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The Threat of Asymmetrical Warfare and Canada's Readiness

By /par Lieutenant Colonel C.M. Hazleton

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Abstract

This paper contends that asymmetrical warfare is nothing new and as such the Canadian Army is more than capable of addressing this threat within its current doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures. However, while doctrine has allowed the Canadian Army to be successful on all of its missions since the Second World War, it must now be able to adjust doctrine in order to maintain this success. Additionally, to ensure continued success the Canadian Army and training system/institutions must also be able to adjust and be creative and flexible enough to incorporate any required modifications to address the asymmetric threat. Within Strategy 2020 the Canadian Army has been tasked to deliver a joint capability to deal with weapons of mass destruction, information operations and other asymmetrical threats and, in a five-year modernization plan, to develop new task tailored capabilities to deal with the asymmetrical threats and weapons of mass destruction. To accomplish this, the Canadian Army is in the process of implementing an interim model, which will see three specialized brigades, which will become more plug-and-play from a manoeuvre and firepower perspective; sub-units will become the basic building blocks for generating more flexible groupings for tactically self-sufficient organizations. This model is the short- term solution to meet the asymmetrical threat.

In summary, the asymmetrical threat appears to be the new 'buzz word' in both military and governmental agencies and as such a great deal of attention is now being focused towards it. But is this attention really necessary? History has demonstrated that asymmetrical warfare has always been present throughout time, and that well trained and disciplined armies have been able to adjust to this threat through solid doctrine and flexible training. The Canadian Army with its

current doctrine and training is capable of defeating the asymmetrical threat, however, to maintain this capability, it must ensure that its doctrine and training is flexible enough to adjust to the asymmetrical threat and any other new threat, which may materialize in the foreseeable future.

The Threat of Asymmetrical Warfare and Canada's Readiness

By

Lieutenant Colonel C.M. Hazleton

“An army may be compared to water, for water in its natural flowing avoids the heights and hastens downwards. So in a war, an army should avoid strength and strike at weakness. As water shapes its flows in accordance with the nature of the ground, an army manages to be victorious in relation to the enemy it is facing. As water retains no constant shape, so in war there are no constant conditions. One who can modify his tactics in accordance with the enemy's situation and succeed in gaining victory may be called divine.”

Sun Tzu (Fourth Century B.C.)¹

Canada is among the world's leaders in the integration of doctrine, technology and training.

(Defence Strategy 2020)²

AIM

The aim of this paper is to demonstrate that existing and evolving operational army doctrine, heretofore related primarily to symmetrical warfare, can be successfully applied to the conduct of operations against an asymmetrical threat. To do so, contemporary definitions of asymmetrical warfare will be presented, the history and evolution of asymmetrical threats will be discussed and several contextual paradigms will be examined. The nature of the asymmetrical threat to the United States and Canada and the strategic level responses of their respective

¹ Hanzhang, General Tao, Sun Tzu: The Art of War, Wordsworth, 1993. p-56.

governments will then be reviewed. Finally, the current and evolving operational and tactical level doctrine of the Canadian Army will be analyzed, along with examples of its successful application in recent operations, in order to demonstrate its continuing relevance and suitability against the asymmetrical threat.

INTRODUCTION

Asymmetrical warfare is not a new ‘buzz word’ or a new type of weapon or warfare. History has shown asymmetrical warfare has always been present. It does, however, now appear to be the flavour of the month within Canadian government and military circles as well as with her allies. With this said, it seems that the western world public and press have recently awakened up to the asymmetrical threat as a result of the various terrorist attacks over the past years, especially since the successful attack on and destruction of the World Trade Centre on the 11th of September 2001. The Canadian and American governments have been concerned about the asymmetrical attack since the mid nineties. Within Strategy 2020, the Canadian Forces were charged to develop new task tailored capabilities to deal with asymmetric threats and weapons of mass destruction.³ Additionally, the threat of an asymmetrical attack is now identified as a key threat to our national sovereignty within The Army Strategy.⁴

Definition(s) of Asymmetrical Warfare

There are certainly no shortages of definitions or opinions as to what the term ‘asymmetry,’ ‘asymmetric warfare,’ ‘asymmetric approaches’ and ‘asym-metric options’ means

²Department of National Defence. Shaping the Future of Canadian Defence: A Strategy for 2020. June 1999. Part II, p-8.

³ Ibid., part II.

within the military and governments of the Western World.⁵ The American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) defines asymmetrical warfare as “The use of innovative strategies, tactics, and technologies by a ‘weaker’ state or sub-state adversary that are intended to avoid the strengths and exploit the potential vulnerabilities of larger and technologically superior opponents. This includes:

1. The selective use of weapons or military resources by a state or sub-state group to counter, deter, or possibly defeat a numerically or technologically superior force.
2. The use of diplomatic and other non-military resources or tactics by a state or sub-state group to discourage or constrain military operations by a superior force.”⁶

Within the Canadian military, the asymmetrical threat is defined as “a term used to describe attempts to circumvent or undermine an opponent’s strengths while exploiting his weakness, using methods that differ significantly from the opponent’s usual mode of operations.”⁷

While the CIA definition covers a wide spectrum of conflicts it is too broad. For the sake of avoiding confusion, the Canadian definition as accepted by Armed Forces Council will be used for this paper.

⁴ Department of National Defence. *Advancing With Purpose: The Army Strategy One Army One team One Vision*. May 2002. p-32.

⁵ Thomas, Timothy L. “Deciphering Asymmetry’s Word Game.” Military Review. Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. July – August 2001. p-1.

⁶ Miles, Franklin B. “Asymmetric Warfare: An Historical Perspective.” USAWC 1999. p- 2 taken from the Central Intelligence Agency, Statement of work for Asymmetric Warfare Threats to US Interests: Expert Panel Support. CIA, May 1998.

⁷ DCDS ‘THREAT DEFINITION: ASYMMETRIC THREATS AND WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION.’ P-2. Definition, taken from US DOD Joint Staff, was endorsed by AFC Apr 00.

History of Asymmetrical Warfare

Asymmetrical warfare has been used throughout the ages of recorded history to either defeat an enemy or deal him a decisive defeat. One of the most recognized and perhaps familiar forms of asymmetrical warfare is that of guerrilla warfare. Whilst usually associated as a conflict involving small groups of irregular troops or formations against a numerically or technologically superior foe, history has shown this type of warfare to be very successful. Through ancient times to present, guerrilla warfare has been able to disrupt and in some cases defeat superior forces. The ambush and destruction of three elite Roman legions by the Germanic chieftain Arminius in the Teutenburg Forest in 9 AD is but one example. The guerrilla warfare conducted by the Spanish during the Peninsula War of 1808-1814 is yet another example of a smaller force using unconventional methods to attrite the superior French forces.⁸ The 20th century has seen a plethora of guerrilla warfare against a stronger foe. Whether it has been on the grand scale of the Vietnamese fighting the Americans, or the Afghan rebels fighting the Soviets, we saw technological inferior forces that were capable of inflicting mass casualties on a super power. It is interesting to note that, during the Second World War, the Soviets utilized a guerrilla campaign behind German lines to successfully tie up nearly one third of the 260 German divisions engaged on the Eastern Front.⁹ Other smaller conflicts throughout the 20th century are numerous, (Cuba, Afghanistan, Niagara, Rhodesia, Angola, Cambodia to name but a few), but in each case these smaller forces eventually succeeded in removing the government and its military from power. In terms of today's realities and threat, to the Al Qaeda fighter cowering in a cave in a remote part of Afghanistan, a fuel air explosives dropped with deadly precision from an aircraft miles away and

⁸ Miles, Franklin B. "Asymmetric Warfare: An Historical Perspective." USAWC 1999. p – 16/17.

⁹ Ibid., p-17.

thousands of feet up directed by laser designators from special operation forces, is as asymmetrical to him as his methods of warfare are to us.¹⁰

Additional New Threats of Asymmetrical Warfare

While the above mentioned can be defined as ‘traditional’ methods of asymmetrical warfare, a new ‘arm’ or ‘threats/tactics’ can be added to the term. They are weapons of mass destruction (WMD), which include nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, the use of cyber warfare (technology /information warfare) and non-conventional operations.¹¹ The term of WMD is perhaps the one threat that the general population recognizes, but likely do not fully understand the term and all that it implies. The United States, by virtue of its super power status and the fact that it cannot be challenged symmetrically for the foreseeable future, must now focus more of its attention towards unconventional means, as adversaries will be more likely forced to use such means to gain any sort of victory. To achieve a victory, the likely weapon of choice may well be a biological or chemical weapon. The CIA estimates this technology (WMD) is available to approximately 20 countries, of which several are openly hostile to the United States. This type of threat is highly probable given that, in the 20th century, there have been some 70 terrorists incidents which have involved chemical or biological elements, and of which over half have occurred in the last decade.¹² Added to this threat are the means by which an adversary can deliver it. Besides the traditional means of delivery such as aircraft and missiles, WMD can now

¹⁰ Ancker, Clinton J, and Burke Michael D. “Doctrine for Asymmetric Warfare.” p.-2.

¹¹ Defence Planning Guidance 2000, dated 5 August 1999.

¹² Department of National Defence. Directorate of Strategic Analysis Policy Planning Division Policy Group Research Note 2001/04. ASYMMETRIC THREATS The Homeland Dimension. August 2001. p-2/3.

be concealed and delivered in vehicles, cargo containers or even in a suitcase; the means of delivery are endless.¹³

The Information Revolution has now introduced another venue to the asymmetrical threat. With the vast majority of the industrialized world being dependent on computer technology to assist in the day to day running of critical infrastructure and financial institutions, the threat of disruption through asymmetrical means is but a ‘buttons push way.’ As a result of advances in cyber technology and the dependency on computers and telecommunications by both civilian and military organizations, attacks by asymmetrical means or information warfare are a reality and have occurred. The CIA Director George Tenet reported to the United States Congress, 13 July 1998, at least a dozen countries, some hostile to America are reported to be developing an information warfare capability. Information warfare may be particularly attractive as a tool of terrorism because it gives individuals and groups a reach that was previously reserved for well-organized, state-funded terrorist organizations.¹⁴ The Pentagon reported that in 1999 it was subjected to daily information attacks of between 80 and 100 cyber incidents on its computer systems each day. This figure doubled in 2000.¹⁵

Another threat is that of non-conventional operations, which include a myriad of threats/techniques, such as the use of complex terrain, economic disruption, civil disobedience and terror to offset the advantages of superior symmetric forces by western military and security forces.¹⁶ Non-conventional operations can best be described as fighting in environments, which

¹³ Ibid., p-3.

¹⁴ Ibid., p-4.

¹⁵ Department of National Defence. Directorate of Strategic Analysis Policy Planning Division D Strat A Project Report 2001/17. Strategic Assessment 2001. September 2001. p-122.

¹⁶ DCDS ‘THREAT DEFINITION: ASYMMETRIC THREATS AND WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION.’ p-6.

degrade superior forces capabilities or, more simply, the opponent does not fight the way we expect. The Vietnam War is a good example of non-conventional operations; whilst the American forces did not lose any battles against the Vietnamese, they eventually lost the war. It has been argued that the will and patience of the American people was defeated and thus there was no longer the desire to continue with this conflict. More recently non-conventional means have been employed by the Chechens against the Russians. Again we see a superior force battling a lesser foe with symmetric means, but being attrited through asymmetrical attacks. A simple tactic such as knowing the Russian T-72 battle tank's main gun depression limit allowed the Chechens to hide below the depression level in the basements and windows and above the maximum elevation while fighting in Grozny during 1994-95 and successfully defeat this armour threat within the city. The end result to this war was humiliating defeat to the Russians. We again see non-conventional means employed by the Serbian military against NATO air forces when bombing both Serbia and Kosovo. Serbian deceptions fooled NATO's high-tech equipment by use of simple decoys and deception. The Serbians found a flaw in electronic-reconnaissance system; they discovered that they could be seen but not clearly identified on the ground so they used decoys and fake positions to protect real targets. Additionally, when the Serbians wanted to defeat or block NATO's thermal-imaging systems they simply hid the heat source of the target by industrial heat sources.¹⁷ The end result was very few Serbian artillery or tanks were actually destroyed. These are but a few examples of non-conventional means, others means include the attack on the USS Cole, the bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut and the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia.

¹⁷ Thomas, Timothy L. "Deciphering Asymmetry's Word Game." Military Review. Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. July – August 2001. p-4.

NEW WORLD ORDER

To better understand the current world situation and how the asymmetrical threat has come to the forefront it is necessary to understand the events of the past decade. At the dawn of the 20th Century's final decade, the world seemed hopeful that it would leave behind the conflicts of the previous ninety years and enter a "New World Order." The United States stood alone as the undisputed heavy weight champion of the Cold War. The ideological struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union ended with the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the triumph of Perestrioka. Up until the beginning of the 1990's, the Cold War's bi-polar structure of a block of mostly well-off democratic societies, lead by the United States, pitted against another somewhat poorer communist block, lead by the Soviet Union, dominated the relations of nations. Most of the world's conflicts were fought in the poor and unstable nations of the world who claimed to be non-aligned. The great powers contained most of these conflicts through their backing of their respective proxies, thereby ensuring that the overall balance in the struggle for world hegemony was preserved. With the internal disintegration of the Soviet empire this structure come to an end. The United States, and to a lesser degree it's Western European allies, emerged as the undisputed champions of the Cold War.

Samuel Huntington suggests a number of possible paradigms that have emerged to explain the post- Cold War structure. The first model is the One World concept, which concludes that the end of the Cold War signifies the end of significant conflict in the world. The victory of "liberal democracy" will lead to a spirit of cooperation and partnership in which peacekeeping and peacemaking will dominate. Huntington likens this to the post World War I optimism of the "war to end all war" and the American vision for the future as blueprinted in President Wilson's Fourteen Points. Wilson had envisioned a League of Nations that would

keep the peace. The 1990's would be the dawn of a "New World Order" and would fulfill Wilson's dream. The second model is the Two Worlds concept, which sees the world divided between 'them' and 'us.' In the past this has included the North/South, East /West and rich/poor variations. In the post-Cold War era, many American scholars have used the "zones of safety" and "zones of danger" to describe this relationship. The third model is the Realist concept, which contends that states are the important factor in determining the course of world affairs. They inevitably attempt to maximize their power in relation to others and protect their own security and interests. There are at present approximately 184 states, each with separate agendas, all interacting with each other. The fourth model is the Sheer Chaos concept, which suggests that the post-Cold War world order is in anarchy, epitomized by the appearance of "failed states." It points to everything from the breakdowns of state authorities, refugee crisis, ethnic conflict and international crime and terrorism as indications of an international order spiralling out of control.¹⁸

Huntington rejects the One World model as unfounded when faced with the failure of the international community in halting the ever increasing number of ethnic conflicts and breakdowns of law and order since 1989. He concedes that the Two Worlds model at least recognizes the existence of a non-Western vision of the world but that it is over simplified. The Realist and Chaos models are, in Huntington's opinion, the closest to reflecting reality. They recognize the multi-national aspect of international relations but fail to appreciate the motives for a state's actions. Huntington has proposed a fifth model of a civilizational-based world order; he contends that the world's states are grouping under the seven or eight major

¹⁸ Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996). This is an overall summation of Huntington's writing and as such has been footnoted at the end of this paragraph.

civilizations that currently exist.¹⁹ He contends that these civilizations have “core states” which establish spheres of influence. In the post Cold War world, cultural commonalities and differences shape the interests, conflicts and alignments of nations. Where cultures meet, fault lines occur and a clash of civilizations ensues. These are particularly dangerous as they could have a potential domino effect among other member nations of the participating civilizations. International relations have, therefore, become multi-polar and multi-cultural.²⁰

While each of these proposed paradigms has some validity, none can serve as a fool proof means to navigate the troubled international waters of the post-Cold War era. Even Huntington’s civilizational based model fails to adequately explain why, for example, nations sometimes align themselves with those of different cultural persuasion against one of their own. As an example, Huntington lists Syria as an Islamic nation that has been engaged in a running war with the Christian west since the 1970’s, yet it provided troops for the American lead coalition against Saddam’s Iraq in 1990.²¹

As Christopher Bellamy points out, one of the most likely flash points for a major conflict with potentially global implications is between Taiwan and China. This would clearly not be a clash of civilizations.²² Huntington’s suggestion that “cultural realpolitik” could be the reason for these deviations indicates that there must be some things more important than cultural affiliation, which motivates states to action.

¹⁹ Ibid., p- 45-47. Primarily these are Sinic, Japanese, Hindu, Islamic, Western, Latin American, African. Huntington also suggests at various points that Orthodox could be viewed as separate from the West, as indicated on the map 1-3 on p- 26-27. This would be particularly applicable to his theory in the former Yugoslavia where Croatia and Serbia end up on opposing sides.

²⁰ Ibid., p- 31-39.

²¹ Ibid., p-216 listed as hostile and p-248 listed as an ally.

²² Christopher Bellamy, *Knights in White Armour* (London: Random House, 1996), p-128.

Huntington's contention is that "in the emerging world, global power is obsolete, global community is a distant dream."²³ The collapse of communism has reinforced the West's view that liberal democracy had triumphed globally and hence was universally valid. His contention is that this is self-deception, what is universalism to the West, is imperialism to the rest. In pursuit of this democratic universalism, the Clinton Administration took as a central theme of its foreign policy the enlargement of democracy.²⁴ This is bound to fail as the United States lacks cultural connections with many nations. By contrast Zbigniew Brzezinski argues that the United States is the only remaining comprehensive global superpower. Its "current global supremacy is distinctive in the rapidity of its emergence, in its global scope and the manner of its exercise."²⁵ This is based on its supremacy in four decisive domains; military power, economic power, technological advancement and culture. While he concedes that "Cultural domination has been an under appreciated facet of American global power" it is the combination of the four domains that make the United States the "only comprehensive global superpower."²⁶

One of the key instruments of exercising national policy is military power. One of the most accepted philosophers on the subject of war and its relationship to military power and politics has been Karl von Clausewitz. Christopher Bellamy succinctly summarizes Clausewitz stating "While the nature of war itself naturally strove to an extreme, it was always limited to a greater and lesser extent by politics, by geography, by the 'friction' of its component parts, by human frailty and human will."²⁷ Political motives for war will determine the military objectives of that war and the resources to be employed, "War is merely the continuation of policy by

²³ Huntington, p- 156.

²⁴ Huntington, p- 193.

²⁵ Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), p- 3.

²⁶ Brzezinski, p- 24-25.

²⁷ Bellamy, p-26. It will be assumed that Clausewitz's theories are generally held to be valid.

others means.²⁸ The political purpose of any war must therefore determine the means employed and the degree of effort dedicated to the achievement of that purpose. As a result, Clausewitz also defined two kinds of wars, limited and unlimited. He defines unlimited wars as those “ in which the object is to render him (the enemy) politically helpless or militarily impotent, thus forcing him to sign whatever peace we please.”²⁹ By contrast limited wars need only gain advantage “for bargaining at the negotiation table” Each of these theories should be kept in mind when looking at asymmetrical warfare, and the threat it presents to the Western World.

THE ASYMMETRICAL THREAT

How then did the first successful attack since 1941 on the American homeland, the attack on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, by a foreign body, catch the only super power in the world apparently sleeping? Was the American government and, for that matter, the Canadian government not aware of the asymmetrical threat? In the mid-1990s the United States, recognizing that, as the worlds only super power it was now vulnerable to other forms of non-symmetric threats, turned its focus towards the threat of asymmetrical warfare. As a result, there was an increase of interest and investigations by different governmental and military organizations into this threat, which, as a result were brought into the public eye. One of the first documents identifying the asymmetrical threat was published in 1996. This document, the ‘Joint Vision 2010’ referred directly to the risk of asymmetrical counters to American military strengths, and as well, identified information technologies as a possible target. This was followed by the 1997 ‘Quadrennial Defense’ review which expanded on the asymmetry theme, arguing that American dominance in the conventional military arena may encourage adversaries

²⁸ Peter Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy* (Princeton: University of Princeton Press, 1986), p- 200.

²⁹ Bellamy, p- 26.

to use asymmetrical means – including ballistic missiles, weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and informational warfare – to attack forces and interests overseas and Americans at home.³⁰ In 1999 the Canadian the Department of National Defence, recognizing the changing world environment provided strategic direction to deliver a joint capability to deal with weapons of mass destruction, information operations and other asymmetrical threats within Strategy 2020.³¹ Clearly then both the Canadian and American leaders were aware of this threat, had identified their concerns and had issued strategic direction to deal with the various threats, in particular the asymmetrical threat.

To the untrained eye the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon on the 11th of September 2001 signalled a new type of warfare and threat to the Western World. While the media and western governments tended to call this a “new and unusual” occurrence – indeed the foundations had been in existence since the record of warfare. The asymmetrical threat appears to be the ‘flavour of the month’ and is now being used to explain the attacks against various western powers. Asymmetrical warfare has simply come to the forefront of public attention in part due to the destruction of the World Trade Centre and attack on the Pentagon.

UNITED STATES REACTION TO THE THREAT

As mentioned earlier the United States emerged from the Cold War as the only world super power. Its military power and might had been proven and demonstrated during the Gulf War and, as a result, the symmetric threat against the United States was assessed as non- existent for the foreseeable future. So why then, given this complete dominance in world power, should

³⁰ Department of National Defence. Directorate of Strategic Analysis Policy Planning Division Policy Group Research Note 2001/04. ASYMMETRIC THREATS The Homeland Dimension. August 2001. p-2.

³¹ Department of National Defence. Shaping the Future of Canadian Defence: A Strategy for 2020. June 1999 p-

the United States worry about an asymmetrical threat? The former Secretary of Defense William Cohen warned “a paradox of the new strategic environment is that American military superiority actually increases the threat of nuclear, biological, and chemical attack against us by creating incentives for adversaries to challenge us asymmetrically.”³² It is therefore not surprising that national attention and resources have been applied towards this threat by the American government. Perhaps the biggest eye opener for the United States was the 1995 sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway by the Japanese Aum Shinrikyo cult. Following the attack, American fears of similar attacks against the United States generated public awareness towards weapons of mass destruction (WMD). As a result, American authorities arrested various individuals associated with domestic extremist organizations for possession of chemical and biological agents, and WMD related scares.³³ The threat of an attack by WMD on the United States became more apparent to the public. As a result, a series of Presidential Decision Directives (PDD) were introduced to counter the threat.

In June 1995, former President Clinton issued PDD 39, which enunciated his administrations counter terrorism policy; as well it distinguished “crisis management” and directed the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to be the agency responsible for countering such threats. Additionally, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was given the lead for “consequence management;” other organizations also received tasks as supporting agencies towards the asymmetrical threat. In 1997 Congress passed the Defense Against Weapons of Mass Destruction Act, which obliged federal departments and agencies to execute

³² Tucker, Jonathan B. “Asymmetric Warfare.” FORUM, For Applied Research and Public Policy. http://forum.ra.utk.edu/1999_summer/asymmetric.htm. P-1-2. Taken from the Center for Defense Information, “Military Domination or Constructive Leadership?” Defense Monitor 277 (3) (1998),p-8.

programs and activities aimed at enhancing the capability of federal, state and local emergency responders to deal with terrorists incidents involving WMD.³⁴ In the years that followed, a series of more powerful PDDs acts were passed, which ranged from the protection of critical infrastructure to combating terrorism. Yet even with these measures, former President Clinton in 1999 stated it was “highly likely” that a terrorist group would launch or threaten a germ or chemical attack on American soil within the next few years.³⁵

Given the amount of activity within the United States government, it is not surprising then that the Canadian government and military began to study the asymmetrical threat with more interest and detail. The Future Operations Study conducted by the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (DCDS) in 1999 suggested that there was little likelihood of a major conventional war involving Canada in the next 5-10 years but identified that emerging families of threats to Canadian security, labelled “asymmetric,” are present now. The report went on to suggest they have significant potential to affect Canada’s security and may move into the foreground in the next 5-10 years.³⁶ Remembering that this report appeared two years prior to the 11th of September 2001 attacks, the authors clearly understood the world situation and threats.

It is recognized throughout the world that Canada and the United States share a very unique relationship in terms of economics, trade, treaties and culture. By virtue of this relationship, the asymmetrical threat posed towards the United States will most likely involve Canada. What is the asymmetrical threat to the United States? As previously discussed, since the

³³ Department of National Defence. Directorate of Strategic Analysis Policy Planning Division Policy Group Research Note 2001/04. ASYMMETRIC THREATS The Homeland Dimension. August 2001. p-5.

³⁴ Selbie, J.J. “Homeland Security: A Canadian Perspective.” USAWC 2001. p-2/3.

³⁵ Department of National Defence. Directorate of Strategic Analysis Policy Planning Division Policy Group Research Note 2001/04. ASYMMETRIC THREATS The Homeland Dimension. August 2001. p-5.

Gulf War there is no single nation, which can challenge the United States militarily. As a result, symmetrical, high tech war is unlikely because such an endeavour would represent enormous training, logistical and resource requirements, the demands of which few societies can meet.³⁷ With Russia in economic turmoil, and increased fighting within its Muslim states, they are no longer in a position to control rogue organizations or anti-American countries. We now see a new threat emerging as a result. The “fourth-generation warriors,” non-national and trans-national groups based on ideology, religion, tribe, culture, zealotry, and illegal economic activities, have pushed many regions of the world into anarchy.³⁸ It is these “fourth-generation warriors” who pose the greatest asymmetrical threat to the United States, and by virtue of our alliance and economic bonds, this threat includes Canada.

“It is every Muslim’s duty to wage war against U.S. and Israeli citizens anywhere in the world.”

Osama bin Laden³⁹

THE ASYMMETRICAL THREAT TO CANADA

Should Canada be worried, and is it prepared to address the asymmetrical threat? As seen by the successful attacks throughout the world against American military and civilian targets in the past and, particularly the 11th of September attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the asymmetrical threat is real and highly organized. Unlike previous attacks that

³⁶ DCDS ‘THREAT DEFINITION: ASYMMETRIC THREATS AND WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION.’ p- 1.

³⁷ Dunlap, Charles J. “Preliminary Observations: Asymmetrical Warfare and the Western Mindset.” Challenging the United States Symmetrically and Asymmetrically: Can America Be Defeated. p – 5.

seemed to be limited to military or government targets, these attacks now identified both military and civilian as targets and, it can be argued, has identified all Americans people to be combatants. Whilst the risk of a large-scale asymmetrical attack on Canadians and Canadian soil is determined to be slight, the threats to Canadian troops deployed on United Nations and NATO missions are more likely.⁴⁰ Given the statement by the Prime Minister Jean Chretien following the 11th of September attacks stating, “the world has been attacked. The world must respond,” it can be perceived to reinforce Canada’s ‘interconnectedness’ with the United States and thus in turn make the asymmetrical threat all the more real to Canada.

Although the asymmetrical threat to Canada is believed to be slight the Canadian government has been proactive in its response, albeit with less public fanfare than the Americans with their Homeland Defence publicity. Traditionally the Canadian Forces were seen as the force of last resort for domestic incidents within Canada. This perception was based on Part VI of the National Defence Act, Section 275, which identifies the CF as liable to be called out when a riot or disturbance of the peace is “beyond the powers of the civil authorities to suppress, prevent or deal with...”⁴¹ However, this was based on traditional threats and, as such, did not take into account the asymmetrical threat and post 11th of September 2001 world environment. With this environment in mind, the Canadian government assigned specific agencies responsibilities to address the asymmetrical threat. The Solicitor General is the lead Minister for co-ordinating terrorists incidents, including WMD and attacks on critical infrastructure within Canada. The

³⁸ Grange, David L. “Asymmetric Warfare: Old Method, New Concern.” National Strategy Forum Review. Winter 2000. p-2.

³⁹ Ibid., p-3.

⁴⁰ Department of National Defence. Directorate of Strategic Analysis Policy Planning Division Policy Group Research Note 2001/04. ASYMMETRIC THREATS The Homeland Dimension. August 2001. p-9.

⁴¹ Department of National Defence. DEFENCE SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD REPORT 01/13 May2002. p-11.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is responsible for law enforcement aspects in the event of such attacks, and, Emergency Preparedness Canada (EPC) is tasked to co-ordinate “consequence management” efforts. To address the cyber threat the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness (OC�PEP) has been created. Whilst this organization has been established within the Department of National Defence (DND), its mandate is to cut across traditional departmental lines of authority, and coordinate many of the intelligence and counter-terrorism activities of the RCMP, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) and the Communications Security Establishment. In addition the EPC has been integrated into this agency, as attacks on critical infrastructure and civil defence all will now fall under this umbrella.⁴² In order to oversee all of the activities and potential threats, OC�PEP operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week and serves as a central point of contact for threat and incident information. If threats are received, the related information is sent to the Government of Canada, provincial governments and the private sector. Accordingly, at the strategic governmental level it appears the organizational command and control has been established and are functioning.⁴³

Within the Canadian Forces, Strategy 2020 provided strategic direction to “deliver a joint capability to deal with weapons of mass destruction, information operations and other asymmetric threats.” It also set a five-year modernization target for developing “new task tailored capabilities to deal with the asymmetric threats and weapons of mass destruction.” Additionally, Defence Planning Guidance 2001 tasked the Canadian Forces to develop an implementation plan for these capabilities by mid-2002. In order to ensure involvement with other governmental agencies charged with addressing the asymmetrical threat, the military was tasked to assist and support

⁴² Department of National Defence. Directorate of Strategic Analysis Policy Planning Division Policy Group Research Note 2001/04. ASYMMETRIC THREATS The Homeland Dimension. August 2001. p-10.

⁴³ Ibid., p- 11.

both the RCMP and EPC at the operational level. In response, the Joint Task Force 2 and the Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Response Team have been assigned this task. Other organizations within DND have also been established to address the various cyber threats and attacks. They are the Critical Infrastructure Protection Working Group, the Network Vulnerability Assessment Team and the Computer Incidents Response Team.⁴⁴

DOCTRINE, TACTICS, TECHNIQUES and PROCEDURES

At the strategic level it appears the Canadian Government has provided the direction/guidance to the various governmental agencies and DND to deal with the asymmetrical threat; however, a clear doctrine is needed to support this guidance at the operational level including clear procedures as to how these organizations will be employed together in time of an asymmetrical attack.

If Canada is to be successful against asymmetrical warfare the country needs to ensure that it is ready at the operational level. For the sake of argument (and this paper), it is assumed that the different governmental agencies listed above have designed their own respective doctrine and working procedures to respond to the asymmetrical threat. However, in the case of DND and, more specifically, the army, this assumption is questionable as there is no specific doctrine manual, which addresses the asymmetrical threat.⁴⁵ It is possible that our present doctrine is sufficient and flexible enough to address the asymmetrical threat and that the need for a separate doctrine designed to address this threat is redundant. To understand the significance of doctrine one must first understand its definition. The American Department of Defense Dictionary of

⁴⁴ Ibi16/TT0 926.618 Tm()TjETEMC /Span /a.141010.02 0 0 10.02.

Military and Associated Terms describes doctrine as “fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgement in application.”⁴⁶ With this definition in mind, doctrine therefore provides us with an operational concept, which, in turn, drives our tactical procedures and techniques and the way in which we train for war, regardless whether it be symmetric or asymmetrical.

The Canadian Army is accustomed to fighting abroad and, given the current world environment and government policy, its deployment will likely remain so for the near future. Given the location of these deployments, an asymmetrical threat is always present and may well be applied against the deployed forces. However, with this said, our current doctrine has on the surface, allowed the army to cope with all situations very well. Internally at home the Canadian Army has confronted the asymmetrical threat during the FLQ and OKA crisis. It can be argued that both these crises were, in fact, asymmetrical in nature and, through cooperation with the civil authorities, the Canadian Army was able to adapt to the situation based on available doctrine and defeated the threat. Or, in other words, “effective doctrine (at all levels) explains how we expect to fight and operate based on past experience and our best guess of what lies ahead. Doctrine provides the link between research, theory, history, experimentation, and practice. It encapsulated a body of knowledge and experiences so it can be applied.”⁴⁷

In a still to be published study on Command and Control within DND, the authors identified that Canadian doctrine is lacking in several areas or is simply not available or understood. As a result, during most of the above-mentioned missions there were serious

⁴⁶ The American Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms; http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/jpl_02.pdf.

command and control issues. This lack of proper or current doctrine, in many cases forced the commander to develop operational procedures from first principles, which was time consuming and frequently lead to mistakes.⁴⁸ Despite the lack of new doctrine the Canadian Army has been fortunate to produce ‘victories’ throughout the world and at home. As discussed earlier, both DND and various federal governmental agencies have formed committees to address the asymmetrical threat. Therefore at the government or strategic level it could be argued that procedures are in place to address the asymmetrical threat. These procedures have, for all intents and purposes, have never been fully exercised and until such time as they are, there will be doubt as to their effectiveness. On the other hand, the Canadian Army is in a position to act and has the resources to do so.

Under its current organization the Canadian Army is configured to fight both symmetric and asymmetrical warfare. Within each of the three Canadian Mechanized Brigade Groups there are two mechanized infantry battalions, an armoured, artillery and combat engineer regiment and one light infantry battalion. Since the conflict in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) every regiment and battalion has participated either as a formed unit or sub-unit on an UN and NATO and OOTW missions or in war fighting. Accordingly, this configuration has proven its successful flexibility in being able to adapt to both the symmetric and asymmetrical threat. Despite this success with its three symmetrical brigades, the Army within Strategy 2020 has been tasked to deliver a joint capability to deal with weapons of mass destruction, information operations and other asymmetrical threats and, in a five-year modernization plan, to develop new task tailored capabilities to deal with the asymmetrical threats and weapons of mass destruction.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p-3.

To address this the army has moved forward with an interim model that will see three specialized brigades. It will become more plug-and-play from a manoeuvre and firepower perspective; sub-units will become the basic building blocks for generating more flexible groupings for tactically self-sufficient organizations. Additionally, during the next ten years the army's structure and doctrine will start focusing more on operations in complex terrain such as urban or large wooded areas, without precluding the more traditional open manoeuvre concepts.⁴⁹ Whether this move towards an interim model is based on economic reasons, rather than to address the asymmetrical threat, will not be addressed within this paper, but given the success of the army in past missions, is a structure and capability change required? The concept of plug-and-play is also not without criticism, as it is perceived as challenging the regimental system. However, the sceptics who feel this way are blinded to the fact that the majority of deployments over the past decade have in fact been plug-in-play organizations, and during these deployments the regimental system was not affected. If the army is to adjust to this interim model, the doctrine currently employed needs to be adjusted immediately and not just reflect complex terrain, but also the changing tasks and capability associated with the asymmetrical threat. It is interesting to note that, within the interim model, three of the nine infantry battalions are designed as 'light' battalions yet there is no Canadian doctrine for light infantry. Similarly, the two armoured regiments whose role will now be strictly reconnaissance will be utilizing out dated doctrine, which was developed for another vehicle and capability. Fortunately, Director of Army Doctrine (DAD) is developing new doctrine for reconnaissance, but it is not close to implementation. As has been shown by their recent deployments each of Canada's light

⁴⁸ COMMAND AND CONTROL A LESSONS LEARNED (LL) ANALYSIS. P-5,14 &17. It should be noted that this study is still in draft form and as such has not been signed off. However, given that the statements provided are not new, I believe the observations to be valid.

battalions and reconnaissance squadrons have performed superbly utilizing symmetric doctrine. However, having said this, it was the flexibility ingrained within their tactics, techniques and procedures that allowed them the ability to adapt to the mission at hand. In order to augment these specialized 'plug-and-play' units within the three brigades, the Canadian Forces and other governmental agencies a nuclear biological and chemical warfare company was stood up as of the summer of 2002. While still in its infancy, this company has been designed to address the asymmetrical threat of WMD. Its capability, though limited at present due to manning, equipment and lack of formalized doctrine,⁵⁰ should when fully operational be able to provide to the Canadian government and OCIPEP an organization capable of fully assisting the asymmetrical threat.

Sound level operational doctrine is translated into combat power at the tactical level, regardless of the threat. It is here that leaders must be able to prepare and adapt to any situation. It is in these situations that the leader is like a master carpenter. When given a job (task/mission) he analyzes the situation and then, based on his experience and training, utilizes the correct tool within his toolbox to complete the job at hand. If the tool chosen is not correct, then he adjusts and uses another tool. The aim, from beginning to end, is to use the right amount of effort, force and time to complete the task. The American FM 3-90 provides perhaps the most comprehensive definition and best captures the master carpenter analogy. "The art of tactics consist of three interrelated aspects: the creative and flexible array of means to accomplish assigned missions, decision making under conditions of uncertainty when faced with an intelligent enemy, and understanding the human dimension – the effects of combat soldiers. The

⁴⁹ Interim Model: Why An Interim Model? CLS Home Home Page <http://www.army.forces.ca/strategy/English>.

tactician invokes the art of tactics to solve tactical problem's within his commander's intent by choosing from interrelated options, such as forms of maneuver, tactical mission tasks, and arrangement and choice of control measures.”⁵¹ It is our tactics that have proven to be the Canadian Army's strength and backbone in all operations since the Second World War. Regardless of the situation, tactical commanders have been able to adapt to meet each situation and challenge. The most recent deployment by the Third Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (3 PPCLI) Battle Group (BG) into Afghanistan is proof of this. The BG was comprised of both light and mechanized infantry companies from two different battalions, as well as an armoured reconnaissance squadron that based its doctrine on symmetrical warfare. Despite this perceived disparate organization and no Canadian doctrine on light battalion in operations,⁵² the BG was able to modify its tactics based on symmetric doctrine and transform into a highly organized and disciplined machine that easily adapted to asymmetrical warfare. Based on this and other past successes, the current Canadian Army tactics are capable of meeting the asymmetrical threat so long as the techniques and procedures are maintained to the highest of levels.

Techniques and procedures are the bread and butter of war fighting. Whilst it is doctrine that will implement government strategic decisions, and tactics that will determine how the battle will most likely be fought, it is the techniques and procedures of the individual soldier that will lead to victory. Techniques are the methods used by forces to tackle their mission or tasks, while

⁵⁰ Discussion Col Roussaeu, Director NBC, LCol Hazleton 19 Oct 2002. The company, which was stood up summer of 2002, presently is manned at 40 personnel and has yet to receive its required equipment. Manning levels will grow in the coming year as well funding for the required equipment has been approved.

⁵¹ Ancker, Clinton J, and Burke Michael D. “Doctrine for Asymmetric Warfare.” P-4. Taken from FM 3-0, Tactics paragraphs 1-12 and 1-13.

⁵² It should be noted that there is Canadian doctrine for both infantry and Armour in battle; but there is no specific doctrine for light infantry.

procedures describe how to do the task or mission. The common thread for both techniques and procedures is the training the individual soldier receives. It is at this level where the Canadian Army and training system have proven their worth. The teaching and learning approach applied to all recruits regardless of rank ensures that the individual is properly trained to adapt to any form of warfare. Once again one need only look at the performance of all Canadian soldiers deployed in Afghanistan as validation of the training system. This is not to say however, that the training system is without fault. In order for it to continue to train effective soldiers for symmetric and asymmetrical warfare the training must continue to be adaptive. The training system must be able to understand fully the ever-changing environment and threat and thus be in a position to adjust to them when required.

SUMMARY

The Canadian Army must re-examine its war fighting doctrine to reflect both the asymmetrical threat and its own capability based on manning levels and equipment to fight and win both symmetrically and asymmetrically. Included in this doctrine must be procedures in how to work with all governmental agencies, regardless of the situation or crisis. These procedures, along with the governmental agencies need to be exercised, both through command post exercises and actual troops/agencies on the ground. Money, time and resources need to be applied to ensure success. Should such exercises not be conducted, the possibility of total confusion and lack of coordinated and structured direction between agencies could result. To ensure this does not happen, Canadian Army doctrine must be able to adapt to the ever changing world situation, it must therefore focus more on the asymmetrical threat but, at the same time, remain true to proven symmetric doctrine. In layman terms, if the Army is to generate and maintain combat capable, multi-purpose land forces to meet Canada's defence objectives our

doctrine needs to reflect this. It is from doctrine that leaders put into play their operational campaign plan and fight.

To date the Canadian Army has been fortunate on the plethora and variety of missions it has faced. However, in order to ensure continued success, the techniques and procedures must be carefully scrutinized after every mission to ensure that at the basic level, the training is adaptive and flexible enough to ensure success, regardless of the threat. General Montgomery C. Meigs, Commander, US Army Europe and 7th Army best explains what we need to avoid and what needs to be done in our training. “We have become adept at replicating a set-piece enemy for our units. We do a good job of giving them an opponent that fights with consistent, predictable doctrine and tactical procedures. We must now move to the next level and present an enemy that uses asymmetrical approaches and who learns from our Blue Force, adapting to avoid our strength and to exploit our tactical weakness as he moves from battle to battle.”⁵³

In order for the Canadian Army to be able to adapt to the interim model and defeat the asymmetrical threat it must be able to maintain its war fighting skills as a medium-weight information-age army. Additionally, it must also develop its civil-military relations and support to law enforcement agencies and NGOs. If the interim model is going to be successful it needs doctrine that will support an operational concept and matches its strengths to fight both symmetrical and asymmetrically. To ensure this, Canadian Army doctrine must be able to envision future threats and operations. It must also be adaptive to in order to meet the asymmetrical threat but at the same time ensure a symmetric foundation. This doctrine must contain a Canadian bent, which incorporates procedures for working with law enforcement and

governmental agencies as well as NGOs, and avoid, if possible, excessive American influence. Whilst the Army's present TTPs have ensured success during past operations, all future TTPs will need to employ lessons learned from current operations and, as well, remain creative and flexible enough to incorporate modifications to address the asymmetrical or any other type of threat. Basic war fighting skills must remain at the foundation of all training. Having said this, the final component required to ensure the over all success with the above mentioned is that of culture. Given that the 'traditional' symmetric type of warfare has been ingrained within the Canadian Army culture, it will now be necessary to ensure that its personnel understand that the asymmetrical threat and the interim model will not detract from their ability to fight and win wars, but rather enable them to adjust and adapt accordingly. This message therefore must come from the leadership at both the officer and non commissioned officer level.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion the Canadian Army has been successful on all operations. This success has been a result of doctrine and training. Whilst the asymmetrical threat has been present in all of these operations it has not proven to be a showstopper to Canadian troops. However, given the future threat of non-traditional types of asymmetrical warfare the Canadian Army must, through improved doctrine, be able to adjust both at the operational and tactical level. This should be addressed within the new interim model, provided the army does not lose its basic war fighting skills and trade of capability with resources. Accordingly, the Canadian Army is more than prepared to defeat the asymmetrical threat.

⁵³ Worley, Robert D. "Asymmetric and Adaptive Command." Military Review. Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. July – August 2001. p-6. Taken from General Montgomery C. Meigs, "Operational Art in the New Century," Parameters (Carlisle, PA: USAWC, Spring 2001), 12.

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