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MAINTAINING A MULTI-PURPOSE COMBAT CAPABILITY: AN UNTENABLE FUTURE FOR THE CANADIAN FORCES

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ABSTRACT

Canada is unique, from both a historical and geo-political perspective. Part of this uniqueness has meant that Canada's national defence in a conventional sense has always been guaranteed by the predominant world power: first Great Britain and now the United States. This reality has allowed politicians the luxury of treating national defence spending as a discretionary matter, rather than as a fundamental priority. The Canadian public, unaccustomed to direct military threats, has rarely demanded more spending on defence, preferring instead to prioritize health care and other social spending. The Canadian military, for the most part, has tended not to appreciate the significance of the dynamic created by the Canadian defence reality. As a result, they have lobbied for and been successful in, being tasked to retain a wide spectrum military. The latest and still extant manifestation of this is the "multi-purpose combat capable" military mandated by the 1994 defence white paper. The problem with maintaining this requirement is that as the costs of maintaining a modern, "multi-purpose" military grow exponentially, the political and public support for defence spending continues to reflect the Canadian reality. The result is that the Canadian Forces continue to "shave the ice cube" in an attempt to meet the white paper commitments. Carried to its logical absurdity, the result will be a Canadian Forces with one fighter jet, one patrol frigate, one company of infantry, one howitzer, and so on. A "multi-purpose" force, with each component individually combat capable, at least theoretically, but a force that would be useless as an instrument of foreign and defence policy, not to mention for any practical domestic tasks.

This paper examines the historical background which has contributed to the Canadian defence reality and essentially produced three solitudes: the politicians, the public and members of the Canadian Forces. None of the three have understood or communicated very well with the other two, and the result is a defence white paper that mandates a military that is too small for its tasks and too big for its budget. The solution to this problem, contained in the thesis of this paper, is recognition that retention of a multi-purpose combat capability within the Canadian Forces is no longer a sustainable or appropriate policy. Instead, following a foreign and defence policy review, the Canadian government should transform the Canadian Forces into a military with specific capabilities, optimized for specific tasks, which not only take into account the existing threat, but which can complement or reinforce the capabilities of our allies. The bottom line is that the Canadian Forces, organized and tasked as they are, with the expected level of funding available, are unsupportable. The inevitable result is the rust out of equipment, the burn out of personnel and the continual loss of capabilities in an unplanned and incoherent manner. It would be much better to determine the capabilities considered the highest priority to the Canadian government, concentrate the limited resources available on them and create a military that may not be capable of doing a little bit of everything, but could be world class at what it is capable of doing. Such a military would be a powerful foreign policy tool as well as a useful force for domestic purposes, if and when the need arises.

> The fox, finding the wild boar sharpening his tusks upon a tree, asks why he is doing that when he is in no danger. "When danger comes," the boar answers, "it will behove me not to sharpen my tusks, but to use them."
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> The Wild Boar and the Fox,
> Aesop, *circa* 570 B.C.

Controversy and the Canadian Forces (CF) are no strangers. The Somalia affair, sexual assault scandals, privates needing food banks to survive and millions of dollars spent on computer services that were never delivered, all focus public attention on problems that appear to plague the military incessantly. Often, it seems as if the CF and controversy are uncomfortable dance partners, locked indivisibly and intimately together while swirling awkwardly across the dance floor of public consciousness. Unfortunately, it often appears that if it were not for problems, the CF would barely rate a mention in public fora of any kind. Those who are somewhat cynical may be tempted to comment that at least the controversies focus some kind of attention on the military, so that critical issues relating to national defence and security may at least garner passing attention from those that should be vitally interested. Indeed, the perception that the average citizen cares little for national defence matters unless the magnifying glass of scandal focuses attention, has become accepted as virtually axiomatic in Canada. Ironically, these two facets of the Canadian defence reality have contributed to the predicament which exists today. General public indifference to defence matters has directly led to a situation which has triggered another defence related controversy in 2004. That is, despite a 12

billion dollar annual budget, there is an argument that the CF are unsustainable and in danger of complete collapse.[1]

Is the CF situation indeed so dire, or is this latest controversy simply the sensationalist cries of distraught Chicken Littles with agendas of their own? Is the Canadian public as uninformed and as uninterested in defence matters as has become popularly accepted, and has this led to a crisis which has (or should) scandalize the CF yet again? Despite public pronouncements to the contrary, have successive governments made policy decisions that have unwittingly or otherwise led the country to the brink of virtual disarmament? This paper will contain examinations of these, and other related issues. Its thesis is that given the probable level of support from the Canadian government, based on historical levels, the maintenance of a multi-purpose combat capability within the CF is no longer a sustainable or appropriate policy. In order to argue this premise it will be necessary to outline how we arrived at where we are, describe where we are exactly, and finally explain what it all means.

Canada's approach to defence and security issues is a direct result of its geographic, historical and political situation. Throughout its history, thanks to its physical position on the globe and the political constructs within which it has been immersed, Canada has never had to seriously consider defending its territory. It has always been in the unique position of having the world's preeminent power as its defence guarantor. Naturally, this has had an impact on many facets of national life in Canada.

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[1]Probably the latest and most complete report on this subject is the Claxton paper *Canada Without Armed Forces?* ed. Douglas L. Bland (Kingston, Ontario: Queen's University School of Policy Studies, 2003)

One of the most significant of these is that Canada has always been able to look at the cost of defence as a discretionary issue. In other words, Canada can choose to spend on defence as much, or as little as it desires, commensurate with whatever goals it should wish to pursue. The result of this situation is that successive governments have tended to adopt a very pragmatic outlook. They will spend as little in money and attention as they possibly can on defence, in order to meet whatever national and international obligations they believe are necessary for the economic and political good of the country. Unfortunately, this combination of a lack of attention and funding has finally reached the point of meltdown. There are no longer sufficient funds allocated to defence to meet the publicly announced policy objectives. As it is also extremely unlikely that sufficient funding will be redirected to meet the current defence objectives, given that such funding has always been viewed as discretionary, the only logical solution is to change those objectives. One of the most significant of these objectives, is the maintenance of multi-purpose, combat capable forces. Not only is this objective intrinsically expensive to maintain, but for unforeseen reasons, it has proven to be both an impractical and an inefficient policy in the Canadian context.

As stated above, a review of the historical background will be followed by a description of the current situation and an explanation of why it is no longer sustainable. Finally, the implications and some proposed solutions will be outlined. In the interest of both precision and brevity, it is necessary to define what is meant by the terms 'multi-purpose' and 'combat capable' within the context of this paper. This is not so simple a

task as it initially may appear. Although many defence related references contain the terms, exactly what is meant by them is almost universally left open to interpretation. Indeed, this is one aspect of the problem that will be discussed in more detail further in this paper. However, for the purposes of the thesis contained herein, the term 'multi-purpose' will be defined as pertaining to forces that are capable of a wide variety of roles, ranging from domestic aid of the civil power tasks, through peace support operations, up to war fighting at the high end of the spectrum. It should be noted that whether the continuum of war fighting in the Canadian context ends at mid or high-intensity conflict is a nuance that will also be discussed later in the paper. 'Combat capable' will be taken to mean that the forces are capable of conducting combat effectively, in the envisioned role, in the operational circumstances within which they find themselves committed.

As mentioned, there are those who should be vitally interested in Canadian national defence and security issues. It is probably not too trite to say that naturally all Canadians should, but for the purposes of this examination, this all encompassing and unwieldy conglomeration will be broken down into three sub-divisions: members of parliament (especially those in cabinet), members of the CF (including the extended 'defence establishment'), and the public at large. History has conspired to create a disconnect in Canada between these three components when it comes to defence related issues. This disconnect has essentially resulted in three solitudes, none of which appears to understand the way in which the others perceive defence issues. The result has been unrealistic expectations, unrealized potential and unintended consequences, in short, a

serious form of dysfunctionality.[2] In order to ascertain the origins of this situation, it is necessary to begin, as they say, at the beginning.

When Canada was created in 1867 it inherited many things from Great Britain, not the least of which was the problem of defence. However, the nascent country continued to look to the British for both direction and funding:

> After Confederation, while the British continued giving the direction for Canadian defence, they wanted the new country to pick up the cost. But the canny Canadians, having become accustomed to bearing no responsibility and little of the cost of their own defence before 1867, in view of the ever decreasing threat from the USA, thought that any expense, however small, was a waste of money.[3]

Right from the beginning, Canada as a nation developed the attitude that it had no direct enemies. Furthermore, if any that were unforeseen ever threatened her sovereignty, someone else would protect her. Naturally that someone else was initially Great Britain, but as soon as it became clear that this was no longer possible, the *sotto voce* guardian of Canada's security rapidly became the United States of America, normally under the rubric of 'continental defence'. This attitude quickly became virtually universal, especially among the political elite, and was summed up in 1902 by the Prime Minister of the day, Wilfrid Laurier, when discussing defence matters with the latest British General appointed to command: "You must not take the Militia seriously, for although it is useful for suppressing internal disturbances, it will not be required for the defence of the country

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[2]J.L. Granatstein, *Who Killed the Canadian Military?* (Toronto: Harper Flamingo Canada, 2004), 1.

[3]John Hasek, *The Disarming of Canada,* (Toronto: Key Porter Books,1987), 105.

as the Monroe Doctrine protects us against enemy aggression."[4]

Famously, Canada was living in a 'fireproof' house, 'far from incendiary materials' though perhaps more importantly, she has for the most part been living next door to the world's biggest and best fire brigade. The impact of this analogy was reinforced in 1938, with the declaration of the "Ogdensburg Agreement" whereby President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Mackenzie King agreed that the United States (US) would defend Canada against invasion, and Canada would do everything it could to prevent an invasion of the US through Canadian territory.[5] The reality of this situation has been a major contributor to the quandary which has faced every government since:

> Because Canada's geostrategic location makes it a vital U.S. interest, the U.S. will defend Canada as part of its "near abroad" no matter what the level of Canada's own defence effort. The Canadian Forces will therefore always be of peripheral military importance to the U.S. Canada's military forces provide both nations with a necessary "fig leaf" of political cover: for very different political reasons, leaders on both sides of the border can pretend the CF are militarily valuable. Mackenzie King and Franklin Roosevelt clearly recognized this strategic reality in 1938 and it has defined the U.S.-Canada defence relationship ever since.[6]

As a result of its unique position both historically and geographically, Canada has

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[4]Quoted in John Hasek, *The Disarming of Canada*, …," 107.1
See also Joel J. Sokolsky, "A Seat at the Table: Canada and its Alliances," *Armed Forces and Society* Vol. 16, no.1 (Fall 1989): 15-17.

[5]Michel Fortmann and David G. Haglund, "Canada and the issue of Homeland Security: Does the 'Kingston Dispensation' Still Hold?" *Canadian Military Journal* Vol. 3, no.1 (Spring 2002): 17-18.
J.L. Granatstein and Norman Hillmer, *For Better of for Worse: Canada and the United States to the 1990s,* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pittman, 1991), 138-144.

[6]David L. King, "We need a Romanow Commission for Defence and Foreign Policy," *Policy Options* Vol. 23, no.03 (April 2002): 8-9.

transitioned from overall military dependence for national security on the British Empire to a similar relationship with the US.[7] This means that never in its existence has Canada had to confront the problem other countries routinely face: defend yourself adequately or risk ceasing to exist. This has had enormous implications for all three 'defence solitudes' in Canada. For members of parliament in general and those holding cabinet positions in particular, it has meant that defence policy has not been seen as a matter of national survival, but rather an optional activity to be engaged in for purely political reasons. This has had an impact on how politicians view and deal with defence issues throughout the country's history. This approach is still operative today and is responsible in large measure for the present predicament facing the Canadian military.[8]

For members of the CF, Canada's geopolitical situation has meant that they have developed an external focus that has concentrated on participation in alliances, almost exclusively as some form of a junior partner or minor participant. This focus created a tendency for Canadian officers to see their role through the eyes of their alliance partners, and being junior partners, to side with their 'superiors' even when this ran counter to the

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[7]Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada: From Champlain to Kosovo*, 4th ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1999), ix.
Sean Henry, *Stability and Prosperity: The Benefits of Investment in Defence,* (Ottawa: The Conference of Defence Associations Institute, 2000), 3.
Douglas Bland, "Everything Military Officers Need to Know About Defence Policy-Making in Canada," *Advance or Retreat? Canadian Defence in the 21st Century*, ed. David Rudd, Jim Hanson and Jessica Blitt, (Toronto: The Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 2000), 3.
Joel J. Sokolsky, "A Seat at the Table…," 15-17.

[8]Douglas Bland, *Parliament, Defence Policy and the Canadian Armed Forces*, (Kingston, Ontario: Queen's University School of Policy Studies, 1999), 3.
Douglas Bland, "Military Command in Canada," in *Generalship and the Art of the Admiral,* ed. Bernd Horn and Stephen J. Harris (St. Catherines, Ontario: Vanwell Publishing, 2001), 123.

Canadian government viewpoint. Naturally, this situation created tension between the military and the government and has had the effect of driving those two solitudes apart when it came to defence policy issues.[9] This policy perspective estrangement still exists today and continues as a major contributor to the current plight of the CF.

As far as the Canadian public is concerned, Canada's unique world position has generally served to relegate defence issues to the remote hinterland of daily life. Not living under the threat of invasion for generations has allowed Canadians the luxury of benign neglect when it comes to contemplating, or paying for, military requirements. As much as one tends to ignore police funding issues until becoming a crime victim serves to focus one's attention on the matter, not being at risk militarily has meant that:

> More than most people, Canadians have distanced themselves from thoughts of war. On the whole, they have no affection for militarism or a military cast of mind. A persistent mythology has persuaded Canadians that an innate gift for war…spares them the burdens of peacetime preparation. Canada's attitude to war rests on more than innocent illusion; it is a product of historical experience. Unless this experience is understood, neither would-be defenders nor disarmers will ever understand the Canadian response to their respective programmes. How far have Canadian attitudes been shaped by our perennial role as dependent military allies? How could a coherent defence policy emerge in a century when Canada was simultaneously indefensible and invulnerable?[10]

As a result, Canadians are used to giving little thought to defence matters. This has

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[9]D.W. Middlemiss and J.J. Sokolsky, *Canadian Defence: Decisions and Determinants*, (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989), 62.
Douglas L. Bland, *Chiefs of Defence: Government and the Unified Command of the Canadian Armed Forces,* (Toronto: The Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 1995), 9-29.

[10]Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada*…, x.

translated into the military having a relatively low priority when it comes to a willingness to spend public money. Obviously, a low profile in the voting public's eyes has meant a correspondingly low priority for elected officials, reinforcing the cycle of benign neglect that has helped to leave the CF where it is today.

Canada's political, geographical and historical realities have therefore shaped an environment that would seem to propel politicians toward disinterest, trend military officers toward self-absorption and leave members of the public disconnected when it comes to issues of defence and security. If this is indeed the case, as has been posited, then an analysis of the historical record should support these assumptions. Due to the inherent limitations of this paper, the period prior to the end of WW II will be summarized very briefly. When called upon to do so by virtue of her empirical/allegiance ties, Canada substantially contributed to collective defence arrangements, in spite of her small peacetime military establishments. These minute cadres would be immediately reestablished following hostilities, in order to serve as a mobilization base in preparation for the next crisis. This pattern appeared to serve the country well. The politicians were able to provide military support for the generally popular participation abroad, while minimizing defence costs in times of peace.[11] As a result, they were able to walk the tightrope of public opinion and maintain their ability to compete electorally.

The impact on the military was to reinforce the approach that Canada's defence

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[11]The markedly different level of support for Canada's participation in overseas conflicts between Quebec and the rest of Canada is beyond the scope of this paper.

contribution was to be served through participation in alliances. It would have been unnatural to have been otherwise, given the fact all Canadians service personnel, in some form or another eventually reported operationally to an allied officer. As a result, Canadian officers, especially those in higher command, developed a decidedly allied-centric viewpoint. Canada's role was to lend troops to allied causes where they would be subordinate to allied strategy. All decisions with respect to policy, force structure and capital procurement were coloured by this approach. This tendency did not always sit well with the government of the day, especially if a more uniquely Canadian approach to a particular issue was being contemplated.

As far as the Canadian public was concerned, the era up until the end of WW II appeared to meet expectations with respect to defence and security matters. When desired, the country was able to contribute magnificently to martial efforts in support of allies who for emotional and historical reasons were important to Canadians. Just as importantly, in the peaceful interludes, the military establishment was shrunk back to a token force that absorbed as little as possible of the national treasury to maintain. As a result, Canadians were able to have their cake and eat it too, in that they were able to participate meaningfully in world conflicts, and yet maintain their self-image as an "unmilitary" and peace loving people.[12]

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[12]There are many good in-depth descriptions concerning the era in Canadian history summarized here. For example, see J.L. Granatstein and Desmond Morton, *A Nation Forged in Fire: Canadians and the Second World War 1939-1945,* (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1989), Bill McAndrew, "Canadian Officership: An Overview," and J.L. Granatstein, "Canadian Generals in the Second World War: Better than Expected," both in *Generalship and the Art of the Admiral*…, and John Hasek, *The Disarming of Canada*..., 105-130.

Following WW II, the Canadian government had the opportunity to formally develop an independent Canadian approach to defence matters. The impetus for this review was the government's desire to reduce defence expenditures, rationalize the military and attempt to reinforce Canadian governmental control over the senior leadership of the CF. The result was a white paper in all but name, entitled *Canada's Defence 1947,* published by the Minister of National Defence, Brooke Claxton. This document forced the military to be a more unified, national and professional organization than it had ever been before. Although quickly overtaken by the events which coalesced into the protracted Cold War, the paper established many of the organizational concepts which impact the CF even today. Moreover, Claxton succeeded in reducing the strength of the military to levels just sufficiently adequate to meet governmental obligations.[13] Finally, besides attempting to establish defence policy in an era when there was no clear military threat, Claxton's paper seemed to reinforce the adage that "war is too serious a matter to entrust to military men."[14] An approach that, regardless of how appropriate or not, was to do little to strengthen or align the military and political defence solitudes within Canada.

As mentioned, Claxton's attempt to develop an independent national approach to defence was quickly overshadowed by the requirements of the onset of the Cold War. Canada once again rejected isolationism and committed itself to collective defence

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[13]Douglas Bland, *Canada's National Defence*, Vol.1 (Kingston, Ontario: Queen's School of Policy Studies, 1998), xi-xiii, 6.

[14]Attributed variously to Clemenceau, Briand and Talleyrand.

arrangements, largely through such multilateral and bilateral mechanisms as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the continental air defence agreement known as the North American Defense Command (NORAD). As there was a realistic fear of the Cold War imminently heating up, these commitments initially forced the government to maintain a relatively large, professional, and technologically well equipped military. However, as soon as possible when the fear of the Cold War turning hot had subsided, a succession of governments began to seek ways to reduce commitments, and therefore expenditures, in a pattern that has persisted to this day. The reality was that the Cold War produced a stalemate. No matter how precarious or dangerous a stalemate it was, whatever Canada was going to do would have had little or no impact. This allowed the Canadian government to reevaluate its defence policies knowing that in all likelihood it only had to pay attention to the political appearances of its obligations, not the cold reality of ever having to actually live up to them.

In the long term, the Cold War era had little or no effect on changing the political imperatives as far as the Canadian military was concerned. If anything, it served to widen the chasm between the two solitudes:

> During the early post-World War II years, the government tended to view the military as a necessary evil in the context of the new postwar system of order based on collective security. The military was not to be trusted, in that it harboured parochial, self-aggrandizing notions of its role and was uneducated- literally and figuratively- in the niceties of domestic political intercourse. Its voice was demanding and occasionally shrill…and its advice regarding the necessity of peacetime national preparedness was both unwelcome- in

> that it meant a drain on funds required for social welfare and national development- and, for the most part, unheeded, at least until external military crises made it impossible to ignore.[15]

In spite of the external demands of the Cold War, politicians still had to pay attention to the national invariants: a public generally unconcerned about military matters, and no direct military threat to Canada itself. Once again, the budget for national defence would have to be whatever was considered available, not whatever was necessary to implement firm, coherent and durable policies.

For obvious reasons, the Cold War served to further reinforce the CF's self image as an alliance partner and lender of troops. The forces had naval, air and ground commitments to NATO and air forces in Canada reporting directly to an American commander. CF personnel served on international staffs, responded to alliance strategies and provided advice to governments with a collective defence mindset. Once again, this did not serve to endear these officers in the eyes of the government. The military had mistaken the political will to contribute to allied efforts with the actual requirement to resource these commitments adequately. Certainly the government wished, for a variety of reasons, to be seen to be participating. What it was never overly concerned about was whether the participation was credible or meaningful in any militarily significant way.[16]

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[15]D.W. Middlemiss and J.J. Sokolsky, *Canadian Defence: Decisions and Determinants*, (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989), 62.

[16]Douglas Bland, "Everything Military Officers Need to Know About…," 4.
Douglas Bland, "Military Command in Canada," in *Generalship…,* 128-130.
Joel J. Sokolsky, "A Seat at the Table…," 17-22.

Another side effect of the Cold War on CF officers was that the nature of their commitments was exclusively single service. This had the affect of reinforcing the service rivalry that was already firmly entrenched within the military. This invariably led to bureaucratic infighting, conflicting advice to government and overall inefficiencies. Naturally, these circumstances served to further distance the military and political solitudes, as each failed to understand why the other was acting the way it did.

The public, meanwhile, appeared to become marginally more sophisticated with respect to defence issues during the Cold War. Certain sectors, at least, seemed to be fully cognizant of the situation faced by Canada. Caught between two super powers on the brink of mutual annihilation, Canada's geopolitical situation seemed more significant to many more than it had previously. Unfortunately for the politicians and the military, however, this awareness often triggered responses that fell short of supporting the existing contributions to collective defence. Those advocating a more isolationist approach, either for moralistic, philosophical or economical reasons, invariably failed to appreciate the government's technique. Contribute just enough to gain influence, but not so much as to impact too negatively on domestic considerations. Naturally, the voices questioning Canada's collective defence contributions also helped to influence the government to reevaluate its level of participation, thereby assisting to further distance the three solitudes.

The climax of the Cold War dysfunctionality came in 1962 during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The US, responding to the covert deployment of nuclear missiles to Cuba

by the Soviet Union, ordered their military to a higher state of alert. The Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) and the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), having been completely integrated into the NATO and NORAD command structures in accordance with the respective alliances, were fully aware of their treaty obligations to follow suit. The Canadian government, however, prevaricated and refused to allow the Canadian military to fulfill their obligations. Whatever Prime Minister John Diefenbaker's reasons were, they were not communicated to, or appreciated by the military leadership, including the Minister of National Defence. As a result, the forces were placed at higher readiness levels, with elements of the RCN and the RCAF even deploying. The crisis eventually passed, but it had exposed the schism which existed between the military and its political masters.[17] In addition, as Douglas Bland points out, it:

> …demonstrated that the strategy of commitments could take national control of the armed forces out of Canadian hands and place the government in the position of either acquiescing to international (or American) plans or forfeiting its Alliance relationship….The crisis illustrated that the real danger of the strategy of commitments was not their cost, but their tendency to usurp Parliament's control of defence policy and the Canadian armed forces…[18]

Regardless of who was in power in Ottawa, it was obvious that something had to be done about the defence situation. The Liberals, newly restored to government, set about to reassert civilian control of the CF, solve the inefficiencies of duplication of effort and interservice rivalries and finally create a Department of National Defence

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[17]John Hasek, The Disarming of Canada…., 141-142.

[18]Douglas Bland, Chiefs of Defence…, 222-223.

(DND) more in line with and as equally manageable as other government departments. The result was Paul Hellyer's *White Paper on Defence: 1964*, which outlined the vision and motivation behind the creation of the unified CF.[19] In addition to legally creating a unified single service, the white paper also reaffirmed Canada's reliance on the US for defence.[20] Any misgivings that may have arisen over close defence ties with the US during the Cuban Missile Crisis, seem to have been swept aside by the new government. Ironically, the unification of Canada's armed forces actually had little long-term impact on reducing service rivalries. Although the separate services no longer existed in law, *de facto* they continued to compete with each other for scarce defence dollars because of the way National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) evolved.[21] This situation remains in place today and, coupled with the lack of a coherent, practicable defence policy, is one of the main causes for inefficiencies within DND.

The Cold War era also saw the invention of peacekeeping forces as a means of settling disputes, before they got out of hand and required intervention by a super power, in the now firmly bi-polar world. Perhaps fittingly enough, as the invention of a Canadian, peacekeeping was to have a substantial impact on the CF. Its first impact was to divert attention and resources within the CF away from existing commitments, and

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[19]Douglas Bland, *Canada's National Defence*, Vol.1…, 62-74

[20]*Ibid*, 84.

[21]Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada*…,261.
J.L. Granatstein, *Who Killed the Canadian Military*…, 92-93.
Douglas Bland, *Chiefs of Defence*…, 63-171.
Douglas Bland, *Canada's National Defence,* Vol.2 (Kingston, Ontario: Queen's School of Policy Studies, 1998), 98.

away from what the leadership of the CF saw as their main focus: training and preparing for war. Its second impact was to capture the imagination of the Canadian public, who, aided and abetted by the politicians, developed the attitude that the Canadian military was not and should not be structured, trained or resourced for 'aggressive' war fighting roles. Rather, the CF should peacefully intervene to prevent the escalation of conflict, as part of what would eventually evolve into a particularly Canadian approach known as 'soft power' projection. This perception of the Canadian military as a sort of lightly armed, international boy scout organization, would come back to haunt the CF time and again, especially once the gloves came off regional disputes after the Cold War ended and peacekeeping transitioned to peacemaking and peace enforcement.[22] The popularization of peacekeeping with the Canadian public and the willingness of the government to send the CF on as many such missions as possible, while the military found itself further and further stretched, served to further divide the three defence solitudes.

In the 1970s, the Liberal government under Trudeau undertook to establish new foreign and defence policies that would not be so alliance-centric. In addition to the philosophical goal of attempting to carve out a more independent role for Canada on the world stage, Trudeau also wanted to save money. He was also loath to accept military advice from the leadership of the CF, preferring instead to rely on his own considerable

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[22]For a particularly balanced view on how Canadians appear to perceive the CF role in peacekeeping, see Don Munton, "Defending the Canadian Public," *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol.4, no.3 (Autumn 2003): 29. see also Darryl Copeland, "Hard Reality, Soft Power: Canadian Foreign Policy in the Era of Globalization," *Behind the Headlines*, Vol.55, no.4 (Summer 1998): 2-4.
Douglas Bland, "Everything Military Officers Need to Know…," 7-8.

intellectual capabilities. Quick to realize that the fact that all defence expenditures were discretionary, he gambled that significantly reducing international commitments would still allow a seat at the table for Canada. As a result, our contributions to NATO became a visible sign of our political support for the organization, but militarily they were purely symbolic. Trudeau's reordering of defence policy was formalized in the 1971 white paper *Defence in the 70s*, which not only explained the new direction the CF were to take, but acted as the first indicator of the significant expenditure reductions that were to characterize his long tenure as Prime Minister.[23] In the end, before he lost interest in defence matters altogether, Trudeau had succeeded in putting his unique stamp on the CF and DND. Unfortunately, as has been too often the pattern before and since: "The government by acting without regard for military advice made commitments it could not honour because it was not prepared to pay."[24]

Another significant event occurred within DND during the 1970s had a tremendous impact which is still resonating today. Defence Minister Donald Macdonald established a Management Review Group, headed by a civilian businessman, in an attempt to make DND more efficient, effective and businesslike. The end result of this review was the reorganization of the department to more closely resemble other government departments. The department and Canadian Forces Headquarters were

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[23] Joel J. Sokolsky, "A Seat at the Table…," 24-26.
Douglas Bland, *Canada's National Defence*, Vol.1…, xii, 116-171.
J.L. Granatstein, *Who Killed Canada's Military*…,84-85.

[24]Douglas Bland, *Canada's National Defence*, Vol.1…, 116-171.

amalgamated. In many respects CF officers and DND bureaucrats became indistinguishable, at least from an organizational perspective. Furthermore, in an attempt at streamlining (and to limit military influence within the department), the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) and the Deputy Minister (DM) became co-equals. The roles of the DM and CDS became blurred, and the influence of the civilian bureaucracy increased substantially. To many, it seemed as if NDHQ became the club wielded by the DM to keep the CF in line with political direction.[25] Generations of CF officers have since decried the resultant 'civilianization' of the military, further widening the gulf of misunderstanding between the forces and their political masters.

Initially, at least, the yawning chasm between the three defence solitudes seemed to narrow during the 1980s. Prime Minister Mulroney had promised to revitalize the CF in his election campaign, and he set about to do just that. *Challenge and Commitment: A Defence Policy for Canada*, the 1987 white paper, had been based on an unprecedented level of input from the military, and as such reflected an unusual degree of policy consensus from within the department.[26] It stressed Canada's desire to strengthen its contributions to existing alliances while recognizing that the CF had been given a low priority by previous governments and had suffered as a result:

> Since coming to office, the Government has reviewed Canada's military commitments in relation to the current capabilities of the Canadian Forces

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[25]J.L. Granatstein, *Who Killed the Canadian Military*…, 85-90. Douglas Bland, *Chiefs of Defence*…,94-101.

[26]Douglas Bland, *Canada's National Defence,* Vol.1…, xii-xiii

> and those they can be expected to possess in the future. This review has confirmed that we are not able to meet those commitments fully and effectively. After decades of neglect, there is indeed a significant "commitment – capability gap".[27]

This was confirmation from the highest level of what the CF had been saying for years, that they were being asked to do too much with too little. Perhaps more significantly, the white paper went on to outline how the resources were finally going to be provided to adequately meet the commitments.

Unfortunately for the CF members who had believed that the years of parsimony were finally over, fiscal reality and the fall of the Berlin Wall soon consigned the 1987 white paper to the scrap heap of history. Once again, the principle of giving defence what was deemed available, not what was necessary, gripped DND and the government reneged on its promise to revitalize the CF. As the Canadian public urged even more fiscal restraint from Ottawa and defence resumed its role as the usual target for cutbacks, the chasm between the solitudes creaked ever wider. Many in the CF who had had their hopes raised, perhaps naively, felt betrayed.[28] Resource constraints once again became the order of the day in NDHQ and business as usual continued essentially as if the 1987 white paper had never been written.

The next era in the history of defence policy making is significant for a number of

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[27]Department of National Defence, *Challenge and Commitment: A Defence Policy for Canada,*(Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1987), 43.

[28]J.L. Granatstein, *Who Killed the Canadian Military*…, 133-136.
Joel J. Sokolsky, "A Seat at the table…," 31-33.
Douglas Bland, *National Defence*, Vol.1…., 188-189.
The Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, *Security and Sovereignty*, (Toronto: The Institute, 1989), 6-15.

reasons. Firstly, it resulted in the *1994 Defence White Paper*, which is the extant overarching policy document in effect today. Secondly, it marked a concerted effort by the defence establishment to justify its existing policy direction in the face of alternatives offered by a variety of lobbies and interested parties. Finally, it resulted in the government's commitment to the maintenance of a multi-purpose, combat capable CF, which is central to this examination. The review that preceded the drafting of the white paper was far-reaching and in-depth. There was a simultaneous review of foreign policy, and a good deal of cross-pollination between the two activities. Naturally DND participated, along with a number of pro-defence organizations. Citizen's groups, academics and peace organizations submitted proposals for consideration to government and a healthy debate ensued. For the subject of national defence, this was unprecedented in Canada.

Several competing visions of the future of the CF emerged from the debates and policy considerations. Not surprisingly, the CF and its traditional supporters attempted to circle the wagons and strongly supported retention of the status quo. This view advocated maintaining all the capabilities then resident in the CF, as well as proposing some augmentation in order to overcome previously identified shortfalls, such as in the area of strategic lift. This lobby worked hard to achieve what it deemed essential in an uncertain world. The belief was that a balanced, general purpose, combat capable military was essential to respond to the full range of tasks that the government may

assign in the future.[29] In 1992, then CDS General John de Chastelain expressed this viewpoint on behalf of the CF and its supporters:

> …the emphasis on the need to counter the threat posed by the Soviet Union and its allies in Europe, and in the Atlantic and the Pacific [has been] replaced by the concept of general purpose combat capable armed forces, stationed in Canada for the most part, ready to deploy anywhere in the world in defence of Canada's interests….Such forces could also constitute the core for the generation of larger armed forces, should that ever become necessary in the more distant future.[30]

Advocates of this approach were clear that general purpose combat capable armed forces meant a 'blue water' navy, an air force capable of air defence, surveillance, search and rescue and transport as well as providing support to the army and navy, and an army comprised of a combined arms team capable of deploying nothing less than a brigade group.[31]

Those advocating a general purpose, combat capable CF probably fell into a number of categories. Many of them genuinely believed that it was the absolute minimum necessary to have armed forces capable of responding to any threat or task that may arise. A sub-division of this category also saw such forces as essentially forming a

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[29]Douglas Bland, *Chiefs of Defence*…, 268.
Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada*…., 283.

[30]John de Chastelain, " Wing–walking Revisited: Canadian Defence Policy After the Cold War," *Canadian Defence Quarterly*, 21, no.6 (June 1992): 8.

[31]Joseph T. Jockel, *The Canadian Forces: Hard Choices, Soft Power*, (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 1999), 31-32.
Department of National Defence, *Statement by the Honourable Marcel Masse, Member of Parliament for Frontenac and Minister of National Defence at The National Press Theatre, 17 September 1991*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1991), 7.

cadre as the mobilization base for any future expansion. In this cadre needed to be resident every function or skill that may be called upon, regardless of how embryonic that may have to be. Members of another sub-division were perhaps somewhat less altruistic, seeing the retention of the full range of capabilities as the only way of justifying a reasonable number of general and/or flag officers, commanding 'real' naval, air or land forces. None of the members of this sub-division wished to compete in a shrinking pool for the privilege of commanding mere 'constabulary' forces. All members of this category assumed that an eventual policy decision to maintain the kind of forces they envisioned would naturally be accompanied by sufficient resources to do so. Although it is *de rigueur* in the military to assume that resources will accompany tasks, it was naïve in the extreme for the defence establishment to think that the political level would act any differently in this instance than they always had when it came to defence issues.

The main competing viewpoint to the balanced, general purpose, combat capable approach was one which saw in the demise of the Cold War an opportunity to break from the past. Recognizing the fact that all Canadian defence expenditures and commitments are discretionary, proponents of this view advocated realigning our commitments in accordance with a new policy approach. This approach would allow the restructuring of the forces to meet the new requirements, thereby saving the relatively large expenditures required to maintain the status quo.[32] One group which urged this type of approach on

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[32]Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto, *Canada 21: Canada and Common Security in the Twenty-First Century*, (Toronto: The Centre, 1994), 61.
Janice Gross Stein, "Canada 21: A Moment and a Model," *Canadian Foreign Policy*, Vol.2, no.1 (Spring 1994): 9-13.

the government was called the 'Canada 21 Council', and they summed up their view of the situation in 1994 with the following:

> In the new strategic context, there is no obvious need to maintain the wide range of air, ground, and anti-submarine conventional forces needed to repel a military attack, because it is difficult to conceive of any military power with the desire and the ability to attack Canada. In one sense this has always been true, but because we chose to ally ourselves, in our own long-term best interests, with more vulnerable nations in Europe, our policies were hostage to the possibility of an attack against them….Quite aside from the fact that there is no longer any threat that would require a full-range military response, the Defence Department's budget today cannot meet the rapidly increasing costs of a modern, high technology military. Unless policy is changed quite radically, the result will be that Canada will have simply a miniature model of a traditional "general purpose" military force- one with just a little of everything, but not enough of anything to be effective in any conceivable situation.[33]

The words from the Canada 21 Council would prove remarkably prophetic, however, the policy debate was won by the proponents of the balanced, general purpose, combat capable version of the CF. The *1994 Defence White Paper* announced that the government had decided that it would maintain "'multi-purpose, combat capable armed forces,' available for the protection of Canada, Canada – U.S. defence cooperation in North America, and for multi-lateral operations contributing to international peace and security."[34] The use of the term 'multi-purpose' instead of general purpose was a deliberate choice by the government in order to emphasize that Canada was not in

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[33]Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto, *Canada 21: Canada and Common Security*…, 62.

[34]Department of National Defence, *1994 Defence White Paper*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1994), 13.

possession of a full range of military capabilities, and had no plans to acquire them.[35] It was also implicitly recognized that Canada did not have the ability to contribute meaningfully in high-intensity conflict, preferring instead to structure and equip for the mid-intensity battlefield when it came to war fighting. Unfortunately, this victory for the supporters of the status quo would have unintended consequences that have beleaguered the CF since 1994 and have culminated in 2004 with the present crisis. For those who fought hard and won, however well intentioned they may have been, failed to understand the ramifications. By convincing the government to adopt an official policy that was unaffordable in the Canadian context, certainly at least in the long term, they forced the CF to continuously 'shave the ice cube' in its inexorable march to irrelevance. This inevitability might have been obvious, if the gulf between the military and political solitudes had not been so wide. Sadly, the historical reality of Canadian defence invariants failed to provide adequate warning. In the words of Douglas Bland: "The minister's support for the slogan 'multi-purpose, combat capable forces' seemed a straw stout enough to float every traditionalist, despite the government's obvious intent to provide just enough funds to keep the barest defence force from drowning."[36]

1994 sowed the seeds for the controversy facing the CF in 2004, but the ground had been prepared long before. The divide between the three defence solitudes in Canada meant that the public were generally content to let the defence establishment and the

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[35]Joseph T. Jockel, *The Canadian Forces*…., 33-34.

[36]Douglas Bland, *Canada's National Defence*, Vol.1…, 284. see also J.L. Granatstein, *Who Killed the Canadian Military*…., 166.

politicians work out what kind of military the country needed, as long as it did not impact negatively on higher priority social programmes or offend their 'unmilitary' sensibilities.[37] The political level was willing to go through the motions of listening to the defence establishment with respect to what was required, secure in the knowledge that whatever they decided was of no real import anyway, as the level of defence expenditures, number of commitments etc., were all discretionary and therefore infinitely flexible.[38] Members of the CF and the defence establishment failed to recognize the political invariant and its eventual impact on their preferred policy direction.[39] Perhaps they should have heeded the famous words of that old soldier (and politician) Charles de Gaulle when he said: "Since a politician never believes what he says, he is quite surprised to be taken at his word." In any case, the field was tilled, the seeds were planted and now the harvest is ripe. The question is, what kind of crop have we now to sow?

The impact of the 1994 white paper has been both wide and deep. By tasking the CF to maintain balanced, multi-purpose, combat capable forces, the government has exacerbated the parochial, inter-service in fighting that has always characterized the military. Each 'environment' (the politically correct term for the three services, which as mentioned, still exist in all but name) competes with the others for scarce funding. As all

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[37]David J. Bercuson, *To Serve a Nation: The Case for a New Defence White Paper*, (Calgary, Alberta: Centre of Military and Strategic Studies, University of Calgary, 2001), 1.

[38]*Ibid*, 18.
D.W. Middlemiss and J.J. Sokolsky, *Canadian Defence: Decisions and*…, 69.

[39]Douglas Bland, *Parliament, Defence Policy and*…, 15.
Joel J. Sokolsky, "Canadian Forces: Organization and Equipment for the Modern World," *Forum: Journal for the Conference of Defence Associations Institute*, Vol.8, no. 2 (April 1993): 40.

three individually attempt to maintain a multi-purpose combat capability in accordance with government direction, the limited funding envelope invariably means that each gets only a portion of what it has requested. Instead of prioritizing across the whole CF, defence funds are essentially sub-divided equally to each environment, thus limiting their overall effectiveness. Despite the fact that a variety of screening processes designed to mitigate this issue have been implemented through the years, it remains a major problem.[40] Furthermore, due to a lack of specifics in the white paper, each environment is largely free to determine what 'multi-purpose' and 'combat capable' mean within their own domain, further exacerbating the rivalry, especially when it comes to capital acquisitions.

Inter-service rivalry is not, however, the main funding issue associated with the 1994 white paper. No amount of political rhetoric or bureaucratic meandering can alter one fact. Modern military capabilities are enormously expensive. They are not only expensive to buy, but they are expensive to maintain and update, and if they should ever be destroyed in combat, to replace. Perhaps more significantly, the costs associated with modern, technologically sophisticated military systems are rising by orders of magnitude, not incrementally.[41] As a result, to be a multi-purpose, combat capable military in 2004 means having an adequate defence procurement budget that increases substantially from

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[40]D.W. Middlemiss and J.J. Sokolsky, *Canadian Defence: Decisions and*…, 88-89.

[41]Elinor C. Sloan, *The Revolution in Military Affairs: Implications for Canada and NATO*, (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 123-124.

year to year. However, an examination of the historical trend in defence expenditures reveals the opposite. As a percentage of government spending, defence expenditures fell from a high of 40% in 1956-57 to 10% in 1973-74, with the level hitting approximately 6% in 2000-01. Taken as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), defence expenditures were at 8% in 1952-53, 4% in 1963-64 and approximately 1% in 2000-01.[42] Obviously, historically Canada has not been willing to expend the funds necessary to sufficiently fund a modern, technologically well equipped multi-purpose military that is combat capable. There are also no signs that this trend will not continue in the foreseeable future. As a result, some alternative to a multi-purpose, combat capable military that will be affordable within the resources the government is willing to commit, must be found.[43]

As mentioned, funding trends have not been conducive to maintaining a multi-purpose, combat capable military in Canada. The impact of these overall trends has been significant over the years. For example, in his 2000 annual report to parliament, the Auditor-General remarked that the $1.4 billion capital budget represented only 14% of the overall 1998-99 defence budget, and was far too low to meet requirements, estimating a $4.5 billion shortfall over the following five years. He went on to say that as a result of the requirement exceeding available funds by so much, it appeared that defence officials did not carry out the necessary rigorous analyses, and instead attempted to spread funds

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[42]Sean Henry, *Stability and Prosperity*…, Annex B.

[43]Robert J. Farrelly, *A Wake-up Call for Canada: The Need for a New Military*, (Toronto: The Defence Studies Committee of the Royal Canadian Institute, 2001), 2.

across as many requirements as possible in the hope of future funding becoming available. The inevitable result was the purchase of inadequate weapons platforms. This is just one of the negative ramifications of attempting to allocate equal funding to all the environments. In other words, a case of too little being spread too thin across an organization that is too wide. Furthermore, the rising cost of operating and maintaining the newer, more technologically sophisticated equipment was creating ever larger gaps in the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) funding envelope.[44] Ominously, the Auditor-General gave an explicit warning that there were insufficient funds in the defence budget to meet the national defence policy of maintaining a modern multi-purpose force.[45]

Another serious funding difficulty encountered by the CF stems from the disproportionately small amount of the budget that is actually available for capital acquisitions. Personnel and O&M costs actually account for approximately 64% of the budget, while only 26% is available to be devoted to capital expenditures. As this 26% is considered the discretionary part of the budget, it attracts an inordinate amount of attention from within DND and even from cabinet.[46] Unfortunately for the military officers who attempt to focus these funds on perceived operational requirements, the real decision making power has been left in the hands of the civilians in the amalgamated NDHQ. They tend to follow the budget consciousness of the politicians and emphasize

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[44]Sharon Hobson, "Audit shows Canadian Defence Shortfall," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, Vol.29, no. 18 (6 May 1998): 8.

[45]Douglas Bland, "Canada and Military Coalitions: Where, How, and with Whom?" *Policy Matters*, Vol.3, no. 3 (Feb 2002): 33.

[46]D.W. Middlemiss and J.J. Sokolsky, *Canadian Defence: Decisions and*…, 83.

overall management goals such as efficiency and cost-effectiveness. As a result, the politicians generally avoid having to make difficult and expensive decisions based on military advice they would rather not hear. This is one of the root causes of the commitment-capability gap that so bedevils the CF today.[47]

As defence budgets have fallen, quite logically, some economies have been attempted by reducing the size of DND in both personnel and infrastructure. Unfortunately, the departmental cuts did not meet the total demand for fiscal restraint, so the capital budget also had to be reduced significantly. As a result, the CF is facing a major problem of rust out as existing equipment reaches the end of its useful life. In addition, there is little money for upgrades or refurbishment and replacements are unaffordable. This clearly has a serious impact on the immediate operational capabilities of the CF:

> With a total capital demand of $23.8 billion, a real capital-funding availability of $8.0 billion, and a recapitalization shortfall of $15 billion, it is clear that the capital-equipment crisis will arrive in the 2003-2008 time-frame. The effect on CF operational capabilities will be….[that] the task of undertaking and supporting any but small, uncomplicated international or domestic operations…will be problematic…..Thus, the ability to meet the commitments made in the *1994 White Paper*…will disappear within the immediate (2003-2008) time-frame.[48]

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[47]*Ibid*, 87.
Douglas Bland, "A Strategy of Choice: Preparing the Canadian Armed Forces for the 21st Century," *Canadian Foreign Policy*, Vol. 2, no. 1, (Spring 1994): 111-115.

[48]Brian MacDonald, "The Capital and the Future Force Crisis," Chap 2 in *Canada Without Armed Forces?* ed. Douglas L. Bland (Kingston, Ontario: Queen's University School of Policy Studies, 2003), 44.

This serious funding situation is a direct result of attempting to maintain forces that are unsustainable given the resources available. Having helped convince the government to task it to maintain the balanced, multi-purpose, combat capable forces that it preferred, the CF now has to live with the ramifications of that decision when sufficient funding has not been forthcoming.

Obviously, there must be significant action taken to avoid the complete collapse of the CF and its operational capabilities. Yet, despite all the evidence to the contrary, the government insists that the CF are capable of meeting their current commitments and that the tenets of the 1994 white paper are still sound. Senior defence officials have generally supported them in public in this regard.[49] Naturally, such pronouncements must be viewed very critically, for as David Rudd has said: "The Canadian Forces are under-strength, under-funded and overworked. [However] We cannot look to those who wear the uniform of the country to say those things…"[50] In recent years, however, many senior CF officers have spoken out about some of the difficulties they face. For example, the former Chief of the Land Staff, Lieutenant-General Mike Jeffrey often spoke publicly about having too much Army for his budget and too little for his tasks. In addition, retired senior officers have frequently criticized the public pronouncements emanating

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[49]See for example, Raymond Henault "Combat Capability and the Canadian Forces," *Canadian Foreign Policy*, Vol. 9, no. 3 (Spring 2002): 5.

[50]Alex Morrison, *Vision into Reality: Towards a new Canadian Defence and Security Concept*, ed. David Rudd, Jim Hanson and Nicholas Furneaux, (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 2002), 2.

from the defence department.[51] In any event, even a cursory survey of various news media will reveal that the travails of the CF are becoming more widely recognized. "The Canadian Forces face dire, even terminal, consequences after decades of government neglect and underfunding…,"[52] "Military on verge of 'rapid collapse' if funding doesn't soar,"[53] and "Army will soon have just 500 available troops"[54] are just some examples of the contents of recent news stories. Are these sensationalist exaggerations, or is this really the situation facing the CF in 2004?

The ramifications of the factors relating to defence and security in Canada and the interplay between the three defence solitudes have been discussed. Now that we have examined *how* we arrived at where we are, it is important to outline *where* we are. Saddled with official policies driving specific force structures and not having enough resources to sustain them, the CF is definitely in a crisis position. There is little agreement within the department on how to resolve the problems, which is not unusual

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[51]Mike Blanchfield, "Retired Generals step in to 'Tell it Like it Is': Ex-Forces Brass Decry Current Generals' 'Positive Spin' on Readiness of Canadian Troops," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 13 May 2001, A1. Robert Fife, "Doubt is Cast on Combat Readiness," *National Post*, 5 December 2001, A6.

[52]Chris Wattie, "Too many Generals Spoil the Forces: Study," *National Post*, 3 December 2003, [newspaper on-line]; available from http://www.national post.com/home/story.html?id=0256E04A-C553-49C9-9051-7CE1A1BB; accessed 12 February 2004.

[53]David Pugliese, "Air Force may Vanish by 2013, study says: Military on Verge of 'rapid collapse' if funding doesn't soar," *National Post*, 3 December 2003, [newspaper on-line]; available from http://www.national post.com/home/story.html?id=E61A3349-6665F-4798-B803-5CEF252A1; accessed 12 February 2004.

[54]John Ibbitson, "Army will soon have just 500 troops available," *Globe and Mail*, 14 January 2004, A1.

as: "When there is no concensus between ministers, officials, and officers about the situation, objectives, and the resources needed…the usual outcome is confusion and confusion might be the chief characteristic of Canadian defence policy today."[55] There should be no confusion, however, as to the existence of the commitment-capability gap. In spite of the potential consequences, the CF has continued to pursue the maintenance of unsustainable force structures:

> A structurally disarmed CF in 2020 could result if CF leadership does not significantly shift from its current investment plans and priorities. Despite the significant defence budget cuts since 1989, and notwithstanding the recent increases in 1999, which at best, have only served to stabilize the budget, the CF has sought to maintain a relatively balanced force structure and set of capabilities among the services, under the rubric of maintaining "multi-purpose, combat-capable forces". As a result, the CF today looks little different from the CF in 1989, except that it is smaller and less robust.[56]

It is clear that this situation should not be allowed to continue, however, until there is a defence policy review at some level and some form of policy direction that releases the CF from its obligations inherent in the 1994 white paper, there can be no official change in direction.

What of the pronouncements that the CF has weapon systems that make it more combat capable now that it has been in the past? These are very difficult statements to reconcile with the situation already outlined. The problem with this type of statement is

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[55]Douglas Bland, *Canada's National Defence,* Vol.1…,286.

[56]Richard Gimblett, "A Strategic Overview of the Canadian Security Environment," *Canadian Foreign Policy*, Vol. 9, no. 3 (Spring 2002): 22.

that they tend to compare specific weapon systems with what has been replaced in isolation, both from the entire 'system of systems' surrounding them and the entire context of their potential deployment. It also must not be forgotten that as soon as any new (especially technologically sophisticated) equipment is accepted into service, it begins to wear out and require increasing amounts of maintenance. Additionally, and perhaps more significantly, its capabilities immediately start to degrade in comparison to the global technology innovation cycle. In other words, it becomes outdated relative to the newer equipment fielded by potential friends or enemies. There may indeed be individual weapon systems in the CF inventory which represent a vast improvement over what they replaced, such as the new Canadian Patrol Frigates for example, but that simply represents a specific snapshot in time. The real concern with CF equipment is the looming crisis when a significant portion reaches the end of its useful service life and there are insufficient funds for replacements. For example, one review by equipment type reveals that the entire CF is facing a 'mass extinction' around the 2005 – 2015 time frame.[57]

There is no doubt that having a defence policy without sufficient resources to implement it is at the root of the CF equipment crisis. This impossible situation has forced defence officials to rob capital investment funds to pay for daily expenses in O&M. This is tantamount to stealing from the future to pay for the present, or as one commentator has eloquently said, defence managers are forced into a situation whereby:

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[57]Brian S. MacDonald, "The Capital/Capabilities Gap: The Final Rustout Decade of the Canadian Forces?" *On Track*, Vol.6, no. 2 (29 June 2001): 14-16.

"They are, in effect, dumping fuel from the aircraft to lighten its load to get a few more miles before it runs out of petrol and falls from the sky."[58] However, faulty defence management must also take some of the blame, even though it too can be traced back to the policy issue:

> The radical change in international security and defence affairs, when combined with niggardly defence spending from 1989 to the present, inevitably affected the management of defence policy throughout the period. Not only are the strategic fundamentals of policy no longer sound, but the fundamentals of defence administration in Canada have been shattered as well.[59]

The system of equipment management in the CF, known as the 'life-cycle system', was in place prior to the 1994 white paper. In the predictable Cold War environment, with very little chance of actually going to war, the system worked quite well. In fact, it was recognized that this peacetime system was supposed to be replaced by a wartime system, should the need arise. The problem is that since the Cold War has ended, the CF have essentially been operating at a wartime tempo, but are still managing equipment under a life-cycle system that was never designed to function in those circumstances. The result has been that the system has broken down under the strain as flying hours, mileage allowances and activity rates could no longer be strictly controlled. Equipment life-cycle management is analogous to rationing. A specific item is to be used

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[58]Douglas Bland, "The Fundamentals of Defence Policy are not Sound," Chap 1 in *Canada Without Armed Forces?*, ed. Douglas L. Bland (Kingston, Ontario: Queen's University School of Policy Studies, 2003), 3.

[59]*Ibid*, 17.

in accordance with a strict timetable, so that spare parts, down time for routine maintenance, mid-life rebuilds etc., are all factored into the detailed framework. Unfortunately, under the operational tempo experienced by the CF since 1994, most equipment is being used at rates far greater than planned, and in much more demanding circumstances.

The result of the greater demands being made on CF equipment in operational settings is that there are more equipment casualties, life-cycles are shorter and demands on repair technicians and facilities have skyrocketed. The operational tempo of the CF does not allow for this problem to be managed as it could have been previously, by simply restricting activities or limiting usage rates of specific equipment suites. Perhaps more significantly, the drastically shortened lifecycles of major equipment has thrown off their planned replacement schedules. There simply has not been the time to acquire replacements. As a result, the equipment is wearing out, O&M requirements increase to keep it all serviceable and no replacements are forecasted for many major systems, further exacerbating the 'mass extinction' scenario previously described.[60]

In the discussion of the rust out of CF equipment, it is useful to examine one or two major platforms in some detail, though the principles apply equally to all. The CC-130 Hercules can accurately be described as the workhorse of the Canadian Air Force. Designed as a tactical airlift platform, the Hercules is a rugged, versatile and reliable aircraft that can operate from a variety of airfields in most conditions in which an aircraft

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[60] *Ibid*, 20.

can fly. In the absence of any purpose built strategic airlift platforms in the CF,[61] the Hercules must also perform this role, for which it was never designed. CF Hercules have the highest operating time of any CC-130 fleet in the world. 60 per cent of the fleet is between 35 and 39 years old, and require increasingly intensive maintenance to maintain their airworthiness. Spare parts shortages and the lack of experienced aircraft technicians compound the problems that accrue naturally to older aircraft, as they have to be inspected more frequently and have more preventive maintenance performed. As a result, aircraft serviceability rates and the yearly flying rate (hours available for use) have radically declined. The issues with the Hercules do not come as a surprise. The Auditor-General has noted the drastic reduction in yearly flying rate, commenting on a 37 per cent reduction from 1990-91 to 1999-2000. By 2003, the rate was down to about 46 per cent of the 1990-91 totals. In spite of the reduced flying rates, the ratio of maintenance hours to flying hours increased 62 per cent from 1990-91 to 1999-2000. Clearly this situation has had a serious impact on the CF's ability to participate in national and international operations.[62]

Another weapons platform in the CF that has generated some controversy is the CF-18, which comprises the core of the air force as a tactical fighter, with a limited tactical/strategic bombing role. Budget restrictions have already reduced the active fleet

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[61]Minus of course the limited capability of the A310 Airbus. For DND's view of the requirement for strategic lift, see Canadian Forces, "Capability Goals for the CF," 21 June 2000, [document on-line]; available from http://www.vcds.dnd.ca/dgsp/dda/start/chap 5_e.asp; accessed 17 March 2004.

[62]Brian MacDonald, "The Capital and the Future Force Crisis," Chap 2 in *Canada Without Armed Forces?* ed. Douglas L. Bland (Kingston, Ontario: Queen's University School of Policy Studies, 2003), 29-30.

from 122 airframes to 60, with another 28 being utilized for training, testing and rotation. The remaining 34 have had to be placed in storage. 18 CF-18s were flown in Kosovo during Canada's participation in the NATO led conflict there, but as alluded to earlier, their overall effectiveness has since been questioned. The out-of-date avionics and communications suites on the aircraft limited their employability, and may have even endangered allied aircraft that had to revert to more primitive methodologies in order to interoperate with the Canadians.[63] A recently announced programme to update a portion of the operational CF-18s at a cost of approximately $10 million per air frame will solve some of the these problems and is projected to extend their life-cycle out to 2017.[64] This decision to refit the CF-18s, however, has not gone unchallenged. Even after the programme has been completed, the aircraft will still be outdated and will still suffer from the increased maintenance costs associated with older weapons systems. Not only that, but taken within the context of the entire CF mission and budget, the efficacy of spending such a large amount to obtain an incremental improvement to a capability that is already open to debate, can easily be questioned.[65] What is more, if the air force intends to replace the CF-18 in 2017, it needs to be involved in a realistic replacement project now, and other than a modest interest in the international Joint Strike Fighter project, this does not appear to be the case. The point here is that if the air force has no firm plans or

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[63]Department of National Defence, Chief of Air Staff Level 1 Business Plan FY 00/01 (amended), part 4-3/25.

[64]Robert J. Farrelly, *A Wake-up call*…, 19.

[65] Brian S. MacDonald, "The Capital/Capabilities Gap...," 16.

funding earmarked to replace the CF-18, it must be contemplating doing without that capability in 2017. If there is no requirement for the capability in 2017, why are we spending millions of dollars to maintain that capability between now and then? The answer would seem to lie more in the air force's self-image, and the inter-service funding distribution methodology in NDHQ, than in any efficient application of defence policies.[66]

What do the capital funding issues mean for the CF? The inevitable conclusion must be that it is only a matter of time until the situation becomes so critical that the CF will not be able to perform core functions because the equipment simply will not be there for them to do so. Brian MacDonald asked the rhetorical question- will Canada's forces have what they need when they need it? His answer is a resounding no, and has deep implications for those who see no need to modify the policies inherent in the 1994 white paper:

> The financial dilemma is driven by the "rust-out" of the large number of major platforms, which have already reached their "pull-by date"….As things stand now, future foreign policy will be determined by budgetary decisions forced on the Canadian Forces about what equipment will not be replaced. The alternative model, that of "shaving the ice cube" by incremental reductions, simply cannot cope with the decaying equipment, except through ruinous increases in maintenance costs- as the sorry spectacle of the Sea King helicopters demonstrates daily.[67]

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[66]Robert J. Farrelly, *A Wake-up call*…, 20.
James Fergusson, "Getting to 2020: The Canadian Forces and the Future Force Structure and Investment Considerations," *Canadian Foreign Policy*, Vol. 9, no. 3 (Spring 2002): 26.

[67]Brian MacDonald, "Will Canada's Forces have what they need when they need it?" *Policy Options*, (March 2001): 32.

MacDonald's unequivocal warning is that the Canadian government has by default limited its foreign policy options to the results of decisions made about current CF capital procurement. Given that the annual budget for capital procurement is only going to be approximately $1.9 billion, it is clear that the CF will not even be able to maintain the capabilities it currently possesses. A massive infusion of cash can also be ruled out, given long-term trends and the proclivities of a succession of governments. There is also no hope that a groundswell of public sentiment will force the government to reprioritize funding to the CF, as 'increased spending on the CF' routinely finishes last on public opinion polls where Canadians are asked their opinion on where federal funds should be directed. Given the divide between the three defence solitudes in Canada, it should not be a surprise that the political level continually expects the CF to do more with less, and the public seems to remain essentially complacent about the problem.[68]

The problem of rust out for Canadian military equipment and weapon systems has also not gone unnoticed by our allies, especially the US. For example, despite interoperability with the US being a fundamental requirement of our defence policy,[69] the significant gap mentioned earlier in the capabilities of our CF-18s in the1999 conflict in Kosovo, was a major concern. As indicated in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq, the US has recognized the requirement to work with other nations for diplomatic and practical reasons, but it is justifiably concerned that any potential allied weakness, or inability to

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[68]*Ibid*, 37-38.
D.W. Middlemiss and J.J. Sokolsky, *Canadian Defence…*, 223.

[69]Department of National Defence, *1994 Defence White Paper…*, 226.

inter-operate with US forces, may result in increased risk to US personnel. Of course, this situation not only applies to Canada, but to other allies as well, though given the long and intimate cooperation with respect to defence matters between the US and Canada, it is especially troubling that we may not be able to cooperate militarily.[70] The situation has been further exacerbated by the fact that the US is aggressively pursuing the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) that has been brought about by the technology and information age. Clearly, no other country can compete across the board with the US in technological innovation, but Canada's inability to afford even modest investment does not bode well for the future:

> The Canadian Forces today suffer the consequences of decades of neglect, inadequate funding, and questionable decisions regarding force structure. As a result, they are in a relatively poor position- at least in comparison to many other Western nations- to field interoperable defense forces and to take advantage of the RMA. At best, they can pursue what some observers have called a "niche" RMA strategy, while fielding specialized forces that offer interoperability capabilities.[71]

Although the CF have recognized the RMA and its ramifications, without sufficient funding, it will not be able to put in place the long-term strategies it itself recognizes are necessary to deliver essential defence capabilities.[72] As a result, the CF will fall further

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[70]Andrew C. Richter, "'Alongside the Best?': The Future of the Canadian Forces," *Naval War College Review*, Vol. LVI, no.1, (Winter 2003): 67-74.
David L. Bashow, "Reconciling the Irreconcilable?: Canada's Foreign and Defence Policy Linkage," *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol.1, no.1 (Spring 2000): 22.

[71]Andrew C. Richter, "'Alongside the Best?'…," 75.

[72]Department of National Defence, *Shaping the Future of Canadian Defence: A Strategy for 2020*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1999), 1.

and further behind, accelerating the level of marginalization it is already experiencing.

Clearly, the combination of the requirement to maintain multi-purpose, combat capable forces and the lack of sufficient resources to do so has had a negative impact on capital procurement and the maintenance of a number of capabilities within the CF. The impact on other aspects of the military have been just as significant. Personnel, for example, have also suffered greatly from the implementation of the policies resident in the 1994 white paper. It has often been recognized that people are the key to the operational effectiveness of any armed force. In this day and age of high technology, fast paced operations and increased lethality of weapons systems, it is even more important than it has ever been to attract, recruit, train and retain intelligent, fit, motivated and competent individuals for the CF. It also takes more time and money to train CF members, both individually and collectively, than it ever has in the past, thanks to the sophisticated equipment they must operate and the delicate and extremely complex missions to which they deploy. Unfortunately, the financial and human resource management policies of the past few decades have brought the CF to the brink of a personnel crisis. In a nutshell, attrition is too high, the recruiting and training systems too overburdened and the experience gap ever widening, so that the competence and capability levels of the CF have been significantly impaired.[73]

How did this personnel crisis come about? Simply put there are a number of factors, including demographics, the civilian economy etc., that have contributed to the

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[73]Christopher Ankersen, "The Personnel Crisis," Chap 3 in *Canada Without Armed Forces?*, ed. Douglas L. Bland (Kingston, Ontario: Queen's University School of Policy Studies, 2003), 55-56.

problem. However, the main contributors appear to fall directly out of the 1994 white paper. First of all the budget shortfalls already discussed and specific manpower reduction targets in the white paper forced the CF to downsize, which they did through an incentive based early retirement programme called the Force Reduction Programme (FRP) and restricted recruiting. Neither of these programmes appears to have been particularly well managed, so that experienced personnel who were operationally required were allowed to leave in too great numbers, and not enough individuals for critical specialties were recruited. The impact of both of these issues has only grown larger as the operational tempo of the CF increased drastically throughout the 1990s. As a result of the personnel crisis, those that remain behind in the CF have been increasingly overburdened with operational taskings, incremental taskings inside Canada and overall increased workloads. This has further exacerbated the problem in that the CF now carries a far higher percentage of 'non-effectives' than it did previously as far more people suffer stress related injuries, or simply burn out. Many others also opt to leave the forces earlier than they otherwise would have. The ongoing personnel crisis has already had an operational impact in all three environments, and the problem will not improve until fundamental changes are made to the defence policies which have in large measure been its origin.[74]

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[74]Douglas Bland, "A Strategy of Choice…," 113-115.
Christopher Ankersen, "The Personnel Crisis…," 68-70.

As discussed, other than in a few exceptions, CF equipment is largely in an advanced stage of rust out, personnel policies have left CF members fatigued and dissatisfied and the operational tempo shows no signs of abating. This is where we are in 2004. This situation is directly attributable to the policies laid out in the 1994 white paper. Even the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs (SCONDVA) in the parliament has recognized the precarious position of the CF:

> Our greatest concern is that the CF be fully capable of meeting the challenges that lie ahead. During our previous investigations we heard much about equipment rust-out, poor morale, inadequate living conditions, lack of training, unsustainable levels of operational tempo, funding shortfalls, etc. We have already addressed some of the major issues of concern in our previous reports, but more needs to be done.[75]

Now what does it all mean? Simply put, the Canadian military is broken. The budget cuts have taken their toll, and the CF have been trying to do too much with too little, for too long.[76] As a result, they are no longer capable of meeting the 1994 white paper commitments: "…Canada today cannot field military forces that can fight 'alongside the best, against the best.' Over the course of the last decade, the Canadian Forces have lost significant combat capability; once lost, such capability is difficult to restore."[77] In the words of the policy committee of the Federation of Military and United Services

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[75]David Price, *Vision into Reality: Towards a New Canadian Defence and Security Concept*, ed. David Rudd, Jim Hanson and Nicholas Furneaux, (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 2002), 7.

[76] The Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, *Security and Sovereignty*, (Toronto: The Institute, 1989), 15.

[77]Andrew C. Richter, "'Alongside the Best?'…," 90.

Institutes of Canada: "The 1994 Defence White Paper has become an under-funded promise rather than a defence policy."[78] As reported by the Conference of Defence Associations Institutes, after an analysis of the operational readiness of the CF following a detailed study of the three environmental Level 1 Business Plans for 2001: "The most important flaw is that DND has not been allocated sufficient funds to implement the policy stated in the 1994 White Paper- notwithstanding the additional funds allocated in 2000 and 2001."[79]

The situation in the CF is so critical that Canada's foreign policy options have already been limited. Much has been made about Canada's decision not to participate in the US led Operation Iraqi Freedom, but many observers question whether Canada even had the resources available for a meaningful contribution. Before the decision not to participate in Operation Iraqi Freedom was made, the Defence Minister made an announcement that Canada could send a 'sizeable commitment' of approximately 2,000 CF members to participate. Despite protestations to the contrary, it is unlikely that such a contribution would have been militarily relevant, or even welcomed by the US. Therefore, the political significance of such a contribution is also suspect. The fact of the matter is that the campaign to force regime change in Iraq required fast moving, mechanized formations with aviation support and precision air power, as well as the

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[78]J. Cecil Benezowski, *Canada's Strategic Security XXI: A National Strategic Appraisal into the 21st Century*, (Kingston, Ontario: Federation of Military and United Services Institutes of Canada, 2001), 13.

[79]Sean Henry, *Caught in the Middle: An Assessment of the Operational Readiness of the Canadian Forces*, (Ottawa: The Conference of Defence Associations Institute, 2001), 7.
Douglas Bland, *Canada and Military Coalitions*…, 35.

ability to interoperate with either the US or British formations. Anything less would have simply been a burden, not an asset, to the coalition. As a result, it is highly unlikely that the US theatre commander would have looked on the type of commitment Canada was offering as anything more than a nuisance, especially as the US would have had to have been responsible for transporting the forces into theatre. This of course leads to the possibility that perhaps Canada's 'decision' not to participate was based on factors other than those publicly acknowledged. In any case, according to the white paper, Canada is supposed to be able to commit 10,000 personnel, including a 5,000 person mechanized brigade group to international operations. The minister's announcement that the government was capable of offering something much less than that would appear to be tacit acknowledgement that the 1994 white paper commitments are no longer achievable.[80]

It is clear that we are at a critical point in our history when it comes to issues of defence and security. Canada is in desperate need of a foreign policy review and a defence review, preferably in that order. Following that we need a new defence white paper. All of this should be conducted with as much participation as possible from each of the three defence solitudes in Canada, members of parliament, members of the CF and the public at large. Most importantly though, the entire process should be carried out with an intimate awareness of the defence invariants in Canada: the public will only

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[80]David Rudd, *Is the Cupboard Bare? The Canadian Forces and Iraq*, (October 2002) [commentary on-line]; available from http://www.ciss.ca/Comment_CupboardBare.htm; accessed 2 February 2004.

ascribe a low priority to defence spending, and the political level will only allocate what is available, not what is necessary, because all defence expenditures are considered discretionary. With these parameters as a baseline, the country can decide what it is that Canada wants to accomplish with its foreign and defence policy, and then set realistic, achievable goals as a result. Following that, decisions about how large the CF should be, how it should be force structured, what type of equipment it should have, can all be answered accurately, so that they can be appropriately tasked and resourced in order to be sustainable.

Of course, one option that could be considered is that Canada not retain any armed forces suitable for international deployment at all. Many who would argue for this option point to the fact that money spent on armed forces is not available for social services. Given her defence realities, this argument has a certain resonance in Canada, even after the events of 9/11 highlighted the asymmetric threat. However, possessing armed forces does not only multiply a nation's foreign policy choices, but provides something more fundamental: "The real and perceived capabilities of a country's armed forces represent…not only the degree to which a state perceives its interests to be at risk, but also reflects the national will or resolve of the state to defend those interests."[81] This does not end the argument, however, as many observers would counter with the idea that for all the reasons outlined in this paper, Canada will never be able to afford a military capable of influencing international events, especially those involving the major powers,

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[81]W. Don Macnamara, "Why does Canada need Armed Forces?" *On Track*, Vol.8, no.4, (30 December 2003), 21.

so it does not make any sense to try. As Douglas Bland points out, this argument needs to be approached from the other side: "…Canada requires armed forces not to influence other's decisions about their interests and actions, but to influence decisions others may take about Canada's interests and policies."[82] In other words, adequate armed forces are an essential element of a nation's ability to operate independently in the international environment. The difficulty is in ascertaining what constitutes 'adequate' armed forces.

There is no doubt that armed forces sent anywhere need to be capable of protecting themselves. Given the complicated and volatile theatres into which armed forces deploy, this necessitates a level of armament and protective equipment that not only lets them accomplish their mission, but also allows them a reasonable opportunity to survive. This predicates then that whatever form the CF take, they should be combat capable. Anything less would invalidate calling them 'armed' forces. This does not mean, however, that all three 'environments' need the same level of combat capability, nor, as has been seen, can such a force structure be sustained:

> …it is completely unrealistic to believe that Canadian's will tolerate a defence budget much higher than three per cent of gross domestic product. It surely is folly, therefore, to believe that the Canadian Forces can maintain credible levels of combat capability within the current force structure; short of actual war, it is unlikely that the resources will ever again be available to sustain a Canadian Forces with three…modern, fully combat capable, but still basically separate, "environments" (army, navy, air force).[83]

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[82]Douglas Bland, "Canada and Military Coalitions…," 8-9.

[83]David J. Bercuson, *To Serve a Nation*…, 19.

Clearly the status quo, of multi-purpose, combat capable forces as mandated by the 1994 white paper is no longer feasible for all the reasons already discussed. However, due to its circumstances, Canada is free to decide which combat capable forces it should maintain and have available for the future. As James Fergusson points out, it does not necessarily mean: "...that Canada will still need, or be capable of possessing, such forces for the Army, Navy, and Air Force. This is, in effect, the core of the hard choices that will have to be made, if Canada is going to avoid the outcome of structural disarmament."[84]

David King makes the strong argument that until foreign and defence policy reviews have been conducted and new policies established that are implementable and make sense to the Canadian public, even the inadequate defence funding now available is probably wasted from a policy perspective. As he points out: "the 'general purpose fully combat-capable forces' cliché that currently informs defence organization is in fact not very well related to the nation's needs."[85] Instead, Canada should design the CF to accommodate her foreign and defence policy needs (once established), and ensure maximum interoperability with the US. Rather than multi-purpose, combat capable forces, Canada should have: "'specific-purpose and specific-capability forces,' that reflect her foreign and domestic policies, including her alliance commitments. This does not imply a single-purpose, single capability force; it implies a set of specific purposes

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[84]James Fergusson, "Getting to 2020…," 26.

[85]David L. King, "We need a Romanow Commission….," 11.

with a set of specific capabilities fine-tuned to policy."[86]

Douglas Bland makes much the same argument within a policy proposal he calls a 'strategy of choice'. His main thrust is that the end of the Cold War now allows Canada to choose a new strategic direction based on well thought out foreign and defence policies. Bland is clear that: "…a defence policy for Canada should be based on the idea that Canada cannot and need not maintain multi-capable 'general purpose' armed forces for a wide range of challenges."[87] Instead, he sees a CF designed for specific tasks it should be given in Canada, within North America and as part of whatever multi-lateral security forces the policy reviews determine are appropriate. Current commitments and past procurement decisions should not be allowed to prejudice this process. In other words it should be done from a blank slate. Furthermore, the Canadian defence invariant must not be forgotten, so that the entire process takes place within the framework of a realistic long term funding model.[88]

For reasons already described, Canada has long been involved militarily in coalitions. It has been accepted as a matter of fact that we will only deploy internationally as part of a coalition. This fact must be considered, therefore, when consideration is being given to what type of forces Canada should require in the future. As a result: "Canadian military contributions, and hence, force structure and capabilities, are a product of calculating what type of forces provide a meaningful contribution to such

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[86]*Ibid*.

[87]Douglas Bland, "A Strategy of Choice…," 124.

[88]*Ibid*.

coalitions."[89] Obviously the capabilities provided by likely coalition partners must also be considered in this process, and for Canada this: "translates today, almost exclusively, into a structure and capability determined by Canada's closest ally and the world's military exemplar- the United States."[90] As discussed, interoperability with US forces is an expensive proposal as they undergo transformation while adapting to the RMA. The US defence establishment recognizes this difficulty, and intends to work toward establishing connectivity between US and allied forces and: "aims not for mirror images of U.S. forces, but instead for allied forces that can participate as team players, often carrying out niche missions of their own."[91] This is an especially important aspect for Canada to consider, given our long and intimate defence relationship and geographical presence within the US Northern Command.[92]

Any new foreign and defence policy reviews need to consider the international partners with which Canada will invariably be involved, but they should also consider the appropriate domestic partners for the CF. Military missions in the twenty first century are more than just that; they often involve diplomatic, foreign aid, police and judicial

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[89]James Fergusson, "Getting to 2020…," 24.

[90]*Ibid*.

[91]David W. Read, "The Revolution in Military Affairs: NATO's Need for a Niche Capability Strategy," C*anadian Military Journal*

components. Many operations also blur the lines between domestic and international responsibilities and many, if not most require long-term, if not indefinite commitments.[93] As a result, the CF must be adapted to this new environment. Hugh Segal has even gone as far as to suggest that Canada should be capable of fielding rapidly deployable task groups composed of integrated CF, police and elements of the private sector. All of this should also be supported by targeted foreign aid funding, and committed to long term solutions.[94] Only a new and comprehensive review of foreign and defence policy review will be able to consider these many disparate elements and ensure that whatever form the CF should take in the future, it will be affordable, sustainable and effective.[95]

The CF of the future will face challenges and threats that are unlike those military forces have encountered in the past.[96] They must be prepared to meet the challenges of an environment bearing little resemblance to past conflict theatres:

> The only certainty now is that future conflict will be continual, increasingly violent and unpredictable. Intra-state rather than inter-state war will be the norm as an increasing number of failed states will continue to flounder in anarchy and violence fuelled by conflict over ethnicity, nationalism and religious fundamentalism, as well as struggles for power and wealth by war-lords and organized crime.[97]

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[93]Douglas Bland, "Defence and Security:The Next Generation," *Policy Options* (March 2001): 41.

[94]Hugh Segal, "A Grand Strategy for a Small Country," *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol.4, no.3, (Autumn 2003): 5.

[95]Department of National Defence, Director Land Strategic Concepts, *Future Force: Concepts for Future Army Capabilities*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 2003), 21.

[96]For a good description of the current threat, see Department of National Defence, *DCDS Final Report: Asymmetric Threat Study*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 2001)

[97]Department of National Defence, Director Land Strategic Concepts, *Future Force…, iii.*

It is clear that in order to meet this threat, the conventional Cold War based structure that the CF now adheres to must be abandoned. Not only is it inefficient with respect to Canadian policy objectives, but it is also little suited to the current threat. Many elements within the CF have already recognized this situation and called for immediate action to ameliorate it.[98] Even official DND documents have contained recognition that change is necessary in order for the CF to remain relevant: "…the CF will need to make tough choices in the near term. These choices must strike a balance between…sustaining current relevant capabilities and transforming the CF to meet the challenges of the future."[99] This magnitude and degree of change is very difficult for many people to accept, especially for those in the defence establishment, who tend to be conservative in nature. However, as General Shinseki put it when he was addressing a similar problem as Chief of Staff of the US Army: "If you don't like change, you're going to like irrelevance even less."[100]

As has been discussed throughout this paper, for very good historical and geopolitical reasons, Canada has had a somewhat unique perspective on issues relating to defence and security. As it has always been sheltered under the protective umbrella of the world's predominant military power, it has never had to bear the full brunt of defence

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[98]R.J. Hillier, *Strategic Capability Investment Plan-Land Effect*, (Ottawa: Chief of Land Staff, 26 June 2003)

[99]Department of National Defence, *Military Assessment 2002*, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, Canada, 2002), 26.

[100]Erik Shinseki, "Chief of Staff Remarks (as prepared)," *AUSA Conference November 2001*, available from http://www.army.mil/leaders/CSA/Speeches/20011108CSAREMARKAUSA.htm; accessed 15 February 2004.

costs itself. As a result, Canadian defence expenditures have always been viewed as being discretionary. Even in this new age of the asymmetric threat, the public has never felt threatened enough to be willing to trade 'butter' for 'guns'. As a result, politicians have quite naturally not taken much of an interest in defence matters; nor have they been willing to allocate more funds than what has been perceived as readily available for the CF. There has simply been no electoral incentive to do otherwise. This situation led to the development of three solitudes in Canada with respect to defence issues. These solitudes comprise members of parliament (especially cabinet members), members of the CF (including the extended defence establishment), and the Canadian public. The three solitudes all developed their own views about defence issues, and none really understood the perspective of the others, or the impact this perspective was likely to have on the formulation of defence policy. This situation eventually led to the adoption of a policy in the latest defence white paper that Canada should maintain multi-purpose, combat capable armed forces. The CF wanted this policy as they felt it was necessary for the defence of the country and they assumed that once adopted, the policy would require the government to fund the CF sufficiently to maintain that capability. The public, for the most part, continued their approach of benign neglect when it came to the military, essentially staying out of the debate, but preferring that funds should be expended on social programmes before national defence. The politicians continued as they always had. Although quite prepared to give the CF what they wanted in the way of policy direction, they never had any intention of ensuring that the CF would have sufficient

funds to implement that policy.

Since the white paper was issued in 1994, the CF have tried to implement its policies, but have been constrained from doing so through a lack of resources. The result is that today, in 2004, the Canadian military is in a crisis. They cannot meet the white paper obligations and are on the verge of collapse trying to maintain an irrelevant force structure. Equipment is rusting out, personnel are being 'burned out' and infrastructure is crumbling. It is probable that no amount of money, no matter how large, could arrest the process at this stage. The fact remains, however, that funds for defence will always be limited, and something must be done to prevent the elimination of any number of CF capabilities in an unplanned, *ad hoc* and potentially embarrassing manner. It is abundantly clear that maintaining the multi-purpose combat capability within the CF is no longer a sustainable or appropriate policy. Instead, a foreign policy review, followed by a defence review should be conducted as soon as possible, in order to ascertain what it is that the CF should be expected to do within the long-term funding availability. Then the CF should be tasked, through the publication of a new defence white paper, to redesign their force structure appropriately to meet the new policy goals. This should include specific purpose forces, with specific capabilities, appropriate to today's threat climate, which can operate effectively with our allies, especially the US.[101]

This is not say that the CF should become a 'constabulary' force, fit only for aid

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[101]Douglas Bland, "Finding National Defence Policy in 2004," *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol. 4, no. 4 (Winter 2003-2004) provides a very good and up-to-date summary of the overall requirement.

of the civil power duties domestically. Rather, in whatever roles are chosen for them, they should be threat oriented, combat capable and hopefully the best in the world at what they do. Allies, specifically the US, should be able to rely on Canada to provide a meaningful contribution to any future coalition. For example, it is quite possible that foreign and defence policy reviews will indicate that the US is most interested in coalition partners that can provide a highly mobile, air transportable, light infantry based formation of approximately division size. This formation should have its own strategic lift, its own logistic support element and be totally compatible with US command and information systems. It should be highly trained, on short readiness timelines and come complete with all the combat functions resident within it. Such a formation could be used in a multitude of tasks, whether hunting for terrorists in Afghanistan, nation building in post-conflict Iraq or as part of a US corps in some future conflict scenario. Such a formation would also have great utility in a variety of domestic operations tasks, as well as in humanitarian and peace support operations abroad.

Clearly the type of scenario described above would probably consume virtually the entire resources available for defence. This would mean that capabilities now resident in the CF would have to be abandoned, such as a 'blue water' navy and the air-to-air fighter capability in the air force. However, the ice cube has been shaved to such an extent now that these capabilities are all threatened, and will disappear from the CF's capability soon if fundamental changes are not made almost immediately. Would it not be better to reach this stage in a planned and rational manner, and still retain some

effective defence related foreign policy tools? It is recognized that the most prudent approach for any country is to maintain armed forces adequate for any contingency that may occur, now or in the future. It is also recognized that such prudence is unaffordable, even for the richest, most militaristic countries in the world. Therefore, compromises must be made in every country with respect to defence and security, based on the threat, foreign policy desires and domestic political situation. For Canada's military, this means specializing now, in order to retain relevant, capable and affordable forces that can serve the national interest.

The bottom line for Canada, is that the multi-purpose, combat capable CF we now ostensibly have are no longer effective, sustainable or appropriate. As a result, the situation confronting the CF is dire, and critics who warn of imminent collapse are not Chicken Littles, but rather concerned observers who foresee the unintended disarmament of the nation. Despite a recent increase in profile, the CF still struggles for recognition within the general public. It would be unfortunate if the next event that focuses attention on the nation's military was the announcement of its inadvertent extinction. This scenario can be prevented, if action is taken immediately to establish a new defence policy. It is time now to make the hard decisions that are necessary in order to alter the course that otherwise has the CF on an inexorable march to irrelevance.

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