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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE / COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES
JCSP 34

EXERCISE/EXERCICE

NEW HORIZONS

THE TRUE NORTH STRONG AND FREE - *FOR THE TAKING?*

The Need for Canada to Apply the Whole of Government Approach in the Pursuit of Arctic Security

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ABSTRACT

In Canada, the traditional approach to dealing with Arctic security issues can be characterized as reactionary and ad-hoc. History shows that Canadian governments have found it far easier to let the Arctic take care of itself and only apply tools of national power when forced to do so by the outside world, and only to do so for a short duration and at a minimum of intensity. However, due to the confluence of climate change, 21st Century technology and the increasingly fierce competition for access to natural resources, Canada's historic Arctic security strategies are insufficient. This paper argues that the Federal Government should pursue a Whole of Government Approach if it hopes to properly meet the rapidly changing, and increasingly complex, Arctic security situation.

Introduction

The belief that the Arctic naturally and indisputably belongs to Canada is firmly embedded in the Canadian psyche, as the allusion to the national anthem in the title suggests. For most of the 20th Century, principally due to the remote and harsh climate, the Arctic looked after itself giving Canada the luxury of being able to expend little effort to ensure the Arctic was indeed Canadian and secure.¹ However, at the dawn of the 21st Century the factors that made this possible no longer exist. Climate change and the race to exploit what remains of the globe's natural resources are drawing the world north and Canadians must begin to view Arctic security from a different perspective (see Figure 1). It is now a strategic imperative, rather than a strategic option, and the Federal Government must pursue a comprehensive, top down Whole of Government Approach if it hopes to properly meet the rapidly changing, and increasingly complex, Arctic security situation.



Figure 1: The Arctic as viewed from the North.

Source: Chris Whitecross, "Protecting Canadians From the Top," 05 March 2008. Presentation given by Commander JTF (N) to CFC JCSP 34 in Iqaluit, Nunavut. Text box contains this author's words.

¹Rob Huebert, "Reinforcing Sovereignty National Security and Circumpolar Cooperation," *Northern Perspectives* 30, no.1 (Winter 2006): 7.

This paper will begin by providing a few thoughts on the meaning of the word security and briefly highlight how Canada dealt with Arctic security during the 20th Century, showing how the strategies of that century are no longer adequate. However, there are aspects of the 20th Century paradigm that are applicable for the next century and these should be acknowledged as such and used as the platform upon which to proceed. The second portion of this paper will describe the security situation that exists today, explaining why it is clearly different than in the past. Next, Canada's incoherent and inadequate Arctic security policy framework will be exposed. Without having a coherent body of policy (the intellectual piece that states what Canada wants to achieve and how), the enabling capabilities (the physical piece that gives Canada the ability to enact and enforce its policies) are immaterial. The essay will conclude by providing some thoughts as to why a Whole of Government Approach is the most suitable framework upon which to provide security in, and to, the region.

Arctic Security Defined

There have been numerous books, journal articles and newspaper entries written about Arctic security in the last few years.² Despite the amount of writing on the subject a commonly accepted definition is difficult to find. To add to the ambiguity, the word sovereignty is also often used. At times these two words are used to denote different concepts and at other times they are used inter-changeably. University of Calgary Professor Rob Huebert contends that they are not “mutually exclusive concepts, but are different terms for the same requirement – regional control,...,the ability of a state to

²A search of the internet using the ‘Google’ search engine returned over 1 Million ‘hits.’ The search parameters were “Canadian Arctic Security” dated within the last year. Admittedly, this is a very unscientific survey, but it does provide a sense of how often the issue is being discussed. Search conducted on 04 April 2008.

make and enforce laws and regulations.”³ Historian Jack Granatstein prefers the word sovereignty on its own, but offers a similar opinion as to the desired outcome, “the ability to control who does what,” in the Arctic.⁴ Canada’s *National Security Policy* (NSP) offers little assistance as its definition of national security uses, confusingly, the word ‘security’ in the definition.⁵ However, the NSP does state that the ultimate goal is to protect the physical security of Canadians and to defend against threats to Canadian territory.⁶ Another concept that is woven through the security literature is the notion that a state must be able to demonstrate effective stewardship and responsibility in order to preserve and promote the safety, health, prosperity and well-being of its citizens.⁷ All of these concepts will be used to form the definition of ‘security’ as it will be used in this paper. To be *secure means that the state has the ability to sense and respond to all challenges to its legal authority and man made or natural events that threaten the nation’s interests or the well being of its citizens at all times and in all places.*

These challenges and events can range from unauthorized territorial intrusions, environmental disasters, damage to the fragile ecosystem that sustains the traditional way of life, illegal fishing, petty crime, disease outbreaks or irresponsible and unsustainable

³Rob Huebert, “Renaissance in Canadian Arctic Security?” *Canadian Military Journal* 6, no.4 (Winter 2005-2006): 28.

⁴Jack Granatstein, *Whose War Is It? How Canada Can Survive in the post 9/11 World* (Toronto: HarperCollins Publishers Ltd., 2007), 110.

⁵Privy Council Office, *Securing an Open Society: Canada’s National Security Policy* (Ottawa: Privy Council Office, 2004), 3. To quote the NSP, “National security deals with threats that have the potential to undermine the security of the state or society.”

⁶*Ibid.*, 5.

⁷Library of Parliament, *Canadian Arctic Sovereignty* (Ottawa: Parliamentary Information and Research Service, 26 January 2006), 2 and Huebert, “Renaissance in Canadian Arctic Security,” 21.

resource development.⁸ Clearly, this state of absolute security is purely theoretical and is a goal that will always be pursued but never really achieved. This definition is broad and encompasses activities that have traditionally not been considered part of the security equation. A concomitant reality is that the state's security architecture must also be broadened in a similar fashion. A Whole of Government Approach is an ideal organizational construct to achieve this.

Historical Approach – The Arctic Will Look After Itself

The traditional Canadian approach to dealing with Arctic security issues can be characterized as reactionary and ad-hoc. Canadian governments have found it far easier to let the Arctic take care of itself and only apply tools of national power when forced to do so by the outside world, and only to do so for a short duration and at a minimum of intensity.⁹ As Dr. Huebert has acidly and accurately noted:

It appears that the responsibility to protect the North has been viewed by Canadian governments as too demanding, and they have preferred to pretend there were no problems and hope for the best.¹⁰

Eventually the threat, whatever it was, went away. Figure 2 depicts the significant, from the Canadian perspective, security milestones since 1898.¹¹

⁸Privy Council Office, *Securing an Open Society...*, 4. The NSP provides a lengthy list of possible threats.

⁹Harriet Critchley, "The Arctic," *International Journal* 42, (Autumn 1987): 769; <http://www.heinonline.org/HOL/PDF?handle=hein.journals/intj42&collection=journals&id=779&print=20&ext=.pdf>, Internet; accessed 08 February 2008.

¹⁰Rob Huebert, "Reinforcing Sovereignty, National Security and Circumpolar Cooperation," 7.

¹¹A detailed history is not the object of this paper. For further info see Kenneth Eyre, "Forty Years of Military Activity in the Canadian North, 1947-87," *Arctic* 40, no. 4 (December 1987): 291-299 and Bernd Horn, "Gateway to Invasion or the Curse of Geography? The Canadian Arctic and the Question of Security, 1939-1999," in *Forging a Nation: Perspectives on the Canadian Military Experience*, ed., Bernd Horn, 307-334 (St. Catharines, Ontario: Vanwell Publishing Limited, 2002) and Harriet Critchley, "The Arctic," *International Journal* 42, (Autumn 1987): 769; <http://www.heinonline.org/HOL/PDF?handle=hein.journals/intj42&collection=journals&id=779&print=20>

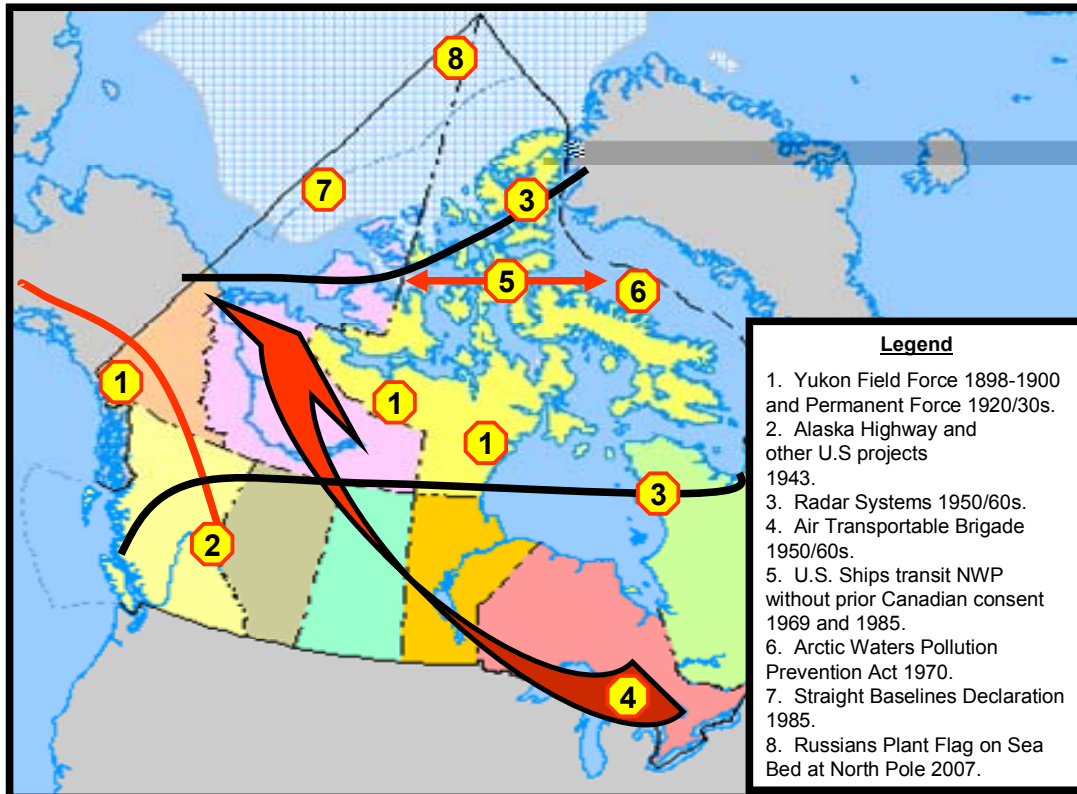


Figure 2: Significant security/sovereignty milestones in the Arctic region.

In the early years of the last century, the Yukon Field Force was deployed to fill a policing role while the Royal Canadian Air Force and Signal Corps of the Permanent Force operated in the region to “support national development activities.”¹² After WW II, Prime Minister Mackenzie King protected Canadian sovereignty by employing economic tools of statecraft when he reimbursed the American’s for the cost of the Alaska Highway.¹³ The Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act (1970) and the Straight

[&ext=.pdf](#), Internet; accessed 08 February 2008 and James Kraska, “The Law of the Sea Convention and the Northwest Passage,” in *Defence Requirements for Canada’s Arctic*, ed. Brian MacDonald, 8-23 (Vimy Paper 2007: Conference of Defence Associations Institute, 2007) and Jack Granatstein, *Whose War Is It? How Canada Can Survive in the Post 9/11 World* (Toronto: HarperCollins Publishers Ltd., 2007), Chapter 5.

¹²Eyre, “Forty Years of Military Activity in the Canadian North, 1947-87,” 294.

¹³Horn, “Gateway to Invasion or the Curse of Geography? The Canadian Arctic and the Question of Security, 1939-1999,” 308.

Baselines Declaration (1985) were diplomatic responses to what Canada viewed as unauthorized incursions into Canadian territory by U.S. vessels.¹⁴ The ad-hoc and reactive nature notwithstanding, these are all examples of a Whole of Government Approach, admittedly a very immature, ad-hoc and haphazard approach, but a Whole of Government Approach nonetheless. This is a little known, yet important, legacy which Canadian policy makers can use to their advantage.

Current Security Situation – There is much to lose

Why is there a renewed interest in Arctic security in Canada? There are four contributing factors: the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 changed the continental security paradigm; climate change is making the Arctic commercially accessible; the global demand for energy, minerals and biological resources is drawing the world north; and a series of well publicized incidents in which Canadian sovereignty was openly challenged has re-focussed the public's attention on the issue.¹⁵

During the 20th Century, the climate and geography of the region were stronger forces than the available technology as mankind simply did not possess the machines, or the desire, to access the region in a significant and sustained manner. However, the balance of power between climate and technology is shifting. Climate change is melting

¹⁴Kraska, "The Law of the Sea Convention and the Northwest Passage," 38 and Donald McRae, "Arctic Sovereignty? What is at Stake," *Canadian Institute of International Affairs*, 64, no. 1 (January 2007), 9 and United Nations. *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982, Article 234*, http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_overview_convention.htm; Internet; accessed 08 February 2008.

¹⁵Rob Huebert, "The Rise and Fall (and Rise?) of Canadian Arctic Security," in *Defence Requirements for Canada's Arctic*, ed. Brian MacDonald: 8-23 (Vimy Paper 2007: Conference of Defence Associations Institute, 2007): 21.

the Arctic's natural resistance to intrusion¹⁶ while 21st Century technology is giving mankind the ability to operate in the region. This phenomenon is being reinforced by the increasingly competitive race to secure what remains of the Earth's resource base, particularly oil and gas.¹⁷

The Arctic has the potential to provide future generations of Canadians an enormous amount of wealth. According to the U.S. Geological Survey the Arctic contains twenty five percent of the world's undiscovered energy resources. Others estimate that fifty percent of the globe's remaining hydrocarbons are located north of the Arctic Circle.¹⁸ Natural Resources Canada predicted in 2005 that the development of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline would generate over seven billion dollars in new investments, and ten billion dollars are expected to be invested in exploration and mining for diamonds, gold, silver, zinc and other metals by 2015.¹⁹ The world is coming to the Arctic and nothing is going to stop it.²⁰ This will no doubt exacerbate the tensions

¹⁶Arctic Council, *Impacts of A Warming Arctic-Arctic Climate Impact Assessment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; 10-11; <http://www.acia.uaf.edu/>; Internet; accessed 13 February 2008.

¹⁷Lauren Krugel, "China eyes Arctic riches," *thechronicleherald.ca*, 26 February 2008; <http://www.thechronicleherald.ca>; Internet; Accessed 27 February 2008 and Randy Boswell, "U.S., Canada on collision course in Arctic - Untapped resources fuel undersea land grab: U.S. expert," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 13 February 1968; <http://www.canada.com>; Internet: accessed 13 February 2008 and "Gold Rush under the ice Russia and the Arctic," *Economist.com/Global Agenda*, 03 August 2007; <http://proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 04 September 2007. These are but three examples of the almost daily reports one can find on this issue.

¹⁸Library of Parliament, *Canadian Arctic Sovereignty*, 6 and Defence R and D Canada, *Arctic Maritime Security and Defence: Canadian Northern Security Opportunities and Challenges* (Ottawa: Department of national Defence, 2005), 17-21.

¹⁹Van Horne Institute, *Northern Information Day II – Post-Workshop Report* (Ottawa, 24 January 2005), 5 <http://www.vanhorne.info/Reports/Northern>; Internet; accessed 13 February 2008.

²⁰See Frankly Griffiths, "Pathetic Fallacy: That Canada's Arctic Sovereignty is on Thinning Ice." *Canadian Foreign Policy* 11, no 3 (Spring 2004): 1-16 and Rob Huebert, "The shipping news part II." *International Journal* 58, no. 3 (Summer 2003): 295-308. Huebert and Griffiths are the foremost academic experts in this area. Although they disagree on how soon the Arctic will be accessible to industrial scale

underpinning the six major territorial issues that have a significant impact on Canadian interests (see Figure 3).²¹

The most famous, and for Canadians the most emotional, territorial dispute concerns the legal status of the Northwest Passage. Canada views the Passage as an internal waterway, while the U.S. and most of the rest of the world believe that it is an international strait. More importantly, Canada and the U.S. have for years been ‘sparring’ over the precise location of the international boundary in the Beaufort Sea. The two nations disagree as to where the maritime boundary is as it runs from the land into the water and there is a sizeable wedge of oil bearing seabed in dispute.²² The eventual outcome of these two disputes will not be known for years, but the point for Canadian policy makers in 2008 is that in the future even Canada’s ‘friends’ may not be afraid to become fierce competitors in the pursuit of dwindling energy resources.²³

processes, they both agree that it will at some point occur and that the Government is not currently doing enough to safeguard Canadian interests.

²¹Rodney Neufeld, “Arctic Sovereignty: Myths and Reality.” 04 March 2008. Presentation given by Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade lawyer to Canadian Forces College Joint Command and Staff Program 34 in Iqaluit, Nunavut and Rob Huebert, “Northern Interests and Canadian Foreign Policy,” *Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute*, 2003;7-9; <http://www.cdfai.org>; Internet, accessed 17 January 2008. A detailed description of all territorial disputes that affect Canada in the Arctic can also be found in Defence R and D Canada, *Arctic Maritime Security and Defence: Canadian Northern Security Opportunities and Challenges*, 19-41.

²²Rob Huebert, “Northern Interests and Canadian Foreign Policy,” *Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute*, 2003;7-9; <http://www.cdfai.org>; Internet, accessed 17 January 2008.

²³Boswell, “U.S., Canada on collision course in Arctic - Untapped resources fuel undersea land grab: U.S. expert.”

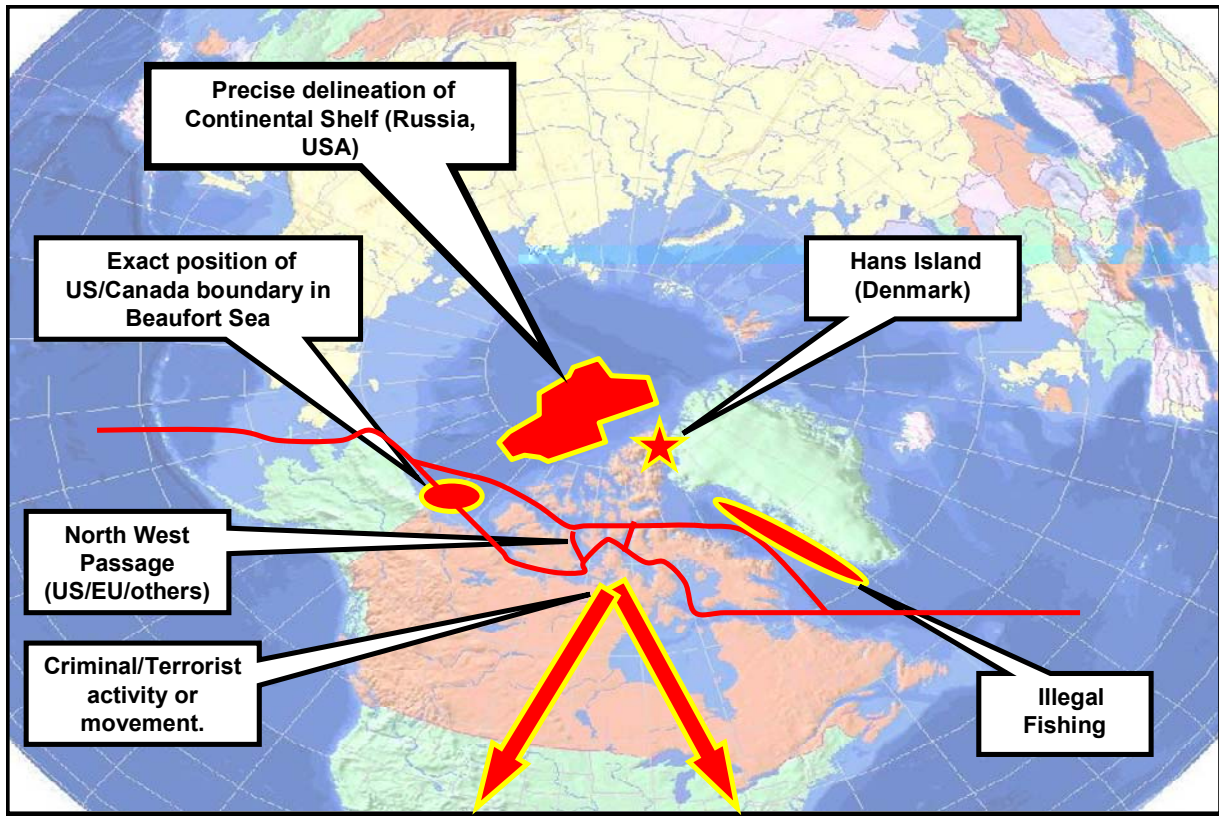


Figure 3: The significant territorial/security disputes in the Arctic that affect Arctic security.

The recent activities in the Arctic, by an increasingly aggressive and hostile Russia, further complicate the Arctic security puzzle. Interestingly, the Russians are also pursuing a Whole of Government strategy to further their Arctic interests. For example, in the summer of 2007, while mapping the continental shelf in accordance with the requirements of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) Article 76, Russian scientists planted a Russian flag at the North Pole – on the ocean floor.²⁴ The legal implications of this act are probably inconsequential, but the Russians nevertheless demonstrated that they have an unmatched ability to operate throughout the region and seem more than willing to use that monopoly to expand their economic and territorial influence and control. Militarily, the Russians have reverted to the Cold War

²⁴“Gold rush under the ice: Russia and the Arctic,” *Economist.com*.

tactic of flying strategic bombers near the sovereign airspace of Canada, the U.S and other NATO Arctic nations.²⁵ While the full impact of this aggressive behaviour remains unclear, the similarities with Cold War behaviour are obvious. Russian activity in the region will, once again, inevitably draw security conscious American eyes northward. Canada must be in a position to credibly assist in responding to the Russian challenges in the Arctic or run the risk of having the Americans do it on Canada's behalf, and without Canada's consent. No mention has been made of other emerging powers in this example, but it is well known that China and India are also eyeing the Arctic's resources and it remains to be seen how aggressively they intend to pursue access to the region.²⁶

There are also the security considerations that have their genesis with the 9/11 attacks in the United States and the resultant recasting of the continental security paradigm. Due to Canada's meagre surveillance capability in the region the current security apparatus does not know who is actually in the North.²⁷ While it is highly unlikely that the Arctic will ever become a high volume illegal transit route into North America, the 9/11 attacks proved that it takes only a handful of motivated individuals to cause a catastrophe.²⁸ If the U.S. perceives, and American perception is reality in the post 9/11 world, that Canada cannot control who enters the country via the Arctic it will

²⁵Sean Maloney, "A cold war in cold waters," *Maclean's Magazine*, 09 January 2008; <http://www.macleans.ca>; Internet; accessed 21 February 2008 and Barbara Starr, "Russian bomber buzzes U.S. Aircraft carrier." *CNN.com*, 11 February 2008; <http://www.cnn.com/2008/US/02/11/russian.bomber/>; Internet; accessed 21 February 2008.

²⁶Lauren Krugel, "China eyes Arctic riches," *thechronicleherald.ca*, 26 February 2008; <http://www.thechronicleherald.ca>; Internet; Accessed 27 February 2008 and Scott Borgerson, "Arctic Meltdown: The Economic and Security Implications of Global Warming," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2008); <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20080301faessay87206/scott-g-borgerson/arctic-meltdown.html>; Internet: accessed 29 February 2008.

²⁷Granatstein, *Whose War Is It? How Canada Can Survive in the Post 9/11 World*, 123.

²⁸Huebert, "Renaissance in Canadian Arctic Security," 28.

no doubt result in further thickening of the U.S. – Canada border.²⁹ An outcome such as this would no doubt serve as the catalyst to finally break Canada’s apathy towards the security situation in the region.

It is imperative that Canada now begin to set the security conditions that will ensure that the Arctic, and all its potential, remains under Canadian control and that all resource extraction activities are conducted for the benefit of Canadians and in accordance with Canadian laws and regulations. While most experts agree that Canada’s ownership of the all land in the Arctic is universally accepted,³⁰ no one can predict how fierce the competition for resources will become in the next 50-100 years. The reality that Canada may someday need to secure the Arctic with coercive tools of national power should not be discounted.³¹

An Incoherent Policy Framework

Canadian governments, from time to time, have attempted to develop a comprehensive security policy framework for the Arctic, but have either failed to complete the policy formulation task or have failed to adequately fund any of the ensuing initiatives - most often have failed to do both.³² The situation in early 2008 is no different. An overview of the major federal policy documents would leave an observer with the impression that there is a “disjointed acknowledgement of the importance of the

²⁹Bruce Champion-Smith, “NORAD facing ‘rogue elements,’ U.S. general says.” *thestar.com*, 10 April 2008; <http://www.thestar.com/News/Canada/article/41372>; Internet; accessed 10 April 2008 and Huebert, “Northern Interests and Canadian Foreign Policy,” 17.

³⁰Neufeld, “Arctic Sovereignty: Myths and Reality,” 04 March 2008.

³¹Peter O’Neil, “Arctic warming could result in armed conflict: naval expert,” *canada.com*, 29 February 2008; <http://www.canada.com>; Internet; accessed 29 February 2008 and Scott Borgerson, “Arctic Meltdown: The Economic and Security Implications of Global Warming.”

³²Huebert, “Reinforcing Sovereignty National Security and Circumpolar Cooperation,” 7.

North.”³³ Predictably, and in keeping with Canadian historical tradition, none of these documents provides an over-arching policy framework that coordinates and synchronizes the efforts of the various federal, provincial and territorial stake holders.

In June 2000, the federal government published *The Northern Dimension of Canada’s Foreign Policy*.³⁴ This document stated four broad Arctic policy thrusts:

- 1) to enhance the security and prosperity of Canadians, especially northerners and Aboriginal peoples;
- 2) to assert and ensure the preservation of Canada's sovereignty in the North;
- 3) to establish the Circumpolar region as a vibrant geopolitical entity integrated into a rules-based international system; and
- 4) to promote the human security of northerners and the sustainable development of the Arctic.³⁵

Despite the fact that Federal Governments, both Liberal and Conservative, have tabled various policy documents in the intervening years, these four points remain at the heart of Canada’s Arctic policy. The 2004 *National Security Policy* was the first formal articulation of a Canadian national security policy, but it did not deal with the Arctic directly. It does highlight the need to strengthen inter-agency cooperation and improve marine security.³⁶ The 2005 *International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World* (IPS) followed the same pattern, albeit with a few more details. The parent document of the series refers to the *Northern Dimension of Canada’s Foreign Policy* and the *National Security Policy* (NSP) and states that key initiatives included,

³³J.D. Guerin, “‘True north strong and free:’ the need for a national strategy and whole of government approach to protect Canada’s Arctic interests,” (Toronto: Canadian Forces College National Security Studies Course Paper, 2006), 19.

³⁴Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *The Northern Dimension to Canada’s Foreign Policy*; http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/circumplor/ndfp_rpt-en.asp; Internet; accessed 27 August 2007.

³⁵Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *The Northern Dimension to Canada’s Foreign Policy*.”

³⁶Privy Council Office, *Securing an Open Society: Canada’s National Security Policy*, viii, 10, 11, 12, 41, 50 & 51.

among other things, an improvement to Canada's maritime, land and air surveillance capabilities and an increase the Canadian Forces' capacity to monitor and respond to events in the North.³⁷ As well, the IPS (in the main document and the defence chapter) obliquely speaks of the need to increase inter-departmental cooperation with the aim of ensuring that all security issues are dealt with in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.³⁸ While an improvement over previous policy documents, neither the NSP nor the IPS provided any real specifics as to how the interdepartmental coordination was going to be achieved and what specific capabilities were going to be developed.³⁹

In early 2006 a new government was elected in a campaign in which Arctic security was an issue of some significance. On 22 December 2005, Stephen Harper stated that if he were to become Prime Minister there would be a renewed emphasis on protecting and enhancing Canadian security in the Arctic. He promised that a Conservative Government would purchase and station three armed ice breakers in the Iqaluit area, establish a deep water port, build a permanently manned Arctic training center, develop underwater sensor systems, station new search and rescue aircraft in Yellowknife, revitalize and increase the ranks of the Canadian Rangers and task the Army to provide an emergency response capability based at CFB Trenton.⁴⁰

³⁷Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World – OVERVIEW* (Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 2005): 8-9.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 8 and Department of National Defence, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World – DEFENCE* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2005): 18-19.

³⁹Guerin, "'True north strong and free:' the need for a national strategy and whole of government approach to protect Canada's Arctic interests," 20-23. The analysis of the policies in the last two paragraphs of this essay is a synthesis of a similar, but longer, section in Colonel Guerin's NSSP paper.

⁴⁰Conservative Party of Canada, "Harper Stands Up for Arctic Sovereignty," <http://www.conservative.ca/EN/1091/36512>; Internet, accessed 03 September 2007.

In the summer of 2007 Prime Minister Harper announced a somewhat less ambitious military program for the Arctic. In August he announced that the deep water port and army training base would indeed be built but that Arctic patrol ships, while perhaps numbering as many as eight vessels, would not be able to patrol all of Canada's Arctic waters during the winter months.⁴¹ The next significant announcement came in February 2008. In a speech to the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce the Prime Minister emphasized the fact that the 2008 Budget, tabled a few weeks prior, allocated funds to purchase a Polar Class icebreaker, announced that a commercial harbour would be built in Pangnirtung and re-announced the Government's obligation to map the continental shelf in the region.⁴² Most of the other campaign promises made two years earlier remain unfulfilled. Harper also spoke about a "comprehensive vision for a new North, a Northern Strategy that will turn potential into prosperity for the benefit of all Northerners and all Canadians."⁴³ The Northern Strategy of 2008 is built on four pillars:

- 1) strengthening Canada's Arctic sovereignty;
- 2) protecting the fragile northern environment;
- 3) promoting economic and social development; and

⁴¹Canada's New Government, "Prime Minister Stephen Harper announces new Arctic Offshore patrol ships," <http://www.pm.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?id=1742>; Internet; accessed 28 August 2007 and CTV.ca News, "Harper bolsters military strength in Arctic," http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArcticNews/story/CTVNews/20070810/Canada_denmark_arctic_070810/20070810?hub=Politics; Internet; accessed 28 August 2007.

⁴²The need to map the continental shelf became a legal obligation when Canada signed on to the UNCLOS treaty. The PM was clearly announcing something that Canada had already committed to doing. He grouped this previously scheduled activity with other 'new' initiatives. This paper will not speculate why the announcement was completed in this manner. *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982, Article 7 and 76*, http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_overview_convention.htm; Internet; accessed 08 February 2008.

⁴³Prime Minister's Office. "Prime Minister Harper delivers on commitment to the 'New North,'" 10 March 2008; <http://pm.gc.ca>; Internet; accessed 13 March 2008.

- 4) giving Northerners more control over their economic and political destiny.⁴⁴

The similarity between the four ‘new’ pillars and the ‘old’ pillars contained in *The Northern Dimension of Canada’s Foreign Policy* that was published by the Liberals eight years earlier is quite evident. The federal Arctic security strategy has been re-branded with new graphics and logos, but it has been adopted nearly verbatim by the Harper government.⁴⁵

Despite any partisan claims to the contrary the de facto Arctic policy has remained constant since 2000 and appears to be completely consistent with Canada’s historic ‘way of Arctic’ security. Dr. Huebert observed in 2007 that “the factors that have pushed Canadian policy makers to re-examine Arctic security will not soon dissipate” and that “Canada is now experiencing a renaissance in how it addresses the issue of Arctic security.”⁴⁶ However, Huebert was only half right. The external factors are definitely not going to conveniently go away, but it is far from certain that there has been a true renaissance in how the Government addresses Arctic security. Canadians will have to wait and see if the rhetoric and funding promises are actually translated into concrete action. History indicates that the odds of this happening are not high.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

⁴⁵Foreign Affairs and International Canada, *The Northern Dimension to Canada’s Foreign Policy*; http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/circumplor/ndfp_rpt-en.asp; Internet; accessed 27 August 2007. This was originally published in hard format – a book. The current GoG website makes use of new technologies and displays the information in html format. However, users are able to download a pdf version of the original 2000 document - different Governments same Arctic policy.

⁴⁶Huebert, “The Rise and Fall (and Rise?) of Canadian Arctic Security,” 23.

The Whole of Government Approach

Despite the pessimistic conclusion drawn at the close of the last paragraph, there are positive aspects upon which a coherent and effective Arctic security architecture can be crafted. The recent acceptance by policy makers from all points on the political spectrum that security challenges in the post-9/11 world must be met by a Whole of Government approach is a good first step. In order to comprehensively address a particular security issue many government departments must work in a coordinated and mutually supportive manner. Implicit in this construct is the notion that a lead Ministry or Department is given the authority, responsibility and competencies to effectively fill the role. While the various policy papers that have been published since 2000 have not provided any specifics with respect to the Arctic, the seeds of this concept are contained therein. Additionally, Canada is applying a Whole of Government Approach to other security issues – the creation of Public Safety Canada and the strategy towards Afghanistan offer two prominent examples.

The first action the Government must undertake is to stop focusing solely on the Northwest Passage. Canadians confuse, at the urging of the Government and to their own detriment, an arcane legal argument over whether or not the Passage is an internal or international waterway as a challenge to the sovereignty of the entire Arctic. Emotional sentimentalism such as this keeps Canadians from seeing what the real issues are and prevents policy makers from pursuing an effective security strategy. Arctic security is much more than the international legal status of the Passage and it is very unlikely that

the waterway will ever see large scale trans-polar marine traffic in any event. (See Figure 4 for explanation).⁴⁷

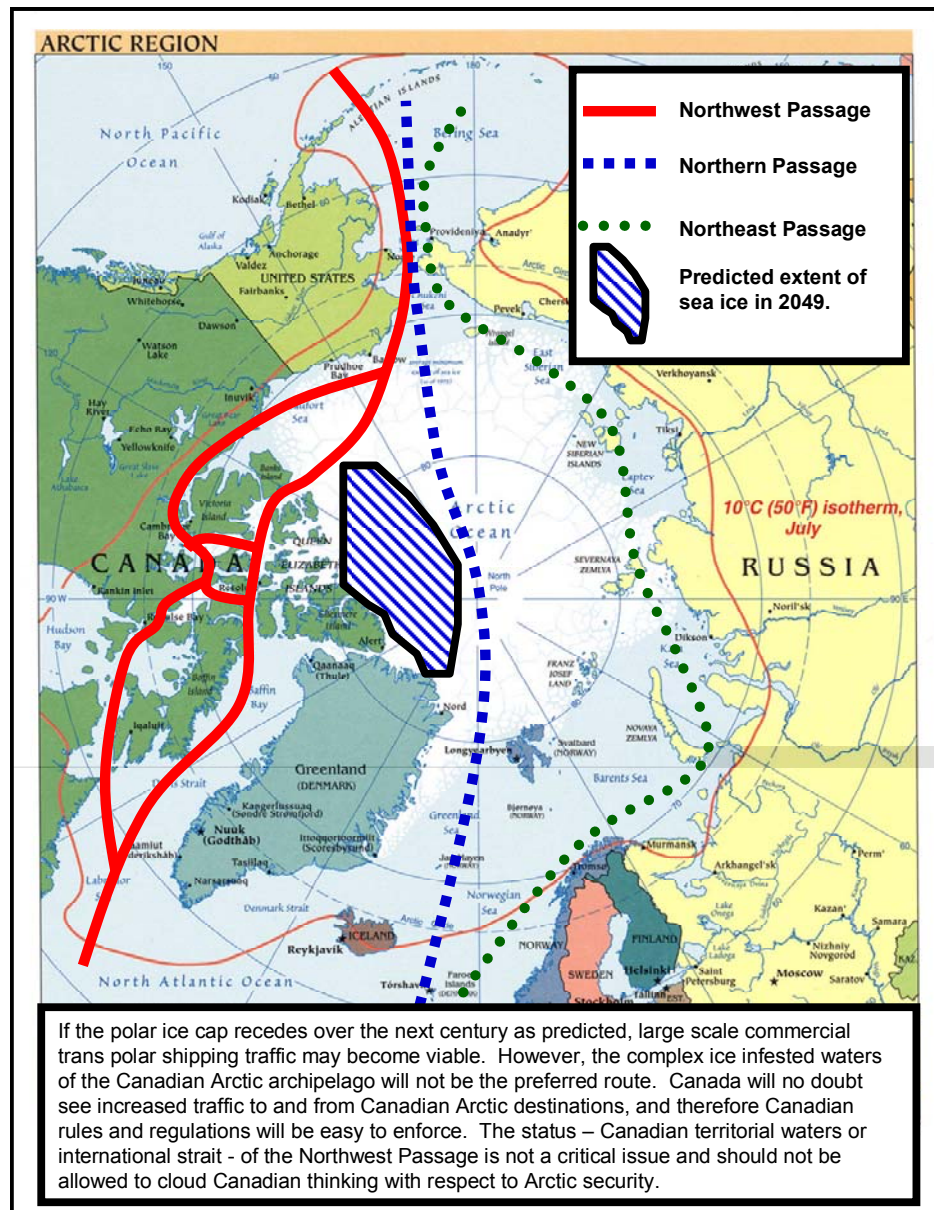


Figure 4: The Northwest, Northeast and Northern Passages

The Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act, the related UNCLOS Article 234 and a host of other laws provide the statutory teeth needed to protect Canada's real interests.⁴⁸

⁴⁷Griffiths, "Pathetic Fallacy: That Canada's Arctic Sovereignty is on Thinning Ice," 1 and Nuefeld, "Arctic Sovereignty: Myths and Reality." The diagram was created by this author from the thoughts and data provided by Griffiths and Nuefeld.

What are lacking are the physical capabilities to enforce those laws on the ice and waters of the region. The fact that the NORDREG Arctic marine traffic system is voluntary⁴⁹ indicates that Canada does not have the ability, or possibly the desire, to enforce its own laws. There is an important distinction between *de jure* and *de facto* security. The Government must lead and begin to pursue policies that close the gap between the two.

The Government should also move to solve the Beaufort Sea dispute with the U.S. as soon as possible. Perhaps by giving the U.S. what it wants vis-à-vis the legal status of the Northwest Passage (where there is nothing material to lose); Canada might be able to negotiate a more favourable outcome with respect to the Beaufort Sea boundary (where there is a significant amount of oil wealth at stake).⁵⁰ Interestingly, the U.S. has let its capability to operate in the Arctic to atrophy in the recent past.⁵¹ Canada should seize the opportunity to develop capabilities that could be used as leverage in solving the territorial disputes in ways that are advantageous to Canada. The aim is not to treat the U.S. as an adversary but to reinforce the partnership by becoming a more capable, and therefore more valuable, partner. But, at the same time, Canada would be quietly confident in the knowledge that it possessed the capability to act unilaterally if the need arose.

⁴⁸Nuefeld, "Arctic Sovereignty: Myths and Reality." Of the Arctic nations Canada has the most extensive Arctic regulatory regime, in fact other nations come to Canada for advice on how to draft and structure their laws and supporting regulations.

⁴⁹Transport Canada, *Guidelines for the Operation of Passenger Vessels in Canadian Arctic Waters*. <http://www.tc.gc.ca/marinesafety/tp13670/pdf-version.htm>; Internet; accessed 11 April 2008, 8.

⁵⁰Andrea Charron, "The Northwest Passage Shipping Channel: Sovereignty First and Foremost and Sovereignty to the Side," *Journal of Military Studies and Strategic Studies* 7, no. 4 (Spring 2005). <http://www.jmss.org/2005/summer/articles/charron.pdf>; Internet; accessed 18 January 2008 and Thomas Axworthy, "A strong Canada in a shared continent," *Toronto Star*, 30 December 2007, A25. Both of these authors offer ideas designed to reach a compromise between Canada's position that the NWP constitutes territorial waters and the U.S. and the E.U.'s opinion that the NWP is an international waterway.

⁵¹Borgerson, "Arctic Meltdown: The Economic and Security Implications of Global Warming."

Once the issue of the Northwest Passage has been placed in perspective and the process of finding lasting solutions to the other territorial disputes started, the Government must begin developing an effective and all encompassing Arctic security strategy. The three key elements of which would be; policy coherence, leading to the development and deployment of surveillance and enforcement capabilities.⁵²

Figure 5 depicts the main federal agencies that have a role to play in Arctic security.⁵³

Federal Agencies Involved in the Comprehensive Arctic Security network	
Canadian Forces	Ensure sovereignty and security of territory, airspace and maritime approaches
Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and Northern Development	Aboriginal liaison and economic development
Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada	International issues
Department of Fisheries and Oceans	Fisheries Regulation and Protection
Transport Canada	Transport and surveillance
Environment Canada	Meteorological and ice reporting services
Circumpolar Conference	Arctic States
Public Safety Canada	Emergency preparedness
Coast Guard	Coastal safety and icebreaking support
RCMP	Law enforcement
Canadian Space Agency	Provide satellite imagery to all departments

Figure 5: Federal Agencies that contribute to the comprehensive security network the Arctic.

The list is not exhaustive; it makes no mention of the primary stakeholders – the

⁵²Rob Huebert, “Canada’s Arctic Security – Conference of Defence Association Institute 23rd Seminar,” 15 February 2007; <http://www.cda-cdai.a/seminars/2007/heubert.pdf>; Internet; accessed 13 March 2008.

⁵³Scott Long, “A Whole of Government Approach to Canadian Arctic Sovereignty in the Face of Global Warming,” Toronto: Canadian Forces College Joint Command and Staff Programme Paper, 2007 and Paul Taylor, “A hawk-eyed addition to Canada’s Arctic arsenal,” *globeandmail.com*, 10 December 2007; <http://www.globeandmail.com>; Internet; accessed 11 December 2007. This author added the Canadian Space Agency entry to the list provided in Long’s MDS paper.

indigenous people of the Arctic - nor does it mention provincial or territorial bodies. It is merely offered to depict the complex nature of the inter-departmental security network.

Truly effective Arctic security can only be achieved by pursuing a Whole of Government approach that can force horizontal coordination across the traditional departmental stovepipes.⁵⁴ This will require a cultural transformation within the various bureaucracies so that the relevant agencies think and operate with a country first rather than a department first mindset.⁵⁵ A fundamental transition in the underlying corporate culture will take years of sustained effort, from the Prime Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers that will be involved.⁵⁶ Admittedly, no system involving this many government departments will ever be entirely free of inter-departmental rivalries and competition, but a properly empowered and politically supported lead Ministry should reduce the ‘friction of bureaucratic politics’ as much as possible. However, in 2008, Canadians are simply not prepared to invest massively in Arctic security capabilities, and therefore Governments will not do so as “there are no votes in it.”⁵⁷ But, the creation of a ‘Department of Arctic Affairs’ should be inexpensive enough to be politically acceptable. If properly organized and supported it would provide the intellectual architecture now so that the surveillance and enforcement capabilities available today can be managed in an optimal fashion, while realistically and intelligently developing and

⁵⁴Guerin, “‘True north strong and free:’ the need for a national strategy and whole of government approach to protect Canada’s Arctic interests,” 47.

⁵⁵At the time of writing this paper, Canada was still awaiting the publication of the Canada First Defence Strategy. Perhaps this strategy will call for a more formalized version of a Whole of Government regime along the lines mentioned here.

⁵⁶Guerin, “‘True north strong and free:’ the need for a national strategy and whole of government approach to protect Canada’s Arctic interests,” 43-44.

⁵⁷Jan Revensbergen, “Senator slams security spending,” *The Montreal Gazette*, 18 April 2008; <http://www.canada.com>; Internet; accessed 18 April 2008.

planning the implementation of the capabilities required for the future. Obviously many government departments have a role to play, and are playing a role, but is Canada developing the capabilities to effectively respond to the security challenges of 2020 or 2060? The question is unanswerable as there is no single government agency tasked to provide the answer.

The first remit that the lead Ministry should provide the Government is a comprehensive strategic assessment. This assessment must clearly define the current security situation and predict the threats and challenges that will be encountered in the near, mid and long term. A risk analysis would also be drawn out of the strategic assessment.⁵⁸ An objective risk assessment would permit the prioritization and allocation of scarce resources to where they are needed most. There is time as the emerging threats will not be fully developed until some years in the future; however, the intellectual activities must begin now if Canada has any hope of fielding adequate physical capabilities in a timely manner.⁵⁹

Once the assessment and corresponding policy regime is in place the next step will be the development and deployment of the requisite surveillance capabilities to ensure Canada can sense what is happening in the region. This is not to say that Canada does not have any surveillance capability at this point in time, but it is clear that there are capability gaps.⁶⁰ The final piece in the security triad is the ability to decisively respond throughout the region in support of Canadian interests. This primarily speaks to the need

⁵⁸Guerin, “‘True north strong and free:’ the need for a national strategy and whole of government approach to protect Canada’s Arctic interests,” 26.

⁵⁹Huebert, “Reinforcing Sovereignty, National Security and Circumpolar Cooperation,” 8.

⁶⁰Revensbergen, “Senator slams security spending,” and Taylor, “A hawk-eyed addition to Canada’s Arctic arsenal.”

to enforce Canadian laws and regulations, but also encompasses other vitally important security activities such as search and rescue, disaster response and environmental protection and clean-up.⁶¹

Canada needs to be able to know what is happening in the Arctic and have the ability to respond in an effective fashion. Fortunately, Canada has experience in this field. The Joint Rescue Coordination Centres in Halifax, Trenton and Victoria⁶² are essentially Whole of Government entities that coordinate multi-departmental responses. This model would have to be expanded to respond to the full range of security issues that the Arctic will face in the years to come. Perhaps this is a task that should be given to the Canadian Forces Joint Task Force (North) as the Commander of the formation chairs the Arctic Security Interdepartmental Working Group.⁶³ This is a forum for the departments that have a stake in the Arctic to meet, share information and coordinate their activities. Unfortunately, it is a voluntary organization and neither participation nor action can be demanded by a lead Ministry.

The Arctic Security Interdepartmental Working Group is another example of an existing organizational construct upon which something useful and effective can be built. Whichever Ministry is designated as the lead, it must be able to collect and analyse information from the departments shown in Figure 5, and other stakeholders, and then direct a coordinated response. It is easy to imagine that information obtained from the

⁶¹Gerard Kenney, "Canada should beef up Arctic rescue capabilities," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 27 November 2007, A11.

⁶²Fisheries and Oceans Canada, *Canadian Coast Guard Search and Rescue – Rescue Coordinating and Alerting*; http://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/sar/program/index_e.htm; Internet; accessed 15 March 2008.

⁶³Huebert, "Renaissance in Canadian Arctic Security," 22-23.

Canadian Space Agency and the Radarsat II satellite triggers the dispatch of a Canadian Forces Arctic Patrol Vessel with an embarked Department of Fisheries and Oceans officer to investigate a vessel suspected of conducting illegal fishing off the coast of Baffin Island. It matters not which Ministry has the lead, what matters is that Canadian security, interests and laws are decisively upheld and enforced.

The establishment of coherent security strategy and inter departmental policy framework supported by a robust surveillance and enforcement regime is valuable in its own right, as this is what a serious and mature G8 nation ought to do.⁶⁴ But in addition to that, a Whole of Government Approach will provide the ability to operate and demonstrate responsible stewardship throughout the Arctic. This will only serve to reinforce Canadian territorial claims in the international arena and with it Canada's ability to ensure all the resource wealth accrues to future generations of Canadians. If this goal is too ambitious, politically or economically, to be implemented now, it is entirely acceptable to proceed in a phased manner. However, it is vital that the process start today.

Conclusion

The security challenges facing Canada in the Arctic are complex. In 2008 security is not just about the protection of territory. It is increasingly seen to involve the ability to control and demonstrate effective stewardship and state responsibility.⁶⁵ Due to the confluence of climate change, 21st Century technology and the increasingly fierce competition for access to natural resources, Canada's historic Arctic security strategies

⁶⁴Granatstein, *Whose War Is It? How Canada Can Survive in the Post 9/11 World*, 110.

⁶⁵Library of Parliament, *Canadian Arctic Security*, 2.

are insufficient. Canada can no longer afford to substitute rhetoric for sustained and realistic action. Despite recent policy announcements by Prime Minister Harper, a careful analysis shows that there does not appear to be any substantive changes in the way Arctic security is being pursued by Canada. This tradition of pursuing Arctic security through the periodic application of reactive and loud rhetoric must stop. There is much at stake, both in economic and psychological terms. The region has the potential to help preserve Canada's position as one of the wealthiest nations on Earth for decades to come, but only if the region is exploited in accordance with Canadian priorities and in support of Canadian interests.

This paper has argued that to realistically respond to 21st Century Arctic security challenges the Government must pursue a comprehensive, top down Whole of Government approach. This approach would require that a lead Ministry be nominated and properly empowered to force horizontal integration across the traditional departmental stovepipes allowing Canada to develop a realistic and comprehensive strategic security assessment. Given that the Canadian public, at this time, seems unwilling to spend vast amounts of national treasure on Arctic security, the development of the intellectual portion of the security architecture is what is politically achievable now. Once the government structure is in place and the strategic assessment completed, the development and deployment of the more expensive physical capabilities can occur when the political climate so allows. This will ensure that when Canadians decide the time is right to heavily invest in the Arctic, the Government will be in a position to invest wisely.

No one knows for certain what the future has in store. However, it is clear that the Arctic will be more accessible in the years to come - and the world will be coming. Providing adequate security in, and to, the region is now a strategic imperative and truly serious action must start today. Canadians of the 22nd Century deserve, and will accept, no less.

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