



**Leaving The Fireproof House Behind:
Preparing Canada for Mobilization in the Twenty-First Century**

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JCSP 51

Master of Defence Studies

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Major Daniel C. Hoyt

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ABBREVIATIONS

4SMP	Four Stage Mobilization Process
ADF	Australian Defence Force
AFU	Armed Forces of Ukraine
AFV	Armoured Fighting Vehicle
AI	Artificial Intelligence
BCE	Before Common Era
CA	Canadian Army
CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CDS	Chief of Defence Staff
CDTIP	Concept Driven Threat Informed Planning
CFJP	Canadian Forces Joint Publication
CJOC	Canadian Joint Operations Command
CMBG	Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group
COVID	Novel Corona Virus
DIME	Diplomatic, Informational, Military, Economic
DND	Department of National Defence
DSAB	Defence Science Advisory Board
EFP	Enhanced Forward Presence
EU	European Union
GDLS	General Dynamics Land Systems
GoC	Government of Canada
HoC	House of Commons
Hybrid COE	European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats
JMRP	Joint Managed Readiness Program
LAV	Light Armoured Vehicle
LSCO	Large Scale Combat Operations
MAGA	Make America Great Again
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NORAD	North American Aerospace Defence Command
NSIA	National Security and Intelligence Advisor
Op	Operation
PME	Professional Military Education
PRC	People's Republic of China
PSC	Public Safety Canada
RCAF	Royal Canadian Air Force
RCN	Royal Canadian Navy
SLOC	Sea Lines of Communication
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UOR	Urgent Operational Requirement
U.S. Army	United States Army
WHO	World Health Organization

ABSTRACT

The global security environment is worsening at a pace that threatens Canada's longstanding complacency towards national security, the "fireproof house". The Russian invasion of Ukraine, Chinese provocations in the Indo-Pacific, and recent American threats to Canadian sovereignty point to the plausibility of war between Great Powers, which is likely to become an all-consuming Total War. To be ready to respond to such a crisis, Canada must be able to harness all elements of state power: Canada must plan to mobilize. However, the CAF, after decades of limited warfare, has become complacent and forgotten how to mobilize or that it is even their job in the first place; the CAF must cognitively prepare for military mobilization. To give the CAF the tools it needs, Canada must prepare to industrially mobilize and convert civilian economic capacity to defence production. This will place such a burden on Canadian society that social mobilization must be planned for as well, to protect against mis- and disinformation and to sustain popular support. Unlike during both World Wars, time and distance are not on Canada's side. Furthermore, a twenty-first century mobilization will be contested in all domains by enemies capable of directly attacking Canadians in Canada. Mobilization cannot be improvised after crossing the threshold to armed conflict; to do so would be strategically irresponsible. A national policy of resilience and preparedness to mobilize all elements of national power will provide Canada the option space to retain its sovereignty and autonomy in the face of any national emergency, including Total War.

Keywords: Mobilization, Preparedness, Resiliency, Total War, National Policy, Misinformation, Disinformation, Hybrid Warfare, Contingency Planning

PREFACE

I was initially motivated to research this topic by my personal experience over two deployments on Operation UNIFIER in 2020 and 2023. Spending time in Ukraine before the 2022 invasion and subsequently working with officers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) after the invasion was sobering. This gave me a personal taste, though indirect, of *Total War* in the twenty-first century and made me consider the implications for Canada. Is the CAF ready? Can it be ready? More importantly, can Canada be ready? As one with an historical background, I was initially drawn to Canada's experience during both World Wars and how it mobilized the totality of the state. However, this begged further questions on mobilization, namely, what lessons from the First and Second World Wars are still relevant? I also noticed that though CAF leaders, particularly the previous Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), General Eyre, and the current CDS, General Carignan, have become bolder in recent years in warning of the impending danger of large-scale conflict, there was a word missing. That word is mobilization. But why dance around it? Why not use it directly? Why do Canada's allies openly signal that they are preparing for national mobilization but we do not?

In considering these questions, it was immediately apparent that I was not the only one interested; my good friend, Major Donny Saul, was also passionate about mobilization, and so we agreed to both take it on, in isolation so as to compare results *post-facto*, but both under the tutelage of Dr. Craig Mantle. I agreed to take a more macro approach, though I was still seeing the topic perspective to define what a national mobilization would look like. However, in my initial definition of the project, it became clear that just making the case for mobilization planning was the more important research. This was reinforced by discussions with peers on the Joint Command and Staff Programme (JCSP), and importantly through questions that I asked to

CAF senior leaders, much to the chagrin of my fellow students. The JCSP is lucky that through the program there are lectures and engagements from a significant swath of currently serving and retired Canadian and allied General and Flag Officers. I used this opportunity to ask nearly all of them mobilization-related questions, with the goal of determining not whether they think the CAF should plan for mobilization, but rather what their biases on the subject were. In these and other anecdotal engagements, I identified the following biases that I would need to overcome:

1. **Misconception that Mobilization Equals Conscription.** Many will go straight to the extreme end of mobilization, namely wartime conscription and all the historical baggage this comes with in Canada. This then presents a cognitive block and a reason that the profession of arms cannot engage with the subject. Chapters 1 and 4 address this.
2. **Fear of Public Reaction.** Some have indicated that they do not believe the Canadian public is ready to hear about mobilization, even in a planning capacity. This implies that if the CAF was seen to be engaging in mobilization planning that this would be interpreted as fear-mongering. Chapter 4 addresses this.
3. **Fear of Criticizing Government.** Even the most basic attempt at mobilization planning would reveal severe failures of successive governments across parties to resource the CAF. As a result, there could be a hesitancy to engage with mobilization as a topic as this could be misinterpreted as military criticism of government. Chapter 2 addresses this.
4. **Not the CAF's Job.** A common theme is that because mobilization touches on government and whole-of-society aspects, that it is not the CAF's job to plan for it. While there is some truth here, it does not absolve the CAF of our responsibility to plan as

stewards of the profession of arms and the government's subject matter experts on the waging of war. Chapter 2 addresses this.

5. **“We’ll Figure it Out Like Last Time.”** By far the most commonly held bias is that mobilization cannot be seriously considered until after crossing the threshold to war. This is the “we’ll figure it out like last time” attitude and is founded on a fundamental misunderstanding of Canadian history: the idea that Canada “just figured it out” in 1914 and 1939. Though there were elements of improvisation in both cases, it is not nearly the whole truth, as planning for mobilization was incredibly important, especially in 1939. Chapters 2 and 3 address this.
6. **Defeatism and Apathy.** Amongst many CAF leaders, primarily at the lower levels, there is a sense of defeatism when discussing a topic as enormous as mobilization. The idea that the CAF could live up to the achievements of its predecessors in the Canadian Corps or First Canadian Army is daunting, given the generational neglect and sorry state of the CAF's capabilities today by comparison. Furthermore, this has bred some level of resentment in some CAF leaders that cannot be understated. Though not directly addressed, I aspire to assuage this pessimism by dispassionately deconstructing the enormity of mobilization into some of its key themes, to show that though this is a wicked problem, it is a solvable one.

I hope that my writing addresses each of these biases in turn and convinces the skeptic not only that Canada should plan for mobilization, but that it in fact can. Therefore, my goal is relatively simple: I aim to open a door to a discussion on mobilization planning within the CAF and the wider Government of Canada.

In the time it took to complete this project, the global security environment and Canada's position therein changed at an astounding pace. When I started, the American election was in its final stages, but the results were far from clear and few predicted the resulting re-election of Donald Trump. By the time I finished, the new Trump Administration had been in power for just over one hundred days, and the world had drastically changed. The special relationship with the United States that Canada has relied on for generations is fraught at best and ruined at worst. Indeed, we are fully engaged in a nearly incomprehensible trade war, prompted by Trump, who has openly threatened the annexation of our country. Rather than force a change in tack, this global chaos has provided added impetus and relevance to what had been a relatively fringe research project before. On writing this, a new Liberal minority government under Prime Minister Mark Carney has a fresh mandate and has promised much in terms of national defence; together we will see how much of this materializes. Given Canada's worsening position, if there was ever a time for a drastic shift in national policy, it would be now. I truly hope and believe that Canada can leave the "fireproof house." We have done it before, we *must* do it again.

Ubique,

Major D.C. Hoyt, CD, MA

Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery

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слава Україні

слава героям

CHAPTER 1 – THE NEED FOR MOBILIZATION

The heavy sacrifices to which we agreed for the re-establishment of peace in Europe led us to reflect on what the future might hold in store.

May I be permitted to add that in this Association of Mutual Insurance against fire, the risks assumed by the different States are not equal! We live in a fire-proof house, far from inflammable materials. A vast ocean separates us from Europe.

- Senator Raoul Dandurand, addressing the League of Nations, 1924¹

Introduction

The current global security environment is one in which the international rules-based order is being progressively degraded. The post-Cold War peace dividend proved to be fleeting and the period of limited wars in the Global War on Terror has ended. The primacy of the United States and the “unipolar moment”, lauded as the harbinger of international peace and security through the absence of a global competitor,² is slipping away. Great Power competition, both direct and indirect, is a reality. Indeed, the prospect of open warfare between them is at least as likely now as at any time during the Cold War. With the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) near the precipice of war with Russia over the invasion of Ukraine and repeated provocations, as well as the People’s Republic of China’s (PRC) posturing to seize Taiwan, war between Great Powers is not only possible but plausible.³ Threats to Canadian sovereignty from the newly re-elected Trump Administration compound the gravity of the situation. Canada is currently woefully unprepared for this changing global order, with threats of such scope as to warrant national mobilization on a scale not seen since the Second World War. Current Canadian policy has not acknowledged this prospect; there have been no substantial professional or public

¹ United Nations Library and Archives Geneva, “League of Nations Official Journal: Records of the Fifth Assembly, Plenary of Meetings,” 1924, Volume ID 0673079, 222.

² Hal Brands, *Making the Unipolar Moment: U. S. Foreign Policy and the Rise of the Post-Cold War Order* (Cornell University Press, 2016).

³ John Feffer, “A Slippery Slope to World War III?” (Foreign Policy in Focus, June 5, 2024).

dialogues on the subject, nor have significant public planning activities occurred. As such, mobilization planning is an urgent, strategic, national imperative for the Government of Canada due to the vulnerable state of Canada's military, economic potential, and social cohesion; a strategy of national resilience and preparedness is required to ensure that Canada is ready to mobilize all elements of national power in a future *Total War* between Great Powers.

The age-old Canadian approach to national security, epitomized by Senator Raoul Dandurand's "fireproof house" analogy,⁴ has received severe criticism for decades as being either naïve or complacent.⁵ "Our 'fire-proof' house has vanished. So too must our complacency," opined Vincent Rigby, former National Security and Intelligence Advisor (NSIA) to the prime minister.⁶ The threat to Canada in the current security environment warrants overcoming this complacency; Canada is no longer a "fireproof house" nor is it far from inflammable materials. As a nation, Canada needs to be resilient and able to withstand the stressors of a national emergency; it needs to be prepared, ready to react to the worsening security environment. To do this, Canada must plan to harness all elements of national power, across the Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic (DIME) spectrum, to meet our national security goals, maintain influence, and deter aggressors. Waiting for war to come and then improvising a mobilization process without a plan is neither a viable nor responsible option. Canada's experience doing exactly that during the First World War demonstrates this.⁷ Failing to

⁴ Vincent Rigby, "A Fire-Proof House No More: Rethinking Canada's National Security in the 21st Century," Max Bell School of Public Policy, September 21, 2022.

⁵ Robert Bothwell, "The Canadian Isolationist Tradition," *International Journal* 54, no. 1 (1998), 76–87.

⁶ Rigby, "A Fire-Proof House No More."

⁷ Sir Sam Hughes has been widely criticized for throwing out Canada's military mobilization plan and improvising an ad-hoc one of his own design in the initial stages of the First World War. This will be discussed further in Chapter 2. Tim Cook, *Warlords: Borden, MacKenzie King, and Canada's World Wars* (Allen Lane, 2012), 36-37.

effectively mobilize risks not only Canadian prestige, influence, and prosperity, but would represent an existential threat to sovereignty and autonomy.

The Global Security Environment.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 dramatically escalated the prospect of a direct confrontation with Russia, after the failure of NATO deterrence and the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014.⁸ Russian rhetoric has painted its war effort as an existential fight against NATO; indeed, Russian propaganda outlets continually spout that they are waging a war against the alliance.⁹ NATO's expansion into Eastern Europe, the Baltic States, and most recently Finland and Sweden, represent an existential encroachment of Western power into what is seen as a traditionally Russian sphere of influence by the Putin regime.¹⁰ Russian provocations, most dangerously the recent incidents of undersea cables being cut in the Baltic Sea, come precipitously close to provoking an armed response.¹¹ The prospect of an accident or misunderstanding, prompting an escalation resulting in a direct confrontation, is worrisome. Dangerous maneuvers by Russian aircraft,¹² missile and drone impacts in NATO territory,¹³ or

⁸ William Maley, "Ukraine, Afghanistan and the Failure of Deterrence," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 77, no. 4 (July 4, 2023), 407–14.

⁹ Department of National Defence (DND), Government of Canada (GoC), *Pan-Domain Force Employment Concept: Prevailing in a Dangerous World*, 2023, 7; Mattia Massoletti, "'Special Military Operation', 'Nazis' and 'at War with NATO': Russian State Media Framing of the Ukraine War," Italian Institute for International Political Studies, March 15, 2024.

¹⁰ Kimberly Marten, "NATO Enlargement: Evaluating Its Consequences in Russia," *International Politics* 57, no. 3 (June 2020), 401–26.

¹¹ "Estonian MP: Damage to Baltic Sea Cables Was 'Terror Attack,'" BBC Worldwide Limited, December 28, 2024.

¹² "Russian Aircraft Spotted near Latvian Airspace Three Times Last Week," BBC Worldwide Limited, November 4, 2024; "Nato Jets in Baltics Scrambled Thrice Over Russian Aircraft," BBC Worldwide Limited, July 15, 2024.

¹³ "Ukraine Says Russian Drones Fell, Exploded in Romania," BBC Worldwide Limited, September 4, 2023; "Latvian Media: Russian Drone Incident, Military Drills," BBC Worldwide Limited, September 30, 2024; "Ukraine Air Force Says Russian Drone Crossed into Poland," BBC Worldwide Limited, March 15, 2022.

potential targeting of NATO personnel on the territory of Ukraine,¹⁴ all raise the prospect of an accident or mishap resulting in an armed response. Barring such an escalation of the ongoing conflict, NATO is now positioning itself in preparation for the inevitability of war with Russia in the future, with Secretary General Mark Rutte recently declaring that “we are not ready for what is coming our way in four to five years” and that “it is time to shift to a wartime mindset.”¹⁵ This mirrors rhetoric from Canada’s Chief of Defence Staff, General M.A.J. Carignan, who stated that “we have about five years to get us close enough to be ready” during her inaugural speech in 2024.¹⁶ Uncertainty as to American support for Europe has only heightened this anxiety. Though war between NATO and Russia is the most immediate threat, it is not the only one.

Competition between the United States and China in the Indo-Pacific is the other, though less immediate, danger. The PRC over the last decades has been pushing an increasingly provocative security policy in the South China Sea, building up artificial islands to bolster their claims to sovereignty over the area and the natural resources therein. This is in direct opposition to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)¹⁷ and regional powers such as the Philippines, a key United States partner in the region and the beneficiary of bilateral defence agreements. The long-simmering dispute over Taiwan threatens to result in eventual armed conflict as the PRC seeks to be ready to take the island in a supposed window of

¹⁴ “NATO Troops in Ukraine? French Proposal Brings a Warning from Russia,” USA Today, February 27, 2024; Jonathan Wolfe, “Wednesday Briefing: Russia Warned against NATO Troops in Ukraine,” The New York Times, February 27, 2024; Peniston Bradley, “NATO Trainers to Ukraine?; Blackouts Return to Kyiv; Gaza Push Continues; F-35s Pile up on Tarmac; And a Bit More...,” Defense One, May 17, 2024.

¹⁵ “‘To Prevent War, NATO Must Spend More’ - Speech by NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte at the Concert Noble, Brussels,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, December 12, 2024.

¹⁶ Ashley Burke and Darren Major, “New Chief of the Defence Staff Says Canada Has 5 Years to Prepare for Emerging Threats,” *CBC News*, July 18, 2024, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/new-chief-of-defence-staff-change-in-command-ceremony-1.7266382>.

¹⁷ United Nations, “United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea” (1994).

opportunity between 2027 and 2030.¹⁸ For now, American policy in the region is based on maintaining the current international rules-based order and its own hegemony, in direct opposition to that of the PRC.¹⁹ Some have likened this competition in the Indo-Pacific to a Thucydides Trap, drawing inference from the Peloponnesian War between the upstart Sparta and preeminent Athens in the Fifth Century BCE, as chronicled by the ancient Greek historian.²⁰ With China as the upstart power seeking to supplant the United States, this frames conflict as an inevitability.²¹ However, war is never inevitable; it only becomes more likely with a rising power seeking to have their “place in the sun”, much as Germany did before the First World War, another scenario on which to transpose the Thucydides Trap.²² This risk is magnified by the entangling alliance structures the United States has built with partners in South-East Asia, primarily the Philippines, South Korea, and Japan. In comparison to the conditions that led to the First World War and those now existing in the Indo-Pacific, historian Stephen Miller concludes that “the most likely route to war with China is via a dispute involving one or more of the United States’ Asian allies.”²³ War between the United States and China, though far from inevitable, is a dangerous possibility too.

Compounding this is the risk of concurrency. It does not take a stretch of the imagination to postulate that if either war were to occur, the other may happen soon after or at the same time. For example, should NATO go to war with Russia, it is foreseeable that the PRC would seek to

¹⁸ Major Kyle Amonson and Captain Dane Egli, “The Ambitious Dragon: Beijing’s Calculus for Invading Taiwan by 2030,” *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs*, April 2023, 39.

¹⁹ The White House, “National Security Strategy: October 2022”, October 12, 2022, 23-25.

²⁰ Graham Allison, “The Thucydides Trap,” in *The Next Great War?: The Roots of World War I and the Risk of U.S.-China Conflict*, ed. Richard N. Rosencrance and Steven E. Miller (The MIT Press, 2015), 74.

²¹ Allison, “The Thucydides Trap, 73-80.

²² David K. Richards, “Thucydides Dethroned: Historical Differences That Weaken the Peloponnesian Analogy,” in *The Next Great War?: The Roots of World War I and the Risk of U.S.-China Conflict*, ed. Richard N. Rosencrance and Steven E. Miller (The MIT Press, 2015), 81-83.

²³ Richard N. Rosencrance and Steven E. Miller, eds., *The Next Great War?: The Roots of World War I and the Risk of U.S.-China Conflict* (The MIT Press, 2015), xxi.

take advantage of this distraction to expand their position in the South China Sea, or, in the extreme, to seize Taiwan. The opposite, with Russia seeking to take advantage of American distraction over a dispute with the PRC, is equally plausible. Added to this are numerous smaller threats, such as the simmering conflicts between Israel and Iran, India and Pakistan, or the prospect of a reignition of war on the Korean peninsula, especially now that nuclear-armed North Korea has openly aided Russia in Ukraine.²⁴ Anxiety over the prospect of simultaneous wars in two theatres is building in American military circles.²⁵

The risk of any of these conflicts expanding beyond limitation grows should Great Powers go to war, as the moderating influence of those powers and their ability to maintain the international rules-based order fades. Predicting possible futures is futile; however, the risk of direct conflict between Great Powers is plausible, as is the risk that such a conflict expands with other powers, great and small, seeking to exploit the situation. Anxieties over either *de facto* or *de jure* United States withdrawal from NATO only heightens this plausibility.²⁶ Both Russia and the PRC are actively engaged in hostile actions against the West in the form of hybrid warfare below the threshold of war.²⁷ War in the twenty-first century is not binary, rather it is a spectrum on which powers engage and can be propelled past the threshold of open conflict. Thus, the prospect of a Third World War is not remote – it is one worth considering, and, more importantly, planning for.

²⁴ Karolina Hird, Daniel Shats, and Alison O’Neil, “North Korea Joins Russia’s War Against Ukraine: Operational and Strategic Implications in Ukraine and Northeast Asia”, *Institute for the Study of War*, November 1, 2024; Can Kasapoglu, “NATO Is Not Ready for War: Assessing the Military Balance between the Alliance and Russia,” Policy Memo (The Hudson Institute, June 2024), 6; Oskar Pietrewicz, “North Korea Increasing Its Support for Russia in the War in Ukraine,” *Bulletin* (The Polish Institute of International Affairs, November 18, 2024).

²⁵ Andrea Ratiu, “The United States and Its Allies Must Be Ready to Deter a Two-Front War and Nuclear Attacks in East Asia,” *Atlantic Council* (blog), August 16, 2023; Benedetta Berti et al., “US Alliance Management in the Shadow of Sino-American Competition,” *Defence Studies* 24, no. 1 (January 2, 2024), 122–32.

²⁶ Jim Sciutto, “Trump Will Pull US out of NATO If He Wins Election, Ex-Advisor Warns,” *CNN*, February 12, 2024, <https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/12/politics/us-out-nato-second-trump-term-former-senior-adviser/index.html>.

²⁷ Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), GoC, “CSIS Public Report 2023”, March 2024, 28-32.

Canada And Total War.

But what would such a war look like? Would it be limited in scope, or would it trend towards becoming a *Total War*? An indicator is in potential consequence of defeat, a main driver of the cycle of *Total War*. In any conflict with Russia, European NATO members, especially those that were formerly under Soviet domination such as Poland or the Baltic States, would likely see renewed Russian subjugation as the consequence of losing such a war.²⁸ As Russia has already placed itself in such a position that they believe their survival as a nation is at stake in their war with Ukraine, this would likely translate similarly in a war with NATO. On both sides, fighting for national survival is a recipe for *Total War*. For a war between the United States and China, the question of *totality* is more open. Indeed, the popular military fiction novel *Ghost Fleet* portrays a potential conflict between the United States and China as largely below the threshold of *Total War*.²⁹ However, the consequence of potentially losing global hegemony to the PRC could be enough to propel the United States on a trajectory to frame a war as one of national survival, especially given the drastic political shift to the right with the Make America Great Again (MAGA) movement. Should significant loss of American life occur, it is equally plausible that national outrage would propel the United States to seek any and all means to victory, as occurred following Pearl Harbor in 1941 and 9/11 in 2001. In totalitarian states such as Russia and China, maintaining the appearance of power and legitimacy in the eyes of the people is critical for the survival of the regime.³⁰ Should these states become embroiled in a war

²⁸ Himani Pant, "Ukraine and Beyond: Understanding the Foreign Policy of the Baltic States," in *The Baltics in a Changing Europe*, ed. Bhaswati Sarkar (Springer Nature Singapore, 2024), 63-65.

²⁹ P.W. Singer and August Cole, *Ghost Fleet: A Novel of the Next World War* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 2015).

³⁰ Oliver Schlumberger et al., "How Authoritarianism Transforms: A Framework for the Study of Digital Dictatorship," *Government and Opposition* 59, no. 3 (July 2024), 761–83; Ludger Helms, "Twenty-First Century Autocrats and Their Followers: A Comparative Inquiry," *Politics and Governance* 13 (November 26, 2024): Article 9065.

against another Great Power, it is probable that the survival of the regime would be at stake, therefore propelling leadership to frame it as a war of national survival. Though it is possible that a war between Great Powers could remain limited, it is at least equally likely that it would become *Total* due to existential war aims.

What does this mean for Canada? It is probable that should one of the above scenarios play out in the future, Canada would inevitably become involved. The prioritization of the Indo-Pacific as a key focus area of Canadian foreign policy links our security interests in the region to those of our regional partners and the United States, in direct opposition to the PRC.³¹ The frequent sailings of Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) ships through the South China Sea and Taiwan Straits in defiance of the PRC and to uphold UNCLOS put Canadian sailors in danger of being drawn into a possible war. Frequent violations of North American airspace by Russian and Chinese aircraft consistently puts Canadian aircrew in similar danger. The commitment of conventional forces as deterrence against Russian aggression in the Baltic now places thousands of Canadian troops in direct threat should war with Russia occur. If a NATO ally triggers Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty,³² as last done following the September 2001 terror attacks, Canada would have little choice but to join the larger coalition war effort, not only due to our existing treaty obligations, but due to the Canadian troops that would be in harm's way immediately. This is not accidental but is one of the designing purposes behind NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence (EFP) system of placing troops from across the alliance on its eastern flank, providing a "tripwire" to ensure a collective response.³³ With Canadian economic

³¹ DND, GoC, *Our North, Strong and Free: A Renewed Vision for Canada's Defence*, 2024; GoC, *Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy*, 2022.

³² "Collective Defence and Article 5," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, n.d.

³³ Donatas Palavenis, "NATO Enhanced Forward Presence in the Baltics: The Nexus between the Host and the Framework Nation," *Security and Defence Quarterly* 49, no. 1 (November 14, 2024), 1.

interests at stake in Europe and the Indo-Pacific, and a long history of coalition contribution, commitment of substantial military power is reasonably assured.

In a war in which Canada's opponents and allies are drawn into the cycling vortex of *totality* it would become unavoidable to not be drawn to the same level of commitment. The ability to maintain Canada's existing security commitments during a large-scale conflict, as part of the CAF's eight core missions as outlined in the latest defence policy document, *Our North Strong and Free*, is questionable.³⁴ Furthermore, Canada's ability to maintain sovereignty and national autonomy in the face of a *Total War* between Great Powers is uncertain. Mobilization of the whole of Canadian society in support of the war effort would be required, on the scale of what was seen during the Second World War where approximately ten percent of the Canadian population took up arms, the economy was mobilized and managed to support war production, and society itself was reoriented to win the war. This is not a feat that should be improvised after Canada crosses the threshold to war; time would be an enemy. The speed, complexity, lethality, and reach of modern large-scale conflict mean that by the time Canada can respond, it could be too late, to the detriment of Canada's allies, prestige, influence, and sovereignty. Even if a conventional conflict remains limited, in scope, scale, or geography, rather than become a *Total War*, Canada would still require a national mobilization effort to sustain the CAF abroad. The CAF's ongoing struggle with reconstitution to effective peacetime strength reinforces this.³⁵

But what exactly is *Total War*?³⁶ A theoretical understanding of the concept reveals that should a war between Great Powers occur, it is possible, indeed likely, that this conflict would

³⁴ DND, GoC, *Our North, Strong and Free; A Renewed Vision for Canada's Defence*, 1.

³⁵ House of Commons (HoC), GoC, "Modernizing Recruitment and Retention in the Canadian Armed Forces," Report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, June 2022, 5.

³⁶ For a historiography of the concept of *Total War*, see Hew Strachan, "Total War in the Twentieth Century," in *Total War and Historical Change: Europe, 1914-1955*, ed. Arthur Marwick, Clive Emsley, and Wendy Simpson (Open University Press, 2001), 255–88.

become *Total*. As the probable end-state of Great Power conflict, it is important to clearly define the concept of *Total War* and its implications for national preparedness. The concept draws its origin in Carl von Clausewitz's idea of *Absolute War*. In his seminal work, *On War*, Clausewitz postulated that "absolute war would demand not only a unified purpose, but also total effort."³⁷ Clausewitz deduced that the scope of warfare was ever expanding towards a theoretical absolute "in all its devastating power"³⁸ drawing opponents into a vortex where more and more extreme forms of violence become acceptable.³⁹ Following the devastation of the First World War, theory emerged to explain how and why the war developed. While the term itself originated with German Field Marshal Eric Ludendorff as a way to advocate for military dictatorship,⁴⁰ *Total War* began to be used to describe the scope of warfare between states as limitless.⁴¹ The concept took on new meaning following the Second World War as a way to understand how states wage war with all elements of national power to the finish, with *totalized* war goals.

Defining one single theory of *Total War* is not straightforward, as definitions vary and expand over time: "its connotations are foreign to compromise, qualification, or nuance."⁴² Due to the imposing shadow that the prospect of *Total War* hangs over modern conflict, it is important to define and understand it.⁴³ The most important factor and the main reason for divergence of views is that it is not a singularly military phenomenon. *Total War* is the interaction between war

³⁷ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Eliot Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton University Press, 1984), 702.

³⁸ Clausewitz, *On War*, 584.

³⁹ Clausewitz, *On War*, 76.

⁴⁰ Wilfred von Bredow, "Landmarks in Defense Literature: Der Totale Krieg by Erich Ludendorff," *Defense Analysis* 7, no. 4 (December 1, 1991), 429–31.

⁴¹ Giulio Douhet, *The Command of the Air*, ed. Joseph Patrick Harahan and Richard H. Kohn (University of Alabama Press, 1998), 9-10.

⁴² Manfred F. Boemeke, Roger Chickering, and Stig Förster, eds., *Anticipating Total War: The German and American Experiences* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 17.

⁴³ Historian Roger Chickering lamented that studying *Total War* is necessary "if only because the historiography devoted to it has become so formidable." Boemeke et al., *Anticipating Total War*, 23.

and society, the tension between the two, and therefore does not fit nicely within any one academic discipline.⁴⁴ It is for this same reason that planning for national mobilization is often a difficult concept to place, as it spans many disciplines; mobilization for *Total War* amplifies this tension. Though definitions tend to become less precise the closer you try to define them,⁴⁵ *Total War* can be characterized as a mutually reinforcing cycle of several factors. The first is *intensification of violence*, wherein if a conflict is not decisive and combat develops into any kind of stalemate or parity, each side will tend to seek ever more violent means of achieving an advantage, with nuclear weapons bringing “the technique of destruction to a ghastly perfection.”⁴⁶ This then drives *conversion of economy*, wherein more and more of each belligerent’s civilian economic capacity becomes devoted to feeding and supplying their nation’s war efforts. In turn, this drives *participation of society*, as war “more and more completely incorporates the whole of social life”⁴⁷ and distinctions between combatants and non-combatants break down.⁴⁸ These three factors form a vicious cycle; as war between belligerents continues, each factor drives the next, widening the *totality* of the conflict. As such, this cycle is self-reinforcing.

As war becomes *totalized* by this cycle, so too do the war goals of the belligerents, becoming ever more hardened and closed to compromise. Each party becomes driven less by what started the war or what they can gain from victory; rather it is the potential consequence of

⁴⁴ Martin Shaw, *Dialectics of War: An Essay in the Social Theory of Total War and Peace* (Pluto Publishing Ltd., 1988), 38.

⁴⁵ David A. Bell, *The First Total War: Napoleon’s Europe and the Birth of Warfare as We Know It* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007), 7.

⁴⁶ Raymond Aron, *The Century of Total War* (Doubleday & Company Inc., 1954), 32.

⁴⁷ Shaw, *Dialectics of War*, 38; Marwick, *Total War and Social Change*, xvi.

⁴⁸ Mark E. Neely Jr, “Was the Civil War a Total War?,” in *On the Road to Total War: The American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification, 1861-1871*, ed. Stig Förster and Jörg Nagler (Cambridge University Press, 1997): 51; Bell, *The First Total War*, 7.

defeat that motivates them to continue the war and not give in.⁴⁹ *Totalized* war goals are therefore inherently existential, with little scope for compromise. Thus, *Total Wars* rarely end partially – they end *totally* with one side utterly defeated and is the key differentiating factor between a limited war and *Total War*. Both World Wars exemplify this: the war goals of all parties became progressively more hardened as each war continued, less open to compromise or settlement, and ultimately ending with unconditional surrender as the only demand. Clausewitz’s maxim that “War is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will” was fulfilled.⁵⁰ Figure 1.1 below shows the relationship between the cycling *vortex of totality* and the key themes of this analysis.

⁴⁹ Thomas Power and Ruthven Tremain, *Total War: What It Is, How It Got That Way* (William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1988), 10.

⁵⁰ Clausewitz, *On War*, 75.

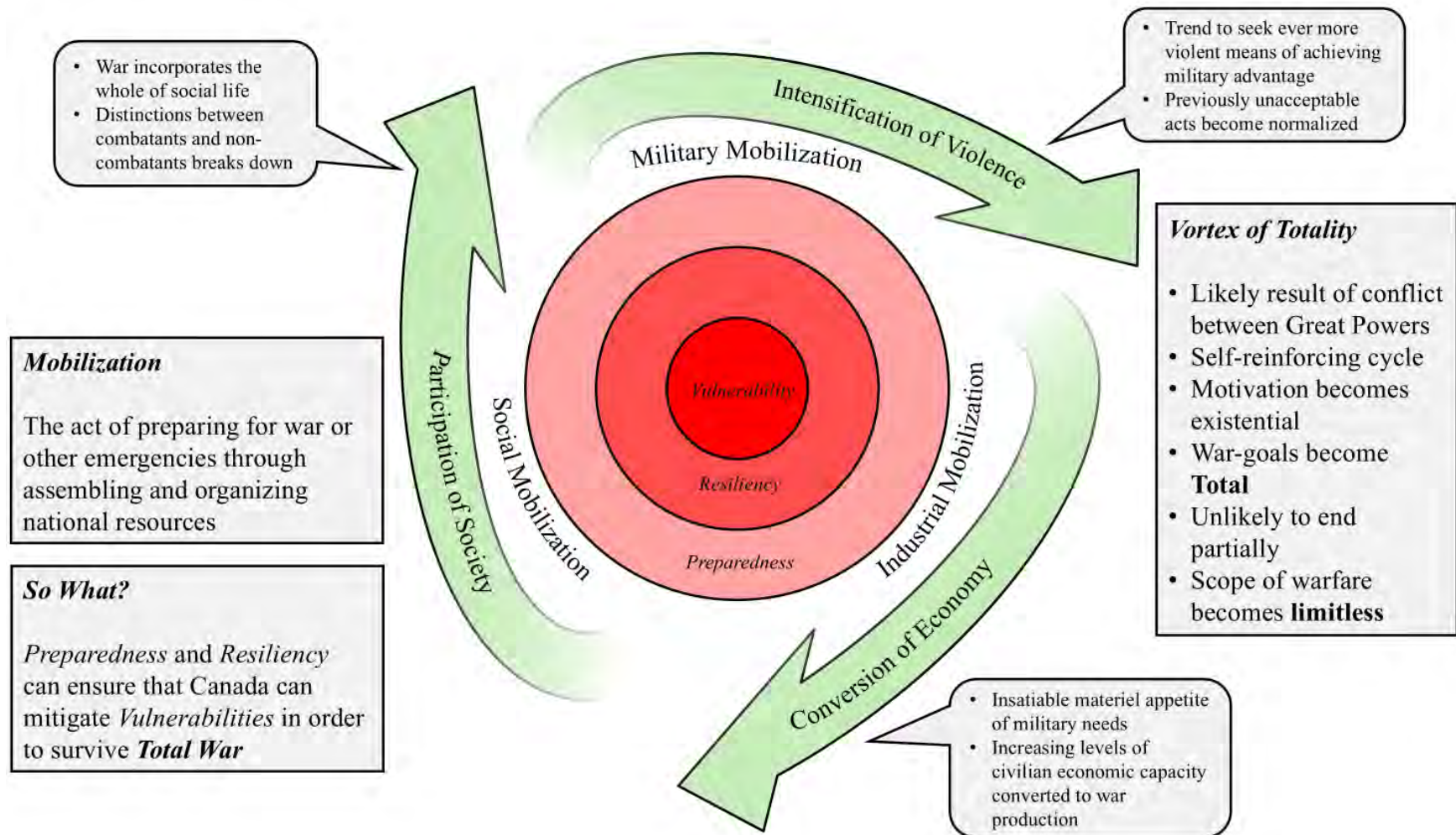


Figure 1.1 – Mobilization Planning and the Vortex of Totality

Source: Author Created

The Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s seemingly provides a more current counter-example. This was a long, protracted conflict between roughly matched belligerents that degenerated into a stalemate. To break the deadlock, both sides pushed the cycle of *totality*, intensifying violence to the use of human wave attacks, ballistic missiles, and chemical weapons, something not seen in widespread use since the First World War.⁵¹ Why then did the Iran-Iraq War end in 1988 with a negotiated settlement vice *totally* with unconditional surrender of one side? Neither side was a Great Power. Rather external powers, through the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), drove the negotiation of a ceasefire and settlement, thus representing an open system.⁵² A modern conflict between Great Powers would not have access to this moderating influence, being a closed system where UNSC members would be at war with one another, rendering the Council moot. Unless an external power was in the position to force a settlement, which is unlikely, especially if all Great Powers become drawn in, then conflict would spiral towards *Total War*.

The period of industrialized *Total War* began in the 1860s with the American Civil War and subsequent wars of German Unification.⁵³ The First World War showed the world what *Total War* between industrialized Great Powers looked like. *Totality* cycled to the point that nearly all belligerent states had mobilized all elements of their societies and economies for the war effort, supporting an intensification of violence that brought new forms of warfare from chemical weapons to strategic bombing.⁵⁴ Despite gas being initially seen as abhorrent, historian Tim Cook summarized that “the abdication of the soldier’s code of war to scientific mass murder”

⁵¹ Hossein Askari, *Conflicts and Wars* (Palgrave Macmillan US, 2012), 92-98.

⁵² Alex Weisiger, *Logics of War: Explanations for Limited and Unlimited Conflicts* (Cornell University Press, 2013), 153.

⁵³ Carl N. Degler, “The American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification: The Problem of Comparison” in *On the Road to Total War: The American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification, 1861-1871*, (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 67-71.

⁵⁴ Rolf-Dieter Muller, “Total War as a Result of New Weapons?: The Use of Chemical Agents in World War I,” in *Great War, Total War: Combat and Mobilization on the Western Front, 1914–1918*, ed. Roger Chickering and Stig Förster, Publications of the German Historical Institute (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 111.

and “the introduction of poison gas pushed the conflict further into the realm of total warfare.”⁵⁵

The cultural memory of the horror of the First World War was initially a restraint at the beginning of the Second World War; for example, though chemical weapons were stockpiled across both sides, neither used them, likely due to fear of reprisal and memory of their use in the earlier conflict.⁵⁶ As the Second World War dragged on, the cycle of *totality* spun, forcing states to dedicate more and more of their economies and societies to the war effort. Intensifying violence brought in more tools of destruction that had either not been envisioned before or had been deemed unacceptable. In 1917, the United States declared war on Germany largely due to its campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare, which was deemed an unacceptable form of violence. However, when the United States entered the Second World War following the attack on Pearl Harbor, it immediately and without debate initiated its own similar campaign against Japan.⁵⁷ What had previously been seen as a barbaric and inhuman method of warfare was legitimized. Though there are attempts to limit the intensification of violence in conflict, through laws, norms, and taboos, these tend to be pushed aside or disregarded as conflict drags on.

The ongoing war in Ukraine is a current and relevant example of *totality* in modern conflict. For the first time since 1945, a conventional war is being waged in Europe, one in which both sides have escalated to the point of widening *totality*. Violence on the part of Russia has intensified with the use of chemical weapons,⁵⁸ deliberate and indiscriminate targeting of

⁵⁵ Tim Cook, *No Place to Run: The Canadian Corps and Gas Warfare in the First World War* (University of British Columbia Press, 1999), 213.

⁵⁶ In fact, it is likely that Adolf Hitler’s personal experience suffering from the effects of chemical weapons was a contributing factor to his refusal to authorize their use. K. Coleman, *A History of Chemical Warfare* (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2005), 65-66.

⁵⁷ Raymond Aron, *The Century of Total War* (Doubleday & Company Inc., 1954), 23.

⁵⁸ United States Department of State, “Imposing New Measures on Russia for Its Full-Scale War and Use of Chemical Weapons Against Ukraine.” press release, May 1, 2024.

Ukrainian civilians and infrastructure,⁵⁹ population replacement,⁶⁰ and civilian deportation.⁶¹

Ukraine for its part has widened the bounds of acceptable tools of violence, with the use of AI-enabled drones with problematic legal status⁶² and widespread use of incendiaries, such as white phosphorous.⁶³ The economies of both states have become increasingly mobilized, as have their societies become increasingly participatory in maintaining it.⁶⁴ The cycle of *totality* has spun and forced the war aims of both sides to become increasingly *total*. While Ukrainian war aims have been based on national survival of the state, which is inherently *total* in nature, the appetite for compromise has only diminished.⁶⁵ Russia too has framed their war aims as *total*, basing them on an ethno-centric interpretation of Russian national identity that sees the survival of the Russian people at stake against the threat of Western ideals.⁶⁶ The war goals of both parties are existential and therefore *totalized*. Despite hitherto unsuccessful influence by an external power, the United States, to force a settlement to the conflict, it is possible that *totality* in Ukraine will continue to cycle until one side or the other is defeated unconditionally. The Trump

⁵⁹ United States Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, “On Russia’s Intensified Missile Attacks Against Civilian Infrastructure of Ukraine Amidst Russia’s Ongoing Aggression.” press release, March 22, 2024; James Waterhouse and Barbara Tasch, “At Least 34 People Killed in Russian Ballistic Missile Attack on Sumy,” *BBC News*, April 13, 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c4g4262x4x1o>.

⁶⁰ Isabel van Brugen “Russia Seeks to ‘change Demographics’ of Occupied Ukraine.”, *Newsweek*, February 6, 2024.

⁶¹ United Nations, “Deportation, Treatment of Ukraine’s Children by Russian Federation Take Centre Stage by Many Delegates at Security Council Briefing” press release, August 24, 2023.

⁶² Saba Sotoudehfar and Jeremy Julian Sarkin, “Drones on the Frontline: Charting the Use of Drones in the Russo-Ukrainian Conflict and How Their Use May Be Violating International Humanitarian Law,” *International and Comparative Law Review* 23, no. 2 (2023), 129.

⁶³ Stew Magnuson, “Army Wrestling with Rapidly Changing World of Drones,” *National Defense* 109, no. 851 (October 2024), 34–35.

⁶⁴ Kateryna Denisova, “Mobilization in Ukraine Ramps up as New Law Comes into Effect, Zelensky Says,” *The Kyiv Independent*, May 31, 2024; Constant Meheut and Thomas Gibbons-Neff, “After Two Years of Bloody Fighting, Ukraine Wrestles With Conscription,” *The New York Times*, January 29, 2024; Paul Schwartz and Dmitry Gorenburg, “Russian Military Mobilization During the Ukraine War: Evolution, Methods, and Net Impact” (Center for Naval Analyses, October 2024).

⁶⁵ Veronica Anghel, “How Wars Don’t End: A Response to Gerard Toal’s Analysis of Ceasefire Negotiations in Ukraine,” *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space* 42, no. 7 (November 2024), 1139–43.

⁶⁶ Samuel Charap and Khrystyna Holynska, “Russia’s War Aims in Ukraine: Objective Setting and the Kremlin’s Use of Force Abroad.” *The RAND Corporation*, August 13, 2024.

administration has set ending the war as a key policy objective but has so far been unsuccessful, despite proposing terms that are conspicuously pro-Russian, notably the recent proposal to permit Russia to retain Crimea.⁶⁷ The war could still end in a negotiated settlement, similar to the way in which the Iran-Iraq War ended. The differentiating factor in this case is that one of the belligerents, Russia, is a nuclear-armed Great Power that has decidedly set itself in opposition to the West. The likelihood that a negotiated settlement would truly end the war, as it did between Iran and Iraq in 1988, is questionable. There is a distinct possibility this would only lead to an armistice while Russia reconstitutes; this is a risk for which serious consideration and preparation is warranted.⁶⁸ Time will tell.

Defining Mobilization.

Given the urgent need for preparation, what exactly is mobilization? Misconceptions as to what mobilization is and is not are widespread. A common theme amongst Canadian military professionals and academics is that mobilization is necessarily analogous to conscription.⁶⁹ This issue will be further explored in Chapter 4, but it is worth clarifying here. Though mobilization can include forms of mandatory military service, it does not necessarily or inevitably lead to conscription; nor is conscription the only viable form of compulsory service. Other forms include national selective service, as used by the United States,⁷⁰ and peacetime mandatory service periods with civilian service options, which many European states are reintroducing.⁷¹ Indeed,

⁶⁷ Illia Novikov, “‘Crimea Will Stay with Russia,’ Trump Says as He Seeks to End War in Ukraine,” *PBS News*, April 25, 2025, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/crimea-will-stay-with-russia-trump-says-as-he-seeks-end-to-war-in-ukraine>.

⁶⁸ Gerard Toal, “The Territorial Taboo: Explaining the Public Aversion to Negotiations in the Ukraine War Support Coalition,” *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, August 30, 2024.

⁶⁹ Based on the author’s anecdotal discussions with various senior CAF leaders and academics.

⁷⁰ Harry A. Marmion, *Selective Service: Conflict and Compromise* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 1968), 5-17.

⁷¹ Miranda Murray and Madeline Chambers, “Germany’s Cabinet Approves Draft Law on Voluntary Military Service,” Reuters, November 6, 2024; Radina Gigova, “Ukraine War: European Nations Turn to Conscription as Threat of Wider War with Russia Grows,” CNN, July 21, 2024.

effective mobilization planning prior to war can mitigate the risk of needing to consider conscription as an emergency measure. The source of this misconception is the historical baggage of conscription in Canada. In qualifying the issue, historian J.L. Granatstein opined that “no single issue has divided Canadians so sharply as conscription.”⁷² Furthermore, historian Tim Cook categorized conscription as “offensive to present-day sensibilities” equal to the internment of Japanese-Canadians during the Second World War.⁷³ Conscription caused national debates and schisms in 1917, 1944, and continued long after as a subject “in fostering suspicion and mistrust among Canadians.”⁷⁴ This understanding of the differences between mandatory service and conscription is far from universal with definitions, especially for the latter, varying greatly;⁷⁵ therefore, for clarity and consistency, the definitions outlined in Figure 1.2 below will be used throughout this analysis.

⁷² J.L. Granatstein and J.M. Hitsman, *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada* (Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1985), 1.

⁷³ Tim Cook, *Warlords: Borden, MacKenzie King, and Canada's World Wars* (Allen Lane, 2012), 3.

⁷⁴ Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*, 264.

⁷⁵ Throughout the literature and popular culture, conscription is often used in a wide ranging but vague way, often crossing with themes of peacetime mandatory service, wartime conscription, national selective service, and mobilization as a whole.

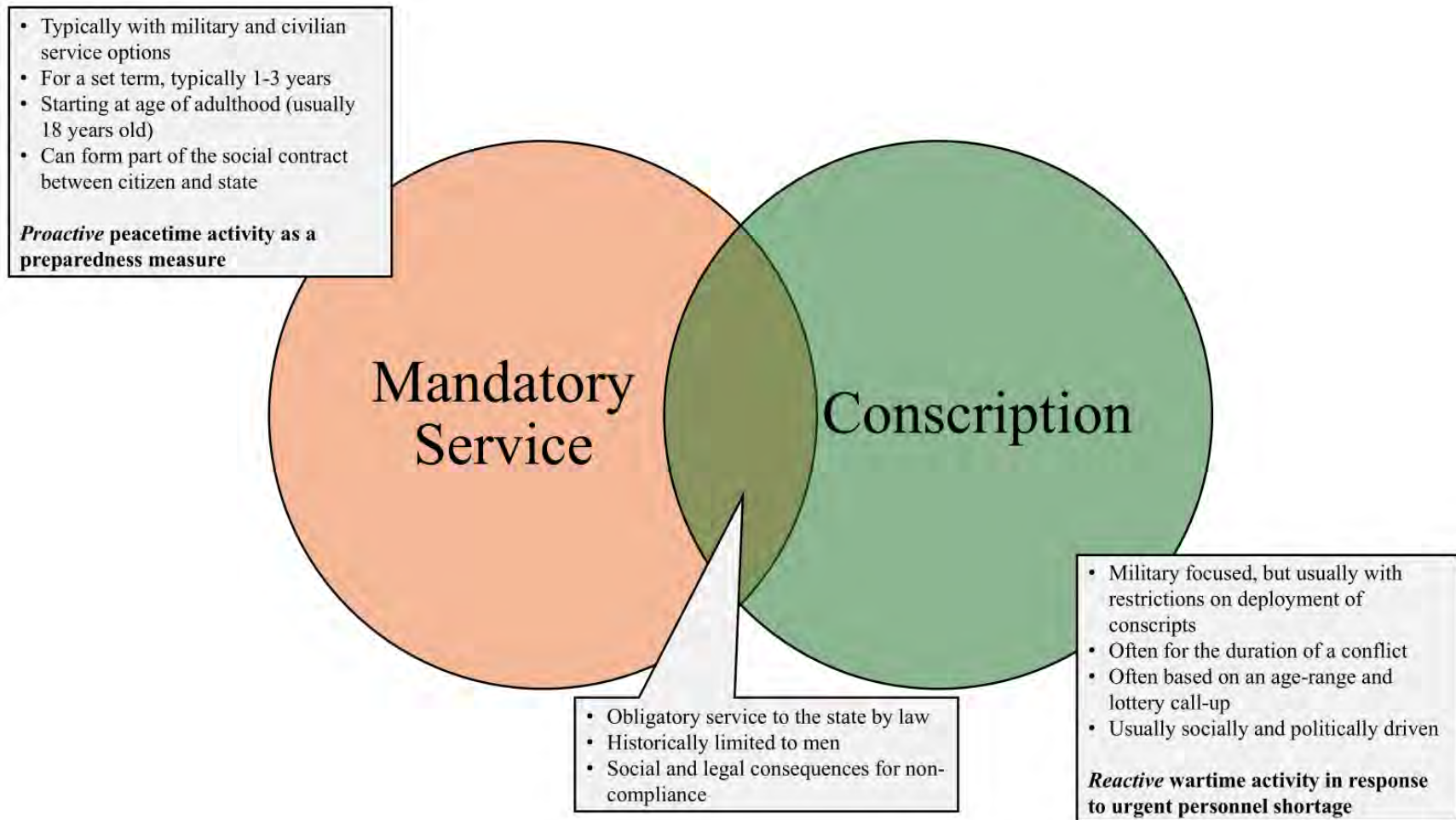


Figure 1.2 – Compared Definitions of Mandatory Service and Conscription

Source: Author Created

A clear and wide-ranging definition of mobilization is required to avoid misconception, overcome potential bias, and ensure clarity. The NATO standardized definition of mobilization reads as “The act of preparing for war or other emergencies through assembling and organizing national resources.”⁷⁶ Though there are other definitions, such as in the CAF’s recently rescinded mobilization doctrine,⁷⁷ which focused on the “expansion of Canada’s military capability”⁷⁸, this is necessarily limited to the military aspects of the problem set. Though the NATO definition is from 1973, it will be used here, as it is clear, standardized across the alliance, and most importantly, focuses on the preparation of all aspects of national power with military, economic, and social implications.⁷⁹

Another important misconception worth clarifying is the idea that mobilization is a concept geared exclusively towards war. The *Emergencies Act* outlines four distinct types of emergencies: Public Welfare, Public Order, International, and War Emergencies.⁸⁰ As per the NATO definition,⁸¹ and indeed previous CAF planning documents,⁸² mobilization is useful for all types of national emergencies, not just war. The most recent example of this was the COVID-19 pandemic, where a monumental whole-of-government mobilization effort occurred, with then-Prime Minister Justin Trudeau declaring “Together, we are mobilizing all of Canada to fight the spread of the virus.”⁸³ Though largely a rhetorical use of the word, this clarifies and expands

⁷⁶ North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Standardization Office, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions*, AAP-06, 2020, 85.

⁷⁷ Rescinded in September 2024 and discussed further in Chapter 2. DND, GoC, “CANFORGEN 132/24 CJWC 005/24 051712Z SEP 24 - RESCINDING OF CANADIAN FORCES JOINT PUBLICATION 7-0 SERIES,” September 5, 2024.

⁷⁸ DND, GoC, *Canadian Forces Joint Doctrine for Mobilization*, Canadian Forces Joint Doctrine 7-3, 2002, 1-1

⁷⁹ NATO Standardization Office, NATO, *NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions*, AAP-06, 2020, 85.

⁸⁰ GoC, “Emergencies Act,” R.S.C. 1985, c. 22 § (2023).

⁸¹ NATO Standardization Office, NATO, *NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions*, AAP-06, 2020, 85.

⁸² DND, GoC, *Canadian Forces Joint Doctrine for Mobilization*, Canadian Forces Joint Doctrine 7-3, 2002; DND, GoC, *Canadian Forces and Department of National Defence Mobilization Planning Framework*, 1999.

⁸³ The Prime Minister of Canada, GoC, “Prime Minister Announces Canada’s Plan to Mobilize Industry to Fight COVID-19,” Prime Minister of Canada, March 20, 2020.

the relevance of mobilization planning and helps assuage any accusation of scare-mongering for the military professional who advocates for it. Indeed the 1990s-vintage DND mobilization plans made wide provision for mobilization in response to all types of emergencies.⁸⁴ The COVID-19 pandemic will not be the last public health emergency that Canada faces, and the complexities of climate change-induced natural disasters continue to increase in frequency and intensity.

Mobilization planning must be flexible and scalable in nature to ensure the Canadian state can respond with all elements of national power to all types of national emergencies.

Analytical Structure.

This paper is structured around the three factors that make up the cycle of *Total War*, as the most extreme use-case of mobilization planning. Chapter 2 focuses on the *intensification of violence* and therefore military mobilization, showing that the CAF is currently unprepared to meet its core missions and sustain them in a major conflict. Chapter 3 examines the *conversion of economy*, and therefore industrial mobilization, arguing that the Canadian economy is unprepared to support the CAF during a major conflict. Chapter 4 delves into *participation of society* and therefore social mobilization, with an emphasis on polarization, information resilience, and whole-of-society preparedness. These chapters are interconnected and follow a common thematic structure, first defining Canada's vulnerability in that area, then moving to the areas in which greater resilience is required and finally ending in the need for preparedness. These are the layers of the problem set, as depicted in figures throughout this analysis,⁸⁵ and when combined, form the basis for a national strategy of resilience and preparedness to ready Canada for the prospect of mobilization.

⁸⁴ DND, GoC, *Canadian Forces and Department of National Defence Mobilization Planning Framework*, 1999.

⁸⁵ See Figure 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1.

Disclaimer

It is apparent that mobilization planning is a wicked problem; as such, the intent is not to solve the problem of mobilization, but rather to raise awareness and stoke discussion. During the conduct of this research, the global security environment was changing at a staggering pace, with major shifts monthly, weekly, and even daily. As a result, this work is a snapshot in time, and though the themes ought to remain relevant, it is acknowledged that the context will likely continue to evolve. As much as possible, the scope of this analysis rests at the national strategic level, and while at times discussion dives deeper to the operational and tactical levels, this is done strictly to demonstrate how these elements directly impact national-level mobilization issues. Throughout this analysis, numbers and figures are used to demonstrate different micro-level factors; the fidelity of such figures is deliberately kept low, usually to a broad order of magnitude, to quantify the issue without getting stuck into too much detail. It is assumed that any consideration of mobilization planning will include the issue of Canadian defence funding; there is no intent to examine this or the ongoing debate over NATO 2% targets. Mobilization is a whole-of-government problem, and though there is a heavy emphasis on CAF involvement and participation in this analysis, this is due not only to the leading role that the CAF has historically and ought to currently play in mobilization, but also to the fact that the audience of this work is senior CAF and civilian defence leadership. There is the potential for pessimism; however, Canada has many of the pieces of such a policy already. The CAF's laudable efforts to increase recruiting, extant Munitions Supply and National Shipbuilding Programs, the federal government's aggressive efforts to combat election interference, and existing legislation in the *Emergencies* and *Defence Production Acts* show that Canada can grapple with these issues. Canada *can* do this. Canada *must* do this.

CHAPTER 2 – MILITARY MOBILIZATION

Plans are worthless, but planning is everything...

...So, the first thing you do is to take all the plans off the top shelf and throw them out the window and start once more. But if you haven't been planning, you can't start to work, intelligently at least.

That is the reason it is so important to plan, to keep yourselves steeped in the character of the problem that you may one day be called upon to solve – or to help solve.

- Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1957⁸⁶

Introduction

There is no other arm of the Canadian government that wages war except the CAF; if cabinet declares a war emergency, it is the CAF that becomes the primary tool of national policy. Should the CAF fail in this role, there is no other option, and therefore any failure at conducting operations during a *Total War* can have national, sovereign, and existential implications. The CAF is currently unprepared to meet its core missions and sustain them in a major conflict due to vulnerabilities at the operational level. Military mobilization, the dramatic expansion of the CAF's capacity, would be required. However, the CAF is not ready for this prospect due to a lack of institutional resiliency and cognitive preparation. This chapter seeks to explore the relationship between the CAF and military mobilization, the expansion of military capacity and capabilities well beyond peacetime levels, with a focus on the extreme use case of *Total War*. The over-riding end-state of this discussion, *Total War*, should not distract from the utility and necessity of military mobilization for other forms of national emergency or limited conflicts.

This analysis will use Canada's commitment to NATO deterrence and defence in Eastern Europe against Russian aggression as a case study. Op REASSURANCE, the primary means in

⁸⁶ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Containing the Public Messages, Speeches, and Statements of the President*, January 1 to December 31, 1957 (National Archives and Records Service, 1957), 818.

which the CAF meets its *Support to NATO Allies* mission task as outlined in *Our North Strong and Free*,⁸⁷ sees a significant contribution of CAF resources as the framework nation of the EFP force in Latvia. This example was selected for detailed exploration as it most readily shows the fragility and vulnerability of CAF commitments and its inability to sustain them. The deductions from this discussion translate directly to other ongoing CAF commitments, such as RCN operations in the Indo-Pacific or RCAF continental defence operations as part of NORAD. All these commitments, should large-scale conflict erupt, would require significant expansion in capacity and capabilities, whether that be in the need for dramatically expanded naval power to maintain Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) or in air power to deter and defeat direct attacks on the Canadian homeland. Failure in any of these cases could not only be catastrophic, but in the context of *Total War*, would have national existential implications. The risk of concurrency only magnifies this urgency as DND has already “recognized that should the CAF be called to fulfil all... commitments simultaneously, the CAF would not be able to do so.”⁸⁸ “The stakes could not be higher,”⁸⁹ a qualification already attributed in Canadian national policy to the threat from Russia, the most immediate that Canada now faces. Therefore, focusing on the CAF commitment to deter and defend against that threat is most poignant and relevant. Figure 2.1 below demonstrates how military mobilization fits within the *vortex of totality* with the critical ways ahead for the CAF in addressing this wicked problem.

⁸⁷ DND, GoC, *Our North, Strong and Free*, 1.

⁸⁸ DND, GoC, “Report Summary: Ready Forces Integrated Strategic Analysis” (Assistant Deputy Minister (Review Services), March 2023), Finding 1.

⁸⁹ DND, GoC, *Our North, Strong and Free*, 6-7.

Military Mobilization

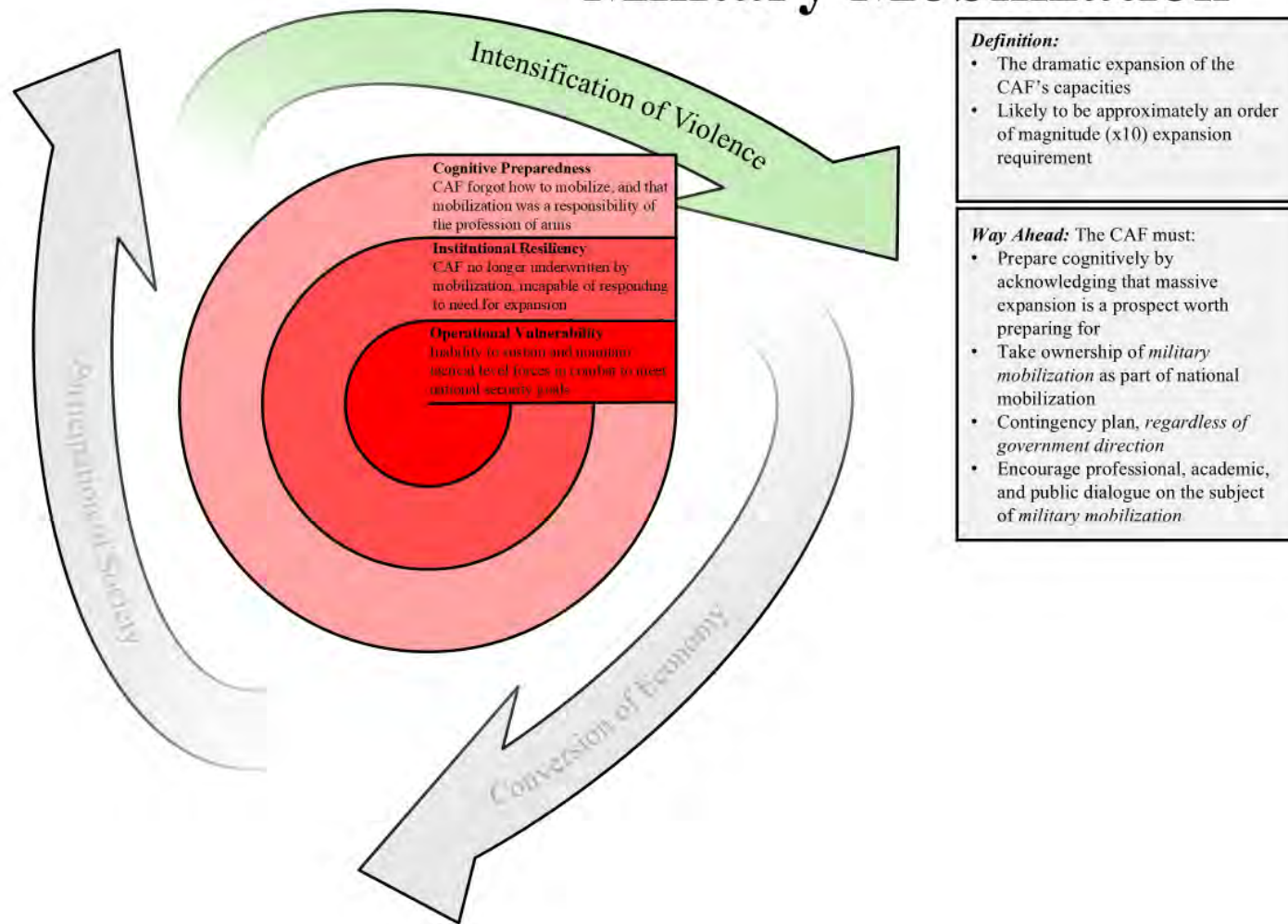


Figure 2.1 – Military Mobilization and the Vortex of Totality

Source: Author Created.

Operational Vulnerability.

Op REASSURANCE is currently Canada's largest international commitment. Slated to reach its full strength in 2026 with 2,200 CAF members leading a multinational brigade of twelve countries, this force would be directly involved in Large Scale Combat Operations (LSCO) against Russian forces immediately upon the start of hostilities.⁹⁰ Upgrading the previously battalion-sized force to that of a brigade, with its associated enablers, has been a total force effort for the CAF. Pulling much of the functional equipment fleet from across the force and overusing it, this demand has contributed to significant maintenance and replacement shortfalls.⁹¹ Not only has this left much of the force bereft of its equipment fleet, degrading both training activities as well as support to other operations, it has placed only a thin veneer of capability in Latvia. When engaged in LSCO, the attrition rate on key equipment platforms would be significant. Without the depth offered by accessible replacements, it is likely that the Canadian contribution to Latvian defence would be impotent in short order due to attrition. The post-Cold War shift from stockpiling of material towards just-in-time sustainment has left the CAF sustainment system with insufficient depth, especially considering that lines of communication would be contested.⁹² In essence, Op REASSURANCE is an example of the CAF applying an "everything in the shop window" approach to operations; there is enough material, equipment, and personnel in theatre to meet the requirements of a brigade in peacetime training, but no depth or scope for realistic operational sustainment and replacement should the deterrence mission switch to active defence of Latvia in wartime. The CAF simply does not have

⁹⁰ DND, GoC, "Operation REASSURANCE," May 1, 2014; DND, GoC, *Our North, Strong and Free*, 6.

⁹¹ DND, GoC, "Report Summary: Ready Forces Integrated Strategic Analysis" (Assistant Deputy Minister (Review Services), March 2023), Finding 4.

⁹² Colonel A.D. Haynes, "CJOC Concept Paper: Operational Support (Study Draft)" (unpublished, December 2, 2024), 2.

the material capacity to operationally sustain the brigade deployed on Op REASSURANCE in combat conditions,⁹³ a deficiency not without precedent given the CAF's struggled to maintain a battlegroup-sized force in combat in Afghanistan in the 2000s.⁹⁴

Physical material is not the only deficiency that the CAF suffers from in readiness for large scale combat; a severe shortage of personnel, though beginning to improve due to ongoing efforts to reconstitute the force,⁹⁵ jeopardizes the viability of any CAF forces engaged. Short over 13,000 trained personnel from an effective peacetime strength of 71,500, the CAF barely has enough personnel to meet its current tasks.⁹⁶ This shrunken force has been asked to do more with fewer people worsening an already bad retention crisis.⁹⁷ Though the ongoing efforts to reverse negative staffing trends are only now showing evidence of improving,⁹⁸ the CAF is not expected to reach its authorized peacetime levels until at least 2029,⁹⁹ on an accelerated timeline that outstrips original reconstitution plans that saw that date in the early 2030s.¹⁰⁰ As the expansion of the CAF's mandate in Latvia has stretched equipment capacity, so too has it stretched personnel, with one internal report indicating that the CAF will be "challenged to meet its NATO commitments" without drastic improvements to staffing.¹⁰¹ Estimates place the number of personnel required to maintain just the sustainment footprint required to keep the

⁹³ Haynes, "Operational Support," 20.

⁹⁴ Sean M. Maloney, *The Canadian Army in Afghanistan: Volume I: A Nation Under Fire* (Ottawa: National Defence, 2022), 529.

⁹⁵ CAF Personnel strength only began to stabilize in mid-2024. DND, GoC, "State of the CAF - Personnel - 1 April 2024 to 31 December 2024" (Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis, n.d.); Rachel Aiello, "Military Can't Say If Uptick in Applications since Trump's Return Connected to His Threats, amid Push to Bolster Recruitment," CTVNews, February 19, 2025.

⁹⁶ Aiello, "Push to Bolster Recruitment."

⁹⁷ Dan Doran, "Retention in the CAF: Reframing the Solution," *CDA Institute*, September 16, 2024.

⁹⁸ DND, GoC, "State of the CAF - Personnel - 1 April 2024 to 31 December 2024" (Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis, n.d.).

⁹⁹ GoC, "State of the CAF - Personnel - 1 April 2024 to 31 December 2024"

¹⁰⁰ DND, GOC, "Chief of Military Personnel Order - CAF Reconstitution - Modernize Mil Pers Management Systems" (Military Personnel Command, April 25, 2022).

¹⁰¹ DND, GoC, "Report Summary: Evaluation of Joint and Combined Force Readiness" (Assistant Deputy Minister (Review Services), March 2023), Finding 3.

combat echelon in theatre at nearly 5,000 personnel, most of whom the CAF is unable to generate.¹⁰²

Filling the significant staffing bill in Latvia is largely left to the responsibility of the Canadian Army (CA),¹⁰³ which is now being pushed to the breaking point by the deployment of a considerable portion of its strength overseas. Of the three mechanized brigades in the Regular Force, at any one time there will be one with most of its effective strength deployed, another training for the next deployment cycle, and the third reconstituting following deployment.¹⁰⁴ When combined with the need to support other smaller operations, and the ever worsening issue of global climate change and associated natural disasters forcing domestic deployments of military forces, the CAF is stretched to its utmost limits in meeting current, peacetime commitments. As a result, the CAF's ability to fulfil its core national security functions has been degraded.¹⁰⁵ Doing so in a contested environment while suffering high levels of attrition would be questionable at best, an issue not lost on CAF senior leadership.¹⁰⁶

LSCO would inevitably lead to high levels of casualties, particularly among land forces, who are anticipated to suffer the highest casualty rates.¹⁰⁷ Experience from the conflict in Ukraine is relevant, with 60-70,000 Ukrainian military deaths since February 2022, an average of 63 per day.¹⁰⁸ Though one should be circumspect in taking lessons from Ukraine at face value,

¹⁰² Haynes, "Operational Support," 20.

¹⁰³ Colonel Marc O'Ray, "Chief of Staff Army Operations Brief to Unit Command Team Course.", June 24, 2024, slide 25.

¹⁰⁴ DND, GoC, "Canadian Army Operating Plan: Fiscal Year 2025-2026," December 17, 2024, Annex A.

¹⁰⁵ HoC, GoC, "Providing Aid to the Civil Power; Disaster Relief and the Canadian Armed Forces' Domestic Operations," Report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, June 2024, 17-19.

¹⁰⁶ Murray Brewster, "Military Planners Map out Restructuring the Canadian Army, Says Top Soldier," CBC News, March 7, 2025, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-army-restructuring-latvia-1.7476793>.

¹⁰⁷ Haynes, "Operational Support," 15.

¹⁰⁸ It should be noted that this estimate is likely to be on the low-end, and that many estimates and anecdotal experience with Armed Forces of Ukraine members suggest the total to be much higher. "Ukraine Fact Sheet" (Institute for the Study of War, February 21, 2025): 2; Alicja Hagopian and Tom Watling, "Ukraine War in Numbers: Full Toll of Russia's Invasion Three Years on," *The Independent*, February 24, 2025.

due to the unique and relatively static nature of combat there, it is clear that significant levels of attrition can be expected for any CAF forces engaged in high intensity combat. The most recent Canadian experience with significant combat casualties was during the Afghanistan mission, where a total of 158 Canadian soldiers died.¹⁰⁹ Though these casualties are tragic and should not be trivialized, casualty rates several orders of magnitude higher should be anticipated in LSCO; what was experienced in Afghanistan over a nine-year period could reasonably be expected monthly or weekly due to the sheer intensity of modern combat. Rates of 20 to 30 killed per day for a brigade are possible with at least four times as many wounded.¹¹⁰ Though these rates of combat deaths seem unprecedented, they are in fact similar to those suffered by the CA in North-West Europe during the Second World War.¹¹¹ This represents a critical vulnerability for the CAF at the operational level of war, the inability to sustain and maintain tactical-level forces in combat conditions in order to meet national security goals. The only viable remedy would be dramatic expansion of Canada's military capacity, lest military defeat occur with implications for Canadian influence and sovereignty. The historical parallel of the Canadian-led brigade in Latvia to the 1941 total loss of a CA brigade in Hong Kong cannot be understated; military defeat will occur if expeditionary forces are not sustainable.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Department of Veterans Affairs, GoC, "Fallen Canadian Armed Forces Members - Canada in Afghanistan - Canadian Armed Forces - History - Remembrance - Veterans Affairs Canada," September 20, 2021.

¹¹⁰ Haynes, "Operational Support": 15-16; Christopher A. Lawrence, *War by Numbers: Understanding Conventional Combat* (Potomac Books, Incorporated, 2017), 181-205.

¹¹¹ Across the three Canadian divisions involved throughout the Northwest Europe campaign, an average rate of approximately 15-20% casualties per month was experienced (combined killed, wounded, missing, captured). This works out to several hundred casualties for an average brigade per month. Robert Engen, *Strangers in Arms: Combat Motivation in the Canadian Army, 1943-1945* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016), Table F4, 236; Terry Copp, *Cinderella Army: The Canadians in Northwest Europe, 1944-45* (University of Toronto Press, 2006): Appendix B, 299-301.

¹¹² Historian Terry Copp directly postulated whether Canada had truly learned this lesson, or if the "next international crisis explodes out of control" could another Hong Kong experience reoccur. See Copp, "The Defence of Hong Kong," 19.

Institutional Resiliency.

To sustain itself in combat, the CAF needs the capability to rapidly expand its capacity in wartime. The existing structure and capacity of the organization, primarily in terms of personnel and equipment, is woefully insufficient to maintain existing commitments, primarily in Latvia. Without expansion, it is likely that the CAF would expend itself in a matter of months of high intensity operations. This is not a uniquely Canadian problem, with key Allies such as the United Kingdom experiencing severe anxiety over their ability to sustain forces in combat conditions.¹¹³ A protracted campaign, as is suggested to be likely by the nature of the war in Ukraine, would require national mobilization to expand Canada's military capacity if only to meet already existing national commitments. Should a larger commitment be required, the need for military expansion becomes acute.

It is impossible to know what an expanded commitment would be, but it is feasible to roughly estimate. Much of NATO, led by the U.S. Army, is moving to the consensus that the division is the "unit of action" in land operations.¹¹⁴ This moves the focus away from the brigade, which has been NATO's focus for the last two decades, and an area where the CAF is particularly comfortable.¹¹⁵ Therefore, a realistic expansion goal for CAF mobilization could be the fielding of a deployed, fighting division in theatre. Indeed, the current commander of 1st

¹¹³ Chas Geiger, "Major War Could Destroy Army in Six Months - Minister," *BBC News*, December 4, 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c3rqlelypgxo>; Harry Fullerton, "The British Army Is in Serious Trouble. How Did This Happen and What Can Be Done about It?," *National Security News*, January 22, 2025, <https://nationalsecuritynews.com/2025/01/the-british-army-is-in-serious-trouble-how-did-this-happen-and-what-can-be-done-about-it-guest-writer-colonel-ret-d-harry-fullerton-obe-gives-his-view-2/>.

¹¹⁴ Kimberly Underwood, "The U.S. Army Turns Focus to the Division Level," *Signal*, May 26, 2023; Major General David S. Doyle, Colonel Charles M. Knoll, and Colonel Daniel R. Leard, "Becoming Multidomain Practitioners: Tactical Training for Multidomain Operations at Echelon," *Military Review: The Professional Journal of the U.S. Army*, February 2025; Colonel Walt A. Reed and Major Justin T. DeLeon, "The Agile U.S. Army Division in a Multidomain Environment," *Military Review: The Professional Journal of the U.S. Army*, October 2024.

¹¹⁵ Brigadier General Louis Lapointe, "How Can We Fight?: Framing the Problem," Opinion Paper (unpublished) (1st Canadian Division, Canadian Armed Forces, Department of National Defence, n.d.), 3.

Canadian Division has advocated for exactly that.¹¹⁶ Fielding a force of this size, in the range of 12,000-16,000 soldiers with associated equipment,¹¹⁷ would be up to eight times the current deployed capacity of the CAF. This is then combined with the need for depth for replacements, training, rotation, and relief. Fielding such a force would require at least a ten-fold expansion of the CAF in terms of personnel strength, equipment stocks, and structure when accounting for similar expansion requirements for RCAF and RCN commitments.¹¹⁸ Expanding the CAF by a factor of ten seems unthinkable to the Canadian military professional of 2025, given the limited wars of previous decades and the ongoing struggles to reconstitute the force to a relatively meagre peacetime strength; however, in wartime, there would be no choice but to see it done. Indeed, it has been done before; the CA in August 1914 had only 3,110 regular soldiers,¹¹⁹ yet managed to deploy the 1st Canadian Division of 31,200 mostly untrained¹²⁰ soldiers within three months - a ten-fold expansion.¹²¹ In 1939, the force had only 4,500 regular soldiers,¹²² and by 1945, 237,000 Canadians were serving in First Canadian Army in Europe, which does not even account for the massive contributions of the RCAF and RCN.¹²³ A dynamic from both

¹¹⁶ Lapointe, "How Can We Fight?", 5-7.

¹¹⁷ Andrew Feickert, "The 2024 Army Force Structure Transformation Initiative" (Congressional Research Service, February 5, 2025): 2.

¹¹⁸ This is not an exact estimate, rather it provides a rough order of magnitude in order to quantify the challenge of military mobilization.

¹¹⁹ Colonel G.W.L. Nicholson, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War* (Roger Duhamel, Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1962), 7.

¹²⁰ Most of these soldiers were fresh volunteers, and training in Canada prior to departure was extremely limited. Further training would occur in the United Kingdom before deployment to France. Andrew Iarocci, *Shoestring Soldiers: The First Canadian Division at War, 1914-1915* (University of Toronto Press, 2008), 40-55.

¹²¹ This is even more remarkable due to the fact that much of the pre-war Regular Army was deployed to Bermuda to relieve British troops rather than join 1st Canadian Division or support its training. Nicholson, *Canadian Army in the First World War*, 29-32

¹²² Colonel C.P. Stacey, *The Canadian Army, 1939-1945: An Official Historical Summary* (The Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1948), 1.

¹²³ Colonel C.P. Stacey, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War, Volume III, the Victory Campaign: The Operations in Northwest Europe, 1944-45* (The Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1960), 641.

mobilization experiences was whether to employ a small core of pre-war Regulars early and risk their rapid expenditure or hold them back in order to train wartime volunteers.¹²⁴

Discussion on previous mobilization efforts feeds into a common misconception that Canada improvised its military mobilization efforts in both World Wars, and therefore, “figuring it out” is a viable method to approach national preparedness today. Though it is largely true that Canada’s mobilization efforts at the beginning of the First World War were improvised, this was not due to the lack of a plan. Indeed, the Canadian military had a rudimentary mobilization concept and plan in 1914, developed over the preceding years, and largely based on the call-up of the militia on a cadre-force model.¹²⁵ The improvised element was due to personality, and one in particular: Sam Hughes, then-Minister of Militia and Defence. Having “little use for plans,”¹²⁶ Hughes opted to throw out the existing mobilization concepts and improvise one of his own devising.¹²⁷ He initiated a haphazard, problematic, though ultimately successful, mobilization process. The Canadian Corps’ deployed combat strength fluctuated around 90,000 to 100,000 soldiers; ultimately, over 600,000 individual Canadians were enlisted in the CA and though fewer saw service in Europe, 51,748 were killed, a loss rate of 9.8%.¹²⁸ The example of 1914 should be a cautionary one rather than exemplary; the Hughes-led mobilization was riddled with

¹²⁴ In 1914 the Permanent Force Royal Canadian Regiment was deployed to Bermuda to replace British regulars vice assisting in the training of 1st Canadian Division. Desmond Morton, *When Your Number’s Up: The Canadian Soldier in the First World War* (Random House of Canada, 1993), 11.

¹²⁵ Nicholson, *Canadian Army in the First World War*, 14-17.

¹²⁶ Morton, *When Your Number’s Up*, 8.

¹²⁷ Colonel C.P. Stacey, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War, Volume I: Six Years of War* (Edmond Cloutier, Queen’s Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1955); Tim Cook, *The Madman and the Butcher: The Sensational Wars of Sam Hughes and General Arthur Currie* (Allen Lane Canada, 2010), 59.

¹²⁸ Hughes was ultimately replaced in 1916, but his impact on the initial Canadian mobilization cannot be overstated. Nicholson, *Canadian Army in the First World War*, 534-535, Appendix E.

problems such as corruption, inefficiency, nepotism and graft, which seriously compromised Canada's war effort early-on and lead to his replacement, forever tainting his historical legacy.¹²⁹

In the case of the Second World War, the Canadian military on its outbreak in 1939 executed an existing, detailed mobilization process. Under Defence Scheme No. 3, planning by the CA began in 1931 without political direction or support, based on the experience of the First World War, with the implicit intention of avoiding the errors of the Hughes-led mobilization.¹³⁰ In comparison to mobilization activities in 1914, that of 1939 was successful, due primarily to the thorough and detailed planning conducted prior to the outbreak of war.¹³¹ It should be emphasized however that Defence Scheme No. 3 mobilization was largely conceptual and lacked any effective material preparation; the CA used it to effectively expand personnel strength, but it left the force lacking in all kinds of basic equipment, including weapons, uniforms, and boots.¹³² Material considerations, though critically important, followed on from successful cognitive preparation. The deciding factor in the eventual success of Canadian mobilization during both World Wars was cognitive preparation for the prospect of large-scale expansion of military capacity in the event of war, despite material deficiencies. Canadian military professionals were actively engaged on the subject, and most importantly, saw it as their responsibility to plan for it.

One might assume that the CAF has a plan for how to expand the force for when the next war comes; indeed, the Canadian public would have an expectation that their military plans for and is ready for such contingencies. The CAF's recent move to deploy significant conventional

¹²⁹ For an accounting on the legacy of Sam Hughes, see Ronald Haycock, *Sam Hughes: The Public Career of a Controversial Canadian, 1885-1916* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986) and Cook, *The Madman and the Butcher*, 384-385.

¹³⁰ Though Defence Scheme No. 3 never received formal Government approval, it ultimately formed the nucleus of the Canadian Army's mobilization. Stephen J. Harris, *Canadian Brass: The Making of a Professional Army, 1860-1939* (University of Toronto Press, 1988), 167-191; Larry D. Rose, *Mobilize! Why Canada Was Unprepared for the Second World War* (Dundurn, 2013), 21.

¹³¹ Stacey, *Canadian Army in the Second World War, Volume I*, 47-48.

¹³² Larry D. Rose, *Mobilize! Why Canada Was Unprepared for the Second World War* (Dundurn, 2013), 31-32.

forces in Europe, though on a rotational basis rather than permanently as during the Cold War, represents a shift back towards Commitment Based Planning. This had been Canada's approach to national security until the 1990s, based on meeting clearly specified NATO force commitments, such as the 4th Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group (CMBG) permanent basing in Germany or the 5CMBG contingency deployment to Norway. However, in the 1990s, Canada's approach shifted to Capability Based Planning, aiming to maintain smaller levels of generic forces, ready to deploy to a wide variety of contingencies, driven by the need to cut defence expenditures.¹³³ The CAF of 2025 is still inherently structured around the concepts of Capability Based Planning yet has now been operationalized in a way reminiscent of Commitment Based Planning. The key difference between the two approaches is while the former retains flexibility to respond to an ever-changing world, it lacks the clearly defined planning goal of the latter. There is a tension in this disconnect, in that the Commitment Based approach was always inherently underwritten by the concept that the CAF would mobilize in wartime to bolster and expand its commitments overseas. Though the CAF now uses a system called Concept Driven Threat Informed Planning (CDTIP),¹³⁴ this still lacks underwriting, which provided a critical baseline of political will to sustain core CAF capabilities.

The Primary Reserve component, which had traditionally been critical to military mobilization, is no longer capable of fulfilling that role. The Army Reserve is still structured around the concept of a cadre force, with hollow shells of units to be filled out by volunteers in wartime.¹³⁵ However, the CAF lacks the planning and policies to call-up its reserve force

¹³³ DND, GoC *1994 Defence White Paper*, 1994, 41.

¹³⁴ DND, GoC, "2024-2025 Departmental Plan," 2024, <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/documents/corporate/reports-publications/2024/04-22-dp-2024-2025-en.pdf>.

¹³⁵ The 1994 Defence White Paper acknowledged that there was a need to restructure the Reserve Force, something that never substantially occurred. DND, GoC *1994 Defence White Paper*, 1994, 45.

effectively, reinforced by the fact that the Supplementary Reserve has not been funded since 1994 and has ceased to be a viable tool in military mobilization.¹³⁶ In fact, the Primary Reserve is most often used as a source of additional personnel to offset Regular Force responsibilities, with up to 20% of CA deployments constituting reservists,¹³⁷ creating a tension with the cadre force concept.¹³⁸ Despite calls to do so, the Reserve component of the CAF was never restructured or empowered to fulfil its mobilization role.¹³⁹ As a result, the CAF is no longer underwritten by mobilization planning, resulting in a critical lack of institutional resiliency, leaving the CAF unfit to respond to a major conflict.

¹³⁶ DND, GoC *1994 Defence White Paper*, 1994, 45.

¹³⁷ DND, GoC, “Canadian Army Operating Plan,” 2-5/9.

¹³⁸ This change was driven by the 1994 Defence White Paper, which saw the role of the Reserve Force as augmenting and sustaining the Regular Force. DND, GoC *1994 Defence White Paper*, 1994, 44.

¹³⁹ Corinne McDonald, “The Canadian Armed Forces: The Role of the Reserves” (Parliamentary Research Branch, Library of Parliament, November 29, 1999), 10-12.

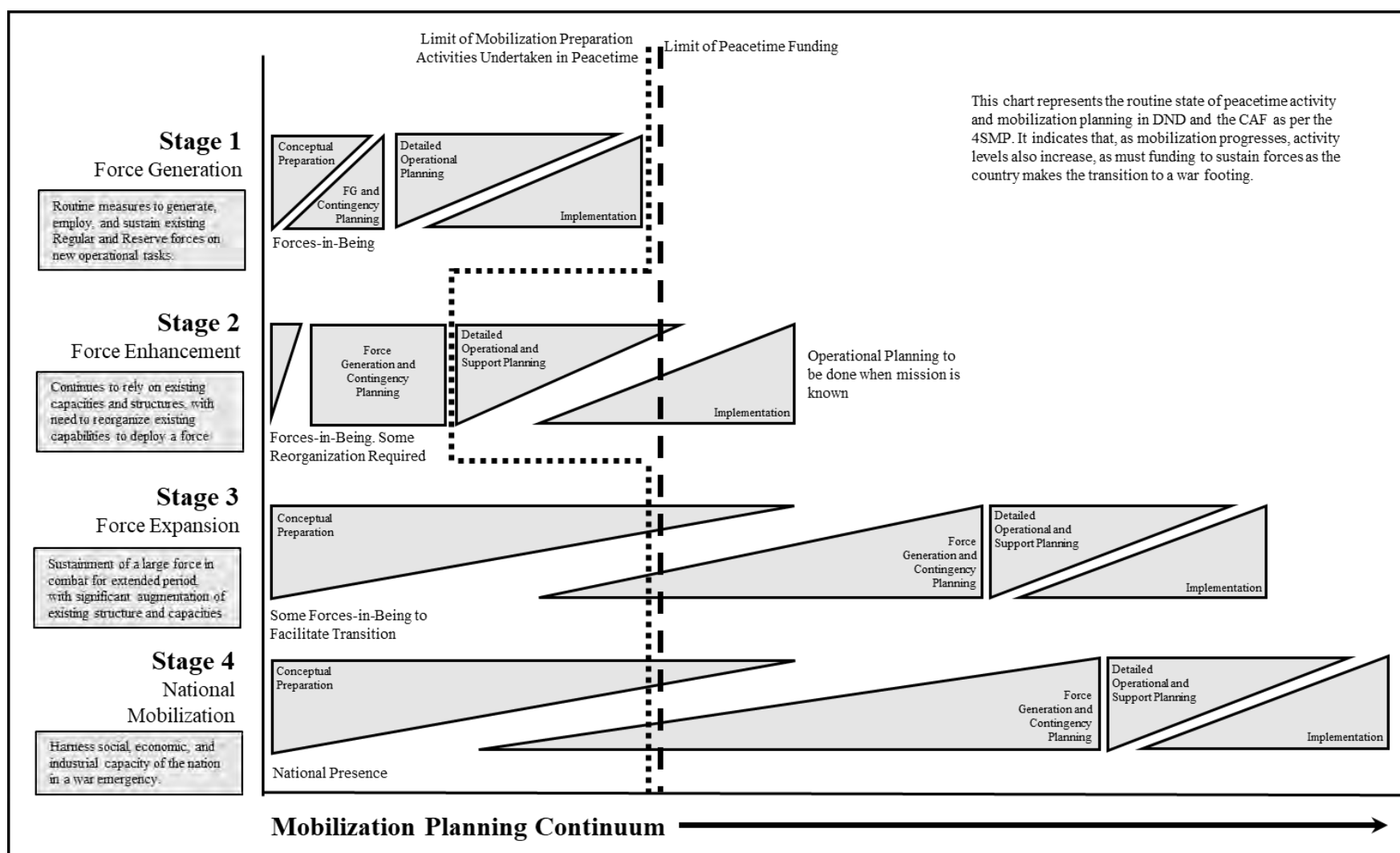


Figure 2.2 – The Canadian Four Stage Mobilization Process (4SMP)

Source: Adapted from DND, GoC, Canadian Forces and Department of National Defence Mobilization Planning Framework, 1999: B-1 and DND, GoC, Canadian Forces Joint Doctrine for Mobilization, Canadian Forces Joint Doctrine 7-3, 2002:3-4.

Cognitive Preparedness.

The most important underlying challenge in preparing the CAF for mobilization is a lack of cognitive preparation for the prospect. Despite the 1990s force reduction and shift from Commitment to Capability Based Planning, the CAF remained cognitively prepared for LSCO and mobilization for years afterwards. Maintaining concepts, plans, and doctrine, the CAF held a body of knowledge that constituted the Government of Canada's institutional expertise on how to mobilize the state. In fact, the CAF had mobilization doctrine until very recently, CFJP 7-3 *CF Joint Doctrine on Mobilization*, which was only rescinded in 2024.¹⁴⁰ This was the result of a decade-long strategic planning process, first initiated by the publication of the *1994 Defence White Paper*.¹⁴¹ This provided strategic direction to DND and the CAF to build a new mobilization plan, based on the reshaped global environment of the post-Cold War world, acknowledging that though the threat of conventional war was low, it was still high enough to warrant deliberate planning.¹⁴² A new system was envisioned to replace the binary Cold War-era approach, that foresaw Canada as being either at war or at peace, with little scope for escalation or the grey area between.¹⁴³ The new Four Stage Mobilization Process (4SMP) was based on “a graduated and orderly transition from routine peacetime operations to higher levels of involvement, which ultimately could include the total mobilization of the nation.”¹⁴⁴ The resulting CAF planning built a series of strategic and operational planning documents, all based on the construct of the 4SMP. In 1996, a broad mobilization plan was made in order to outline

¹⁴⁰ DND, GoC, “CANFORGEN 132/24 CJWC 005/24 051712Z SEP 24 - RESCINDING OF CANADIAN FORCES JOINT PUBLICATION 7-0 SERIES,” September 5, 2024.

¹⁴¹ DND, GoC, *1994 Defence White Paper*, 1994.

¹⁴² GoC, *1994 Defence White Paper*, 5-7.

¹⁴³ The 1960s mobilization system used a graduated warning system, this was focused on readiness of a force-in-being to respond to conventional or nuclear war. DND, GoC, *War Book*, 1961, 1-2.

¹⁴⁴ GoC, *1994 Defence White Paper*, 44.

how the CAF would contribute to a national mobilization,¹⁴⁵ with elemental plans developed in support of this.¹⁴⁶ These were detailed plans on how the CAF, in response to a national emergency, would expand in scope and capability well beyond peacetime establishment, in the case of the CA to the size of a deployed corps.¹⁴⁷

This period of mobilization planning was not limited exclusively to the CAF, as in 1999 DND developed the *CF and DND Mobilization Planning Framework*, which outlined “preparatory plans to expand Canada’s military capability in the event of an emergency.”¹⁴⁸ Most importantly, this plan described in detail how DND and the CAF fit into a larger, whole-of-government mobilization effort, in a lead planning role.¹⁴⁹ This planning framework was also intended for socialization to other government departments, based on the heavy implication of non-military preparedness actions such as development of stand-by legislation, preparation of the defence industrial base, declaration of a War Emergency, and the forming of a War Cabinet by the prime minister.¹⁵⁰ The threat of major conflict and the need to mobilize all elements of national power was part of DND contingency planning and formed a large portion of the threat scenarios that the department planned against.¹⁵¹ Following on from this, CFJP 7-3 *CF Joint Doctrine on Mobilization* was published in 2002 as the authoritative guide on how the CAF would join a national mobilization effort. Structured around the 4SMP, CFJP 7-3 did not go into

¹⁴⁵ DND, GoC, “Canadian Forces Mobilization Plan (Draft),” September 1996.

¹⁴⁶ Research was unable to uncover mobilization plans or concepts for the RCAF and RCN, however it is assumed that this planning activity did occur in accordance with direction given to each element in the “Canadian Forces Mobilization Plan (Draft)”. Though only a final draft version of this document was found, it is assumed that the final signed version largely resembled the available copy, based on the hand-written comments by the reviewing officer. DND, GoC, “Land Force Command Mobilization Concept (Draft),” February 1996.

¹⁴⁷ GoC, “Land Force Command Mobilization Concept (Draft)”

¹⁴⁸ DND, GoC, *Canadian Forces and Department of National Defence Mobilization Planning Framework*, 1999, 1.

¹⁴⁹ GoC, *Mobilization Planning Framework*, Annex D, Annex E.

¹⁵⁰ GoC, *Mobilization Planning Framework*, Annex D, Annex E.

¹⁵¹ DND, GoC, “The Development of a Scenario Set for Departmental Force Planning” (Operational Research Division, November 1998), B27-B29.

detail on specific tasks, rather it constituted “conceptual preparation” and formed the most basic level of mobilization planning intended to provide general awareness and cognitive preparation.¹⁵²

Concurrent to this period of renewed mobilization planning was the series of drastic drawdowns in the Canadian defence establishment, known as the “Decade of Darkness.”¹⁵³ Initiated by the same *1994 Defence White Paper* that outlined the 4SMP and reinforced by yearly Defence Planning Guidance,¹⁵⁴ these cuts progressively shrunk the size and capabilities of the CAF, with total force strength dropping from 85,000 in 1992 to 64,600 in 1997.¹⁵⁵ Coinciding with the move from Commitment to Capability Based Planning, this shift was part of the drive to reduce expenditures, resulting in a smaller, less capable CAF. Concurrent to this shift was an identity and culture crisis in the CAF, with numerous high-profile scandals tainting the professional image of the profession of arms in Canada.¹⁵⁶ Notwithstanding the presence of a handful of extremely competent and professional officers, military leadership at the time, in addition to many other deficiencies, has been characterized as complacent, hesitant to change, and at an “absolute nadir.”¹⁵⁷ Despite this complacency, preparedness was still a priority for CAF leadership.

¹⁵² DND, GoC, *Canadian Forces Joint Doctrine for Mobilization*, Canadian Forces Joint Doctrine 7–3, 2002.

¹⁵³ Gloria Galloway, “Hillier Decries Military’s ‘Decade of Darkness,’” (The Globe and Mail Online, February 16, 2007).

¹⁵⁴ Gaps in years in the cited sources are due to lack of availability of the physical documents, but it can be assumed that the 4SMP is carried on in the missing years of 1996 and 2000 based on the existence of other source material from this period. DND, GoC, *Defence Planning Guidance (DPG) 1995*, 1995; DND, GoC, *DPG 1997*, 1997; DND, GoC, *DPG 1998*, 1998; DND, GoC, *DPG 1999*, 1999; DND GoC, *DPG 2001*, 2001.

¹⁵⁵ DND, GoC, “Audit of Force Reduction Program,” Director General Audit (Chief Review Services, January 1997).

¹⁵⁶ For a detailed account of this period see Scott Taylor and Brian Nolan, *Tarnished Brass: Crime and Corruption in the Canadian Military* (Lester Publishing Limited, 1996).

¹⁵⁷ Craig Leslie Mantle, “Complacency: A Threat to (Canadian) Military Professionalism,” in *Threat to Military Professionalism: International Perspectives* (Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2012), 221.

Why, then, did the Government of Canada, DND, and the CAF prioritize mobilization planning at a time when many felt that the Cold War had been won and that there was no chance of another World War? Indeed, was this not a new era of peace, “the end of history” as encapsulated by philosopher Francis Fukuyama?¹⁵⁸ Perhaps widespread complacency in CAF leadership led them to focus on what they knew, preparation for large-scale combat. Unwilling to change, perhaps focusing on a familiar “what if” scenario of another World War, maybe this was a small act of defiance against the deep budget and structure cuts the CAF was facing. Regardless, the key factor is that these mobilization planning activities were driven directly from the federal government in the *1994 Defence White Paper* and formed part of strategic national policy. Civilian and military leadership had a long history of cognitive preparation in the concept of mobilization planning, were familiar with its responsibilities and implications, and the need to have a plan even if the probability of using it was small. The 1990s mobilization planning effort was just the latest in a long process that dated to the Second World War. The 1980s had seen its own reinvigoration of mobilization planning,¹⁵⁹ as did preceding decades.¹⁶⁰ This direct history of mobilization planning formed cognitive preparation in DND and CAF leadership, resulting in consensus that not only was mobilization planning a critical activity in peacetime, it was the CAF’s responsibility to help lead this effort and maintain the institutional knowledge on the subject for the Government of Canada. The 1999 *Mobilization Planning Framework* and CFJP 7-3 *CF Joint Doctrine on Mobilization* formed a body of knowledge, encapsulating this

¹⁵⁸ Francis Fukuyama, *End of History and the Last Man* (Free Press, 1993).

¹⁵⁹ Emergency Planning Canada, GoC, *Planning for Mobilization*, Proceedings of Symposium on Civil Mobilization Planning, 1983, 3.

¹⁶⁰ Frank Maas, “The 1964 White Paper on Defence: Responding to a New Strategic Context,” in *The Price of Alliance: The Politics and Procurement of Leopard Tanks for Canada’s NATO Brigade* (University of British Columbia Press, 2017), 10-11; DND, GoC, *War Book*, 1961.

institutional consensus on how to mobilize the nation with a direct lineage to the Second World War.

The post-Cold War peace dividend did not shatter institutional belief in mobilization planning, however the post-9/11 security environment did. With the CAF's substantial commitment to Afghanistan beginning in 2002, focus shifted away from preparedness for large-scale conflict. In 2003, the Defence Science Advisory Board (DSAB) was tasked to conduct a study analyzing existing CAF mobilization plans and verify that they were still fit for purpose given changes in the contemporary security environment. Finding that the conventional planning contained in the recently published CFJP 7-3 was no longer relevant, the DSAB recommended that a new mobilization plan be built primarily to counter the asymmetric threat of terrorism in a domestic setting.¹⁶¹ Though it is unclear how and if the DSAB's recommendations were implemented, the *Canada First Defence Strategy* issued by the Stephen Harper-led Conservative government in 2008 made no mention of mobilization planning;¹⁶² this was a marked departure from previous defence policies that had overtly messaged mobilization as a priority.¹⁶³ Furthermore, CFJP 7-3 stayed in force for a further 21 years.¹⁶⁴ Rather than demonstrate that CAF leadership still prioritized mobilization planning against the threat of large-scale conflict, this shows the intense hyper-focus on Afghanistan; CFJP 7-3 was allowed to remain in force due to distraction and omission, rather than deliberate intent.

This conclusion is reinforced by the way in which CFJP 7-3 was ultimately rescinded. Though this decision was approved by the Commander of Canadian Joint Operations Command

¹⁶¹ DND, GoC, "Mobilization: The Way Ahead" (Defence Science Advisory Board, 2003), 10.

¹⁶² DND, GoC, *Canada First Defence Strategy*, 2008.

¹⁶³ GoC, *1994 Defence White Paper*; DND, GoC, *White Paper on Defence: Challenge and Commitment, a Defence Policy for Canada*, 1987; DND, GoC, *White Paper on Defence*, 1964.

¹⁶⁴ DND, GoC, "CANFORGEN 132/24 CJWC 005/24 051712Z SEP 24 - RESCINDING OF CANADIAN FORCES JOINT PUBLICATION 7-0 SERIES," September 5, 2024.

(CJOC) with the understanding that there would not be a gap in doctrine and that any relevant material would be covered in existing CAF programs,¹⁶⁵ there was indeed a critical gap. The current readiness system of the CAF, the Joint Managed Readiness Program (JMRP), focuses on the use of existing CAF capacities, with concepts analogous to the first and second stages of the 4SMP. However, it is lacking in scope for expansion of the CAF in response to a large-scale conflict, the third and fourth stages, thus the gap in doctrine on the high-end of the spectrum of conflict.¹⁶⁶ This omission was not one of incompetence but of absence; over the previous decade during important CAF doctrinal discussions, there was no one advocating for the maintenance of mobilization doctrine.¹⁶⁷ Without a champion and with uncertainty as to who was responsible for stewardship of CFJP 7-3, the CAF's remaining documented institutional knowledge on mobilization died with little fanfare. Most importantly, the acceptance of this decision was not based on a holistic understanding of the risks and implications. By 2024, mobilization planning had disappeared from the consciousness of the CAF: over six years of working groups with hundreds of individual attendees had little conception of it, and a senior CAF leader was able to

¹⁶⁵ Major B.J.S. Hibbert, "Briefing Note for Commander CJOC: Recommendation to Rescind Canadian Forces Joint Publication 7-0 Training Series," October 17, 2024, 1.

¹⁶⁶ In fact, a simple search for the term "mobilization" within the JMRP and related documents comes up naught, further reinforcing the lack of prioritization of mobilization as a concept. DND, GoC, *Joint Managed Readiness Program Volume 1: Standing Guidance on the Management of Canadian Armed Forces Joint Readiness*, 2023; DND, GoC, *Joint Managed Readiness Program Volume 2: FY 2023/24 Annual Direction on the Conduct of Canadian Armed Forces Joint Readiness*, 2023; DND, GoC, *Joint Managed Readiness Program Volume 2: FY 2024/25 Annual Direction on the Conduct of Canadian Armed Forces Joint Readiness*, 2024.

¹⁶⁷ From 2017 to 2023, sessions of the Joint Doctrine Working Groups (JDWG) hosted by the Canadian Joint Warfare Centre (CJWC) discussed the future of CFJP 7-3. There was consistent uncertainty as to who the custodian of the document was, and though the Canadian Defence Academy was eventually identified, they were also uncertain as to their own responsibility and ownership. As a result, CFJP 7-3 was marked for cancellation as early as 2023. DND, GoC, "Record of Discussion (ROD) – CAF JDWG 18 May, 2017" (Canadian Forces Warfare Centre, May 18, 2017), 2; DND, GoC, "ROD – JDWG Held at the CJWC on 21 November, 2018" (CJWC, November 21, 2018), 6; DND, GoC, "ROD – JDWG Held at the Canadian Joint Warfare Centre (CJWC) on 23 March, 2022" (CJWC, March 23, 2022), 5; DND, GoC, "ROD – JDWG Held At National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) Carling Campus on 29 November 2023" (CJWC, November 29, 2023), 9.

rescind a key document with no apparent opposition and unknowingly accept a critical doctrinal gap with little understanding of the consequences.

While many Allied militaries are openly discussing the concept of mobilization planning within academia, the same is not true in Canada. A review of the primary academic journals of the profession of arms in Canada reveal no articles or editorials on or related to the subject within the last five years.¹⁶⁸ Though Canadian military leadership seem to engage with the topic privately, there is a noticeable dearth of overt discussion on the topic.¹⁶⁹ In contrast, mobilization has often been a topic in discussion within American military circles, especially since the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014.¹⁷⁰ While in Australia, following the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and increased Chinese posturing in the Indo-Pacific, mobilization has been one of the most prominent topics of professional military discourse. Having recently published a new mobilization doctrine manual, *Preparedness and Mobilisation*,¹⁷¹ dialogue has been stoked with the tagline “Mobilisation is back in the lexicon.”¹⁷² The Australian Defence Force (ADF) is actively and publicly engaging with the topic, with numerous articles published over the last several years. Topics of this vibrant discussion include the resilience of a mobilized Australian state in the face of increased competition,¹⁷³ historical reviews of past Australian mobilization

¹⁶⁸ Canadian Military Journal, the Canadian Army Journal, and Royal Canadian Air Force Journal issues from 2019 to 2025 were reviewed. DND, GoC, “Canadian Military Journal,” n.d., <https://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/cmj-landingpage-en.html>; DND, GoC, “Canadian Army Journal,” n.d., <https://www.canada.ca/en/army/services/canadian-army-journal.html>; DND, GoC, “The Royal Canadian Air Force Journal,” n.d., <https://www.canada.ca/en/air-force/corporate/reports-publications/royal-canadian-air-force-journal.html>.

¹⁶⁹ Based on anecdotal experience with CAF senior leadership and a review of public statements, interviews, and engagements of CAF senior leaders in recent years.

¹⁷⁰ Examples include: Ken S. Gilliam and Barrett K. Parker, “Mobilization: The State of the Field,” *The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters* 47, no. 2 (June 1, 2017); Olen Chad Bridges and Andrée Navarro, “Mobilizing for Major War,” *The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters* 47, no. 2 (June 1, 2017).

¹⁷¹ Australian Defence Force (ADF), Commonwealth of Australia, *Preparedness and Mobilisation*, 1st ed., Australian Defence Force Philosophical Doctrine, Series 0, Command, 2024.

¹⁷² ADF, *Preparedness and Mobilisation*, 2.

¹⁷³ David Kilcullen, “Mobilisation and Australia’s National Resilience,” *Australian Army Journal* 20, no. 2 (2024).

strategies,¹⁷⁴ and views to modernizing their approach to future mobilization challenges.¹⁷⁵ In fact, mobilization was identified as a theme for Australian Army Professional Military Education (PME) in 2024.¹⁷⁶ With newly published mobilization doctrine and an active professional dialogue on the subject, the ADF, among other allies, has clearly positioned itself in a leading role in tackling the problem of national mobilization.

Why then does the CAF not engage professionally with mobilization? It could be out of fear of public reaction, though this is unlikely as this would not greatly impact academic engagement. More likely, it is due to a lack of ownership of mobilization as a concept. The idea that the military has a leading role to play in mobilization planning is largely forgotten in the CAF of 2025. During the last period of mobilization planning, from 1994 to 2002, any current senior CAF leader that was then serving would have been in a junior subaltern rank level – far too junior to be involved in such strategic planning activities.¹⁷⁷ As no subsequent unclassified mobilization planning activities occurred, it is possible that current CAF leadership is unaware of the leading role that the organization played in previous planning efforts, nor the depth of mobilization documentation produced. In fact, it is equally likely that most are unaware that the CAF even had mobilization doctrine or that it had been cancelled so recently. Maintenance of records within the CAF is notoriously unreliable,¹⁷⁸ and given that the period in question would

¹⁷⁴ Peter Layton, “National Mobilisation During War: Past Insights, Future Possibilities,” *Australian National University*, National Security College Occasional Paper, August 2020

¹⁷⁵ Stephan Frühling, Graeme Dunk, and Richard Brabin-Smith, “The Concept of Mobilisation and Australian Defence Policy Since Vietnam: Lessons and Cautions for Army in the Post-DSR World,” *Australian Army Journal* 20, no. 3 (2024)

¹⁷⁶ “The Cove’s PME Themes of 2024,” The Cove, March 19, 2024, <https://cove.army.gov.au/article/coves-pme-themes-2024>.

¹⁷⁷ For example, the current CDS, General M.A.J. Carignan was commissioned in 1990, and would have been a subaltern during most of this period. DND, GoC, “Chief of Defence Staff - Biography,” January 24, 2025, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/organizational-structure/chief-defence-staff/cds-bio.html>.

¹⁷⁸ The CAF has long received criticism for long delays in actioning Access to Information Act requests, with a consistent reason for delays being poor or non-existent record keeping, especially of analog documents. Parliament

have been when record-keeping was transitioning from physical, type-written documents to digital records, this supports an assumption that many mobilization planning documents were simply lost.¹⁷⁹ Anecdotal experience during the research for this paper supports this, as other interested parties within DND reported similar experiences in being unable to track down documents.

From the end of the Second World War until 2002, there had been an unbroken chain of mobilization planning efforts in Canada. All involved the CAF in a leading role, primarily as the professional keepers of corporate knowledge on how to mobilize the state. With the Cold War over and a focus on counter-insurgency in Afghanistan, CAF leadership post-2002 gradually forgot their role in mobilization planning. Successive governments of the day, both Liberal and Conservative, did not know to push the CAF to plan for it, nor apparently did military leaders advocate for it. In fact, no Canadian defence policy document has made mention of mobilization as a concept since the *1994 Defence White Paper*; as a result, the CAF lost the intellectual high ground as the government's experts on mobilization.¹⁸⁰ The CAF must reclaim it.

Way Ahead.

What then should be done to prepare the CAF for the prospect of mobilization, particularly in the context of a potential *Total War*? There are clear material preparations that must take place, regarding procurement of equipment and preparation of the defence industrial base, but these will be explored further in Chapter 3. Most importantly and immediately for the CAF is the need for cognitive preparation; this is the fount from which all other preparatory

of Canada, "Study on Transparency at National Defence" (House Standing Committee on National Defence, February 7, 2024).

¹⁷⁹ The author's experience working with primary source documentation from this period supports this assertion. Most mobilization documents from the 1990s are type-written vice electronically produced, and several other interested DND parties expressed frustration at not being able to locate documents from this period.

¹⁸⁰ DND, GoC, *Canada First Defence Strategy*, 2008; GoC, *Strong Secure Engaged*; GoC, *Our North, Strong and Free*.

activities for mobilization flow. The CAF must recognize that expansion of military capacity in response to an emergency is something that must be planned for before Canada crosses the threshold to war. The profession of arms in Canada must take ownership of the concept of military mobilization, recognizing that it fits into a larger whole-of-government effort. The military is naturally subservient to government control in a democracy, and it is not supposed that military leadership should drive government policy in terms of national security preparedness. However, the military is the only arm of government that wages war – it behooves CAF leadership, in its advisory role to government, to advocate for a robust policy of national preparedness and planning for state mobilization. The CAF does not decide the wars that it gets to fight, nor should it; however, it must prepare for the ones that it must.

Dialogue about mobilization should be encouraged within the profession of arms in Canada, which can be done through professional journals, such as *Canadian Military Journal* and others. Discussion should be encouraged, not only to explore the nuances and complexities of modern mobilization planning, as is thriving in Allied circles, but also to begin socializing the concept to the wider community. Most importantly, the CAF must begin deliberate planning for mobilization to develop a framework for how CAF plans will fit into a whole-of-government effort. The CAF's current approach to strategic readiness planning has been criticized as fragmented and based on each specific environment;¹⁸¹ preparation for mobilization should form the basis of a strategic, joint readiness approach to unify all other CAF planning efforts. Structures and expansion goals must be developed, as well as policy and legislative barriers overcome. Measures should be introduced to manage an expanded intake of volunteers; the ongoing measures to address recruiting as part of CAF reconstitution can be a starting point.

¹⁸¹ DND, GoC, "Report Summary: Ready Forces Integrated Strategic Analysis" (Assistant Deputy Minister (Review Services), March 2023), Finding 2.

Importantly, CAF mobilization planning should form the vanguard of government preparedness, as the material and personnel needs of the CAF will directly inform economic and social measures required to support a war effort.

Waiting for government direction to begin mobilization planning, as occurred with the *1994 Defence White Paper*, risks the CAF being caught unprepared. Therefore, regardless of government policy, the CAF must begin contingency planning for the prospect of military mobilization. The example of 1939 is instructive: the Defence Scheme No. 3 planning efforts of the 1930s were not directed or formally approved by government, rather they were a form of prudent contingency planning that was ultimately validated.¹⁸² Canada's last mobilization planning framework included provision for a significant period of up to ten years of warning of strategic-level threats that may warrant mobilization;¹⁸³ the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014 and full-scale invasion in 2022 ought to have been the trigger, therefore, for renewed mobilization planning. This is a subject in which the CAF used to lead; it must retake the intellectual high ground to help ensure national preparedness and resiliency in the face of a national emergency. Improvising a mobilization of the CAF after the nation crosses the threshold to armed conflict is not only unfeasible, but also irresponsible. When an emergency arrives, the Canadian public will expect their military to have a plan; it behooves the CAF to not disappoint them.

The materiel requirements to support a ten-fold or greater expansion of the CAF would be immense, and the question remains that even if the CAF cognitively prepares for the prospect

¹⁸² Stephen J. Harris, *Canadian Brass: The Making of a Professional Army, 1860-1939* (University of Toronto Press, 1988), 167-191.

¹⁸³ DND, GoC, *Canadian Forces and Department of National Defence Mobilization Planning Framework*, 1999, 2/8.

of mobilization, is Canada able to support it with the tools it needs to win, or at the very least creditably participate in, a *Total War*?

CHAPTER 3 – INDUSTRIAL MOBILIZATION

Before the war, few thought of Canada as an industrial power and many doubted whether the manufacturing techniques, which had been perfected in other countries over the centuries, could be developed here in time to produce the war supplies required. It was a challenge that was splendidly met by the men and women of Canada.

- C.D. Howe, 1950.¹⁸⁴

Introduction

Though the CAF may have been cognitively prepared for military mobilization in 1939, Canada's lack of industrial preparation for military expansion left it woefully underequipped,¹⁸⁵ incapable of engaging in large-scale combat as "the country's immediate means for waging war were slender."¹⁸⁶ The Canadian public *does* care about the ability of its military to wage war; the numerous Royal Commissions in both wars into equipping the Canadian military demonstrate the political volatility of the issue, with investigations into issues such as shell contracts,¹⁸⁷ small arms ammunition,¹⁸⁸ submarines,¹⁸⁹ military clothing,¹⁹⁰ surgical supplies,¹⁹¹ horses,¹⁹² and Bren machine guns.¹⁹³ It was not until 1943 that the CA was able to launch large-scale operations,

¹⁸⁴ J. de. N. Kennedy, *History of the Department of Munitions and Supply: Volume I, Production Branches and Crown Corporations* (Edmond Cloutier, King's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1950), v.

¹⁸⁵ New Canadian recruits in 1939 lacked all kinds of essentials, including uniforms and boots. Stacey, *The Canadian Army, 1939-1945*, 4.

¹⁸⁶ Stacey, *The Canadian Army, 1939-1945*: 1

¹⁸⁷ The Honourable Sir William Meredith and The Honourable Lyman Poore Duff, "Report of the Royal Commission on Shell Contracts" (GoC, 1916).

¹⁸⁸ The Honourable Sir Charles Davidson, "Report of the Royal Commission on the Sale of Small Arms Ammunition" (GoC, 1917).

¹⁸⁹ The Honourable Sir Charles Davidson, "Report of the Royal Commission on the Purchase of Submarines" (GoC, 1917).

¹⁹⁰ The Honourable Sir Charles Davidson, "Report of the Royal Commission Concerning Military Cloth" (GoC, 1917).

¹⁹¹ The Honourable Sir Charles Davidson, "Report of the Royal Commission on the Purchase of Surgical Field Dressings and Other Surgical Supplies" (GoC, 1917).

¹⁹² The Honourable Sir Charles Davidson, "Report of the Royal Commission on the Purchase of Horses in Nova Scotia for the First Canadian Contingent" (GoC, 1917)

¹⁹³ The Honourable Henry Hague Davis, "Report of the Royal Commission on the Bren Machine Gun Contract" (GoC, 1939).

starting in Sicily; earlier operations were either small or outright disasters.¹⁹⁴ With the Canadian-led brigade in Latvia on Russia's doorstep, the CAF would assuredly not have the same scope for a long-term buildup in wartime as occurred during the Second World War.

It is urgently imperative, therefore, that the CAF be provided with the tools it needs to be successful on the battlefield, expand its capacity in wartime, and prepare before hostilities commence. Presently, Canadian industry is unprepared to support the mobilization of the CAF during a major conflict due to vulnerability in capacity of the defence industrial base. Industrial mobilization, harnessing the nation's productive capacity through conversion of the civilian economy towards defence production, would be required. However, Canada must overcome barriers such as a lack of resiliency in critical infrastructure and preparedness in governance. This chapter will explore key themes in how Canada must meet the material needs of wartime military expansion, based on the rough mobilization requirement of a ten-fold expansion as established in the previous chapter. This is a macro-level analysis, and as such will focus on key national level industrial themes; there are a great many related issues of mobilization worthy of further study, to include financial mobilization, wartime labour management and relations, as well as mobilization of supply chains. The immensity of the problem of industrial mobilization necessitates deliberate planning prior to the outbreak of hostilities. The broad nature of this requirement should not take away from the utility and urgency of this analysis, as these themes are universal across mobilization scenarios and forms of national emergency. Figure 3.1 below demonstrates the key themes of industrial mobilization, building upon those of military mobilization, within the context of *totality*.

¹⁹⁴ The Defence of Hong Kong in 1941 and the Dieppe Raid in 1942 are the notable examples. For Hong Kong see Terry Copp, "The Defence of Hong Kong," *Canadian Military History* 10, no. 4 (2001): 5–20; For Dieppe see David O'Keefe, *One Day in August* (Knopf Canada, 2013).

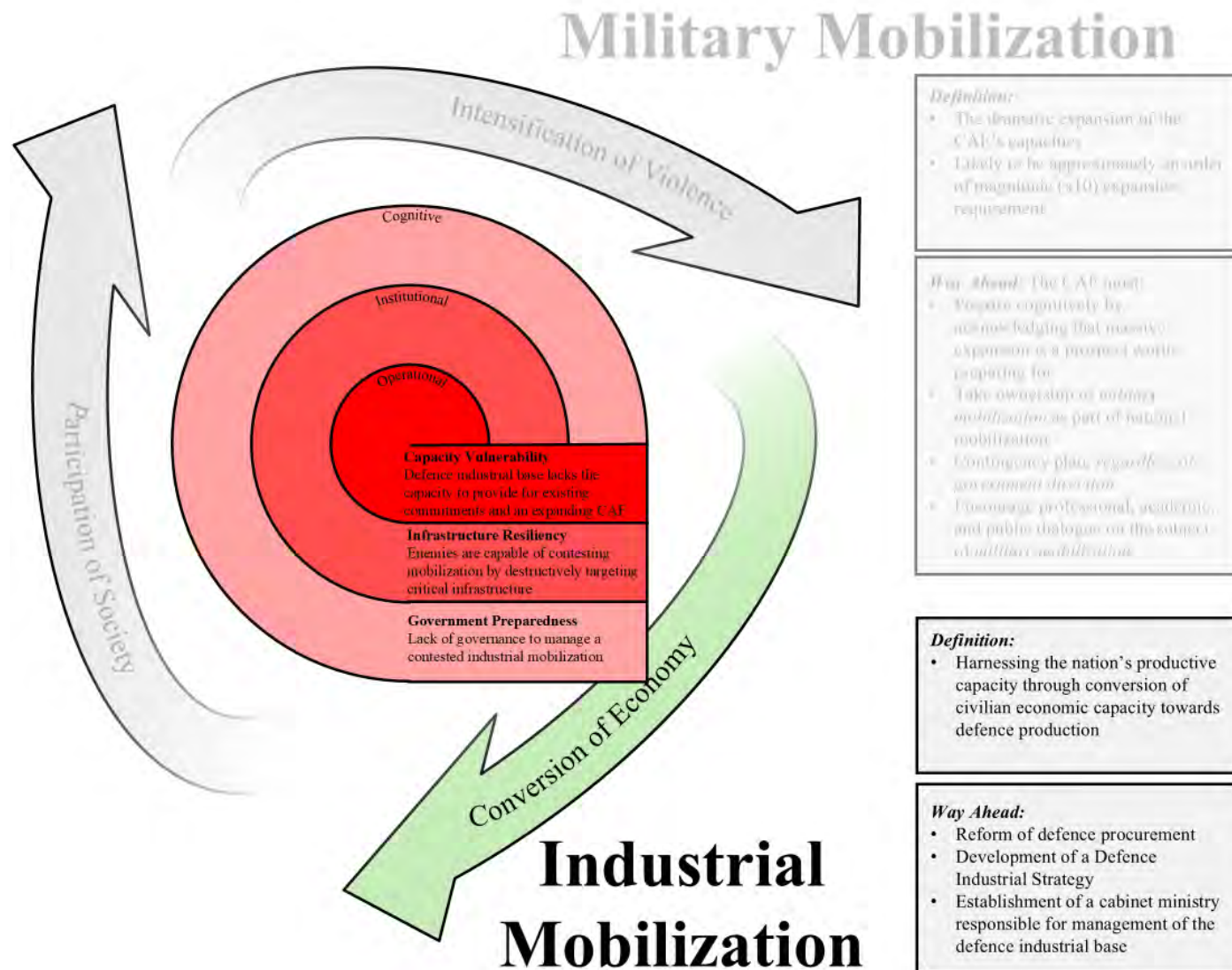


Figure 3.1 – Industrial Mobilization and the Vortex of Totality

Source: Author Created.

Capacity Vulnerability.

Canada has perennially struggled to materially support its existing military commitments.¹⁹⁵ Not until the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 did the urgency of this issue come to the fore, with renewed emphasis on ensuring those forces deployed on Op REASSURANCE were capable of not only deterring Russian forces through their presence, but of engaging them in combat.¹⁹⁶ Procurement projects were rushed through to provide critical capabilities, such as air defence, anti-tank missiles, and counter-drone systems.¹⁹⁷ These were not only far too late in fielding, but the method by which they were brought into service highlights the weakness in Canadian military procurement. Termed Urgent Operational Requirements (UOR), these projects were designed outside the normal procurement processes to field critical capabilities quickly. The procurement of the G-Wagon vehicles to replace the Iltis light trucks during Afghanistan was a notable example of this, where Canadian soldiers were initially underequipped and vulnerable until a UOR could provide for them; this cost lives.¹⁹⁸ The very need to use such processes to field what are basic military capabilities that any credible force ought to possess highlights the blatant failure of traditional Canadian procurement, while military decisions to divest capabilities as part of the change from Commitment to Capability Based Planning share the blame. Canadian troops in Latvia ought never have been deployed

¹⁹⁵ Lee Berthiaume, “More than 100 Military Procurements Facing Delays: Defence Department,” *The National Post*, February 5, 2020, <https://nationalpost.com/pmnn/news-pmn/canada-news-pmn/more-than-100-military-procurements-facing-delays-defence-department>; Toms Rostoks and Alexander Lanoszka, “Success Assured? Appraising the Canadian-Led Enhanced Forward Presence Battlegroup in Latvia” (Macdonald-Laurier Institute, April 2024), 13-16.

¹⁹⁶ Rostoks and Lanoszka, “Success Assured?”, 11-12.

¹⁹⁷ DND, GoC, “Minister Anand Updates National Defence Stakeholders on Progress to Modernize the Canadian Armed Forces for Tomorrow’s Security Challenges,” News Release, March 9, 2023, <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/news/2023/03/minister-anand-updates-national-defence-stakeholders-on-progress-to-modernize-the-canadian-armed-forces-for-tomorrows-security-challenges.html>.

¹⁹⁸ See Sean M. Maloney, *The Canadian Army in Afghanistan: Volume I: A Nation Under Fire* (Ottawa: National Defence, 2022), 211-213.

there without the tools to meet their mission. Though some of these UOR projects have since delivered,¹⁹⁹ their remit is exclusively for the Canadian troops in Latvia and precludes the rest of the CAF. The success of the UORs following the 2022 invasion only mitigates the fact that Canadian procurement failed in the first place. Indeed, assurances by the Canadian government that recent budgetary shortfalls will not impact procurement of critical capabilities have been criticized as “not believable.”²⁰⁰ However, much has been written on the subject of Canadian military procurement and how to reform it to ensure the CAF can be provided the tools it needs,²⁰¹ and therefore it is obvious that any reorientation of national security policy towards mobilization planning will require wholesale reform of this critical function. Doing so will inevitably require the acceptance of risk. The byzantine nature of Canadian procurement is designed to reduce financial and political risk and spread economic benefits across the country, but far too often this comes at the cost of reduced military effectiveness and delayed acquisition; accepting risk would invert this dynamic.²⁰²

All solutions to the problem of equipping the CAF require political will from government, but should that be forthcoming, does Canada even have the industrial capacity to equip an expanding CAF with what it needs? With a ten-fold expansion required to field a fighting division and similar air and naval contributions, it is relatively straightforward to determine that Canada is wholly incapable of equipping such a force quickly enough with the existing defence industrial base. For the sake of this discussion, the example of armoured

¹⁹⁹ Canadian Army, “Building up Our Anti-Air Capabilities. 4th General Support Regiment Began Operator Training on the RBS 70NG in Preparation for Deploying on Op REASSURANCE.,” Twitter (X) Post, November 15, 2024, <https://x.com/canadianarmy/status/1857484829790711852?s=46>.

²⁰⁰ Rostoks and Lanoszka, “Success Assured?”, 20.

²⁰¹ HoC, GoC, “A Time for Change: Reforming Defence Procurement in Canada,” Report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, June 2024.

²⁰² Detailed discussion on the mechanics of defence procurement reform are out of the scope of this discussion. For further insight, see Charles Davies, “Understanding Defence Procurement,” *Canadian Military Journal* 15, no. 2 (Spring 2015).

fighting vehicles (AFV) will be explored in detail, as they are one of the most basic and essential equipment requirements of a large land commitment like Op REASSURANCE.²⁰³ It is expected that these types of platforms would suffer high levels of attrition in combat, therefore increasing the production demand for such vehicles. General Dynamics Land Systems (GDLS) currently produces the Light Armoured Vehicle 6.0 (LAV 6) family of AFVs in Canada.²⁰⁴ The delivery of the last variants of what will be a fleet of over 900 vehicles is in its final stages,²⁰⁵ which will only equip two thirds of the CA's existing Regular Force infantry battalions.²⁰⁶ Equipping a division would require in the range of 500 to 1000 AFVs,²⁰⁷ plus additional requirements for a training fleet, a steady supply of replacements, and spare parts. It is likely that a regular production capacity of 200 to 400 per month or more would be required to field such a force and sustain it in theatre.²⁰⁸ Currently, GDLS delivers to the CA at a rate of less than 40 vehicles per month.²⁰⁹ GDLS dedicates most of its production capacity to foreign partners, particularly the

²⁰³ The same principles apply across the spectrum of military capabilities, including complex air and naval platforms.

²⁰⁴ "LAV 6.0," General Dynamics Land Systems, n.d., <https://www.gdls.com/lav-6-0/>.

²⁰⁵ The LAV 6 fleet is a mix of upgraded older LAV III vehicles and newly built support variants. DND, GoC, "Light Armoured Vehicle III Upgrade (LAVUP) Project Summary," April 1, 2019, <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/documents/quad-charts/lavup-quad-chart-en.pdf>; DND, GoC, "Armoured Combat Support Vehicle (ACSV) Project Summary," March 20, 2023, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/procurement/armoured-combat-support-vehicle.html>.

²⁰⁶ Each CMBG has two mechanized infantry battalions and one light infantry battalion, with the LAV 6 fleet equipping the former. Much effort has been spent justifying the light infantry battalions, but there is no explicit justification based on lack of equipment. DND, GoC, "Light Forces Initiating Directive" (Lieutenant-General J.M.M. Hainse, Commander Canadian Army, July 13, 2016).

²⁰⁷ The Canadian Army does not have current doctrine for divisional level operations or requirements; thus estimation based on the following: an infantry battalion is equipped with approximately sixty AFVs plus supporting variants. A mechanized division could contain anywhere between six to twelve such battalions, plus a variety of other AFVs across its combat support and combat service support elements. DND, GoC, *Battle Group in Operations*, B-GL-321-005/FP-001, 2012; DND, GoC, *The Infantry Battalion in Battle*, B-GL-309-001/FT-001, 1995; DND, GoC, *Brigade Tactics*, B-GL-321-003/FP-001, 2017.

²⁰⁸ Based on combination of needing to generate a division within 6-12 months, a stock requirement of +50%, and an attrition rate of +0.5% per day or 15% per month, derived from conservative Second World War loss rates. Haynes, "Operational Support," 14. Trevor N. Dupuy et al., *Handbook on Ground Forces Attrition in Modern Warfare* (Historical Evaluation and Research Organization, 1986), 124-145.

²⁰⁹ It is not clear if the delivery rate is per garrison division or for the Canadian Army as a whole, with rates ranging between 8 to 40 vehicles per month. Ken Pole, "Enter the Armoured Combat Support Vehicle," *Canadian Army Today*, December 16, 2024, <https://canadianarmytoday.com/enter-the-armoured-combat-support-vehicle/>.

U.S. Army in the form of the Stryker family of vehicles;²¹⁰ this raises the question of how much capacity can be reoriented to Canadian national requirements vice supporting allies, heightening the political volatility of the issue. It can be assumed that some portion can, however it is expected that foreign demand would also be high and for the sake of alliance stability the flow of material to the U.S. Army could not be entirely shut off. Even with increased investments from wartime defence expenditures and other acceleratory measures, it is doubtful that existing industrial capacity can supply this demand of ten- or twenty-times existing capacity. Physical expansion of industrial facilities takes years, time which would not be available in the face of a wartime expansion.

How much of Canada's civilian capacity can be converted to military purposes to support a wartime expansion? In the case of AFV production, there is likely no easy answer on conversion of industrial facilities. Though it is likely possible with enough money and ingenuity to convert some automotive or heavy industries to produce AFVs, this would likely require compromise of military specifications to meet the sheer production requirements needed. The American approach to tank production in the Second World War provides a valuable example. The M4 Sherman tank, the mainstay of American armoured forces, was not the most combat effective tank on the battlefield. Indeed, American industry was capable of producing far better armed and armoured vehicles; the M4 Sherman was a war-winning tank not due to its tactical abilities but for its ease of production, with over 40,000 produced.²¹¹ Fully eighty-percent of American tank production during the war was conducted by automobile factories reoriented to

²¹⁰ Over 4000 Stryker vehicles have been delivered to the U.S. Army, with production and delivery still ongoing. Nickolai Sukharev, "Army Looking to Continue Stryker Vehicle Production," Inside Defence, December 15, 2023, <https://insidedefense.com/insider/army-looking-continue-stryker-vehicle-production>.

²¹¹ Steven Zaloga, *Armored Thunderbolt: The U.S. Army Sherman in World War II* (Stackpole Books, 2008): 327; Spencer C. Tucker, *Instruments of War: Weapons and Technologies That Have Changed History* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015), 221.

war production.²¹² The U.S. Army built its approach to armoured warfare around the M4 Sherman, as a compromise between military requirements and production capacity, and built doctrine around the limitations of the platform;²¹³ the same approach may hold in the twenty-first century.

Adapting CAF requirements to the realities of the production capacity of a mobilized Canadian industry could result in accepting less capable equipment in large quantities to support military mobilization. Priority may shift to production of platforms that existing civilian industry would reasonably be capable of making, in the case of AFVs something that a traditional automotive factory can produce. Instead of building LAV 6s with all their advanced systems, accepting much more basic vehicles capable of fulfilling the essentials of military tasks could be required. Likely, this would be a much more primitive vehicle, focusing on the bare essentials of mobility, protection, and firepower while eschewing crew comforts, electronics, and computerized systems. The Roshel Senator armoured truck is an example; in widespread use by Ukraine, it is produced in Canada and based on a commercial Ford F550 chassis.²¹⁴ Though a less capable vehicle than the LAV 6, the Senator can be produced in large numbers by traditional automobile factories. Military expectations would need to compromise, with force generation and employment considerations adjusting accordingly. This compromise would not be required, or at least not to such an extent, with all forms of military equipment. Those items that already

²¹² V.R. Cardozier, *The Mobilization of the United States in World War II: How the Government, Military and Industry Prepared for War* (McFarland & Company, Inc., 1995), 138.

²¹³ Tank doctrine that was built around the M4 Sherman has been blamed for a degree of complacency amongst U.S. Army leaders that led to a hesitancy to accept newer tank models even when it was clear they were needed. Having built a tactical doctrine fitted for the M4 Sherman, leaders became too comfortable and unwilling to see deficiencies in the platform. Charles M. Baily, *Faint Praise: American Tanks and Tank Destroyers during World War II* (Archon Books, 1983), 140-146.

²¹⁴ The author's personal experience with AFU members indicate that the Senator is a popular vehicle with its Ukrainian crews; Brennan Leffler and Mike Drolet, "Canadian Shield: How Ukrainians Are Defending Their Homeland from 8,000 Kilometres Away," *Global News*, November 19, 2022, <https://globalnews.ca/news/9280476/canada-armoured-vehicles-ukraine/>.

have roughly equivalent civilian analogues, for example soft-skin trucks and engineering equipment, could simply have production lines adapted and existing fleets appropriated.

Canada is a relatively large arms manufacturer, with non-U.S. arms exports valuing over \$2.1 billion in 2023.²¹⁵ There is considerable scope for a compromise approach in equipment production and expansion of the existing defence industrial base, particularly light armoured vehicles,²¹⁶ small arms,²¹⁷ and ammunition;²¹⁸ however, there are areas where it is not an option. The aerospace industry would prove challenging, in particular the capacity to produce combat aircraft. Canada retains a large aerospace industry, valued at \$28.9 billion in 2024 and is a global leader in production of civil aircraft, engines, and simulator systems.²¹⁹ However, there is currently little if any capacity to produce fighter aircraft in Canada; the last time Canada produced fighters was the CF-116 Freedom Fighter in the 1960s and 70s.²²⁰ Modern platforms such as the F35 have a globalized supply chain, and though there are over thirty Canadian companies involved,²²¹ production is deliberately designed to spread industrial benefits across partner nations.²²² Building capacity during wartime to domestically produce fighter aircraft would not only be costly but prohibitively time-consuming. Barring the development of domestic

²¹⁵ Statistics on arms exports to the United States were unavailable but can be assumed to be significantly higher than those to the rest of the world due to the intertwined natures of both states defence industries. Global Affairs Canada (GAC), GoC, “2023 Exports of Military Goods and Technology,” June 19, 2024.

²¹⁶ GDLS and Roshel Smart Armoured Vehicles maintain production lines of armoured vehicles in Canada.

²¹⁷ Colt Canada produces much of the CAF’s small arms inventory.

²¹⁸ The Munitions Supply Program manages the supply and production of small arms and munitions to the CAF, and currently comprises five companies. DND. GoC, “Chief of the Defence Staff - Mandate and Priorities -26 September 2024,” Proactive Disclosure (House Standing Committee on National Defence, September 26, 2024).

²¹⁹ Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, GoC, “State of Canada’s Aerospace Industry Report: Summer, 2024” (Aerospace Industries Association of Canada, July 11, 2024), 8-10.

²²⁰ Also known as the CF-5. Produced under licence by Canadair, now owned by Bombardier. See Peter Pigott, *Wings Across Canada: An Illustrated History of Canadian Aviation* (Dundurn, 2002), 141-144.

²²¹ DND, GoC, “Future Fighter Capability Project Summary,” March 10, 2025, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/procurement/fighter-jets/future-fighter-capability-project.html>.

²²² For an overview of the F35 program, see Bert Chapman, *Global Defense Procurement and the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-01367-7>.

production as is suggested by recent proposals from both Saab and Dassault Aviation,²²³ supply of fighter aircraft from abroad would be necessary. The demand for fighter aircraft would be extremely high during a *Total War*, as allied need for aircraft to both replace combat losses and expand capacity would rapidly outstrip supply. The same dynamic applies in other critical areas in which Canada cannot produce, such as tank and submarine production. To compete for this limited supply, Canada would need to leverage those industrial strengths it possesses, namely provision of natural resources, to a larger allied war effort.

Coherent industrial policy that is designed to leverage Canada's strengths against its weaknesses to best serve the military and industrial mobilization of the state is required; this cannot occur accidentally and must be done deliberately ahead of time. There are hopeful signs that at least in certain areas, Canada is addressing this issue. The National Shipbuilding Strategy, begun in 2010, is one such area, where a deliberate investment in domestic warship production capacity is finally bearing fruit after significant controversy;²²⁴ this capacity will be invaluable in wartime and is something that can be expanded upon. Indeed, this approach is indicative of the relationship between the RCN and RCAF with mobilization. Rather than being concerned with material preparedness for war, their historical mobilization concern has been with ensuring that the defence industrial base retains some capacity to produce to their highly technical requirements in wartime.²²⁵

²²³ Murray Brewster, "Canada Reconsidering F-35 Purchase amid Tensions with Washington, Says Minister," *CBC News*, March 14, 2025, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/f35-blair-trump-1.7484477>; Terry Milewski, "F-35's French Rival Pitches 'Canadianized' Fighter Jet," *CBC News*, March 18, 2025, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/f-35-s-french-rival-pitches-canadianized-fighter-jet-1.2577234>.

²²⁴ See Elinor C. Sloan, "National Shipbuilding Strategies in Australia, Britain, and Canada," *International Journal: Canada's Journal of Global Policy Analysis* 80, no. 1 (March 2025): 5–22, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00207020251320417>.

²²⁵ Douglas L. Bland, "The Canadian Defence Policy Process and the Emergence of a Defence Industrial Preparedness Policy," in *Canada's Defence Industrial Base: The Political Economy of Preparedness and Procurement*, ed. David G. Haglund (Ronald P. Frye & Company, 1988), 242.

The overall capacity of the defence industrial base represents a critical vulnerability for national mobilization. Canada must be prepared to convert civilian economic capacity to wartime production to address this weakness, and importantly, it must do so in the face of adversaries that are capable of directly interfering and disrupting mobilization activities. Images of Ukrainian cities being attacked daily by Russian drones and cruise missiles for over three years could be transposed onto a future *Total War*; Canada will not be a “fireproof house.”

Infrastructure Resiliency.

During both World Wars, Canadian industrial mobilization was largely uncontested; the enemy had no ability to strike infrastructure in Canada, and defensive measures were largely to appease a fearful public rather than defend against a credible threat. Historian Lee Windsor categorized the deployment of coastal artillery to protect the port of Saint John, New Brunswick in 1914 as “an entirely symbolic gesture to placate local anxiety,”²²⁶ a qualification that applied to most home-defence missions in both wars. This is a key differentiator in any twenty-first century mobilization; Canada’s adversaries are increasingly capable of directly contesting and disrupting mobilization through striking targets in North America, in all domains including space and cyberspace. In particular, Russian long-range precision strike systems, cruise and ballistic missiles, are some of the few capabilities whose potential has largely lived up to its hype.²²⁷ The downfall of long-standing arms control treaties such as the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty only worsen this trend.²²⁸ Should a *Total War* devolve to the use of nuclear weapons, the threat to the Canadian homeland is manifest.

²²⁶ Lee Windsor and Roger Sarty, *Loyal Gunners: 3rd Field Regiment (The Loyal Company) and the History of New Brunswick's Artillery, 1893-2012* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 471.

²²⁷ Robert Dalsjö and Michael and Jonsson, “More than Decorative, Less than Decisive: Russian A2/AD Capabilities and NATO,” *Survival* 63, no. 5 (September 3, 2021), 176-177.

²²⁸ Dalsjö and Jonsson, “More than Decorative”, 177.

Critical infrastructure is defined by Public Safety Canada as “processes, systems, facilities, technologies, networks, assets and services essential to the health, safety, security or economic well-being of Canadians and the effective functioning of government.”²²⁹ These assets, in particular infrastructure such as transportation, manufacturing capacity, and energy production, become critical for the sustainment of any war effort. An expanding defence industry with civilian capacity converting to war production becomes dependent on the provision of energy and fuel, the transportation of goods and products, and the physical factories producing war material. Like any industrialized economy, bottlenecks in supply chains exist in Canada, which would likely become the targets of deliberate attacks with the goal of disrupting mobilization. During the COVID-19 pandemic, global food supplies were disrupted and though most suppliers rapidly reoriented themselves, bottlenecks still occurred with supply chains continuing to rely on “open and predictable markets;” this cannot be assured during a *Total War*.²³⁰ Maintaining the momentum of industrial mobilization in support of military expansion will be vital, and any interference by adversaries could directly impact Canada’s ability to sustain military forces. As a result, the physical resiliency of Canadian infrastructure is a critical requirement to maintain a war effort.

Nowhere has the issue of physical resiliency in Canada’s critical infrastructure been laid bare more than during the 2020 Indigenous blockades of transportation routes. Instigated by a dispute between the Wet’suwet’en Nation in British Columbia and Coastal GasLinks, a pipeline project through their traditional territory, protest activity spread across Canada by sympathetic Indigenous groups. An issue in a remote part of the country dominated the news cycle for weeks

²²⁹ GoC, *National Strategy for Critical Infrastructure*, 2009, 2; Government of Canada, Public Safety Canada, *National Cross Sector Forum: 2021-2023 Action Plan for Critical Infrastructure*, 2021, 1.

²³⁰ Koen Deconinck, Ellie Avery, and Lee Ann Jackson, “Food Supply Chains and COVID-19: Impacts and Policy Lessons,” *EuroChoices* 19, no. 3 (2020), 38.

in early 2020.²³¹ Following the example of the Wet'suwet'en physical blockages of pipeline construction,²³² the Mohawk Nation established blockades targeting transportation infrastructure, primarily railways, in Quebec and Ontario, interrupting passenger and freight transport in the critical Montreal-Toronto corridor. The impact on the Canadian economy was acute: supply chains were interrupted and passenger rail service severed in the most populated region of the country, costing millions of dollars in damages and delays.²³³

In the Wet'suwet'en case, disruption of the Canadian economy was achieved through relatively benign means: non-violent blockades of a railway. If this can be achieved so simply, how might Canada withstand a determined state opponent equipped with the destructive tools to deliberately target critical infrastructure in Canada? In the case of transportation infrastructure, there is little redundancy in rail lines across the country. Particularly in Northern Ontario and Manitoba, there are only one or two rail lines connecting the country, and all East-West rail traffic flows through Winnipeg.²³⁴ Disrupting Canadian industrial mobilization through destructive targeting of critical infrastructure, particularly areas where there is little redundancy, would have an outsized impact on the ability of industry to materially support military mobilization.

Directly targeting the infrastructure itself is not the only way that industrial mobilization could be disrupted. As previously discussed, COVID-19 disrupted global supply chains; however, COVID was an enemy that was not conducting a targeting process to deliberately

²³¹ Rebecca Hume and Kevin Walby, 'Framing, Suppression, and Colonial Policing Redux in Canada: News Representations of the 2019 Wet'suwet'en Blockade', *Journal of Canadian Studies* 55, no. 3 (December 2021), 529.

²³² Michael Luoma, "Collective Self-Determination, Territory and the Wet'suwet'en: What Justifies the Political Authority of Historic Indigenous Governments over Land and People?," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 55, no. 1 (March 2022), 20.

²³³ Luoma, "Collective Self-Determination," 20.

²³⁴ Based on a visual study of resources available on "Canadian Rail Atlas," Railway Association of Canada, 2025, <https://www.railcan.ca/rac-initiatives/canadian-rail-atlas/>.

starve Canadian industry of the materials it needs to produce. With very little of the CAF's material requirements produced exclusively in Canada, disruption to global supply chains could have an outsized impact on Canadian industrial production capacity. Though substitution and reorientation of supply chains could lessen that impact in some areas, critical ones such as aerospace production necessarily rely on a globalized manufacturing network. Furthermore, all industrial products require raw material inputs, many coming from outside Canada and therefore putting the country at the mercy of a global supply chain, adding another layer of vulnerability in need of resiliency.

Canada's adversaries possess the tools required to attack targets in Canada, and in the case of Russia, have shown their willingness to use them on civilian infrastructure. Since the beginning of their invasion of Ukraine, and particularly during the winter months when energy infrastructure is crucial for home heating, Russian ballistic missile, cruise missile, and most commonly drone attacks have pummeled Ukrainian cities.²³⁵ Many of these weapons systems have the range to hit targets in North America,²³⁶ and there is every reason to believe that in a *Total War*, Russia would unleash the same type of terror campaign that Ukraine has suffered since 2022; there is little reason to believe that the PRC would act differently in a conflict. Therefore, Canada must prepare to protect and defend its critical infrastructure in the event of war with a goal of strengthening resiliency.

Addressing this problem can be done through three primary avenues. The first is redundancy, investing significant amounts of capital and resources in building-up additional

²³⁵ Riley Bailey and Fredrick W Kagan, "Russian Strikes More Effective as Ukraine Exhausts Defenses," Special Report (Institute for the Study of War, April 12, 2024).

²³⁶ *Air Launched Cruise Missiles and Stand Off Missiles*, Webinar, Intel Briefing (Janes, 2025), <https://i.janes.com/air-launched-cruise-missiles-webinar>; Center for Strategic and International Studies, "Missiles of Russia," CSIS Missile Defence Project, August 10, 2021, <https://missilethreat.csis.org/country/russia/>.

capacity in key areas, particularly transportation, energy production, and manufacturing of critical capabilities. Though likely to be effective at mitigating the impact of hostile action, increased redundancy would be both costly and time-consuming and is likely only feasible as part of a long-term strategy initiated prior to hostilities. Secondly, there is the approach of physical protection of critical infrastructure. Though there is assuredly a role for hardening and defending assets, the Ukrainian experience is instructive. In the face of persistent Russian missile and drone attacks, the AFU have waged a massive air defence battle to defend their cities and infrastructure. Though Ukraine intercepts between 40 to 60% of Russian drones and missiles, enough penetrate defences to wreak havoc and cause significant casualties.²³⁷ Russian attacks have typically targeted Ukrainian energy production, with the goal of disrupting military-industrial production.²³⁸ This demonstrates that protection of critical infrastructure must be multi-faceted as only focusing on physical protection is ineffective on its own. Ukraine has the advantage that most of their war material is provided by Western allies, with factories safely out of Russian reach behind the shield of NATO's Article 5. In a *Total War*, Canada would have no such advantage; all of Canada's industrial capacity would be targetable and in need of defending. Therefore, the sheer scope of physically protecting Canada's infrastructure precludes any kind of assurance that this defence would be singularly viable, beyond the most critical of assets. However, as in both World Wars, public shows of physical defence by the military can have a morale boosting effect that should not be discounted. The final approach would be reconstruction, the capacity to rapidly repair and reconstruct damaged infrastructure that has been attacked. The German experience withstanding Allied strategic bombing during the Second World War is useful: their ability to rebuild factories, railways, and infrastructure made Germany

²³⁷ Bailey and Kagan, "Russian Strikes More Effective"

²³⁸ Bailey and Kagan, "Russian Strikes More Effective," 3-4.

a “prize fighter unwilling to go down.”²³⁹ This would require organization and personnel ready to rapidly respond to attacks to repair and restore infrastructure function. To creditably secure Canadian critical infrastructure, all three protection methods would need to be applied and balanced, requiring dedicated governance structures to manage this effort, to assure a level of resiliency so as not to negatively impact mobilization activities.

Government Preparedness.

The need to manage defence production, conversion of civilian capacity, sourcing of foreign supply, as well as defence of critical infrastructure all point to the need for deliberate governance. The current peacetime approach to management of defence production has been criticized as having become “more complex and bureaucratic as additional federal departments and agencies have become involved,”²⁴⁰ as compared to the traditional wartime approach of “centralization of defence procurement under a single federal department.”²⁴¹ A lack of responsibility for its failures, particularly military procurement, has been a common source of concern for years.²⁴² There is no one single minister or civil servant in the federal government, beyond the prime minister, that is empowered with the authority to cohere the various threads of industrial mobilization to ensure Canada can sustain a war effort. This represents a critical gap in governance, with the end result that should Canada need to mobilize industrially today, it would be haphazard and improvised, reminiscent of the mismanaged Hughes mobilization of 1914.²⁴³ However, in 1914, there had been little foresight as to the sheer industrial immensity of modern

²³⁹ Tami Davis Biddle, “British and American Approaches to Strategic Bombing: Their Origins and Implementation in the World War II Combined Bomber Offensive,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 18, no. 1 (March 1995), 128.

²⁴⁰ Martin Auger, “The Evolution of Defence Procurement in Canada: A Hundred-Year History” (Parliamentary Information and Research Service, Library of Parliament, December 14, 2020), 18.

²⁴¹ Auger, “The Evolution of Defence Procurement in Canada,” 18.

²⁴² GoC, “A Time for Change: Reforming Defence Procurement in Canada,” 8-10.

²⁴³ See Chapter 2

war, and therefore Canadian decision makers were in uncharted territory; this ought not to be the case today, where historical understanding as well as more current Ukrainian experience demonstrate that planning is critical.

A cabinet ministry with explicit responsibility and authority to manage the defence industrial base could be advantageous. Though in peacetime the scope of such a ministry would be necessarily limited, possibly with an initial mandate of reforming defence procurement, it would form a nucleus around which preparatory activities for industrial mobilization could be built. In wartime, this ministry could be the basis for a more expansive mandate akin to the Second World War-era Ministry of Munitions and Supply. Ideally, collaboration with civilian industry can occur so that there is a minimal impact on the free market with less need for direct government control and coercive measures. This was largely the approach during the First World War, where cooperation of private industry was coordinated by government rather than compelled.²⁴⁴ However, there were myriad issues with this approach, and ultimately government was driven in some instances to compel cooperation of industry and overcome cronyism and profiteering.²⁴⁵ The fiduciary responsibility of companies to shareholders can conflict with the national interest; in wartime the latter necessarily takes precedence. While voluntary cooperation of industry should be desired in management of defence industry, government should be prepared to compel industry if needed.

The case for consolidation of procurement and management of the defence industrial base is not clear cut. The idea has been floated at the legislative level in recent years, primarily as an

²⁴⁴ Arthur Marwick, "Problems and Consequences of Organizing Society for Total War," in *Mobilization for Total War: The Canadian, American, and British Experience, 1914-1918, 1939-1945.*, ed. N.F. Dreisziger (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1981), 13.

²⁴⁵ Andrew Iarocci and Jeffrey A. Keshen, *A Nation in Conflict: Canada the Two World Wars* (University of Toronto Press, 2015), 44-53.

observation of how some allies approach defence acquisition.²⁴⁶ However, there has been significant pushback both within government and academia. The primary counter-argument is that the process of consolidation of procurement functions would be time-consuming, lead to bureaucratic frictions as a new system is developed, and not substantively address the issue of political will.²⁴⁷ Defence academic J. Craig Stone has argued that such a change would not in fact address the core issue,²⁴⁸ which he contends is actually the lack of a strategic defence industrial policy.²⁴⁹ This is another area in which Canada differs from its allies, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia, whom all have mature and relevant strategic policies for the development and management of their defence industries.²⁵⁰ Though the *Defence Production Act* stipulates the Minister of Public Works and Government Services as the responsible party,²⁵¹ the convoluted management structure of defence industry and lack of coherent policy leaves a severe lack of accountability for shortcomings and lack of direction.²⁵²

The legislative foundation for industrial mobilization is reliant on *reactive* measures in response to a crisis rather than *proactive* ones to prepare for it. The *Defence Production Act* lacks nuanced *coercive* options for management of defence industry to over-ride the inherent fiduciary interest of private companies. Though the act has provision for nationalization and price controls,²⁵³ these would be extreme measures, leaving more nuanced options in the realm of the *Emergencies Act*. This grants broad powers to government to directly control industry through

²⁴⁶ The Honourable Percy Mockler, The Honourable Joseph A. Day, and The Honourable Andre Pratte, “First Interim Report on Defence Procurement: Summary of Evidence” (Senate of Canada, June 2019), 27.

²⁴⁷ Mockler et al, “First Interim Report on Defence Procurement,” 17-18.

²⁴⁸ Mockler et al, “First Interim Report on Defence Procurement,” 17-18.

²⁴⁹ J. Craig Stone, “Canada Still Needs a Defence Industrial Policy,” Policy Perspective (Canadian Global Affairs Institute, June 2024), 9-11.

²⁵⁰ Stone, “Canada Still Needs a Defence Industrial Policy,” 4-8.

²⁵¹ GoC, “Defence Production Act,” R.S.C., 1985, c. D-1 § (2017), 3.

²⁵² Mockler et al, “First Interim Report on Defence Procurement,” 17-18.

²⁵³ GoC, “Defence Production Act,” 4.

measures such as regulation of industry, appropriation of private property, the right to inquiry into private businesses, and contracting controls.²⁵⁴ However, the *Emergencies Act* is an inherently *reactive* tool and the political volatility of using it was on display in 2022 when it was invoked by the Trudeau Government as a response to the “Trucker Convoy” protests in Ottawa.²⁵⁵ The *Emergencies Act* is a hammer, and when that is the only tool available, all problems will seem like nails. It is not argued that Canada should use *coercive* tools of industrial control in peacetime, rather without a coherent defence industrial strategy based on preparation for mobilization, Canada would be forced to rely upon the powers of the *Emergencies Act*, leaving little choice but to improvise.

This scenario is not without precedent; the initial approach to industrial mobilization during the Second World War involved a series of loosely controlled government boards designed to corral corporations into line, each under the nominal supervision of the Minister of Finance.²⁵⁶ However, this approach proved to lack effective centralized control and accountability, leading to the establishment of a separate ministry, the Ministry of Munitions and Supply, headed by C.D. Howe.²⁵⁷ This ministry was granted expansive powers to control the mobilization of Canadian industry, including oversight of all Canadian and Allied production orders in Canada, nationalization of key industries through the establishment of Crown Corporations, the resource supply chains feeding the factories, and management of industrial labour. Industrial mobilization saw over 900,000 Canadians employed in war industry by 1945,

²⁵⁴ Under the provisions for an International Emergency the powers are clearly stipulated, while under a War Emergency, provisions are broad, less defined, and assumed to include those of an International Emergency. GoC, “Emergencies Act,” 14-23.

²⁵⁵ See The Honourable Paul Rouleau, “Report of the Public Inquiry into the 2022 Public Order Emergency” (Government of Canada, 2022).

²⁵⁶ The Defence Purchasing Board followed by the War Supply Board. J.L. Granatstein, “Arming the Nation: Canada’s Industrial War Effort, 1939-1945” (Canadian Council of Chief Executives, May 27, 2005), <https://canadacommons.ca/artifacts/1203681/arming-the-nation/1756792/view/>, 3.

²⁵⁷ Granatstein, “Arming the Nation,” 3-4.

nearly 8% of the population,²⁵⁸ a doubling of the Gross National Product,²⁵⁹ and nearly half the federal budget on war spending.²⁶⁰ The appointment of C.D. Howe to this critical ministerial portfolio is commonly acknowledged as one of the most consequential wartime decisions by the Canadian government, not only ensuring that Canada's military commitment was appropriately equipped but also providing a massive contribution to the Allied war effort.²⁶¹ The key deduction from the example of C.D. Howe is the centralized nature of his ministry to manage industry, policy, and control.

The defence industrial base in Canada is now largely rudderless, and without a coherent strategic policy or centralized governance, it would be poorly equipped to handle the immensity of industrial mobilization. Thus, improvisation would rule, and the CAF would likely not be able to effectively mobilize to meet the growing scope of security requirements in a *Total War* or other emergency. To be prepared for that possibility, the issue of governance must be addressed, ideally through a combination of strategic defence industrial policy and centralization of ministerial authority, before a war begins.

Way Ahead.

The implicit move back to Commitment Based Planning with the ongoing deployment of substantial land forces in Europe has removed time as a possible crutch for Canadian mobilization efforts. In the Second World War, Canada was afforded this luxury to generate and materially equip its forces before they were committed in substantial strength; Canadians were not in combat immediately upon the declaration of war in 1939. In the event of war with Russia,

²⁵⁸ Canada's population was approximately 12 million in 1945. Statistics Canada Government of Canada, "Estimated Population of Canada, 1605 to Present," August 26, 2015, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/98-187-x/4151287-eng.htm>.

²⁵⁹ Granatstein, "Arming the Nation," 13.

²⁶⁰ Iarocci and Keshen, *A Nation in Conflict*, 65-66.

²⁶¹ Larry D. Rose, *Ten Decisions: Canada's Best, Worst, and Most Far-Reaching Decisions of the Second World War* (Dundurn, 2017), 165-197.

Canada would have no such luxury. The Canadian-led brigade in Latvia will be in combat immediately; taking years to ramp-up war industry, as C.D. Howe was able to do, would leave existing commitments unsustainable. Planning for industrial mobilization must occur prior to the outbreak of hostilities, and as many peremptory actions as possible must be enacted to prevent defeat of deployed forces. The impact of such a defeat in Latvia would certainly be existential for the Latvians, but also in the context of *Total War*, would border on existential for Canada as well. The failure to plan is irresponsible.

Canada has much of the legislative framework for effective management of the defence industrial base in place. The *Defence Production Act* and *Emergencies Act* have provisions for both cooperation-based and coercive interaction with private industry, though most tools are *reactive* vice *proactive*. However, Canada needs a strategic defence industrial policy to steer government and industry in a unified direction. Nor is there any measure of accountability with the current defence procurement system, where having a single cabinet minister responsible could address this. The critical vulnerability in capacity of the defence industrial base to meet the needs of a mobilizing CAF cannot be addressed without either of these key elements of governance preparedness. Converting civilian industry to wartime production would necessitate the use of all elements of government power included in the *Defence Production Act* and likely the *Emergencies Act* as well. The added complexity of the modern security environment leaving all of Canada's critical infrastructure open to attack, and thus industrial mobilization able to be directly contested, makes manifest the need for resilience. Canada cannot afford a period of improvisation to get to the point where a twenty-first century C.D. Howe emerges; time will not be on Canada's side.

In characterizing Canada's issues with industrial mobilization during the Cold War, military scholar Douglas Bland opined that:

...without a commitment to readiness, mobilization, and sustainment in some meaningful way any drive towards a comprehensive defence-industrial policy will be too incredible to be sustained in reality.²⁶²

Planning for industrial mobilization can only go as far as popular support is willing to take it, regardless of its inherent military necessity. With a better understanding of the immensity of the issues of military and industrial mobilization, it becomes abundantly clear that the impact on Canadian society would be equally immense. With tens of thousands of new recruits needed for CAF service, increasing swaths of the economy reorienting to war production, and an enemy willing and able to target Canadians in Canada, how then will Canadian society respond to the hardships of *Total War*?

²⁶² Bland, "Emergence of a Defence Industrial Preparedness Policy," 247-248.

CHAPTER 4 – SOCIAL MOBILIZATION

The fabric of democracy is always fragile everywhere because it depends on the will of citizens to protect it, and when they become scared, when it becomes dangerous for them to defend it, it can go very quickly.

- Margaret Atwood, 2010²⁶³

Introduction

Total War is not just a military or economic phenomena; it is based on the interaction between war and society, and as such, it is unavoidable that *Total War* has a transformative social effect.²⁶⁴ As the vortex of *totality* spirals, war “more and more completely incorporates the whole of social life,”²⁶⁵ either directly or indirectly. It is this increase in participation that Canada must prepare for; neglecting to do so risks wartime societal transformation occurring that, at best, does not adequately support the warmaking potential of the nation. At worst, wartime social transformation could be co-opted by the enemy and steered through mis- and disinformation to threaten Canada’s national unity and democratic institutions. In studying the impact of *Total War* on society, historian Arthur Marwick opined that in a *Total War* “societies will be forced to change.”²⁶⁶ Though this change can be positive, as with the progress achieved for women’s rights in both World Wars,²⁶⁷ war-driven social change does not always go “necessarily in a desirable direction.”²⁶⁸ Canadian society is unprepared for the stressors of *Total War* due to vulnerable social polarizations that could be exploited by an opponent. Social mobilization, the

²⁶³ Margaret Atwood, interview by Mathew Rothschild, *The Progressive Magazine*, December 2, 2010, <https://progressive.org/magazine/margaret-atwood-interview/>.

²⁶⁴ Arthur Marwick, “Problems and Consequences of Organizing Society for Total War,” 3.

²⁶⁵ Martin Shaw, *Dialectics of War: An Essay in the Social Theory of Total War and Peace* (London: Pluto Publishing Ltd., 1988), 38.

²⁶⁶ Marwick, “Problems and Consequences of Organizing Society for Total War,” 3.

²⁶⁷ Iarocci and Keshen, *A Nation in Conflict*, 185-189.

²⁶⁸ Marwick, “Problems and Consequences of Organizing Society for Total War,” 3.

deliberate rallying of popular support behind a war effort, would be needed; to do so would require a dramatic increase in informational resilience and whole-of-society preparedness of the Canadian people. Neither military nor industrial mobilization are viable without a society that is mobilized to provide it with the workforce, recruiting base, and financial capital required.

This chapter seeks to explore the key obstacles to social mobilization in Canada during wartime and what preparedness policy ought to be enacted prior to the outbreak of war. Though Canada has the historical precedent of social mobilization during both World Wars to draw from, these examples are now out of human memory. Canada's only living memories with war are from the limited ones of the recent past, none of which seriously incurred significant participation of society. Indeed, the typical Canadian's awareness of military operations is notoriously low,²⁶⁹ something that would drastically and harshly change should the CAF be engaged in LSCO, if experience during Afghanistan is any indication.²⁷⁰ As established in Chapter 2, casualty rates would likely exceed those suffered in Afghanistan by at least an order of magnitude. Canadians have grappled with this scale of death before: during the First World War, horrific scenes of combat passed home through soldiers' letters drove increased public commitment vice public discouragement, but, this experience is now out of living memory.²⁷¹ With a minimum ten-fold expansion of CAF strength, swaths of civilian industry being converted to war production, and Canadian cities and infrastructure vulnerable to enemy attack, it would be difficult for any Canadian to not be directly impacted by *Total War*. The house would

²⁶⁹ Murray Brewster, "Military Is off the Radar of Most Canadians: DND Poll," *CBC News*, July 20, 2018, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/dnd-canadians-military-poll-1.4754083>.

²⁷⁰ During the Afghanistan mission, most Canadian public opinion was shaped by casualties. Jean-Christophe Boucher, "Evaluating the 'Trenton Effect': Canadian Public Opinion and Military Casualties in Afghanistan (2006-2010)," *The American Review of Canadian Studies* 40, no. 2 (2010), 237–58.

²⁷¹ Ian Hugh Maclean Miller, *Our Glory and Our Grief: Torontonians and the Great War* (University of Toronto Press, 2002), 194.

be “fireproof no more.”²⁷² Figure 4.1 below shows social mobilization as driven by both industrial and military mobilization, the key themes and deductions of this chapter, all within the context of *totality*.

²⁷² Rigby, “A Fire-Proof House No More”

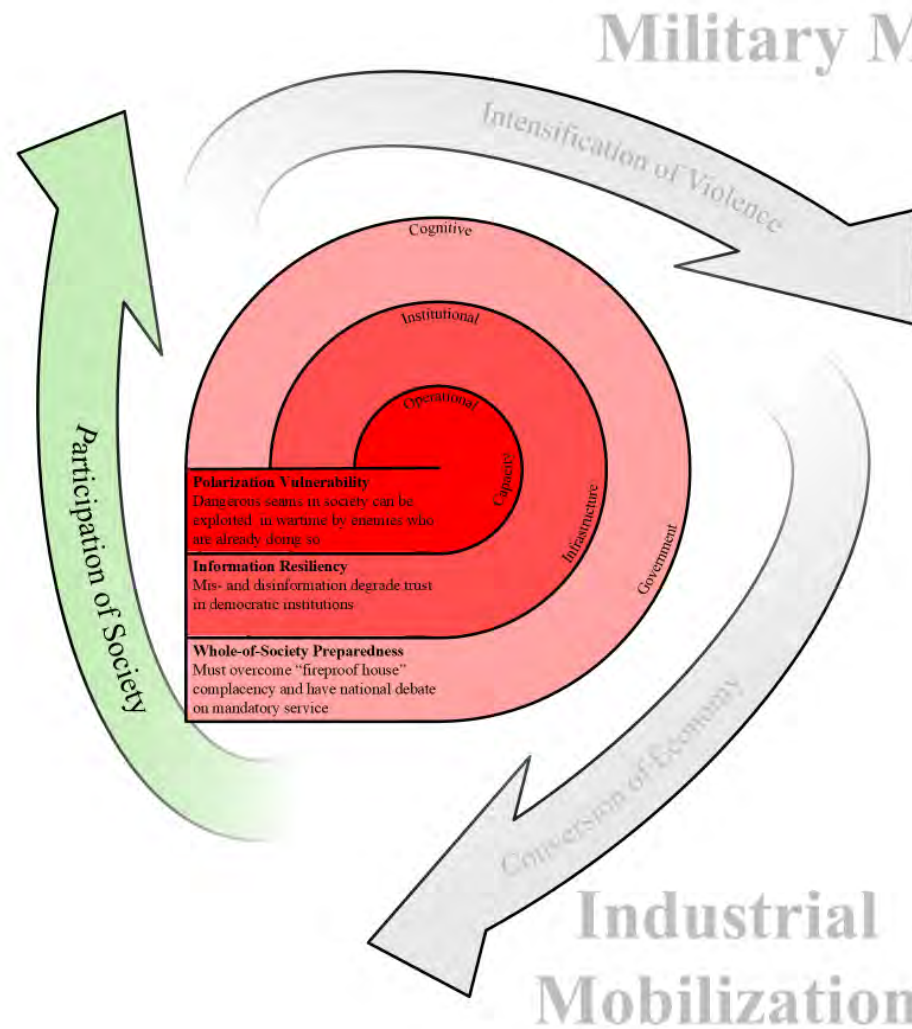
Social Mobilization

Definition:

- The deliberate rallying of popular support behind a war effort

Way Ahead:

- Greater transparency from government in combatting Hybrid threats
- Encourage a national debate on mandatory service while stripping away historical baggage of wartime conscription
- Encourage personal stake in national security



Definition:

- The dramatic expansion of the CAP capabilities
- Likely to be approximately an order of magnitude (x10) expansion requirement

Way Ahead: The CAP must

- Prepare cognitively by acknowledging that massive expansion is a prospect worth preparing for
- Take ownership of *national mobilization* as part of national mobilization
- Contingency plan regardless of *commitment decision*
- Encourage professional, academic, and public dialogue on the subject of *national mobilization*

Definition:

- Harnessing the nation's productive capacity through conversion of civilian economic capacity towards defence production

Way Ahead:

- Review all defence procurement
- Development of a Defence Industrial Strategy
- Establishment of a national ministry responsible for management of the defence industrial base

Figure 4.1 – Social Mobilization and the Vortex of Totality

Source: Author Created.

Polarization Vulnerability

Social mobilization in the twenty-first century can be credibly contested by the enemy on the information spectrum, something that was largely not a factor during the World Wars.²⁷³ Both Russia and the PRC practice information operations doctrine that actively seek out and take advantage of polarizations in their opponent's societies. The Russians in particular have relied on this approach to offset economic and military asymmetry inherent in trying to compete with the West. Seeking to attack their enemies on the psychological plane, short of the threshold of war, the Russians routinely exploit seams in their opponent's society with a well-developed modus-operandi based on what has been categorized as a less-than coherent operational doctrine.²⁷⁴ This was a key factor in the success of their campaign against Georgia in 2008, as well as throughout their decade-long confrontation with Ukraine, even prior to the full-scale invasion in 2022.²⁷⁵ Though the Russians eschew the term, Hybrid Warfare has popularly been seen as a novel dynamic of state power competition in the twenty-first century.²⁷⁶ To the Russians, the information domain is just as decisive as the physical domain in achieving national goals. Through mis- and disinformation they seek to subvert the enemy's political will and domestic legitimacy.²⁷⁷ In order to "break the spirit of the adversary's nation by a gradual erosion of its culture, values, and self-esteem", these information operations place "an emphasis on political,

²⁷³ First World War concerns over enemy "fifth columnist" elements, such as German or Ukrainian-Canadians spreading propaganda or sabotage were in hindsight, unfounded. See Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Propaganda and Censorship during Canada's Great War* (University of Alberta Press, 1996): 7-11.

²⁷⁴ Ofer Fridman, *Russian 'Hybrid Warfare': Resurgence and Politicisation*, (Oxford University Press, 2018), 92; Hanna Smith, "The Comprehensive Resilience Ecosystem and Hybrid Threads," in *Information Resilience and Comprehensive Security: Challenges and Complexities in Wicked Environments*, ed. Petri Uusikylä, Harri Jalonen, and Annukka Jokipii, Information Technology and Global Governance (Springer Nature Switzerland, 2024), 39–56, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-66196-9_44.

²⁷⁵ Ibrahim Muradov, "The Russian Hybrid Warfare: The Cases of Ukraine and Georgia," *Defence Studies* 22, no. 2 (2022), 168–91.

²⁷⁶ Fridman, *'Hybrid Warfare'*, 123; Smith, "The Comprehensive Resilience Ecosystem and Hybrid Threads," 40.

²⁷⁷ Fridman, *'Hybrid Warfare'*, 110-111.

informational, and economic instruments, rather than on military force.”²⁷⁸ The way in which these tactics are employed is by seeking out existing seams for exploitation to “amplify political, ideological, economic and other social polarisations within an adversary’s society, thus leading to a collapse.”²⁷⁹ The aim of Hybrid Warfare is threefold: to undermine democracy in favour of autocracy; change the decision-making process of the enemy to align with their own goals; and to create chaos through cascading effects.²⁸⁰ Hybrid Warfare does not create division, it exploits divisions that already exist, amplifying them within a context where Russia already sees itself as at war with the West.²⁸¹

The final objective of this approach is to negate the need for a military conflict that Russia cannot win by prompting social and political collapse in their adversary, following Sun Tzu’s maxim that “subjugating the enemy’s army without fighting is the true pinnacle of excellence.”²⁸² This concept is not new, nor is it uniquely Russian; rather, Russian success with Hybrid Warfare amidst their conventional military failures in Ukraine has heightened its importance and prominence.²⁸³

This is an area in which Canadian society is particularly vulnerable. There are a number of polarizations in Canadian society that have seen prominence in recent years. The issue of Crown-Indigenous relations remains prominent, with confrontations over treaty rights, as in the Wet’suwet’en case, residential schools, and murdered and missing indigenous women and girls as examples. The Anglo-Franco divide is another polarization that has simmered since long

²⁷⁸ Fridman, ‘Hybrid Warfare’, 118.

²⁷⁹ Fridman, ‘Hybrid Warfare’, 124.

²⁸⁰ Rainer Jungwirth, *Hybrid Threats: A Comprehensive Resilience Ecosystem* (The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats, 2023), 37.

²⁸¹ Department of National Defence (DND), Government of Canada (GoC), *Pan-Domain Force Employment Concept: Prevailing in a Dangerous World*, 2023, 7; Mattia Massoletti, “‘Special Military Operation’, ‘Nazis’ and

²⁸² Sun Tzu, *Art of War*, trans. Ralph D. Sawyer (Basic Books, 1994), 177.

²⁸³ Sandor Fabian, ‘The Russian Hybrid Warfare Strategy – Neither Russian nor Strategy’, *Defense & Security Analysis* 35, no. 3 (3 July 2019), 322.

before Confederation, and which has threatened national unity most recently in the 1995 referendum on Quebec independence. The recent anti-COVID-19 lockdown protests in Ottawa in 2022 were another loud and prominent example. The persistent socio-economic marginalization of Canada's arctic populations is another such vulnerability.²⁸⁴ The most current and worrying of these polarizations is the ongoing "51st State" rhetoric originating with the Trump Administration in the United States. Though this has become a rallying issue of national unity for most, there is a small percentage of Canadians, predominately on the conservative side of the spectrum and in the Western Provinces, that have overtly welcomed the possibility of annexation by the United States or separation from Canada.²⁸⁵

There is ample evidence that foreign actors, namely Russia and the PRC, are already engaging in information operations targeting the Canadian population through the cyber domain in order to amplify existing polarizations.²⁸⁶ Both states are known to operate massive "bot farm" operations that flood cyberspace with mis- and disinformation, amplifying controversial views and turning Canadians against one another.²⁸⁷ These tactics cloud the truth, make Canadians distrustful of all information they receive, and generally sow chaos in cyberspace. While these operations are known to Canadian authorities, and indeed occur across the West, they are difficult to counter as they deliberately take advantage of democratic freedom of expression.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁴ Gaëlle Rivard Piche and Bradley Sylvestre, "Vulnerabilities and Hybrid Threats in the Canadian Arctic: Resilience as Defence," Hybrid CoE Working Paper (The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats, May 2023).

²⁸⁵ A January, 2025 poll placed public support for Canada becoming the 51st state at less than 10%. Fakiha Baig, "'There's No Canadian Dream': Meet Some Who Want Canada to Become the 51st U.S. State," *CBC News*, March 22, 2025, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/canada-u-s-51st-state-annexation-1.7490806>.

²⁸⁶ Communications and Security Establishment Canada Government of Canada, "National Cyber Threat Assessment 2025–2026" (Canadian Centre for Cyber Security, 2024), 11–14.

²⁸⁷ Denis Stukal et al., "Why Bother: How Pro-Government Bots Fight Opposition in Russia," *American Political Science Review* 116, no. 3 (August 2022): 843–57, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055421001507>; Oz Sultan, "Tackling Disinformation, Online Terrorism, and Cyber Risks into the 2020s," *The Cyber Defense Review* 4, no. 1 (2019), 43–60.

²⁸⁸ Rainer Jungwirth, *Hybrid Threats: A Comprehensive Resilience Ecosystem* (The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats, 2023), 14.

Moves by both the United States and Canada to ban the social media platform TikTok due to reported concerns that it is used by the PRC as an information operations tool targeting Western populations demonstrate this; however, pushback from the public, as well as legal challenges, have prevented the banning of an effective tool of PRC state power.²⁸⁹ The recent controversy over foreign interference in Canadian elections is a further example, with several countries, not limited to Russia and the PRC, directly accused of interfering in Canadian elections.²⁹⁰ Cyber activities are not the only method in which Hybrid Warfare manifests: malintent economic and industrial activities and academic manipulation are examples, amongst others. As a result, Canadian society is critically vulnerable, as are most democracies, to hostile information operations that target existing polarizations.

If Canadian society is already under attack from hostile information operations in peacetime, what will be the impact should competition cross the threshold to armed conflict? If the goal of Russian Hybrid Warfare tactics is to negate the need for military confrontation, it is logical to assume that should armed conflict occur, its goal could transition to disrupting the warmaking potential of the enemy society. The impact of military and economic mobilization on Canadian society would be immense and present a new host of polarizations for an enemy to exploit. Massive recruitment efforts targeting the whole of Canadian society to fill the ranks of the expanding CAF would present an easy opportunity. Given the fact that the CAF would be involved in high-intensity combat immediately, horrific media images and unprecedented casualty numbers would bombard the information space in Canada. This would be an area in

²⁸⁹ Madison Clausius, “The Banning of TikTok, and the Ban of Foreign Software for National Security Purposes,” *Washington University Global Studies Law Review* 21, no. 2 (2022), 273–92.

²⁹⁰ In order of level of activity in interfering in Canadian elections, the following states are identified in the report: PRC, India, Russia, Pakistan, and Iran. Marie-José Hogue, *Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference in Federal Electoral Processes and Democratic Institutions: Final Report* (Ottawa: Foreign Interference Commission, 2025), 39–42.

which the enemy could target and amplify voices opposed to the war effort, or simply amplify and exaggerate narratives that highlight the horrors of modern combat that may discourage recruitment into the CAF. Similarly, disruptions to the economy due to industrial mobilization would add financial stresses to the average citizen, regardless of their participation in war industries, and present an easy target; this risk would be amplified by increasing levels of coercive controls over industry. National mobilization would present a host of new social polarizations that could be exploited, in addition to the ones that already exist, by an enemy that is adept at doing so to undermine popular support for the war effort.

This is an area in which Canada has no historical precedent to fall back upon. Though there were German propaganda efforts targeting the Allies during both World Wars, these were not credible nor seriously capable of disrupting or impacting Canadian society in any meaningful way. The advent of the cyber domain has left Canadian society open to hostile action, and indeed the very democratic ideals that form the foundation of that society contribute to that vulnerability and “limit the actions authorities can take to counter incorrect information.”²⁹¹ There is likely the need to constrain freedom of expression during wartime, as a “reasonable limit” under Section 1 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*,²⁹² and has been shown historically to be a byproduct of *Total War*. No measures short of Orwellian censorship of media and the internet could close this vulnerability completely due to the speed with which information disseminates in cyberspace.²⁹³ Ukraine is facing this issue now, investing significantly more into countering Russian mis- and

²⁹¹ Petri Uusikylä, Harri Jalonen, and Annukka Jokipii, eds., *Information Resilience and Comprehensive Security: Challenges and Complexities in Wicked Environments*, Information Technology and Global Governance (Springer Nature Switzerland, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-66196-9>, 12

²⁹² GoC, “Constitution Acts, 1982,” § Part I: Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982): Section 1.

²⁹³ Uusikylä et al., *Information Resilience and Comprehensive Security*, 12.

disinformation and treating it as another front as decisive as any other in the war.²⁹⁴ If *Total War* does indeed force inevitable social change, it is likely that exploiting existing social polarization would be the vector for an enemy to influence this change in an undesirable direction. Only through increasing the informational resiliency of its society can Canada hope to prevent an opponent from critically disrupting mobilization of the people in support of a war effort while maintaining some semblance of the democratic ideals for which Canada would be fighting.

Information Resiliency

Information resiliency can be defined as the ability of a society to “respond and adapt to disruptions and challenges in their information environment” and withstand mis- and disinformation.²⁹⁵ In the context of a national mobilization, informational resilience is as critical to the success of a war effort as is resilience of critical infrastructure. While inherently defensive in nature, as it is a protective measure against Hybrid information threats, information resilience can be both *reactive* and *proactive*.²⁹⁶ In the *reactive* sense, measures to increase informational resilience include technical means to respond to active cyber threats, reporting mechanisms for passage of information on threats and narratives, and review processes to study the success of past efforts.²⁹⁷ *Proactively*, measures to increase informational resilience are focused on planning for anticipated threats and developing strategies to defend against them.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁴ Jakub Kalenský and Roman Osadchuk, “How Ukraine Fights Russian Disinformation: Beehive vs Mammoth,” Hybrid CoE Research Report (The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats, January 2024).

²⁹⁵ Uusikylä et al., *Information Resilience and Comprehensive Security*, v, 3.

²⁹⁶ Jungwirth, *Hybrid Threats*, 17.

²⁹⁷ Harri Jalonen and Petri Uusikylä, “National Preparedness: Towards an Emergent System of Governance,” in *Information Resilience and Comprehensive Security: Challenges and Complexities in Wicked Environments*, ed. Petri Uusikylä, Harri Jalonen, and Annukka Jokipii, Information Technology and Global Governance (Springer Nature Switzerland, 2024), 111–36, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-66196-9>, 127.

²⁹⁸ Jungwirth, *Hybrid Threats*, 103.

While Canada participates and engages with the Hybrid CoE, it has struggled to respond to Hybrid threats domestically.³⁰³ Indeed, responding to mis- and disinformation is a highly politicized issue in Canada to the point that any national dialogue on responding to the threat is difficult. The most prominent symptom is the ongoing controversy over foreign interference in the Canadian electoral process. While a parliamentary inquiry occurred that shed light over interference by foreign powers in Canadian elections,³⁰⁴ the erstwhile Opposition leader refused to get a security clearance to be able to effectively engage with the topic at the appropriate level of classification.³⁰⁵ Claiming that he did not want to be “muzzled” by restrictions on classified information, Pierre Poilievre has been criticized for putting party politics over national interest by both the media and the recent Public Inquiry.³⁰⁶ Regardless of political leaning, this shows an apparent unseriousness about the issue of foreign interference, mis- and disinformation in Canada, resulting in a critical lack of informational resilience. Stemming from Canada’s long-term apathy towards national security, the “fireproof house” analogy is alive and well in this regard.

How then can government improve the informational resilience of Canadian society so that it can withstand Hybrid threats, especially in the context of *Total War*? Most Canadians will not realize that the Canadian government has in fact taken Hybrid threats seriously, enacting

20methods%20will%20be%20collected%20in%20one%20place.; Minna Alander and Patrik Oksanen, “Tracking the Russian Hybrid Warfare: Cases from Nordic-Baltic Countries” (Stockholm Free World Forum, May 27, 2024).

³⁰³ Canada’s refusal to ban Huawei, a Chinese telecommunications company accused of engaging in PRC state directed influence activities has lowered Canada’s credibility amongst allies. House of Commons Government of Canada, “An Interim Report on the Defence of Canada in a Rapidly Changing Threat Environment,” Report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, 2022, 16-17.

³⁰⁴ Hogue, *Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference*.

³⁰⁵ Darren Major, “Poilievre Rejects Terms of CSIS Foreign Interference Briefing,” *CBC News*, January 29, 2025, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/poilievre-csis-briefing-1.7444082>.

³⁰⁶ Alex Boutilier, “What Ex-Security Officials Think of Pierre Poilievre’s Top Secret Security Stance” *Global News*, January 31, 2025, <https://globalnews.ca/news/10989610/ex-intel-poilievre-top-secret-clearance/>; Hogue, *Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference*, 116.

policies to counter them, including deliberate plans to protect the integrity of Canadian elections, counter foreign interference, and mis- and disinformation in media.³⁰⁷ However, while the government's actions to counter threats received praise by the recent public inquiry, it received significant criticism for a lack of transparency in doing so.³⁰⁸ While the recommendations from this inquiry are wide ranging, a number concern the need for greater transparency from government to the public in order to foster trust.³⁰⁹ The report further states that while the government's actions to counter interference and misinformation has been well-intentioned and often effective, it lacks formal organization.³¹⁰ "The importance of building public trust was a constant theme" throughout the investigation and ought to form the foundation of any lasting policy.³¹¹ Furthermore, the inquiry accuses the government of being so non-transparent that many Canadians can only get information on what the government is doing to counter foreign interference via leaks of protected information to the media;³¹² not only does this not engender trust in the public, but it creates further polarizations to exploit.

To be informationally resilient, Canada needs a comprehensive and coherent national strategy to address the threat from mis- and disinformation. Most of the tools for such a strategy are already in place; what is lacking is a centralized body responsible for cohering them all, and most importantly, engaging with the public to create whole-of-society information resilience based on trust. The Hybrid CoE's concept for improving informational resilience is based on the

³⁰⁷ GoC, "Canada's Plan to Protect Democracy," August 10, 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/democratic-institutions/services/protecting-democracy.html>; Public Safety Canada Government of Canada, "Parliamentary Committee Notes: Countering Hostile Activities by State Actors," March 14, 2023, <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/trnspnc/brfng-mtrls/prlmntry-bndrs/20220930/06-en.aspx>.

³⁰⁸ Hogue, *Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference*, 4.

³⁰⁹ Six of the fifty-one recommendations directly refer to the need for greater Government transparency. Hogue, *Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference*, 111-121.

³¹⁰ Hogue, *Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference*, 97.

³¹¹ Hogue, *Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference*, 97.

³¹² Hogue, *Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference*, 4-5.

idea that there are three core areas on which to base such a strategy: Governance (read: government); Civic (read: the public); and Service (read: private sector). Figure 4.1 below shows that informational resilience is a multi-faceted and wicked problem that spans all of public and private life; in particular, the domains arranged around the CORE model show the areas in which preparedness must be focused.³¹³

Canada's current approach, with its aforementioned lack of transparency, is limited in that it focuses far too much on only the Governance aspect of this model; a comprehensive approach would engage the Civic and Service spaces. Engaging the public can be done through greater transparency and educational initiatives. Engaging the private sector already has a precedent, in Public Safety Canada's approach to critical infrastructure security, which is based on a coordinating partnership between all three levels of government and private security.³¹⁴ In terms of informational resilience, a similar partnership could be engaged primarily with media organizations. A critical obstacle to this concept is the fact that a large proportion of traditional media outlets in Canada are owned by American conglomerates, an issue that has received increased attention recently amid ongoing tensions with the United States.³¹⁵ However, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) could be a useful tool in this regard; as state-owned media, it is uniquely placed to be a public facilitator of a national dialogue to counter mis- and disinformation. While the issue of CBC funding was politicized in the recent national election,³¹⁶ there have been calls for it to be strengthened and used more in the fight against hostile mis- and

³¹³ Jungwirth, *Hybrid Threats*, 10.

³¹⁴ GoC, "National Strategy for Critical Infrastructure," 2009.

³¹⁵ "Canadian Media Ownership Index," The Future of Media Project (Harvard University, February 15, 2022), <https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/futureofmedia/canadian-media-ownership>; Dwayne Winseck, "Canada's Network Media Economy: Growth, Concentration and Upheaval, 1984-2023," Global Media and Internet Concentration Project (Carleton University, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.22215/gmicp/2024.12.124>.

³¹⁶ The Conservative Party has campaigned on the slogan of defunding the CBC. Stephanie Taylor, "Poilievre's Pitch to Defund CBC, Keep French Services Would Require Change in Law," *CBC News*, April 14, 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/poilievre-defund-cbc-change-law-1.6810434>.

disinformation.³¹⁷ Indeed, the CBC is the most common place that Canadians receive news and has already started to be used to reinforce the integrity of elections as seen with the recent Elections Canada advertising campaign.³¹⁸

Disruption in Canadian society from misinformation, disinformation, and other Hybrid threats is not the only obstacle to effective social mobilization, nor is it the only stressor likely to occur in wartime. What can be done to raise the level of social preparedness of the Canadian public for a *Total War*?

³¹⁷ The Liberal Party has campaigned on boosting funding to the CBC. Mark Gollom, “Carney Pledges \$150M Boost to ‘underfunded’ CBC,” *CBC News*, April 4, 2025, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/mark-carney-cbc-funding-1.7501902>.

³¹⁸ “Canadian Media Ownership Index,” The Future of Media Project (Harvard University, February 15, 2022), <https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/futureofmedia/canadian-media-ownership>.

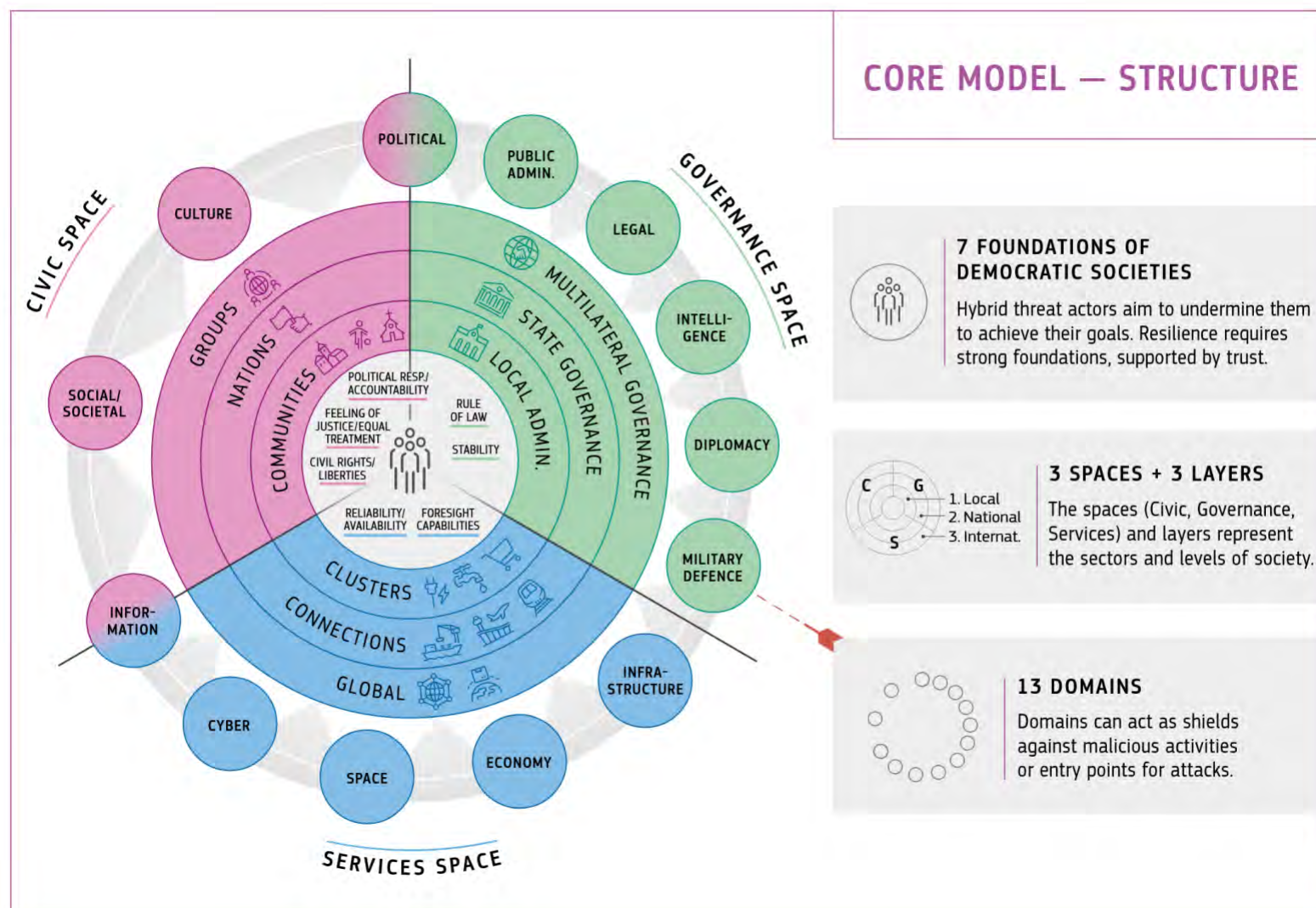


Figure 4.2 – The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats (Hybrid COE) CORE Model

Source: Rainer Jungwirth, *Hybrid Threats: A Comprehensive Resilience Ecosystem* (The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats, 2023), 10.

Whole-of-Society Preparedness

To be prepared for *Total War*-level social mobilization, Canada must overcome the “fireproof house” mindset; not doing so prior to the outbreak of war risks a much starker reality check for Canadian society. This requires overcoming a high degree of complacency towards security, the expectation that national defence is only something that occurs remotely, and that Canada can rely on its international partners, particularly the United States, to shoulder the burden. The re-election of Donald Trump has shattered assumptions to the point that the “special relationship” with the United States that Canada has relied upon for generations is at stake, with Prime Minister Mark Carney stating that the “old relationship” with the United States is “over.”³¹⁹ Canadians are slowly coming to terms with generational complacency towards national defence, though it remains to be seen if this is an illusory effect as an emotional reaction to the Trump Administration’s threats to Canadian sovereignty. The unprecedented show of national unity in the face of American aggression, with the tagline “elbows up,”³²⁰ is something that can be leveraged to prepare Canadian society for the stressors of mobilization. Engaging civil society in issues of national security is critical; transparent and honest government communication on the severity of threats facing Canada can work. Obfuscating or “sugar-coating” threats to Canada degrades public trust in government, as when those threats manifest it will appear that the public has either been lied to or their government is incompetent.

The Swedish approach is instructive: they practice an overtly transparent messaging scheme with their public to keep them informed of dangers inherent in conventional war to the point of issuing instructional pamphlets to the general population of what to do in the case of a

³¹⁹ John Paul Tasker, “Carney Hits Back at Trump’s Auto Tariffs, Warns U.S. Trade Action Will ‘Rupture the Global Economy,’” *CBC News*, April 3, 2025, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/carney-hits-back-trump-1.7500990>.

³²⁰ Alistair Steele, “‘Elbows Up’ Rallying Cry Evokes Memories of Mr. Hockey,” *CBC News*, March 6, 2025, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/elbows-up-rallying-cry-evokes-memories-of-mr-hockey-1.7453276>.

war emergency (see Figure 4.3).³²¹ This is not without precedent in Canada, as during the Cold War the federal government engaged in public awareness campaigns to convince the public to be prepared for the prospect of nuclear war. An example from this period is included at Figure 4.4 below. Though tinged with the now unpalatable taste of 1950s anti-communist nationalism,³²² the lesson is that Canadian can engage in public dialogues of national defence and preparedness. The Canadian public must be engaged in this dialogue of national security for the purpose of encouraging a sense of national unity and personal stake in the state.

³²¹ “In Case of Crisis or War: Important Information to All Residents of Sweden” (The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, November 2024).

³²² For further detail, see Andrew Burtch, *Give Me Shelter: The Failure of Canada’s Cold War Civil Defence* (University of British Columbia Press, 2012).

Swedish defence

Sweden's total defence system comprises military and civil defence. Sweden is also part of NATO's collective defence.

Military defence

Sweden's military defence protects Sweden and its NATO allies from armed attacks, defends our national borders, and aids in conflict resolution. It comprises The Swedish Armed Forces and government agencies whose core duty is to support Sweden's military defence.

Civil defence

Civil defence involves everyone who lives in Sweden, alongside government agencies, regional authorities, municipalities, private sector and non-profit organisations. One of the most important tasks of the civil defence is to support the military defence. Another core task is to protect the population and ensure that essential public services are uninterrupted as far as possible – even during times of war. Essential public services include energy, healthcare and transport.

Sweden in NATO

Sweden is part of the military alliance NATO. The purpose of the alliance is that the member countries collectively will be so strong that it deters others from attacking us. If one NATO country is nevertheless attacked, the other countries in the alliance will aid in its defence – all for one, one for all.



7



Heightened state of alert

In the event of war or the threat of war, the Swedish government may announce a heightened state of alert to improve the country's ability to defend itself.

A heightened state of alert requires that we unite against an aggressor, while ensuring that essential services and functions remain uninterrupted. If such an event arises, you may also be called upon to serve in various capacities.

Announcements regarding a heightened state of alert will be broadcast through various channels, including radio, TV, and teletext. The emergency alarm may also be used to signal the highest state of alert.

The emergency alarm signals that Sweden is in a state of war or imminently threatened with armed conflict. The entire total defence must be mobilised immediately, and everyone must prepare for war. The entire country has entered the highest state of alert.

8

Total defence duty

From the year you turn 16 until the end of the year you turn 70, you are part of Sweden's total defence and required to serve in the event of war or the threat of war.

Total defence duty applies to all Swedish citizens living in Sweden or abroad. Total defence duty also applies to foreign nationals residing in Sweden. Total defence duty consists of:

- Military or civil defence service. During a heightened state of alert, you are to proceed immediately to the place you have been designated in your wartime posting.
- General national service. If the Swedish government activates general national service, you are to remain at work or carry out other tasks in support of Sweden's total defence system.

During a heightened state of alert, go to work as usual unless you are assigned a specific wartime posting.



9

Figure 4.3 – Selections from Current Swedish Civil Defence Pamphlet

Source: "In Case of Crisis or War: Important Information to All Residents of Sweden" (The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, November 2024).

WHERE MIGHT H-BOMB EXPLOSIONS OCCUR IN CANADA?

An H-bomb attack on North America would include attacks on defence installations such as bomber and missile bases in the U.S.A. Large industrial centres, capital cities and key ports in the U.S.A. and Canada might also be attacked. In addition, any areas in Canada could be selected as second-choice targets or could be hit by missiles going astray or by bombers being shot down or disabled.

If Canada were to be deliberately attacked, Calgary, Edmonton, Halifax, Hamilton, London, Montreal, Niagara Falls, Ottawa, Quebec City, St. John's, Nfld., Saint John, N.B., Toronto, Windsor, Winnipeg, Vancouver and Victoria and the areas immediately surrounding them could be considered as the more likely target areas.

A 5 megaton explosion would effectively destroy any of these target areas. Larger weapons (such as 10, 20 or even 50 megatons) could be used with increases in the destructive effects, but in this pamphlet, illustrations and examples of effects all refer to 5 megaton explosions and some comparisons are given in footnotes.

When an H-bomb explodes a white-hot fireball develops and energy is released in the form of light and heat, radioactivity, and blast. As the fireball expands and cools, it shoots upward many thousands of feet, giving the appearance of a huge mushroom.



WHAT ARE THE DANGERS OF AN H-BOMB EXPLOSION?

They are: LIGHT and HEAT, IMMEDIATE RADIATION, BLAST (known as immediate effects) and RADIOACTIVE FALLOUT. Distances at which any effect might be experienced depend on many factors including weather conditions, height of the explosion from the ground and the explosive force.

Light and Heat

For some seconds after the explosion a blaze of light and tremendous heat will be given off from the fireball. If the eyes are not shielded, the glare can cause temporary blindness or eye injury. The heat flash will immediately start fires up to 20 miles away. A person in the open would have exposed skin badly burned up to 15 miles, blistered up to 18 miles and sunburned up to 23 miles away. These burn effects can be lessened by diving behind cover. People behind adequate cover would be protected from the heat flash but still would be in danger from fires. An anti-blast shelter would protect a person against these effects. A person in a basement, if out of line of the windows would be protected against the heat.

NOTE: For a 20 megaton Bomb the distances would be slightly less than twice those shown above.

4



Immediate Radiation

At the same time as the light and heat, intense radiation is given off for about one minute. Most people within two miles of the explosion who survived the blast and fire would die from this immediate radiation unless they had adequate protection against it.



Figure 4.4 – Selections from 1962 Canadian Nuclear Civil Defence Pamphlet.

Source: GoC, "Survival in Likely Target Areas: Blueprint for Survival No. 5" (Roger Duhamel, Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1962), Canadian Civil Defence Museum and Archives, <https://civildefencemuseum.ca/survival-in-likely-target-areas>.

Way Ahead

Fostering a sense of national unity and personal stake in defence of the nation can be achieved through some form of mandatory service. Many of Canada's European allies, most of whom dispensed with mandatory service after the Cold War, have recently reinstituted it in the face of renewed Russian aggression.³²³ Post-Soviet states such as Poland see the threat from Russian invasion as grave and are reintroducing mandatory service schemes in a bid to ensure they never come under Russian occupation again.³²⁴ Indeed, many countries bordering Russia are openly calling for the rest of NATO to consider some form of mandatory service,³²⁵ which is also making a comeback in countries that are not directly threatened by Russian invasion, such as the United Kingdom. There, Parliament has begun serious discussions on reintroducing mandatory service, something which has not been in force since 1960.³²⁶ Even Germany, who abandoned mandatory service in the 1990s, is bringing it back.³²⁷ For some, particularly Finland, mandatory service serves a crucial readiness purpose, ensuring that the majority of the population has the basic competencies required to participate in a war of national resistance against a materially and numerically superior Russian foe. However, to Finland, mandatory service also serves an important social function: it fosters a sense of national unity and engenders a personal stake in

³²³ Miranda Murray and Madeline Chambers, "Germany's Cabinet Approves Draft Law on Voluntary Military Service," Reuters, November 6, 2024; Radina Gigova, "Ukraine War: European Nations Turn to Conscription as Threat of Wider War with Russia Grows," CNN, July 21, 2024.

³²⁴ Adam Easton, "Donald Tusk Announces Military Training Plans for All Men in Poland," *BBC News*, March 7, 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy83r93l208o>.

³²⁵ Nick Beake, "Russia's Neighbours Urge Nato Allies to Bring Back Military Service," *BBC News*, April 4, 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-68728096>.

³²⁶ Louisa Brooke-Holland, "Conscription and National Service in the UK," Research Briefing (House of Commons Library, March 28, 2025); Linda Slapakova, Rebecca Lucas, and Theodora Ogden, "Should the UK Bring Back National Service? Considerations and Lessons from International Research" (RAND, June 28, 2024), <https://www.rand.org/pubs/commentary/2024/06/should-the-uk-bring-back-national-service-considerations.html>.

³²⁷ Joshua Posaner, "Serving the Vaterland: Germany Debates Reviving Conscription," *POLITICO*, May 13, 2024, <https://www.politico.eu/article/germany-conscription-boris-pistorius-military-service-ukraine-war-bundeswehr/>.

national defence for the average citizen.³²⁸ This stake is critical as it ensures buy-in and helps prepare the population for the inevitably increased participation of society in a *Total War*.

At no point since the Second World War has Canada been more ready to engage in a meaningful dialogue on the merits of mandatory service. Longstanding presumptions relating to national defence have been shattered by the degradation of relations with the United States; this ought to drive reassessing all prior assumptions, including that mandatory service is anathema to the Canadian character.³²⁹ Esteemed historian J.L. Granatstein summed up the historicity of the issue in Canada by declaring that “Conscription has simply not worked in Canada, and there seems no reason to believe it ever will.”³³⁰ This is where the precise use of terminology is important: mandatory service must be separated from the concept of wartime military conscription. Mandatory service is about much more than military preparedness and conscripting unwilling soldiers to fight in the next war. Indeed, the term “conscription” is loaded with historical and emotional baggage in Canada. The conscription crises of 1917 and 1944 tore at the fabric of the nation, particularly the Anglo-Franco divide, and were *reactive* responses to severe personnel shortages brought on by military mobilization and combat casualties.³³¹ Mandatory service, on the other hand, is not a strictly wartime activity; rather, it typically involves the peacetime drafting into service of citizens, based on set criteria and for a set period, usually

³²⁸ Finland’s history with mandatory service goes back to its independence in 1918, and has seen consistently high levels of public support over the generations as a key element of maintaining Finnish national unity and identity. Olli Harinen and Jukka Leskinen, “General Conscription in Finland After 2008: Some Reasons Behind Finland’s Population’s and Conscript’s Attitudes Towards General Conscription,” in *Advances in Military Sociology: Essays in Honor of Charles C. Moskos*, ed. Giuseppe Caforio and Manas Chatterji (Emerald Publishing Limited, 2009), 51–64, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cfvlibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=483206>; Miina Kaarkoski and Teemu Häkkinen, “The Legitimacy of Conscription in Democracy: Connections between Conscription Politics and Public Opinion in Parliamentary Debates in Finland and Sweden in the 2010s.,” *Journal of Political & Military Sociology* 49, no. 2 (September 1, 2022): 195–218, <https://doi.org/10.5744/jpms.2022.2004>.

³²⁹ Tim Cook, *Warlords*, 3.

³³⁰ Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*, 269.

³³¹ Granatstein and Hitsman, *Broken Promises*, 60-104, 185-244.

ranging from one to three years. Crucially, mandatory service can involve credible civilian service options for those not willing or interested in military service. Therefore, while mandatory service is *proactive* in peacetime, conscription is *reactive* in wartime.³³²

The legality of mandatory service is worthwhile to discuss and has been the subject of some recent public discussion.³³³ While the *Emergencies Act* grants broad powers to cabinet in the event of an International or War Emergency, it expressly forbids the conscription of persons into the CAF by fiat.³³⁴ However, this does not forbid the compulsion of military service from the civilian population; conscription requires legislation and therefore the consent of parliament.³³⁵ There is the possibility that such legislation if enacted would be challenged via the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, but recent legal discussions of the Canadian Bar Association (CBA) indicate that such a challenge would likely be unsuccessful, particularly if service is compulsory regardless of gender.³³⁶ Furthermore, it is also likely that government would need to use Section 33 of the *Charter*, the notwithstanding clause, something that has never been done at the federal level and is typically controversial when used.³³⁷ This legal interpretation of conscription is based largely on historical experience in both World Wars, when service was compelled as a response to an urgent wartime need; as such, this supposes that conscription can only be an improvised, *reactive* measure to stave off a personnel shortage in the CAF. Refusing to engage with the subject of mandatory service as part of national mobilization planning risks Canada being forced into a situation, as in 1917 or 1944, where *reactive*

³³² Refer to Figure 1.2 in Chapter 1.

³³³ Agnese Smith, “Conscription in Canada: Mandatory Military Service Ended Here in 1945. But as Take-up of It Accelerates among Allies, Could This Country Follow Suit?,” The Canadian Bar Association, June 6, 2024, <https://nationalmagazine.ca/en-ca/articles/law/in-depth/2024/conscription-in-canada>.

³³⁴ GoC, “Emergencies Act,” R.S.C. 1985, c. 22 § (2023), 20-21.

³³⁵ Smith, “Conscription in Canada.”

³³⁶ Smith, “Conscription in Canada.”

³³⁷ GoC, “Constitution Acts, 1982,” § Part I: Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982): Section 33; Smith, “Conscription in Canada.”

conscription measures became necessary.³³⁸ Peacetime mandatory service as a proactive measure is a different matter altogether as Canada has never had such a system; enacting one would require thinking beyond the provisions of the *Emergencies Act* and would most certainly require new, *proactive* legislation. National dialogue on the subject need not be limited or blinded by historical experience.

The seeds of a fruitful national discussion on mandatory service have already been sown. In response to American annexation threats, there have been initial calls in mainstream media for adoption of a mandatory service system.³³⁹ While a survey of Canadians in August 2024 indicated that only 10-11% of Canadians supported conscription into the CAF, this could be indicative of an aversion to the term *conscription*.³⁴⁰ Polling conducted around the same time had showed that 50% of Canadians may support the introduction of a mandatory service system that is similar to what has been proposed in the United Kingdom.³⁴¹ However, it should be noted that both of these data points come from well before the Trump Administration's annexation threats and "51st State" rhetoric. Furthermore, the ever-present threat of climate change-induced natural disasters has shown the need for some sort of civilian disaster relief capacity in Canada; this is an ideal non-military option for mandatory service and would help ensure the CAF is able to focus on its priority warfighting functions. Though the CAF needs to be part of any national discussion

³³⁸ Prime Minister Borden prior to 1917 had promised no conscription, but after the horrendous casualties of the at Vimy Ridge and Hill 70, he reversed course on the issue. J.L. Granatstein, *Canada at War: Conscription, Diplomacy, and Politics* (University of Toronto Press, 2020), 48-52.

³³⁹ Chris Lambie, "Canada Has Far Too Few Soldiers. Here's a Radical Fix — Mandatory Service," *The National Post*, March 15, 2025, <https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/how-canada-wins-mandatory-service>; Susan McArthur, "Mandatory National Service Would Fix What Ails Canada," *The National Post*, January 16, 2025, <https://nationalpost.com/opinion/susan-mcarthur-mandatory-national-service-would-fix-what-ails-canada>.

³⁴⁰ Bryce J. Casavant, "National Poll Finds Majority of Canadians Are Opposed to Military Conscription If War Breaks Out," *The Conversation*, August 7, 2024, <http://theconversation.com/national-poll-finds-majority-of-canadians-are-opposed-to-military-conscription-if-war-breaks-out-235405>.

³⁴¹ Mario Canseco, "Half of Canadians Support Mandatory National Service, Survey Reveals," *Business in Vancouver*, August 27, 2024, <https://www.biv.com/news/commentary/half-of-canadians-support-mandatory-national-service-survey-reveals-9434252>.

on mandatory service, some could be resistant to the idea. Mandatory service would bring about fundamental changes to the profession of arms in Canada, which has been based on long-service professionals since the Second World War. Changing the conditions of entry into the profession of arms to a compulsory nature, as well as the practical challenge of administering such a system, could be perceived as too great a change.³⁴² However, recent efforts to make the CAF more reflective of Canadian society could be a jumping-off point to close the civil-military gap and better enable buy-in from military leadership in a national discussion. Conversely, many CAF leaders would likely welcome the influx of new personnel and public support.

Mandatory service must be a politically-driven dialogue and buy-in from potentially hesitant military leadership is critical. Canada's historical baggage with conscription is blinding; though relevant, this should not be a reason to shut-down the possibility of dialogue on mandatory service in the twenty-first century. Canada must be ready to jettison all previous assumptions about national security to be able to increase its whole-of-society preparedness for *Total War*; only then can Canada hope to effectively mobilize society in support of a war effort and weather the inevitable social upheavals that such a war would bring. Making such a transition would not be easy, as European countries that are transitioning back to a *total defence* system of social mobilization have shown.³⁴³ The argument is not that Canada should adopt mandatory military service as a policy, rather that having the national debate on the subject will mark the readiness of Canada to leave the "fireproof house."

³⁴²The British Army officer corps, long based on professional service, was deeply resistant to enacting conscription during both World Wars. George Q. Flynn, *Conscription and Democracy* (Greenwood Press, 2002), 248.

³⁴³ See Louise Olsson and Chiara Ruffa, "Tensions in Retention during Military Transformation," in *Total Defence Forces in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Joakim Berndtsson, Irina Goldenberg, and Stefanie von Hlatky (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2023).

As with military and industrial mobilization, social mobilization must be planned for and ought not to be improvised; doing so risks inevitable war-driven social changes being co-opted, with existential implications for national unity and sovereignty. Canada has left the “fireproof house” before, in both World Wars; it must be prepared to do it again.

CHAPTER 5 – CANADA AT A TURNING POINT

The only thing that makes sense is for Canada to become our cherished Fifty First State. This would make all Tariffs, and everything else, totally disappear. Canadians' taxes will be very substantially reduced, they will be more secure, militarily and otherwise, than ever before, there would no longer be a Northern Border problem, and the greatest and most powerful nation in the world will be bigger, better and stronger than ever.

- President Donald Trump, 2025³⁴⁴

Conclusion

The comfortable global security environment that Canada enjoyed for decades is gone and the nation is at a turning point. With the Russian invasion of Ukraine, there is a large-scale land war in Europe for the first time since 1945, while emboldening PRC provocations in the Indo-Pacific are degrading the international rules-based order. The unpredictable foreign policy decisions and anti-democratic rhetoric of the newly re-elected Trump Administration, along with overt threats to Canadian sovereignty, have questioned the fate of the “special relationship” with the United States; Prime Minister Mark Carney has called this “the biggest crisis of our lifetimes.”³⁴⁵ North Korea continues its nuclear provocations on the Korean peninsula, worsened by their involvement in Ukraine, Iran continues to stoke proxies across the Middle East, and India and Pakistan are at risk of open war yet again. Conflict between Great Powers is frighteningly possible; such a conflict is unlikely to remain limited and therefore a slide to *Total War* is plausible. As a result, Canada’s future is uncertain, and it is for this reason that planning for national mobilization is an imperative for the Government of Canada. Should Canada become involved in another *Total War*, the consequences would be inherently existential; failure would not be an option, and improvisation due to lack of planning would be strategically irresponsible.

³⁴⁴ Donald Trump, Twitter (X) Post, March 13, 2025.

³⁴⁵ Aaron Wherry, “Mark Carney Lays out His Plan for ‘the Biggest Crisis of Our Lifetimes,’” *CBC News*, April 20, 2025, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/mark-carney-lays-out-his-plan-for-the-biggest-crisis-of-our-lifetimes-1.7514504>.

Overcoming the “Fireproof House”

Urgency is key, as the CAF is both poised to engage in combat immediately upon the start of hostilities, but is woefully underprepared to do so, leaving it vulnerable. The CAF as an institution lacks resiliency, having been lulled into a state of complacency from decades of limited wars and counter-insurgency. The idea of mobilization is no longer in the CAF’s lexicon; its strategic concepts neglect the need for massive wartime expansion. The CAF forgot how to mobilize and therefore must cognitively prepare it; engaging with the topic must occur within the profession of arms, through military academia and professional journals. The CAF can and should be a driving force for renewed national mobilization planning. As the government’s subject matter experts on the waging of war, the CAF ought to have the intellectual high ground to advise on the realities of modern war, the high levels of attrition and casualties expected, the need to generate large and capable land, air, and naval forces to win such a *Total War*, and demand planning for military mobilization at the highest level. Prudent planning in anticipation of foreseeable contingencies is an inherent military responsibility; the CAF must plan for the contingency of military mobilization regardless of government direction, while pushing for further prioritization of national-level mobilization planning. The Canadian public will have an expectation that the CAF has a plan; it behooves CAF leadership to not disappoint them.

Providing for a mobilizing CAF will require industrial mobilization of the Canadian economy on a scale not seen since the Second World War. The theme of vulnerability extends to Canadian industry, where a severe lack of capacity in the defence industrial base prevents it from materially supplying not only the CAF’s existing commitments, but also wartime expansion. Conversion of civilian economic capacity to war industry would be required, likely prompting the need to compromise military technical requirements in the name of production capacity; the

CAF must be prepared to reduce its military specifications to what civilian industry can produce. However, Canada is no longer a “fireproof house” for it is open to attack from its enemies. Canadian cities and infrastructure can be destructively targeted, killing innocent civilians and adversely impacting industrial mobilization. To prevent this, critical infrastructure must be resilient, able to withstand and recover from enemy attack. All of this requires deliberate governance to manage both the production of the defence industrial base, conversion of civilian industry, as well as security and resiliency of critical infrastructure. Establishment of a cabinet ministry responsible for defence production, as well as the development of a coherent defence industrial strategy, would be two such preparedness measures.

Effective military and industrial mobilization require a willing population; thus, social mobilization would be an inevitability. However, Canadian society is vulnerable to hostile mis- and disinformation that can exploit existing and future seams, sowing distrust in government institutions and jeopardizing support for a war effort. Canadian society must be resilient, able to withstand hostile mis- and disinformation targeted to disrupt national unity and popular support. History has shown that *Total War* drives social change, so it is imperative that Canadian society be prepared for it, lest change be co-opted by the enemy in an undesirable direction. Honest and transparent communication from government is necessary on matters of national security, even if the public is not yet ready to hear the message; “sugar coating” serious issues such as war preparedness does the Canadian public a disservice at best and breeds distrust at worst. Canada must abandon the “fireproof house” and take national security seriously in its public dialogue. At no time since the Second World War has the Canadian public been more ready for a discussion on mandatory military service as a proactive measure. To do this, the historical baggage of wartime emergency conscription must be stripped away as it is blinding and presents a cognitive

block to productive dialogue. Whether Canada adopts mandatory service is secondary, but having the discussion at the national level will be a signal that the nation has overcome the “fireproof house” mentality.

The themes of resilience and preparedness must form the bedrock of any future Canadian national mobilization planning. Policy must be targeted to address key national vulnerabilities, because unlike during both World Wars, Canada does not have the luxury of time or distance. Though the three oceans separating Canada from the rest of the world are still formidable, they are not invulnerable to Russian or Chinese missiles and drones, and cyberspace knows no oceans. Therefore, Canada must be prepared to mobilize in a future where it will be contested in all domains. Mobilization is a wicked problem with no one easy solution; it crosses all functional areas, domains, departments, and levels of government. This is also not a problem that can be solved quickly. Canada will not have a robust and credible mobilization system in the short-term – this is a long-term problem, though this should not take away from the urgency of the matter. Therefore, the scope of this analysis was deliberately kept broad, and as such, this work forms a “call to arms” for national mobilization planning rather than an instruction manual on how to mobilize.

As a wicked problem, there are many associated questions worthy of future research. The practical implications of massive CAF expansion are immense, including such important questions as how can the CAF adapt its recruiting and training systems to handle a ten-fold or greater increase in strength? What standards would need to be sacrificed? What should the role of the CAF be in society to best support national mobilization? How might the profession of arms change with mobilization? How should *demobilization* of CAF members be planned? Would mobilization change the social contract between the veteran and the state? How would the

Canadian government finance national mobilization? How much control over the free market should the state need to exercise? Would censorship of social media and traditional media be required? Would the Canadian public accept such restrictions on their freedom of expression? And finally, if a national debate on mandatory service favours its introduction, how would such a program be implemented? Would new government departments and agencies need to be created? And who would pay for it? These are not the only questions, to be sure, but are all worthy of future research. Figure 5.1 clearly shows that mobilization is a wicked problem and that the analysis provided here is only an introduction; there are a host of relevant areas for future research.

Mobilization Planning:

- is a wicked problem
- crosses domains, departments, and levels of government
- should include unclassified, public facing planning effort
- provides options to government to respond to **all** types of national emergency, including **Total War**
- can be both **reassurance** and **deterrence**
- is an imperative of **existential** implications

Social Mobilization

- Would censorship of traditional and social media be required?
- How much restriction on freedom of expression would the Canadian public tolerate?
- How would the Canadian public respond to casualty rates significantly higher than in Afghanistan?
- If the Canadian public favours mandatory service, what impact would that have on the fabric of society?
- Could *voluntary mobilization* be an option to explore?
- Does Canadian society even have the potential for national unity?
- What is the best strategy to educate the Canadian public on the dangers and hardships of *Total War*?
- How will Canadians react to the physical hardships, shortages, and civilian casualties that are possible?
- Would *Total War* lead to a reduction in the standard-of-living? Would Canadians tolerate this?
- Could Canada's large advertising industry be used to help foster popular support for a war effort?
- Is a "national unity" or wartime coalition government a viable option, given the current political climate?
- What are the implications to Crown-Indigenous relations? Can Indigenous groups be brought into the national security fold as equal partners?

Military Mobilization

- How much of the Regular Force should be committed to operations vice remaining in Canada to train the newly expanding force?
- What are the implications to current individual and collective training?
- How can the CAF handle a massive increase in recruitment?
- Would the role of the CAF in society change?
- Would the profession of arms fundamentally change with a shift away from long-service professionals?
- How would CAF personnel be *demobilized* after war?
- What doctrine and tactics would need to change for a less professional force?
- What are the implications for leadership training and development?
- How sustainable would current Culture Change initiatives be?
- Would the social contract between the veteran and the state need to change?
- How practical would it be to implement a mandatory service system in Canada?

Industrial Mobilization

- How can the state *financially mobilize*? Who pays for mobilization?
- How much control of the free market is needed or will be tolerated?
- Can the Canadian economy become self-sufficient enough to support a contested industrial mobilization?
- What are the critical bottlenecks in defence production?
- Would industrial labour need to be deliberately managed? What would be the role of unions? Would collective bargaining need to be curtailed?
- How much of Canada's service-based economy will still be relevant? Can elements be repurposed for defence production?
- How willing would business leaders NOT in the defence sector be to reorient to defence production?
- Would *coercive* measures of industrial control be needed?

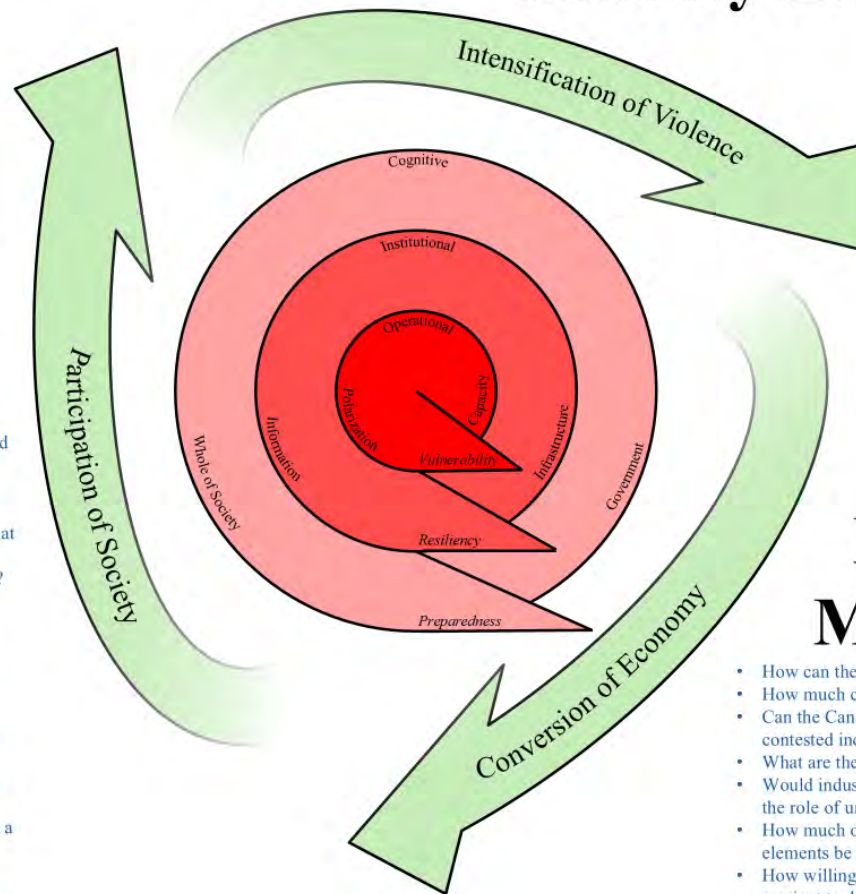


Figure 5.1 – Mobilization as a Wicked Problem

Source: Author Created.

Mobilization Provides Options

There could be debate over the use of the word *mobilization* itself, as it may come off as alarmist. Though the word was used during the COVID-19 pandemic,³⁴⁶ outside of that context it has been conspicuously missing from policy and statements from both military and civilian leadership.³⁴⁷ In keeping with the need for transparency, the word *mobilization* ought not to be avoided; it should be used deliberately. Though a significant portion of any mobilization planning scheme ought to be conducted at higher levels of classification outside of public dialogue, there is the need for overt and public elements of that planning. Canada's last mobilization system had a significant unclassified component, in the CAF's CFJP 7-3 *CF Joint Doctrine on Mobilization* and DND's *Mobilization Planning Framework*. Both were deliberately unclassified to ensure maximum cross-pollination and cooperation between government departments. As shown in Chapter 4, transparency from government is critical for building trust in the public, especially when it comes to nationally existential issues; mobilization planning is one such issue. Doing so will act as a *signal*, not only to the Canadian public that its government takes threats seriously, but also to Canada's enemies and allies that it is preparing, even prepared.

Though *Total War* is the most severe use-case of mobilization planning, it is not the only one. Limited conflicts below the threshold of another World War could require the expansion of military capacity beyond peacetime establishment; the CAF's struggle to sustain forces in Latvia is a case in point. Any mobilization system that Canada develops as part of national mobilization

³⁴⁶ The Prime Minister of Canada, GoC, "Prime Minister Announces Canada's Plan to Mobilize Industry to Fight COVID-19," Prime Minister of Canada, March 20, 2020.

³⁴⁷ In a survey of public remarks by the current and previous Chiefs of Defence Staff, the word *mobilization* is never used. However, remarks that touch on the subject indirectly such as the need for preparedness and resiliency are common, indicating a deliberate hesitance to use the word *mobilization*. In their outgoing and incoming speeches respectively, Generals Carignan and Eyre both alluded to *mobilization* without directly using the word. Ashley Burke and Darren Major, "New Chief of the Defence Staff Says Canada Has 5 Years to Prepare for Emerging Threats," *CBC News*, July 18, 2024, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/new-chief-of-defence-staff-change-in-command-ceremony-1.7266382>.

planning must be flexible, scalable, and applicable for all types of national emergencies as outlined in the *Emergencies Act*. The system developed in the 1990s and codified in the now-rescinded 4SMP had the advantages of flexibility and adaptability; any twenty-first century equivalent must also. The COVID-19 pandemic will likely not be the last global health emergency,³⁴⁸ and the World Health Organization (WHO) has already called for preparedness for the next one.³⁴⁹ Climate change-induced natural disasters in Canada continue to occur at a worrying pace, particularly forest fires. Canada must be prepared to harness and mobilize all elements of national power in response to all types of emergencies. Furthermore, planning is cheap; having a plan and not using it is better than needing a plan and not having it. It will be impossible to plan for every contingency, but having a limited plan, even an incomplete one, is better than improvising *after* an emergency arises. Again, cognitive preparation is paramount.

Recent Canadian national security policy has relied on allies, the United States in particular, to offset generational complacency and deficiencies in defence investment. The ongoing and rapid degradation of the “special relationship” and outright threats of annexation by the Trump Administration have shred these assumptions. Canada is at a fork-in-the-road in terms of national policy, and though not all do, some of those paths lead towards war. A policy of national preparedness, resiliency, and mobilization planning provides options from which Canadian national policy can be pivoted. Having the capacity to mobilize the state for *Total War* gives Canada the options to be able to mobilize its national capacities for all types of emergencies and contingencies. With Canada routinely being called out by its allies, not just the

³⁴⁸ Andy Giddings, “Another Pandemic Inevitable, Virologist Warns,” *BBC News*, March 24, 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cx2xr8n14g5o>.

³⁴⁹ Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, “After COVID-19, Is the World Ready for the next Pandemic?,” World Health Organization, March 11, 2025, <https://www.who.int/news-room/commentaries/detail/after-covid-19--is-the-world-ready-for-the-next-pandemic>.

United States,³⁵⁰ for failing to live up to its defence commitments, a credible mobilization system can act as a form of *reassurance*. Furthermore, mobilization can also be an act of *deterrence*; Finland has survived more than eighty years alongside a hostile Russia, largely due to the deterrent effect of its *national resistance*-focused mobilization system.³⁵¹ Though deterrence against Russian and PRC aggression is necessary, it is also relevant for the worst-case scenario: aggression from the United States. Though previously unthinkable, some public discussion is now occurring on the prospect of invasion and annexation by the United States;³⁵² the need for some kind of deterrence is evident. Invading Canada should be too costly for any aggressor to contemplate, as the idea of invading Finland has been to Russia for generations. Mobilization planning provides options to pivot to a policy of *national resistance* akin to Finland, should that worst-case arise.

The global security environment is changing so fast that Canada's long-standing national security complacency is an existential threat in and of itself. A national policy of resilience and preparedness to mobilize all elements of national power will provide Canada the option space to retain its sovereignty and autonomy in the face of any national emergency, including *Total War*. Planning for national mobilization is an imperative of existential implication, as time and

³⁵⁰ Nadine Yousef, "NATO Allies Pressure Canada to Step up Spending at Washington Summit," *BBC News*, July 9, 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cl4ygzl4mzo>; Ashley Burke, "Defence Minister Accelerates 2% NATO Spending Timeline to 2027 amid Pressure from Trump," *CBC News*, January 24, 2025, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/defence-spending-two-percent-defence-spending-target-1.7440870>.

³⁵¹ See Teija Sederholm, Rasmus Rannikko, and Mikael Salo, "Total Defence Model at the Heart of Finland's National Defence and Resilience," in *European Total Defence: Past, Present and Future*, ed. Gjermund Forfang Rongved (Oxford, UNITED KINGDOM: Taylor & Francis Group, 2025), 115–34, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cfvlibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=31752522>.

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