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**CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE / COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES
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**The Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process:
A Maturing Process or Continued Improvisation?**

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Abstract

Much has been written about the failures in leadership surrounding the beating and shooting of Somali nationals by Canadian Forces personnel as investigated by the Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces personnel to Somalia. Less well known to the public and military personnel is the strong criticism by the Somalia Commission of the Canadian military planning system. Indeed, a review of the planning process was central to their review.

With the passing of time and the high operational tempo conducted by the Canadian Forces since the Somalia mission, it is worth looking at the lessons learned from these missions and how they have been applied, or not applied, to improve Canadian military operational planning. This paper contends that the planning process has been slow to mature despite the many documented lessons learned from a variety of recent operations. The main reason for this is the continued blurring of lines between the strategic planning level and the operational planning level. The paper examines lessons learned as documented in the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff Lessons Learned Staff Action Directives to evaluate the applicability of the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process (CFOPP) to domestic, humanitarian, peace support and war operations. The examination demonstrates that the time sensitive nature of many planning operations and other external pressures has lead to a repeat of many of the planning mistakes cited by the Somalia Commission. Several recommendations are offered to improve the application of the CFOPP at all levels.

The Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process: A Maturing Process or Continued Improvisation?

Officers in Canada are selected, trained, and paid to plan military operations and to command armed forces in operations. After commanding forces in action, planning military operations is an officer's most important duty.¹ - Somalia Commission of Inquiry, Volume Three

Introduction

Much has been written about the failures in leadership surrounding the beating and shooting of Somali nationals by Canadian Forces personnel as investigated by the Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces to Somalia. Less well known by both the public and military personnel is the strong criticism by the Commissioners of the Canadian military planning system as it existed in 1992. Indeed, scrutiny of the planning process was central to their investigation. The Canadian Forces has experienced an extremely high operational tempo since the planning of Operation "Cordon" and Operation "Deliverance" to Somalia. Moreover, the very nature of peacekeeping has changed along with the return of more frequent coalition operations outside standing alliance commitments. It is now timely to ask whether the operational planning process has matured in response to criticisms by the Somalia Commission or does the Canadian Forces continue to improvise mission planning in an ad hoc manner?

This paper will examine the lessons learned from recent Canadian military operations in the 1990s and evaluate the applicability of the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process (CFOPP) to these activities which include domestic, humanitarian, peace support, and war fighting operations. The essay

contends that little has been learned about a planning process that is perhaps one of the better kept secrets in the Canadian Forces and that the lines between the strategic planning level and the operational planning level in Canada are frequently blurred. More often than not, there has been a blending of the strategic and operational planning process at the strategic headquarters. The lessons learned from many recent missions will show the CFOPP process continues to be influenced by external factors such as short response times, government pressure, and coalition or United Nations expectations that force the military to accept a great deal of ad hoc planning to the detriment of operations.

Recommendations for Change

On the surface, it is probably surprising to most people that the Somalia Commission found so many planning problems associated with Operation “Cordon” and Operation “Deliverance”. After all, this is what military forces train to do. Nevertheless, systemic crisis-management problems were a recognized concern within the Department of National Defence prior to the tarnished mission to Africa in 1992. Just prior to the conclusion of the Cold War in 1989, General Paul Manson, Chief of the Defence Staff, and Mr. Bev Dewar, Deputy Minister of National Defence, commissioned a study to examine how the Canadian Forces could improve its ability to perform crisis management in peace, emergencies, and war. They appointed Lieutenant-General De Chastelain, Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, to oversee a study that was co-chaired by Major General W.E.R. Little and Mr. S.P. Hunter. The Little-Hunter study was specifically charged “to determine the function of NDHQ in emergencies and war, how it should be

organized to undertake these functions, what resources it would require, and the appropriate peacetime structure that would permit a transition to wartime operations".²

Little and Hunter found that the role of National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) in peace, emergencies, and war was not clear and needed to be better articulated. They recommended an improved framework to develop a better crisis management system within the Department.³ Some of their recommendations concerned improvements to operational planning. They recommended changes within the NDHQ decision making structure to speed up the timely exchange of information, to produce better estimates of the situation, to better prepare courses of action, to properly package recommendations on the best course of action, and finally, to better coordinate operational plans. These were weak areas later commented upon by the Somalia Inquiry. Unfortunately, the Little and Hunter Study was shelved when it was tabled in early 1989 because the new CDS and DM determined that the study had been overcome by events.⁴ As the Cold War ended, the Canadian Forces had already moved into an unprecedented era of high operational tasks around the world spanning the entire spectrum of conflict and the Department of National Defence was already dealing with crisis management problems such as the native crisis at Oka, Quebec. This missed opportunity was unfortunate because the manner in which strategic level crisis-management takes place profoundly impacts the implementation of the CFOPP process at the operational planning level. The perception that defence challenges would diminish after the end of the Cold War

was quickly shattered by the realities of messy regional conflicts throughout the 1990s.

Regretfully, there is a paucity of literature dealing with the present Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process or its predecessors either in the academic community or the military journals. This situation might indicate that the process is not well known either inside or outside of the military. There are very few articles written by Canadian military officers either on planning issues or their operational experiences. Moreover, those that have been written tend to be complimentary rather than critical assessments. This contrasts quite significantly with countries such as the United States and Great Britain. Perhaps the new Canadian Military Journal will provide the vehicle for frank commentary on military challenges facing the Canadian Forces today.

The most comprehensive critique is to be found in the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of the Canadian Forces to Somalia. Many of the points raised by the Commission concerning military mission planning are applicable to a variety of missions ranging from domestic operations to peace support operations to war. Thus, the report provides a very useful benchmark with which to gauge the applicability and effectiveness of the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process within the last decade despite the other criticisms of the inquiry.

The findings of the Somalia Commission pointed out a number of flaws related to the military planning process. Some of the findings included the following observations. First, DND did not have any documented policies or procedures to conduct peacekeeping operations. Second, the Commission was critical that the criteria to weigh plans against for peacekeeping operations as promulgated in the 1987 White Paper on Defence were not followed. Third, the process was reactive, incomplete and constrained by short time-lines.⁵ The Little and Hunter Study had pointed out these same weaknesses three years earlier.

The Somalia Commission made several good recommendations to improve the military planning system for future operations. A major recommendation included the need for the government to issue new guidelines and compulsory criteria for decisions about whether to participate in a peace support operation. Another recommended the development of better doctrine to guide the planning, participation and conduct of peace support operations. Moreover, the Somalia Commission recommended that Canadian participation in United Nations peace support operations should be contingent upon the completion of a detailed mission analysis by the Chief of the Defence Staff each time Canada is asked to participate in a peace support operation. It also advocated the inclusion in the mission analysis of the following elements: a determination of troop strengths, unit configuration, resource requirements, and weapons and other capabilities.⁶

Many of the above recommendations are equally applicable to domestic, humanitarian and war operations for military planners. The Canadian Forces

Force Employment manual states that “by definition, a lesson learned is not learned until follow-on action has been completed and doctrine, procedures or equipment have been changed.”⁷ So how have the Commission’s recommendations been addressed and what lessons have been learned and applied to the full range of operations conducted by the Canadian Forces since 1992? What lessons have been learned from the Little/Hunter Study? In order to determine the answer it is useful to make a quick survey of the Canadian military planning system and then examine it’s application to a variety of recent operations, but always keeping the Somalia Commission criticisms and findings in mind.

The Canadian Military Planning System

A number of initiatives have slowly been introduced to improve the Canadian military planning system since the end of the Cold War. The system has clearly evolved to the point that the Canadian Forces are in a stronger position today to better develop military plans. For example, unlike the period of the Little/Hunter Study, there is now an overarching doctrine for the conduct of the full spectrum of conflict from Operations Other Than War to peace support operations to war. This guidance is documented in a capstone manual entitled, Canadian Forces Operations. Chapter four provides guidance on the Operations Planning Process, to be developed at the operational level. Along with the individual environmental doctrinal documents, it provides a good overarching framework for single environment, joint and/or combined planning. Moreover, another strength is that it follows similar approaches used by NATO and Canada’s major allies.

Additionally, the Canadian Forces has developed a manual entitled Force Employment “to provide guidance for the planning, conduct and review of Canadian Forces operations at the strategic and operational-levels”.⁸ This manual spells out the Force Employment Process as a core process that supports the Defence White paper task to defend Canada and Canadian interests. The Canadian Forces Operations Process to employ forces involves three elements: to plan operations, to conduct operations and to review operations. The guidance to plan operations is well articulated in the Force Employment manual that replaces earlier versions entitled the Joint Operations Planning Process (JOPP) and the Canadian Operations Planning Process (COPP). The Force Employment manual seeks to standardize the Canadian Forces planning process, to ensure strategic and political control of plan development, to enable the staff to translate political objectives into military objectives, to enable commanders to guide plan development and to maximize the staff’s creative thought process.

The Force Employment manual has been augmented by the development of a Canadian Forces Operations Planning Process Guide by the Canadian Forces College (CFC) to help students of the operational level of war to better understand the military planning system. However, it is not exactly clear how the Canadian Forces at-large uses the Canadian Forces College Guide to conduct operational level planning. It is presumed that individual graduates of the

Canadian Forces Command and Staff Course (CSC), the Joint Reserve Command and Staff Course (JRCSC) and the Advanced Military Studies Course (AMSC) may use this guide as a reference in the application of their duties after leaving the College. There is anecdotal evidence that individual graduates have found the guide extremely useful as a planning tool in both Canada and abroad serving with the United Nations or a coalition.⁹ While this document is very useful, it is unfortunate that officers across the Canadian Forces have not been provided access to this important planning tool. For example, the DCDS Lessons Learned Staff Action Report for Operation “Assistance” in support of the Manitoba Flood pointed out that only 3 of 35 majors assigned to the Joint Force Headquarters had attended CSC.¹⁰ It would seem that there is a need to expand the Force Employment manual to include information from the Canadian Forces College Guide. Alternatively, the CFC Guide should be published separately as a stand-alone Canadian Forces document available to all.

Nevertheless, all three of the above documents describe the operational planning process. Each provides a sound description of the five phases of contingency planning process: Warning, Preparation, Deployment, Employment, and Redeployment. Each also provides a sound description of the six steps in the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process: Initiation, Orientation, Course of Action Development, Decision, Plan Development and Plan Review. Moreover, each provides a sound descriptive overview of the differences between deliberate planning and time-sensitive planning, and also capability-based planning instead of commitment-based planning. But that’s where the

documents are probably weakest as they fail to make planners properly aware of the real challenges that times-sensitive or crisis-management planning present. A common theme encountered over and over again in lessons learned reports is the adverse impact that lack of planning time has on operations. The documents also miss stressing the growing importance of capability-based planning in light of the significant impact on force structure caused by downsizing and fiscal restraint. The new focus on capability based planning is an important change from the commitment-based planning era of the Cold War as Task Forces are now task tailored to different scenarios rather than to a standing commitment.¹¹

How effective has the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process been applied to military operations since the tragedy of the Somalia mission? It is very revealing to discover a number of common findings in the Lessons Learned Staff Action Directives produced by the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff for the operational missions conducted by the Canadian Forces since 1992. What can these operations tell future planners about the applicability of the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process to domestic, peace support and war operations?

CFOPP Applicability to Domestic Operations

Perhaps the simplest and most straightforward application of the CFOPP process should be for domestic operations. Certainly, a deliberate planning activity such as that conducted under Operation “Abacus”, the preparations to

assist the Government of Canada with anticipated Y2K computer problems, lends itself to a very orderly planning process. Indeed, the government and the general public applauded the Canadian Forces for the very careful and detailed planning it conducted in preparation for a potential emergency. This activity was also an excellent vehicle to promote the continued development of a joint operations capability in the Canadian Forces.

In contrast to the excellent work conducted in the deliberate planning model used for Operation “Abacus”, mother nature forced the time-sensitive model on the military, the federal government and provincial governments to deal with the challenges of the 1997 Manitoba flood and the 1998 Eastern Ontario/Western Quebec ice storm. Both natural disasters required large-scale interventions by the Canadian military to help provincial governments. The Manitoba flood in April and May 1997 began with the devastation of farmland in southern Manitoba and escalated very quickly as the flood soon threatened the entire City of Winnipeg. The military involvement began with a modest request for 100 soldiers to fill sandbags and culminated in the deployment of some 8,500 Canadian Forces personnel as part of a Joint Task Force.¹²

The Canadian Forces response to the Manitoba Flood was an overwhelming success. Nevertheless, many valuable lessons were learned for future operations because several issues were identified in the post action reports that needed attention. Many identified issues dealt with the need to improve the

capability for the Canadian Forces to plan and execute joint operations. It was pointed out that there was very limited “jointness” within the structure at 1 Canadian Division Headquarters. Moreover, there were not clear delineation of planning responsibilities between NDHQ joint planners and the Joint headquarters planners. Operation “Assistance” disclosed many command and control relationships that were loose and misunderstood by senior military personnel at NDHQ and in the field.¹³ A common challenge for all concerned was the time-sensitive response required by planners and operators. The need to respond fast resulted in a less than optimum use of the planning process. The Lessons Learned report described the issue as follows:

The relatively short notice nature of OP ASSISTANCE resulted in the planning procedures in the Joint Operational Planning Process being accelerated and modified to meet the emergency and evolving nature of the situation. Unfortunately, there were instances where basic JOPP doctrine and procedures, notably with respect to finances and movement, were bypassed or overlooked: confusion and the waste of resources resulted.¹⁴

How then did the Canadian Forces apply these lessons learned for the application of the planning process to the next domestic emergency? The need for a deployable joint headquarters had been previously identified in 1994 and revalidated in 1996. As an interim measure, a small joint cadre was set up within the 1st Canadian Division Headquarters at Kingston, Ontario. This formation provided the nucleus of the Canadian Forces command and planning response in Manitoba. As a result of lessons learned, NDHQ established a working group to examine joint command, control and planning issues.

However, before the working group could table a report it became necessary to once again implement the military planning system on a large-scale. In early January 1998, some 22,000 Regular and Reserve Force personnel were deployed or involved as part of Operation “Recuperation” in the response to the series of ice storms that hit Eastern Ontario, Western Quebec and part of New Brunswick with such devastating effect.

Consequently, the Canadian Forces dealt with yet another large-scale domestic emergency even before the lessons learned from the Manitoba experience were fully digested.¹⁵ As in the Manitoba Flood, the Canadian Forces once again received rave reviews from the public and governments for the timely and professional response to the emergency. However, the lessons learned report listed 15 significant issues to improve the Canadian Forces’ ability to respond to a domestic emergency. Many lessons learned were identified in the Manitoba Flood after-action reports, including problems in command and control arrangements, lack of staff in the National Defence Operations Center (NDOC) to man 24/7 operations, mission creep, and the requirement to improve planning capabilities for short-notice operations.¹⁶ This operation demonstrated that the Canadian Forces still had a way to go to improve its’ crisis response capabilities.

With regard to planning, the Operation “Recuperation” Lessons Learned Staff Action Directive validated the basic doctrinal concepts to respond to a complex domestic or international emergency as being sound as detailed in the Canadian

Forces Operations and Force Employment manuals. However the report stated that, “the planning doctrine, Standing Operating Procedures and crisis management procedures at the strategic level for planning domestic operations in response to disasters are underdeveloped and the management and control of operational documentation within the Joint Staff is weak”.¹⁷ This finding demonstrates that weaknesses at the strategic level have a cascading effect to the operational level if initial plans and direction are not conducted effectively. Indeed, there is a tendency for the strategic level to take on planning that should more appropriately be left for the operational level. It is interesting to note the major disconnect that took place concerning the need for weapons. Within one twenty hour period, NDHQ directed the JFHQ for units not to deploy with weapons, followed by a direction to take weapons, only to be rescinded by another order not to take weapons.¹⁸

It is clear from the DCDS Lessons Learned Staff Action Directives from both Operation “Assistance” and Operation “Recuperation” that planning staffs will always be tremendously challenged by the short timelines involved to respond to difficult natural emergencies. Moreover, just as peace support operation planners are encumbered in dealing with external agencies such as the United Nations, domestic operations will equally challenge planners who deal with government and non-government organizations. There is clearly a need for government bureaucrats to understand the military planning process and for the military to better understand civilian emergency response procedures. While

this may be difficult to achieve in real terms, it is important for the military to attempt to educate civilian planners as early in a crisis situation as possible.

Both the Manitoba Flood and the Ice Storm helped push the Canadian Forces to further improve its joint operations and planning capabilities. While the staff planning related to these events pointed out strengths in the documented planning process, they also underscored the need for strong SOPs to be able to translate the CFOPP process into action in a severely time constrained environment.

CFOPP Applicability to Humanitarian Operations

At the same time that planners were being challenged with domestic contingencies, they were being called upon to respond to international appeals for emergency assistance. Recent Canadian experience has shown the benefits of complimenting the deliberate planning process with the time sensitive planning process. A case in point is the very successful deployments of the Canadian Forces Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART). In October 1998, the DART deployed for the first time under Operation "Central" to provide humanitarian relief assistance to Honduras following the devastation caused by Hurricane Mitch throughout Central America. Part of the success of this mission was the application of several planning lessons learned concerning the DART from the aborted Operation "Assurance" mission to Zaire two years earlier and from earlier deployments to other parts of the world.¹⁹

The Department of National Defence created the DART after awkward ad hoc responses to international hurricane and earthquake emergencies earlier in the 1990s. Canadian disaster relief operations were often cobbled together from available resources. The DART organization now provides dedicated units capable of responding on 48 hours notice to move anywhere in the world. The overarching document to plan, deploy and re-deploy the DART organization is Operational Plan “Griffon”. This standing operation plan provides a detailed framework to execute an effective DART deployment.²⁰ The basic plan was soon put to the test in Turkey.

Valuable lessons learned were applied from the Operation “Central” experience to the subsequent DART deployment to Turkey to help with the destruction caused by an earthquake in August 1999. It is gratifying to note that earlier operational planning and execution lessons learned from Operation “Central” were applied to Operation “Torrent” in Turkey.²¹ The normally frank and critical DCDS Lessons Learned Staff Action Directive process applauded the Canadian Forces for the “skill and determination at all staff levels in rapidly planning, deploying and supporting a force of significant size in a distant and unfamiliar region. The NDHQ Joint Staff and the Joint Headquarters (JHQ) Kingston responded superbly in mounting and deploying the DART for Op Torrent.”²² This success demonstrates the high value of conducting as much deliberate planning as possible beforehand and adapting that planning base to the situation encountered on short notice.

CFOPP Applicability to Peace Support Operations

Probably the most difficult application of the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process is to Peace Support Operations, whether these are in direct support of the United Nations or as part of a coalition or alliance. Several authors have suggested that the Canadian Forces have come a long way in the past decade to improve joint and combined doctrine. For example, a former Commandant of the Canadian Forces College wrote in 1994 that “the CF made much progress in operational maturity since the Gulf War, where valuable lessons were learned respecting command and control, logistic support, operational level planning, and joint and combined tactical operating procedures.”²³ Yet, how has this improvement been reflected in the operational experience of the Canadian Forces in a variety of peace support operations? It is useful to contrast this assertion with a brief look at the effectiveness of operational level planning in peace support operations in Haiti, Zaire, Iraq, the Central African Republic and East Timor.

Operation “Standard”, and later Operation “Stable”, were Canada’s contribution of a 750 person contingent as part of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) and the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH) that took place between April and October 1996. This mission, like many other United Nations operations, encountered many of the same problems that plagued planners for the Somalia mission. There were uncertainties over the renewal of United Nations mandates, lack of a mission aim, limited planning, late

reconnaissance, logistics delays and confusion, training conducted without a clear understanding of the mission and the lack of an approved rules of engagement (ROE). The Operation “Standard” Lessons Learned Staff Action Directive indicates that the mission was conducted with “disregard for the Joint Operations Planning Process procedures and inefficient coordination of mission requirements. Furthermore, the government’s direction that Canada would participate in the mission was given without the full benefits of a military analysis”.²⁴ Proper application of ROE became a very contentious issue in theater because there were considerable differences over the mission objectives and ROE required. Indeed, soldiers cards were amended twice over one seven day period and soldiers on the initial deployment were “gun shy” because of confusion over the proper use of their weapons and they feared a Somalia type inquiry if they made a mistake.

The Canadian led peace support operation to Zaire to protect and relocate refugees demonstrated quite vividly that the problems encountered in Haiti were not unique to that mission. Numerous planning problems were once again encountered as pointed out in the DCDS Lessons Learned Staff Action Directive for Operation “Assurance”.²⁵ It is disturbing to note the significant number of planning deficiencies in this operation. The mission did not have a complete mission analysis and planners did not provide clear outputs from the Joint Operational Planning Process. Also, the planners were reluctant to make assumptions and the mission lacked a clearly understood command relationship.

More disturbingly, there was a lack of knowledge about joint doctrine by senior leaders and a need to train the Joint Staff in joint planning.²⁶ Fortunately, events on the ground obviated the need to attempt to execute fully Operation “Assurance” as the refugees returned home on their own accord without serious interference.

Canada continued to participate in a variety of peace support operations following what staff planners derisively call the “Bungle in the Jungle”. The DCDS Lessons Learned Staff Action Directives for many of these missions are classified, but there is one common denominator. Time-sensitive planning was a major factor in Operation “Determination”, the Multi National Force to enforce sanctions against Iraq, Operation “Prudence”, the mission to assist the restoration of peace and security in the Central African Republic, and Operation “Toucan”, the Multi National Force to restore peace and security to East Timor. It is also clear that the Canadian Forces continued to encounter planning problems along the lines experienced in earlier missions.

CFOPP Applicability to War Operations

While Canadian Forces units have gone in harm’s way in both the Persian Gulf War and the Balkan Air Campaign, it is difficult to draw solid lessons learned from these experiences as to the applicability of the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process in war. The Canadian Forces contributions in ships, fighters and personnel were extremely modest. Use of the CF-18 fighter force on two occasions within eight years did demonstrate the high skill and

professionalism of Canadian pilots. And of course, Canada's sailors performed equally well in the Persian Gulf conflict. However, the use of the CFOPP process was more in tune with past limited force contributions to peace support operations. Individual CF Commanders did not develop detailed campaign plans, but instead operated within a coalition or alliance framework.

However, in both war-fighting conflicts in the 1990s, the Canadian Forces faced challenging planning issues to field relatively small combat forces. The use of a composite fighter squadron in the Gulf War with a limited air-to-air role demonstrated the ad hoc nature of some Canadian Forces operations. This operation demonstrated the lack of appreciation of the proper application of fighter aircraft to both a defensive and offensive coalition air campaign. While some of these limitations were eliminated in the Balkan Air campaign, one of the senior Task Force Commanders has speculated that Canada would be very hard pressed to repeat this accomplishment.²⁷

It would seem, however, that the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process would be very useful should Canada participate in any future coalition or alliance war in a more robust manner. Certainly, the Canadian Forces use the planning process in a variety of environmental, joint and combined training exercises. Also, a very similar process was used effectively by Canada's coalition and alliance partners to pursue hostilities in both the Persian Gulf and the Balkans.

Recommendations

The Somalia Commission was quite critical of the Chief of the Defence Staff, the Deputy Minister and the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff for failing to conduct better strategic and operational planning for the Somalia mission in all its various forms. However, just as operational level planning cannot be conducted in isolation from strategic level planning, the Department of National Defence cannot operate in isolation from the Government of Canada. The Government of Canada must understand the strengths and weaknesses of the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process.

The Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process, as it is described in Canadian Forces publications, is fairly sound. What is less sound is the link and understanding on the part of the government of Canada on how the process leads to the proper selection and employment of Canadian Forces units and personnel in the field. Despite the call by the Somalia Commission for better criteria against which to determine if Canada will participate in peace support or coalition operations little progress has been made in this critical planning area. The same planning mistakes seen in Somalia have been repeated in later missions to Rwanda, Haiti, Zaire, Iraq and East Timor. It is interesting to note that Mr. Louis Delvoie, a former Deputy Minister of National, recently challenged the government of Canada to develop policy criteria for use in the decision-making process to determine if Canadian Forces should be sent on peace support operations.²⁸ Mr. Delvoie points out quite correctly that the “CNN factor” all too frequently influences the government of Canada to respond quickly to

world situations without carefully considering Canada's real interests and to permit proper planning to take place. Too often the Canadian Forces responds with a "Can Do Attitude" and proceeds to participate in operations that are not fully developed through the complete use of the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process.

In his annual report for 1999-2000, the Chief of the Defence staff described the high pace of operations over the last decade and, in particular, the last two years. He indicated that "the Canadian Forces will likely be called upon to do even more in the decade ahead".²⁹ What should the Canadian Forces do to better prepare for the challenging operations in the future? The following are a few initiatives that could be pursued to continue to enhance the understanding and application of the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process:

1. Conduct a comprehensive comparison of past DCDS Lessons Learned Staff Action Directives to determine recurring common problems;
2. Make the DCDS Lessons Learned Staff Action Directives available to military personnel through the NDHQ Joint Staff web site;
3. Delineate clear responsibilities for strategic level planners and operational level planners;
4. Encourage Canadian Forces Joint Force Commanders and United Nations Commanders to write and publish lessons learned articles based on their personal command and planning experiences;

5. Encourage the Canadian Forces College to introduce a case study on Canadian operational planning and the execution of a mission. The Somalia Mission provides an excellent Canadian case study to understand the variables that influence the application of the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process at both the strategic and operational levels;
6. Encourage Canadian Forces leaders to speak more frequently on their personal experiences in planning and executing missions to help educate a larger Canadian Forces audience.
7. Revise the current Canadian Forces Force Employment Manual to better describe the problems associated with time-sensitive planning;
8. Educate federal and provincial government leaders and bureaucrats on the military planning process and its limitations; and
9. Encourage the government of Canada to develop criteria to determine if and how the Canadian Forces should participate in a peace support, coalition or alliance operations.

Conclusion

What can be learned from the lessons learned from the Canadian Forces operations conducted since the Somalia Inquiry? The Somalia Report placed a great deal of emphasis on reforming and revitalizing Canada's military planning system. Has the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process been reformed or is the Canadian Forces destined to continue to conduct ad hoc military planning? The lessons learned and re-learned by the Canadian Forces through the large number of domestic and international operations over the last decade

have forced the military to introduce some changes along the lines advocated by the Somalia Commission and the Little/Hunter Study. The ability of the Canadian Forces to apply the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process has improved and the process continues to mature. The results have tended to be better when the deliberate-based planning process is applied than when the time-sensitive based planning process is implemented.

The recent creation of the Canadian Forces Joint Operations Group (CFJOG) should significantly improve the Canadian Forces ability to plan and conduct operations ranging from multinational operations with increased emphasis on high-risk peace enforcement missions to complex domestic operations as experienced in the 1990s. Moreover, the improved plans to deploy the Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) will certainly improve the Canadian Forces capability to respond to domestic and humanitarian operations. And the creation of a more robust National Defence Command Center (NDCC) to replace the National Defence Operations Center (NDOC) has improved both command and crisis-management issues within NDHQ. However, the job is not finished. The lessons from recent missions indicate the Canadian Forces need to develop a disciplined approach to use the CFOPP, especially at the strategic level.

It is interesting to speculate what might have happened if Canadian Forces personnel killed looters during the Manitoba Flood, the Ice Storm, or the Rwanda or Haiti missions. Or what if there had been significant military casualties? Quite clearly, it is essential that Canadian Forces officers continue to develop and

apply the Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process to the very best of their ability. The criticisms and findings of the Little/Hunter Study and the Somalia Commission of Inquiry concerning Canadian military planning and crisis management are valid. In the final analysis, the military planning process and crisis-management tools are maturing slowly within the Canadian Forces. However, the process must continue to evolve and become better understood in order to minimize the problems associated with earlier ad hoc operations. As pointed out by the Somalia Inquiry, it is every officer's duty to make it better.

Endnotes

¹ Canada, Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces to Somalia. Dishonoured Legacy: the Lessons Learned of the Somalia Affair. (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Services Canada, 1997) 797.

² Douglas Bland, ed., Canada's National Defence: Volume 2 Defence Organization (Kingston: Queen's University, 1997) 410.

³ Ibid, 492.

⁴ Ibid, 423.

⁵ Dishonoured Legacy, 845-848.

⁶ Ibid, 772-775.

⁷ Canada, Force Employment (Ottawa: DND, 1997) 1-9.

⁸ Ibid, iv.

⁹ A staff officer serving with the United Nations Mission in the Central Africa Republic recently advised the Canadian Forces College that he found the CFC CFOPP Guide to be very useful as the basis for UN mission planning.

¹⁰ Canada, Department of National Defence, DCDS 3301-2-4-2 (J3 Lessons Learned 2) OP Assistance – Lessons Learned Staff Action Directive, 19 November 1997. A-4/13.

¹¹ Jeremy R. Stocker, "Canadian Jointery" Joint Force Quarterly Winter 1995/96: 118.

¹² Canada, Department of National Defence, DCDS 3301-2-4-2 (J3 Lessons Learned 2) OP Assistance – Lessons Learned Staff Action Directive, 19 November 1997. A-1/13.

¹³ Ibid, A 6/13.

¹⁴ Ibid, A-6/13.

¹⁵ Canada, Department of National Defence, Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff, 3301-2-4-3 (J3 Lessons Learned), Operation Recuperation Lessons Learned Staff Action Directive, 15 March 1999, 1-4.

¹⁶ Ibid, pp. A-19/23 to A-23/23.

¹⁷ Ibid, A-8/23.

¹⁸ Canada, Department of National Defence, Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff, 3452-034/134 (J3 Lessons Learned 2), Op Standard/Op Stable (Apr-Oct 96) – Final Lessons Learned Report, 2 July 1997. A-2/8.

¹⁹ Canada, Department of National Defence, Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff, 3452-12-8 (J3 Lessons Learned), Operation Assurance Lessons Learned Staff Action Directive, 25 February 1998. A-7/17.

²⁰ See Department of National Defence Public Affairs Information Backgrounder, BG-00.013, 18 May 2000

²¹ See Department of National Defence Public Affairs Information Fact Sheet, 4 October 1999. pp. 1-3.

²² Canada, Department of National Defence, Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff, 3350-165/C33 (DLLS), Operation Central/Torrent Lessons Learned Staff Action Directive (LLSAD), 01 March 2000. 2/7.

²³ K.A. Nason, “Joint Operations in the Canadian Forces: A Meaningful and Timely Start, Canadian Defence Quarterly December 1994: 7

²⁴ Canada, Department of National Defence, Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff, 3452-034/134 (J3 Lessons Learned 2), Op Standard/Op Stable (Apr-Oct 96) – Final Lessons Learned Report, 2 July 1997. A-2/8.

²⁵ Operation Assurance, A-5/17.

²⁶ Ibid, A-6/17.

²⁷ Davies et al, “Mission Ready: Canada’s Role in the Kosovo Air Campaign” Canadian Military Journal, Spring 2000: 59.

²⁸ Louis A. Delvoie, “Canada and International Security Operations: The Search for Policy rationales” Canadian Military Journal, (Summer 2000) pp. 13-23.

²⁹ Canada, Department of National Defence, “Building on a Stronger Foundation – Annual Report of the Chief of the Defence Staff 1999-2000”: 5.

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