duty," "accepting unlimited liability," "fighting spirit," "leadership," "discipline," "teamwork," "readiness," "stewardship"[51]

The terms themselves are almost the same as in *Duty with Honour*, but the addition of "inclusion" and the exclusion of the use of "warrior"[52] signifies their different conceptualization in *Trusted to Serve*. The section on respect as an ethical value encapsulates *Trusted to Serve*'s overall approach:

> As the foundation of military ethics, it [respect] also means an aspiration that all humans can live their lives in peace and be protected against unprovoked aggression, because we are all fundamentally equal and deserving of this ideal…. The equal dignity of all human beings is the logic of military ethics, diversity, equity and inclusion."[53]

Respect is defined as "appreciating the other person's unique identity, skillset, perspective, history and experiences." It is the "foundation for inclusion and trust" and thereby enhances the CAF's "ability to perform more effectively in military service. *Respect is a necessary condition of mission success*."[54] This definition of respect, which is tied to peace, is now at the core of expectations for CAF military service.

Inclusion as a military value is intended to "create an environment where everyone can bring their authentic selves to work"[55] to "enhance a sense of belonging and cohesion."[56] Inclusion is an active, ongoing practice for which all personnel are responsible:

> Those who are inclusive reject racism, sexism, heteronormativity, homophobia, xenophobia or any other form of hateful, discriminatory or hurtful behaviour, conduct or association. They take a proactive approach to prevent, stop and report such conduct and support those affected. Inclusive leaders and team members take deliberate steps to identify and challenge inequities both within their teams and within the institution.[57]

This approach to inclusivity (although listed as the fifth military value) is interwoven with all the others. Loyalty not only includes "personal allegiance to Canada, its parliamentary democracy, the profession of arms, the chain of command, and the team" but also calls for personnel to "show respect, challenge unacceptable behaviour, [and] support their teammates in difficult situations."[58] Courage is defined as "overcom[ing] fear and pain in pursuit of the mission"[59] as well as "helping others in following and championing our ethos."[60] Excellence calls for continuous learning and being "curious, ask[ing] questions, and seek[ing] advice,"[61] allowing personnel to demonstrate uncertainty instead of fearing repercussions for not immediately demonstrating knowledge and taking related action.

Feminists working in the area of military studies have long argued whether efforts should be made to assist militaries in recruiting and retaining women and diverse people, due to the harm such members often experience in military organizations.[62] There is a stream of feminism, termed feminist antimilitarism,[63] to which I subscribe, that critiques military values and their related problematic binary approach to men/women, protectors/protected, military/civilian, friend/foe, us/them, with conflict winners/losers. What is a military without military values, one might ask, and how do they relate to a binary approach?

"*Trusted to Serve* demonstrates that military values can paradoxically be, at least partly, demilitarized in the ways they are construed in an ethos, which may result in building an equitable organization..."

It is not the values themselves that are of concern, but how they are operationalized in military environments. In *Duty with Honour*, ideal military members always put duty first, defer to hierarchy, demonstrate a stoic, rational, uniform discipline in all that they do (except in relation to unlawful orders) and serve their country and their military at the expense of their personal and family lives. This approach is a narrow one that is based on traditional sex and gender roles, with homogeneous bodies and perspectives focused on a warrior ideal. Although "respect the dignity of all persons" is an element of *Duty with Honour*, it is embedded within military values that are intended to create a uniformity which resists and even abhors difference.

Trusted to Serve demonstrates that military values can paradoxically be, at least partly, demilitarized in the ways they are construed in an ethos, which may result in building an equitable organization and moving beyond binary thinking toward diverse thinking, with the end result of decreasing or, ideally, eliminating discrimination, sexual harassment and sexual assault. Throughout, the document balances conventional military requirements with

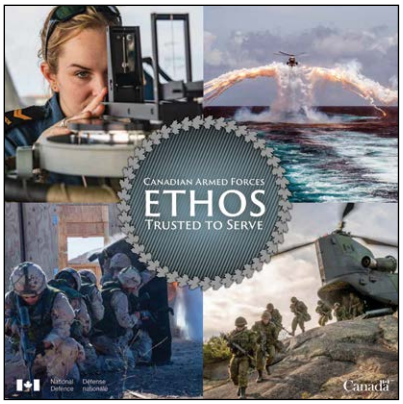
an acknowledgement of the whole of diverse members' lives, to the possible benefit of individuals, the organization and mission success. For instance, "serve Canada before self" still requires members to "prioritize service to the country, the military and their teammates ahead of themselves." However, this expectation is paired with the role of leaders to "ensur[e] a healthy work-life balance for their subordinates" and support them in "stay[ing] true to their personal identities and attend[ing] to roles and responsibilities in their personal lives."[64]

The professional expectations set out in subsequent sections of *Trusted to Serve* can be read through an inclusive lens. In particular, fighting spirit "demands an unwavering will to succeed, [and] requires grit and the will to fight against all adversity."[65] This spirit "is also present in our determination to change our practiced culture more closely to what is expressed in the CAF Ethos."[66] Personnel are still bound to their duty, accept unlimited liability and maintain readiness, but it is through a "balanced total health and wellness approach."[67]

The expectation of unlimited liability deserves further discussion. In *Trusted to Serve*, unlimited liability means that CAF personnel "may have to injure or kill to achieve the mission and that we may suffer injury or be killed while performing our duty."[68] This seems reasonable in a military organization, though doubtless there are those who would disagree. The section also includes the statement that "In specific situations, the CAF requires everyone's total commitment to the military profession."[69] The qualifier "in specific situations" may enable a demonstration of commitment to the military that differs among occupations and takes into consideration the health and well-being of personnel and families.

The ways in which *Trusted to Serve* intersects with other CAF policies is important to note here, particularly with respect to the Universality of Service[70] order and the "soldier first" principle, with the "requirement to be physically fit, employable and deployable for general operational duties," [71] as well as the related Minimum Operational Standards.[72] Currently, personnel who cannot perform common or operational tasks or deploy (with some exceptions) have a limited period of retention. Therefore, someone who has a long-term disability, medical issues, familial commitments or religious restrictions may be involuntarily released from the military, which limits the CAF's ability to be an inclusive organization and engage in transformative culture change. Adding an inclusive lens without removing the privileged forms of military membership is insufficient. The inclusion of the phrase "in specific situations" may be a useful way to reconceptualize commitment to the CAF, depending on how understandings of commitment intersect with the ongoing review of the Universality of Service order and how it is interpreted in related policies and practices.

Next Steps



As stated near the end of *Trusted to Serve*, the ethos "requires stewardship at the executive level to ensure that policies and programs are in line with the CAF ethos."[73] While formal education[74] will serve a purpose in officially teaching the ethos, its content also needs to be reflected in the everyday informal learning of CAF personnel. *Trusted to Serve* recognizes that the CAF ethos must be normalized through "socialization…an informal and continuous learning process."[75] Situated learning theories can be helpful in conceptualizing how this socialization might occur. Through the lens of legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice,[76] newcomers enter an organization on a learning trajectory that, if they are deemed to fit into expectations, eventually moves them into central participation as old-timers. They learn not only occupational skills, but how to think and act in a way desired by the organization and frequently dictated by old-timers. Therefore, as newcomers move through mid-level management and gradually become old-timers, they are likely to reflect the norms they themselves learned, teaching these directly and indirectly to incoming newcomers, reproducing organizational culture through policies and practices. This learning can be positive, if it contributes to a sense of belonging within a culture of equitable policies, practices and expectations.

"Particular attention should therefore be given to what recruits internalize about the expectations of military service (who an ideal military member is) in basic training, entry-level courses and military colleges, as well as when posted to their first unit."

However, in the context of the hypermasculine and sexualized culture of the CAF, too often, what recruits (newcomers) learn from personnel at all rank levels of the organization, from other relative newcomers to old-timers—non-commissioned members, non-commissioned officers, junior officers, senior officers and general/flag officers—is to reproduce the privileging of a warrior ideal that marginalizes women and diverse people. Particular attention should therefore be given to what recruits internalize about the expectations of military service (who an ideal military member is) in basic training, entry-level courses and military colleges, as well as when posted to their first unit.

Those who feel that they do not fit into an ideal of military membership, for any of a variety of reasons—often tied to ability, gender, Indigeneity, race and sexuality—are more likely to voluntarily release before they become old-timers, because they see

that their learning trajectory is blocked. As such, the release is not so much voluntary as indirectly forced. Those who continue on in the organization may be reluctant to challenge organizational norms, for reasons of personal safety and professional opportunities.[77] Others face involuntary release because they cannot demonstrate total commitment due to factors beyond their control, and therefore they cannot advocate for change from within the organization, even if that had been their aim.

By opening up understandings of who an ideal military member is, *Trusted to Serve*, as a boss text, has the potential to precipitate transformative and meaningful culture change in the CAF by changing what the organization values, how recruitment and promotion are approached, how policies are written and how educational curricula are developed and delivered, with concomitant changes to everyday practices and the situated learning of personnel. It can assist CAF members in engaging in inclusive practices that are not a current and central part of CAF culture to challenge the warrior identity and replace it with one that supports and values diversity. Discussions are already ongoing in the CAF—as demonstrated in the "Setting the Context" section above in relation to CPCC, dress instructions, ranks, women's health, compassionate leave, education, employment equity and promotions—to align these policies and others with the new ethos.

"By opening up understandings of who an ideal military member is, *Trusted to Serve*, as a boss text, has the potential to precipitate transformative and meaningful culture change in the CAF."

However, as Peter Drucker famously stated, "culture eats strategy for breakfast." In order for change to occur, personnel throughout the ranks must agree with and enact the ethos, so all learn that the ethos is the new heart of military service in the CAF. It remains to be seen how the ethos is incorporated throughout the organization; how personnel perceive, enact and informally teach the ethos; and, therefore, how effective *Trusted to Serve*, as a boss text, is at engaging the organization as a whole in cultural change. As well, the Universality of Service order remains a barrier to inclusive service.

Still, the differences between *Duty with Honour* and *Trusted to Serve* demonstrate that the CAF is willing to rethink what it values and how those values affect military service. The changes between the two signal a significant perspective shift, from a warrior model to a character-based inclusive ethos. An important step in engaging in culture change is changing how people think about military service, which *Trusted to Serve* is positioned to do. It is my hope that certain principles viewed as sacrosanct, such as total commitment, will continue to be reconsidered through a lens of inclusivity. If the CAF can eliminate organizational discrimination, it should be able to reduce sexual harassment and sexual assault in its ranks.

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The Canadian Forces Snowbirds aerobatic team fly past the Peace Tower during Canada Day celebrations on Parliament Hill, Ottawa, 1 July 2016.

Improving Parliamentary Scrutiny of Defence

by Philippe Lagassé

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Canada's Parliament plays a limited role in the country's defence and military affairs. While most democratic legislatures are secondary to the executive in defence matters, the Canadian Parliament is particularly weak. Consider, by way of contrast, the British and Australian parliaments, with which Canada shares a Westminster-style bicameral legislature. Backbench independence and forceful parliamentary committees give British parliamentarians a remarkable willingness and ability to hold the government to account, including in matters of national defence.[1] For its part, the elected Australian Senate performs legislative and policy scrutiny of the government's defence affairs and the armed forces.[2] Neither of these parliaments ranks alongside the United States Congress in terms of legislative power and influence, nor are they without critics. Indeed, one would be hard pressed to find a democracy where the legislature's role in defence policy is not considered insufficient, with the possible exception of Germany.[3] In Canada, however, the state of parliamentary involvement in defence matters is particularly troubling.[4] Strong party discipline and excessive partisanship hobble the defence committee in the House of Commons, while the Senate is no longer as seized of national security and defence as it was in previous decades. Parliament's contribution to Canadian defence is marginal, and there are few efforts to change this reality.

This article outlines three practical steps to improve parliamentary scrutiny of defence in Canada. By practical I mean reforms that do not involve altering Parliament's constitutional functions or structural facets of the legislature. Reforms that aim to give Parliament decision-making authority over defence matters, for instance, are either impractical or cosmetic under our existing system of responsible government.[5] Rather than aiming to make Parliament a body that governs defence, practical reforms should focus on improving what the legislature has evolved to do in our system: scrutiny. Put differently, instead of trying to make Parliament responsible for defence, reforms should strive to help the legislature hold the executive to account for the military decisions the government makes. A pragmatic approach also avoids reforms to deeply entrenched parliamentary cultures and

practices. Tight party discipline and heated partisanship will remain features of the House of Commons as long as the conditions that produce them, such as our electoral system, the dominance of party leaders, and high member turnover rates, are in place.[6] To paraphrase a former American Secretary of Defense, a practical approach aims to improve the Parliament we have, not build the legislature we might want.

The proposals put forward here, therefore, seek to better parliamentary scrutiny without demanding that parties, parliamentarians or the legislature significantly transform themselves or the way they do business. With that in mind, the three proposals focus on improving a critical aspect of parliamentary scrutiny: information. Increasing the information available to the legislature is not sufficient for better scrutiny, but it is necessary. Indeed, a well-staffed and independently minded parliamentary committee that lacks good information will struggle to hold the government to account. In contrast, an otherwise dysfunctional committee that nonetheless puts information into the public domain will be performing an important function, even if it leaves it to other actors to make effective use of what they have learned.

With improving parliamentary scrutiny and access to information as the goal, I propose three reforms: 1) requiring the executive to provide detailed information about military deployments to Parliament for take-note debates and committee hearings; 2) establishing a veritable national security committee of Parliament whose members will have security clearances to review classified matters in a parliamentary setting; 3) empowering and resourcing the Department of National Defence (DND) and the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) to cooperate on annual reviews of DND's suite of major capital projects and the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF)'s recruitment and retention efforts. Although much more could be done to improve Parliament's ability to hold the government to account for defence matters, these three reforms are feasible and would increase parliamentary knowledge and scrutiny of defence in Canada.

"With improving parliamentary scrutiny and access to information as the goal."

I. Improving Military Deployment Debates

Granting Parliament control over military deployments has been a recurrent theme in Canadian discussions of the legislature and defence matters. Following the First World War, Liberal prime minister William Lyon Mackenzie King stressed that Canada would not commit to another great power conflict without parliamentary approval. King's motives in stressing parliamentary control were mixed. Having Parliament decide meant that Canada would not be automatically at war if the United Kingdom was. As well, holding a parliamentary vote ensured that tensions between English and French Canadians would be dampened by legislative proceedings and debates. Beyond these political machinations, King likely believed in the democratic principle of a parliamentary decision as well. From that point on, the notion that "Parliament will decide" Canada's international military missions became a common refrain.[7] Prior to advising the Sovereign to declare war for Canada in 1939, King held a parliamentary vote, making good on his pledge.

In the decades that followed the Second World War, parliamentary control of military deployments was shown to be largely hollow. The House of Commons was not asked to approve Canada's participation in the Korean War, and although a few sporadic votes were held for various United Nations missions, the executive's control of deployment decisions was affirmed during the Cold War. Canada's participation in the 1991 Persian Gulf War reignited debates about Parliament's role in approving deployments, leading the Progressive Conservative government of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney to hold a retroactive vote on the mission. The Mulroney government would consult the Commons on other deployments as well, including the ill-fated mission to Somalia. When Jean Chrétien's Liberals came to power in 1994, however, those votes ceased. Although Canada took on ever more deployments in the mid- to late 1990s and early 2000s, the Commons was only invited to hold occasional take-note debates.[8]

The lack of parliamentary consultation on military deployment decisions made by the Chrétien Liberals led the Reform Party to call for limits on the executive's discretion. Those calls continued when Reform and the Progressive Conservatives merged to form the Conservative Party. One of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's first decisions after forming the government in 2006 was to bring a motion to extend Canada's deployment to Kandahar, Afghanistan, before the Commons for a vote. Harper's Conservatives would hold several votes in the years that followed, notably for a further extension of the Kandahar mission in 2008 and to secure the Commons' support for missions in Libya (2011) and Iraq (2014). Yet, like King's, Harper's principled stance was laced with political posturing. The Kandahar votes exposed rifts in the Liberal opposition and served to deflect responsibility for a controversial mission from the government onto the Commons. Harper and his ministers were also careful to highlight that the executive's underlying discretion and authority over military deployments were unaffected by the choice to consult the Commons.[9]

Whether driven by principle or politics, Harper established the practice that Commons votes would be held regarding military deployments in the future, especially those involving combat. The Liberal government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has held only one vote thus far, in March 2016 for an alteration to the CAF mission in Iraq, though this arguably reflects the fact that Canada has not committed a significant number of troops to an international mission in recent years. The next time Canada sends the military to fight overseas, the Commons is likely to be consulted in some fashion.[10] When that happens, however, we should ask what exactly Parliament's involvement is meant to achieve. The votes have not given the Commons a veto in a meaningful sense. And although there has been increased debate leading up to the votes, once they have been held, high-profile parliamentary discussions of the missions have tended to fall off. Indeed, the tendency of these votes to implicate the Commons in deployment decisions may discourage parliamentarians from keeping the debate alive, particularly if they themselves voted in favour of the mission.[11]

Parliamentarians, however, will turn toward greater scrutiny if controversies arise or when there appears to be a disjuncture between stated mission objectives and developments in theatre.

A notable example was the 2014 deployment to advise and assist Iraqi forces in the battle against the Islamic State. Indications that members of the CAF were involved in combat as part of their advising and assisting mission led to debates about the exact scope of the operation. Concerns about the mission also prompted the government to hold regular press conferences about the operation.[12] This episode and others like it highlight ways to improve parliamentary debates about expeditionary deployments, whether they are subject to a vote or not.

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Former Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper outlines his government's plan to participate in a military campaign against Islamic State militants, House of Commons, Parliament Hill, Ottawa, 3 October 2014.

At the heart of the parliamentary deliberations about the advising and assisting mission in Iraq were questions about mandates, rules of engagement and operational objectives. As in any partisan exchange, those issues were not treated with much nuance or subtlety. But the discussions pushed the government and CAF leadership to better explain what the military was doing in Iraq and how it was doing it. It is also likely that the opposition's and the media's interest in those aspects of the mission reinforced the need to brief the press and the public about the mission. As in the Afghan detainee controversy, details mattered in this case, which prompted parliamentarians to demand more information, notwithstanding the fact that the Commons had voted in favour of the mission.[13]

To encourage parliamentarians to engage in more detailed scrutiny, they should be provided with greater details about international deployments when the operations begin. Specifically, whether a vote is held or not, the Minister of National Defence should table a mission memorandum to provide the Commons with salient information about the operation. For instance, the memorandum could include a discussion of the legal basis of the mission and how the government expects that the law of armed conflict will be applied. Mission objectives and anticipated timelines could be outlined as well, with any allied agreements about burden sharing and expected rotations highlighted. To the extent possible, the memorandum could detail which formations and/or units will be deployed, the coalition or alliance command arrangements, where the forces will operate, when they will be rotated, and what impact the mission will have on the CAF's ability to manage concurrent operations at home or abroad. Lastly, the memorandum could provide rough order-of-magnitude costing for the mission and explain how the operation will be funded within the defence budget.

Once the mission memorandum has been tabled, a take-note debate on the operation should be held. If the government wishes, the Commons could be invited to vote on the deployment, with the memorandum underscoring the mission parameters that parliamentarians are being asked to support. After the take-note debate and an optional vote, the Commons defence committee could scrutinize the deployment, using the memorandum as a reference point to assess the mission's progress, costs and scope. The defence committee's efforts could be supplemented by sessions of the Committee of the Whole. If the mission requires an extension, the process would begin again, with an updated mission memorandum. If significant changes occur over the course of the mission, the defence minister could brief the Commons and the defence committee accordingly. Once the deployment is concluded, the Senate Committee on National Security and Defence could initiate a retrospective study of the operation, identifying lessons learned and outlining any significant deviations between the memoranda tabled by the government and the actual conduct of the mission.

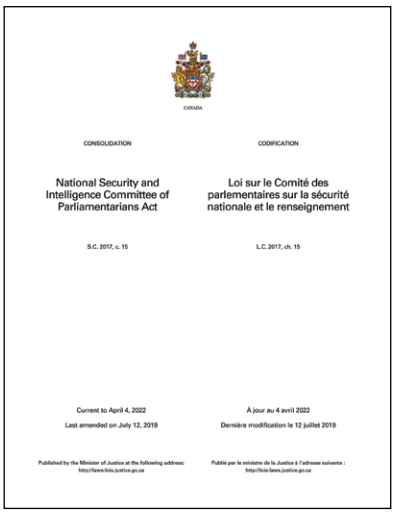
It might be asked what tangible difference the tabling of a mission memorandum would have on parliamentary scrutiny of expeditionary operations. At the very least, it would provide opposition members with a hook, something with which to hold the government to account, without necessarily questioning the importance of the mission itself. Indeed, therein lies the true benefit as compared with simply holding a vote: more information about the mission would give parliamentarians the opportunity to ask better questions and would provide metrics by which to assess the deployment, whether they voted to support the operation or not. While the quality of debate would still be negatively affected by crass partisanship and the whims of the media, better information should nonetheless lead to better scrutiny.

Lastly, it might be asked why any government would agree to these reforms. While it may seem that withholding information ultimately benefits the executive, that is not necessarily the case. Indeed, in many instances, providing information dulls attacks. Governments cannot be accused of hiding costs and mission details if they are simply presented to the Commons. As Lagassé and Saideman have argued, opposition criticism thrives when opposition members are uninformed.[14] When there is no information to work with, it is far easier to accuse the government of any and all things. Having the executive willingly divulge information and then put that information through the regular proceedings of Parliament eliminates the controversy surrounding the issue.

II. A National Security Committee of Parliament

In 2017, Parliament passed the *National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians Act*. The purpose of the law was to involve parliamentarians in the review of national security and intelligence. The National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians (NSICOP) is composed of 11 parliamentarians: 8 from the House of Commons and 3 from the Senate. However, owing to concerns about the security of information and how it might be used in a parliamentary setting, NSICOP is not a parliamentary committee. Instead, it is a committee within the executive whose members are parliamentarians. At first blush, this may appear to be a distinction without a difference. However, it has proved to be significant, particularly since the election of a minority Parliament in 2019. By establishing an executive committee of parliamentarians instead of a legislative committee of Parliament, the *National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians Act* set the stage for a confrontation between the government's concerns about classified information and Parliament's constitutional powers to demand documents. To resolve this conflict, Parliament and the government should negotiate the establishment of a veritable parliamentary committee on national security and intelligence, one that will strike an effective balance between the security of information and the legislature's right to be informed.

NSICOP was created with good intentions. Canadian parliamentarians have not had access to classified information as a matter of course, unless they also serve as ministers or have been sworn as Privy Councillors. There are two principal and interrelated reasons why parliamentarians have not been granted clearances. First, parliamentarians could share classified information in parliamentary proceedings without legal consequence. Specifically, one of the core privileges individual parliamentarians enjoy is freedom of speech. This privilege allows parliamentarians to say anything as part of a parliamentary proceeding, without being subjected to legal penalties; as a constitutional protection, the parliamentary privilege of free speech insulates proceedings in Parliament from ordinary laws. For example, this allows parliamentarians to make claims in Parliament against individuals that could be considered libellous outside of Parliament. In the area of national security, parliamentary privilege would also protect the airing of information that would otherwise violate the *Security of Information Act*. Hence, giving parliamentarians access to classified information has been considered a risk, since they could disclose it in Parliament while being shielded from prosecution. Second, partisanship and the lack of a culture of secrecy could lead parliamentarians to abuse their free speech regarding classified information. While the Canadian security and intelligence community may admit that there is value in protecting the disclosure of classified information in Parliament when there is a clear public interest at stake, petty politics and an immature view of the importance of classification could lead parliamentarians to share sensitive information for reasons that fall far below the threshold of the public interest. Simply put, the average parliamentarian is seen as too partisan or immature to be trusted with classified information given the protections of parliamentary privilege.[15]


CANADA

CONSOLIDATION

CODIFICATION

National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians Act

Loi sur le Comité des parlementaires sur la sécurité nationale et le renseignement

S.C. 2017, c. 15

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NSICOP was designed to address both these concerns. Section 12 of the *National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians Act* prevents members of the committee from invoking parliamentary privilege to shield themselves from the *Security of Information Act*. While the constitutionality of this provision has been questioned,[16] Parliament has the authority to waive its privileges and to limit how they are exercised by individual parliamentarians. Accordingly, it is unlikely that the courts will rule against this constraint. Were a member of NSICOP to disclose classified information during a parliamentary proceeding, they would therefore be subject to prosecution.

To reduce the effects of partisanship on NSICOP's work, the committee does not meet in public, nor is there a public record of its deliberations. This lessens the temptation for members to engage in partisan grandstanding or political point scoring. In addition, appointments to NSICOP are made by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. When naming members from opposition parties, the Prime Minister must consult with their respective party leaders. While opposition leaders may want to have rabid partisans on the committee, the Prime Minister is not obliged to accept them. Instead, the Prime Minister and opposition leaders must come to an agreement about who will serve on the committee. This process and the nature of the committee itself lend themselves to the appointment of measured and discreet parliamentarians who can work across party lines.

Since it began operating, NSICOP has largely worked as the security and intelligence community hoped, issuing reports that touch on security and intelligence governance in Canada, diversity in the national security community, and threats to Canada. Although it is difficult to know how harmoniously the committee worked in the past two parliaments, there were no evident partisan rifts, nor is there any indication that members mishandled or aired classified information. Academics have also praised NSICOP's reports shedding light on a poorly understood aspect of Canadian government. (I should note here that I have been critical of the committee's findings on defence intelligence.[17])

In December 2021, however, the leader of the official opposition, Erin O'Toole, announced that the Conservative Party would be boycotting NSICOP for the 44th Parliament.[18] His announcement followed the Conservatives' rejection of the government's proposal to use NSICOP to resolve a dispute between the Commons and the executive that had erupted in the last months of the 43rd Parliament. At the heart of that confrontation were documents related to the dismissal of two scientists from the National Microbiology Lab in Winnipeg. Opposition parties had demanded that the government provide classified information to the Commons about their firing. Since the government had lost its majority in the October 2019 general election, the opposition controlled the Commons and were able to pass a motion requiring the executive to provide the information. The government resisted, arguing that releasing the documents would be injurious to national security and that the Commons lacked the expertise to properly redact the documents before making them publicly available. Rather than providing the documents to the Commons, the government argued that they should be given to NSICOP. Indeed, as commentators noted, NSICOP was ideally suited to resolve this impasse, as a multiparty committee that could rely on expertise from the security and intelligence community when determining what information should be redacted when reporting on the documents.[19] The Speaker of the House, however, ruled that the government's refusal to provide the documents was a breach of parliamentary privilege, which grants the legislative houses the power to compel the production of all documents. The government, in turn, brought the matter before the Federal Court.[20] After Parliament was dissolved in August 2021, the motion ordering the documents ceased to be in effect and the government withdrew the case from the Federal Court. When the general election of 20 September 2021 returned another minority parliament, the standoff over the documents resumed. The Liberals proposed that an ad hoc committee review the documents. The Conservatives rejected that compromise,[21] then announced their boycott of NSICOP two weeks later.

In retrospect, it is not difficult to understand why NSICOP failed to serve as an acceptable compromise. NSICOP's status as an executive body meant that giving it access to the documents would not satisfy the requirements of parliamentary privilege. Being a committee of parliamentarians rather than a parliamentary committee, NSICOP could act as a compromise solution only if the Commons agreed that it should. Under a majority Parliament, of course, that would not be a problem. NSICOP would be the default solution to any call for parliamentary scrutiny of a controversial national security question, since a government-controlled Commons would not pass a motion demanding documents from the executive. But the true test of NSICOP's viability as a bridge between the Commons and the executive would be during minority parliaments, where the opposition could make full use of the powers of the legislature against the government. In a minority setting, referring a controversial question to NSICOP, with the committee taking months to review the matter, followed by redactions by the executive before the committee's report is tabled before Parliament, is politically unattractive. Opposition parties have an incentive to demand that the question be reviewed quickly—before the controversy and media attention dissipate—by parliamentary committees they control. And while some opposition members may be concerned about undermining national security by having inexperienced parliamentary staff redact sensitive information, the partisan allure of being able to embarrass the government will overpower those doubts.

To get around the problems NSICOP faces during minority parliaments, the body should be remade as a veritable parliamentary committee; the national security committee of parliamentarians within the executive should become the national security committee of Parliament. This transformation would allow NSICOP to review classified matters in a parliamentary setting, addressing situations where the legislative houses compel the production of classified information and allowing Parliament to scrutinize sensitive files relatively rapidly before they lead to confrontations between the executive and the legislature. To reassure the security and intelligence community, a parliamentary NSICOP would need to be staffed and resourced to properly vet and redact public versions of its reports. This may require secondments or cooperative agreements between the legislative houses and security officials within the executive. Yet, given that security-cleared parliamentary committees exist in other countries, including other Westminster-style legislatures, this is far from an insurmountable obstacle.[22]

"The national security committee of parliamentarians within the executive should become the national security committee of Parliament."

Making NSICOP a parliamentary committee could reignite concerns about members abusing their privilege of free speech to air classified information without consequence. This could be addressed in three ways. First, a modified version of the waiver found in section 12 of the current *National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians Act* could be included in new legislation, thereby subjecting unauthorized disclosures to the provisions of the *Security of Information Act*, whether the disclosures were made in Parliament or not. This would involve the houses limiting the privileges of individual members within parliamentary proceedings, which they have the authority to do as self-governing legislative bodies. Second, as in the Australian *Intelligence Services Act 2001*, specific offences and penalties related to the unauthorized disclosure of information to this committee could be outlined in law. Third, the standing orders could be amended to allow the houses to sanction members who disclose classified information provided to the national security committee.

This leaves the question of whether Parliament is too partisan to have a veritable national security committee. NSICOP as it exists today suggests that individual parliamentarians can perform their functions without leaking or mishandling classified information. NSICOP's members have demonstrated that they can rise above partisanship and be mature national security actors. It is unclear why having them perform their role in a legislative setting would change their behaviour. As importantly, NSICOP as it exists today—in the form of an executive committee rather than a legislative committee—highlights that the real risk is *not* having a parliamentary body that can handle classified information. Put differently, the 43rd and 44th Parliaments have shown that an executive-based NSICOP may not be accepted as a compromise when an opposition-controlled Commons demands documents from the government. When this occurs, the absence of a parliamentary national security committee becomes the actual risk, since the

legislature may demand classified information without the means to handle it safely. The best means of mitigating this risk is to embed a national security committee within Parliament itself.

Lastly, it might be asked how having a parliamentary national security committee would improve legislative scrutiny of defence. While this committee would primarily focus on Canada's intelligence community, it would also be able to review any classified information related to national defence and the armed forces. Hence, this committee could review military matters that would be too sensitive to discuss at the defence committees. This could include issues ranging from the special forces to procurement to memoranda of understanding with allies. For example, had such a committee been in place during the war in Afghanistan, it would have been the proper body to examine the Afghan detainee controversy in Parliament. Although defence might not feature prominently on such a committee's agenda, the option of referring important military files to the committee would be available.

III. Annual Major Defence Reports

Since the Auditor General is an officer of Parliament, the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) plays a significant role in helping the legislature hold the government to account for matters of national defence. Most importantly, audits performed by the OAG inform the work of the Public Accounts Committee (PACP), a Commons committee that is always chaired by an opposition member. Armed with the OAG's reports, PACP scrutinizes the performance of departmental programs and keeps track of how the departments have responded to recommendations for improvement. In recent years, for example, PACP has leveraged the OAG's report on the military supply chain to press for improvements to the DND/CAF inventory management system.[23] Although it did not garner much media attention, this type of review demonstrates how the OAG contributes to parliamentary scrutiny of defence, and in this case to the oversight of an issue that greatly affected the public accounts of Canada.

The OAG's departmental performance audits do not inform PACP alone. These audits are arguably Parliament's most important tool for understanding how the government policies and programs are working and what shortfalls and failures plague them. In addition, the OAG's performance audits have a significant impact on media reporting and the wider public's understanding of how effectively they are being governed. Indeed, while an attentive observer may learn quite a bit about how a departmental policy or program is faring by reading committee testimony and submissions, the OAG's pointed and focused reports provide vital information in a more condensed and transparent form. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that the OAG's performance reports can have sizable policy impact. For example, Canada's efforts to replace its aging CF18 fleet were greatly affected by the OAG's spring 2012 report on the project. The OAG's critique of the costing and processes surrounding the initial decision to acquire the F35 Joint Strike Fighter led to a decade-long reconsideration of how to go about buying new fighter aircraft.[24]

As valuable as they are, the OAG's performance audits have limitations. Above all, they are episodic. Given that it is responsible for auditing all federal entities and that it faces persistent resource constraints,[25] the OAG can examine only so many programs and projects. And while DND and the CAF are the subject of regular performance audits, those audits tend to focus on single projects or policies. As a result, the OAG's performance audits of the defence portfolio provide precise snapshots, rather than a wider, if less focused, panoramic view. Although performance audits remain critical, one means of giving both Parliament and the public a better understanding of the defence portfolio would therefore be to broaden the OAG's remit. Specifically, the OAG and DND should be resourced and directed to cooperate on the publication of annual reports on major capital projects and military personnel. Indeed, this initiative would bring Canada into line with practices in other Westminster states.

In Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, national auditors and the defence ministry collaborate in preparing annual reports on the state of their capital acquisition plans. Known as the Equipment Plan study in the United Kingdom and the Major Projects Report in Australia and New Zealand, these documents provide Parliament and the public with an annual review of affordability and schedule risks surrounding major military procurements. The reports therefore provide an overarching view of how particular projects and the capital equipment portfolio are progressing. That information can then be used by parliamentary

The Canadian Press/Sean Kilpatrick/20210225

Auditor General Karen Hogan holds a press conference after releasing a report in Ottawa, 25 February 2021.

committees to assess the viability of the defence department's capital plan and, by extension, the military's expected future capabilities. The auditors' role in these reports, it should be noted, is more limited than a performance audit. They do not examine each project; instead, the auditors essentially provide a statement of assurance that the data and analyses provided in the documents are valid and properly presented, to the best of the auditors' understanding. In the Australian case, for example, the National Audit Office will perform cost, schedule and capability analyses of the Major Projects Report, while in the United Kingdom, the National Audit Office performs a quality assurance assessment of the Equipment Plan.[26]

Having a Canadian major projects report or equipment plan would help parliamentarians and the public better understand the state of the DND/CAF capital portfolio, how projects are tracking, and what costing and schedule trends are apparent. Providing that information transparently would, of course, be initially uncomfortable for the government and DND/CAF. Suffice it to say, the Canadian executive is not in the habit of freely sharing information. Yet there are reasons to believe that making more data about DND/CAF's capital plan available in the public domain would ultimately benefit the government. The dominant narrative about Canadian defence procurement is that the process is broken beyond repair.[27]

Certainly, there are enough high-profile controversies to suggest that the military acquisition system struggles to deliver capability on time and within budget. However, in many unsung and unappreciated cases, the procurement system delivers. Greater transparency around the capital portfolio would highlight routine successes that rarely make the news or become the subject of scathing performance audits. What is more, this type of report would indicate which projects are in trouble well before they become headlines. Pressure from opposition parliamentarians to address these struggling projects early on, moreover, could focus the Minister of National Defence's attention on them earlier, potentially leading to more effective course corrections.

Procurement is not the only area that would benefit from this type of report. Military personnel issues, such as recruitment and retention, diversity, and shortfalls in particular trades, could also be reviewed in an annual report jointly prepared by the OAG and DND/CAF. In the United Kingdom, the National Audit Office provides an overview of personnel issues within the Ministry of Defence and the armed forces with its annual departmental overview. This could be broadened and deepened in a Canadian context with an annual DND/CAF personnel report, one that would provide details about demographic trends for entry and exit from various trades and the military itself, as well as survey data from DND civilian staff and CAF members. Alternatively, reporting on military personnel issues, as well as military justice questions, could be assigned to an Inspector General who would be answerable to Parliament.[28] Considering that people are the defence establishment's most important resource and capability, making this type of information readily available to Parliament would improve defence scrutiny and debates.

The Canadian Press/Adrian Wyld/20220308

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Minister of Defence Anita Anand and Chief of the Defence Staff General Wayne Eyre pose with soldiers deployed as part of Op REASSURANCE as they visit the Adazi Military base, Latvia, 8 March 2022.

IV. Conclusion

Canada's Parliament does not perform sufficient scrutiny of the country's defence and military affairs. While certain committees and officers of Parliament do important work to hold the government to account in this area, the legislature lacks information and structures that are needed to scrutinize the defence portfolio effectively. To improve Parliament's performance, it may be tempting to recommend significant overhauls to how parliamentarians do their job and what powers the legislature has at its disposal. Practically speaking, however, that will not get us very far. Most notably, while it is likely true that Parliament would be better placed to hold the government to account if there was less party discipline and more bipartisanship on defence questions, neither of those changes is probable. Therefore, we must look at other measures.

The reforms proposed in this article have emphasized the importance of information. Mission memoranda for international deployments would improve parliamentary debates about operations overseas and mechanisms to hold the government to account, even in cases where opposition parties supported the decision to send CAF troops. A veritable national security committee of Parliament would reconcile the legislature's power to demand documents and the executive's concerns about secrecy. Further, mandating that the Office of the Auditor General and the Department of National Defence cooperate on annual reports on the military's acquisitions and personnel plans would further inform the Public Accounts Committee, the defence committees of the House and Senate, and the wider public about these critical matters. Although these proposals are certainly not exhaustive, they outline initial steps that could be taken to strengthen parliamentary scrutiny of defence in Canada.

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RCMP-GRC

A group of Canadian police officers, Canadian Armed Forces members, National Police of Ukraine, and support staff participate in the Police and Peace Officer's National Memorial Day ceremony at the Canadian Embassy, 27 September 2020.

An International Perspective: Canada's Commitment to Peace and Stabilization Operations in Ukraine

by Sean O'Brien and Grégory Gomez del Prado

Sergeant Sean O'Brien *is a police officer with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and is currently deployed on his second tour to the European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM) Ukraine as a Senior Advisor for Organized Crime. He is a graduate of the Royal Military College (Class of '96) and has served 24 years in various locations in Canada. During his first 8 years, he served as a patrol officer in New Brunswick and Nunavut, and since then he has served in Federal and International Operations in Drug Enforcement, Serious and Organized Crime, Border Integrity, National Security, and International Capacity Building/Security Sector Reform. Under the RCMP's Major Case Management framework, he is an Accredited Team Commander for Organized Crime investigations.*

Sergeant Grégory Gomez del Prado, Ph.D., *is a police officer with the Sûreté du Québec. During his career, he has held various positions including patrol officer, public relations officer, criminal investigator and intelligence specialist. Currently, he is serving in the European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM) in Ukraine as a General Policing Adviser/Trainer. He has a Ph.D. in criminology from the University of Montreal, where he has been a lecturer for more than a decade. In his teaching and research, he is particularly interested in the phenomena of violence and the organization of police services. He recently published a book on the structure of policing in Quebec.*

(This article was written in March 2022, shortly after the Russian invasion of Ukraine.)

One mechanism the Government of Canada has at its disposal to increase peace and stability is the deployment of Canadian police officers to fragile, conflict-affected areas. In fact, Canadian police officers are currently deployed in conflict areas throughout the world as part of the Canadian Police Arrangement (CPA), a partnership between Global Affairs Canada (GAC), Public Safety Canada and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). This partnership enables Canada to deploy police officers in peace and stabilization missions abroad.

Since 2014, the CPA has taken a two-pronged approach to peace and stabilization operations in Ukraine. The largest component of this strategy is the Canadian Police Mission in Ukraine (CPMU), a bilateral capacity-building operation that deploys Canadian police subject-matter experts to develop and deliver training to Ukrainian police. Training consists of various pillars designed to improve both policing competency and organizational professionalism. CPMU operations are currently suspended due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Canada's lesser-known effort towards policing reform and stabilization in Ukraine is its partnership with the European Union through the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the EU–Canada Strategic Partnership Agreement. Arguably the most practical tool in the EEAS's arsenal is the ability to force generate and deploy EU resources in the form of civilian and military missions in accordance with the EU's Common Security and Defence

Policy (CSDP). Since 2003, Canada has been a third-country contributor to CSDP missions, and it currently participates in the EU civilian missions for the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS) and in Ukraine (EUAM Ukraine).

The EUAM Ukraine Mandate

Prior to the beginning of Russia's operations to invade Ukraine, EUAM Ukraine's role was to provide strategic advice and practical support to Ukraine's Civilian Security Sector, which comprises law enforcement agencies including the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the National Police, the Patrol Police, the State Border Guard Service, the National Anti-Corruption Bureau and the Security Service of Ukraine. It also includes rule of law agencies, such as the Ministry of Justice, the General Prosecutor's Office, and local courts.

The EUAM Ukraine mandate has three pillars:

- strategic advice for the reform and development of legislation and strategic documents;
- support for reform implementation, providing training and equipment;
- cooperation and coordination, aligning reform efforts of local and international partners.

To implement its mandate, EUAM Ukraine focused its activities on five priorities:

- national and state security;
- organized and cross-border crime;
- criminal justice;
- community safety and police management;
- digital transformation and innovation.

However, reform of the civilian security sector is not possible without also integrating cross-cutting priorities, such as anti-corruption, good governance, and human rights and gender equality. These play a part in each of the EUAM's five priorities and are relevant for all agencies of the civil security sector.

Canada's Contribution to the Civil Security Sector Reform Process in Ukraine

To understand the role Canadians fill within EUAM Ukraine, it is important to understand the Civil Security Sector Reform (CSSR) process from a strategic perspective. Following the Maidan revolution of 2013–14, the Ukrainian government requested the assistance of the EU to assist with reform through the signing of an Association Agreement with the European Union. In short, the Ukrainian people demanded comprehensive systematic reform in areas of anti-corruption, governance, policing and the judicial system. After the Maidan revolution, helping Ukraine in its fragile state shed the vestiges of Soviet governance required a clear methodology to reform and develop resiliency against backsliding into established ways. The elements of reform can be broken down into seven key areas:[1]

1) Legal Basis: appropriate laws must be established to provide the legal basis for reform.
2) Accountability/Oversight: specialized independent oversight mechanisms must be created to ensure oversight and transparency.
3) Change Management: strategies and capacities must be developed to manage reform.
4) Modern Human Resourcing: organizational reform requires professional staff, free from corruption, with inclusive representation of gender, ethnic, religious, language or other considerations as appropriate. A key concept is to recruit for values and train for skill.
5) Capacity Development: ensure that individuals are able to perform the tasks entrusted to them.
6) Resources: ensure that the organization has adequate financial, human and material resources.
7) Assess and Focus: evaluate progress and target problem areas that require additional support in order to function in accordance with democratic principles.

Canada's direct contribution to the EUAM since 2014 has been the deployment of Canadian police officers to various roles within the EUAM, such as Anti-corruption, General Policing, Criminal Investigation, Mobile Unit and Organized Crime. Generally, there are two Canadian police officers deployed to the mission at a time. Currently, those officers hold positions as Senior Advisor on Organized Crime and Advisor/Trainer on General Policing. In addition to the officers' individual contributions to their respective roles within the mission, the presence of the Canadian police has been a force multiplier for both CPMU/CPA and EUAM Ukraine. These officers have provided a vital link between the two missions, which has resulted in cooperation across multiple program lines including cooperation on training development and delivery and sharing of information in accordance with the EU's "Integrated Approach."[2]

"The Ukrainian people demanded comprehensive systematic reform in areas of anti-corruption, governance, policing and the judicial system."

Organized and Cross-Border Crime Reform

In 2019, the Ukrainian government published its Action Plan for Organized Crime, which laid out its priorities and planned activities. With his Organized Crime Unit colleagues from Ukraine, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Germany and Estonia, Sgt O'Brien was involved in planning and delivering on five activities within the Action Plan. This was in partnership with the National Police of Ukraine (NPU) and the Office of the Prosecutor General. The key interlocutors in the NPU were the Strategic Investigation Department, the Criminal Intelligence Department and the Witness Protection Unit.

The unit was involved in helping Ukraine adopt the Serious and Organized Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA) methodology. SOCTA is a strategic tool that the EU uses to get a strategic view of the organized crime situation across the EU, so that policy makers can assess the spectrum of threats facing Member States, prioritize them, and assign resources accordingly. Canada contributed to EU

RCMP-GRC

Sergeant Sean O'Brien, a police officer with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, is deployed on his second tour to the European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM) Ukraine as a Senior Advisor for Organized Crime. He stands in front of the Monument to the Unknown Soldier in the Park of Eternal Glory in Kiev during a Remembrance Day ceremony.

SOCTA through its EU Partnership and produces its own national and provincial organized crime threat assessments through Criminal Intelligence Service Canada and its provincial representatives. These assessments have enabled governments to change their focus to address such things as the opioid crisis, money laundering, cybercrime and related frauds, as well as border integrity issues such as human trafficking and migrant crises. SOCTA has been strongly supported by the Government of Ukraine through proclamations in the Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian parliament) in January 2022 and direction for the NPU to lead its implementation. In fact, the NPU Criminal Analysis Unit compiled SOCTA Ukraine 2019; however, it was not officially published. As with many reform items, this activity had difficulty finding support at various levels, despite government direction.

The EUAM also sponsored the concept of Regional Organized Crime Task Forces. As a mechanism to improve the fight against organized crime, the EUAM has advocated for Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) in Ukraine to establish regional task forces for the purpose of maximizing resources, prioritizing threats, and sharing information. Models of such cooperation in various EU countries and Canada were analyzed and collated in the EUAM's strategic advice package to advance this effort.

In any organized crime investigation, the lack of witness protection and the inability to ensure witnesses' safety after prosecution can scuttle any prosecution and potentially block law enforcement from infiltrating insulated organized crime groups. The EUAM and partners in Europol (a support service for EU Member States) were providing training and strategic advice for witness protection legislation and organizational standard operating procedures. These efforts faced two fundamental challenges, as outlined in the CSSR process above. First, Ukraine does not have specific witness protection legislation that regulates police authority with respect to witness protection. Two legislative drafts were before the Ukrainian parliament: one to enact new legislation and a second to amend articles of the *Criminal Procedure Code* that could facilitate witness protection measures. However, both draft laws had been stagnant for 18 months. Second, there is no clear delineation of competencies within Ukrainian law enforcement with respect to witness protection and no single oversight body, unlike in most western countries. As a result of the lack of clarity and the lack of trust among law enforcement bodies, multiple LEAs within Ukraine had witness protection mandates with no coordination of efforts nationally or internationally.

To support intelligence-led policing approaches and strategic and tactical analyses, the EUAM has been facilitating criminal intelligence analysis training to NPU's Central and Regional Criminal Analysis Units throughout Ukraine using Romanian police experts in the field. This training was designed to dovetail with decision-making frameworks for policing leadership. The lion's share of this training provided practical skills, such as open source intelligence analysis, database analysis, signal intelligence and GIS mapping skills. However, the most important areas of the training were the concepts of intelligence-led policing and strategic intelligence analysis. One of the key challenges of those activities was that Ukrainian LEA leadership was primarily focused on developing practical skills and employing them in support of tactical investigations, with less consideration for the larger strategic organized crime picture internationally. Often, those skills were diverted from intelligence analysis tasks and used for forensic video processing. The lack of an objective intelligence-led prioritization and decision-making process removed an important strategic tool and oversight mechanism while maintaining a system with increased susceptibility to corruption.

Human intelligence is a highly valuable asset in law enforcement and is fraught with complications. A working group consisting of various EUAM experts representing different Member States, the United States International Criminal Investigation Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) and the NPU Criminal Intelligence Section was in the process of developing practical human source handling specific to NPU criminal intelligence needs. This training was an incremental step towards developing unit competency prior to providing in-depth specialized training to be delivered by Estonian experts. One lesson learned during this process was that, in keeping with CSSR Key Area 4, Modern Human Resourcing (mentioned above), experts from the US International Bureau of Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) could not be involved in this activity, since the NPU had not committed to implementing modern staffing procedures as an anti-corruption measure.

On 23–24 February, Sgt O'Brien and the Organized Crime Unit were participating with the Office of the Prosecutor General in a conference for the rollout of the Regional Organized Crime Task Forces to the Regions of Ukraine. On 24 February, the Russian invasion ended the activities. Since then, Sgt O'Brien has been actively supporting his contacts in the NPU Strategic Investigation Department (SID) in many ways. Maintaining daily contact with

the NPU SID, he has focused his efforts on connecting key players to provide support in Ukraine, or to help those trying to leave. Moreover, through daily updates, Sgt O'Brien has helped to ensure that EUAM Ukraine is actively engaged in supporting its partners.

Community Safety and Police Management Reform

Since its beginning, the EUAM has focused on strengthening the effectiveness of Ukrainian LEAs. Starting in 2021, the new mandate has aimed at specifically developing the NPU into an effective and efficient police service through the integration of Community Safety and Police Management principles and concepts, with sustainability always in mind.

Under the general term "community safety and security" lie the main principles of community policing. Although these principles have sometimes been misunderstood and not adequately applied by police services in Canada[3], the core values of community policing have proven to be relevant in a CSSR process. The Mission aims at supporting LEAs in integrating a proactive and multi-stakeholder approach to ensuring the safety of citizens and their communities. This means involving local authorities, security actors, civil society organizations and representatives of the community at the central, regional and local levels. Concretely, the EUAM has put in place the Community Safety Dialogue project to gather counterparts at the central and regional levels. At the local level, the Security Environment Assessment System initiative has supported and monitored the implementation of Citizen Advisory Groups in smaller communities. These advisory groups identify criminal and non-criminal safety issues that affect citizens' sense of security and address these issues with the "local solutions to local problems" approach.

On the sustainability side, one particularly promising approach has been the Community Policing Training of the Trainers (ToT) project. In partnership with the Donetsk State University (DSU) of Mariupol, the EUAM, in collaboration with the CPMU, created an extensive Community Policing curriculum based on the best practices and experiences in EU countries and in Canada. Until recently, this curriculum was gradually being integrated in all of the seven universities of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA). MoIA universities are responsible for the initial and specialized training of police officers in Ukraine. In parallel, police officers from the EUAM and CPMU trained all the professors from the DSU in May 2021 in this Community Policing curriculum and a six-day seminar was organized to train the first group of teachers from the remaining six universities. The trainers were all the DSU professors paired with EUAM and CPMU mentors, in accordance with their field of expertise. Three more seminars in the same format were planned in 2022 to complete the training of community policing professors in all the MoIA universities.

The other pillar is the reform of the management system within the NPU. The EUAM aims to advise, mentor and support the development and implementation of efficient management standards. This has proven to be quite challenging given the highly hierarchical and rigid style of management inherited from the past culture. Moreover, transparency and accountability issues in leadership are regularly addressed, as the Mission established good governance and anti-corruption as cross-cutting measures in its mandate.

As with community policing, the EUAM has focused on sustainable projects for the management of the NPU. For example, the Mid-Level Management ToT project trained approximately 150 police managers in the last two years. The training was divided into two parts. First, police officers were taught the skills required to become trainers themselves and deliver key learning strategies. Second, the training provided concepts and best practices on management and leadership, communication, human rights and gender, and anti-corruption. Last year, a module on sexual harassment in the workplace was added to the training. The first part of the project was completed just before the start of the Russian invasion. The second part, which was planned for spring and summer 2022, consisted of monitoring the training given by the new trainers to approximately 2,900 police managers across Ukraine. The EUAM, in collaboration with the CPMU, was planning to monitor approximately 50 training sessions.

What's Next? The EUAM Pivots Its Mandate to Support the New Reality

As tension was building around Ukraine's borders, EUAM management proactively evacuated non-essential Mission staff from the country in mid-February. On the day of the attack, senior management and essential staff executed the evacuation plan and established a temporary headquarters in Moldova. After an expeditious and intense assessment of

RCMP-GRC

Interregional Conference organized by the Ukrainian Association of Women in Law Enforcement (UAWLE) in October 2021 titled "Break Stereotypes by Knowing Yourself." (Left to right) Nina Pelkonen, Finnish policer officer working for EUAM Ukraine; Kateryna Pavlichenko, Deputy Minister of Interior of Ukraine and president of UAWLE; Erik Svedahl, Ambassador of Norway to Ukraine; Sergeant Grégory Gomez del Prado, Sûreté du Québec.

the situation, EUAM Ukraine pivoted within its mandate to concentrate on several key activities.

The primary activity is providing emergency support for Ukraine. EUAM Operations collected and collated immediate needs from the EUAM's key partners and immediately redistributed the budget from planned operations to the provision of rations and humanitarian supplies. Likewise, it began the procurement process to reallocate additional funding through other police funding for personal protective equipment, rations, medical supplies and communications equipment.

RCMP-GRC

Deployed Canadian police officers stand respectfully during the singing of the Ukrainian National Anthem at a graduation ceremony, 16 August 2019.

EUAM Operations also aims at supporting operations on the different EU borders with Ukraine. In partnership with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) and the European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM), The EUAM aims to support Ukraine and Member States with the flow of goods and people across different border points.

The last activity consists of assessing the support to Ukrainian authorities in the investigation and prosecution of international criminal law violations.

Conclusion

With respect to CSSR and its impact on helping fragile states build resilience to outside aggressors, or to internal subversive threats, it is clear through the lens of current events just how crucial it is to have a clear reform plan and to achieve the reforms as expeditiously as possible. Over the course of the mission, mission members and beneficiaries have experienced reform fatigue and complacency, which can then become an obstacle to successful integration. One of the key takeaways from the operations following the initial invasion was how the COVID19 pandemic and the necessary transition to remote working helped prepare the Mission to be agile and to respond quickly to help manage aspects of this crisis.

Likewise, in the early onset of the war, there was uncertainty among the staff with respect to the status and future of the mission. Understandably, Ukraine has much more pressing issues to deal with at present—including its very existence—that take precedence over reform agendas. However, the EEAS Conduct Planning and Conduct Capability, as well as Mission leadership, left no doubt and reassured Ukrainian partners and Mission staff that they were in the business of crisis management and were still in the fight. It is this decisive leadership that has allowed EUAM Ukraine to pivot quickly and stay engaged.

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NOTES

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AP photo/Markus Schreiber

A man carries combat gear as he enters Ukraine at the border crossing in Medyka, Poland, Wednesday, 2 March 2022.

The Canadians Fighting in Ukraine

by Tyler Wentzell

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Canadians have a long history of engaging in foreign wars. Even when the state played no official role, Canadians fought in large numbers in the American Civil War, the Spanish Civil War, and the Vietnam War, with smaller numbers participating in many other conflicts.[1] These volunteers sometimes served in formal militaries, while others fought for non-state actors. These Canadians went to fight for their ideals or to seek adventure rather than because their home country demanded it. With such ostensibly romantic motivations, it is little wonder that foreign volunteerism is often a divisive topic. Some see these fighters as criminals—or liabilities who risk pulling their country into a war—while others celebrate them as folk heroes.

This article, written in the early days of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, examines the Canadian volunteers serving in the Armed Forces of Ukraine. It begins by recounting the early recruiting process and Russian and Canadian official reactions to it. Then, it examines the concept of foreign fighters generally and related terms, highlighting key legal distinctions between foreign fighters, mercenaries, and foreign terrorist fighters. Finally, it highlights what this author perceives as some of the challenges posed by the participation of Canadian volunteers in this conflict. It dispels the notion that Canada is formally neutral and posits that the principal risk is that Russia will use the foreign fighters in support of their narrative of clandestine NATO involvement. This claim is only made worse by Russia's announced intention to treat foreign fighters as criminals and not extend to them the protections of the Geneva Conventions.

The International Legion of Territorial Defense of Ukraine

The first concrete indications of a move towards recruiting foreign volunteers came on 26 February 2022 through a Facebook post by Ukraine's embassy in Israel (Figure 1).

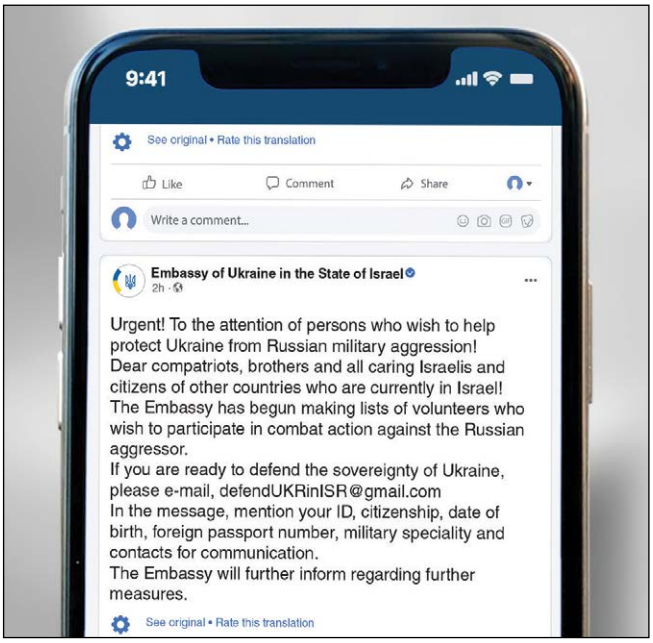

Figure 1: Adapted screenshot from the Ukrainian embassy to Israel's Facebook post, 26 February 2022, later deleted.[2]

The next day, Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky announced that the Armed Forces of Ukraine would accept foreign volunteers and build the International Legion of Territorial Defense of Ukraine (ILDU), a unit within its armed forces. Ukraine has formally permitted foreign nationals and stateless persons who could legally work in Ukraine to join its military since 2016.[3] Now it was recruiting foreigners and building a specific organization within its military to receive them. Within a week, Ukraine had waived all visa requirements and reportedly received 16,000 foreign volunteers.[4]

The ILDU has made joining its ranks extremely easy (Figure 2). A well-designed website with high search engine optimization greets a potential recruit with a live chat feature and two buttons to "Enlist Now." The website provides seven simple steps to enlist and all of the necessary contacts to complete the process. Additionally, the website amplifies key themes present in other state materials: that Ukraine needs help and that their fight is the fight of free people everywhere. The website's tagline is "Save the World, Stand with Ukraine," and one of the five criteria for volunteering is having "a strong will to defend world peace."[5] The website designers have emphasized the moral standing of the endeavour rather than excitement, adventure, or material gain. The corresponding website for Canadians—with a .ca domain name—is less sophisticated but certainly direct. It includes a four-line application form.[6]

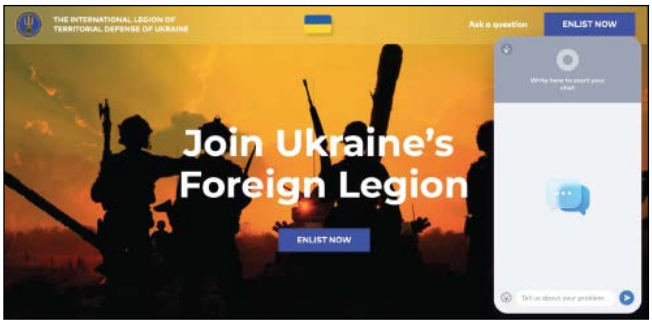

Figure 2: The landing page of the ILDU as of 12 March 2022.[7]

Canadian reaction to the recruiting drive came quickly. Mélanie Joly, Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, stated the same day as Zelensky's announcement: "We understand that people of Ukrainian descent want to support their fellow Ukrainians and also that there is a desire to defend the motherland and in that sense it is their own individual decision…. Let me be clear: we are all very supportive of any form of support to Ukrainians right now." Minister of National Defence Anita Anand similarly told "all foreigners willing to defend Ukraine and world order" to contact the foreign diplomatic missions of Ukraine.[8] Subsequent statements warned Canadians not to join the Russian armed forces and encouraged them to join the Canadian Armed Forces instead of going abroad to enlist. Still, the official Canadian stance on Ukraine's recruiting drive has been uncritical.[9]

On 9 March, only ten days after Zelensky announced the creation of the ILDU, 550 Canadians were reportedly in Kyiv. The ILDU grouped them into their own battalion, with a further 1,000 applicants in the recruiting pipeline.[10] Given that many more volunteers are simply boarding commercial flights to get to Ukraine as fast as possible, there are potentially many more volunteers, meaning that a Canadian brigade is not beyond the realm of possibility.[11] There are as yet no details as to the composition of the Canadian contingent or the experience of its members, and therefore nothing on how it might be employed. For instance, there is a significant difference between 550 enthusiastic and perhaps even highly trained infantry soldiers and an actual battalion with the necessary mix of command and technical skills to fight, move, and communicate as an organization. The former is a holding unit; the latter can conduct operations.

The difference between a holding unit from which to draw volunteers for other units and a formed organization of Canadian volunteers might not make a difference militarily. However, it may play a role in the Canadian public's perception of the volunteers. For instance, in the Spanish Civil War, nearly 1,700 Canadians volunteered to fight for the Second Spanish Republic. They are collectively remembered as the "Mac-Paps," short for the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion. However, this nickname belies a sort of useful fiction: the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion was an actual battalion named in honour of the Canadian volunteers' contribution to the war. In truth, Canadians never constituted its majority, certainly not among its leadership appointments. The International Brigades sprinkled Canadians throughout its battalions, but the more politically savvy Canadian volunteers understood that the idea of a Canadian unit was a

powerful way to connect the Canadian public to the war effort.[12] The announcement of a Canadian "battalion" in Ukraine and creating a "brigade" patch so early likely follows the same logic (Figure 3). In the Spanish Civil War, the announcement of a Canadian battalion also preceded the unit's actual creation.

Badge/photo courtesy of Roman Chabursky and Professor Lubomyr Luciuk

Figure 3: The reported arm patch worn by Canadians fighters in Ukraine.[13]

Russian officials publicly commented on the foreign fighters shortly after Zelensky's announcement. Alexander Bastrykin, head of Russia's Investigative Committee, directed that the foreign fighters be identified and monitored for potential criminal proceedings. Russian domestic law prohibits the participation of mercenaries in armed conflict, punishable by up to seven years imprisonment.[14] A Russian Ministry of Defence spokesperson then stated that the military's position was that the foreign volunteers were mercenaries. As mercenaries, they were not entitled to prisoner of war status under the Geneva Conventions. He stated, "At best, they [the volunteers] can expect to be prosecuted as criminals."[15]

What is a Foreign Fighter?

There is no universally accepted definition of foreign fighters or foreign volunteers. Moreover, challenges in assessing a volunteer's motivations to fight and any measure of "foreignness" beyond strict citizenship often dilute the concept. The best definition comes from historian Nir Arielli's *From Byron to bin Laden: A History of Foreign War Volunteers*: "Foreign volunteers leave their country of nationality or residence and take part in a conflict abroad on the basis of a personal decision, without being sent by their government and not primarily for material gain."[16] This definition usefully separates mercenaries from foreign volunteers, and includes volunteers for both state armed forces and armed non-state actors alike.

The history of Canadian foreign fighters is further complicated by the country's heritage as a British colony, integration with the United States, and multicultural population. Canadian citizenship was not distinct from British until 1946. Furthermore, Britons and many Canadians shared profound cultural connections. Consequently, Canadians could and often did serve with British or imperial forces with little perception of "foreignness." Similarly, Canadians and Americans—sharing a North American identity that obscured foreignness—have routinely served in each other's militaries. Finally, Canada's multicultural society creates further complications. Many people simultaneously hold more than one identity and/or set of legal obligations. Canada permits dual citizenship, and a Canadian may be required to complete compulsory military service where required by their other state. Further, Canada is home to many diaspora populations who may feel compelled to serve in the militaries of their other home. Such connections are not strictly a matter of country of origin, such as the movement during the 1860s to have Catholic Canadians defend Pope Pius IX or the many Jewish Canadians who have served in the Israeli Defence Forces.[17]

While popular culture sometimes romanticizes mercenaries, their widespread use during the Cold War, particularly in Africa, led to significant human rights abuses and diminished exercise of national self-determination. Whoever could pay the bills could quickly acquire a body of often ruthless fighters. Consequently, the label is often used to diminish the moral standing of foreign volunteers. The "good guys" attract foreign volunteers because of the justness of their cause, while the "bad guys" use mercenaries who are motivated by nothing more than money.

The 1977 Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions defines mercenaries and their legal protections. A mercenary is recruited to participate in an armed conflict and then actually engages in an armed conflict. A mercenary is neither a citizen of a state party to the conflict nor a resident of it. A mercenary is motivated by personal gain, and they are paid considerably more than those of equivalent rank or qualifications. The definition further excludes individuals who serve in either the armed forces of a party to the conflict or of a non-party who is present in an official capacity. This is a very restrictive definition and notably excludes foreign volunteers who serve in a state's armed forces.[18]

The distinction between a mercenary and a foreign fighter is significant, as there are different legal protections for each category. A foreign volunteer in an armed force receives the protections of the Geneva Conventions, especially important if the individual is captured and becomes a prisoner of war. Although a mercenary does not receive the same protections, they are presumptively given them until a tribunal determines their status—a requirement ignored by Russian statements to date.[19] A prisoner of war has immunity from prosecution for their mere participation in the conflict and lawful conduct. Mercenaries, however, may be tried by the detaining power for their conduct, which should be preceded "whenever possible" by the tribunal determining their status.[20] While Canada has no such offence in its legislation, some states—including Russia—have created specific offences for the crime of being a mercenary.

A related category of foreign fighter is the Foreign Terrorist Fighter (FTF). Following the attacks of 11 September 2001, Canada created new terrorism offences within the *Criminal Code*. In 2013, Canada added new provisions, including section 83.181: it is an offence to leave or attempt to leave Canada to commit an

offence that, if it were committed in Canada, would constitute participation in a terrorist group. This offence preceded United Nations Security Resolution (UNSCR) 2178 of 2014, which called upon states to establish laws for identifying, prosecuting, and reintegrating FTFs, and the similar UNSCR 2396 of 2017.[21]

REUTERS/Alamy Stock Photo

Canada's Defence Minister Anita Anand speaks during a visit to highlight military aid for Ukraine at Canadian Forces Base Trenton in Trenton, Ontario, 14 April 2022.

UNSCR 2178 and 2396, and Canada's section 83.181 of the *Criminal Code*, were principally motivated by many foreigners fighting with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), a listed terrorist group. Canadians also volunteered with Al-Shabab in Somalia; Al-Muwaqi'un Bil Dima, an Al Qaeda affiliate in Algeria; and the anti-ISIS Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The PKK is especially notable because it was the only listed terrorist group within the anti-ISIS coalition. Canadians who volunteered with other Kurdish militias did not break any law in doing so. However Canadians joining the PKK would do so in contravention of section 83.181 if they acted to commit a terrorist offence or to assist the PKK in committing a terrorist offence. Nevertheless, no one has been charged for actions with the PKK to date. As of 2018, only 11 Canadians had been charged under this provision, and only three have been convicted.[22]

Whether an individual is labelled a foreign fighter or volunteer, a mercenary, or a terrorist, their conduct is what ultimately matters. Canadian legal prohibitions on terrorist activity and the commission of war crimes or crimes against humanity apply extraterritorially, meaning it does not matter where the crimes are committed or for whom they are committed. Similarly, whether or not someone is rhetorically considered a terrorist, they nonetheless receive protections under the Geneva Conventions if their actual conduct follows the laws of armed conflict.

Potential Implications of the Canadian Foreign Fighters

The principal motivation behind early legal prohibitions on foreign military service is preserving a state's prerogative in the exercise of its foreign policy. The circumstances leading to the first British *Foreign Enlistment Act* provide an illustrative example. After the Napoleonic Wars, demobilized British soldiers travelled to Latin America to fight for Simon Bolivar against Spain. The individual decisions of these British subjects threatened the peace between Spain and Britain, so the British parliament passed a law prohibiting them from joining foreign militaries as may be "prejudicial to and tend to endanger the Peace and Welfare of this Kingdom."[23] The law was hardly enforced, but at least Britain could point to it as evidence that it was not surreptitiously fuelling an insurgency against Spain. In British North America, the law was used in a limited way to prosecute American recruiters during their civil war, but not against the volunteers themselves. The law was hastily updated again in 1870 to prevent Britons from fighting in the Franco-Prussian War—effectively, to preserve British neutrality in a war in which it played no part.[24]

The law of neutrality was established in custom and codified in the 1907 Hague Conventions. These conventions included 13 treaties, two of which directly addressed the law of neutrality. One of these is pertinent to the present discussion: *Respecting the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Case of War on Land*.[25] The positive duties of a neutral state in land warfare were limited. While the neutral state could not itself contribute soldiers, weapons, or "in general, of anything which can be of use to any army or fleet," it did not have to actively prevent its nationals or resident corporations from volunteering for service, making donations, or trading with (and profiting from) a belligerent party.[26] The neutral state could restrict or otherwise regulate the activities of its nationals and corporations, but it had to do so in a manner that did not discriminate amongst belligerents. For example, a state could restrict volunteering in foreign militaries generally, or in the militaries of any belligerent state involved in a specific conflict, but it would lose the status of neutrality if it prohibited enlistment in one belligerent's military while permitting it in another.[27]

The statuses of "neutral" and "belligerent" are not binary; there is space in between. In the present conflict, Canada is not a belligerent, but it cannot claim to be neutral either. Canada has contributed weapons to Ukraine and not to Russia. Canada has pursued sanctions against Russia and not against Ukraine. Canada is providing intelligence and cyber assistance to Ukraine and not to Russia. Canada's position on foreign volunteers is not entirely clear, but official statements so far have been permissive of volunteering for Ukraine and cautionary against volunteering for Russia. Canada is not—and should not—treat the parties the same and therefore cannot claim to be neutral.

AP Photo/Markus Schreiber

A Ukrainian refugee holds the hand of a child as she walks with others at the border crossing in Medyka, Poland, 8 March 2022.

The risk to Canada posed by the foreign volunteers is not the loss of neutrality but potential Russian claims that Canada or its allies are belligerents. Russian propaganda has repeated the claim that Russia had "no choice" but to invade Ukraine due to NATO expansion and the threat to Moscow posed by long-range weapons in Ukraine. At the time of writing, the performance of the Russian armed forces has been lacklustre and the Ukrainian resistance formidable. As Russian president Vladimir Putin attempts to construct a narrative to explain this poor performance, he may claim that these failures were due to significant clandestine NATO involvement. In addition to material support for Ukraine, including anti-tank weapons, the large numbers of foreign fighters from NATO states like Canada will support this narrative. These issues may manifest as rhetorical claims in state media as Putin tries to save face, but they may also manifest in acts of escalation.

Russia's claim that the foreign volunteers are mercenaries and will not be extended the protections of the Geneva Conventions exacerbates this risk. For example, suppose the Russian armed forces capture a Canadian volunteer. In that case, that individual will not be afforded prisoner of war status and will instead face trial in a Russian court for the crime of being a mercenary engaged in an armed conflict. If Russia does not presumptively give these individuals the protections of the Geneva Conventions and make determinations of their status through a competent tribunal, as required by Additional Protocol I, this will constitute a disturbing violation of international law. Moreover, it seems unlikely that a Russian criminal proceeding of this nature would be apolitical. There is a significant risk of coerced false confessions and sham trials to provide the world with misleading evidence in support of the Russian narratives of significant NATO interference in the conflict.

A corollary to this issue is the risk of the volunteers being used more generally for disinformation. Simply by travelling abroad to isolated locations, these foreign volunteers are at an elevated risk of identity theft. Russian authorities could steal a Canadian volunteer's identity and compromise their social media accounts such that Russian disinformation could reach a Canadian audience with greater legitimacy than through state-run media. In the same way a volunteer's social media account may do much to connect Canadians at home directly to the Ukrainian people, a compromised or entirely fabricated account could create opportunities for Russia to develop simulated, "false flag" war crimes to erode the legitimacy of the ILDU.

In the longer term, the eventual return of Canadian volunteers presents other complications. Even though Canadian policy is that going is a personal choice undertaken at one's own risk, it seems unlikely that the government could invest zero political capital into securing the release of any detained Canadians. Similarly, while any returned Canadians would be eligible for general healthcare, they will require certain social and mental health services that are not provided to the general population. Ukraine's veteran services and potentially even Ukrainian diaspora community groups may assist these returnees. Still, other aspects of their care and reintegration may require special services and the expenditure of taxpayer money.

Finally, some returning fighters will pose a potential security threat to Canada. Some elements of the Armed Forces of Ukraine are heavily influenced by right-wing ideology, to say nothing of the myriad paramilitary groups that have or will emerge. Similar-minded extremist foreigners are among those who have volunteered to defend Ukraine.[28] Such individuals may be simultaneously motivated to support Ukraine while also gaining training and combat experience for nefarious ends. Such individuals may present a future law enforcement challenge, and prosecution of such individuals for war crimes, crimes against humanity, or terrorism offences stands to be extremely difficult.

Conclusion

At the time of writing, Russia has abandoned its general offensive and focused instead on Ukraine's south and east. The Ukrainian people continue to give example after

example of defiance in the face of terrible odds. Foreign volunteers continue to arrive by way of the Polish border, passing Ukrainian civilians driven from their homes by the fighting. The foreign volunteers may yet provide enough combat power to make a tactical difference in battles to come, but we can be certain that regardless of their military impact, they will alter the relationship their home countries have to the plight of the Ukrainian people. Canadians, already following the battle through traditional and social media, will soon hear stories from the front told by their fellow citizens. Should a formed unit of Canadians engage in combat against the Russian armed forces, it will likely become a powerful symbol that will motivate Canadians to do more for Ukraine.

Such a symbol is appealing, especially at a moment when so many Canadians feel helpless and frustrated as they watch this human tragedy play out. But it will come with a cost. Canadians will be among the casualties, and captured Canadians will likely be exploited for propaganda purposes. This, too, will change Canada's relationship with this war, as leaders struggle to do what is possible for these Canadians while preventing Canada from becoming further embroiled in the conflict. At the end of the conflict, whatever its outcome, many of these fighters will come home bearing both visible and invisible scars from their experiences. This reintegration may fuel further debate as to what degree the state owes assistance to the Canadians who fought for this popular cause, knowing it was a personal decision undertaken at their own risk.

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NOTES

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DND photo courtesy of author

Task Force Latvia (TFL) team at the start of the *Baltais Kalns* 136 km hike, May 2019.

"Let's StratCom the Shit Out of That": Task Force Latvia and Adventures with StratCom

by Chris Young

Christopher J. Young, CD, Ph.D., *is a retired armoured major with over 40 years of service in the Canadian Armed Forces. He completed his doctorate in history at Concordia University in Montreal under the supervision of Professors Frank Chalk and Carolyn Fick, examining the impact of foreign interventions in Haiti. He also has a Master of Arts in War Studies from the Royal Military College of Canada.*

Background

> *Like warfare, narrative has always been about influence. Narratives have been used to influence behaviour since the dawn of Man. But now more than ever with conflicts that are conducted just below the threshold of all-out war we are participating in battles for influence. These are narrative conflicts.*[1]

In 2009, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) initially defined Strategic Communications (StratCom) as the coordinated and appropriate use of NATO communications activities and capabilities—Public Diplomacy, Public Affairs, Military Public Affairs, Information Operations and Psychological Operations—in support of Alliance policies, operations and activities that advanced NATO's aims. By 2010, NATO had recognized that StratCom was not an adjunct activity but rather an enabling process. The new aim of StratCom was to provide understanding and shaping of the information environment. To accomplish that aim, NATO decreed that StratCom was to be integrated into all military operations and activities.

By 2018, the NATO Centre of Excellence (COE) for StratCom, located in Riga, Latvia, refined the definition further with the issuance of the StratCom Practitioners Handbook.[2] StratCom was identified as both a process and a command function, with the new aim of promoting the integration of military communications capabilities and functions with other military capabilities to achieve three goals.[3] The first goal was to understand and shape the information environment; the second, to inform, persuade and influence audiences in support of mission objectives; and the third, to implement political will. Underlying StratCom as a process and a command function was an understanding that all operations and activities were communication tools, whether intended or not. In effect, as Marshall McLuhan wrote so many years ago, this was a recognition that "the medium is the message."[4]

At the operational level, the NATO StratCom COE identified four responsibilities for StratCom.[5] First, StratCom was to guide and assist the implementation and updating of the strategic–political communications guidance or information strategy, in conjunction

with the Strategic Planning Directive (SPD). Second, it provides oversight for the commander across all dimensions of communications, operations, and levels of command. Third, StratCom involves the coordination of the joint task force (JTF) military communications efforts with those of other Joint, Interagency, Multinational and Public (JIMP) partners and allies. Fourth and most importantly, StratCom provides operational foresight on the information environment and assists with contingency planning from a perceptive beyond the joint operational area (JOA).

Aim

The aim of this article is to outline the development and implementation of a Canadianized version of StratCom within Task Force Latvia (TFL), including how and why TFL's StratCom implementation and practice differed from the NATO doctrinal model. I will also explore, based on the TFL experience, thoughts on staffing and the qualifications necessary for an operational StratCom cell on future operations. Lastly, I will identify best practices from TFL's experience that should influence future StratCom cell operations.

Tracing the Evolutionary Development of TFL's StratCom

> *Indisputably, Russia uses many different instruments to assert its interest. These include hard military power, as demonstrated in the interventions in Georgia, Ukraine, and Syria; the manipulation of economic ties; interference in other countries' domestic politics through various allies, affiliates, and proxies; and targeted information campaigns to influence public opinion.*[6]

TFL was initially established with a J9 Information Operations cell.[7] The cell's major activities centred on outreach and military public affairs, although it did undertake limited capability-development work with the Latvian Armed Forces.[8] By 2016, the Commander of TFL, Colonel Josh Major, had made the decision to move away from the J9 organization and towards a StratCom cell model based on NATO doctrine.[9]

Col Major's StratCom vision was oriented towards providing a philosophical underpinning intended to permit greater collaboration and better integration of communications- and information-related capabilities into other military activities. This was to be realized not only within Latvia, but within the wider NATO enhanced forward presence operational area. With that larger reach in mind, the Commander's vision was of a robust, action-oriented framework which had the StratCom cell leading the planning and synchronization of information-related activities including, when appropriate, actively leading the activities on the ground. A catchphrase around the HQ became "Let's StratCom the shit out of that!"

Initially, the StratCom role was based on achieving effects within the information environment (IE), in support of Canadian strategic objectives. That role would later expand and include support for not only Canadian objectives, but also NATO and Latvian objectives as well.[10] The initial structure shown in Figure 1 supported that initial vision.

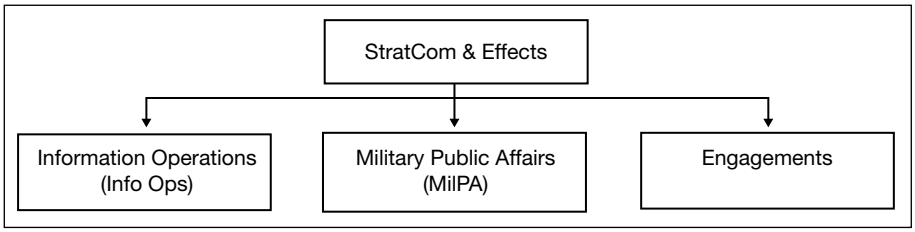


Figure 1: Initial TFL StratCom Cell Organization

Staffing for the cell saw a public affairs (PA) major as Chief StratCom & Effects, a PA major as Chief MilPA and a combat arms major as Chief Info Ops. All three were Regular Force. The Engagements cell was headed up by a Reserve combat arms captain and, while directly under the Chief StratCom & Effects as per the line diagram, was supervised by the Chief Info Ops on a day-to-day basis for coordination and synchronization of civil–military cooperation (CIMIC) activities.[11]

By 2018, it became apparent that that structure required further rationalization. The Engagements cell had initially been established to support the targeting required for both the physical and information environments. However, because of concerns raised over the cell being seen as targeting a fellow NATO member state (Latvia), "targeting" became a forbidden term within the HQ. Additionally, the vision for the StratCom cell as effecting the collaboration and better integration of communications- and information-related capabilities into other military activities required more emphasis on long-term plans and analysis, particularly in the development of an effects-based approach to TFL operations. Accordingly, a revised structure as shown in Figure 2 was proposed.

The proposed changes reflected the StratCom cell's very limited role in information operations (info ops) during non-crisis periods; it was largely confined to CIMIC and resiliency work with the Latvians specifically in the development of their military information-related capabilities (IRCs) as per their national plan. The Liaison & Networks functional area reflected the comprehensive approach to operations implicit in StratCom, both Whole of Government (WoG) and that required by NATO. It also included the networking developed with Latvian military and civilian contacts.

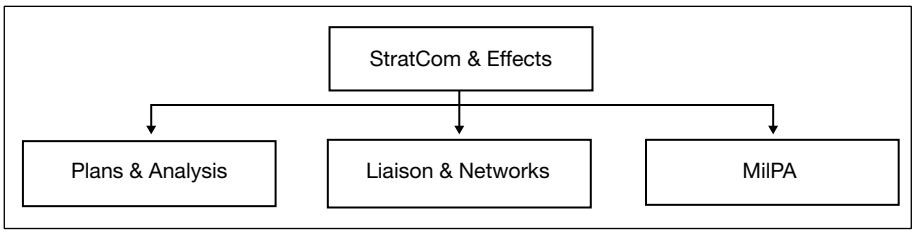


Figure 2: StratCom Cell – First Rationalization

In 2019, the StratCom cell was again refined.[12] While the three-section structure was retained, the sections were renamed Tactical Activities, maintaining a focus on CIMIC and resiliency; Analysis, which included assessments; and MilPA. The MilPA section was augmented in 2019 with a much-needed photo and video image technician who was also given responsibility for social media content. Because Chief StratCom was heavily involved in meetings with other partners and Latvian agencies, the Chief Tactical Activities became StratCom's de facto Chief of Staff (COS), picking up the day-to-day role of coordinating and synchronizing the cell's activities (see Figure 3).

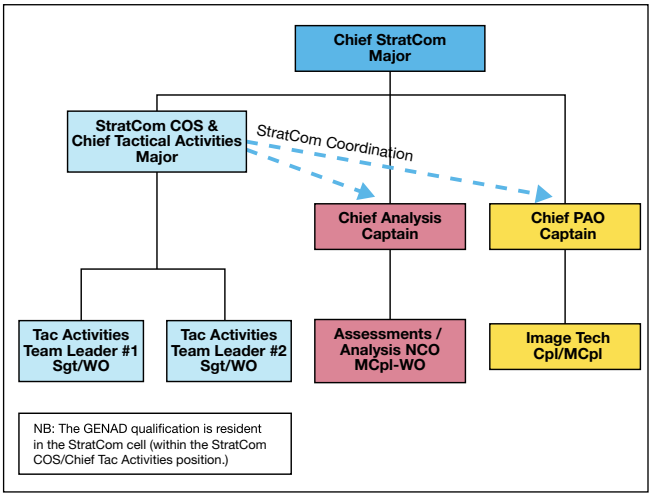


Figure 3: StratCom Cell – Second Rationalization and Proposed Reorganization of TFL StratCom Activities.

TFL StratCom Activities

> *On a yearly basis since 2008 the Latvians take part in "The Big Clean Up," a project which aims to make Latvia the cleanest country in the world by its centennial year anniversary in 2018 and estimates indicate over 1,000,000 million people have participated since its inception… In 2018, 150 countries will partake in the "Let's Do It!" Campaign and since its inception in 2008, 18 million volunteers have participated. Canada is currently creating a team.*[13]

The StratCom cell activities centred on three activity areas. The first was strategic analysis and operational planning, albeit with a bias towards campaign development. Essentially, the StratCom cell attempted to operationalize the effects-based approach to operations (EBAO). Within the StratCom sphere, effects should be understood as spanning a wide spectrum, with the more sophisticated effects on the right and the less sophisticated on the left.[14] Generally, the further the effect was to the right, the more resources, effort and time— time being the most critical—were usually required for the effect to be realized. The StratCom effects spectrum is best illustrated as shown in Figure 4.

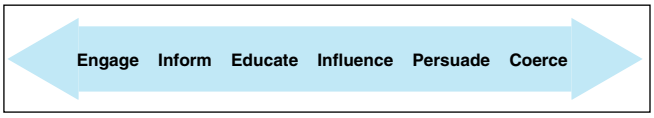


Figure 4: The Effects Spectrum

The effect desired is dependent upon the target audience and their degree of susceptibility to change, whether that change is behaviour- or opinion-based. For example, an outdoor vehicle display involving a small number of soldiers and a vehicle or two can be expected to have only the low-level effect of engaging with the public and providing some informative and entertainment value. While such a display could move into the range of Inform and Educate effects, it would be unlikely to shift further to the right. Activities which typically stay on the left side of the spectrum are usually classified as outreach activities and, while understood to be important and to provide value from a StratCom perspective, they are normally capable of being performed by anyone with a small amount of instruction.

At the other end of the spectrum, more sophisticated planning is required in order for activities to achieve the desired effect, be it Influence, Persuade or Coerce. Coercive diplomacy, for example, will entail high-level participation, is often based on Whole of Government partner participation, and is considerably more sophisticated in its planning and execution, and more so from an assessment perspective. A coercive diplomatic activity, for example, could bring the Canadian Ambassador into a coordinated diplomatic encounter that features troop deployments or exercises. The level of involvement in turn would require substantive metrics to ensure that the activity was indeed appropriate and did produce the desired effect.

Somewhere in the middle lie activities like key leader engagements (KLEs) and CIMIC liaison, as well as resiliency work with key allies or partners.[15] The diagram presented in Figure 5 is a possible overlay showing various activities as they align with the effects spectrum.

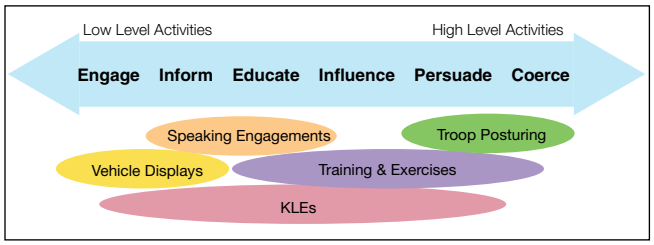


Figure 5: Sample Activities Along the Effects Spectrum

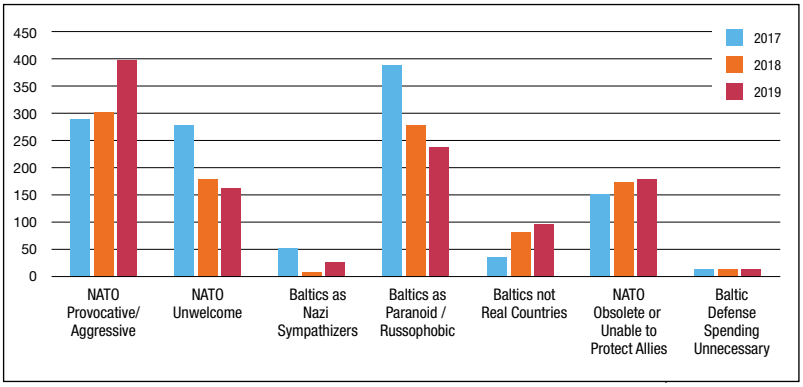
What the TFL StratCom cell sought to accomplish was to operationally plan out 6 to 12 months' worth of activities that would allow the accomplishment of the Commander's operational objectives. Unfortunately, planning effects and then measuring their actual impact on objectives proved elusive and was an extremely frustrating process. Our experience in this regard was not unique. US Army Major Richard L. Gonzales and Chief Warrant Officer Marc J. Romanych, for example, had previously made this quite accurate observation about effects and their relationship to objectives:

> *Lacking quantifiable physical evidence, nonlethal targeting effects are necessarily subtle. Engagement effects may be a target's response or nonresponse or changes in efforts and techniques. Targeting effects may be manifested as trends, activities and patterns in the operational environment. Effects can also be as simple as the absence of activity.*

Where StratCom value-added was discovered was in adopting a threat-based approach to info ops. By this, I mean that we consciously shifted away from EBAO and instead focused on how TFL was being attacked within the information environment. The adversary, the Russian government operating discreetly through a variety of proxies, had launched an information war against NATO, the Baltic nations and Canada, although Canada and TFL were not a regular target.[17]

Our threat-based analysis centred on adversarial information environment attack vectors or hostile narratives. Five adversarial themes were quickly identified that specifically "attacked" or targeted the Canadian deployment to the Baltic region. These included NATO being unwelcome and a claim that NATO troops were really occupiers in the Baltics; that NATO was obsolete and unable to protect its new Baltic allies; that NATO's forward presence was deliberately aggressive and provocative; that the Baltic States were spending monies on defence unnecessarily; and that the Baltic States, and NATO by supporting them, were sympathetic to fascism.

In September 2019, TFL's StratCom cell identified a sixth vector that Russia was seeking to exploit. That narrative, based on economics, was focused on three specific messages. The first was that Latvia was paying for NATO's presence and that of TFL by extension. The second was that NATO and TFL did not trust Latvians enough to employ them at the multinational base in Adazi, Latvia. The third was that the economic benefits Latvia expected to derive from the NATO presence had not been realized. This narrative assault was quite cunning and resonated within Latvian society because of the consistently high ranking Latvians had given to the economy and economic crises as security risks on their annual national surveys (see Figure 6).[18]



Author

Figure 6: Dominant Russian Narratives, 2017–2019

The second activity area grew out of an expansion of the original TFL J9 outreach mandate and developed over time into a more rigorous CIMIC liaison cell. It has since scaled back slightly and is now known as a tactical activities cell. What we sought to do was move beyond outreach activities—primarily vehicle and equipment displays, which usually fall on the low end of the influence activities spectrum—and instead institute a program which targeted specific communities for education about TFL and NATO writ large, seeking to shift influence towards the high-end activities.

This was conducted partly through a Whole of Government (WoG) program with the Canadian Embassy in Riga. The joint TFL–Embassy program, known as the "12 in 12," was ambitious and was based on the simple idea of running 12 different visits, one per month, to 12 different Latvian communities. The program usually began with the WoG visit team members—both Embassy and TFL—meeting local town and/or municipal leaders for an introduction and orientation to the local area. This was key to establishing important contacts in support of StratCom activities. The Embassy took the lead on these meetings, being more experienced in this area.

While the centrepiece of the program was a visit to at least one school for educative purposes—upper elementary or high school preferred—the programme quickly grew to include other "Canadian" activities directed more towards the entire community. These included Canadian-themed art displays and activities focused on children, such as the construction of dream-catchers. When possible and appropriate, the 12 in 12 program would also be coupled to an eFP BG outreach within the same community, usually in the form of a vehicle and weapons display.

For TFL, the WoG program had three objectives. First, it provided a mechanism for conducting coordinated and synchronized information operations within a WoG context. Second, the program provided input into TFL's nascent targeting program. Unfortunately, from an early stage in TFL's development, targeting had become a forbidden subject, the mistaken thinking being that NATO partners did not target each other. Yet that ignored the reality of requiring target material in order to properly conduct StratCom activities. Non-kinetic influence activities required a knowledge of target audiences, which meant understanding local Latvian communities and local influence leaders. Whether the information collection is oriented towards the creation of target packs, or is instead camouflaged under different terms like audience analysis or community relations, the result and the end product are the same.

Lastly, the program provided the mechanism by which Latvian communities were informed and educated about NATO, TFL and Canada generally. While that Inform and Educate function was generally geared towards the entire community, audience analysis identified Latvian youth between 15 and 25 as our program's target audience. The logic supporting targeting this audience (high school and college/university students) was straightforward. First, their teachers and professors were usually receptive to lectures or seminars and would welcome our presence. Second, the youth were identified as future Latvian voters. By educating them, our intent was to predispose them to continue to support NATO's presence within the Baltics, and specifically in Latvia. Not surprisingly, this argument was controversial, although, interestingly enough, not so much with Latvian authorities.

The third activity area was liaison, coupled to assisting Latvia in the development of its Army's information operations capability. Initially, StratCom continued with the work done, ad hoc, by the J9 cell. That work had initially focused on assist-

ing the Latvian Joint Headquarters (JHQ) with writing the Info Ops annexes to their national defence plan. At the same time, the need to synchronize and coordinate information operations with a variety of partners was recognized.

The J9 cell developed the Integrated Activities Committee (IAC) as the mechanism to address that requirement. The IAC was created as a Latvian-led committee which included a host of interested parties within the Baltic theatre, including (but not limited to) representatives from the Latvian Ministry of Defence, Joint HQ and National Guard (*Zemessardzes*); the Canadian Embassy and TFL HQ; the eFP BG; and NATO and US military representatives. While the committee was led by the Latvian Chief of the JHQ Info Ops cell, TFL provided the secretariat and assisted with the coordination of the IAC.

The IAC served two key functions. The first was to foster a cooperative attitude towards info ops activities and allow for multiple agencies to work together in support of similar objectives. The second was to develop a common operating picture regarding StratCom activities in general, and in particular those intended to have an effect within the info environment.

By 2019, the Tactical Activities team was conducting regular CIMIC liaison visits to Latvian communities. The decision was made, however, that the visits would target the areas and towns in Latvia which had seen little to no NATO presence but which had areas that potentially could see a NATO presence in the event of adversarial activity or because of the potential for a Latvian domestic operation.[19] Using the BG's activities map as a start point, the team planned a number of visits throughout Latvia, seeking, in essence, to conduct a meet and greet with local officials and a quick recce of the area for familiarization.

Figure 7 shows a number of bubbles of various sizes which represent the BG's level of activities in those areas. The larger the bubble, the more activities had taken place in that area. Our focus became the towns and cities without bubbles.

By June 2020, the Tactical Activities team had shifted from the so-called bubble map above and had developed a more comprehensive country-wide map which provided better fidelity in terms

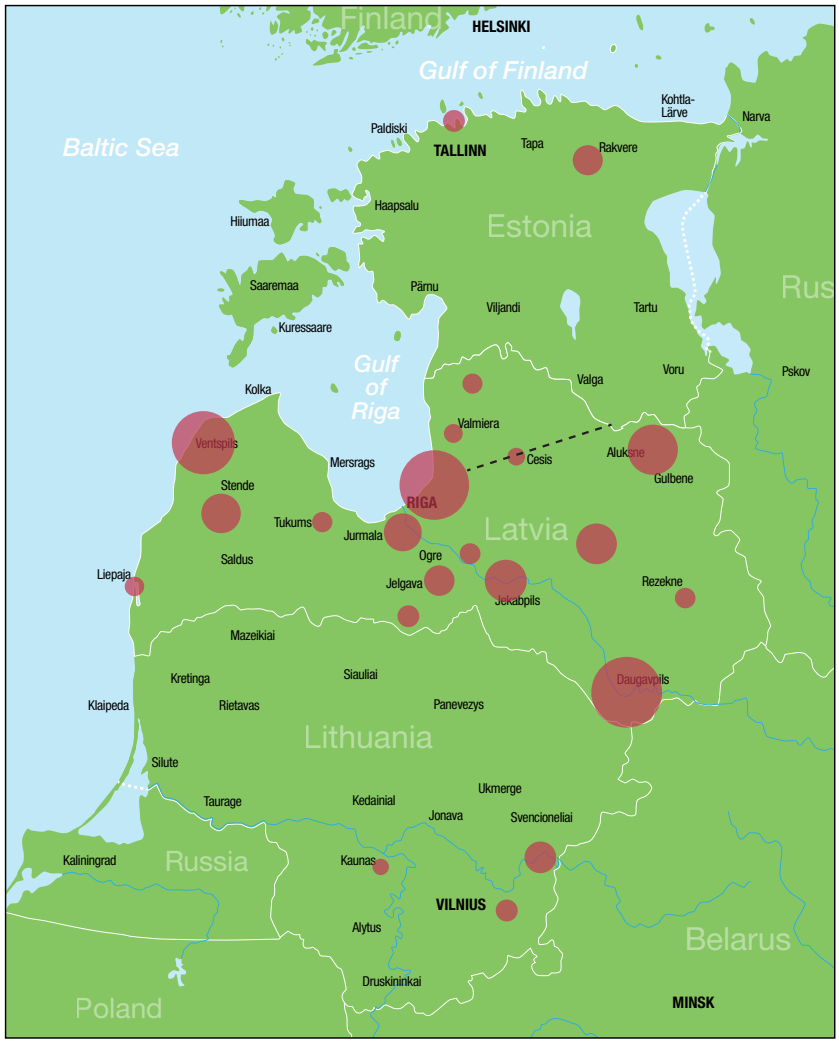


Figure 7: eFP BG Latvia Information Activities for the 2018–2019 Period.

Provided by author/Redrawn by Accurate Creative

Canadian Whole of Government (WoG) team led by Ambassador Kevin Rex, meeting with local Latvian *novad* (municipal) officials.

DND photo courtesy of author

Provided by author/Redrawn by Accurate Creative

Figure 8: StratCom Engagements as of June 2020.

of the last time StratCom activities had been undertaken in each *novad* (municipality) (see Figure 8).

Note that each team sent out on these tactical activities was designed and built to include at least one Latvian info ops practitioner. This met two aims. First, working in conjunction with Latvian soldiers allowed us to defeat any narrative claiming that we were spying on our ally. Second, we were able to provide our Latvian counterparts with an opportunity to practise their CIMIC work and exchange best practices with our Canadian experts. The Latvian soldiers who formed part of the teams were info ops soldiers drawn from the *Zemessardzes*.[20]

Some Thoughts on the Future of StratCom

> *Unlike Western governments, jihadists use communication to support their use of force. They treat strategic communications as an intrinsic element of war... the internal coherence of their messages is greater and more persuasive... their propaganda cadres are also nimbler; while they form a loose, decentralised network, they act in accordance with mission command principles, galvanised by a clear sense of the commander's intent and a higher tolerance for risk. Indeed, the West's failed use of strategic communications reveals a startling ignorance of several of Carl Von Clausewitz's principles and arguments, not least the importance of understanding the kind of war upon which one embarks.*

Taking NATO's StratCom concept and adapting it to a tactical HQ like TFL was a challenge and, frankly, not well understood. While NATO's idea of StratCom remains focused on messaging and narrative work—the emphasis being on the so-called war of the narrative—we quickly realized that StratCom for TFL necessarily involved a large role in campaign planning. In essence, StratCom, with its emphasis on effects-based activities, can be understood as the manifestation of the EBAO.

So what does that mean? First, staffing of any future StratCom cell should be done with an eye to ensuring that it has key leaders within the cell who are very experienced with operational planning and ideally understand campaign design. Without that experience and understanding, StratCom cells risk remaining mired in the planning of outreach activities coupled to traditional MilPA.

Second, commanders must be aware of what a StratCom cell can provide on a deployment and, consequently, must have a plan of action for its incorporation into the HQ. Ideally, the Plans Officer and the Chief StratCom are co-located or, at a minimum, working collaboratively on the development of the campaign plan and contingency operations. Otherwise, the StratCom cell becomes a waste of very talented and highly specialized soldiers.

Issues abounded with this initial trial of tactical StratCom. The cell has constantly suffered in its staffing, with no-fills being common. Further, staffing positions with qualified individuals also proved to be a struggle. In my own case, I lacked any formal info ops qualifications, which led to a steep learning curve.

Our StratCom cell lacked tools and a dedicated budget. At the lowest level, even when conducting outreach visits, having items to give away to children has an influential impact. At the analyst level, the Army needs to examine what software and hardware is available to support analysis. Our ability to provide meaningful analysis on social media, for example, was quite limited. And

frankly, it was often possible only because of the expertise and attitude our soldiers brought to the fight.

We also needed software that supports operational planning and campaign design. A dedicated budget should be identified prior to deploying a StratCom team. In addition to buying (locally) small items for giveaways, the Tactical Activities cell also requires funding for a continuous visit program, including funding for regular travel items like overnight accommodation and rental vehicles.

A last word on the Information War. We need to understand that we can neither dominate the information sphere (or domain) nor effectively deter the ongoing activities which adversarial forces are constantly employing against us. There are three reasons why we are unable to do either. The first is our lack of understanding of what the information environment is and just how much of it we are unaware of. Dark web activity on the World Wide Web (WWW), for example, is estimated to make up almost 50 percent of all Internet activity. Coupled to those difficult-to-access areas are obstacles including foreign language use and encryption, all obscuring activity within the information environment. In the words of former US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, there are a large number of "known unknowns" and "unknown unknowns" associated with the WWW and the Internet which preclude a comprehensive understanding of adversarial activities being undertaken against us.

Second, adversarial activities are largely non-military, meaning that rules of engagement (ROEs) and principles of violence (e.g. minimal force and escalation of force) are difficult to reconcile with respect to the information environment. Canadian and NATO information operations outside of armed conflict are often restricted to measures available and employed by military PA or joint cyber assets, and are usually limited to what are identified as defensive measures.

Third, adversarial activities are often gradual, rooted in what can be termed false narratives, and seek to be cumulative and reinforcing in their impact.[22] Adversarial activities seek to identify and exploit vulnerabilities. Even the mainstream media is engaged in this, indulging in what is termed reductionist reporting, which often leads to a loss of context and lends itself to reporting that typically focuses on apparent CAF vulnerabilities.

That reductionist reporting often leads to easier manipulation by other media players who are unconstrained and less professional, many of whom end up in the employ of our adversaries, knowingly or otherwise. Adversarial use and exploitation of third parties, proxies and other quasi-AI entities means that decisive attribution is very difficult to prove and often costly in terms of the expertise and resources required. The information age has seen the democratization of the information environment, which, while a positive development, has made it possible for adversaries to conduct attacks in relative anonymity through small proxy groups, while achieving strategic effect.

Our best defence within the information environment, then, hinges on developing IRCs while understanding our own vulnerabilities through hostile narrative development. Maintaining freedom of action within the information environment demands a constant presence, as so many of our functions are dependent upon this domain and the information networks developed therein. Seeking to directly attack a threat within the information environment is time-consuming and next to impossible based on our current and projected IE capabilities. Instead, developing IRCs to counter generic threats within the information environment may be the best mechanism for success in this new type of warfare.

At the same time, capability development requires restrictive arcs of fire or bounding to provide some form of efficiency and effectiveness. This is best accomplished by shifting to an understanding of adversarial information warfare as based on escalation. The majority of adversarial activities within the information environment are routine, mundane and long-term, amounting to little more than a series of the proverbial mosquito bites. Yet they are also undertaken within the concept of *maskirovka* (Russian military deception). What this means is that such activities were and should be considered as probing attacks. While most lead to nothing, those which have prompted a response or which uncovered a vulnerability are quite likely to be exploited. In a theatre like the Baltics, such attempts should be and are viewed as seeking to exploit vulnerabilities that could ultimately lead to some form of armed conflict, and therefore must be countered accordingly.

Conclusion

As noted by Canadian journalist David Pugliese in a 2020 article,

> *The Canadian Forces wants to establish a new organization that will use propaganda and other techniques to try to influence the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of Canadians, according to documents obtained by this newspaper... The new Defence Strategic Communication group will advance "national interests by using defence activities to influence the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of audiences," according to the document dated October 2020. Target audiences for such an initiative would be the Canadian public as well as foreign populations in countries where military forces are sent.*[23]

Notwithstanding the recent missteps by the joint military PA branch, as discussed in Pugliese's article, operationalizing StratCom at the tactical level was a learning experience for TFL and one which the Army should continue to support. Our StratCom

Aviator Jérôme Lessard/Task Force Latvia (TFL)

TFL StratCom team member with senior Embassy official take part in Canadian crafts in local Limbazi junior school, 31 August 2018.

concept was plagued by a host of issues which need to be resolved for the doctrine and practice to mature. There is at present no consensus among Canadian government departments and CAF leadership on StratCom and its application. Adopting the original NATO understanding and role of StratCom as a tool to fight the narrative battle is weak and ill-suited to the tactical–operational level of Army and joint operations.

Linking narratives to strategic effects can be useful, but linking a narrative to tactical activities is quite difficult, mainly because of the timeframe of weeks or months before effects from those activities become apparent. Further, by using the narrative at the tactical level, there is a dangerous tendency when evaluating activities and effects to presuppose direct cause-and-effect relationships!

There is no Canadian WoG approach to StratCom, something which weakens its utility dramatically, especially within a JIMP environment. Part of the problem is differing definitions of what exactly StratCom is and how it should be employed. Overall, though, the lack of coherence within the WoG community has led to issues with StratCom regarding messaging or narrative. What StratCom requires is greater coordination, alignment and consensus during the research and analysis phases instead of what occurs now: WoG partners seeking to rationalize effects and activities after the fact to fit a post-activity manufactured narrative.

Ideally, discussions of StratCom should take place within a broader WoG forum. The CAF and its interest in "operationalizing" StratCom cannot, by definition, occur in isolation. Further, the push to have a StratCom capability resident at the tactical level needs to be re-examined. David Pugliese's 2020 article demonstrates the dangers of isolated capability development.

Lastly, it remains far from clear that the implementation of a StratCom cell within a CAF operational theatre like Latvia will lead to the influence Canada is hoping to have both with its allies and within the information environment generally. Drawing on TFL and eFP BG experience, what works is not simply establishing a StratCom cell, but rather ensuring that a shared and well-articulated StratCom WoG vision is articulated. That shared vision must align the ends, ways and means, and allow for metrics to re-orient WoG activities when required.

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NOTES

1 Ajit Maan and Paul Cobaugh, *Introduction to Narrative Warfare: A Primer and Study Guide* (Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, June 2018), 7.

2 The NATO StratCom concept was designed and built for employment within a two-star NATO operational HQ. As we discovered in TFL HQ, taking that concept and its associated responsibilities and shoehorning them into the tactical parameters of the TFL HQ became our work for the first year and a half. The StratCom COE's publication of the Practitioners' Handbook greatly facilitated our progress, as it "operationalized" StratCom and broadened it beyond just narrative and messaging work to embrace other concepts including information-related capability (IRC) coordination and synchronization.

3 The CAF adopted this definition for StratCom as of 30 June 2017.

4 The NATO COE for StratCom states this through the expression "One cannot not communicate!"

5 These responsibilities were identified in the NATO StratCom Practitioners Handbook, version 3.0, dated December 2018.

6 Dimitar Bechev, Ph.D., Russia's Strategic Interests and Tools of Influence in the Western Balkans (NATO StratCom COE, December 2019), 10.

7 TFL was first envisioned and established as Task Force Europe, and it was to have had operational command and control over all joint assets deployed under the Operation REASSURANCE umbrella. At some point, that decision was changed and TFL was established as a Land Task Force within Latvia. Concurrently, Op REASSURANCE included both a Maritime and an Air Task Force.

8 Outreach should be understood as those activities which seek to engage with an audience and inform them. This is different from seeking to have a more complex effect like educating or influencing, both of which take more time and effort than many of the outreach activities can achieve.

9 For a variety of reasons (staffing issues, etc.), the StratCom cell did not become operational until 2018.

10 The TFL StratCom cell did not receive Latvian strategic objectives until 2018.

11 The cell was labelled Engagements rather than Targeting because of sensitivity about the use of the term "targeting." For example, TFL could not be seen to be targeting Latvian audiences nor collecting information about a NATO ally. Our targeting activities were instead identified by other terms, like "liaison" or "engagement."

12 Note that the structural changes were driven by a lack of appetite for any staffing increases. The optimal 2020 StratCom structure, for example, should include additional CAF members at the MCpl/Sgt level within the tactical activities section to allow for more CIMIC activities simultaneously. The structures are also influenced by the promise of reachback, something which will be examined later in the article. Note also that the StratCom cell retained the Gender Advisor (GENAD) role as a secondary duty.

13 Extract from *3350 – Op Reassurance (J9/Info Ops), BRIEFING NOTE FOR COMD JTF-EUR*, dated 24 July 2017.

14 Note that there are other effects which can be created within the physical and cognitive domains, including Destroy, Isolate, Protect, Mislead, Confuse, and Degrade. Those effects identified per Figure 2 are the main effects related to StratCom activities within the Information Environment or IE.

15 Resiliency work is akin to capability development work with partners and allies.

16 Richard L. Gonzales and Marc J. Romanych, "Nonlethal Targeting Revisited," *Field Artillery Journal* (May-June 2001): 10.

17 Anonymous feedback suggested TFL and Canada were "too tough" for Russian information attacks as we enjoyed a very solid reputation within the Baltic region.

18 The Latvian government conducted a national survey every year. One of the questions was to identify and rank national security risks and threats. The economy was consistently ranked as the top national security risk each year by a wide margin, across all demographic categories.

19 TFL did not have authority to assist the Latvian authorities in the event of a domestic emergency, but planning for such assistance was nonetheless seen as prudent.

20 Chief StratCom organized a meeting with the Commander of *Zemessardzes* and provided him with a briefing on our tactical activities program. The Commander provided his enthusiastic approval and ensured the team was well supported throughout. On a number of occasions, the team was able to make use of *Zemessardzes's* bases for overnight accommodation. Needless to say, *Zemessardzes* hospitality was unrivalled for those times the team was able to stay overnight.

21 David Betz and Vaughan Phillips, "Putting the Strategy back into Strategic Communications," *Defence Strategic Communications* 3 (Autumn 2017), 41.

22 For an excellent discussion of Russia and so-called gray tactics – defined as "ambiguous political, economic, informational, or military actions that primarily target domestic or international public opinion and are employed to advance a revisionist nation's interests without provoking outright war" – see Stacie L. Pettyjohn and Becca Wasser, *Competing in the Gray Zone: Russian Tactics and Western Responses* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2019).

23 Extract from David Pugliese, "Canadian military wants to establish new organization to use propaganda, other techniques to influence Canadians," *Ottawa Citizen*, November 2, 2020.

dpa picture alliance/Alamy Stock Photo

The flags of the NATO member states are hoisted during the ceremonial handover of the new NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium, 25 May 2017.

NATO: Some Thoughts from a Canadian in the Alliance

by Greg R. Smith

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(This article was written before the February 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine and intended to explain NATO and its importance to Canada.)

Introduction

Most of us will have heard the popular jokes about NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization). What does NATO stand for? Not After Two O'Clock. How many people work at NATO? About half. Humour often has a sliver of truth, which suggests that the stereotypes of the North Atlantic Alliance and the work culture there are at least somewhat accurate. Created following the Second World War as Western Europe and North America sought to respond to a threatening Soviet Union, NATO successfully contributed to peace for over forty years until the Cold War ended. After its raison d'être seemingly disintegrated, the Alliance subsequently transformed itself to respond to and lead numerous difficult security operations and missions in the Balkans, Afghanistan, Libya, and more recently Iraq.

Despite NATO's apparent facade as a security alliance with a long-expired core mission, Canada has been a part of the Alliance and contributed to it since its creation in 1949. Indeed, although reducing our country's operational footing, like many Alliance partners, between the early nineties and 2014, Canada and the Canadian Armed Forces have maintained a significant presence in Europe. Yet why is there an apparent misalignment between the significance of the Alliance, on the one hand, and Canada's continued contribution to this collective security arrangement far across the Atlantic Ocean on the other? Is NATO an archaic multilateral organization well past its prime and worth jettisoning given the fresh strategic thinking that should emerge in a post-COVID-19 world? Is NATO simply a distraction to geopolitical

thinking when Canadians should be looking north to an increasingly important, accessible, and contested Arctic region or west across the Pacific Ocean to an economically dynamic Asia and an increasingly assertive China?

This article, while conceding the above strategic considerations for Canada's security perspective, suggests that NATO remains a worthwhile security relationship. The author reaches this conclusion after exploring the origins, policies, members, and processes of the Alliance, and reviewing Canada's specific role and advantages within NATO. The article posits the continued strategic relevance of the "enduring alliance" for Canada and its national security.

What is NATO?

A group of Western nations created NATO out of the human carnage and geopolitical disaster of the Second World War. Wanting to unite like-minded democratic nations in a defensive alliance and faced with an increasingly threatening Soviet Union, 12 post-war states began political discussions that resulted in the 1949 Washington Treaty. With the post-Second World War period a time of deep strategic thinking, the triumphant Western leaders looked to construct a new world order that precluded geopolitical aggression and would bring international security, economic rebuilding, and expansion. NATO, of course, was neither the first nor the only step in reshaping Europe politically and economically, as six European nations formed the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, which eventually transformed into the European Union (EU).[1]

Signed by the 12 founding nations on 04 April 1949, the Washington Treaty "derives its authority from Article 51 of the United Nations Charter which reaffirms the inherent right of independent states to individual or collective defence."[2] The Treaty consists of a mere 14 articles. Article 2, the so-called Canadian article, binds the signatories together in a political agreement that seeks peaceful resolution of conflict.[3] In contrast, Article 3 commits each nation to developing their own armed forces for individual and collective defence. A key paragraph for NATO as a defensive alliance, Article 4 empowers nations to collectively consult if threatened.[4] Finally, and best known, Article 5 guarantees a collective defence for all NATO members in stating: "The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all …."[5] This commitment to collective defence, that an attack against any member is justification for all other NATO nations to become involved in a conflict, is the foundation of the Alliance's raison d'être and, despite the Cold War, has only been enacted once following the tragic events of 11 September 2001. The remainder of this simple agreement articulates the NATO's operational area, and ascension, ratification, and withdrawal arrangements.[6]

Since 1949, NATO has expanded to 30 states, with the latest member, North Macedonia, joining the Alliance on 01 April 2020. With differing geography, history, and national cultures, member states possess diverse views and security defaults from which they perceive national and Alliance threats. Where you sit is where you stand, and NATO's geographic range, commonly referred to as Supreme Allied Commander Europe's Area of Responsibility (SACEUR's AOR), includes the majority of Western, Central, and Southern Europe and the North Atlantic. Furthermore, member nations range from tiny states that are geographically proximate to Russia to larger countries with deep concerns over the instability and the vast demographic challenges coming via the Mediterranean. This creates very different perceptions of what constitutes an existential threat, which shapes the strategic cultures of the 30 member states.[7] This diversity of security perceptions based on geographic and historical experiences matters deeply in the Alliance and is worth illustrating using national examples including the home nation of several NATO headquarters—Belgium.

Gaining independence from the post-Napoleonic United Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1830, the comparatively small country of Belgium[8] has sat on the North European historical invasion route between the large land powers of Western Europe. As many Canadians know, more recently the Western Front of the First World War was located across eastern France and western Belgium, and Hitler's blitzkrieg twice smashed through the Ardennes region of southern Belgium. Perhaps for these historical reasons, to Belgium, war is local, real, and intimate. Familiar to Western readers, war memorials feature prominently in most Belgian town squares. However, in addition to the solemn lists of local soldiers who died fighting on not-so-distant battlefields, Belgian monuments include the names of local citizens killed or deported by the invading German forces or shot as spies

ZUMA Press, Inc./Alamy Stock Photo

NATO Summit, Paris 1957.

or partisans.[9] With national neutrality failing earlier in its history, security through collective agreement is critical to this small country. Indeed, Belgium readily became one of the founding members of NATO and made itself the spiritual centre of Europe due to the presence of many international organizations' headquarters, including NATO and the EU.

NATO photo library

Meeting of the North Atlantic Council with Finland, Georgia, Sweden, Ukraine and the European Union – Extraordinary meeting of NATO Ministers of Defence, Brussels, 16 March 2022.

Farther to the east, more recent members of NATO are more sensitive to geopolitical threats and joined the Alliance for the promised collective security. Poland in particular possesses a troubled history: it has been invaded, ceased to exist as a nation or lost sovereignty three times when overrun by more powerful neighbours.[10] The depth of this suffering is exemplified by Poland's dismemberment in 1939 following the double invasion by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. As viscerally codified in Timothy Snyder's *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, Poland suffered the fate of a nation whose military had failed. With the Polish army destroyed, the occupying Nazi and Soviet forces mistreated and massacred the Polish population.[11] Indeed, Poland lost approximately one-fifth of its pre-Second World War population through fighting, massacres, and the Holocaust.[12] Such historic national trauma and Poland's continued proximity to Russia create great sensitivity to national security and NATO's preparedness for collective defence.

In comparison to the eastern flank, member states on NATO's southern periphery view mass illegal immigration and instability from across the Mediterranean Sea as an existential threat and, therefore, a critical focus for the Alliance.[13] Italy is a relevant example of a NATO member that contributes to collective defence along the northeastern flank, looking for reciprocal NATO support as it casts a wary eye towards North Africa where demographic and other societal concerns pressure migrant flows towards a more economically promising and secure Southern Europe.[14] Fully cognizant of many NATO states' preoccupation with the Russian geopolitical threat, the countries of the Alliance's southern periphery, such as Italy, rightly draw attention towards other challenges to European security.

This eastern versus southern focus is but one of many challenges that divides NATO. Beyond different geopolitical views, the sovereign states vary in historical experience, national power and, as a result of these factors, strategic culture. Yet how is the NATO family, now into its eighth decade, expected to achieve consensus, unanimity, and to advance multinational strategic policy with such diverse viewpoints and national interests?

Animus in consulendo liber[15]

With different security perceptions and frequently different national interests, decision making in the Alliance is a process of discussion, negotiation, and consensus building. To address the obvious challenge of achieving unanimity across 30 states, NATO has developed a specific decision-making process entitled the NATO Crisis Response Process or the NATO Crisis Response System (NCRS).[16] This complex planning process spans multiple levels of NATO's hierarchy and frequently includes input from the subordinate military strategic level via Allied Command Operations (ACO) and Allied Command Transformation (ACT) in addition to critical national interaction.[17]

As a political decision-making process, the NCRS often commences with "unfettered military advice" produced by the NATO Military Authorities.[18] When contemplating potential collective military action, this advice normally takes the form of a SACEUR's Strategic Assessment and, depending on the speed of the planning and consensus building required, may be followed by a series of military strategic courses of action entitled Military Response Options. Again, based on the urgency of decision making, SACEUR's Strategic Assessments and Military Response Options may wind their way through Military Committee (MC) (the senior national military representatives), MC working groups, various political committees organized by the International Staff and ultimately end up at NATO's supreme decision-making body made up of national ambassadors—the North Atlantic Council (NAC).[19] Several times a year the chiefs of defence (CHODs) assemble at the MC CHODs Session, as do defence and foreign ministers, and national political leaders to discuss, negotiate, and approve collective action.[20]

A series of decision or guidance documents direct the NCRS support a well-structured consensus process and careful political control of the military. This includes a NAC Initiating Directive that commences and politically frames strategic planning, a NAC Execution Directive that directs military action, and an accompanying Force Activation Directive that authorizes the generation of forces from the sovereign states for the execution of an operation or activity. Although this decision-making process, based on consensus, may appear overly choreographed and sclerotic, in times of national or Alliance emergency it can move extremely quickly.[21]

Readers may recognize the challenge of receiving political direction or acquiescence from one government and imagine that accomplishing this through Alliance bureaucracy and across 30 states to be nearly impossible. It is in order to manage this bureaucracy and achieve unanimity among the many states and their different strategic cultures that the NCRS has evolved and been employed. Nevertheless, unanimity requires careful discussion and at times tempestuous debate that reminds the observer of Winston Churchill's statement: "There is only one thing worse than fighting with allies and that is fighting without them."[22] However, once these "family arguments" are through, the Alliance mobilizes tremendous collective hard and soft power as 30 like-minded states achieving steadfast unanimity in times of crisis.

NATO, however, despite its success as a defensive alliance that has been maintaining peace in the North Atlantic for over 70 years, has been criticized for a failure to evolve.[23] Since the end of the Cold War in the early nineties, the Alliance has managed the Balkan conflict, led military operations in Afghanistan, Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR in Libya, the NATO Mission Iraq, and numerous other activities, and enlarged to 30 members.[24] However, Russia's aggression towards Ukraine and other grey-zone activities have fomented calls for NATO's evolution. As characterized by Russian chief of general staff Valery Gerasimov, contemporary international security challenges use all tools of national power in "new generation warfare" which "…blend[s] … military, paramilitary, economic, informational, and other initiatives to sow conflict and unrest within an enemy state or coalition …."[25] NATO, therefore, with the preponderance of its multinational power focused in the military and political realms, is suboptimally structured to pre-empt or react to the challenges it faces. Ultimately a multilateral military alliance, NATO must develop and evolve a comprehensive approach that strategically counteracts across all the tools of DIMEFIL.[26] Although perhaps the key to continued 21st century relevance, some would suggest planning and employing all tools of multinational power is not the Alliance's business.

Nevertheless, NATO responded to these criticisms by launching the Readiness Action Plan in 2014. The Readiness Action Plan instigated a series of reviews and reorganizations including the NATO Command Structure-Adaptation (NCS-A). This military organizational review transformed the Alliance structure from one optimized for post-Cold War expeditionary operations to one more ready to face Russian geopolitical aggression. To enable the Alliance to respond to strategic confrontation and competition, the NCS-A added new contemporary military capabilities such as targeting, strategic communications, and cyber operations; augmented personnel capacity in existing Alliance structures; and created new operational headquarters in Ulm, Germany, and Norfolk, Virginia, United States.[27]

To match this organizational modernization, NATO's military hierarchy initiated concurrent conceptual updating. Instigated by the military strategic headquarters – SHAPE – the Alliance conceptualized a new strategy, simply entitled the NATO Military Strategy, a subordinate concept, labelled the Deterrence and Defence of the Euro-Atlantic Area , and a subordinate strategic plan.[28] These strategic steps, although returning NATO to a footing more suited to military confrontation and competition, equally acknowledged that the Alliance was not reverting to a security situation analogous to one faced in the past. Although it involved considerable increases in resourcing and efforts to contemporize its military strategy, concepts, and plans, this modernization of Alliance thought acknowledged that this was not a return to the Cold War, that Russia with its limited allies is not the Soviet Union with the Warsaw Pact, and that the geopolitical situation is not that of 1949 Europe. Indeed, the statement often attributed to the American author Mark Twain that "History doesn't repeat itself but often rhymes" may be most appropriate for the Alliance's current framing of its security situation.[29]

Yet this subordinate military strategic modernization and conceptualization could not take place exclusive of a higher political framework. NATO's existing policy, *Active Engagement – Modern Defence*, dates from 2010, a very different time in the Euro-Atlantic security situation.[30] For this reason, current political leaders such as French President Emmanuel Macron called out NATO's antiquated policy, criticizing the dearth of contemporary strategic thinking and "brain death" within the Alliance.[31] In response, NATO announced a reflection process at the London Leaders Summit on 03-04 December 2019, led by an independent group of experts to propose a new strategic policy for the Alliance.[32] Following a period of political consultation and with little fanfare due to the COVID-19 crisis, the Alliance published *NATO 2030: United for a New Era* in late November 2020.[33] Recommending a new policy for an alliance in its eighth decade, *NATO 2030* identified numerous threats, challenges, and opportunities including Russia, China, the climate and Green Defence with implications for the Arctic, Alliance political cohesion and unity, and improved cooperation with the EU and other multinational partners. Labelling NATO a "strategic anchor in uncertain times," the

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Remarks by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the public launch of the NATO 2030 Expert Group's Report: "United for a New Era", 3 December 2020.

review recognized the recent military strategic efforts while acknowledging the requirement for a corresponding political modernization based on democratic principles, consultation, and streamlined decision making.[34]

NATO photo library

A Canadian soldier carries spent light anti-tank weapons following the conclusion of Exercise Steele Crescendo. The exercise allowed NATO's enhanced Forward Presence Battle Group Latvia to practice coordinated defensive firing using live ammunition, 8 May 2020.

Canada in NATO

Canada, one of the original founding members of NATO, has evolved with the North Atlantic security alliance throughout its more than 70 years. However, with competing strategic challenges—including an increasingly open and accessible Arctic, an economically dynamic Asia with greater geopolitical threats, and broader dangers to North American security from cyber, informational, and long-range precision effects—what is the role of Canada and Canadians within history's greatest alliance?[35] Since Russian geopolitical aggression in Ukraine in 2014, Canada has overtly returned military power and a military presence to Europe. Canada has led one of the four NATO enhanced Forward Presence battle groups in Latvia, provided annual air policing in Iceland and more recently in Romania, assigned a frigate to a Standing NATO Maritime Group, and increased personnel to the NATO Command Structure. This is not a return to the scale of Cold War contribution seen with 4 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group and the 1 Canadian Air Division in Lahr and Baden-Solingen, Germany. Nevertheless, Canada has been viewed within NATO as competent and credible across the "three Cs" – cash, contribution, and capability.[36]

With Canada far across the Atlantic Ocean, not sitting geographically within Europe nor within SACEUR's AOR, [37] its presence and contribution in the Alliance are less evident and, therefore, poorly understood. Still, due to Canada's geographic size, economic clout, military capability, and large and growing multiethnic population, the member nations view Canada as a powerful and important member of the Alliance. Indeed, although most Canadians intellectually understand their country's geographic size, they could be forgiven for denigrating other measures of its national power. Although it has an area only slightly smaller than all of Europe, Canada has a population that is more modest, as only the eighth-largest country.[38] Equally, as the sixth-biggest economy in the Alliance, Canada has also been the sixth-biggest spender on its military.[39] Although Canada may appear relatively weak by these measures, one must remember that NATO includes a number of the world's most economically and militarily powerful states, including the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, and France.[40] Therefore, although Canadians may be prepared to dismiss themselves and their country as minor players within NATO, the other members of the Alliance do not.

While certainly capable in terms of hard power, Canada equally enjoys considerable soft power among its North Atlantic peers.[41] Soft power—the ability to influence and attract based on national reputation, leadership, and credibility—has considerable importance in a rules-based organization such as NATO. In this sense, Canada possesses a substantial reputation and credibility based on its success, values, multiculturalism, tolerance, and national brands. These brands—the collection of images and understanding based on a country's history, international narrative, and success—do not have the same impact internationally as France's well-known champagne and Eiffel Tower or Germany's meticulously manufactured automobiles and chocolate.[42] However, Canada enjoys a positive national image across the world and is, therefore, seen as a powerful and successful member within NATO.

This broad positive view of Canada's brand and national power is further strengthened by Canada's and Canadians' collective and personal interaction within the Alliance. First, and quite practically for operating within the Alliance, Canadians speak both official languages of NATO, English and French, with the former being NATO's operational language. This gives Canadians working within NATO headquarters and organizations a great advantage, as they are from one of three countries whose citizens speak English as a mother tongue—"native speakers" in NATO parlance.[43] Beyond the daily benefit of working in one's native language, the military strategic headquarters of the Alliance is located in the French-speaking part of Belgium, which further advantages bilingual Canadians. Still, as a linguistically sheltered Canadian, one quickly learns within NATO and Europe that two languages is only a beginning in this continent full of polyglots. To function further within the Alliance, a command of multiple languages, like many other NATO member state citizens have, is an enormous advantage. As suggested by South African president Nelson Mandela, "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart." NATO teaches Canadians to be humble about any language skills they may possess.

Second, Canadians generally possess a humble, self-pejorative nature that both endears them to their Alliance partners and confuses them. Perhaps due to Canada's colonial and continental history, Canadians have traditionally compared themselves with the founding countries— France and the United Kingdom. These are countries that at various points in their history have been superpowers to whom Canadians have compared themselves unfavourably. Subsequently, with the strategic withdrawal of the United Kingdom from North America, Canadians could look south to compare themselves to the massive United States in national power and cultural popularity. Perhaps for this reason, Canadians carry a brand of being nice, quiet, and self-deprecating.[44] This demeanour manifests in a form of Tall Poppy Syndrome, where we enjoy belittling ourselves or fellow Canadians who have done well for themselves domestically or internationally. One need only share in good-natured mocking of Canadian cultural icons such as Brian Adams or Céline Dion to see the confusion in fellow Alliance members. Although this cultural quirk is normal for Canadians, other members of NATO that view Canada with the aforementioned positive image find it genuinely confounding and bemusing.

Third, and by no means the final reason for its perception within NATO, Canada has a positive national history in relation to other members of the Alliance. Outside short periods of peace, European history until 1945 is one of frequent interstate conflict and strife. Indeed, the majority of the 30 states of NATO have been at war with one another at some point in their history. This is, of course, somewhat true for Canada, which participated in the First and Second World Wars as well as the Cold War against the Warsaw Pact. Canada's history, however, is viewed as "clean," with Canadians coming to the aid of victims of aggression and making great sacrifices particularly during the First and Second World Wars. This is broadly understood in the European view of Canada in which the Canadian Corps stormed into central Belgium, liberating the historic city of Mons on 11 November 1918.[45] In addition to great contributions in the air and at sea, elements of the Canadian Army fought through Sicily and Italy in 1943 and 1944, and the 1st Canadian Army advanced along the Allies' "long left flank," liberating the French Channel ports, northern Belgium, and most of the Netherlands from June 1944 to June 1945. More intimately, Commonwealth War Graves cemeteries, individual soldiers' graves, and war memorials are scattered across these countries, where Canada's contribution and its human cost is kept alive in national memories. This historic contribution and sacrifice is not unique to Canada within the Alliance. However, when combined with the other Canadian characteristics, it helps form a collective positive image.

Conclusion

Some critics suggest that geo-strategically NATO belongs in Canada's past and that Europe can manage its own security concerns, be they a belligerent Russia or instability from the Middle East and North Africa. Indeed, these critics would contend that the West should focus its intellectual and material efforts on China's strategic rivalry and its intent to upend the current democratic, rules-based world order. Or they might say that global warming and the concomitant opening of the Arctic should become Canada's strategic focus. This author sympathizes with these concerns and the sober geostrategic thinking required to weigh and prioritize these challenges with allies and partners alike.

However, one needs to see the world as it is and not as we wish it to be. There are likely few international security scenarios that would see Canada act unilaterally. Rather, as it has throughout its history, Canada will take strategic action as a member of a coalition led by the United States. In such a scenario, NATO's organizational maturity and Canada's more than 70 years of hard-won experience in this alliance make it an ideal tool for collective action. With a highly practised collective political decision-making process, an established military hierarchy, and mechanisms and experience leading multinational forces within and outside SACEUR's AOR, Canada is already an important member of a powerful alliance. Granted, NATO is far from perfect. Indeed this septuagenarian multinational organization suffers from political dynamics that challenge it to forge consensus across 30 national interests and numerous national and service cultures. However,

Photo courtesy of author

St. Symphorien Military Cemetery near Mons, Belgium, burial site for those killed in the initial clash between British and German soldiers killed in Aug 1914 as well as Canadians killed in Nov 1918 including Private George Lawrence Price, 28th Bn CEF, the last British Commonwealth soldier casualty of the First World War.

in sober geostrategic thinking, it is the best multinational military organization Canada has.

Equally, Canada and the Canadian Armed Forces have much to learn and benefit from organizationally through their participation in NATO. Foremost, Canada has the awesome advantage and horrible disability regarding its national strategic culture of not having faced a tangible existential threat since a young United States of America invaded during the War of 1812. Indeed, some Canadian readers may be confused by this paragraph as nothing in Canada's national history, popular culture or collective memory provides them a mental framework to understand a geostrategic existential threat like some members of the Alliance do.

DND photo by Corporal Braden Trudeau

HMS *Trent* conducts a sail past with other ships from Standing NATO Maritime Group Two after completing Exercise DYNAMIC MANTA, 1 March 2022.

In comparison, during the Cold War and since 2014, NATO has focused on and responded to tangible threats from Russia and instability on its southern periphery. In the future, it may face challenges from China. This sense of purpose foments sober military action and the forging of strategic tools from which Canada and the Canadian military gain tremendous experience. Whether practising contested inter- and intra-continental operations, logistics, and communication; building strategic threat-based plans linked to multinational defence planning through political compromise that is sourced, generated, and practised; or working through diverse cultures and languages to achieve tactical success, NATO experience is best viewed as tactically relevant and strategically important for Canada. As they say, votes in NATO are not counted, they are weighed. Canada needs to carefully coordinate, strategically integrate, and coherently message to its allies the breadth and depth of its important quantitative and qualitative contributions. Indeed, as a rising China and the Arctic are equally NATO challenges, Canada is better situated to face them with historic and cultural allies rather than unilaterally or with an ad hoc coalition.

Canada is an extremely important and highly valued and relevant member of the North Atlantic Alliance. But as much as NATO needs Canada, Canada needs NATO. Unless Canada conducts expeditionary military operations unilaterally, which has not historically been the case nor contemporaneously likely, understanding and operating within practised and mature alliances is critical. Equally, NATO challenges Canadians to think beyond national unilateral actions to operate strategically within a mature coalition. Despite Canada's success overcoming the challenges of contributing to and functioning within the Alliance, some would be surprised by Canadians' dismissive, pusillanimous attitude towards working within NATO. Yet perhaps the NATO jokes noted at the beginning of the article are reflective of Canada's and Canadians' self-deprecating character: Can an organization in which Canadians truly excel be that important and worth our membership?

CMJ

NOTES

1 Wikipedia, "European Coal and Steel Community," last accessed 31 December 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Coal_and_Steel_Community.

2 NATO, "Founding Treaty," last accessed 17 August 2020, www.nato.int. These 12 nations were Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

3 Matjaz Kacic, "Commentary on Articles 2 and 3 of the Washington Treaty," Emory Law, last accessed 21 August 2020, law.emory.edu. The then foreign minister who later became prime minister, Louis St. Laurent, argued for the alliance to be more than a military force and equally be an economic and moral one. The "three wise men" (the foreign ministers of Norway, Italy, and Canada) expanded non-military collaboration to the political, economic, scientific, and cultural realms.

4 Article 4 has only been invoked five times in NATO's history. L. Kello, *The Virtual Weapon and International Order* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 186.

5 NATO, "The North Atlantic Treaty Washington, D.C. – 4 April 1949," last accessed 17 August 2020, www.nato.int.

6 The treaty has remained largely unaltered since its ratification on 24 August 1949 other than geographic changes when Turkey and Greece acceded to the Alliance in 1952.

7 For a description of SACEUR's AOR, see Timo S. Koster, "Reinforcement of NATO forces and military mobility," last accessed 18 August 2020, www.atlcom.nl. Colin Gray defined strategic culture as "the socially constructed and transmitted assumptions, habits of mind, traditions, and preferred methods of operation—that is, behavior—that are more or less specific to a particular geographically based security community." Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 199), 28, quoted in Texas National Security Review, "Strategic Culture in the Service of Strategy: The Founding Paradigm of Colin S. Gray," last accessed 29 August 2020, https://tnsr.org/roundtable/remembering-colin-gray/.

8 Belgium is 30,689 km^2—approximately 1/325 the size of Canada or 5.4 times the size of Prince Edward Island. See Wikipedia, "Belgium," last accessed on 25 August 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belgium.

9 Indeed, monuments from both world wars are scattered across the Belgian countryside.

10 Poland was partitioned by Russia, Prussia, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire from 1772 to 1918; it was divided up by the USSR and Nazi German in 1939; it became a communist satellite state until 1989. See Norman Davies, Britannica, "Poland," last accessed 25 August 2020, https://www.britannica.com/place/Poland.

11 This includes the so-called Katyn Massacre in which the Soviet NKVD killed 22,000 Polish military officers, police officers, and intellectuals. See Wikipedia, "Katyn massacre," last accessed 25 August 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katyn_massacre.

12 See Statista, "Population of Poland from 1800 to 2020," last accessed 25 August 2020, https://www.statista.com/statistics/1016947/total-population-poland-1900-2020/ and Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010).

13 This is not a European threat perception revelation. See Andrea Kendall-Taylor and Jim Townsend, interview with Judy Dempsey and Jonathan Katz, *Brussels Sprouts*, podcast audio, 09 October 2020, https://www.cnas.org/publications/podcast/prospects-for-democracy-in-belarus-with-judy-dempsey-and-jonathan-katz.

14 Africa's population surpassed one billion in 2010 and is forecast to double by 2050. Stephen Smith, *La Ruée vers L'Europe: La jeune Afrique en route pour le Vieux Continent* (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 2018), 45.

15 This Latin phrase meaning "A mind unfettered in deliberation" is the official motto of NATO and is displayed prominently in the NATO HQ main council room. Wikipedia, "Animus in consulendo liber," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animus_in_consulendo_liber#:~:text=Animus%20in%20consulendo%20liber%20(Latin,a%20mind%20unfettered%20in%20deliberation%22, last accessed 12 October 2020.

16 The NCRS is regularly reviewed, debated, and agreed upon, and appears in the NATO Crisis Response System Manuel.

17 ACO is led by SACEUR, an American four-star post, from SHAPE near Mons, Belgium. ACT is led by Supreme Allied Command Transformation, a French four-star post, from Norfolk, Virginia, United States.

18 National military authorities include the NATO HQ International Military Staff and both ACO and ACT or the so-called Bi-Strategic Command.

19 The NCRS has six phases for political decision making/strategic planning: indications and warning, assessment, response options, planning, execution, and transition, although this may be abbreviated.

20 The MC CHODs Session, defence ministers', and foreign ministers' meetings normally take place three times a year, with heads of state meetings occurring less frequently.

21 NATO invoked Article 5 on 12 September 2001, one day after the attacks on New York, Washington, DC, and Pennsylvania. Lord George Robertson and Michael Ruehle, interview with Dr. Stella Adorf, Master Sergeant Alex Burnett, and Dr. Linda Risso, *An Enduring Alliance*, podcast audio, 09 August 2019, https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/an-enduring-alliance/e/63105776?autoplay=true.

22 Forbes, "Quotes," last accessed 16 October 2020, https://www.forbes.com/quotes/10322/.

23 To the first secretary general, Lord Hastings "Pug" Ismay, NATO's metric of success was "… to keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down." See Richard Hurowitz, "What Is NATO For?" *Washington Examiner* last accessed 31 December 2020, https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/weekly-standard/what-is-the-purpose-of-nato-keep-the-russians-out-the-americans-in-and-the-germans-down.

24 By the early nineties, NATO included 16 nations, with Greece, Turkey, (West) Germany, and Spain being added from 1952to 1982.

25 Hall Brands and Charles Edel, *The Lessons of Tragedy: Statecraft and World Order* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press), 126, quoted in Greg Smith, "NATO adapting: a return to peer competition," in *NDC Research Paper: The Alliance Five Years After Crimea: Implementing the Wales Summit Pledges*, No. 7, (December 2019), ed. Marc Ozawa, 41-46.

26 DIMEFIL is one model to describe the tools of national or multinational power: diplomatic, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement.

27 The Joint Support and Enabling Command is in Ulm, Germany, and Joint Forces Command-Norfolk (JFC-Norfolk) is in Virginia, US, joining pre-existing JFC and environmental commands.

28 NATO's conceptual hierarchy flows (top to bottom)—policy, strategy, concept, and strategic plans. For the NATO Military Strategy, see NATO, "NATO Chiefs of Defence discuss future Alliance adaptation," last accessed 06 December 2020, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_166244.htm. For Deterrence and Defence of the Euro-Atlantic Area, see Ed Adamczyk, Defense News, "NATO concludes defense chiefs' conference with praise for military plans," last accessed 06 December 2020, https://www.upi.com/Defense-News/2020/09/18/NATO-concludes-defense-chiefs-conference-with-praise-for-military-plans/9711600450468/.

29 A quote often, but not convincingly, attributed to Mark Twain.

30 See NATO, "Strategic Concept 2010," last accessed 24 December 2020, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_publications/20120214_strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf.

31 *The Economist*, "The future of the EU Emmanuel Macron warns Europe: NATO is becoming brain-dead" 07 November 2019, last accessed 18 Oct 2019, https://www.economist.com/europe/2019/11/07/emmanuel-macron-warns-europe-nato-is-becoming-brain-dead.

32 NATO, "London Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in London 3-4 December 2019," last accessed 18 October 2020, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_171584.htm. This group of independent experts included the former Canadian National Security and Intelligence Adviser Greta Bossenmaier.

33 For the 67-page report, see NATO, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era—Analysis and Recommendations of the Reflection Group Appointed by the NATO Secretary General—25 November 2020," last accessed 06 December 2020, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf. Or listen to a one-hour podcast by Andrea Kendall-Taylor and Jim Townsend, "Live: The NATO 2030 Report, with Wess Mitchell, *Brussels Sprouts*, podcast audio, 18 December 2020, https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/live-the-nato-2030-report-with-wess-mitchell/id1238007695?i=1000502828521.

34 "NATO 2030," 30.

35 For an overview of Asian economic dynamism and opportunities, see Parag Khanna, *The Future is Asian: Global Order in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2019).

36 Broadly labelled as NATO burden sharing, cash, contribution, and capabilities are national inputs to NATO. Achieving 2% of GDP in national defence spending is the putative quantitative metric.

37 SACEUR's AOR ends at North America's maritime boundary, aligning with North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD) created in 1958, but not with the US combatant command system.

38 See Elizabeth Keith, NARCITY, "This Map Shows Just How Massive Canada Really Is Compared to Europe," last accessed 23 May 2020, https://www.narcity.com/news/ca/how-big-is-canada-this-map-shows-exactly-how-much-bigger-canada-is-than-europe. Europe is 10.12 million km^2 compared to Canada at 9.98 million km^2. Canada's population is less than that of the United States, Turkey, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, and Poland. Wikipedia, "List of countries and dependencies by population," last accessed 23 May 2020, https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_and_dependencies_by_population.

39 Wikipedia, "List of countries by GDP (nominal)," last accessed 23 May 2020, https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_(nominal). Top spenders are the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, and Canada. See Niall McCarthy, "NATO Summit: The Countries Meeting The 2% Threshold [Infographic]," *Forbes*, last accessed 31 Dec 2020, https://www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2019/12/03/nato-summit-the-countries-meeting-the-2-threshold-infographic/?sh=752c8c841f2c. This places Canada 14th in the world for national military spending.

40 These countries are also G8 members, revealing Canadians judge themselves against the world's most powerful countries. For a relative comparison, see Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Lindsay, "The Committee to Save the World Order: America's Allies Must Step up as America Steps Down," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 97, No. 6 (Nov/Dec 2018): 77.

41 In discussing hard and soft power, the author is drawing from Joseph Nye's numerous books including Joseph S. Nye Jr. *Soft Power: The Means of Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).

42 Terry O'Reilly and Mike Tennant describe a brand as "… the emotional impression or idea that surrounds something …" or very concisely: "recognition shorthand." See Terry O'Reilly and Mike Tennant, *The Age of Persuasion: How Marketing Ate Our Culture* (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2009), 50, quoted in Col G.R. Smith, "True North Strong and Free: A Study of Canadian National Power" (NSP Masters Thesis, CFC Toronto, 2014), 73.

43 English is the day-to-day operational language within NATO. France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Canada have French as an official language. The United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada count English as their mother tongue—there is regular debate on which country speaks it best.

44 Former Canadian Prime Minister Joe Clark explores the "nots" of Canada, Canadians' self-image, and its international reputation. See Joe Clark, *How We Lead: Canada in a Century of Change* (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2013), 112, quoted in Col Smith, 87.

45 Canada and Belgium commemorated the 100th anniversary of the liberation of Mons, Belgium, at the conclusion of the First World War in the presence of the Canadian Governor General on 11 November 2018. For a history of Canada's liberation of Mons, see Don Farr, *Mons 1914-1918: The Beginning and the End* (West Midlands: Helion and Company, 2008).

DND/CAF photo by Cpl Braden Trudeau

During Mission Readiness Training for Operation CARIBBE, HMCS *Moncton* conducts foc'sle transfer with a CH-148 Cyclone helicopter in the Bedford Basin, 18 January 2021.

The Greater Caribbean Basin as a Complex Littoral System: Implications for Joint Operations in the Region

by Juan Castillo

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Introduction

The physical and human geography of the western hemisphere, and of the Greater Caribbean Basin in particular, has been shaped into a security environment where a plethora of networked non-state actors impact its dynamics on a daily basis. The legacy of state-sponsored and non-state proxies that were supported by both the US and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, together with the emergence of transnational criminal organizations in the 1980s, helped shape the features that generated this contemporary hemispheric security environment.[1] Moreover, structural conditions linked to gaps in governance, state presence and economic inequality throughout

the region have enabled not only the proliferation of these actors, but also their ability to thrive, making them a constant security challenge for governments across the region.[2] Actors such as drug trafficking organizations, local criminal gangs, and insurgencies (some of which have more in common with the former), continue to erode the monopoly of violence held by state-based security institutions in the region. In some instances, they have acquired more sophisticated military-type capabilities than those possessed by the host states in which they operate.[3] Apart from the social, political and economic conditions that facilitate the proliferation and overall operational success of these non-state actors, the diverse geography found in this region plays an equally pivotal role not only in facilitating their sustainment but also in maintaining the transactional processes in which they participate. Dense rainforests, fluvial waterways, coastal lines with access to the ocean, and rugged mountainous terrain facilitate activities that range from kinetic operations to the movement of weapons, contraband, narcotics and cash. Over time, the Greater Caribbean Basin has become a permissive theatre of operations for actors that challenge or undermine state structures and institutions across the region.

In the current state of play, the security environment is being shaped by recalcitrant insurgencies that operate in the Colombian and Venezuelan hinterland; Mexican cartels that are expanding their reach; and other transnational organized crime organizations, as well as localized (and armed) criminal gangs that operate across countries in the region.[4] These violent non-state actors (VNSAs) do not exist in operational silos but instead rely on the ability to cooperate with, influence and/or coerce each other, creating a web where the exchange of violence, contraband and funding transcend national boundaries. Ostensibly, these actors have generated their own operational environments, which ultimately feed into a macro-system that overlies a significant portion of the western hemisphere. Human and physical geography play an important role in maintaining this system. The clandestine routes formed by mountain ranges, dense jungles, and complex fluvial and littoral waterways are closely linked to the way in which VNSAs are able to thrive and operate, while challenging the monopoly on violence held by the host states. Moreover, civilian space (or "white space") becomes equally vital and critical terrain on which these actors can achieve their objectives. By gaining the support of locals, VNSAs are able to access the freedom of movement, logistical support and human resources they need to support their operations across the board.[5]

The aim of this article is to advance the notion that the Greater Caribbean Basin is a complex security system that is littoral in nature, and which in turn should be viewed as a wider area of operations – in contrast to specific country-focused approaches – for ongoing efforts led by the US, Canada and other like-minded partners that operate in the region. To this end, the article is divided into three sections. The first will discuss the theoretical implications behind littoral complex systems and how they can contribute to a better understanding of the security dynamics experienced in a defined geographic space. The second section will focus on applying the complex system model addressed in the previous section to the current operating environment in the Greater Caribbean Basin. The third and final section will discuss the implications for ongoing multinational operations in the region. For the purposes of this article, the Greater Caribbean Basin will include not only the Caribbean Sea, but also the Gulf of Mexico, the Central American subcontinent and its Pacific Coast, and the northern portion of South America. These geographic parameters reflect the system discussed in this article.

Littoral Operating Environments as Complex (Security) Systems

In the post-9/11 era, the application of systems theory to active operating environments has emerged as a tool for

Map drawn by Accurate Creative

Map of the vast geographic space of the Greater Carribean Basin, which includes the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico, the Central American subcontinent, its Pacific Coast and the northern portion of South America.

understanding complex dynamics that involve multiple actors, including but not limited to adversaries, as well as their interactions. The West's engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq facilitated the application of this concept in operational environments at the time, and concurrent and subsequent conflicts across northern Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe have shown that there is still a good degree of utility for this applied paradigm.[6] Borrowing from the economics, biology and computer science literature on this topic, the best way to describe a complex system is as a structure that is made up of various autonomous components with several intricate lines of interaction.[7] Moreover, key features that must be present in a system for it to be complex are the "ensemble of many elements," including the diversity of its components; their interactions; inherent disorder due to the physical and cognitive independence of each component; and an inherent capacity for organization or development of patterns within the system's confines.[8] Although there might not be an overarching hierarchy within the system's components, the interactions among them, which can include collaboration, competition or any other sort of intra-systemic feedback processes, will generate alignments, patterns and placements of some sort. Another factor that influences system dynamics is the environment where the actual system is contained, which can include even a much larger system. In the same way that the various components interact among themselves, they can also interact or react to their external environment, creating a complex adaptive system or a "system of systems" that is sustained by these structured internal and external flows and thus adapts to external conditions.[9] Indeed, a complex system can be contained within a larger system, which in turn can also enclose smaller systems as the remainder of its components.[10] An actor such as an insurgency can be seen as a complex system that comprises components such as its leadership, members, supporters, materiel and logistical assets.[11] So can other actors such as security forces, government institutions and segments of civil society. However, the theatre of operations where the insurgency and other actors are engaged is in turn a macro-system of which the actor-based systems are the components, and their interactions and the way they play out in the physical domain generate the necessary dynamics and conditions to make such larger systems complex.[12] Another example of this model could include networked terrorist organizations, which themselves are complex systems with components that are critical for their overall operational sustainability, survival, and efforts to achieve their political–military objectives. Since they are able to interact with other elements across sovereign territorial boundaries, including other actors, the larger systems shaped by transnational terrorist organizations overlie a vast geographic space.[13]

The application of the complex systems paradigm to littoral operating environments is certainly relevant, given that the latter possess many of the features described above. According to US joint doctrine, the littoral space specifically refers to two elements in the maritime operating environment: first, "seaward," or "the area from the open ocean to the shore, which must be controlled to support operations ashore," and, second, "landward" or "the area inland from the shore that can be supported and defended directly from the sea."[14] Similarly, British doctrine describes the littoral space as "those land areas (and their adjacent areas and associated air space) that are susceptible to engagement and influence from the sea" as well as "those areas of the sea susceptible to engagement from the land, from both land and air forces."[15] But while both descriptions capture the notion that the littoral space is a geographically defined area of the physical domain where different elements (specifically weapon systems) interact, the British definition alludes to the notion that it can include elements other than kinetic capabilities. Indeed, the littorals challenge military planners because of their diverse geography and hydrology (such as shallow waters, enclosed seas, and straits, among other things), which impact the employment of weapon systems.[16] Yaneer Bar-Bam describes the littoral region as a complex system where multiple operational domains (air, land, sea, information, etc.) converge while, concurrently, different networked agents, from an individual combatant to a combined joint force or from an insurgent fighter to a sophisticated armed non-state group, are engaging other active elements in the operating environment.[17] In addition, we cannot forget that "approximately 95 percent of the world's population lives within six hundred miles of the coast," making the littoral regions equally challenging from a human terrain perspective and due to the fact that other elements can quickly come into play, including the great diversity of actors that operate in this space.[18] According to David Kilcullen, the littoral environment has not only become highly urbanized due to the demographic density in the sphere of influence of coastal areas, but it has also increased its connectivity due to the adoption of new information and communications technologies which support networks that overlie traditional maritime trade and demographic routes.[19] Moreover, littoral regions are a point of convergence where actors, including potential adversaries, operating in the cyber, maritime, land, urban and information space, meet and create a system where they engage through highly intricate flows.[20] In such an environment, insurgencies, organized crime or even state-sponsored hybrid actors can quickly exploit such flows to further key objectives, from cultivating legitimacy among key target populations to co-opting actors such as shipping companies or ports to enable logistic functions across the area of operations.

"The littorals challenge military planners because of their diverse geography and hydrology."

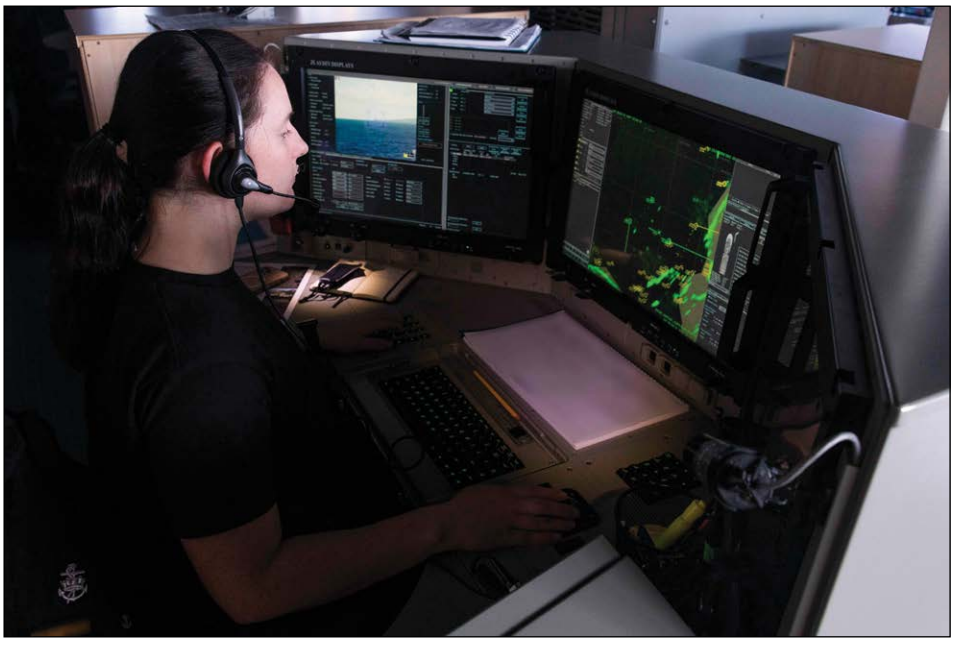
In light of this complexity, national or multinational military operations that are focused on supporting security efforts in littoral environments must tailor their response to the conditions and dynamics of the larger security system at play. According to Fernando Escobar and his colleagues, the non-linear and multi-vector nature of the littorals requires that a national or multinational combatant force apply an integrated diplomatic, information, military and economic (DIME) framework that is able to shape and transform critical flows within the littoral system to achieve a desired end-state.[21] Indeed, the DIME framework is in itself a system made up of specialized elements (such as the diplomatic corps, military assets, programs and targeted financial investments) that can pool resources and capabilities to address specific, yet interrelated, challenges within the littoral system.[22] Threats such as insurgencies, transnational terrorism, organized crime and piracy can be elements that operate and sustain themselves through the flows that exist in complex littoral systems; therefore, applying a framework that is multi-pronged, fit for purpose and tailored to the complexity of the littoral space can be a more effective strategy to counter such threats. Another operational concept that is aligned with the tenet of a DIME framework is the notion

of Unified Action, which has been advanced by the US defence community. Unified Action is defined as the synchronization, coordination and/or integration of the activities of governmental and nongovernmental entities with military operations to achieve unity of effort.[23] That entails achieving a compound effect through the combination of different efforts that include military activities working through other lines of operation as well as activities that are being led by other instruments of national power including diplomatic engagement, international assistance and other security-related activities such as international law enforcement. Ultimately, the littorals are a multi-domain environment where naval, air and land forces can play a critical role in achieving key military objectives. The littoral operating environment, in all of its complexity, requires a comprehensive engagement that enables the use of a wide range of strategic tools, including joint forces integrated with other whole-of-government capabilities. This can ensure that the right set of capabilities is employed to defeat threats or adversaries that are exploiting the complexity of the littorals to their advantage.

The Greater Caribbean as a Complex Littoral System

Based on the model described above, there are key characteristics that can be applied to the Greater Caribbean Basin area of operations, making it, from a security perspective, a strong case study of a complex littoral system. Those characteristics are, first, the ensemble of actor-based components; second, the flows and relationships that exist among those components; and last, the overarching structure that encases both the components and their flows. In terms of the cognitive components, it is evident that an assortment of actors is present in the multi-domain space, and that they have different sets of capabilities and military objectives and occupy specific niches within the larger security ecology of the region. Foremost, the presence of threat actors in the form of VNSAs is quite salient in the operating environment, and countering their activities has been the main effort for existing multinational inter-agency operations in the region.[24] In the geographic space that extends from the northern tip of South America to the US–Mexico border, there is a significant presence of threat actors that seek to challenge or undermine state governments to advance political or economic goals.[25] For instance, the National Liberation Army (ELN), right-wing criminal bands (BACRIM) and dissident units from the former Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) are engaged in an asymmetric warfare campaign against the state as well as among themselves for territorial control of areas that are essential for cocaine production, illegal mining and other illicit activities.[26] These actors do not limit themselves to the Colombian borders, and they thus have a footprint in neighbouring countries such as Ecuador, Venezuela and Panama.[27] Equally destabilizing is the presence of transnational criminal gangs in Central America, which not only boast a well-profiled capacity to use violence but are also able to influence (through coercion and persuasion) different elements of the civilian space, including population segments and local government institutions.[28] While the main objectives of these actors are economic, they have the capacity to achieve limited political objectives that include limiting government presence and exercising basic governance functions in the areas where they have achieved some degree of territoriality.[29] Mexican cartels have also emerged as prevalent actors in the last two decades, shaping the regional security environment. Apart from showcasing sophisticated military capabilities, they challenge the state's monopoly on violence and they also enjoy vast economic power, which allows them to influence and persuade other actors that operate in the space.[30] Like the Colombian VNSAs and the Central American criminal organizations, the Mexican cartels also conduct operations outside their own country's borders, especially as they seek to facilitate the drug trade across the western hemisphere.[31]

State actors with a relative hostile posture are also shaping the overall security environment within the Greater Caribbean Basin. The Maduro regime in Venezuela is challenging Western security objectives by not only supporting some of the aforementioned VNSAs, but also providing a footprint for Russia (and to a lesser degree Iran and China) as those countries seek to ramp up activities advancing great power competition outside their traditional spheres of influence.[32] All of these actors are inherently complex entities with sophisticated command and control nodes, multi-domain capabilities and operational support mechanisms. The overall strategic objectives of all these actors are focused on their respective geographic core areas, yet there are interdependencies or systemic flows that exist among them due to their stake in the drug trade and other illicit transnational activities.



DND/CAF photo

A Royal Canadian Navy member aboard HMCS *Harry DeWolf* operates the radar system to monitor the ship's surroundings as it approaches the port of Montego Bay, Jamaica during Operation CARIBBE, 1 December 2021. (Photo has been digitally altered for operational security).

DND/CAF photo

A United States Navy member aboard HMCS *Harry DeWolf* coordinates the transfer of seized illegal drugs to the United States Coast Guard as part of an illegal drug seizure while on a drug trafficking interdiction operation during Operation CARIBBE in the East Pacific Ocean, 13 November 2021. (Photo has been digitally altered for operational security).

The VNSAs that currently operate in the Greater Caribbean Basin have diverse capabilities, footprints and intent. Nevertheless, overlapping objectives, an appetite for collaboration among themselves, and opportunities for such collaboration have facilitated systemic flows among these different components within the complex security system that exists in the region. These flows facilitate the exchange of strategic commodities such as weapons, expertise and resources, and they ultimately play a role in the trade of illicit goods, mainly but not limited to narcotics. Also, these flows generate alignments through which various actors (notwithstanding their projection capacity) position themselves to support each other's political–military goals. At a macro-system level, actors are closely aligned. For example, Colombian VNSAs, criminal organizations based in Jamaica, Mexico-based cartels, and other VNSAs that are present in strategic geographic areas such as key port areas across the Pacific are likely to share interests.[33] At the local level there is competition and conflict among threat actors, which is evident in Central America, Colombia and Mexico, where violence among VNSAs is quite conspicuous. Yet, as violent actors seek to undermine both domestic and regional security frameworks led by state governments and the international community, the overall system becomes more conducive to their alignment, since the flows seek to shape the system in a way that sets the conditions to achieve their overall strategic (or integrated military, political and economic/criminal) goals. Ultimately, the connectivity that exists at a system-wide level generates a compounded threat environment, which is itself a multi-vector and multi-domain complex system.

The last but not least element that makes the Greater Caribbean Basin a complex security system, and more specifically a littoral one, is the region's physical and human geography. The system generated by the alignment of elements and the flows among them, as described above, is itself encapsulated in a much larger system that includes the demographic, social, economic and political processes that occur in the region's diverse physical domain on a daily basis. The Greater Caribbean Basin is characterized by complex geography around a major oceanic sea that has been used for commerce, war and overall human development for centuries. In this littoral periphery, threat actors maximize the use of the physical terrain to their advantage. On the one hand, features such as fluvial systems, highlands and jungles act as obstacles for state governments in the region that seek to extend their presence and governance as well as their military/security footprint within their boundaries. On the other hand, this rugged terrain is used by threat actors to establish operational nodes, including bases and logistics hubs from which the movement of illicit commodities, personnel and hardware is facilitated. Moreover, this geographic periphery allows threat actors to engage in asymmetric warfare activities to protect or advance their existing political and economic goals. Apart from the physical geography, the human geography also plays a critical role, especially in urban centres within the Greater Caribbean Basin. While cities and other built-up areas offer operational advantages to threat actors due to the impact human-made infrastructure has on the physical domain, the host state's poor governance and lack of presence are ultimately exploited by threat actors in the urban environments.[34] Indeed, the combination of economic power, due to the drug trade and other illicit criminal activities, and an established capability to employ violence allows threat actors to enjoy a high degree of influence over key demographics.[35] This translates into achieving a significant degree of territoriality where control of the human terrain provides access to operational resources, but more importantly erodes both the legitimacy and the presence of state institutions. According to John P. Sullivan, there are plenty of examples of major urban centres across the Greater Caribbean basin where threat actors are able to exercise this degree of territoriality, including Ciudad Juarez in Mexico, San Pedro Sula in Honduras, Caracas in Venezuela and Buenaventura in Colombia, among others.[36] In the end, the complex system components that include threat actors (as the lead elements) and their flows have thrived in the Greater Caribbean Basin because they have successfully adapted to the region's geographic space while simultaneously integrating into the larger security ecosystem within this defined littoral geographic space.

Implications for Combined Joint Operations in the Region

The complex littoral system that exists in the Caribbean has significant strategic value for North American and Western European states. Curtis Ward notes that the Caribbean acts as a "third border" to the US, and that securing it means preventing "terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal migration, human trafficking, and the smuggling of contraband and of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear materials" from reaching the North American mainland.[37] In addition, the Caribbean remains a strategic transit route for maritime trade, a destination for tourists and expatriates, and a significant recipient of foreign direct investment.[38] Although specifically addressing US interests in the region, the salient points raised by Ward could equally apply to Canada or like-minded European countries with a footprint in the region, such as the UK, France and the Netherlands.

Several active military and security activities in the region seek to address particular security interests, some of which take a bilateral country-specific approach while others have more of a regional focus.[39] Examples include ongoing capacity-building packages that are delivered by western forces to state security forces, increased participation in multilateral exercises, and a major counter-narcotics Combined Joint Operation (Operation MARTILLO), which is led by the US with several contributing countries, including Canada (through Operation CARIBBE).[40] In addition, other security agencies also implement programming seeking to bolster security in the region. They focus on enhancing law enforcement, the rule of law and other non-military security efforts.[41] Although these targeted operations haves been critical in addressing current security threats in the region, they will likely encounter the challenge of facing a wider system in which threat actors can easily adapt, persevere and continue their operational tempo due to alignments that occur at a wider structural level. Thanks to systemic flows that include (economic) resource generation, transnational mobility, and even transfer of combat commodities, the system at large can adapt and generate resiliency towards ongoing military and security operations from a bilateral, regional and state perspective.

In this light, it is worth considering an approach that focuses on generating unity of effort through a "combined joint interagency" platform that could coordinate all military and security operations across the Greater Caribbean Basin. Such a platform would not necessarily establish a unified chain of command, which could be quite challenging given competing priorities and interests, as well as other political challenges among partner countries. Instead, it would focus on synchronization, collaboration and ultimately generating a space for joint operational planning to re-adjust to shifts in the alignment of the threat system across the region. Currently, the US Southern Command maintains a Joint Inter-Agency Task Force that supports Operation MARTILLO. However, the scope of both the task force and the operation is narcotics interdiction (maritime, air and law enforcement activities) as opposed to the full spectrum of interconnected threats that are present in the region. A combined joint and interagency

DND/CAF photo

HMCS *Moncton* transits the Atlantic Ocean on their way to the Caribbean Sea during Operation CARIBBE to support the US-led Campaign MARTILLO, a multinational effort to prevent illicit trafficking by organized crime and improve security in the region, 31 January 2021.

platform could offer an opportunity to North American, European, and regional partners to address the threat system by adjusting to changes and shifts in the system through information sharing, synchronization of action and subsequently linking activities that at this point are exclusively focused on bilateral or localized efforts, such as capacity-building or support for partner security forces. As highlighted earlier, given the complexity of littoral operating environments, especially ones as vast as the Greater Caribbean Basin, the use of DIME or the unified action approaches can help maximize efficiency and impact when employing all instruments of state power to advance security objectives. Ergo, a platform that can coordinate multi-domain activities across a variety of lines of effort that are implemented by a set of like-minded countries could help address fluidity that exists in a complex security system. In the end, there would have to be an appetite among partners to establish such a security architecture, yet this is a process that can be built up through gradual steps that facilitate operational integration.

Conclusion

The Greater Caribbean Basin is a complex security system that is littoral in nature and which, in turn, requires a comprehensive approach to regional security to address interconnected threats that are of a transnational nature. Overall, the physical and human geography of the region, which borders a major oceanic body of water, hosts elements that include threat actor–-based components as well as flows that contribute to the complex relationships among them. Indeed, these components include non-state and state actors that either cooperate with or compete against each other while simultaneously creating alignments that ultimately shape the security environment across the region. Given the way in which threats have managed to intertwine through transboundary networks across the Greater Caribbean Basin, there is a need to enable a high degree of coordination, collaboration and planning across all military and security efforts in the region, in spite of the political and administrative challenges involved. To that end, this article proposes exploring the establishment of a combined joint interagency structure with a mandate to oversee operations across the region. As both Western nations and local partners continue to counter threats in the region, these are opportunities that merit consideration.

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DND photo by Corporal Julie Turcotte

Master Bombardier Robert Kelly, Forward Observation Officer Technician from the 1st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group, monitors footage that is being received from an Unmanned Air Vehicle (UAV). This capability allows soldiers to have better visibility and situational awareness when conducting operations, 8 October 2010. In close cooperation with Afghan National Security Forces, 1st Battalion, the Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group provides security by conducting counter-insurgency operations throughout Panjwa'i District located south-west of Kandahar City.

Hybrid Warfare: Redefining and Responding to Hostile Intent

by Jason Thompson

Major Jason Thompson *enrolled in the Canadian Army as an Infantry Officer in 1999. Upon completion of training, Major Thompson was posted to 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (3 PPCLI), where he served as a Rifle Platoon Commander and as Reconnaissance Platoon Commander. In 2007 Major Thompson was selected to serve in Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM); since that time, he has fulfilled a variety of command and staff positions within the Command. Major Thompson has completed multiple combat tours and domestic security operations. He is also a graduate of several advanced courses, including Advanced Reconnaissance, US Army Ranger, Military Freefall, and an array of Special Operations courses. Major Thompson holds a B.A. in Commerce from the Royal Military College of Canada and an M.B.A. from Queen's University. Major Thompson is currently the Executive Assistant to the Director of Staff at the Strategic Joint Staff, and in 2022 he will be posted back to CANSOFCOM as the J5.*

> Our authoritarian rivals see the strategic context as a continuous struggle in which non-military and military instruments are used unconstrained by any distinction between peace and war. These regimes believe that they are already engaged in an intense form of conflict that is predominantly political rather than kinetic. Their strategy of 'political warfare' is designed to undermine cohesion, to erode economic, political and social resilience, and to compete for strategic advantage in key regions of the world.[1]
>
> – General Nick Carter, UK Chief of the Defence Staff

Introduction

The re-emergence of great power competition, globalization and the rapid development of technology have all challenged the traditional concepts of peace, competition and war. Hard military power remains an effective deterrent to war, but Western liberal democracies can no longer rely upon their relative military superiority and multilateral institutions to achieve, or defend, their national strategic objectives.[2] Hostile state and non-state actors now employ a broad spectrum of layered capabilities to accelerate competition below the threshold of war. They seek to influence, shape and alter outcomes through military and non-military means to achieve their objectives without triggering war. And if war is inevitable, or if war is the preferred option, those same actors will employ similar tactics in advance of direct hostilities to set conditions that maximize their chances of success.[3]

This approach to competition and conflict is a significant threat to Western liberal democracies precisely because it exposes a critical vulnerability. Commonly referred to as "hybrid warfare," namely the synchronized application of military and non-military capabilities to achieve an outcome, this emerging trend challenges existing Western capabilities to detect, defend and counter malign intent. Lauren Speranza from the Atlantic Council states it bluntly: "[M]anaging hybrid threats remains one of the greatest challenges for the transatlantic community."[4] From legal frameworks and authority processes to military capabilities and capacities, Western states are ill prepared to counter this significant threat. Consequently, national security and national defence strategies must evolve to fulfill their mandate to defend and protect national interests.

"Commonly referred to as "hybrid warfare," namely the synchronized application of military and non-military capabilities to achieve an outcome, this emerging trend challenges existing Western capabilities to detect, defend and counter malign intent."

This article will demonstrate that hybrid warfare is a significant threat to Canada and the West. The argument will be presented in three sections. First, several definitions of hybrid warfare will be explored. In the process, it will become clear that there is no standard definition of hybrid warfare and that the terms "hybrid" and "warfare" are problematic for political, legal and military reasons. It will also become clear that although the expression "hybrid warfare" may be relatively new, the application of military and non-military capabilities to achieve objectives is not particularly new or novel. What is new, however, and what makes hybrid warfare so difficult to counter, is the variety of capabilities available to hostile actors and how those capabilities are employed within the rules-based international order.[5] Second, the article will explore how and why hostile state actors apply hybrid warfare capabilities. It will focus on Russia but will also explore Chinese and Iranian examples to demonstrate the pervasiveness of the hybrid threat. Third, the United Kingdom's response to the evolving threat environment will be examined, looking specifically at its National Security Strategy and its National Defence Integrated Operating Concept. The UK's priorities and frameworks will be outlined to demonstrate how that nation views the threat and intends to counter it. It is a monumental change that will require significant adjustments to authority mechanisms and internal resource allocations. The UK was selected because it offers a unique, non-American example of national security and defence policy that could be applied to states such as Canada that have significant equities at stake, finite security and defence resources and a strong tradition of liberal democratic values.

Defining and Responding to Hybrid Warfare

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) describes hybrid warfare as "a wide range of overt and covert military, paramilitary, and civilian measures [that] are employed in a highly integrated design."[6] NATO further refines this definition, stating that hybrid warfare is "a broad, complex, and adaptive combination of conventional and non-conventional means, and overt and covert military, paramilitary, and civilian measures, [that] are employed in a highly integrated design by state and non-state actors to achieve their objectives."[7] The Canadian definition of hybrid warfare is very similar: Canada's defence policy, *Strong, Secure, Engaged,* states that "hybrid methods involve the coordinated application of diplomatic, informational, cyber, military and economic instruments to achieve strategic or operational objectives."[8]

The NATO and Canadian definitions of hybrid warfare are very similar and align closely with legacy definitions. Frank Hoffman, for instance, described it as "a full range of modes of warfare, including conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts that include indiscriminate violence and coercion, and criminal disorder."[9] Although Hoffman's 2009 definition was presented through the prism of complex counter-insurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, as opposed to hostile state actors and great power competition, his definition is consistent in that it focuses on the blended application of military and non-military capabilities to achieve objectives.

Notably absent, however, are the geopolitical conditions under which hybrid warfare may occur. The term "warfare" implies that war, or conflict, is a precondition for these tactics. However, history has shown that this is not always the case; hostile state actors deliberately choose hybrid approaches precisely in order to avoid war. Additionally, the increase in political rhetoric and military/academic discussions about hybrid warfare implies that it is a new, novel or emerging concept. Again, this is misleading, as state and non-state actors have been employing hybrid tactics for centuries. What has changed, however, are the capabilities, technologies and conditions under which those tactics are employed within the rules-based international order. Absent a clearer definition, understanding and responding to hybrid warfare becomes exceedingly challenging.

Definition Challenges for Hybrid Warfare

The term "hybrid warfare" accurately reflects the tools that state and non-state actors have at their disposal to achieve outcomes. However, deeper analysis suggests that hybrid warfare has become a blanket expression to describe virtually all activities that occur between high-intensity warfare and traditional statecraft.

PA images/Alamy Stock Photo

Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir Nick Carter giving evidence to the House of Commons Defence Committee in London, where he said that Russia is in violation of a landmark Cold War-era nuclear treaty and must be called out on the breach, 4 December 2018.

This lack of clarity poses a significant challenge for policy and military professionals, as there is a gap within the international system when describing and responding to each. This has a direct impact on how elected officials, policy experts and military professionals plan, allocate resources and deploy capabilities. Ofer Fridman reinforces this: "Despite the political usefulness of the term hybrid warfare…[military] professionals now recognise that the term is next to useless for describing the real nature of contemporary conflicts, leading them to promote more specific definitions."[10] Bettina Renz further amplifies the call for more precise language: "Not unlike the idea that we are currently witnessing a 'New Cold War', 'hybrid warfare' used as a model for [hostile state actor] foreign policy is no more than a very general analogy and as such not useful either for scholarly analysis or policy making."[11] Current legal and authority processes within liberal democracies demand that a distinction be made between war and competition, and the status quo is extremely limiting.

Hybrid Warfare vs Competition

The term "warfare" is misleading because it does not necessarily reflect the reality of contemporary great power competition. Hostile actors are deliberately using hybrid tactics below the threshold of war to confound response options. Russian General Makmut succinctly described this challenge when he said, "[I]f the employment of any non-military means is a war, then the whole of human history is war…the over-free employment of such words as 'war' devalues the severe [nature of the] concept… and dulls its adequate perception in society."[12] Politicians throughout history have inappropriately labelled political competitions or struggles as "war," but this is a dangerous precedent and tends to be confusing for military and policy professionals. "Any military organisation, by definition, takes preparations to win wars… therefore, conceptualising non-military confrontations as wars is unhelpful…because most of the required actions and counteractions do not fall under the military's responsibility."[13]

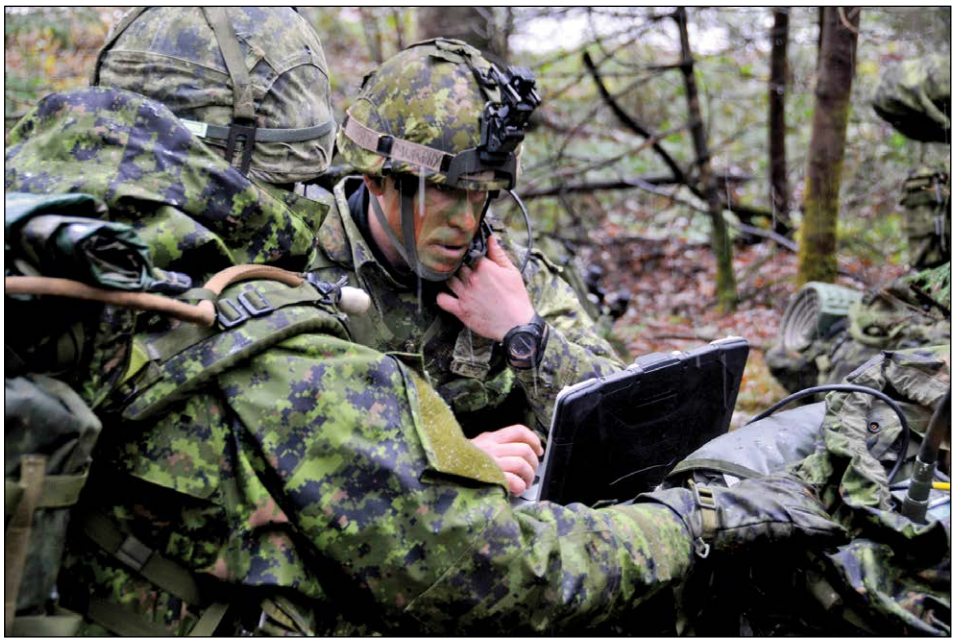
What's New About Hybrid Warfare?

Contrary to modern rhetoric, hybrid warfare is not new. Several experts go so far as to say that some "aspects of hybrid war…have been practiced since warfare began"[14] and that "there is nothing new about hybrid warfare and it is just a new abbreviation for an old type of warfare."[15] Indeed, the layering of military and non-military capabilities to achieve specific outcomes, in war and competition, is an ancient tradition that continues to be central to modern statecraft. What has changed, however, are the ways in which technology and globalization can be leveraged to influence, shape and manipulate the environment. Further complicating this development is the challenge of attribution and the incredible speed at which these capabilities can be deployed. Consequently, it is argued that "the legal framework for international conflict is not meeting modern conflict realities."[16] Hostile actors have studied the international system and have exploited a critical vulnerability, namely the difficulty of confirming attribution and proving hostile intent. If those aspects are not precisely ascertained, Western states will have significant difficulty justifying the development and employment of capabilities to counter the threat. And potentially more dangerous is the issue of escalation management. If the threat is inadequately defined and prepared for, responsible counter-actions become considerably less predictable or manageable. Raymond Reilly has this to say:

> Whether considering a nuclear attack, armed conflict, use of cyber capabilities, espionage, space weaponization, predatory economics or even election influence, extreme caution and due regard to escalation risk must always be taken to formulate an effective strategy in the 21st century. While limited war and [mutually assured destruction] are not new topics, the rapid growth and development of new technologies has led to additional challenges that are less black and white. Cyberweapons, artificial intelligence, militarization of space, and various other technological advancements in warfare have made escalation management more complex, but no less important. Without a proper escalation management strategy, plans will not survive first contact with a major power.[17]

Why Hybrid Works: The Legal Case for Hybrid Warfare

Canada's defence policy, *Strong, Secure, Engaged,* states that "[hybrid methods] often rely on the deliberate spread of misinformation to sow confusion and discord in the international community, create ambiguity and maintain deniability."[18] As stated above, the employment of influence activities in competition and war is not new, but modern technology has made it possible to execute those missions in a low-attribution fashion while adjusting in near real time. "[Hostile state actors] have both the ambition and capability to develop a sophisticated hybrid strategy, encompassing a highly integrated use of…capabilities…combined with a creative reconfiguration of the legal and communication aspects of security."[19] This concept is further amplified by Laura Herta, who argues that modern hybrid approaches by hostile state actors seek to avoid, or ignore, *jus ad bellum* criteria. She indicates that hostile actors may "not intend to overtly defy international law, but [they do attempt] to escape its provisions and find loopholes



DND photo by Corporal Julie Turcotte

MCpl Patrick Murphy, 2 R22eR reconnaissance platoon, sends data to the command post using a computer and a 117F radio. The exercise is designed to confirm the platoon's ability to send data using mobile equipment. The data is subsequently analysed by intelligence and the chain of command.

by using the lexicon of Western liberal democracies."[20] *Strong, Secure, Engaged* warns that the potential for misunderstanding and miscalculation in this environment is extremely high. It goes on to say that, by employing hybrid tactics, "states can influence events in their favour without triggering outright armed conflict" and that "the use of hybrid methods presents challenges in terms of detection, attribution and response for Canada and its allies."[21]

Jean-Christophe Boucher argues that the legal and authority challenges associated with hybrid warfare are particularly acute for Western democracies when the principal–agent model for national defence is considered. Boucher states,

> [T]he danger of hybrid warfare lies in the strain it causes on civil-military relations. In this light, hybrid warfare is not a tactical or strategic challenge; it is a political issue. Hybrid warfare is particularly problematic for Western democracies because it exploits our civil-military governance tradition.[22]

Ultimate authority for defence policy rests with elected civilian officials, and responsibility for executing defence policy rests with military officials. This requires equilibrium, whereby both the principal and the agent must be disciplined in the pursuit of their interests and the passage of information must be relatively unhindered. But in a hybrid warfare environment where attribution is difficult, misinformation is rampant and conditions are fluid, ensuring common understanding and symmetry of information is very difficult. "This asymmetry increases the duration of the decision-making process and…often allows enemies to force a fait accompli."[23] This is one of the primary reasons why hybrid warfare tactics are exceedingly effective during competition and conflict below the threshold of war: Western liberal democracies are simply not constructed to respond effectively.

Half Measures to Address the Threat

Many Western states have eschewed the term "hybrid warfare" in favour of more precise terms like "cyber operations" or "information operations." This allows Western states to overcome some of the ambiguity associated with the term "hybrid warfare" and adequately frame the specific threat they are trying to tackle or the operation they intend to conduct. This approach addresses some of the policy and authority issues that have been identified in the paragraphs above; however, it fails to address the fundamental problem of the "grey space" between competition and war. Authorities and legal constructs continue to be framed as either war or competition, not a fluid representation of both. And, what is potentially more challenging, by stovepiping operational acts through specific operation types (cyber, information, etc.), Western states are not responding to layered hybrid attacks with appropriately layered hybrid capabilities of their own. Instead, they are constrained to whichever operational capability they have decided to frame their response through. This presents a unique problem and further demonstrates that national security and national defence policies must evolve to adequately address the threat posed by hybrid warfare.

The Application of Hybrid Warfare by Competitors

The West's geopolitical competitors are increasingly turning to hybrid warfare tactics to achieve their objectives. Despite the transition away from an American-led unipolar world to a multipolar world with several emerging superpowers, American and NATO military strength still provides a significant deterrent to war. Consequently, alternative means of competing have been aggressively pursued by hostile state actors. The research suggests that "more and more actors are choosing to combine various methods…drawing not merely upon hard capabilities; rather, they seek to combine different levers of national power"[24] to compete and win below the threshold of war. Expanding on this concept, hostile state actors have demonstrated:

> preferences for hybridity linking ends to available means and resources, within specific limitations, internal or external to the actors in concern. From this perspective, what emerges from the overall issue is an important point about how, while technology is creating a permissive environment for hybrid warfare to develop, hybridity may indicate a strategy making the best of inherent limitations in available options, rather than an optimal strategy.[25]

The following sub-sections will explore Russian, Chinese and Iranian approaches to hybrid warfare. The intent is not to provide a comprehensive analysis of each approach; conversely, it is meant to demonstrate the variability that exists within the broad threat categorized as "hybrid warfare." It will also demonstrate the global nature of the threat and signal why Western liberal democracies must take it seriously if they hope to compete effectively.

Russia

Russia provides the quintessential example of hybrid warfare. Its recent operations in Crimea, Donbass and Syria demonstrate an exceptional ability to bring military and non-military capabilities to bear in competition and conflict, while expertly avoiding war with global superpowers and regional hegemons. Further, its ability to employ cyber and information capabilities to influence democratic elections (e.g. United States), shape critical referendums (e.g. BREXIT) and aggravate contentious social movements (e.g. Black Lives Matter) represents a highly sophisticated approach to competition that leverages low-attribution technology while exploiting vulnerabilities in Western liberal democracies. Russia's approach to hybrid warfare is described as a "combination of covert military operations with criminal disorder and hijacking social media, the blending of special forces, intelligence, malware, and local militias, but most importantly…[a] systematic and integrated attempt to reverse realities."[26]

Interestingly, Russian military leaders have recognized the challenges associated with hybrid warfare and have actively separated hybrid warfare (*gibridnaya voyna* in Russian) from "new-generation warfare" in their doctrine:

> Russian military thought draws a clear distinction between two different concepts: *gibridnaya voyna* and new-generation warfare. Whereas the former implies a mix of political, diplomatic, economic, information and other non-military means intended to subvert and undermine an adversary, the latter describes a full-scale military operation, preceded and accompanied by different non-military actions intended to weaken the adversary's military power and political resilience. An understanding of this division is important as it suggests that the Kremlin could apply different strategies in different scenarios, depending on whether it intends to engage in an open military confrontation.[27]

The Russian approach implies a high level of sophistication and a deep appreciation for the primacy of political–strategic objectives when determining military strategies. Ultimately, Russian leaders understand that each scenario is unique, which drives a bespoke risk assessment, resulting in a tailored and highly pragmatic application of national capabilities. Russian General Gerasimov, the individual who, in Western circles, is thought to be most responsible for the development of Russian hybrid warfare, has stated that "war is now conducted by a roughly 4:1 ratio of nonmilitary and military measures. These nonmilitary measures include economic sanctions, disruption of diplomatic ties, and political and diplomatic pressure."[28]

The distinction between Western interpretations of hybrid warfare and the Russian approach come into sharp relief when General Gerasimov says, "The important point is that while the West considers these nonmilitary measures as ways of avoiding war, Russia considers these measures as war."[29] This nuance is important because it indicates that the Russians view their actions as critical to state survival, and hence believe that it is in their national interest to allocate war-like authorities to actively pursue their strategic objectives.

DND photo by Corporal Anthony Chand

A member of Her Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Fredericton* performs his duties during a mine warfare exercise as the frigate departs Aksaz, Turkey to join other ships as part of Standing NATO Maritime Group Two (SNMG 2) task group during Op REASSURANCE. 29 January 2016.

> The center of gravity, in Russian military thought, is the adversary's will to fight and a country's ability to engage in war or confrontation as a system. Therefore, the purpose of operations, particularly at a time of nominal peace, is to shape adversary decision-making by targeting their economic, information, and political infrastructure.[30]

President Putin's approach to geopolitics has directly influenced Russian hybrid warfare. "Putin's ultimate goal is not just to weaken former Soviet republics, but rather to react to global asymmetries. As such, Russia needs to preserve its status of great power and to counteract not only a militarily stronger coalition of adversaries, but a Western ascendancy."[31] Viewed through this lens, the Russian approach becomes much more urgent than simply a competition with the West. It is linked to identity and survival. "The Russian mindset, and subsequently its strategy, is based heavily on a historical pattern of defeats and a desire to gain back some of its previous Soviet glory."[32]

"If Western states hope to compete and win against their geopolitical rivals, their national security and national defence strategies must evolve to become more flexible, responsive and integrated."

China

Similarly, China has adopted a hybrid warfare strategy to achieve its objectives below the threshold of war. "The Chinese government has made it clear that they intend to change the status quo and create a region and world in which China holds a stronger and more influential position in the global order."[33] Like Russia, China has demonstrated finesse in its application of hybrid techniques, recognizing that it can be more aggressive and interventionist in regions closer to mainland China (Taiwan, Hong Kong, the South China Sea and the border area with India), while farther abroad it tends to be less forceful and rely upon softer capabilities like diplomacy, economic policy, cyber capabilities and industrial espionage to shape and influence the environment. "In competition against the United States and its allies, a hybrid strategy is inevitably an attractive option [for China] to create an impasse in the form of deterrent stalemate, whilst avoiding an escalation to all-out, open war."[34] Although China is an emerging superpower, it has not yet attained military parity with the US and the West. Consequently, China appreciates the limited utility of force and has "been playing a long-term economic strategy to achieve great power status and increase its global influence."[35] Conversely, China has been much more willing to exercise all elements of its national power in East Asia. "Since April 2012…several regional state actors have grown concerned of China's ability to successfully exploit the space between peace and war by means of hybrid strategies."[36]

Iran

Iran is a regional power and does not have the geopolitical reach or ambition demonstrated by either Russia or China. However, Iran does employ a highly effective hybrid strategy to achieve its objectives. "Iranian hybrid warfare is characterised by strong centralisation of strategic-level decisions and good synchronisation of actions at operational level…[it] is wholly implemented by well-coordinated security policy and diplomacy."[37] Iran is regionally focused but has demonstrated willingness to pursue global initiatives when there is a direct impact on its national interests.

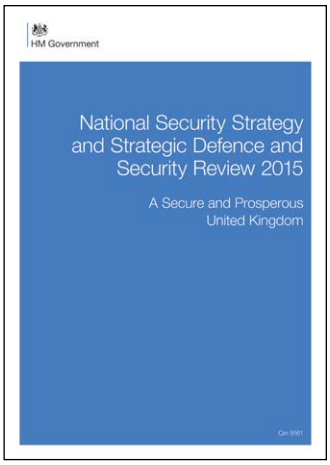
Despite Tehran's unique regime and ideology, Iran has also demonstrated a broad spectrum of instruments for hybrid warfare: military, paramilitary, socio-cultural and religious, information and cyberwarfare.[38] There are four elements of Iranian understanding and employment of hybrid warfare. The first is "soft war" and the influence of cultural and political movements. Second is cyber operations, both through publicly available sources (social media, etc.) and through targeted offensive and defensive operations. Third is a concept known as "mosaic defence," which implies the application of asymmetric forces to complement or reinforce conventional military forces. Mosaic defence is employed domestically for homeland defence purposes as well as internationally for foreign interventions and influence operations. The fourth element is Iran's relationship with Hezbollah and the support of its forces against Israel and the associated application of hybrid capabilities.[39] Despite being regionally focused and significantly less powerful than either Russia or China, Iran has competently employed hybrid warfare capabilities that must be considered carefully by Western states.

The United Kingdom's Approach

The UK has taken an innovative and forward-looking approach to its national security and national defence requirements. As with most major powers, national security is an integral component of the UK's governing tradition, and it regularly releases new or updated policy documents to reflect its current strategy. The two key documents that will be outlined in this article are the *National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review*[40] and the UK Ministry of *Defence Integrated Operating Concept*.[41] Both documents have taken steps to address emerging and evolving threats to UK national interests, and they deserve further consideration by defence policy experts.

As was stated in the introduction, the UK was selected for this article primarily because it provides a non-American example of what can be done to address emerging threats. The UK is a global leader and a staunch supporter of the rules-based international order. The UK is also a relatively small country with limited resources to spend on national security and national defence programs. Consequently, the UK provides a useful example for other Western liberal democracies trying to address, or evolve, their national security and national defence strategies.

National Security



The *National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review* from November 2015 is a capstone strategy document that is updated and reviewed every 12 to 18 months. In the 2019 version, the UK Prime Minister stated:

> We have therefore made an unconditional commitment to the defence and security of our continent against shared challenges; from tackling illegal migration to preventing terrorist attacks on our citizens to deterring conventional and non-conventional threats to European security.[42]

This capstone document is broad and appropriately covers multiple domains. It identifies three priorities: tackle terrorism, strengthen the rules-based international order and promote prosperity. To address those priorities, the UK has outlined three broad national security objectives, which are to protect citizens, project global influence and promote prosperity. Clearly those priorities and objectives are not exclusively linked to defending against hybrid warfare threats, but some of the supporting lines of effort for addressing hybrid threats are a commitment to develop agile, capable and globally deployable Armed Forces and intelligence agencies, a pledge to exploit the full spectrum of available capabilities to respond to state-based threats, a promise to develop tough and innovative cyber security measures, and a commitment to work more closely with the private sector to increase innovation and collaboration.[43]

The themes outlined above are not necessarily new, nor are they unique to the UK. Many Western states, including Canada, have issued similarly themed defence and security policy statements. What makes the UK approach unique, however, is the way in which it intends to implement the policy. As stated above, hybrid threats are unique and dangerous because they combine multiple elements of national power and exploit gaps in the international system between competition and war. To address this, the UK has adopted a "Fusion approach":

> Our Fusion approach to national security ensures that all of Government's capabilities and policy levers are used to tackle complex national security questions. Fusion is a fundamentally new approach designed to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of government in support of national strategic objectives. It ensures that in defending our national security we make better use of all of our capabilities: from economic levers, through cutting-edge military resources to our wider diplomatic and cultural influence on the world stage. Fusion is underpinned by partnerships: within Government and with other parts of the public sector, but also with the private sector and academia. Fusion is about Government working more effectively in concert with the full range of potential partners to deliver against national priorities.[44]

Regarding implementation of the Fusion concept, the UK recognized that collaboration without specific authorities and responsibilities is ineffective. To address that challenge, the UK developed the National Security Council (NSC), chaired by the Prime Minister, with a series of issue-specific sub-committees that are chaired by senior Cabinet-level officials. Again, this is not particularly innovative or new, as most Western states have ministerial-level committees to address national issues. What is innovative, however, is the development of the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) Implementation Sub-committee. The sub-committee is chaired by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Minister of Finance) and is empowered to address structural, policy and legal barriers to effective "Fusion." It is also tasked to hold committee chairs and members accountable for their actions and reallocate resources and capabilities between departments to ensure that threats are addressed quickly and effectively. "Our enhanced national security structures promote and support the Fusion approach to national security. Our SDSR implementation team…provides [support to the NSC] and oversees implementation by Departments."[45] All of these committees are supported by Programme Boards which are chaired by senior government officials from across government as well as a robust data analytics system to conduct intelligence assessments and horizon scanning. These systems are designed to be "as effective and efficient as possible in providing evidence to inform and underpin national security policy and decision making."[46]

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Then-Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson and Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach Chief of the Defence Staff arrive in Downing Street after then-Prime Minister Theresa May summoned a meeting of the National Security Council for a briefing on the latest intelligence on the nerve agent attack in Salisbury on Sergei Skripal and Nikolai Glushkov, London, United Kingdom, 20 March 2018.

National Defence Integrated Operating Concept

The *Integrated Operating Concept* is a direct response to the hybrid threat posed by hostile actors and, if implemented successfully, will fundamentally change UK defence policy thinking. It also nests cleanly within the spirit and intent of the Fusion approach at the national strategic level. The Integrated Operating Concept recognizes that rivals deliberately exploit the ambiguous grey zone between competition and war; in response, it offers three broad concepts. First is the concept of "persistent competition," whereby the authorities governing "operating" and "warfighting" need to be more dynamically managed and modulated. Second is the requirement for integration across the military, inter-agency and allied domains. And third is the requirement to modernize the Armed Forces to operate with information-age systems.[47] Although specific implementation details have not been released, the document specifically mentions some of the impending structural and procurement challenges that lie ahead:

> Warfare is increasingly about a competition between hiding and finding. It will be enabled at every level by a digital backbone into which all sensors, effectors and deciders will be plugged. This means that some industrial age capabilities will increasingly have to meet their sunset to create the space for capabilities needed for sunrise.[48]

Conclusion

The contemporary operating environment is shaped by great power competition, rapid technology development and globalization. This is further amplified by the transition from an American-led unipolar world to a multipolar system with multiple emerging superpowers. In this new environment, each country is fiercely competing with all elements of its national power, below the threshold of war, to achieve its strategic objectives. Although the concept of hybrid warfare is not necessarily new, the way it is currently applied presents extremely difficult challenges for Western states. Authority and legal constructs are ill suited to simultaneously respond to military and non-military threats, and there are significant capability and capacity shortfalls. If Western states hope to compete and win against their geopolitical rivals, their national security and national defence strategies must evolve to become more flexible, responsive and integrated. The UK model provides an innovative example that attempts to confront the threat directly, by fundamentally changing the way that authorities are granted and capabilities are developed. Like-minded states should pay close attention.

DND photo by MCpl Gabrielle DesRochers

Captain Corey O'Neill, CH-148 Cyclone helicopter pilot, conducts an anti-submarine warfare mission during Exercise TRIDENT JUNCTURE 18, while deployed on Op REASSURANCE, 28 October 2018.

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Members of the House of Commons and Senate listen as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, addresses Parliament in Ottawa, 15 March 2022.

Turning Point

by Martin Shadwick

The brutal, incompetently executed and breathtakingly ill-advised Russian invasion of Ukraine signifies the end of the post-Cold War era that commenced with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Be it a "paradigm shift"—to cite United Kingdom Foreign Secretary Liz Truss and others—or, in the words of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, a *Zeitenwende*—a turning point—the arrival of the post-post-Cold War era, as Roland Paris of the University of Ottawa's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs noted in a 21 March 2022 *Globe and Mail* op-ed, has "already upended Europe's post-1989 security order, and what follows may be even more dangerous than the Cold War." For Canada, a state typically associated with both a parsimonious approach to defence spending and an uncomfortably sparse interest in matters of national defence and international security, the fallout from the invasion of Ukraine has brought unaccustomed political, media and academic attention to the perceived inadequacy of Canadian defence spending, to the disquietingly glacial pace of defence procurement in Canada, to weaknesses in military readiness, sustainability and recruitment and retention as well as to the most credible procurement and other initiatives for enhancing Canada's military capabilities in both the near and longer terms. It has also sparked debate on how best to refresh—or potentially replace—*Strong, Secure, Engaged* (SSE), the Trudeau government's now five-year-old defence policy blueprint. Although its core tenets and principles arguably remain valid, Jody Thomas, the recently appointed National Security and Intelligence Advisor to the Prime Minister, noted during the March 2022 Ottawa Conference on Defence and Security organized by the CDA Institute and the Conference of Defence Associations that "we've been overtaken by events, and there may be a different ordering of things that need to be invested in."

The geostrategic and other ramifications of the Russian invasion—and their implications for Canada and its NATO allies—are profound. "However the war in Ukraine unfolds," noted Roland Paris in his *Globe and Mail* analysis, "NATO–Russia relations will almost certainly remain tense, if not hostile. Sanctions and economic warfare may continue as long as Mr. Putin retains power. Russian troops might never return home from their 'training exercises' in Belarus. Their presence threatens Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, all members of NATO. The Western alliance has already begun to rearm and reinforce." Such trends, according to Paris, "point toward a new kind of Cold War, more perilous than the last. In its original form, the Soviet and Western blocs used various devices to constrain their competition within certain bounds. Armscontrol agreements limited certain weapons and permitted both sides to inspect each other's compliance. The lines dividing the Soviet and Western blocs were relatively clear. These measures helped prevent the Cold War from becoming 'hot,' but

most have now faded away." He goes on to write that, whereas "Russia and NATO were largely disconnected during the Cold War, both sides are now vulnerable to each other's cyberweapons, heightening the risks of real-world confrontation. Nor can Russia truly be isolated if China continues to serve as its economic lifeline." Indeed, as former BBC special correspondent Allan Little noted in a March 2022 assessment of the invasion, "much will depend on how China negotiates this new landscape. China and Russia are bonded by their shared antipathy to American power, and their conviction that the greatest threat is from a resurgent, more unified democratic world. China does not want [Vladimir] Putin weakened, or the West strengthened. Yet that is exactly what the effect the war in Ukraine has had." Similarly, observes Paris, "the good news is that Western democracies have shown remarkable unity in the face of Mr. Putin's aggression. Now, they must prepare for what could become a long confrontation with Russia in Ukraine and elsewhere, without inadvertently triggering another 'war to end all wars.'"

Typifying much of the Canadian media reaction to the invasion, and to its potential security and other ramifications for Canada, was *Globe and Mail* columnist Andrew Coyne. Writing on 19 March 2022, Coyne argued that Russia under Vladimir Putin "has become not merely a source of instability or the occasional outrage, but an existential threat; even if it can be returned to its cage in the short term, it will be the work of decades to contain it. Predictions of Mr. Putin's imminent demise will, I'm afraid, prove illusory, and whoever succeeds him could in any case be as bad or worse. This is not a short-term crisis, but a long-term one." Coyne writes that "one consequence of this, clearly, will be a requirement—no longer a request—that Canada improve its contribution to the collective defence of the democracies: an increase in defence spending from its current 1.4 per cent of GDP to at least 2 per cent, and probably beyond that." The "current crisis has cruelly exposed, if it were not evident already, just how threadbare our military has become…." He writes: "That we need to spend more is self-evident; even more urgently, we need to spend better." Military procurement, in his view, "has been a national disgrace for decades. Played for politics, corrupted by lobbyists, and caught between competing regional interests, projects have routinely come in years late and billions of dollars over budget. Perhaps we could afford this nonsense in the past. We cannot now."

REUTERS/Alamy Stock Photo

Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs Mélanie Joly speaks to the media after Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky addressed Parliament in Ottawa, 15 March 2022.

Coyne cautioned, though, that "some difficult choices" will be required since "this new demand for [defence] spending" will have to "contend" with the substantial pandemic-related growth in the deficit and the debt, rising levels of inflation, the Trudeau government's "pet projects—and there are many of them"—the "grim" long-term fiscal prospects of the provinces as "an aging population collides with a sclerotic and overburdened health care system" (thereby necessitating additional fiscal transfers from Ottawa) and, more generally, the global economic uncertainties and damage triggered by the invasion of Ukraine. Indeed, "the only way we will ever be able to afford all of the many new burdens we are piling onto the tax system is if we can generate faster growth—much faster."

The renewed political attention to questions of national defence and international peace and security in the immediate post-invasion period was evident in a series of wellpublicized statements and/or speeches by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Foreign Affairs Melanie Joly and, in particular, Minister of National Defence Anita Anand. The latter's address to the Ottawa defence conference, for example, stressed that "we are [now] facing the greatest threats to international peace and stability since the end of the Second World War" and a series of "consequences for our multilateral partnerships and for the rules-based international order." Given Canada's need for a "strong, healthy and modern military," the Minister was "pressing to ensure that we as a government are able to step up to support and invest in a well-equipped military that can defend our country and contribute to continental and global security." "We know from [SSE]," said the Minister in a subsequent Global News interview, "that we will be increasing defence spending by 70 per cent over the nine-year period beginning in 2017. But in the context of the current threat environment, we must ask ourselves, is that enough? Should we be doing more?" In a CBC interview, the Minister reported that "I personally am bringing forward aggressive options which would see [Canada], potentially, exceeding the two per cent [of GDP] level, hitting the two percent level, and below the two per cent level." More circumspect but potentially instructive was Chrystia Freeland's early March 2022 comment to reporters in Berlin that she was accompanying the Prime Minister on a fourcountry European tour in part to consult with allies prior to the forthcoming federal budget. "The geopolitical situation has just changed tremendously" and "it's very important and valuable for me as we finalize the budget to have some firsthand conversations about exactly the changes on the ground. And certainly, defence spending is something we have to look at carefully." The Prime Minister, although widely reported to have "opened the door" to increased defence spending, was decidedly guarded. He acknowledged that the strategic "context is rapidly changing," that Canada's military personnel needed "all the equipment necessary to be able to stand strongly" and that "we will continue to look at what more we can do" but, noted the Canadian Press, he "did not directly respond to a question about whether Canada would finally commit to spending two per cent" of GDP on defence.

A decision by the government of Justin Trudeau to provide significant additional funding for national defence—just how

significant and how quickly remains to be seen—at the seven-year mark of his prime ministerial stewardship could in some respects prove reminiscent of Pierre Trudeau's Defence Structure Review. Unveiled in 1975—coincidentally at the seven-year mark of his prime ministerial tenure—the Defence Structure Review effectively restored NATO to its pre-eminent position in Canadian defence policy, rescued DND and the Canadian Forces from the financial wilderness, and facilitated something of a renaissance for a rather battered and rundown military establishment. The product of a less benign strategic environment and the Soviet Union's expanding military capabilities, entreaties from allies (with European leverage much enhanced by Canada's quest for trade diversification) and a variety of other factors (e.g. the perceived regional and industrial benefits of defence procurement), the Defence Structure Review heralded a major, inflation-indexed increase in defence spending and a wide-ranging re-equipment agenda. Some of this new equipment not surprisingly took a considerable amount of time to enter service, but some acquisitions, such as the underbudget CF-18 fighter, arrived, in retrospect, with remarkable dispatch.

REUTERS/Alamy Stock Photo

Canada's Defence Minister Anita Anand speaks at a news conference about an advisory panel report on systemic racism and discrimination in the military as Chief of the Defence Staff General Wayne Eyre listens in Ottawa, 25 April 2022.

Potential analogies between 1975 and 2022 should not be overstated, however. *Defence in the 70s*, the first and only defence white paper of the Pierre Trudeau era, for example, was obsolete by 1975, while Justin Trudeau's 2017-vintage SSE defence blueprint remains essentially sound in its core fundamentals—albeit with profound reservations about the slow pace of implementation. Similarly, those who drafted and approved the Defence Structure Review did not have to contend with a pandemic-related assault on the public purse, present-day levels of anxiety over North American and Arctic security, or China's rise as an economic and military powerhouse, or with the distressing imagery, the angst and the myriad geostrategic dilemmas generated by the invasion of Ukraine.

If the Trudeau government authorizes a prompt (not Germany's Olaf Scholz-style prompt, admittedly, but something credible) and substantial infusion of additional funding for national defence, difficult but innovative decisions—which will become even more difficult if credible additional funding is *not* forthcoming—will be required on a host of personnel, procurement, infrastructure and related issues. Some useful insights into current thinking, and by inference into how additional funding could be allocated, were provided by the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS), General Wayne Eyre, in comments to the Ottawa defence conference. In "reconstituting" Canada's armed forces, noted Eyre, "we're going to look at three things, three priorities: people, operations and modernization. The people piece has to come first." Indeed, General Eyre later told a CBC interviewer that his "first and foremost" priority in the event of additional defence spending would be to recruit and retain a stronger and more capable fighting force. "Front and centre," he informed the Ottawa conference, "is evolving our culture, changing those aspects of our culture that we absolutely have to have in place to win the battle for talent, to be able to attract and retain talent … wherever we may find it in Canadian society because, if we don't, if we don't keep pace with the … changing demographics, the changing face of Canada, we are going to be irrelevant. Part of the people priority is getting our numbers back up and to that end, we're energizing the recruiting system and the personnel production pipeline to be able to get those numbers rapidly back up." Key, "as well," he said, is "addressing retention. Even though we've got some of the best retention numbers … amongst our Western allies, [we've] got to make sure we're keeping the right people [in] the right occupations [after] investing so much into people."

The CDS characterized operations as a second priority "because as we rebuild, as we reconstitute, and current events are showing this, we absolutely have to keep our eye on readiness and operations. Ensuring that we can continue to deliver overseas and most importantly domestically for when that call comes." General Eyre observed that there were a number of aspects to the third priority of modernization: "Continuing to push forward the projects that are in [SSE] because we know we're going to need them. Continuing to focus on the North, including pieces like NORAD modernization because we know we are no longer as secure, no longer as insular here in North America and in Canada as we once were. Continuing to invest in those new domains: space, cyber and how we integrate all those domains with land, air [and] sea to produce that unified integrated effect."

General Eyre's attention to home, Arctic and North American defence and NORAD modernization—which would entail considerably more than replacing the North Warning System—dovetails broadly with SSE, the 14 August 2021 Canada–United States *Joint Statement on NORAD Modernization*, Minister Anand's Mandate Letter of 16 December 2021 and a growing number of statements and speeches by ministers and officials. It would be a logical recipient of new defence spending, partly because of changing geostrategic, technological and operational realities, partly because of its importance in terms of the broader Canada–United States relationship and partly because of some potentially attractive synergies between Arctic defence and the assertion of Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic—a subject historically close to Canadian hearts if not wallets—and to synergies between the military, quasi-military and non-military roles of Canada's armed forces (e.g. search and rescue in the Arctic). In procurement terms, logical corollaries to a revitalized northern role would include the replacements for the CF-18, the CC-150 tanker-transport and the *Aurora* maritime patrol/intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) aircraft. That said, both the Liberals and the opposition parties would do well to recall that the precursor North American Air Defence Modernization (NAADM) accord of 1985

was mishandled by both the government and the opposition and became linked in the minds of many Canadians to the controversial Strategic Defense Initiative and ultimately produced one of the most confused, muddled and frankly embarrassing debates in the convoluted history of Canadian defence policy.

On the broader procurement side of the ledger, a major infusion of additional funding and, at the very least, a comprehensive freshening of SSE, would together necessitate a thorough but not drawn out review of the 348 projects that currently constitute the SSE capital envelope. The review would need to examine a range of factors, including potential capital additions and deletions (although one suspects that there would be precious few of the latter), projects that should be elevated in priority and therefore expedited (if possible) or, conversely, reduced in priority, adjustments in projected quantities and/or capabilities and performance, the prospects for life-extending and upgrading existing weapon systems to meet changing circumstances and requirements, and what is, or is not, feasible given limitations in the ability to manage numerous procurement projects and to actually spend available funds. The latter problem already exists, of course, and has repeatedly figured in the reports of the Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer. Trade-offs between domestic content and off-the-shelf procurement from foreign suppliers would no doubt also require re-evaluation in some cases. A challenge, not unexpectedly, is that foreign production lines will themselves be busier with domestic and offshore orders following the ramping up of Western defence spending and procurement. Canadian defence academics and others have offered up a range of favoured projects if substantial additional funding is forthcoming. Such lists typically prioritize the successor to the CF-18, the potent but pricey Canadian Surface Combatant, capital projects related to NORAD modernization, multiple projects for the army (usually anchored by air defence and anti-armour requirements) and, potentially, new submarines. Additional strategic airlift—which has the virtue of being relevant to an inherently broad range of defence commitments—appears less frequently on such lists, but Ottawa already has ambitions in this regard, given declarations in Minister Anand's Mandate Letter of 16 December 2021 and in the Liberal campaign literature from 2021. A harsh defence procurement reality, of course, is that many scheduled projects would be difficult to expedite even if substantial additional funding became available.

REUTERS/Alamy Stock Photo

Canada's Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland delivers the 2022-23 budget in the House of Commons on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, 7 April 2022.

AP photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta

Canada's Minister of National Defense Anita Anand speaks during a news conference with Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin following their meeting at the Pentagon, in Washington, 28 April 2022. Canada and the United States are both training Ukrainian artillery troops in the use of howitzers provided by Ottawa and Washington.

In the final analysis, a sound and compelling case—one anchored in Canada's own national self-interest, in our commitments to our allies and in our oft-stated desire to make enduring and productive contributions to international peace and security—can be advanced for a substantial boost in the defence budget. That said, one must be mindful of the enormous and growing array of competing demands upon the public purse. On some, such as those related to climate change and the environment, we have only scratched the surface. If public support for additional defence expenditures is to be secured and maintained, it is imperative that existing and projected defence dollars be spent—and be seen by the public to be spent—wisely and productively. Longstanding inefficiencies in defence procurement—many, admittedly, more the fault of political tinkering than inefficiencies or deficiencies in stated procurement practices or in the procurement system per se—must be addressed. Bloated civilian and military bureaucracies, and rank structures, also require attention. Nor is the exceptionally serious and deeply troubling problem of sexual misconduct and harassment in the military irrelevant in this context. Such misconduct has already hurt recruiting for the armed forces but, in eroding public support and respect for the armed forces, it also threatens to undermine, at least indirectly, public support for a more credibly funded military establishment.

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Helicopter Pilots Are Different

by Randy Wakelam and Trevor Teller

Larry A. Freeland, *Chariots in the Sky: A Story About U.S. Assault Helicopter Pilots at War in Vietnam*. Newport Beach, CA: Publish Authority, 2021. 325 pp.

W. E. B. Griffin, *The Aviators – Brotherhood of War, Book VIII*. New York: G. P. Putnam, 1988. 450 pp.

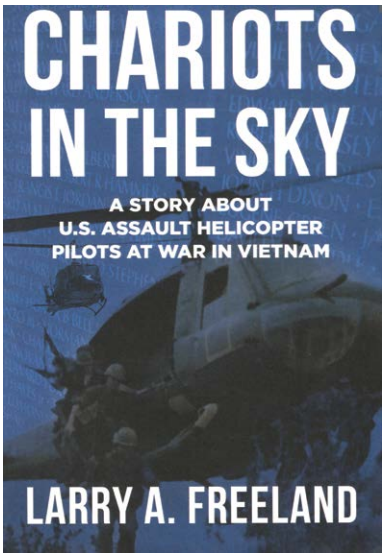
Robert Mason, *Chickenhawk*. New York: Viking, 1983. First edition, 339 pp.

Lt-Gen John J. Tolson. *Airmobility, 1961–1971*. Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 1973. https://history.army.mil/html/books/090/90-4/index.html, accessed 1 Feb 2022.

DND/CAF photo by Capt Greg Juurlink

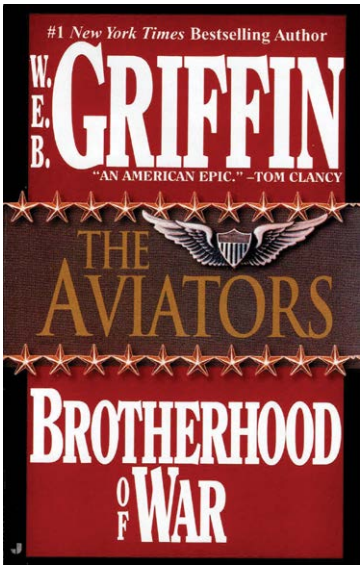
A CH-146 Griffon helicopter pilot flies over CFB Gagetown, New Brunswick during Exercise COMMON GROUND II 2016 at 5th Canadian Division Support Base Gagetown, 25 November 2016.

When asked to review Larry Freeland's *Chariots in the Sky: A Story about U.S. Assault Helicopter Pilots at War in Vietnam*, two thoughts immediately came to mind. First, I would want to compare this historical novel with other works on the same theme, that being U.S. Army helicopter aviators in Vietnam. Second, while I could readily review the novel based on an extensive background, both as a Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) tactical helicopter pilot and a historian, I did not have any combat flying experience and would therefore have a limited understanding of the realities that recent Canadian tactical aviators with tours in Kandahar would bring to this review. To get that perspective, I sought the advice of Colonel Trevor Teller, who flew in Afghanistan in 2008–2009. And so the following essay is presented as a series of two person commentaries. We look at three works that both set the context of the U.S. Army's use of helicopters in the 1960s and early '70s in Southeast Asia and also narrow in on the life of the flyer. From there, we move on to Freeland's work.



Wakelam: An official treatise that examines many facets of the American use of helicopters in the Vietnam conflict is Lt-Gen John Tolson's *Airmobility, 1961–1971*, part of the U.S. Army's Vietnam Studies series.[1] The full text is available online, and the 305-page document states: "The purpose of this study is to trace the evolution of airmobility in the U.S. Army. The integration of aircraft into the organic structure of the ground forces is as radical a change as the move from the horse to the truck, *and the process is only beginning*." But the process did not start in Vietnam and so the work covers decisions and actions from the 1950s, and, published in 1972, it attempts to offer conclusions of use for future aviators. Tolson recognized that not all readers would be experts in the details of army flying and so included extensive annexes with information about the aircraft used and the organizations that employed them. In terms of this essay, Tolson looks at the development of the airmobile concept leading up to the deployment of the first major aviation organization, the First Cavalry Division (Airmobile) in 1965. He then examines that division's employment before going on to look at the evolution of equipment, organizations and tactics across the theatre of operations before concluding with an analysis of the U.S. helicopter support to Vietnamese incursions into Laos in 1971 just as the U.S. was beginning its drawdown of forces.

Teller: The observations and tenets that Tolson highlights remain as applicable today as they were during the decade of airmobility development upon which he focuses, and they serve to articulate how today's tactical aviation roles of mobility,

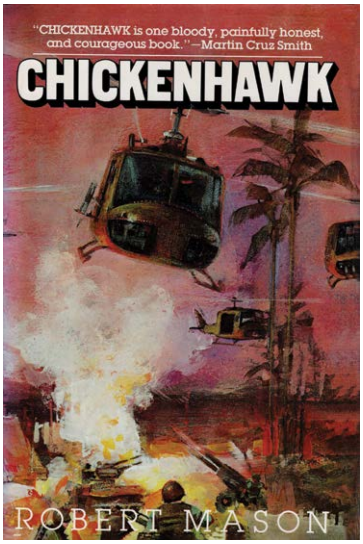


firepower and reconnaissance found their beginnings in the jungles of Vietnam in the mid 1960s. While technology has changed the character of aviation—depending on sensors, electronic warfare, defensive suites and automation —the nature of support provided to land forces has stood the test of time. So too remain some of the tensions and capability implementation challenges noted by Tolson. In the Afghan theatre of operations, the CAF took delivery of six used CH147 Chinook platforms in 2008, reintroducing a heavy lift capability at the same time as beginning operations in a combat theatre. Additionally, the Griffon evolved in its employment, accepting mission kit such as the MX-15 EO/IR sensor, M134 Minigun and GAU-21 .50 calibre door gun, etc. Regardless, aviation integration with land forces and the enabling of the joint missions by the combined arms team as detailed in *Airmobility* have remained key components of successful army aviation operations, and they are mentioned to varying degrees in both *Chickenhawk* and *Chariots in the Sky*.

Wakelam: Because *Chariots in the Sky* is fiction, I wanted to reread a novel that stuck in my mind—one that dealt with the U.S. Army's actions in building up its aviation capabilities prior to the "Cav" deploying in the summer of 1965. W. E. B. Griffin, arguably a master of popular military fiction, wrote *The Aviators* in 1988 as part of his Brotherhood of War series that followed a small circle of professional officers through their service careers beginning in the early 1940s. The novel looks at the complexities of preparing the U.S. Army for deploying the Cav, but the characters are not aware of that eventual action; rather, they are focused on two linked priorities: the training of new pilots at the U.S. Army Aviation Center at Fort Rucker, in Alabama, and the development of new aircraft, principally the Chinook. Griffin, as a fine storyteller, also paints the emotions facing the flyers, their commanders and their families as losses, even in these stateside activities, begin to take a toll. All of these issues were real and Griffin draws, we can assume, on his own Army service and on a circle of military contacts that he maintained once he left the service. Griffin, who was a prolific writer by the time he penned this novel, tells the story with elegance and action such that a reader, or rereader, will not grow tired of the plot.

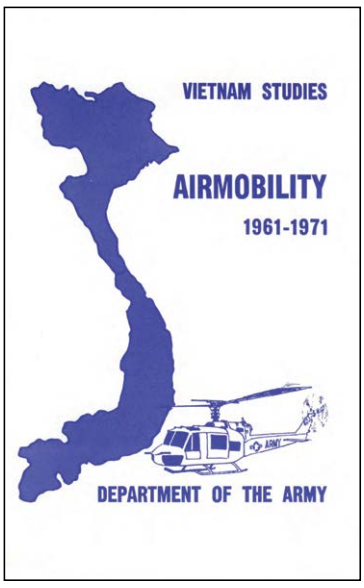
Teller: Griffin is still on my "must read" list.

Wakelam: In 1982, Robert Mason published a memoir of his year in Vietnam with the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile). Called *Chickenhawk*, the work illuminates Mason's journey as a helicopter pilot: his decision to join the U.S. Army because of a love of flying, his training, his combat flying and his return to the United States at the end of a year in theatre. With the Cav, Mason flew "slicks," unarmed (except for door guns) UH-1D Hueys, the forerunner to Canada's former CH135 Twin Huey and our current CH146. The reader sees the war from Mason's perspective, and he takes us on a variety of missions, both combat and noncombat, describing the tension and the fear that he and his peers face. The fear is the result of enemy action from which the aviators cannot hide in doing their jobs. There is also fear from weather and mechanical issues, which have been the bane of all flyers since the Wright brothers' first flight. And there is occasionally fear from poor decisions by his superiors that place him and his mates in jeopardy. Mason also leads us through the social joys and tensions of living in rough conditions with others of his calling in the constant combat zone of every part of Vietnam. In short, we see the complexities of life in combat in all their shades and hues. Importantly, as the memoir progresses, we see Mason's slow succumbing to fear and his increasing use of prescribed medication to help him cope. His return to the U.S. at the end of the war is not a salvation but just another phase of that descent.



Teller: Mason's account, which I reread, having first looked at it 25 years ago, remains as poignant and accurate a description of the combat experience as there is. The author takes us through a journey characterized by the camaraderie and interpersonal conflict that paints a picture of life in a combat theatre, and he does so while telling a tale that lays bare the tacit acceptance of an omnipresent enemy threat that seems to become distilled in its intensity through a continual exposure to the enemy threat. The rawness and honesty of his storytelling allows the reader to feel the fear and anxiety that typify combat operations, which only serves to make one fully appreciate the courage demonstrated by those who flew into the face of danger. The aviators I deployed with, and those that followed, demonstrated this courage. And, while the intensity of the Afghanistan experience may not match that of Mason's, there was certainly no absence of overt hostility directed towards Canadian aviation elements. The story is told in such a manner as to create a feeling of kinship with its author for those who have experienced combat—especially the aviators out there. Lastly, the personal struggles that Mason details, and his subsequent personal decline, remain as topical today as they were then; he reminds us that the experience of combat changes all who endure it, and, for some, the burden of the experience can be both damaging and tragic. As I thought when I read it so long ago—but now feel more confident in saying—this is the book against which others of its genre will be judged.

Wakelam: Now, in 2021, Larry Freeland has published his fictional account of other slick pilots—those serving in a company similar to Mason's but as part of the 101st Airborne Division in 1971. In reality, Freeland, according to the publisher's notes, served as an infantry officer and subsequently a Chinook pilot within that division. The 101st, while airborne in name, was employed like the Cav as a heliborne light infantry division. As the novel opens, Freeland's flyers are found supporting Operation Lam Son 719, the South Vietnamese army's attempts to cut the Ho Chi Minh Trail running parallel to the international boundary, but on the Laotian side of that boundary. Freeland describes some of the main events and locations of that operation in his first chapters but does not provide a map of any sort. Happily, Tolson, as well as Google and a variety of websites, lays out those places clearly; from the maps, we see that the distances involved are not perhaps as extended as Freeland's narrator would have us imagine. The balance of the book follows the life of Capt Taylor St. James three months into his tour. He must deal with the same dangers and fears as Mason. These include not just the ground fire that kills or wounds many of his friends and members of his crew, while badly damaging or destroying significant numbers of aircraft, but also nighttime assaults on the unit's base and, significantly, the harm created by a careerist and immoral company commander. Those stressors and their impact on St. James and his mates mirror the circumstances that Mason describes, but Freeland's storytelling does not match Mason's or Griffin's. In both detail and basic prose, Freeland struggles through the book. Early on, he uses the term "packs" to identify the passengers in an aircraft. Unfortunately, this term is simply wrong; what aviators do talk about are their "pax," a term used for generations. Later, he mentions that night vision goggles were to be used for one mission; that seems implausible as the U.S. Army did not start using aviator goggles until 1973. Throughout the book, his description of engine performance (something critical to all flyers, but perhaps more so to helicopter pilots) sounds more like how one would describe a gasoline engine than the turboshaft engine in the Huey. These sorts of details may take aback the knowledgeable tactical helicopter reader, but what will impact every reader's connection with Freeland's protagonist is the decidedly weak prose. The dialogue is simplistic and hackneyed, and one can almost anticipate who will say what. The author seems to have trouble constructing rich sentences through the use of pronouns and other straightforward devices. From the prologue, preface and afterword there is no doubt about Freeland's worthy intention to honour fallen comrades, but the poor execution, which must be borne as much by his editor as himself, is at best unfortunate.



Teller: Freeland's fictional recounting of the experience of Captain Taylor St. James in Vietnam attempts to capture the unnatural coupling of a continual fear of death with the strange comfort offered by the predictable redundancy of tasks in that same environment. Through his detailing of camp and flying routines, there is a familiarity that develops in the storytelling, one that mirrors the often mundane grind of deployed operations; for the most part, days blend into one another, and the book's repetitive "plan-fly-sleep-repeat" will feel familiar to any veteran. Freeland also touches on the strength some find in the connection to home, as St. James' story is split between the danger and strife of the deployed operation and the promise of stability and future expressed in his letters and thoughts for his wife, Sandy. Unfortunately, while Freeland's attempt at harnessing the raw emotion and nuance of combat can be felt on occasion, overall the writing style and prose leave the reader unsatisfied. The unfortunate consequence is that any reader even remotely familiar with military operations will find that the stylistic shortfalls result in clunky storytelling that leaves one challenged to connect with St. James or indeed immerse oneself in the plot in a meaningful manner. To this reader, the book seemed to open with a promise that never quite delivered. Perhaps for those less familiar with aviation and operations, the shortcomings of the book will be less apparent; for those who do not fit into that category, however, the story will fall short.

As a final observation, apart from Tolson's study, which is more report than narrative, none of the three works are easy to understand without some knowledge of two things: the central subject, that is to say, the U.S. Army's use of helicopters in enhancing the mobility of light forces (i.e. footborne infantry) in difficult terrain; and the mechanics (and mystery) of piloting a helicopter. The first concern is addressed in Tolson's volume, which is well complemented by aircraft photos and technical specifications, organization charts and maps. And, these days, Google and YouTube will allow readers to get a sense of how helicopters work and are piloted.

But read Mason, as his poignancy is unmatched!

Commentaries

We incorporated two commentaries on U.S. Army helicopter pilots in Vietnam into this book review essay since John Steinbeck is included in Freeland's volume in the front matter and Harry Reasoner is very well known in the helicopter community. Steinbeck's commentary was written in 1967 (so close behind Mason's *Chickenhawk* experiences); Reasoner's was written in 1971, so roughly in the timeframe of Freeland's account.

"I wish I could tell you about these pilots. They make me sick with envy. They ride their vehicles the way a man controls a fine, well-trained quarter horse. They weave along stream beds, rise like swallows to clear trees, they turn and twist and dip like swifts in the evening. I watch their hands and feet on the controls, the delicacy of the coordination reminds me of the sure and seeming slow hands of (Pablo) Casals on the cello. They are truly musicians' hands and they play their controls like music and they dance them like ballerinas and they make me jealous because I want so much to do it. Remember your child night dream of perfect flight free and wonderful? It's like that, and sadly I know I never can. My hands are too old and forgetful to take orders from the command center, which speaks of updrafts and side winds, of drift and shift, or ground fire indicated by a tiny puff or flash, or a hit and all these commands must be obeyed by the musician's hands instantly and automatically. I must take my longing out in admiration and the joy of seeing it. Sorry about that leak of ecstasy, Alicia, but I had to get it out or burst."

John Steinbeck, circa January 1967

"You can't help but have the feeling that there will come a future generation of men, if there are any future generations of men, who will look at old pictures of helicopters and say, 'You've got to be kidding.' Helicopters have that look that certain machines have in historical drawings. Machines or devices that came just before a major breakthrough. Record-changers just before the lightweight vinyl LP for instance.

Mark Twain once noted that he lost belief in conventional pictures of angels of his boyhood when a scientist calculated for a 150-pound man to fly like a bird, he would have to have a breast bone 15 feet wide supporting wings in proportion.

Well, that's sort of the way a helicopter looks.

The thing is, helicopters are different from airplanes. An airplane by its nature wants to fly, and if not interfered with too strongly by unusual events or incompetent piloting, it will fly. A helicopter does not want to fly. It is maintained in the air by a variety of forces and controls working in opposition to each other. And if there is any disturbance in this delicate balance the helicopter stops flying immediately and disastrously. There is no such thing as a gliding helicopter. That's why being a helicopter pilot is so different from being an airplane pilot, and why in generality airplane pilots are open, clear-eyed, buoyant, extroverts. And helicopter pilots are brooders, introspective anticipators of trouble. They know if something bad has not happened, it is about to.

All of this, of course, is greatly complicated by being shot at. American helicopter pilots are being shot at more often and more accurately these days from Khe Sanh to Tchepone than at almost any other time in this whole War."

American journalist Harry Reasoner, circa 1971

Col (Ret'd) Dr Randall Wakelam *flew CH-135 Twin Hueys in 10 Tactical Air Group between 1977 and 1991. He was the commanding officer (CO) of 408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron (408 Tac Hel Sqn) in his final flying tour. He has subsequently taught at the Canadian Forces College and at RMC.*

Col Trevor Teller *flew the CH-146 Griffon with 1 Wing domestically and deployed between 2000 and 2017. He too was the CO of 408 Tac Hel Sqn, has served at the tactical through strategic levels, and has deployed to Bosnia, Afghanistan, and Kuwait. He is currently the Queens University CAF Visiting Defence Fellow.*

NOTE

1 Airmobility, 1961-1971, Lieutenant General John J. Tolson.