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FROM THE BOERS TO THE TALIBAN: HOW CANADIAN ATTITUDES TOWARDS WAR HAVE CHANGED

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ABSTRACT

Over the past century, Canadian attitudes towards the use of force and the exercise of military power in support of national aims have fundamentally shifted. This paper argues that primarily because of changing demographics as well as a lack of consensus on their national interests and values, most Canadians do not believe in using war as a means to achieve their foreign policy objectives. To make this argument, the paper uses case studies of the Boer War and Canada's current operations in Afghanistan to demonstrate how the societal and political context changed over time, even if military operations maintained distinct similarities. Following the case studies, the differences between the two situations are reviewed in detail. Specific attention is given to how the changing nature of Canadian society, its belief in peacekeeping as an enduring role for the Canadian Forces, anti-Americanism, confusion over national values and interests, and the media have all combined to shape Canadian attitudes towards war. Lastly, the implications that may be anticipated from this attitudinal shift within the Canadian populace are examined.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Much has been written over the past thirty years about how war has changed. Thousands of pages have been devoted to describing how this very human phenomenon has existed and evolved over the course of history. [1] Yet for all the thought that has been focussed on the subject, at its core war remains as it always has been: the use of violence to impose one country's will on another. To paraphrase a Canadian infantry battalion commander recently returned from Afghanistan, war is "friction, uncertainty and fear."[2] This is not new. Soldiers from ages past would recognize modern war for what it is.

Certainly aspects of war and combat have evolved. We have become more efficient in how we use violence, in some ways more precise and in others more indiscriminate. We have harnessed the gasoline turbine and the nuclear reactor to fuel our modern machines. Microprocessors and radios have enabled commanders to give direction with an efficacy almost unimaginable to generals of a century ago. We have attempted to codify the means that may be used, the purposes that justify a war's commencement, and protection for those caught within it. But at its essence, war remains largely the same; what has changed, however, is our attitudes towards it.

George Stanley was close to the truth when he wrote his history of the Canadian military in the years following the close of the Second World War. Titling it, *Canada's*

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[1] For example John Keegan, *The Face of Battle: A Study of Agincourt, Waterloo and the Somme* (New York: Penguin Books, 1984); Gwynne Dyer, *War* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1985); Martin Van Creveld, *The Transformation of War* (New York: The Free Press, 1991); Colonel Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century* (St Paul: Zenith Press, 2004).

[2] Lieutenant-Colonel Ian Hope, "Beating the *Dushman*: Task Force Orion in Counter-Insurgency Operations, Op Archer Roto 1" (lecture, Land Forces Western Area Senior Leadership Symposium, Calgary, AB, January 13, 2007).

Soldiers: The Military History of an Unmilitary People,[3] he touched upon what many may perceive to be an essential element of our national character (if such a thing can be said to exist). But stating that Canadians were "an unmilitary people," as the Cold War moved beyond its infancy, was an over simplification.

At that time, Canada had clearly demonstrated martial prowess, having been involved in both world wars and the Korean Conflict. Although Stanley may have hit a nerve with his title, he missed the point. Canadian attitudes to war were, and in fact are, in a constant state of flux. The context in which we send our soldiers to do our country's bidding, whether defending our interests or projecting our values, is dynamic. This dynamism continues to this day.

There are numerous parallels between our experience fighting the Boers at the commencement of the 20th Century and our actions against the Taliban at the entry to the 21st. Few, however, would argue that the world in which we sent our first contingents overseas in the service of the British Empire is the same as that in which we now live. Instead of Empire, we now use military force to support coalitions of the willing, military alliances born out of the Cold War, or United Nations Security Council Resolutions.[4]

The differences between the two situations, the national context that saw Canadians go to war, and the beliefs that our citizens hold towards the idea of war, are what is important. This paper will demonstrate that primarily because of changing demographics, as well as a lack of consensus on their national interests and values, most

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[3] George F.G. Stanley, *Canada's Soldiers: The Military History of an Unmilitary People (Revised Edition)* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1960).

[4] Canada, since the inception of the United Nations in 1945, has only used force without that organization's sanction once (Kosovo 1999), and never unilaterally. Some might argue that in place of the British Empire, we are now attempting to serve the American version. Though this is an interesting question, it is one that is beyond the scope of this piece and rightfully deserves a study of its own.

Canadians do not believe in using war as a means to achieve foreign policy objectives. How the Canadian public thinks about war transformed over the latter half of the 20th Century, even though the tasks that Canadian soldiers are now performing are remarkably similar to those assigned soldiers a century ago. Acknowledging that this change has occurred is important for both political and military authorities because of the inherent implications which arise from this attitudinal shift.

The following chapters use case studies of the Boer War and the ongoing Canadian deployment to Afghanistan to make this argument. The Boer War, as Canada's initial experience sending forces abroad in organized national contingents, provides a solid basis to show how Canadian attitudes have changed. Canadians had previously fought overseas in the military of the British Empire (and others) solely as individuals. With the commencement of hostilities in South Africa, Canada sent its first contingents overseas in support of one of its founding nations. This had effects on Canada and Canadian attitudes towards conflict that can be easily demonstrated.

The many similarities between the two conflicts make them useful to showcase differences. One only need look at the similarity in the tasks expected of our contingents in both conflicts, like counter guerrilla operations, and then contrast it with reporting from both periods to see the intrinsic value of such an examination. Additionally, there is the fact that in neither case was the importance of going overseas dictated by global conflict or cause. Instead, soldiers went to South Africa in 1899 to support imperialistic, or perhaps democratic, aims at Great Britain's behest. In 2001, the Canadian Forces deployed to assist the United States in Afghanistan, with a United Nations mandate

providing legal sanction. In neither case did we *need* to go to war: instead we chose to.[5]

Examining the context surrounding the decisions to go affords us an opportunity to look closely at what was then considered important and how Canadians reacted. This gives additional insight into how attitudes have changed. There is also a degree of symmetry in an examination of this nature; these were our initial and most recent expeditions overseas.

Each case study examines specific relevant details. To commence, they examine the political and cultural situation within Canada when the decision to deploy overseas was taken, as well as how the decision itself was made. Once the background is understood, the contributions that were made are reviewed, identifying what force elements the Canadian government opted to send. Employment overseas, and the specific tasks that our military was entrusted with, will then be covered. This will show some of the similarities and reinforce the assertion that in many ways warfare has not fundamentally changed. The last element of each case study will be an account of the effects that the deployment had – both internal to the military and external to the nation at large.

Following the case studies, the modern Canadian attitude towards war will be covered in detail. Here, there are several areas that will be examined: the nature of Canadian society, our belief in peacekeeping, anti-Americanism, the confused articulation of our national interests and values, and the pervasive nature of the media.

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[5] Clearly, being a colony in one instance, and a middle-power in the other, means that although Canada had a choice as to whether or not to participate, it was not one of absolute free will. Being subordinate to the authority of an Empire or having to maintain solid relations with a superpower affects the dynamic of choice. Further, it can be argued that by virtue of being a prosperous member of the G8, Canada incurs a certain degree of moral responsibility for the world at large.

Our society's fragmented nature and our inability to articulate what we hold as important are of particular importance when examining how Canadian attitudes have shifted regarding the use of military force.

The paper will conclude by examining the implications of a continuing shift in Canadian attitudes towards war and the use of force in pursuit of national aims. These will focus on the political, military and societal consequences. Specifically, we will consider how the combination of a modern mass media and a multicultural population likely mean that the Canadian government and its military are unlikely ever to enjoy widespread popular support in the conduct of "small wars."[6] Second, the need for clearly articulated national interests and the promotion of broad-based national values will be touched upon. This is crucial; unless our national interests and values are more widely understood by Canadians, government efforts to invoke them when building support for its endeavours will likely fall on deaf ears.

Whether or not we are an unmilitary people is less important in the long run than the question of the direction we are moving as a society. It would appear that we are becoming far less willing to accept the use of force in the accomplishment of our national aims. The inherent irony in this is remarkable. As our leaders espouse a "responsibility to protect" and a willingness to intervene in cases where human rights are at risk, our

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[6] "Small wars" was the term used by the United States Marine Corps to define counter-insurgency operations commencing in the period between the two World Wars and continuing until Vietnam. The actual definition reads "small wars are operations undertaken under executive authority, wherein military force is combined with diplomatic pressure in the internal or external affairs of another state whose government is unstable, inadequate, or unsatisfactory for the preservation of life and of such interests as are determined by the foreign policy of our nation." United States Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual, 1940*, Reprint (Manhattan, KS: Sunflower University Press, 1996).

population refuses to give broadbased support for military intervention.[7] The implications of this incongruity will affect the very nature of the nation Canada may yet become.

[7] United Nations Security Council Resolution 1674 reaffirms the responsibility of the international community to act to protect the lives of people whose governments are not acting on their behalf. Specifically, it mandates action by the international community in cases of "genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity." United Nations, "United Nations Security Council Resolution 1674 (2006): Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict." http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N06/331/99/PDF/N0633199.pdf?OpenElement; Internet; accessed 14 February 2008.

CHAPTER 2
CANADA AND THE BOER WAR

At the start of the Twentieth Century, Canada was a young dominion. Politically, socially, and even geographically, it was a country very different than it is now. The intent of this chapter is to examine the country that Canada was when she dispatched soldiers in support of the British effort in South Africa, how it was decided to send troops, and to touch briefly upon their actions in the field. This will demonstrate that, as a country, Canada was pro-military and generally accepted the utility of war as a means of achieving a political end.[1] The focus is primarily on the social context that existed and less on the tactical actions that were undertaken by Canadian soldiers. This will form a benchmark against which judgements can be formed as to how Canada's attitudes towards war have changed.

The National Context - 1899

Context is critical to an understanding of Canadian attitudes at the time. In 1899, Canada was barely thirty years old as an entity and in its adolescence as a nation. The population numbered approximately five million people,[2] most of whom were of British ancestry. Her society and culture possessed a distinctly British air. The largest exception to this was the approximately 1.7 million Canadians of French descent.[3] In the quarter

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[1] Scholar Mark Moss has argued that attitudes evoked by Canada's involvement in the Boer War "express[ed] a feeling in Canada, and especially Ontario, that war, or at least the chance for the adventure of war, was a desirable thing." Additionally he notes that these attitudes, specifically "the support and passion for war... would only increase" in the period before the First World War. Mark Moss, *Manliness and Militarism: Educating Young Boys in Ontario for War* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2001), 1.

[2] Statistics Canada, "Estimated Population of Canada: 1605 to Present," http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/98-187-XIE/pop.htm; Internet; accessed 2 February 2008.

century following Confederation, the majority of immigrants that had arrived on Canada's shores were British.[4] Culturally, the questions of language and linguistic rights were unanswered; we were neither bilingual in policy nor multicultural in our outlook or beliefs. To paraphrase authors J.L. Granatstein and David Bercuson, we were not a particularly tolerant society.[5] Further, historian Desmond Morton makes the point that at the turn of the century Canada was pro-military in its outlook, stating that "militarist thinking in Canada asserted itself with quite unprecedented vehemence."[6]

In 1899, religious beliefs formed a strong element in national culture.[7] The country was overwhelmingly Protestant in its religious makeup, with Irish and French Canadians making up the approximately twenty per cent of the population that followed the Roman Catholic faith.[8] Religion was not something that Canadians took lightly. Rather, as Robert Page notes, "For most Canadians religion constituted the most vital ingredient in late nineteenth century society."[9]

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[3]Canadian Human Rights Commission, "Population and People: January 1, 1900," http://www.chrc-ccdp.ca/en/getBriefed/1900/population.asp; Internet; accessed 2 February 2008.

[4]Canadian Human Rights Commission, "The Bottom Line," http://www.chrc-ccdp.ca/en/getBriefed/1900/bottom-line.asp; Internet; accessed 2 February 2008.

[5]J.L. Granatstein and David Bercuson, *War and Peacekeeping: From South Africa to the Gulf – Canada's Limited Wars* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1991), 40.

[6] Desmond Morton, *Canada and War: A Military and Political History* (Toronto: Butterworths, 1981), 48. It is worth noting that Morton seems to disagree with Mark Moss as to the extent of militarism in the period preceding the First World War. Where Moss sees the attitude gaining in prominence, Morton states that "As a fashion in thought, militarism ebbed rapidly away." Morton, *Canada and War*..., 53.

[7] Granatstein and Bercuson, *War and Peacekeeping*..., 39-40.

[8]Canadian Human Rights Commission, "Faith and Religion," http://www.chrc-ccdp.ca/en/getBriefed/1900/faith-religion.asp; Internet; accessed 2 February 2008.

[9]Robert Page, "Response to the 'Imperial' Idea During the Boer War Years," in *Canadian History Since Confederation: Essays and Interpretations*, 2nd ed, ed. Bruce Hodgins and Robert Page, 313-336 (Georgetown, ON: Irwin-Dorsey Limited, 1979), 315.

Imperialism was generally viewed positively. The spread of the British Empire, and increasing Canada's place within it, were seen by large segments of the population as entirely acceptable and even necessary. The Christmas stamp, issued by Postmaster-General William Mulock in 1898, provides visual evidence of the importance that Empire had for many Canadians.[10] It was a powerful statement of the Empire's position in the world, with the words "We hold a vaster empire than has been" under a map where all elements of the British Empire were coloured red. The symbolism, of Canada as the largest red portion, near the top of the stamp and almost dead centre, is unmistakably compelling.

Figure 2.1: Canadian Christmas Stamp 1898[11]

[10]For a brief history of the stamp see Michael O. Nowlan, "How the First Christmas Stamp Came to Be," July 14, 1999, http://www.psestamp.com/articles/article1087.chtmlt; Internet; accessed 21 March 2008. The only thing that made this a Christmas stamp was the note at the bottom stating when it was released. Thanks to Lieutenant-Colonel John Conrad for his observations regarding the stamp, as well as his background information on William Mulock.

[11]Image obtained from Ralph E. Trimble, "The Map Stamp of 1898," http://www.re-entries.com/mapstamp.html ; Internet; accessed 21 March 2008.

Federal politicians were intensely aware of imperialism's primacy of place to much of the Canadian electorate.[12] Scholar Carl Berger has asserted that "Successful politicians like Sir Wilfrid Laurier were never so unwise... as to underestimate the strength of imperialism in English Canada."[13] This is plainly evident in the words of Canadian author W. Wilfred Campbell, who shortly after the Boer War stated to the Empire Club that:

> It is the duty of Christianity to keep such a great moral force as the British Empire solid and lasting. It is our duty... to organize and use all the practical means possible... Present-day Imperialism is more than a mere self-satisfied jingoism, and a desire to emulate the splendours of ancient Rome... true Imperialism, as it stands today, is more than an opinion; it is a vital force, a sort of necessary phase of human progressiveness; that instead of being the foe to the individual national life, it is the greatest necessary means to that end.[14]

The phrase "all the practical means possible" warrants note. Here Campbell is referring to the use of military force to achieve desired ends.

Politically and militarily the country continued to evolve. The election of 1896 resulted in Canada's first Catholic and first French-Canadian Prime Minister, Wilfrid Laurier.[15] Following the election, in an inspired choice, he appointed Frederick Borden

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[13]Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism,1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), 5.

[14]W. Wilfred Campbell, **"**Imperialism in Canada. Address by Mr. W. Wilfred Campbell, F.R.S.C., of Ottawa, on Thursday, November 23rd, 1904," in *The Empire Club of Canada Speeches 1904-1905,* ed. J. Castell Hopkins, 30-41 (Toronto: The Empire Club of Canada, 1906) [speech on-line]; available from http://www.empireclubfoundation.com/details.asp?SpeechID=2582&FT=yes; Internet; accessed 2 February 2008. At the outbreak of the Boer War, Campbell was the Vice-President of the Royal Society of Canada, and would later assume the post of President in 1900. See Desmond Morton, "Dictionary of Canadian Biography: Sir William Dillon Otter." http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=41981&query=William%20AND%20Otter; Internet; accessed 12 February 2008.

[15]Oscar Douglas Skelton, *Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier*, Volume I (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965), 168-169.

to the post of Minister of Militia.[16] The militia itself was actually commanded by a British officer seconded by the Imperial government into the position of General Officer Commanding (GOC) the Canadian Militia.

The militia was one of only two Canadian elements which made up the nascent Canadian security establishment, the other being the North West Mounted Police.[17] Divided into permanent and non-permanent forces, the militia was supplemented by British Regulars who garrisoned the fortresses at Halifax and Victoria. Defence policy and thinking on matters of national security were in their infancy. In the words of scholar Brian Reid, "Canadians based their defence policy on patronage, parsimony, and the dogma that Canadian settlers, not British Regulars, had won the war of 1812."[18] Militia performance during the Riel Rebellion, where it had defeated Louis Riel and his followers, without the necessity for a large standing army, seemed to prove that little more was required.

Different GOCs attempted to improve the situation, most notably Colonel Ivor Herbert. In the early 1890s, he commenced a series of reforms that focussed upon professionalizing and revitalizing the Permanent Force. This included "regimentalizing" those elements that taught at the Canadian schools of infantry, artillery and

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[16] Skelton, *Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier*, Volume II..., 5. For details on the life of Frederick Borden, see Carmen Miller, "Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online: Sir Frederick William Borden," http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=41342&query=Frederick%20AND%20Borden; Internet; accessed 15 March 2008.

[17] They would not obtain the prefix "Royal" until 1904, largely as a result of the efforts of their members during the Boer War. "North West" was removed from the title in 1920 when the name would be officially changed to the now familiar Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

[18] Brian A. Reid, *Our Little Army in the Field: The Canadians in South Africa 1899-1902* (St Catharines, Ontario: Vanwell, 1996), 19.

cavalry.[19] His logic was simple and straightforward. If the non-permanent elements of the militia were to be improved, they needed to be taught by professionals. If the permanent elements were not professionalized, they would never be a suitable example for the other elements of the militia. The result was the creation of the Royal Canadian Dragoons, the Royal Canadian Artillery and the Royal Canadian Regiment of Infantry.

In the spring of 1899, events in South Africa began to be featured in the media. The causes of the conflict can be briefly summarized as a power struggle over the control of mineral and natural resources between the Boer Republics and Great Britain.[20] By the summer, events were coming to a head and the British began soliciting support for the war that appeared to be inevitable.

In July, the British wanted a "spontaneous offer of troops" from Canada.[21] Instead, on July 31, shortly before Parliament would recess for the summer, the Prime Minister moved a three-part resolution in the House of Commons affirming Canadian support to the British cause.[22] Unknown to either the Prime Minister or his Minister of Militia, Governor-General Lord Minto and the GOC Major-General Edward Hutton had begun working on a plan to send up to 1,200 Canadians to South Africa.[23] At this point, the war began to occupy "a central place in private and public discourse" as Canadians

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[19]J.L. Granatstein, *Canada's Army: Waging War and Keeping the Peace* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 34.

[20]Granatstein and Bercuson, *War and Peacekeeping*..., 39.

[21]Granatstein, *Canada's Army*..., 36-37.

[22]W. Sanford Evans, *The Canadian Contingents and Canadian Imperialism: A Story and a Study* (Winnipeg: Highnell Printing, 1901. Reprint, Ottawa: Eugene G Ursual, 1995.), 38-39 (Page citations are to the reprint edition).

[23]Granatstein, *Canada's Army*..., 36-37.

debated just what their actions should be.[24]

Opinions, a Decision and Interests

The Liberal government had a difficult choice in deciding whether to contribute military forces to a war in a far away country, little more than a spot on the map for many Canadians. It was evident to anyone reading the newspapers that war was coming, and that a decision would need to be made.[25]

On 3 October, the Colonial Office released a telegram, which promptly hit the press, thanking Canada for her gracious offer of troops.[26] A surprised Prime Minister Laurier announced that there was no plan in existence to send Canadians to South Africa.[27] The same day, the GOC's plan appeared in the *Canadian Military Gazette*.[28] Political manipulation is obviously not confined to our century.

The next day *The Globe* pronounced: "War Signs in South Africa Ominous."[29] The same day its competitor, *The Evening Star*, recorded that "The enthusiasm for a Canadian contingent is so great that the Government must defer to the popular wish. There is much talk in Toronto of setting up a public meeting to urge the necessity of a

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[24]Carman Miller, "Canada's First War," *Beaver*, Volume 79, Issue 5 (October/November 1999): 6.

[25]Carman Miller, *Painting the Map Red: Canada and the South African War 1899-1902* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 37-41.

[26]*Ibid.*, 41.

[27]*Ibid*., 43.

[28]*Ibid*., 41.

[29]*The Globe*, October 4, 1899, Front page. *The Globe* was the Toronto-based forerunner of *the Globe and Mail*.

Canadian Corps for South Africa on the Government."[30]

The question of participation was, according to Carman Miller, "the focus of an intense and acrimonious debate that appeared to divide the country along its linguistic fault lines."[31] English speakers among the Canadian population were largely supportive of going to war to support the Empire.[32] French Canadians were largely against sending troops and the idea of going to war was "highly unpopular in Quebec."[33] Bluntly put, "the overwhelming majority of vocal French Canadians rejected a Canadian military involvement."[34] This lack of support existed, at least in part, because many French Canadians "identified with the Boers... a minority trying to preserve their national identity against the corroding influences of an alien culture."[35]

Within English-speaking Canada, opinion lacked the clarity of its counterpart in Quebec, and support varied from moderate to extreme. In Central Canada, to return to Carman Miller, "the pro-war party consisted of a loose coalition of progressives, nationalists, pragmatists and partisan politicians – groups most likely to favour imperialism."[36] Additionally, Protestant clergymen generally supported the war and

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[30]*The Evening Star*, October 4, 1899, Front page. The paper would later become *The Toronto Daily Star* in January 1900. It would then become known as *The Toronto Star* in 1971. For full details see "History of the Toronto Star," http://www.thestar.com/aboutUs/history ; Internet; accessed 21 March 2008.

[31]Miller, "Canada's First War...," 6.

[32]Carman Miller, "English-Canadian Opposition to the South African War as Seen Through the Press," *Canadian Historical Review*, Volume 55, Number 4 (December 1974): 422.

[33]Granatstein, *Canada's Army*..., 38.

[34]Carman Miller, *Canada's Little War: Fighting for the British Empire in Southern Africa – 1899-1902* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 2003), 14.

[35]Miller, *Painting the Map Red*..., 28.

[36] Ibid., 17.

preached this to their congregations. Their reasoning might seem somewhat archaic now, but for many, there was an element of necessity for Canada to support the Empire "on the basis of communal Britishness."[37]

The English-speaking segments of the population that opposed the war were far from organized and as a result "exercised only limited influence"[38] in comparison to the pro-war press and party politicking that was in full force at the time. In addition to the Irish and German segments of the population who did not generally support the war,[39] opposition manifested itself in several small "farmers' weeklies [newspapers] and radical labour journals."[40] To gain some idea of the scope of this opposition, it is helpful to return to Miller's work. Looking specifically at the press, he noted that "The combined circulation... of all seven anti-war weeklies never equalled more than one half the circulation of one large city daily, *The Star* (Montreal), a strident advocate of war."[41] Another group which did not endorse the war was the Women's Christian Temperance Union.[42] Knowing that they possessed and espoused a pacifist doctrine, their lack of support was not surprising.

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[37]Paul Maroney, "'Lest we Forget': War and Meaning in English Canada, 1885-1914," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, Volume 32, Issue 4 (Winter 97/98): 114.

[38]Miller, *Painting the Map Red...*, 24.

[39]Granatstein and Bercuson, *War and Peacekeeping*..., 41. In general terms the Irish and Germans did not support the war because they saw it as furthering British Imperial interests, which they viewed as being different from Canadian interests.

[40]Gwynne Dyer and Tina Viljoen, *The Defence of Canada: In the Arms of the Empire 1760-1939* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1990), 170.

[41]Miller, *Painting the Map Red...*, 436.

[42]Miller, "English-Canadian Opposition to the South African War...," 434.

National opinion was far from unanimous. Desmond Morton summarized this well: "The crisis fired a jingo spirit among English speaking communities... In French Canada, there was a cool neutrality, tinged with resentment at the racial arrogance the moment provoked among the majority."[43] By 9 October, the question of sending troops had become a crisis in cabinet.[44]

The split in public opinion was reflected in Laurier's cabinet. The influential Minister for Public Works, Israel Tarte,[45] (backed up by the Member of Parliament Henri Bourassa)[46] argued against sending troops, in part because Canada had not had any say in the decisions which had led to the conflict.[47] The opposite view was taken by Frederick Borden and William Mulock.[48] The Minister of Militia and the Postmaster-General both asserted that "a full Canadian contingent, recruited, equipped, transported and paid by the

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[43]Desmond Morton, "Canada's First Expeditionary Force: The Canadian Contingent in South Africa, 1899-1900," in *Canadian Military History: Selected Readings,* ed. Marc Milner, 26-24 (Concord, Ontario: Irwin Publishing, 1998), 27.

[44]Skelton, *Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier*, Volume II..., 38-39.

[45]For a discussion of the life of Israel Tarte, please see Michele Brassard and Jean Hamelin, "Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online: Joesph-Israel Tarte," http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=41219&query=Israel%20AND%20Tarte; Internet; accessed 12 February 2008.

[46]For details on the life of Henri Bourassa, see Joseph Levitt, *Henri Bourassa on Imperialism and Bi-culturalism, 1900-1918* (Toronto: The Copp Clark Publishing Company, 1970). In addition to providing information on his views and opinions, it contains three biographical perspectives on the man and his importance to Canadian politics. A fierce nationalist and incredibly intelligent man, he was a central figure in Canadian politics in the early part of the 20th Century.

[47]Morton, *Canada and War*..., 39-40.

[48]A comprehensive biography of politician Sir William Mulock does not appear to ever have been written. Details of his life are frequently presented as they relate to his involvement in the career of one of his protege's - Prime Minister Mackenzie King. Two of King's biographers describe William Mulock, at the turn of the century, as "One of the most important men in the Liberal Party in Ontario, and one of the shrewdest and richest men in the community..." H.S. Ferns and B. Ostry, *The Age of Mackenzie King: The Rise of the Leader* (Toronto: William Heinemann, 1955), 13.

Canadian government" was required.[49] As Ronald Haycock argues, the Laurier government faced trying to align two fundamentally opposed perspectives, each based in different segments of the population.[50]

It took two days of deliberations and politicking before the government achieved consensus. In part, the Boers provided an element of the solution when they invaded the British territories on October 11, 1899.[51] Some, like Haycock, detect a conspiracy featuring the Governor-General and the GOC nefariously working to get Canadians overseas,[52] but the reality is somewhat more mundane. As Carman Miller asserts, "Canada's decision to send troops to South Africa was a form of home brew, a reluctant, politically motivated capitulation to the demands of Canada's pro-war advocates, not the clandestine machinations of a handful of imperial conspirators, orchestrated from London."[53]

Two elements of Laurier's decision to participate warrant comment: national interests and electoral politics. Canadian involvement in the Boer War should be viewed first and foremost as acceptance of the primacy of national interests. In this case, the interest was to improve the relationship with the dominant world power – at that time Great Britain. Numerous commentators and scholars have argued this point. Historian Chris Madsen has written that "Canadians [were] sent to South Africa to uphold the

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[49]Miller, *Painting the Map Red*..., 46.

[50]Ronald Haycock, "The Proving Ground: Sam Hughes and the Boer War," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, Volume 16, Numbers 3 & 4 (Fall-Winter 1981): 14.

[51]Granatstein, *Canada's Army*..., 37.

[52]Haycock, "The Proving Ground..., " 14. Also see, Skelton, *Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier*, Volume II..., 35-37.

[53]Miller, *Canada's Little War*..., 7.

imperial interests of Empire."[54] Carman Miller voiced a similar belief, stating that national interests, namely an improved relationship with Britain and a greater voice in the halls of Empire, argued for a significant level of participation.[55]

Electoral politics was the other element that weighed on Laurier's mind. With a federal election looming no later than 1900, Laurier clearly felt pressures. Carman Miller noted that "the government...agreed to send troops...because it feared electoral defeat" if it did otherwise.[56] Additionally, Gwynne Dyer and Tina Viljoen argue that the Liberals needed to win votes in both Quebec and Ontario if they were to be successful in a federal election.[57] As such, any potential settlement regarding the question of participation, had to cater to both distinct elements of Canadian society. This necessity resulted in Laurier's compromise. Canada would, in the words of J.L. Granatstein "equip and transport [the contingent] to South Africa; once there, the costs of pay, rations, and transport back to Canada were to be borne by Britain."[58] Laurier decided that there would be no debate in parliament, because the relatively small expenditure of funds did not require that it be recalled.[59]

Putting aside the fact that the Militia Act (governing the use of the Militia) did not cover the contingency of sending soldiers overseas, as well as the right of Parliament to

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[54]Chris Madsen, "Canadian Troops and Farm Burning in the South African War," *Canadian Military Journal*, Volume 6, Number 2 (Summer 2005): 50.

[55]Miller, *Painting the Map Red*..., 19.

[56]Miller, *Canada's Little War*..., 24.

[57]Dyer and Viljoen, *The Defence of Canada*..., 161-162.

[58]Granatstein, *Canada's Army*..., 37.

[59]Skelton, *Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier*, Volume II..., 39.

be at least consulted, the decision was to have far-reaching effects.[60] The first was that a precedent had just been set, contrary to Laurier's view that the methods used to decide the issue had not done so. Henri Bourassa was far more astute and saw that this was exactly what had happened.[61] On October 20, 1899, he resigned in protest, declaring that a precedent was a precedent.[62]

The government justified its decision to each segment of the population differently. To English-speaking Canada, national interests were evoked. Additionally, the nascent national values of "the cause of justice, the cause of humanity, of civil rights and religious liberty" were trotted out.[63] French Canadians were placated with the fact that their dollars would pay for little more than organizing and sending the soldiers off.[64]

Once the decision was announced, public attitudes began to solidify behind the government or at least for the soldiers that were to carry the flag.[65] Papers in Quebec, writes Miller, "accepted the fait accompli."[66] Notwithstanding this, and in light of the divisions he had witnessed, Laurier decided against calling an early election.[67]

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[60]Granatstein, *Canada's Army*..., 37.

[61]Joseph Levitt, *Henri Bourassa on Imperialism and Bi-culturalism, 1900-1918* (Toronto: The Copp Clark Publishing Company, 1970), 36.

[62]*Ibid*., 35-36. Interestingly, Bourassa's acknowledgement of the precedent being set was cited over a century later by a letter writer commenting on the Canadian Government's decision to recognize Kosovo's statehood. The government argued that such recognition did not constitute a precedent particularly as it concerned the status of Quebec. See Ramsay Cook, "The Kosovo Fact is Precedent," *The Globe and Mail*, 21 March 2008, A.14.

[63]Granatstein and Bercuson, *War and Peacekeeping*..., 44.

[64]Miller, *Painting the Map Red*..., 48.

[65]Miller, "English-Canadian Opposition to the South African War...," 426.

[66] Miller, *Canada's Little War*..., 19.

[67]Granatstein and Bercuson, *War and Peacekeeping*..., 44.

Sending the Boys

Recruitment, centered on the Permanent Force, began at once, with an expected departure date at the end of October. Thankfully, the military reforms mentioned earlier had had some effect, although the situation was far from perfect. As historian S.J. Harris backhandedly stated, "Despite all that was wrong with them, the regulars [Permanent Force] were the most competent soldiers..." that the Militia possessed.[68] The contingent was named the "2nd (Special Service) Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment"(2 RCR);[69] its commander was the experienced Toronto militia officer Lieutenant-Colonel William Otter, who first gained national prominence during the Riel Rebellion.[70]

The unit was "far from representative of Canadian society."[71] They were described as "largely young, single, Anglophone, urban workers drawn from the low-paid blue-collar and service sectors of the country's urban society, at a time when 68% of Canada's population of five million lived in rural areas."[72] Further, J.L. Granatstein notes, "more than 70 per cent were Canadian born, with another quarter coming from Britain... only 5 per cent hailed from rural districts... the men seemed motivated by a desire for adventure, but also by imperial patriotism... most... had no military experience

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[68]S.J. Harris, "The Permanent Force and 'Real Soldiering,'1883-1914," in *Canadian Military History: Selected Readings*, ed. Marc Milner, 35-52 (Concord, Ontario: Irwin Publishing, 1998), 45.

[69] R.C. Fetherstonhaugh, *The Royal Canadian Regiment: 1883-1933* (Montreal: Gazette Printing Company, 1936. Reprint, Fredericton: Centennial Print & Litho, 1981), 86-87 (Page citations are to the reprint edition). Also see Desmond Morton, "Dictionary of Canadian Biography: Sir William Dillon Otter." http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=41981&query=William%20AND%20Otter; Internet; accessed 12 February 2008.

[70]*Ibid*., 87.

[71]Miller, *Canada's Little War*..., 27.

[72]*Ibid*.

whatsoever."[73]

The objectives of the first contingent were not defined by the Canadian government or the Minister of Militia. Instead they were to be articulated by their British commanders. As Major-General Daniel Gosselin has written, "The Canadian strategic objectives, which exclusively consisted of a military contribution to the war in support of the needs of the Empire, were achieved independently of the need for any Canadian government control over the planning and conduct of military operations."[74]

In other words, the Canadian contribution of soldiers did not result in a voice in the strategic direction that the war would take. This was unimportant to the Canadian government; supporting the British Empire was what mattered. A voice on the battlefield was irrelevant when compared to the national interest at the time. Command at the formation level was to be exercised by British officers, who would decide the actions that Canadian troops would undertake. This is reflected in the orders received by Lieutenant-Colonel Otter:

> You will exercise command of this battalion and of the officers attached thereto...in accordance with the Army Act and the Queens Regulations...On arrival in Cape Town, you will report yourself to the Officer in Command of that place, and from that time you will come under the orders of the General Officer Commanding the Imperial Forces in South Africa.[75]

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[73]Granatstein, *Canada's Army*..., 38.

[74]Major-General Daniel Gosselin, "Canada's Participation in the Wars of the Early 20th Century: Planting the Seeds of Autonomy and National Command," *Canadian Military Journal*, Volume 7, Number 2 (Summer 2006): 70.

[75]Library and Archives Canada (LAC), "Militia and Defence Post-Confederation Records: South Africa – Correspondence re Gratuities," RG 9, IIA3, Volume 27. Order dated October 29th, 1899. From the Chief Staff Officer to the Officer Commanding the 2nd (Special Service) Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment.

Once the ship carrying 2 RCR sailed, the Canadian government had no direction to give to its soldiers in the field. There were two limitations on this. First, Ottawa specified the duration of the unit's deployment in South Africa at one year. Second, the government mandated "employment in nationally distinct lower tactical" units.[76] This insistence on the grouping of its soldiers in tactical units demonstrates signs of a budding sense of nationalism that would continue to grow after the war. There was a very real desire to be thought of as Canadians.

At the end of October, following a hectic period of recruiting, equipping and organizing, the untrained contingent was ready to sail for Cape Town. Their send-off showed how the country felt at the time. According to author Paul Maroney, the "departure of Canadian troops... brought forth [a] round of civic celebrations that demonstrated a distinct sense of local consciousness."[77] Author T.G. Marquis described the scene as the first contingent moved by rail to concentrate outside Quebec City:

> At Montreal, Toronto and Halifax tens of thousands had crossed their line of march... At every stopping place, too, along their route the inhabitants turned out to wish them God-speed...Torch-light processions, the music of local bands, the shouting of the crowds, told that in every village and town there was the same spirit...A peace[ful] people had been aroused... for Empire.[78]

Before departing from Quebec, the contingent witnessed a significant outpouring of public support. The most noteworthy was a large, and long, departure ceremony replete with dignitaries and speeches that lasted the better part of their day of departure. After

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[76]Madsen, "Canadian Troops and Farm Burning...," 53.

[77]Maroney, "'Lest we Forget'...," 112.

[78]T.G. Marquis, *Canada's Sons on Kopje and Veldt: A Historical Account of the Canadian Contingents* (Toronto: The Canada's Sons Publishing Company, 1900), 54-57.

parading through crowded city streets, to the accompaniment of bands, 2 RCR boarded ship and slipped into the St Lawrence while the guns of the Citadel fired a thirty-one gun salute.[79]

Ultimately, Canada would send far more than the one thousand man force originally agreed to by Laurier. Over 7,000 Canadians would serve in different capacities throughout the war, split between at least four major contingents of soldiers, special constables, nurses and postmen.[80] However, as Carman Miller explains:

> Only the first two contingents were recruited under the authority of the Militia Act and were organized, clothed, equipped, transported and partially paid by the Canadian government....The rest were recruited as temporary units of the British army and paid entirely by the British government.[81]

On the Veldt

Historians generally divide the conduct of the Boer War into three stages, the first being a conventional phase from the commencement of hostilities on 11 October until the three British defeats which comprised their "Black Week"[82] of mid-December 1899. The second conventional phase followed the assumption of command by Lord Roberts of Kandahar, and ran until the fall of Pretoria in June 1900. The third phase of guerrilla and counter-guerrilla operations lasted from June 1900 until the surrender of the Boers in May 1902. It is not the intent of this paper to reconstruct a military history of the

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[79]Miller, *Canada's Little War...*, 31 and Marquis, *Canada's Sons On Kopje and Veldt*..., 60-69.

[80]Miller, "Canada's First War...," 7.

[81]Ibid.

[82]Black Week comprised three significant British losses, at Sormberg on 10 December, Magerfontein on 11 December and Colenso on 15 December. This was in addition to the sieges that were ongoing at Kimberly, Ladysmith and other areas of the Boer Republics at the time. As Jeffery Williams relates, British generalship was thought to be so bad at the time that "A joke current among the Boers was that it was an offence punishable by death to shoot a British General." Jeffery Williams, *Byng of Vimy: General and Governor General* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 33.

campaign, but it is worth reviewing several of its elements in order to be aware of the conduct on the battlefield that was to shape opinions at home. Of particular interest are the soldiers of the Royal Canadian Regiment.

The unit arrived in Cape Town on 30 November 1899, to begin a period of conditioning and training for the battlefield.[83] Having been spared the initial challenges and defeats suffered by the British, they landed just in time to witness "Black Week" unfold. Imperial Forces were then under the command of Major-General Redvers Buller. After the British failures of Black Week, Field Marshal Lord Roberts of Kandahar was sent from England to assume command.[84]

The men of 2 RCR saw their first action on December 31 near Sunnyside Kopje. No Canadians were killed in the contact, and the enemy largely escaped. However the unit had been blooded and began the process of building a reputation for soldiering that would outlast their time in South Africa.[85] Soon after his arrival from England, Roberts opted to change strategies. Instead of the defensive form of warfare practiced by his predecessor, he decided to launch an offensive that would "strike directly at the Boer's capitals, forcing them to withdraw their troops from other fronts, free[ing] besieged British fortresses..." and having to "defend their seats of government."[86] The Royals would see more action very shortly.[87]

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[83]Fetherstonhaugh, *The Royal Canadian Regiment*..., 97-99.

[84]*Ibid*., 96. Little more than one hundred years later, Canadian soldiers would find themselves fighting in Kandahar, where Lord Roberts had fought the battle which led to the granting of his title.

[85]*Ibid*., 99.

[86]Miller, *Canada's Little War*..., 38.

[87]The Royals is a shorter designation for members of the Royal Canadian Regiment.

In Canada, a second contingent had been raised, and a third was in the process of being organized for dispatch. The second contingent had been accepted gratefully following the setbacks in early December. It comprised two battalions of mounted infantry and three batteries of artillery.[88] The battalions were designated as the Royal Canadian Dragoons and the Canadian Mounted Rifles. These were the final contingents paid for by the Canadian government.

The third contingent was raised by Donald Smith, the Lord Strathcona, then serving as the Canadian High Commissioner in London.[89] With a generous donation, he paid for the raising and equipping of a cavalry unit that would become known as the Lord Strathcona's Horse.[90] Following their arrival in the early spring of 1900, they built on the reputation started by the first Canadians in South Africa. Further contingents would follow; however, the British government handled all aspects of their funding and employment.[91]

Back on the veldt, the RCR prepared for an operation intended to raise the Boer siege of Magersfontein.[92] On 12 February 1900, they left their camp with Lord Roberts and began marching across the countryside in an operation that gave the British their first major victory of the war: the battle of Paardeberg.[93] The actual conduct of the battle is less important than the fact that the Canadians were credited for it in the international

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[88]Reid, *Our Little Army in the Field...*, 32-33.

[89]Miller, *Painting the Map Red...*, 289.

[90]*Ibid*., 289-290.

[91]Reid, *Our Little Army in the Field...*, 159.

[92]Granatstein and Bercuson, *War and Peacekeeping...*, 40.

[93]Fetherstonhaugh, *The Royal Canadian Regiment...*, 101-117.

media, and as Gwynne Dyer notes, "just happened to be in the right place at the right time."[94] Of the 18,000 soldiers in the battle under Robert's command, less than 1,000 were Canadian.[95]

In the wake of the first real British success of the war, the men of the Royal Canadian Regiment were considered heroes. The details may have been somewhat questionable, but again, a perception of Canadian abilities was forming. Following their success at Paardeberg, Roberts continued the march to the Boer capital at Pretoria, thinking that its loss would mean the end of hostilities. He was mistaken. Although the capital fell on 5 June 1900, the war continued for another two years. [96]

Following their loss of Pretoria, the Boers adapted a guerrilla approach to the conflict, and attempted to avoid the British and Imperial strength.[97] For the RCR the remainder of their time in South Africa was largely spent in garrison duty, patrolling and marching "after the Boer horsemen."[98] By the end of October, following some fruitless attempts by Otter and others to convince the men to extend their one-year contracts, the first contingent returned to Canada.[99]

The second and third contingents found themselves fighting Canada's first counter-guerrilla campaign, aspects of which remain controversial to this day. This is

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[94]Dyer and Viljoen, *The Defence of Canada...*, 167-168.

[95]Peter Holt, "Costly British Victory at Paardeberg," *Military History* (February 2000): 59.

[96]Morton, "Canada's First Expeditionary Force...," 30.

[97]Gregory Fremont-Barnes, *The Boer War: 1899-1902* (New York: Osprey, 2003), 60-70.

[98]Morton, "Canada's First Expeditionary Force...," 31. The RCR were not a mounted unit; they did in fact march on foot, against an enemy that was largely horse borne. This was a result of the initial assessment that infantry were required. All other Canadian contingents were either cavalry or dragoons.

[99]Ibid.

aptly described by scholar Brereton Greenhous who writes:

> The Canadians joined in the fatiguing, mostly fruitless, work of chasing small bands of sharp-shooting, veldt-wise guerrillas in every direction...burning Boer farms as they went. Alternatively they endured the excruciating monotony of railway guard duties on key bridges and manning dusty, isolated blockhouses.[100]

It was, according to J.L. Granatstein and David Bercuson, "a forerunner of the kind of war that would later bedevil the British in Malaya and the French and Americans in Vietnam."[101]

In the process, the men of the RCD and the Lord Strathcona's Horse continued building a Canadian reputation as competent and brave soldiers. In one engagement, near Leliefontein, the RCD earned three Victoria Crosses while acting as a rearguard.[102] However, counter-guerrilla operations as practiced by the British forces were not generally what the men had signed on for. Placing women and children in concentration camps, destroying their property in an effort to deprive guerrillas of support, and the seeming lack of honour in the enterprise did not sit well with many Canadian soldiers. To paraphrase Chris Madsen, the distastefulness of farm burning played a significant role in the unwillingness of a significant portion of the Canadians to re-enlist in the efforts in South Africa at the end of their tour.[103] Like the RCR before them, at the end of their engagement, the RCD and Strathconas went back to Canada. However, they had made

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[100]Brereton Greenhous, "The South African War," in *We Stand on Guard: An Illustrated History of the Canadian Army*, ed. John Marteinson, 55-80 (Montreal: Ovale, 1992), 75.

[101]Granatstein and Bercuson, *War and Peacekeeping*..., 75.

[102]For a complete account see Brian A. Reid, "'For God's Sake...Save Your Guns!'Action at Leliefontein, 7 November 1900," in *Fighting for Canada: Seven Battles, 1758-1945*, edited by Donald E. Graves, 191-236 (Toronto: Robin Bass Studio, 2000).

[103]Madsen, "Canadian Troops and Farm Burning...," 56.

an impression on their allies.

The international press praised the Canadian efforts. As summarised by Carman Miller, "Popular British writers, such as... Rudyard Kipling and Arthur Conan Doyle supplied language, argument and imagery to articulate the colonial difference. In speeches, reports and stories, they cast colonial troops as youthful, courageous, resourceful, unorthodox and energetic."[104] The Canadian public, still very interested in the war, would not have let accolades such as these escape unnoticed. Similarly, British commanders who had led Canadians in the field, or been in battle with them, were equally effusive. One example stands out.

Colonel John Reeves of the 2nd Battalion Princess Victoria's (Royal Irish Fusiliers), addressed Colonel Lessard (the Commanding Officer of the Royal Canadian Dragoons) in July 1900, following a funeral for "two very gallant officers." He wrote:

> I am afraid I failed to convey the deep gratitude my regiment owes to the Royal Canadian Dragoons, for their great gallantry in going so nobly and fearlessly to the succour of our beleagued [sic] detachment at Witpoort yesterday.
>
> The Counter[sic] attack your regiment made occurred at a most critical moment and it doubtless saved many of the lives of our detachment... we shall ever bear in grateful memory the gallantry and self sacrifice of the Royal Canadian Dragoons on this occasion.[105]

This typifies the perceptions that the British carried home regarding the Canadians. Further, it is indicative of the attitude that Canadian soldiers possessed when they arrived back in Canada.

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[104]Miller, *Canada's Little War*..., 89. This is not specifically aimed at Canadians, but should also be taken to include Australians and New Zealanders.

[105]Library and Archives Canada (LAC), "Militia and Defence Post-Confederation Records: South Africa – Orders, 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles," RG 9, IIA3, Volume 31. Appendix 1 to letter dated 2nd January 1901, from OC Royal Canadian Dragoons to Adjutant General Ottawa.

Some Canadians also earned a reputation for ruthlessness and brutality. Although it does not receive significant mention in much of the modern historical writing, it did receive note at the time. A contemporary officer writing of the Australian experience in 1907 makes specific mention of the Canadians. He wrote that "they rigidly adhered to the rule of never allowing their enemies to trouble them a second time."[106] Clearly, some possessed a different perspective on the kind of war they were fighting.

The Home Front

After the initial crisis surrounding participation, support for Canadian soldiers and the war itself never really faltered. Carmen Miller notes that once the troops deployed the "enthusiasm [for the enterprise] was infectious, especially in urban areas."[107] This argument is reinforced by the fact that, in English Canada, there was no trouble obtaining troops to form further contingents, even when they were to serve as temporary units of the British Army. The Boer War did not see a reinforcement crisis such as that which occurred during the First and Second World Wars.

Manifestations of public support took several different forms. On departure the troops enjoyed gifts of tobacco, cigarettes, and pipes. Bibles, boxing gloves, whiskey, books and games were also given by a grateful public.[108] Some employers granted leave to their employees who deployed to fight the Boers (even if promises of a job upon return

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[106]Lieutenant George Witton, *Scapegoats of the Empire: The True Story of Breaker Morant's Bushveldt Carbineers* (Melbourne: D.W. Paterson & Co., 1907, Reprint, London: Angus & Robertson Publishers, 1982), 35 (Page citations are to the reprint edition).

[107]Miller, *Canada's Little War*..., 30.

[108]*Ibid*., 31-32.

were not always honoured); in some cases this was done with pay.[109] Public concerts and fundraising, on a scale impressive for the time, were held to support soldiers, their widows and orphans. Funds were also sent to provide comforts to the soldiers in the field.[110] In Miller's words, "practically every city, town, or village that sent men to South Africa provided gifts, receptions, and comforts for the local volunteers."[111]

A last indication of support for the war can be seen in the pop-culture of the time. Numerous poems, books and songs were written, both while the war was on and in its aftermath. The song titles alone convey the attitudes at the time: "Johnny Canuck's the Lad," "Young Canada was There," and "The Queen's Brave Canadians" to name but three. [112]

In the media, reporting often took on a local dimension. In his study of the press during the period, Paul Maroney noted that "when the Canadian contingent began to see action, the fighting itself was often seen in the context of local identity."[113] Canadian cities and towns were proud to see their soldiers engage in combat. Indeed, as Maroney writes "The press also showed an attachment to the troops in South Africa as *Canadians.*"[114] The Canadian capacity to win at war was quickly becoming a cherished part of Canada's budding national identity. The modern tendency to argue for

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[109] Miller, *Canada's Little War...*, 31-32.

[110]Miller, *Painting the Map Red...*, 428-433.

[111]*Ibid*., 432.

[112]For a further example of the types of songs that were written to commemorate, and perhaps glorify, Canada's contribution in South Africa see the Library and Archives of Canada web-site "Canadian Sheet Music From the Time of the Boer War" http://www.lac-bac.gc.ca/military/025002-5080-e.html; Internet; accessed 8 February 2008.

[113]Maroney, "'Lest we Forget'...," 112.

[114]Ibid.

withdrawal from the mission when casualties were suffered does not seem to have occurred at all.

Kenneth Morgan, who studied the British press and the Boer War, made some interesting observations on the media and its role in shaping public sentiments. His study has some applicability in the Canadian context as well. He argued that "The war in general created a new kind of reciprocal relationship between pressmen, proprietors, editors, and journalists and the political world..."[115] and an "unusual degree of interaction between the war and the main participants."[116] In some ways this can be seen to presage the modern concepts of embedded journalists.

There were exceptions to the seemingly boundless support for Canadian efforts in South Africa, pointing to the fact that divisions still existed in Canada. A clear example can be seen in what Carman Miller has termed "the Montreal Flag Riot."[117] Whether the disagreements concerned the propriety of going to war or were simply evidence of strained relations between English and French Canadians is not entirely clear. However, following the success of the RCRs at the Battle of Paardeberg, on 1 March 1900 a victory celebration was held in the streets of Montreal. This degenerated into a series of disturbances which pitted English Canadians against French-Canadian students. Tensions overflowed to such a point that the Militia had to be called out to restore order.[118] Although there may have been a significant degree of popular support for the

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[115]Kenneth O. Morgan, "The Boer War and the Media (1899-1902)," *20th Century British History*, Volume 13 (March 2002): 9.

[116]Ibid., 6.

[117]Miller, *Canada's Little War...*, 47-54.

[118]*Ibid.*, 51.

war, it was clearly not unanimous, most markedly in Quebec.

Effects – Part 1

Canadian participation had myriad effects on the young nation and its society. In pure human terms, the British Empire suffered approximately 100,000 casualties, including some 22,000 dead. The vast majority of these (16,000) were the product of wounds and disease, while 6,000 soldiers from the Empire were killed in action.[119] Almost half a million troops had been sent to fight just under 90,000 Boers; there were almost 28,000 Boer civilians left dead, most dying in British concentration camps. This represented approximately ten percent of the entire Boer population.[120] Out of the approximately 7,300 Canadian soldiers who went to the battlefields of South Africa, between 242 and 270 did not come home and were buried on the veldt.[121] Financial costs were no less significant for either side.

In honours, Canadians earned four Victoria Crosses, nineteen Distinguished Service Orders, seventeen Distinguished Conduct Medals and 117 Mentions in Dispatches.[122] Clearly performance on the battlefield was deemed satisfactory.

Moving beyond raw numbers, the Canadian Army saw other effects aside from casualties and honours. First, in what may also be classed as a political effect, the GOC Militia, Major-General Hutton, was fired by Sir Wilfrid Laurier's government in

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[119]Fremont-Barnes, *The Boer War*..., 86.

[120]Albert Grundlingh, "The Bitter Legacy of the Boer War," *History Today*. (November 1999): 22.

[121]Different sources cite differing numbers of casualties. The casualty numbers are respectively taken from Morton, *A Military History of Canada*..., 117 and Miller, "Canada's First War...," 7. The total number of deployed Canadians is from Miller, "Canada's First War...," 6.

[122]Miller, "Canada's First War...," 7.

February 1900. He was recalled to Britain because of his inability to accept government direction.[123] A second result was that those who had gone to South Africa learned from their experience and positively affected the Army as an institution. This can be readily seen in that thirty-four of the 106 general officers in the Canadian Expeditionary Force during the First World War had seen service during the Boer War.[124]

Third, and perhaps more significantly, upon the return of Canadians from South Africa, the government undertook a series of reforms to its developing military. This was done under the leadership of the new GOC Militia, Major-General the Earl of Dundonald[125] as well as Sir Frederick Borden, who had lost his only son in the conflict.[126] Multifaceted and comprehensive, the reforms focussed on revitalizing the Permanent Force, improving housing, providing a living allowance, a pension plan and pay raises.[127] Additionally the Permanent Force was expanded, and an Army Medical Corps, an Ordnance Corps and a Pay Corps were all established.[128]

Further, Canadians began to argue for increased autonomy in the exercise of command.[129] After seeing how the British had performed, Canadians wanted a say in the tasks that they would undertake and how they would be conducted. On the home front,

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[123]Haycock, "The Proving Ground...," 15.

[124]Miller, *Canada's Little War...*, 6.

[125]Granatstein, *Canada's Army*..., 45.

[126]Reid, *Our Little Army in the Field*..., 117. Borden was knighted in 1902.

[127]Harris, "The Permanent Force...," 46.

[128]Desmond Morton, *The Canadian General: Sir William Otter* (Toronto: Hakkert, 1974), 273.

[129]Gosselin, "Canada's Participation in the Wars...," 66.

this was manifested in the patriation of the GOC position from Britain in 1904, enabling the Canadian military to be led at the highest levels by Canadian officers.[130]

Politically and socially, the war had equally important effects. In the words of J.L. Granatstein, "It had been a small war but not one without significance..."[131] Some, like Carman Miller, have described the experience as "empowering" elements of Canadian society.[132] Desmond Morton noted that "the South African War did much to encourage a naive military enthusiasm in Canada."[133] Although this may have manifested itself as political viability for the military reforms desired by the government, it is also indicative of the way that Canadians felt about using military force in support of their aims. This enthusiasm fed demands for a Department of External Affairs, as appeared in one of the first books to chronicle Canada's involvement in the war.[134]

This idea was a remarkable change from 1899 when, according to historian C.P. Stacey "there was no question of Canada having...an 'independent' foreign policy."[135] Simply put, there was no need for a colony to have a foreign policy of its own; its task was to follow the dictates of the mother country. In voicing a desire for a Department of External Affairs, Sanford Evans was expressing a wish for Canada to be considered as more than a colony; he was articulating a request for Canada to be considered a nation.

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[130]J.L. Granatstein, "Joining Forces," *Beaver*, Volume 80, Issue 1 (January/February 2000): 74. Whether this was just blatant nationalism or a militarily correct decision is certainly open to debate.

[131]Granatstein, "Joining Forces...," 74.

[132]Miller, *Canada's Little War...*, 93.

[133]Morton, *A Military History of Canada...*, 116-117.

[134]Evans, *The Canadian Contingents...*, 332-352.

[135]Colonel C.P. Stacey, "Canada and the South African War II: How Canada Got Into the War," *Canadian Army Journal*, Volume 4, Number 3 (Summer 1950): 42.

This thought is echoed by Mark Moss, who wrote that "One of the reasons why Canada's involvement in... the Boer War... was so important to the country's collective psyche is that it finally gave Canadians the chance to demonstrate their political and military maturity."[136]

Carman Miller, whose work has framed much of the discussion in this chapter, explains the effects better than most:

> [Canada's participation in the Boer War had a] profound affect upon Canadian life and politics... [it] weakened Canada's imperial tie to Great Britain, broke Sir Wilfrid Laurier's power in Quebec, strengthened French-Canadian nationalism, split open the cleft between French and English Canadians and launched the... separatist movement...[it affected] industry, trade, transportation, politics and public policy... [it] influenced literature, music and fashion...[137]

In short, Canadian involvement in South Africa influenced almost every aspect of Canadian life. This included how Canadians perhaps felt about war itself. Miller explains:

> Among English-Canadians the war reinforced a sense of community, of sharing common experiences, identity, symbols, attitudes and manners. Among French-Canadians the war created a negative point of reference, one of exclusion, division, distrust and injury.[138]

Two authors writing at the time phrased the sentiment in language that resonates today. T.G. Marquis, in perhaps a jingoistic tone, wrote that "Canada cannot but be proud of the men she sent to South Africa in the Empire's war... Her sons on kopje and veldt have proved themselves without superiors..."[139] Sanford Evans was slightly less

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[136]Moss, *Manliness and Militarism*..., 51.

[137]Miller, "Canada's First War...," 6.

[138]Miller, *Canada's Little War*..., 5.

[139]Marquis, *Canada's Sons on Kopje and Veldt*..., 468.

effusive in his statements, but perhaps more prescient. In words that would be echoed on a field inside Kandahar Air Field by a Canadian Prime Minister just over one hundred years later, he wrote:

> However shaken and perplexed might be the national mind, the temper of Canadians rang clear. They may be trusted to see an undertaking through to the end...[140]

[140]Evans, *The Canadian Contingents*..., 21.

CHAPTER 3
AFGHANISTAN

In the century since the conclusion of the Boer War, Canadian society, and the nation itself, changed dramatically. In both its composition and its attitudes, the nation which entered the 21st Century was fundamentally different from a hundred years before. This chapter examines the societal context and the successive decisions undertaken by the Government of Canada to deploy members of its military to Afghanistan, as well as the general conduct of the operations.[1] As in the previous case study, the focus is less on the tactical application of military force and more on the political and social elements associated with it. This is followed by an examination of how the operations have been perceived within Canada and some of their immediate effects, showing that Canada has generally become more anti-war, perhaps even more pacifistic in its outlook. Indeed, the emerging trend is for ever-decreasing numbers of Canadians to view the use of military force as a viable means to defend either our national interests or values.

The National Context – 2001

Over the course of the 20th Century, the Canadian population grew to just under 30 million people, six times the number a hundred years earlier.[2] Far more diverse, the Canadian citizenry of 2001 claimed lineage from ninety-two different ethnicities and

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[1]The full range of the Government's decisions included a naval deployment to the Persian Gulf in the wake of the attacks on September 11, 2001. By its nature, this aspect of the operation is largely noncontroversial and in many ways does not seem to factor in to the Canadian public's perceptions of the war in Afghanistan. Although the Canadian Navy played a significant role in Maritime Interdiction Operations in the Persian Gulf between 2001 and 2003, it will not be dealt with in this paper.

[2]Statistics Canada, "Population by Selected Ethnic Origins, by Province and Territory (2001 Census)," http://www40.statcan.ca/l01/cst01/demo26a.htm; Internet; accessed 14 February 2008.

cultures;[3] this was a distinct change from the eleven different origins cited in 1900.[4] Canadian religious views reflected the fractured ethnic make-up of its society, with the census noting thirty-four different religious affiliations.[5]

The population was also older, on average, than it had been in the past,[6] a trend that continues to the current date.[7] An interesting element of the nation's aging is that fewer Canadians have direct, practical experience with war or its rationale as an instrument of national power. With an average age of almost 38 years, the typical Canadian of 2001 would have been born in 1963 – just before the commencement of peacekeeping operations in Cyprus and well after World War Two or the Korean Conflict.

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[3]Statistics Canada, "Selected Ethnic Origins, for Canada, Provinces and Territories (2001 Census)," http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/highlight/ETO/Table1.cfm?T=501&Lang=E&GV=1&GID=0&Prov=0&S=1&O=D&PF=Y; Internet; accessed 20 February 2008. This represents sub-populations with more than 15,000 people, as identified during the Census. There were a total of 231 different ethnicities and cultural groupings represented in the 2001 census. See Statistics Canada, "Ethnic Origin (232), Sex (3) and Single and Multiple Responses (3) for Population, for Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations," http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/standard/themes/RetrieveProductTable.cfm?Temporal=2001&PID=62911&APATH=3&GID=431515&METH=1&PTYPE=55440&THEME=44&FOCUS=0&AID=0&PLACENAME=0&PROVINCE=0&SEARCH=0&GC=0&GK=0&VID=0&VNAMEE=&VNAMEF=&FL=0&RL=0&FREE=0; Internet; accessed 20 February 2008.

[4]Canadian Human Rights Commission, "Population and People: January 1, 1900," http://www.chrc-ccdp.ca/en/getBriefed/1900/population.asp; Internet; accessed 2 February 2008.

[5]Statistics Canada, "Religions in Canada (2001 Census)," http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/highlight/Religion/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo=PR&View=1a&Code=01&Table=1&StartRec=1&Sort=2&B1=Canada&B2=1; Internet; accessed 14 February 2008.

[6]Statistics Canada, "Age and Sex, Median Age for Both Sexes, for Canada, Provinces and Territories (2001 Census)," http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/highlight/AgeSex/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo=PR&View=1&Table=4a&StartRec=1&Sort=2&B1=Median&B2=Both; Internet; accessed 14 February 2008.

[7]Statistics Canada, "Portrait of the Canadian Population in 2006, by Age and Sex: National portrait," http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/analysis/agesex/NatlPortrait3.cfm; Internet; accessed 14 February 2008.

Multiculturalism had become an accepted part of the Canadian mosaic, contributing to the definition of the society since the Trudeau era.[8] Rather than the "melting pot" of cultures seen in the United States, many Canadians enjoyed the nation's reputation as an "open, peaceful and caring society that welcome[ed] newcomers and value[d] diversity."[9] As pollster and author Michael Adams noted, "multiculturalism has become central to Canadians' sense of themselves and their country."[10] He argued that "Canada is the only place on earth that has... these characteristics: a national minority group, an Aboriginal population, and a substantial immigrant population."[11] By 2001, immigrants comprised just over one sixth of the populace.[12]

Women played a more significant role in society than ever before. Granted the right to vote in federal elections in 1918, their place in national life grew throughout the 20th Century.[13] By the year 2000, women were engaged in almost every aspect of Canadian public life, including the government and the military. Data from 2001 shows

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[8]Canadian Heritage, "Multiculturalism: Policy and Legislative Framework," http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/progs/multi/policy/framework_e.cfm; Internet; accessed 14 February 2008.

[9]Canadian Heritage, "Canada's Commitment to Cultural Diversity," http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/progs/ai-ia/rir-iro/global/divers/index_e.cfm; Internet; accessed 14 February 2008.

[10]Michael Adams, *Unlikely Utopia: the Surprising Triumph of Canadian Pluralism* (Toronto: Viking, 2007), 20.

[11]*Ibid*., 9.

[12]Statistics Canada, "Immigrant Status by Period of Immigration, 2001 Counts, for Canada, Provinces and Territories," http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/highlight/Immigration/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo=PR&View=1&Table=1&StartRec=1&Sort=2&B1=Counts ; Internet; accessed 14 February 2008.

[13]"History of Women's Suffrage in Canada," http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/QuebecHistory/encyclopedia/Canada-WomensVote-WomenSuffrage.htm; Internet; accessed 21 March 2008.

that almost 7.4 million women were employed in the work force – nearly half of the 15.6 million Canadians then employed.[14]

Canadians generally demonstrated provincial or regional outlooks, in addition to whatever perspective was afforded them by their ethno-cultural point of view. There was no true Canadian national opinion, as perspectives almost always displayed an inward-looking bias. Each region tended to look at the world through its own set of historical and cultural lenses. This phenomenon was, and remains, noted in many public opinion polls,[15] including the work of Michael Adams.[16] It is not hyperbole to argue that there were very few issues or questions where a common national perspective was readily apparent.

One area that did elicit a fairly consistent national consensus concerned the roles and functions of the Canadian military. In 1998, the Canadian Forces commissioned a poll to determine Canadian public opinions regarding the military and security matters, with striking results. First, when asked to choose up to three roles for the Canadian Forces, 52% of the sample chose "peacekeeping" as either their first, second or third

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[14]Statistics Canada, "Industry - 1997 North American Industry Classification System (422), Class of Worker (6) and Sex (3) for Labour Force 15 Years and Over, for Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations, 2001 Census," http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/standard/themes/RetrieveProductTable.cfm?Temporal=2001&PID=60347&APATH=3&GID=431515&METH=1&PTYPE=55440&THEME=46&FOCUS=0&AID=0&PLACENAME=0&PROVINCE=0&SEARCH=0&GC=99&GK=NA&VID=0&VNAMEE=&VNAMEF=&FL=0&RL=0&FREE=0; Internet; accessed 21 March 2008.

[15]See for example, Decima Research, "Canadians Divided on Afghanistan," April 7, 2006. http://www.decima.com/en/pdf/news_releases/060407E.pdf; Internet; accessed 12 February 2008.

[16]He noted that, in addition to regional loyalties, there were differing regional perspectives on various topics. Most notably, he argued that there were variations relating to the concepts of individualism, idealism and autonomy, deference to authority, personal values and egalitarianism. These all varied depending on the province where the data was collected. Michael Adams, *Fire and Ice: The United States, Canada and the Myth of Converging Values* (Toronto: Penguin, 2003), 80-86.

choice. Only 10% chose "protect/defend Canadians" and a mere 2% selected "support for our allies."[17]

Peacekeeping was the role that the public saw as most important, registering 22% of the responses.[18] Perhaps most revealing was that when asked "In your opinion, what is the role of the Canadian Forces?" only 1% stated "Serve/Fight in War/Battle/War";[19] even fewer thought it was the military's most important function.[20]

Canadian opinion from the period concerning its military was instructive. Many Canadians did not appear to see value in an institution intended to use force in the protection of national interests or values. Scholar and former army officer Douglas Bland summarized it well:

> Political leaders, and most citizens, have a weak view of defence history, and believe that Canada is a "peacekeeping nation" without international interests that might be defended by force. There is therefore, no real or traditional use for the Canadian Forces or combat capabilities.[21]

Bland asserted that "Peacekeeping is essentially an invented purpose, lacking definition and content, but it is the objective that the people are most likely to support on a continuing basis."[22]

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[17]Pollara, Strategic Public Opinion & Market Research, *Canadians' Opinions on The Canadian Forces (CF) and Related Military Issues* (Ottawa: Pollara, December 1998), Section 4.0-4.1, 36-37.

[18]*Ibid*., Section 4.2, 38. It should also be noted that fifteen per cent of the respondents did not know or refused to answer, five per cent responded protect/defend Canadians, four per cent stated protect/defend, and two per cent thought that the most important role was to help other countries.

[19]*Ibid*., Interview Schedule 7.

[20]*Ibid.*, Interview Schedule 9.

[21]Douglas Bland, "Everything Military Officers Need to Know About Defence Policy Making in Canada," in *Advance or Retreat? Canadian Defence in the 21st Century*, ed. David Rudd, Jim Hanson and Jessica Blitt, 15-30 (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 2000), 21.

[22]Ibid., 21-22.

His contemporary, Colonel Brian MacDonald, used Canadians' spending habits and their willingness to commit funds to the Canadian military to gauge public sentiment. From his analysis, when deciding where to put their tax dollars, national defence was often at the bottom of the list of priorities.[23] This was plainly evident in June 1999, when only three per cent of the population saw defence spending as the most important place to commit their taxes.[24]

In this unfriendly atmosphere, by 2000, the Canadian military had evolved substantially over the previous century. The first half of the 20th Century saw it engaged in two world wars, where it earned a solid reputation. From 1950 until 1991, it participated in the Korean Conflict, the Cold War, and numerous peacekeeping missions. Nonetheless, only this latter category characterized the military for many Canadians.

Defined by Lester Pearson during the Suez Crisis,[25] peacekeeping became an activity that was singularly Canadian, an embodiment of seemingly national characteristics of compromise and conciliation. Journalists, domestic politicians and scholars have noted the pride of place that peacekeeping seized and continues to occupy in the mindset of many members of Canadian society. American journalist Douglas Belkin noted in the *Wall Street Journal* that, "Peacekeeping is embedded in Canada's self

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[23]Brian MacDonald, "Thinking Outside the Box: Radical Questions About Canadian Defence Planning," in *Advance or Retreat? Canadian Defence in the 21st Century,* ed. David Rudd, Jim Hanson and Jessica Blitt, 77-88 (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 2000), 80.

[24]Ibid., 79.

[25]Walter Dorn, "Canadian Peacekeeping: No Myth - But Not What it Once Was," *SITREP*, Volume 67, Number 2 (April-May 2007): 5.

image."[26] Jean Chrétien described it as "our traditional role,"[27] then listed it as the top priority for the Canadian military.[28]

Scholarly opinion varies. Some, like Walter Dorn, gave it a heroic mantra. Writing for *Canadian Foreign Policy*, he recorded:

> For Canadians, peacekeeping is about trying to protect people in mortal danger, providing hope in almost hopeless situations, and bringing peace and some justice to war-torn communities in far-away lands. It is about self-sacrifice as well as world service.[29]

Others did not share his perspective. Sean Maloney, with characteristic bluntness, referred to the concept and Canada's role in it as a dangerous "myth" with the potential to adversely affect Canada's foreign policy and its Armed Forces.[30] Rather than altruism, he linked the existence of the myth to the concept of "Canadian Exceptionalism"- the idea that Canadian identity is intrinsically linked to "being demonstrably different from and morally superior to the United States."[31] Similarly, scholar Eric Wagner argued that "the Canadian peacekeeping myth... is false, and... largely serves to confuse public debate on the appropriate role of the armed forces."[32] Even so, the concept remains a powerful

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[26]Douglas Belkin, "Politics & Economics: Canadians Grow War Weary; Afghanistan Death Toll Puts Heat on Harper," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 27, 2007 (Eastern Edition), A.10.

[27]Jean Chrétien, *My Years as Prime Minister* (Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf Canada, 2007), 88.

[28]*Ibid*., 304.

[29]Walter Dorn, "Canadian Peacekeeping: Proud Tradition, Strong Future?" *Canadian Foreign Policy*, Volume 12, Number 2 (Fall 2005): 7.

[30]Sean Maloney, *Canada and UN Peacekeeping: Cold War by Other Means, 1945-1970* (St Catharines, Ontario: Vanwell, 2002), xi-xiii. For the most comprehensive articulation of the roots for the myth, and its construct, see pages 2-6.

[31]*Ibid*., 2. This idea will be covered further in the next chapter.

[32]Eric Wagner, "The Peaceable Kingdom? The National Myth of Canadian Peacekeeping and the Cold War," *Canadian Military Journal*, Volume 7, Number 4 (Winter 2006-2007): 46.

one for Canadians.

The decade leading up to 2001 saw both highs and lows for the Canadian military. Highs were readily evident in the Army's deployment to the former-Yugoslavia, first as part of the United Nations Protection Force which assisted in the opening of the airport in Sarajevo.[33] Later, the army continued operations in the same region under NATO. As well, it enjoyed some success peacekeeping in Haiti and later during the NATO-led war in Kosovo.

Acting as part of multilateral efforts had become an accepted element of the exercise of Canadian foreign policy. In the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, this took on a new importance, as articulated in the *1994 Defence White Paper*.[34] It clearly stated how the government felt about multilateral operations:

> Canadians are internationalist and not isolationist by nature. We uphold a proud heritage of service abroad... Multilateral security cooperation is not merely a Canadian tradition; it is the expression of Canadian values in the international sphere. We care about the course of events abroad, and we are willing to work with other countries to improve the lot of all manner of peoples... As a reflection of the global nature of Canada's values and interests, the Canadian Forces must contribute to international security.[35]

The Canadian military's contribution to the defeat of the Iraqi military during the Gulf War of 1991 can be seen as a manifestation of this belief.[36] Domestically the military

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[33]That the United Nations mission was less than successful in achieving its goals and had to be replaced by NATO forces, does not detract from how Canadian soldiers acted and were perceived by their fellow citizens.

[34] Department of National Defence, *1994 Defence White Paper* (Ottawa: Canada Communications Group, 1994).

[35]*Ibid*., 27.

[36]The main roles in this conflict were filled by the Navy and Air Force. The Army played an extremely limited role in the conflict. See Major Jean H. Morin and Lieutenant-Commander Richard H. Gimblett, *Operation Friction: The Canadian Forces in the Persian Gulf, 1990-1991* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1997).

also proved quite capable, fighting floods, forest fires and ice-storms in dramatic demonstrations of organizational capability to assist Canadians in crisis.

However, there were some significant low points as well. The deployment of the Canadian Airborne Regiment to Somalia in early 1993 was a pivotal moment in Canadian military history. The mission was scarred by incidents of poor leadership and gross misconduct; disbandment of the Regiment occurred two years later in the wake of a subsequent scandal.[37] Canadians watching the board of inquiry that followed were shocked at the details of poor conduct by their men and women in uniform; attitudes towards their military would be tainted for the latter half of the decade.[38]

In 1994, another mission floundered. Commanded by a Canadian, the United Nations mission in Rwanda utterly failed to prevent or halt the genocide that took place around it.[39] Additionally, the Forces underwent a significant period of budgetary constraint, seeing its funding cut by almost a third, resulting in a massive reduction in personnel.

In the political arena, under the leadership of Minister of Foreign Affairs Lloyd Axworthy, the buzz-word had become "the human security agenda." Fundamentally, this unproven concept downplayed the importance of a state or nation's interests in favour of

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[37]For a comprehensive treatment of the deployment and its aftermath, see David Bercuson, *Significant Incident: Canada's Army, the Airborne, and the Murder in Somalia* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1996) for a detailed account of the incident and its immediate aftermath.

[38]The complete report of the Somalia Board of Inquiry may be obtained at http://www.dnd.ca/somalia/somaliae.htm; Internet; accessed 16 March 2008.

[39] See Carol Off, *The Lion, the Fox & the Eagle: A Story of Generals and Justice in Rwanda and Yugoslavia* (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2001) for an account of both the UNPROFOR and Rwandan missions.

those of the individual. [40] It was paired with the idea of "soft power," defined by Mr Axworthy as "the power to co-opt, rather than coerce, others to your agenda and goals."[41]

On September 11, 2001, much of this was forgotten. Four airliners piloted by terrorists crashed into the World Trade Centre in New York City, the Pentagon in Washington DC, and an empty field in Pennsylvania. The global context of security changed in less than three hours. The ramifications were to be significant. As Sean Maloney observed, "the paradigm had shifted."[42]

The Fledgling Swans

Prior to "9/11" Afghanistan was not as prominent in the Canadian public consciousness as it might have been. Some likely remembered the Afghan-Soviet War, and probably a few tracked the undertakings of the "Taliban" government. However, most would have been hard-pressed to describe why the government of Afghanistan was being led by a religious scholar from Kandahar province. Even fewer would have been conscious of the civil war which had followed the Soviet withdrawal and ultimately led to the Taliban assuming power. Fewer still were likely aware that a man named Osama Bin Laden had orchestrated the attacks of 9/11 and that he used a compound outside a former Soviet airfield in Kandahar as his headquarters. Canadians were simply not interested in

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[40]The human security agenda, as detailed by Mr Axworthy, "is the idea that security goals should be primarily formulated and achieved in terms of human, rather than state, needs." Lloyd Axworthy, "The New Diplomacy: the UN the International Criminal Court and the Human Security Agenda," speech to Conference on UN Reform at the Kennedy School, Harvard University, 25 April 1998 [speech on-line]; available from http://w01.international.gc.ca/Minpub/Publication.aspx?isRedirect=True&publication_id=375691&Language=E&docnumber=98/30 ; Internet; accessed 21 February 2008.

[41]Ibid.

[42]Sean Maloney, *Enduring the Freedom: A Rogue Historian in Afghanistan* (Dulles, Virginia: Potomac Books, 2007), 9.

the region. They would become so.

When the attacks occurred, the Chrétien government had held power for eight years. A seasoned politician with decades of political experience, both he and his ministers were caught "flat-footed" by the blatant attacks on the United States. In the words of authors Janice Gross Stein and Eugene Lang, the Government was at a loss as to how to appropriately respond:

> Members of the Chrétien government in the days and weeks following 9-11 had no idea what role Canada's military should, could, or would play in Afghanistan. In fact, Ottawa struggled for months to devise an Afghanistan policy that would satisfy the core political objectives of the government and, at the same time, be acceptable to the Canadian public.[43]

The United Nations Security Council sanctioned the use of armed force to remove the Taliban from power on 12 September 2001, passing United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1368. It clearly articulated that the United Nations would "take all necessary steps to respond to the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, and to combat all forms of terrorism."[44] What precisely these steps would be had yet to be determined. The American Government acted quickly. On 28 September, the UN provided further legal sanction for this to occur, under UNSCR 1373 which would later see Operation

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[43]Janice Gross Stein and Eugene Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar* (Toronto: Viking, 2007), 2. It is worth noting that Eugene Lang was the former Chief of Staff to Minister of National Defence John McCallum.

[44]United Nations Security Council, "Resolution 1368 (2001): Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts," http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N01/533/82/PDF/N0153382.pdf?OpenElement; Internet; accessed 14 February 2008. This resolution condemned the attacks and provided general sanction for the use of military power to respond to the terrorist attacks.

ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) executed under a chapter VII mandate.[45]

To avoid perceptions that American operations in Afghanistan were unilateral in nature, President Bush was eager for allies to be involved.[46] He immediately began soliciting support from other countries and looked to Canada. Although, according to former-Chrétien aide Eddie Goldenberg, the final details would not be worked out until the Thanksgiving weekend in October, contributions to the campaign began in short order.[47] Ironically, the first elements to deploy were from the Canadian Navy, which sent a Task Force (TF) from Halifax to the "Indian Ocean to conduct leadership interdiction operations."[48] This was rapidly followed by Canadian special operations forces who deployed into Afghanistan proper.[49]

The Chrétien Government discussed the situation throughout the remainder of 2001. The Americans had already established OEF and witnessed the collapse of the Taliban government on December 6. Additionally, following diplomatic discussions in

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[45]United Nations Security Council, "Resolution 1373 (2001): Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts," http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N01/557/43/PDF/N0155743.pdf?OpenElement; Internet; accessed 14 February 2008. This resolution reaffirmed the use of all necessary means to combat terrorism, as well as articulating specific means that countries were to take to deny support to terrorist organizations. A Chapter VII mandate refers to the use of non-peaceful means to resolve disputes. Under article 42 (which is within Chapter VII) of the United Nations Charter states are authorized to use force to "maintain or restore international peace and security." United Nations. *Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice* (New York: United Nations Department of Public Information, October 1997), 28.

[46]Maloney, *Enduring the Freedom...*, 57.

[47]Eddie Goldenberg, *The Way it Works: Inside Ottawa* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2006), 284.

[48]Sean Maloney, "Blood on the Ground: Canada and the Southern Campaign in Afghanistan," *Defense and Security Analysis*, Volume 23, Number 4 (December 2007): 406. This was ironic given the land-locked nature of Afghanistan itself.

[49]*Ibid*., 406.

Bonn, Germany, in early December, the United Nations had sanctioned the creation of an "International Security Assistance Force" (ISAF), to assist and protect the new Afghan government.[50] There were two questions for Canada: with whom a Canadian force would work and what tasks it would be expected to conduct.[51]

Justification for a Canadian role was relatively simple. To paraphrase Sean Maloney, by destroying the facilities that had contributed to the original attacks and the support of terrorism, Canada would help make North America safer and deter further attacks.[52] However, there was disagreement within the Canadian security establishment as to the best means to use. Describing it as "schizophrenic," Maloney writes:

> One faction argued that force was obsolete and that "soft power," or the use of skilful diplomacy, humanitarian aid and UN conflict-resolution mechanisms, including peacekeeping, should form the basis of Canadian policy and the Army's structure...The realists with the Department of National Defence (DND) and the Canadian Forces (CF), however, were tired of deploying forces in support of irrelevant soft-power policies.[53]

The decision to deploy elements of the Army to Afghanistan was made in mid-

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[50]Afghanistan, "Agreement On Provisional Arrangements In Afghanistan Pending The Re-Establishment Of Permanent Government Institutions," commonly referred to as "the Bonn Agreement," http://www.afghangovernment.com/AfghanAgreementBonn.htm; Internet; accessed 14 February 2008 and United Nations Security Council, "Resolution 1386 (2001): On the Situation in Afghanistan," http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N01/708/55/PDF/N0170855.pdf?OpenElement ; Internet; accessed 14 February 2008.

[51]For a detailed review of the choices faced by the Canadian Government, see Maloney, *Enduring the Freedom...*, 57-58.

[52]Sean Maloney, "The International Security Assistance Force: The Origins of a Stabilization Force." *Canadian Military Journal*, Volume 4, Number 2 (Summer 2003): 3.

[53]Maloney, *Enduring the Freedom...*, 57-58.

November 2001, without a debate in parliament.[54] After significant discussion in cabinet and the bureaucracy, the government decided to send the troops under the OEF mandate in early January 2002.[55] The reasons behind the deployment, as former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien records, are indicative of the confusion over the roles of the Canadian Forces within the government. Chrétien wrote that the tasks of the Army were "to stabilize the situation, protect the new government and the Afghani people, and help keep the peace... this operation was really about peacemaking more than peacekeeping."[56] Notwithstanding Chrétien's use of the term "peacekeeping," the government of the day had committed its soldiers to combat in Afghanistan.

Why the government chose OEF over ISAF is an interesting question, with several possible responses. Stein and Lang point out that ISAF was in its infancy and that the European countries slated for the mission initially seemed to make it very difficult for Canada to contribute to the force moving into Kabul, arguing that it was "really a European operation."[57] Maloney's perspective is that the question revolved around trying to rationalize what military planners wanted to send, and what ISAF was

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[54] Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War*..., 15. On 19 November 2001, the Minister of National Defence announced the intention of the Government to send a battalion to Afghanistan". There was no debate at this time. See House of Commons, "37th Parliament, 1st Session Edited Hansard , Number 114: Monday, November 19, 2001," http://www2.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?pub=Hansard&doc=114&Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=37&Ses=1#Int-83632; Internet; accessed 19 February 2008. A "take note" debate was held on 28 January 2002. See Library of Parliament, "Afghanistan: Chronology of Canadian Parliamentary Events," http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/library/PRBpubs/prb0724-e.htm#source3; Internet; accessed 19 February 2008.

[55]Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War*..., 16-17.

[56]Chrétien, *My Years as Prime Minister*..., 305. Whether this is how the Prime Minister felt at the time, or is a memory made for public consumption is difficult to assess. Peacekeeping may be loosely defined as operations which intend to maintain a peace that already exists. Peacemaking is more about creating the conditions which allow peace to form.

[57]Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War*..., 16.

willing to use; this was further compounded by the fact that ISAF was not yet ready to conduct operations.[58]

Orders quickly followed to the Third Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (3 PPCLI). The tasks it was assigned included "airfield security, sensitive site exploitation, humanitarian aid, and combat operations."[59] The unit joined a brigade of the American 101st Airborne Division at the Kandahar Air Field (KAF), for one six-month rotation. By February 22, 2002, the unit had arrived in theatre and begun conducting its assigned duties.[60]

Between February and August 2002, 3 PPCLI conducted numerous operations with the proficiency one would expect of a modern military force. Initially, its missions were centred on providing security at KAF, however, over the spring the tasks became more offensively oriented. These included the first air assault ever conducted by the Canadian Army, as well as another where 3 PPCLI executed a significant sensitive site exploitation mission to gather intelligence on their enemy.[61]

For many Canadians the mission only became significant on April 18, 2002 when four of their soldiers were killed in what was but the first of a series of friendly-fire incidents.[62] Disregarding that the casualties occurred while training and were not due to

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[58]Maloney, *Enduring the Freedom*..., 57-58.

[59]Lieutenant-Colonel P. Stogran, "Fledgling Swans Take Flight: The Third Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry In Afghanistan," *Canadian Army Journal*, Volume 7.3/7.4 (Fall/Winter 2004): 15.

[60]Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War*..., 19.

[61]Maloney, *Enduring the Freedom*..., 59-65.

[62]For a description of the incident, please see Peter Pigott, *Canada in Afghanistan: The War so Far* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2007), 89-91. Further incidents would occur in the fall of 2006.

enemy activity, the incident struck the Canadian public hard. According to writer Peter Pigott, "The tragedy affected Canadians profoundly... many... seemed shocked that their military was in a warzone and taking casualties."[63] The attitude displayed by Canadian citizens may be viewed as the logical outcome of the government's information management processes. The editors of *Maclean's* noted that, "Canada's deployment was always downplayed as just another chapter in our long history of multilateral peacekeeping," even when peacekeeping was the furthest possible description from the reality on the ground.[64]

Two examples of government communications from the period demonstrate this point. One need only examine the official press release which announced the deployment of 3 PPCLI; no mention was made of what its tasks were to be, and a parallel was drawn to peacekeeping forces then deployed to Bosnia.[65] In a second example John McCallum, who had become Minister of National Defence, similarly downplayed the fact that Canadian were at war in a speech he gave on "Armed Forces Day" on 2 June 2002. Rather than state what Canadian soldiers were doing in Afghanistan, he used the word "operating," with its deliberate vagueness.[66] That Canadians were at war against the Taliban was a message that the government did not seem interested in passing to its

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[63]Pigott, *Canada in Afghanistan...*, 91.

[64]Mark Stevenson, Peter Kopvillem, Dianne de Fenoyl and Dianna Symonds, "Canadians Need To Be Told Why We're At War," *Maclean's*, Volume 119, Number 34 (August 28, 2006), 4.

[65]Department of National Defence, News Release, "Canadian Forces Ground Troops Departing for Afghanistan and The Arabian Gulf Region," 26 January 2002 [news release on-line]; http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/newsroom/view_news_e.asp?id=354; Internet; accessed 21 February 2008.

[66]Department of National Defence, Minister's Speeches Archive, "Speaking Notes for The Honourable John McCallum, PC, MP Minister of National Defence For Canadian Forces Day," Toronto, Ontario, 2 June 2002 [speech on-line]; http://www.dnd.ca/site/newsroom/view_news_e.asp?id=467; Internet; accessed 21 February 2008.

citizens.

It is revealing that the government chose a communications strategy that emphasized peacekeeping, over the fact that Canadians were engaged in a war that presumably supported either national values or interests. Rather than spell out the actual reasons Canadians were deployed to Afghanistan, the government relied on a strategy that reinforced the peacekeeping stereotype. This seems to indicate that, for fear of what the public might think, the government was reluctant to detail that its soldiers were in combat. To the government, going to war was not a concept palatable to Canadians, even in the aftermath of the attacks on 9/11. Instead, it was politically more feasible to maintain the mythology that had been built up over the previous fifty years.

In late July 2002, 3 PPCLI returned to Edmonton. Their original mission completed, and with the Canadian Forces still engaged in operations in the former-Yugoslavia, there were no troops available to assume a continuing mission in Afghanistan.[67] The special operations commitments would continue, as well as the naval, and (limited) air operations. However, at that time it appeared that the Canadian Army's commitment to Afghanistan was finished.[68]

Holding the Fort

Barely six months after the last of the ground forces had withdrawn from Kandahar, the Canadian government announced that the Army would be returning to Afghanistan. On 12 February 2003, [69] it was disclosed that one thousand Canadian

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[67]Pigott, *Canada in Afghanistan*..., 91.

[68]*Ibid.*

[69]John Geddes, "Bullets fly. Ottawa Ducks," *Maclean's*, Volume 119, Number 34 (August 28, 2006), 26.

troops were headed to Kabul, to assume command of the Kabul Multinational Brigade (KMNB), and later the entire ISAF mission. Going back to Afghanistan was not a move that the military supported before the decision was made. Planners in National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) had concluded that it was unsustainable from a resource perspective.[70]

Deciphering the decision to send Canadians back to Afghanistan is akin to untying the Gordian knot. At its heart the decision was political, made by Prime Minister Chrétien and Defence Minister John McCallum. Some suggest that redeploying the Canadian Forces to Kabul was a move intended to keep them out of the looming war in Iraq.[71] Sean Maloney writes that Canada's decision to take command of ISAF was specifically intended to "stave off domestic criticism regarding Canada's planned military commitment to Operation IRAQI FREEDOM [the war in Iraq], a commitment that was subsequently cancelled in favour of an Afghanistan deployment." [72]

A second justification for the acceptance of the ISAF mission is argued by Janice Gross Stein and Eugene Lang, who state that it pre-empted a move by the Americans to seek another Canadian unit deployment to Kandahar.[73] One element in the government's decision was the role that the troops would be expected to play. Unlike the combat of the previous summer, ISAF and a Kabul deployment were viewed as being more akin to traditional peacekeeping. Jean Chrétien recollected:

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[70]Pigott, *Canada in Afghanistan*..., 101-102. Surprisingly, the resignation of Major-General Ross, who was at the time Director General International Security Policy, is not discussed in the work of Stein and Lang. It was reported by John Geddes in his article of 28 August 2006.

[71]Pigott, *Canada in Afghanistan*..., 92-93, and Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War*..., 46-50.

[72]Maloney, "Blood on the Ground...," 406.

[73]Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War*..., 41-43.

> In January 2003,... I instructed John McCallum... that we were willing to take over [responsibility for ISAF] from the Germans and the Dutch at the conclusion of their term in August... we were going to get our soldiers into a more secure place where their assignment was closer to traditional peacekeeping.[74]

A third possibility is that it was a clear assertion of civilian control over the military. At the time, senior military officers seem to have favoured deploying to the American-led invasion of Iraq. Former Minister of National Defence John McCallum, as reported by *Maclean's*, stated that "They [the senior military leadership] wanted to go into Iraq... the military leadership of the day wasn't terribly enthusiastic about Afghanistan."[75] This is echoed in the writings of Stein and Lang, who quote McCallum at length.[76]

The Canadian Army arrived back in Afghanistan in July 2003. Brigadier Peter Devlin assumed command of the KMNB on 17 July.[77] Subsequently, on 9 February 2004, Lieutenant-General Rick Hillier assumed leadership of ISAF.[78] For the vast majority of the time in Kabul, things were relatively benign. However there were rocket attacks, and mine strikes, one killing two soldiers from the Royal Canadian Regiment.[79] Principal tasks included developing the Afghan National Army, using Canadian Embedded Training Teams, and ensuring the safe conduct of the national elections in

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[74]Chrétien, *My Years as Prime Minister*..., 305.

[75]Geddes, "Bullets fly. Ottawa Ducks...," 26.

[76]Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War*..., 61-63. It is important to note that McCallum's Chief of Defence Staff, General Ray Henault, has a distinctly different memory of the period and the military's willingness to go into Iraq. Ibid., 60.

[77]Pigott, *Canada in Afghanistan*..., 94.

[78]*Ibid*., 101.

[79]*Ibid*., 98-99.

2004.[80] Separately, the single biggest event to affect Canadian efforts in Afghanistan happened in the fall and winter of 2003: the replacement of Jean Chrétien as prime minister on 12 December by Paul Martin.

During his campaign to lead the Liberal Party, Paul Martin does not appear to have given the military, or its role in Afghanistan, significant thought. In some cases, accounts of the period do not mention the Canadian Forces at all.[81] Stein and Lang make note of the appointment of the relatively hawkish David Pratt as Minister of National Defence and Martin's symbolic visit to NDHQ on his first day as prime minister as evidence of a new focus on defence.[82] Concerning Afghanistan specifically, Peter Pigott makes the point that Martin did not think that it was "a natural fit for Canada" and would have preferred missions that could be more easily associated with peacekeeping.[83] If that was so, matters soon changed.

Slightly more than one year later, the Martin government made the decision to pull the Canadian military out of ISAF and send it back to Kandahar to work with OEF. First to be established was a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), announced in February 2005 and established in Kandahar later that summer.[84] In late March, planning began to add an infantry-based task force to the Kandahar deployment.[85] This was

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[80]Maloney, "Blood on the Ground...," 406.

[81]See for example Susan Delacourt, *Juggernaut: Paul Martin's Campaign for Chrétien's Crown* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2003).

[82]Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War*..., 117-119.

[83]Pigott, *Canada in Afghanistan*..., 102.

[84]*Ibid.*

[85]Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War*..., 183-193.

approved by Cabinet and the Prime Minister in early May, setting the stage for the next phase of Canadian involvement in Afghanistan.[86]

That summer the Minister of National Defence, Bill Graham, began giving speeches and interviews designed to raise support for this next incarnation of the Canadian mission in Afghanistan. The language he used was generally blunt and direct, in an attempt to inform Canadians that they were going to see their soldiers, once again, at war in Kandahar. The Minister's remarks to the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs and the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, in Ottawa on 16 May were notable in that the term peacekeeping was not used. Instead Graham let the committees know that Canadian soldiers would be conducting "operations to strengthen the security situation in the country."[87]

He gave similar messages throughout the fall, in Ottawa, Montreal, and Vancouver. Shortly before Remembrance Day, Minister Graham spelled out the risks and the purposes in clear language for any who were listening:

> Canadians should be under no illusion; Kandahar is a very complex, challenging and dangerous environment and mission. The part of Afghanistan we are going to is among the most unstable and dangerous in the country. Indeed, that is why we have been asked to go there and that is why we are going there... this will be dangerous work with a risk of injury and the potential for casualties that comes with the job. Canadians, too, must recognize this aspect of their mission and be ready to support them

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[86]Stein and Lang, *The Unexpected War*..., 195.

[87]Department of National Defence, Minister's Speeches Archive, "Speaking Notes for the Honourable Bill Graham, P.C., M.P. Minister of National Defence at a joint session of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs and the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade," Ottawa, Ontario, 16 May 2005 [speech on-line]; http://www.dnd.ca/site/newsroom/view_news_e.asp?id=1663; Internet; accessed 29 February 2008.

[soldiers] in every way if that occurs...[88]

Near the end of his speech, he took great pains to explain that the next deployment was not in the realm of traditional peacekeeping, but rather was better explained as a blend, "including peacekeeping and combat."[89]

The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), General Rick Hillier, also attempted to inform Canadians of the risks that could be expected with the evolving mission. Overshadowed by some of the CDS's word choices was the point that there was a strong chance of suffering casualties. General Hillier clearly stated, as recorded by reporter Bruce Campion-Smith, "The possibilities of taking casualties are always there ... I do think there needs to be an awareness across Canada that we're in a dangerous business."[90] Unfortunately, this point seems to have been missed by more than a few Canadians.

Back to Kandahar

Canadians went to the polls on 23 January 2006, and power changed hands; Stephen Harper and the Conservative party were elected to form a minority government. In the two months before the election, members of the Canadian military in Kabul shut down their camps and made an exhausting road move to the KAF to establish a home for the next contingent. Soldiers from the First Canadian Mechanised Brigade Group and the First Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (1 PPCLI) began arriving as the election was taking place back in Canada. Ultimately, the Canadians tasked to work

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[88]Department of National Defence, Minister's Speeches Archive, "The Canadian Forces Mission in Afghanistan: Canadian Policy and Values in Action Vancouver Delivery," Vancouver, British Columbia, 9 November 2005 [speech on-line]; http://www.dnd.ca/site/newsroom/view_news_e.asp?id=1805; Internet; accessed 29 February 2008.

[89]Ibid.

[90]Bruce Campion-Smith, "Canada Urged to go After 'Scumbags,'" *The Toronto Star,* 15 July 2005, A1.

under the American-led operation comprised almost 2,500 troops. This included an infantry battle group, a brigade headquarters, special operations troops, the PRT and a National Support Element, which was to provide logistical support for all Canadians in Afghanistan.[91] The mission was straightforward:

> ... assist [the] Afghans in the establishment of good governance, security and stability, and reconstruction in the province of Kandahar during Operation (Op) Archer Rotation (Roto) 1 in order to help extend the legitimacy and credibility of the Government of Afghanistan throughout the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and at the same time help to establishconditions [for transition from OEF to ISAF].[92]

In simple terms, they were to assist the legitimate government in the conduct of its counterinsurgency. Canadians were there to fight a war.

Prime Minister Harper visited Kandahar in early March, an act journalist Paul Wells described as "the most spectacular expression of Harper's new foreign-policy assertiveness."[93] After gathering all available Canadian soldiers in a dusty parking lot for a short speech, Harper echoed the words of W. Sanford Evans - written slightly more than a century before. As Wells described, "Harper was typically blunt when he told the Canadian troops... he would not let them down now. 'We don't make a commitment and

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[91]Maloney, "Blood on the Ground"..., 406. For the best accounts of the actions of the Canadian Forces during the summer of 2006, interested readers are referred to Colonel Bernd Horn (editor), *In Harm's Way – The Buck Stops Here: Senior Commanders on Operations* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007). The book includes accounts by the three men who each led a major organization: Brigadier-General David Fraser (Commander of the Multi-National Brigade), Lieutenant-Colonel Ian Hope (Commanding Officer of 1 PPCLI), and Lieutenant-Colonel John Conrad (Commanding Officer of the NSE).

[92]Lieutenant-Colonel Ian Hope, "Reflections on Afghanistan: Commanding Task Force Orion," in *In Harm's Way – The Buck Stops Here: Senior Commanders on Operations*, ed. Colonel Bernd Horn, 211-226 (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007), 212. Operation ARCHER was the Canadian military's name for the Canadian contribution to OEF.

[93]Paul Wells, *Right Side Up: The Fall of Paul Martin and the Rise of Stephen Harper's New Conservatism* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2006), 296. It should be noted that Jean Chrétien also visited Afghanistan in October 2004.

then run away at the first sign of trouble.'"[94] This new positive tone was welcomed by many, as demonstrated by the words of the editors of *Maclean's* magazine. Writing in April 2006, they stated "it has been a welcome surprise to see the Harper government move the country back toward a muscular foreign policy that truly reflects Canadian values..."[95]

From March until December, Afghanistan frequently featured in the Canadian media; fighting was heavy and casualties were suffered in numbers not seen since Korea. Numerous firefights and IED strikes occurred as the Taliban and coalition forces battled for supremacy throughout the provinces for which Canada was responsible.[96] Casualties became an almost weekly occurrence.[97]

Throughout the period, the government used the language reminiscent of earlier peacekeeping missions; war was not mentioned and combat was a word that was rarely used. In a telling headline in June 2006, Maclean's noted that "Canadian troops are digging in for a long bloody battle with the Taliban this summer. Someone should tell our defence minister."[98] The accompanying report showed that prior to going with the Prime Minister on his visit to Kandahar in March, Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor

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[94]Wells, *Right Side Up...*, 296.

[95]Mark Stevenson, Peter Kopvillem, Dianne de Fenoyl and Dianna Symonds, "Reasserting Canada's Role on the World Stage," *Maclean's*, Volume 119, Number 17 (April 24, 2006), 4. What the values are is not articulated .

[96]IEDs are improvised explosive devices. The provinces were: Helmand, Kandahar, Zabol and Oruzgan.

[97] For a full description of the period two sources are strongly recommended. The first is Maloney, "Blood on the Ground" which gives a general overview. A more in-depth, human account of the events surrounding the casualties can be found in Christie Blatchford, *Fifteen Days: Stories of Bravery, Friendship, Life and Death from Inside the New Canadian Army* (Toronto: Doubleday, 2007).

[98]John Geddes, "This Means War," *Maclean's*, Volume 119, Number 26 (June 26, 2006), 14.

stated that "Our role in Afghanistan is not to conduct combat operations..."[99] Later in May, he stated "I don't consider this war... We're engaged in helping people move products around, we're helping them build houses, we're helping advise the police... And when we're attacked, we attack back."[100] In an editorial written in late August, the editors of *Maclean's* were no longer quite so full of praise in their tone remarking: "The Conservatives... have consistently minimized the possibility of combat and refused to acknowledge that Canada is at war."[101]

The language used by the Harper government to communicate with the public was a distinct change from the up-front style that had been used through the fall and winter of 2005. By refusing to use words like "war" and "combat" it seemed very much as if Canadian politicians were attempting to shape public perception of the actions that were taking place. In some ways, this can be viewed as tacit political recognition that Canadians believe in war in ever decreasing numbers and generally are reluctant to support politicians who dare to speak of it with anything other than condemnation.

The mission in Kandahar continued, although at the end of July 2006 it changed from an OEF mandate to the NATO led ISAF mission, as originally planned. Canadian casualty rates peaked with the conduct of Operation MEDUSA in September 2006, and

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[99]Geddes, "This Means War...," 14.

[100]Ibid., 15.

[101]Mark Stevenson, Peter Kopvillem, Dianne de Fenoyl and Dianna Symonds, "Canadians Need To Be Told Why We're At War," *Maclean's,* Volume 119, Number 34 (August 28, 2006), 4. The first date where a government official, in this case Prime Minister Harper, used the word "war" to describe Canadian operations in Afghanistan appears to have been on September 17, 2006 in a radio interview with the CBC, as cited in Pigott, *Canada in Afghanistan*..., 129. I was unable to confirm this.

then declined through 2007.[102] On 13 March 2008, after the Conservative and Liberal parties reached a compromise on the Kandahar mission's goals and end-date, the government voted to extend the Canadian mission until 2011.[103]

Prior to moving on to a discussion of the effects that the war in Afghanistan has had on Canada, there are three elements related to the domestic context that warrant discussion: the media, support for soldiers in the place of support for the war, and the fluctuating levels of support for the war itself.

Back At Home

The media in the 21st Century is instantaneous and ubiquitous. Far more advanced than the newspapers that were the staple at the turn of the 20th Century, modern media also includes radio, television, and the internet with its panoply of digital journals, web-casts and blogs. If a person wants to be informed on any given subject, there is likely a media outlet that will cater to them. However, the Canadian media and its coverage of the war in Afghanistan highlight several issues.

The first is that in the aftermath of the attacks on 9/11, the Canadian government attempted to strictly control the information flow concerning the military within the media.[104] This did not help in promoting an understanding of the roles, organization of the forces being deployed, or of the national values and interests that were to be

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[102]Independent Panel On Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan, *Independent Panel On Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan* (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2008), 26. This report is also commonly referred to as "the Manley Report."

[103]CTV.CA, "MPs Approve Motion to Extend Afghan Mission," March 13, 2008, http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20080313/resp_bill_080313/20080313?hub=TopStories; Internet; accessed 16 March 2008.

[104]Sharon Hobson, *The Information Gap: Why the Canadian Public Doesn't Know More About its Military* (Calgary: Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute, June 2007), 5 [paper online]; available from http://www.cdfai.org/PDF/TheInformationGap.pdf ; Internet; accessed 12 February 2008.

protected. Control is also an aspect that is generally treated with some suspicion by the media; if the government is trying to control access, journalists believe it must have something to hide.

The coverage that the media did offer to Canadians was generally simplistic and very focussed on the human interest side of the story. Rather than portrayals of the complexities and analysis of the reasons behind the tasks that were being performed, the media tended to opt for tragedies and fire-fights. In the words of journalist Sharon Hobson, "the media... tended to concentrate on the immediate physical elements of the mission, while giving short shrift to the more strategic or theoretical aspects, such as the impact on future capabilities, 'mission creep,' and sustainment."[105] Even journalists have made the point that the mission was misunderstood and that this became a factor in the fluctuating levels of public support.[106] This undoubtedly figured into the idea espoused by Colonel Fred Lewis, that initially "many... did not recognize these latest operations in Afghanistan as anything different from our 1990s peace support operations."[107]

The next factor is that the Canadian media was generally not well educated to give in-depth coverage. As Sean Maloney has noted, "media portrayal of the war in Afghanistan has lazily fallen back on false historical analysis and predictions of doom."[108] This may be in part because at the outbreak of war, there were very few

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[105]Hobson, *The Information Gap...,* 11.

[106]Geddes, "Bullets fly. Ottawa Ducks...," 22.

[107]Colonel Fred A. Lewis, "The Ability to do Old Things in New Ways – Counter-Insurgency and Operational Art," *Canadian Army Journal*, Volume 9.3 (Winter 2006): 6. Lewis was the Deputy Commander of TF Afghanistan in late 2006.

[108]Maloney, "Blood on the Ground...," 405.

Canadian media outlets that had military experts or specialists, an area where the American and British media tended to have more. Sadly, although they possessed more ability to cover the situation, British and American media outlets tended not to cover events in Afghanistan, particularly if they did not concern soldiers from either of those two nations. As Maloney observed, this too played a role in forming Canadian public opinion. He argued that "the combination of neglect [by British and American military commentators and media outlets] has resulted in a distorted impression of exactly what is going on in southern Afghanistan and why."[109]

The last area concerning media coverage is their attention to individual casualties. This is a significant change from previous wars. Rather than discuss what was being done and why, the media tended to talk about the casualties themselves. As an example, Sharon Hobson noted that media attention was acutely focussed following the friendly-fire deaths of four members of 3 PPCLI in 2002.[110] This over-attention to deaths directly erodes Canadian public opinion on the viability of the war. When the only information that Canadians receive is news of another casualty in Kandahar, it is easy to see the linkage to lack of support for the mission.

Still, the Canadian public has been engaged by the war. The most obvious aspect is that manifestations of support have generally been for the soldiers involved and not for the activity in which they are engaged. One need only examine "Red Fridays" and their

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[109]Maloney, "Blood on the Ground...," 405. Maloney also notes the difference between British and Canadian media outlets stating "Unlike the Canadian media pundits who thought that the OEF conducted too much violence in Afghanistan, British media pundits thought there wasn't enough: they derided the Royal Marines for not being aggressive enough... and they attacked the government for exaggerating the threat." Maloney, *Enduring the Freedom*..., 65.

[110]Hobson, *The Information Gap*..., 8.

stated goals. According to the Red Fridays' website, they exist "to promote support for our men and woman who serve our country..."

> Our goal is to be non-partisan support for our military troops. We do not support any particular policy, political position, agenda or the nature of the military missions. This support is for all Canadian Troops regardless of their activity if its [sic] here or abroad.[111]

A second display of public support can be seen in the significant degree of fundraising that has gone on in Canada since 2002 in support of soldiers and their families. An excellent example of this is the establishment of a scholarship fund for the children of soldiers killed in the line of duty. Raising $1.8 million in the first few months since it was formed, it is demonstrative of the support Canadians are willing to offer those who serve the nation.[112]

Conversely, the extremely limited number of protests against the war have been just that: against the war. The single biggest demonstration of this sentiment took place during the weekend of October 27-29, 2006, when anti-war rallies were staged in thirty-seven different cities with differing degrees of participation. In an interesting irony, the slogan that was used by many was "Support our troops, Bring `em home."[113]

Canadian pop-culture also offers insight into the fact that Canadians are supportive of their soldiers while not necessarily supporting the war. Since Canada's first involvement in Afghanistan, there has not been a significant impact on popular culture,

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[111]"Red Fridays," http://www.redfridays.ca ; Internet; accessed 17 February 2008.

[112]Colin Perkel, "Children of Canadian Soldiers Killed on Duty Granted First of New Scholarships," *Toronto Sun*, 17 February 2008 [newspaper on-line]; available from http://cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/Canada/2008/02/16/4852466-cp.html; Internet; accessed 17 February 2008.

[113]Susan Mohammad, "Thousands Turn Out to Protest Canada's Participation in Afghanistan," Canwest News Service, http://www.canada.com/topics/news/national/story.html?id=95217bf2-9974-4b97-8e2c-d9e955a8e812&k=46284; Internet; accessed 17 February 2008.

with two exceptions. First, three Canadian country-music artists have published songs that are all directly related to the Canadian military, either in their lyrics or their videos. All three profess support for the soldier; none argue for support of the mission in which they are engaged.[114] This is a marked difference from the popular music that came out of Canada's involvement in the Boer War.

The second example from pop culture is the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's (CBC) radio drama "Afghanada."[115] Its intent is not to give or raise support for the war; indeed it does very little to explain why Canadian soldiers are actually in Afghanistan. Rather, as its website explains,

> it gives us a grunts'-eye-view of the conflict . The sound is edgy and gritty, the impact immediate, pushing the listener into an auditory journey that is impossible to escape. It is a reflection of the very real situation Canadian soldiers are facing every day in Afghanistan.[116]

A more tangible, and quantifiable, measurement of fluctuating public support can be seen in the numerous polls which have been conducted while the war in Afghanistan has been going on. There are dangers in using public opinion polls: results are open to interpretation; answers depend directly on the question being asked; and there is no way

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[114]The three songs are George Canyon's "I Want You to Live" (lyrics available from http://www.cowboylyrics.com/lyrics/canyon-george/i-want-you-to-live-18517.html; Internet; accessed 17 February 2008), Aaron Lines' "Somebody's Son" (lyrics available from http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20071109/somebodys_son_071109/20071109?hub=CanadaAM ; Internet; accessed 17 February 2008), and Julian Austin's "Red and White" (lyrics available from http://www.lyricsbox.com/julian-austin-lyrics-red-and-white-bk1w5rb.html; Internet; accessed 17 February 2008). The George Canyon video shows a group of Canadian soldiers going off to war, with one dying in combat, and leaving a letter wishing the best for his wife. Dressed in tan desert uniforms it can be easily argued that the video is meant to portray Afghanistan. Aaron Lines' song is almost anti-war in its tone, invoking the idea that there are no winners in war when it is always someone's child that must go and fight. This video uses footage and photographs of Canadian casualties in Afghanistan to make its point. Julian Austin's music, as shown in the lyrics, leans towards glorifying the soldier and could be described as modestly pro-war.

[115]For a full backgrounder on the program see, CBC Radio, "Afghanada," http://www.cbc.ca/afghanada; Internet; accessed 17 February 2008.

[116]CBC Radio, "Afghanada," http://www.cbc.ca/afghanada; Internet; accessed 17 February 2008.

to be certain of the knowledge level of those being polled.[117] However, reviewing the available polls does offer insight. First, they demonstrate that the level of support for sending Canadians to Afghanistan is dropping over time; second, that there is a relationship to how Canadians feel about the war and incidence of casualties;[118] and, third, that there are regional variations in the results.

In the first instance, a review was conducted of eleven polls from the Strategic Counsel group that covered the period between March 2006 and January 2008. This source has the benefit of asking the exact same question each time the poll was conducted.[119] The graph below shows the results over time.

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[117]As an example of the second point, I was unable to find a poll that directly asked the question "Do you believe that Canada is justified to use military force to either protect its national interest or values, or to disseminate them in the world at large?"

[118]Some scholars disagree with the general idea that there is a relationship between the suffering of casualties and decreased support for military operations, claiming that the idea is "largely a self-serving creation of politicians and journalists." Phillip Everts and Pierangelo Isernia, *Public Opinion and the International Use of Force* (London: Routledge, 2001), 22-23.

[119] The question used was "Overall, would you say you strongly support, support, oppose or strongly oppose the decision to send Canadian troops to Afghanistan?"

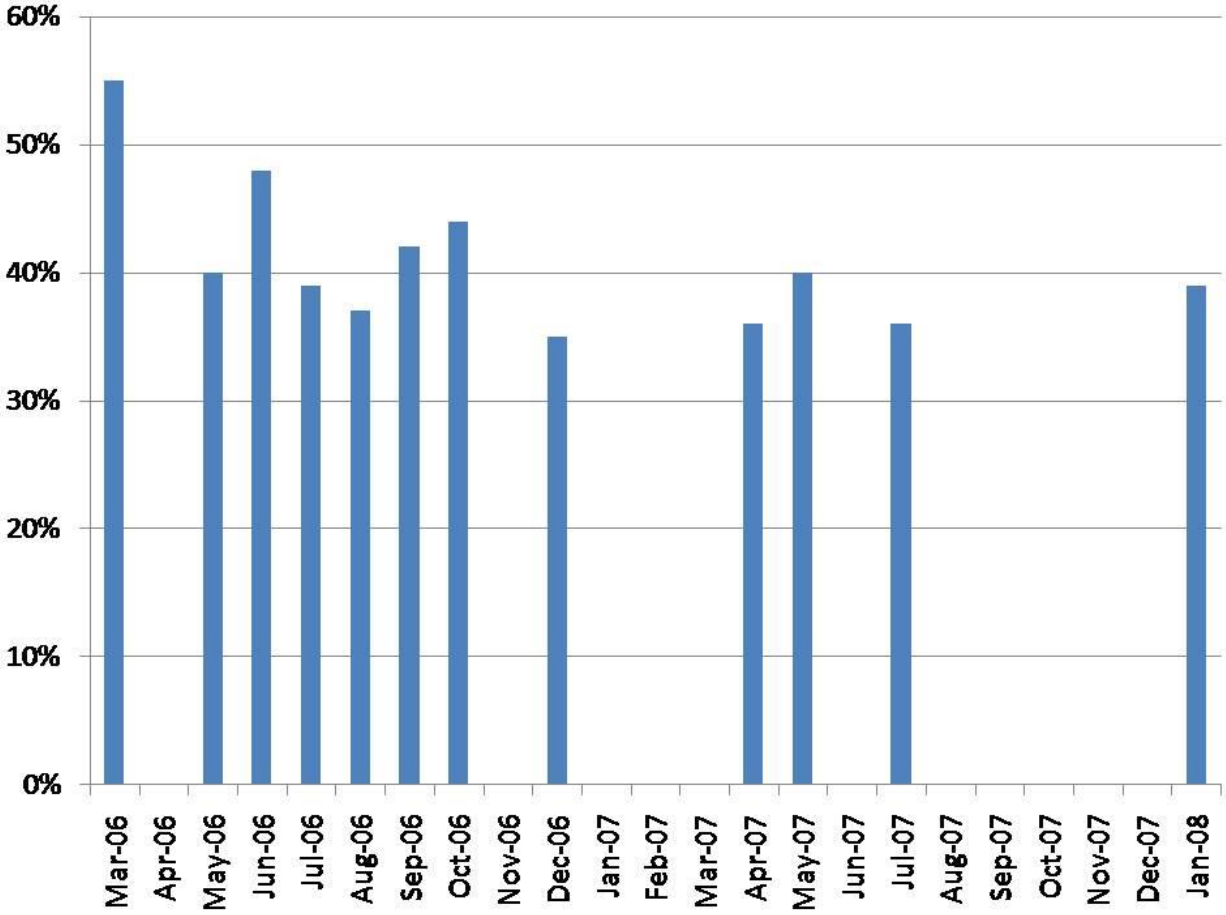

Table 3.1: Support For Sending Canadians to Afghanistan[120]

One can see that the trend over time, among those polled, is for a fluctuating but decreasing level of support. It is also possible to observe that support for the mission dropped dramatically in May, July and August of 2006, as Canada sustained casualties in the conduct of combat operations against the Taliban. Similarly, deaths in December 2006 seem to have triggered a subsequent drop in the level of public support. The level of support, however, is not always linked to the taking of casualties. For example, the conduct of Operation MEDUSA, in September 2006, with its significant friendly-fire

[120]The complete list of polls consulted is as detailed in the bibliography under "the Strategic Counsel." Where no polls were conducted, the months have been left blank.

incident and several men killed-in-action, actually resulted in an increase in the level of public support.

This seeming anomaly points to an idea that warrants some discussion: the casualty hypothesis. Scholars Phillip Everts and Pierangelo Isernia devoted significant energy to studying how public opinion and the use of force were related.[121] They argue that the hypothesis anticipates "a rapid decrease of the public support for the use of military force in the eventuality or fear of casualties."[122] Although their study focussed on the United States and several European countries, one of their conclusions is particularly noteworthy. They determined that public perceptions mattered more than the number of casualties that were being suffered in shaping opinions.[123] If the mission was perceived as successful, then there would be a correspondingly high level of support (as seen in the wake of Operation MEDUSA). If the mission was viewed as being less likely to succeed, the willingness of the public to accept casualties dropped. For them, the critical piece in how the public viewed a mission was whether the mission was perceived as likely to be successful.[124]

Not seen in the table above are the regional differences of opinion. However, consulting the polls demonstrates that the various regions of Canada possessed differing

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[121]Everts and Isernia, *Public Opinion and the International Use of Force*.... Whether or not their work maintains its applicability in Canada is an area that deserves future study.

[122]*Ibid*., 269.

[123]*Ibid*., 270-271.

[124]In a poll released on 14 January 2008, it was announced that 47% of Canadians believed that the Canadian Forces should "return as soon as possible" from Afghanistan. This would seem to indicate that a large minority of Canadians do not seem to believe that there is a strong likelihood of success for the current mission. The Strategic Counsel, "A Report to the Globe and Mail and CTV: Economy, Leader Positives/Negatives, Afghanistan, Carbon Tax," January 14, 2008, 23, http://www.thestrategiccounsel.com/our_news/polls/2008-01-14%20GMCTV%20Jan%2010-131.pdf ; Internet; accessed 12 February 2008.

levels of belief in the mission over the polling period. Though the province of Quebec generally showed less support for the deployment, there were also regional differences (in the Strategic Counsel polls) between Ontario and the West.[125] A second polling company, the Decima Research group, provides further insight into this fact.

Between April 2006 and July 2007, Decima conducted five polls concerning Canada's involvement in Afghanistan, although each covered different elements of the mission. Unlike the Strategic Counsel, Decima did not conduct sustained polling over time using the same question. However, Decima did break down the results based on gender as well as provincial groupings.[126] Some of their findings are striking.

First, in April 2006, the country was split almost evenly between thinking that having Canadian troops in Afghanistan was a good idea (45%) or a bad idea (46%).[127] The region with the highest level of support was Alberta with 65%, while Atlantic Canada had 42% and Quebec had 31%.[128] A second interesting point was noted in October 2006, when Decima asked whether or not Canadians would volunteer to serve with the mission in Afghanistan if it was possible. No province had greater than 15% agree, while only 10% of respondents in Quebec supported the idea. Further, the segment of the population that was most likely to volunteer were those aged fifty-five or

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[125]The Prairie provinces were generally more supportive than any other region in Canada.

[126]The complete list of polls consulted is as listed in the bibliography under Decima research. The provincial breakdowns used by Decima were generally: BC, AB, MB/SK, ON, QC and AC (Atlantic Canada).

[127]Decima Research, "Canadians Divided on Afghanistan," April 7, 2006, http://www.decima.com/en/pdf/news_releases/060407E.pdf; Internet; accessed 12 February 2008.

[128]Ibid.

older.[129]

A last example of the divergence of opinions, using the Decima Research data, can be seen in how Canadians viewed the human cost of conducting operations in Afghanistan. Here, the significant variations can be seen geographically, politically, economically and by both age and gender. The question broadly stated was whether the respondents felt that the number of casualties was acceptable given the results that were being achieved.

Geographically, 76% of Quebecers thought the numbers unacceptable, compared to a national average of 67% and a "Prairie" result of 53%. Politically, Conservatives were evenly split, with 47% saying they were acceptable, and 48% saying they were not. This compares to Liberal results of 22% and 74%, NDP 18% and 77% and Bloc Quebecois 17% and 81%. From an economic perspective, those earning less than $60,000 per year responded at 70% unacceptable while those that earned more than $100,000 responded at 60% unacceptable. Women and men responding that the casualties were unacceptable were 74% and 59% respectively. From an age-based perspective, it will suffice to say that the younger one was, the more likely that the number of casualties was beyond what one was willing to accept.[130] It is evident that the fractured nature of Canadian society has led to fractured perspectives.

Effects – Part 2

The war in Afghanistan is not over, yet the effects are already being felt in

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[129]Decima Research, "Canadians Torn on Afghan Mission," October 5, 2006, http://www.decima.com/en/pdf/news_releases/061005E.pdf; Internet; accessed 12 February 2008.

[130]Decima Research, "Rising Discomfort with Casualties." July 10, 2007, http://www.decima.com/en/pdf/news_releases/070612AE.pdf; Internet; accessed 12 February 2008.

Canada. These may be broken down into three broad categories: military, political and societal. Let us first examine the effects on the Canadian military.

The war in Afghanistan has been a test for the Canadian Army, primarily at the tactical level, but also for the higher echelons of command. On the battlefield, Canadian soldiers have generally performed as well as they ever have. In 2006 they were recognized by *Maclean's* magazine as "the Newsmaker of the year."[131] Many newspaper articles and magazine columns attested to the abilities of the individual soldier, some verging on the heroic in their treatment of the subject matter.

The higher levels of command and the institutional side of the military have had to adapt policies, equipment and procedures, originally designed for the Cold War, to the contemporary operating environment. The example of equipment procurement and the rapid acquisition of the C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft, M-777 howitzers and main battle tanks all demonstrate their success in this regard. However, there have also been difficulties. The subject of detainee handling resulted in a court case before the British Columbia Supreme Court. The central issue was whether the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms applied to those whom the military detains in Afghanistan, and who are then turned over to Afghan authorities.[132] This was partially resolved on 12 March 2008

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[131]Michael Friscolanti, "For Courage and Sacrifice in the Face of Terrifying Combat, Maclean's Honours the Canadian Soldier," *Maclean's*, Volume 119, Number 51 (December 25, 2006), 67. There is some irony in this; however it should probably be viewed as yet another example where Canadians have opted to support their soldiers rather than discuss what it is that they are working to achieve.

[132]For one side of the argument, please see British Columbia Civil Liberties Association, "Afghan Detainees," http://www.bccla.org/antiterrorissue/antiterrorissue.htm; Internet; accessed 17 February 2008.

when the Court gave its decision that the Charter did not apply; appeals are anticipated.[133]

From a professional standpoint, Canadian military journals are full of articles covering all realms of military activity, written by officers and NCOs who are now contemplating and recording their experiences in conducting every manner of operations in Afghanistan. A quick survey of the literature that has been produced demonstrates that each combat function, and the reasons for its existence, is being considered. Clearly, the next generation of military leaders is being shaped by their experiences.[134]

Politically, the effects are somewhat harder to assess. Canada's involvement in Afghanistan remains a significant issue in Canadian politics. The central question revolves around whether or not Canadian soldiers should be engaged in a combat role.[135] Remarkably, the question of how the deployment in Afghanistan supports either the nation's interests or values is absent from the dialogue.

There have been two major reports written on the subject of Canadian involvement in Afghanistan. The first was issued by the Standing Senate Committee on

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[133]Murray Brewster, "Judge: Afghan Detainees Not Covered by Charter," http://cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/War_Terror/2008/03/12/pf-4982121.html; Internet; accessed 16 March 2008.

[134]There is also an interesting anomaly now at work within the Canadian military. For the first time since the Boer War, the veterans within the Canadian Forces are its most junior members. Unlike the World Wars or Korea, where senior leadership had experienced combat at the tactical level, most Canadian senior officers now leading the Canadian Forces have little or no experience in combat. Their formative years were largely spent peacekeeping. It is unknown what the effect of this will be.

[135]As part of the compromise referred to on page 62, the role is expected to shift away from combat, and more towards reconstruction within Afghanistan, as well as the training of its army. See CTV.CA, "MPs Approve Motion to Extend Afghan Mission," March 13, 2008, http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20080313/resp_bill_080313/20080313?hub=TopStories; Internet; accessed 16 March 2008.

National Security and Defence in February 2007.[136] The intent of the report was to answer five questions: the role, success criteria, chances for success, costs, and whether the employment of Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan was giving the best chance of success.[137] The report answered its questions only in the loosest of terms.

The second report, commonly referred to as "the Manley Report,"[138] was commissioned by Prime Minister Harper in October 2007 to consider four distinct options for future Canadian involvement in Afghanistan, as well as any other that the committee deemed relevant.[139] Far more detailed and comprehensive than its predecessor, it benefited from being "independent" of any one political party in its approach, being led by a former Liberal cabinet minister and including Conservatives.[140] Among the report's five recommendations were that the Canadian military should remain engaged for the foreseeable future, beyond 2009, as long as several pre-conditions were met, and that:

> The Government should provide the public with franker and more frequent reporting on events in Afghanistan, offering more assessments of Canada's role and giving greater emphasis to the diplomatic and reconstruction efforts as well as those of the military.[141]

The war's effects on Canadian society are difficult to gauge accurately. The

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[136] Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, *Canadian Troops in Afghanistan: Taking a Hard Look at a Hard Mission (Interim Report)*, February 2007. The report is insightful only in that of the reports thirty-three pages, sixteen are biographies of the report's authors.

[137] *Ibid*., 3.

[138] Independent Panel On Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan, *Independent Panel On Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan* (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2008).

[139] Independent Panel On Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan, "Terms of Reference," http://www.independent-panel-independant.ca/terms-eng.html; Internet; accessed 17 February 2008.

[140] For a detailed list of the committee members, see Independent Panel On Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan, *Independent Panel On Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan*..., 56-59.

[141] *Ibid*., 37-38.

polling data points to the confusion and contradictions that currently exist. For example, five years after Canadians were first deployed and after dozens of casualties, only 47% of Canadians regarded the mission in Afghanistan as a war mission.[142] This is all the more incredible given the efforts that the Canadian government made to inform Canadians as to the evolving nature of the mission in late-2005.

A poll conducted in July 2007 found that 44% of respondents thought that Canadians were in Afghanistan because of pressure from the United States, while 53% thought that the reason was one of obligations to a "broader international community."[143] A second poll from January of this year attempted to ascertain what the most important issues were to Canadians. By lumping all mentions of Afghanistan together, the poll determined that 4% of Canadians thought that it was the single issue that was most important for Canada. Placing it behind "environmental issues," "healthcare," "economic/unemployment issues" and only just ahead of "gas prices."[144] The same poll asked if Canadian "troops should return or remain in Afghanistan"; 47 % of respondents answered that they should "return as soon as possible.[145] Yet when asked if they thought

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[142]Angus Reid Strategies, "More Canadians See Benefits for Afghan People, but a Majority Still Calls for an Early End to Mission," December 2007, http://angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/2007.12.31_AfghanMission.pdf; Internet; accessed 30 January 3008.

[143]The Strategic Counsel, "A Report to the Globe and Mail and CTV: The State of Canadian Public Opinion on Afghanistan, Conrad Black," July 16, 2007, 10, http://www.thestrategiccounsel.com/our_news/polls/2007-07-16%20GMCTV%20July%2012-15.pdf; Internet; accessed 12 February 2008.

[144]The Strategic Counsel, "A Report to the Globe and Mail and CTV: Economy, Leader Positives/Negatives, Afghanistan, Carbon Tax," January 14, 2008, 5, http://www.thestrategiccounsel.com/our_news/polls/2008-01-14%20GMCTV%20Jan%2010-131.pdf ; Internet; accessed 12 February 2008. "Gas prices" was the response by 3% of the polling group.

[145]Ibid., 23.

the troops were doing a "good job," 76% of the replies were positive.[146] It leaves one wondering just what if anything Canadians do believe in.

[146]The Strategic Counsel, "A Report to the Globe and Mail and CTV: Economy, Leader Positives/Negatives, Afghanistan, Carbon Tax," January 14, 2008, 24, http://www.thestrategiccounsel.com/our_news/polls/2008-01-14%20GMCTV%20Jan%2010-131.pdf ; Internet; accessed 12 February 2008.

CHAPTER 4
CANADIAN ATTITUDES TOWARDS WAR: THE DIFFERENCES OF A HUNDRED YEARS

The context in which Canadian governments decide to use military power and then dispatch forces on operations fundamentally changed in the century between Canada's first and most recent overseas expeditions. There are many components that factor into this change and affect the willingness of Canadians to use force in the service of their national interests and values. The most significant elements include: the Canadian belief in peacekeeping as the most important of its military's roles; latent (and at times very overt) anti-Americanism; confusion over the country's national interests and values; and the modern mass media. However, the most significant difference, which affects every other element, is the very nature of Canadian society.

Canadian Society

Today, Canada is an older society than ever before. With an average age just below forty, a decreasing number of its citizens have had direct experience with war. The average age is actually increasing, a trend that started in the late 1960s and continues to the present.[1] This will directly impact the Canadian military.

Canada is also far more multi-dimensional than it was in the past. There are over ninety different ethnic or cultural populations within Canada, each numbering over 15,000 people. Every one of these groups responds to information slightly differently, and each possesses its own cultural biases and value systems. This affects how both

[1]Statistics Canada, "Figure 3 Median Age in Canada 1956-2006," http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/analysis/agesex/charts/chart3.htm; Internet; accessed 22 February 2008.

domestic and foreign policy are perceived and, as government responds to its electorate, formulated.

Scholar Elizabeth Riddell-Dixon examined this subject. Although the study was oriented towards the effects of immigration, one of her conclusions is particularly relevant. She anticipated that Canada could expect to face "political pressure to take sides on highly contentious international political issues" as a result of the loyalties that new immigrants possess for their parent countries.[2] Although these may diminish over time, they highlight the idea that every sub-culture within Canada has interests and values that it holds dear. These may conflict with the values and interests held by other sub-cultures and the various, poorly defined sets articulated by the Canadian government.

Numerous polls also show regional and provincial biases. The provinces vary not only in their cultural make-up, but also in the values that they hold and the importance that they assign to national interests. One only need examine how the different provinces view the impacts of the softwood lumber dispute with the United States, the shipping of cattle over the American border, or ongoing issues with the automotive sector, to see that many Canadians care most deeply about issues that directly affect them and their home regions. That these types of perspectives exist is not new, but we must recognize that regional viewpoints dominate Canadian attitudes if we are to have a realistic idea of the nature of our society and how it functions.

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[2]Elizabeth Riddell-Dixon, *Domestic Demographics and Canadian Foreign Policy* (Calgary: Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute, 2003), 10 [paper On-line]; available from http://www.cdfai.org/PDF/Domestic%20Demographics%20and%20Canadian%20Foreign%20Policy.pdf ; Internet; accessed 12 February 2008. This sentiment is not new. Canadians at the opening of the 20th Century felt similarly; however, their loyalties were then directed to the British Empire

Perhaps the most widely recognized split within Canadian society is the difference in the way French and English Canadians tend to view the world. This division is not only cultural in nature, but also reflects a provincial and regional split.[3] It is almost conventional wisdom that French Canadians wherever they live are less likely to be willing to use force in the pursuit of Canadian national goals.

Jean-Sébastien Rioux, formerly the Canada Research Chair in International Security at Laval University, studied the phenomena and came to some thought-provoking conclusions. First, he found that Quebecers were "consistently wary of defence spending and what they see as military adventurism in some deployments."[4] Second, he attributed this attitude to "historical and sociological" reasons.[5] Historically, the evidence is readily available that French Canadians tended to be more isolationist, as well as being "consistently against war in general."[6] From a sociological perspective, he noted that the differences in how military and foreign affairs were covered by French and English-language media outlets were directly related to the opinions that each group formed.[7] Most interesting in Rioux's work, however, is his observation concerning the rest of Canada – that there are regional differences of opinion on all manner of defence related

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[3]There are significant numbers of French Canadians who live outside in Quebec.

[4]Jean-Sébastien Rioux, *Two Solitudes: Quebecers' Attitudes Regarding Canadian Security and Defence Policy* (Quebec: Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute's "Research Paper Series," February 23, 2005), 25 [paper On-line]; available from http://www.cdfai.org/PDF/Two%20Solitudes.pdf ; Internet; accessed 12 February 2008.

[5]*Ibid*.

[6]*Ibid.*, 17. In his study Rioux is drawing heavily on the work of James Ian Gow.

[7]*Ibid.*, 13-14.

issues.[8]

It needs to be recognized that the differences between French and English Canada are but one example of the cultural-ethnic division within Canada. Some might argue that Quebec's place in Canadian society is unique, as it is one of our founding cultures. However, given the dynamic nature of Canadian society and with five different ethnic populations each possessing over a million people, it is likely that other minorities will also assert their unique nature.[9] Additionally, it is reasonable to expect the existence of different opinions and perspectives on the use of military force across each of these sub-cultures. However, there are two areas where it appears there is a national consensus within Canadian society: a belief in peacekeeping and anti-Americanism.

Areas of Consensus

Peacekeeping, as a national belief, is a dramatic change from the imperialistic ideas that characterized Canada's involvement in the Boer War. That peacekeeping relies on a willingness to use combat is a subtlety that seems to be lost on many Canadians. Also generally missing is the idea, articulated by Eric Wagner, that "Canada's participation in peacekeeping during the Cold War was primarily motivated by its own strategic interests" in supporting the United States and NATO.[10] Rather, the situation is

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[8]Rioux, *Two Solitudes...*, 19.

[9]Statistics Canada, "Selected Ethnic Origins, for Canada, Provinces and Territories (2001 Census)," http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/highlight/ETO/Table1.cfm?T=501&Lang=E&GV=1&GID=0&Prov=0&S=1&O=D&PF=Y; Internet; accessed 20 February 2008. The five ethnic groups do not include those cultures originating in the British isles or French-Canadians. They are German (2.7 million), Italian (1.2 million), Chinese (1.1 million), Ukranian (1.1 million), and North American Indians (1 million). Additionally the Dutch and the Poles are just under one million people each.

[10]Wagner, "The Peaceable Kingdom...," 53. Sean Maloney also argues the same point. See Maloney, *Canada and UN Peacekeeping*.

as described by sociologist Donna Winslow, "The general public sees military actions in support of peace operations as nobler and less threatening, less aggressive and less demanding than traditional military tasks."[11] This may be the result of an idea noted by journalist Isabel Gibson who observed that "Two generations [of Canadians] have grown up believing that our military's proper role is disaster relief at home and peacekeeping abroad – anything but actually fighting."[12]

That the concept of peacekeeping is being discredited on an almost daily basis does not seem to matter to the perceptions Canadians hold. Researcher and UN staffer Andrzej Sitowski examined the history of United Nations peacekeeping across four continents and noted numerous problems. His conclusions were scathing:

> An effective UN peacekeeping [force] faces serious constraints...The leaders of the organization never came to terms with the idea that war sometimes must be fought to keep up or create peace. The governments shy from commitments to operation[s] exposing their troops to casualties...The roots of the malaise reach deep, growing out of a soil fertilized by ubiquitous contradictions. The first contradiction is a declared desire for peace but an unwillingness to pay its price...[13]

In his most telling statement, he notes the utter failure of the concept, stating "The determination to 'save the succeeding generations from the scourge of war,' proclaimed in the United Nations Charter, did not prevent 150 conflicts... which cost some 22 million lives."[14] Still the Strategic Counsel found, in July 2007, that the number of Canadians

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[11]Donna Winslow, "Canadian Society and Its Army," *Canadian Military Journal*, Volume 4, Number 4 (Winter 2003-2004): 12.

[12]Isabel Gibson, "The Bitter Necessity of Force: Canadian Debate Highlights the Paradox of 'Peacekeeping' in Afghanistan," *National Catholic Reporter*. Volume 42, Number 26 (April 28, 2006): 19.

[13]Andrzej Sitkowski, *UN Peacekeeping: Myth and Reality* (London: Praeger, 2006), 4-5.

[14]*Ibid*., 143.

who supported peacekeeping was almost double the number that supported peace enforcement or defending countries under attack.[15] Dogmatic acceptance of our own mythology is triumphing over fact.

The persistence of belief in "traditional" peacekeeping within Canadian society is remarkable given that the conditions which gave rise to the construct no longer really exist: the Cold War is over, and traditional peacekeeping missions interposed between warring sovereign states are decreasing.[16] Lester Pearson's original concept does not easily extend to a context where non-state actors prevail. The ironies are also interesting. Why does current debate on military deployments seem to focus on exit strategies and timelines when Canadians were willing to see their military deployed to Cyprus for almost three decades or to the former Yugoslavia for almost fifteen years?

One possible reason was the lack of media attention that generally was focussed on peacekeeping missions. A second possibility is that Canadians have a decreased tolerance to seeing their soldiers in combat and greatly prefer the relatively benign construct of peacekeeping, even in the face of evidence that the traditional paradigm no longer really exists. This is readily apparent in some of the discussions that are taking place within Canadian society. One example comes from journalist, and former military

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[15]The Strategic Counsel, "A Report to the Globe and Mail and CTV: The State of Canadian Public Opinion on Afghanistan, Conrad Black," July 16, 2007, 18, http://www.thestrategiccounsel.com/our_news/polls/2007-07-16%20GMCTV%20July%2012-15.pdf; Internet; accessed 12 February 2008.

[16]Traditional peacekeeping may be loosely construed as the image of a blue-bereted soldier, with rifle slung, standing between two warring factions, keeping the peace through force of personality and the building of consensus. The United Nations efforts in Cyprus are probably the best example of the traditional construct.

officer, David Caplan:

> Canada's violent foreign policy in Afghanistan... has steadily eroded what once was the greatest guarantor of any Canadian's physical security abroad: the moral authority and global respect earned by Canada's longstanding commitment to the non-violent resolution of international disputes.[17]

Not only does this view betray a fundamental blindness to the fact that the security environment changed dramatically at the opening of the 21st Century, it also ignores the basic premises upon which peacekeeping was founded: a willingness to use force to enforce peace. Yet such beliefs continue to be espoused and promulgated.

Another striking illustration is found in the booklet given to those who wish to become Canadian citizens. Completely devoid of reference to the Canadian military and its role within society, it contains but two statements loosely concerning the military in its forty-eight pages: "Canadians act as peacekeepers in many countries around the world," and "We are proud of our nonviolent society and our international role as peacekeepers."[18] A third case in point is found in the recent *Canada's World Poll* undertaken by Environics to gauge how Canadians feel about their country and the world at large in January 2008. It states that "Canadians see peacekeeping as their country's most important contribution to the world... Those who see a diminishing influence point

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[17]David Caplan, "Staying the Course in Afghanistan Means Abandoning Reason: A Veteran Canadian Forces Officer Speaks Out," *Canadian Dimension*, Volume 41, Number 2 (March/April 2007): 26.

[18]Citizenship and Immigration. *A Look at Canada* (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services, 2007), 7 [publication on-line]; available from http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/pub/look.pdf; Internet; accessed 9 February 2008. The words "military, Canadian Forces, Army, Navy" and "Airforce" do not appear in the publication, nor is there any mention of Canada's role in either of the World Wars or Korea.

to less peacekeeping or declining independence from the U.S. on foreign policy."[19] This was the prevailing attitude, after six years of involvement in Afghanistan.

Anti-Americanism is not a new element in Canadian society, but it has fundamentally changed since 1900. At that time, anti-American sentiments were readily apparent in the border disputes concerning Alaska and the Yukon. In fact, this was a significant issue in continental politics in the lead-up to the Boer War in 1899.[20] Now it seems to follow one of three paradigms: exceptionalism, fear of what some perceive as a drive for empire; or blatant politicking by those who would lead the country.

In 1996, J.L. Granatstein saw the roots of the phenomenon as being an outgrowth of the Loyalist experience in the 18th Century, when those loyal to the British crown migrated north to Canada following the American Revolution. It then continued to grow throughout the 19th Century, with the War of 1812, competing expansionist plans, and free trade negotiations. Writing in the aftermath of the Mulroney government's success in negotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement, when relations between the two countries were quite good, he argued that Canadians were "outgrowing their reflexive anti-Americanism,"[21] and that the phenomenon was becoming "increasingly inconsequential."[22] Ten years later this no longer seems to be the case, and if anything

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[19]Environics. *Canada's World Poll* (Environics Institute: Toronto, January 2008), 8; http://www.igloo.org/community.igloo?r0=community&r0_script=/scripts/folder/view.script&r0_pathinfo=%2F%7B0f2c2935-322d-40c1-b053-6c1c022faa81%7D%2Flearnmor%2Fquizzesa%2Fpollresu&r0_output=xml; Internet; accessed 30 January 2008.

[20]For example, see the front page of *The Globe*, October 4, 1899.

[21]J.L. Granatstein, *Yankee Go Home? Canadians and Anti-Americanism* (Toronto: Harper Collins, 1996), 287.

[22]*Ibid*., 11.

anti-American sentiment is now on the rise.

Manifestations of Canadian anti-Americanism are readily evident. Sean Maloney draws the point that peacekeeping itself can be viewed as an illustration of how Canadians consider themselves somehow morally superior to their neighbour to the south. Canadians are peacekeepers; Americans make war.[23] Granatstein also comments on this, noting that former Minister of Foreign Affairs Lloyd Axworthy's ideas on soft power and the human agenda can be seen in a similar vein.[24] This drive to be different from the United States directly impacts Canadian attitudes towards the use of military force.

Fear of the "American empire" is a recurring theme of some op-editorial pages, exemplified by statements such as those written by *Toronto Star* columnist Linda McQuaig. Her article from 13 February 2006 aptly shows this:

> So is Canada's mission in Afghanistan really about preserving our "way of life," or about helping Washington extend its economic and military hegemony? Canadian Maj.-Gen. Andrew Leslie... has talked about Canada's role in Afghanistan as a 20-year commitment fraught with danger: "There are things worth fighting for. There are things worth dying for. There are things worth killing for." True. But I doubt Canadians would consider Washington's desire for global dominance to be one of those things.[25]

From the political realm, one need only examine the election campaign of 2005-2006 to witness how some politicians harness this element of Canadian public opinion for

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[23] Maloney, *Canada and UN Peacekeeping*..., 2-3.

[24] J.L. Granatstein, *Whose War Is It? How Canada Can Survive in the Post-9/11 World* (Toronto: Harper Collins, 2007), 67.

[25] Linda McQuaig, "Being Pushy: Is Our Mission About Preserving Our Way of Life, Or Helping US Extend Its Supremacy?" 13 February 2006, http://www.lindamcquaig.com/Columns/ViewColumn.cfm?REF=25; Internet; accessed 2 March 2008.

their own ends.[26] Prime Minister Martin's condemnation of President George Bush's stance on the Kyoto Accords and his failure to respect the "global conscience" are but two examples.[27]

A third, striking example of an underlying anti-Americanism is easily seen in the results of the Environics *Canada's World Poll*. It found:

> Canadians are also distinctly uncomfortable with the American's current role in world affairs and the U.S. is the country they name most often as one that stands out as being a negative force in the world today (52% name the U.S., Iran comes second at 21%).[28]

The numbers speak for themselves.

National Interests and Values

A clear, over-arching definition of Canadian national interests is hard to find principally perhaps because, with the fragmented nature of Canadian society, there are few interests which resonate across all segments of the population. A quick survey of documents from the Federal government shows that although national interests are often cited as justification for a given policy, they are rarely fully articulated.[29] The main exception to this can be found in *Canada's International Policy Statement* of 2005which

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[26]For one example see Granatstein, *Whose War Is It?...*, 79-80.

[27]CBC News, Canada Votes 2006, "Reality Check: Do the Americans Have a Global Conscience?" http://www.cbc.ca/canadavotes/realitycheck/us.html; Internet; accessed 2 March 2008. Also, Miguel Bustillo, "Canada Faults U.S. on Global Warming," *The Seattle Times*, 8 December 2005 [newspaper on-line]; http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/nationworld/2002671167_warming08.html; Internet; accessed 2 March 2008.

[28]Environics. *Canada's World Poll...*, 5.

[29]Department of Finance Canada, *Advantage Canada: Building a Strong Economy for Canadians* (Ottawa: Public Works and Services Canada, 2006) refers to the idea of national interests without defining them. Privy Council Office, *Securing an Open Society: Canada's National Security Policy* (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services, 2004) makes reference to "national security interests" which it defines (on page 5) as "Protecting Canada and the safety and security of Canadians at home and abroad... Ensuring that Canada is not a base for threats to our allies... [and] Contributing to international security." This is different than the broader based concept of national interests.

articulates that Canada's "fundamental interests" are "ensuring continued prosperity and security for Canadians."[30] For a country whose exports are predominantly sent to the United States, this means that Canada's main national interest is engagement with that country. This is a fundamental difference from a century ago when the primary national interest was supporting the British Empire. It is also more than slightly ironic given the prevalence of anti-American sentiment within Canadian society.[31]

Canadian values are another issue of difference. The values held at the opening of the 20th Century did not last until it closed. More intriguing, however, are the discrepancies between those that are currently formally articulated and those that are espoused by Canadian commentators. This is yet another indication of the fragmented nature of Canadian society. Much like national interests, Canada's national values are only sporadically defined even though they are frequently referred to.[32] One governmental source deems that they are comprised of "equality, respect for cultural differences, freedom, peace [and] law and order," in addition to a "commitment to social

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[30]Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World – Overview* (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services, 2005), 4.

[31]For a good example of the anti-American bias resident within Canada, one need only refer to the 2005 report of the Fraser Institute, which found that the "Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)" was "at least partly responsible for enhancing and sustaining anti-Americanism in Canada following the 2001 terrorist attacks. CBC, in short, helped turn the joint outrage of Canada and the United States at the terrorists into mistrust and animosity between the two neighbours." That such comments could be written about the primary national media outlet within Canada is remarkable. The Fraser Institute, "CBC Television News Guilty of Anti-American Bias Says New Study," http://www.fraserinstitute.org/commerce.web/newsrelease.aspx?nid=4049; Internet; accessed 29 February 2008.

[32]The National Defence section of *Canada's International Policy Statement* refers to values numerous times. It does not however define what these are taken to mean. Similarly, the parent document does not define just what precisely comprise the uniquely Canadian values it holds that a majority of Canadians believe in.

justice."[33] Another document states that the nation's core values are "openness, diversity and respect for civil liberties";[34]yet another details "respect for human rights, democracy, the rule of law, and the environment."[35] Acknowledging that values may change over time, all these were drawn from government documents covering little more than a decade.

A particularly glaring example of the confusion over Canada's national values is found in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's *A Dialogue on Foreign Policy*.[36] Released in 2003 while Bill Graham was the Minister responsible for the department, it tends to argue for a values-based approach to foreign policy decision-making, without clearly defining what values constitute the national set. Instead it states:

> Canada's foreign policy agenda must reflect the nation we are: a multicultural, bilingual society that is free, open, prosperous and democratic. The experiences of immigrants from around the world and the cultures of Aboriginal peoples are woven into the fabric of our national identity. Respect for equality and diversity runs through the religious, racial, cultural and linguistic strands forming our communities.[37]

The idea that "respect for equality and diversity" might cut across religious and cultural boundaries can be described as optimistic at best. Only later do the document's authors

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[33]Citizenship and Immigration. *A Look at Canada* (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services, 2007), 7 [publication on-line]; available from http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/pub/look.pdf; Internet; accessed 9 February 2008.

[34]Privy Council Office, *Securing an Open Society: Canada's National Security Policy* (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services, 2004), vii.

[35]Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, "Canada in the World: Summary," 1995, http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/foreign_policy/cnd-world/summary-en.asp; Internet; accessed 22 February 2008.

[36]Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *A Dialogue on Foreign Policy* (Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 2003).

[37]*Ibid*., 13.

list "our long-standing advocacy of human rights, the rule of law, democracy, respect for diversity, gender equality and good governance" in their discussion.[38]

Those outside the government are equally diverse in their opinions. Michael Adams provides comments on the "social values" Canadians hold, without attempting to define a set of nationally-held ones.[39] Perhaps this is tacit recognition that such a concept may not be possible given the diverse attitudes, cultural make-up and regionalism of Canadian society. J.L. Granatstein draws attention to "freedom and democracy."[40] John Kirton, Director of the G8 Research Group at the University of Toronto, muddies the waters further. He asserts that Canada's fundamental values are "its devotion to pragmatic compromise, formal international law and the broadly multilateral institutions of the United Nations." He then adds "globalism, multiculturalism, openness, anti-militarism, environmentalism, egalitarianism, [and] international institutionalism" as being "distinctive national values."[41] Putting aside the obvious questions which arise out of such a list, the point is that there is little agreement on what Canada's national values actually are. Recognizing that different Canadian sub-cultures will approach the concept of values differently, and that each will likely have its own set, it should be readily apparent that there may well be contradictions between the values held by each group.

Support for this can be found in the work of Donna Winslow and her study of how Canadian values directly relate to those articulated by the Canadian Army. She

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[38]Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *A Dialogue on Foreign Policy...*, 14. This list forms the fourth different set of national values from three different government departments.

[39]Adams, *Fire and Ice*.

[40]Granatstein, *Whose War Is It?...*, 72.

[41]John Kirton, "Canada and its Values: Policy, Priority and Practice," http://www.g7.utoronto.ca/g8online/2002/english/2002/10.html ; Internet; accessed 22 February 2008.

observed, "Since... the 1980s...Canadian society has been in a state of flux, generating multiple value systems... which have led to an ambiguous post-modern society whose core values do not 'resonate' with traditional Army values."[42] She specifically noted that the Army's values of duty, integrity, discipline and honour do not "hold appeal" for the majority of Canadians under thirty.[43] Instead she commented that these "only reflect the values of the older generations in Canada."[44] The values that Canadians claim will vary and change over time. The media is one factor effecting just how they may evolve.

The Media

It is evident that the media changed dramatically over the preceding century. During the Boer War, it and the militia were seen to be working together to fan the flames of imperialism.[45] Over the course of the 20th Century, the relationship between the media and the military altered fundamentally. Presently in Canada, there are very few media outlets or journalists that could be described as being either pro-military or advocating the use of Canadian military power for anything other than support to humanitarian operations. In addition to this philosophical change, the advent of modern technology has allowed the mass media a pervasiveness and responsiveness that few would ever have imagined possible.

The myriad media outlets and agencies each possess their own perspectives,

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[42]Winslow, "Canadian Society and its Army...," 11.

[43]Ibid., 20-21.

[44]Ibid., 21.

[45]Robert Page, "Response to the 'Imperial' Idea During the Boer War Years," in *Canadian History Since Confederation: Essays and Interpretations*, 2nd edition, ed. Bruce Hodgins and Robert Page, 313-336 (Georgetown, ON: Irwin-Dorsey Limited, 1979), 332.

agendas and methodologies. They lack a professional governing body and are free to write and say what they will. However, to blame the media for the quality of information that is made available to the public is to address only part of the equation. In her study of why the Canadian public was uninformed on the actions of its military, Sharon Hobson was even-handed in her allocation of responsibility:

> The government failed in its duty to explain the "why"- the rationale behind the commitment. The military for its part, did not fully provide information on the "how"- what capabilities and tactics it will use to accomplish the assigned mission. And the media... did not provide as full a picture as possible.[46]

The combined effect of these factors has been a significant attitudinal shift: an ever-decreasing belief in the use of military force in the pursuit of national goals. An almost mythological conviction as to the utility and moral worth of peacekeeping, anti-American bias, confusion over national interests and values, and the state of the media are all strong factors in the change by themselves. However their cumulative effect, particularly when taken in concert with the nature of Canadian society itself and the massive demographic shift that it underwent over the course of the 20th Century, has been incredible. In short, we are closer now to being an "unmilitary people" than George F. Stanley would probably ever have imagined.

That such a change has occurred is not surprising. Knowing that both values and societies are dynamic by nature, it is less important to try to trace the causes of the changes than to examine what the implications of these changes are likely to be. Understanding the reality is one thing; considering what its effects might be is another.

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[46]Hobson, *The Information Gap*..., 3.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION: IMPLICATIONS AND QUESTIONS

> ... it reflects a point of view that has grown stronger with the passage of time, and there is an argument to be made that it is now an enduring fact of national life within the Canadian consciousness. The idea of "Canada as an unmilitary community" can trace its genesis back to before Confederation, and is closely linked to geography, the cultural heritage of the nation, and to the recognition that most Canadians have seen themselves as living in a country which, in the words of Desmond Morton, is "undefensible and invulnerable."
>
> Major-General Andrew Leslie[1]

War did not change over the 20th Century, but Canada did. Because of shifting demographics and confusion over the exact forms of our national interests and values, our society is rapidly losing belief in the utility of war. Shedding blood in support of foreign policy is unpalatable to the majority of Canadians. The implications, particularly if one believes that military force is an essential instrument in the exercise of national power, are significant.

Politically, the obvious question is whether or not there is sufficient will to sustain the possession and use of effective Canadian military forces. If will exists, then it needs to be informed. Confusion and imprecision over our values and interests are not conducive to building support at the best of times. However, in a multicultural society, with each sub-culture approaching the question from a slightly different perspective, the need for clear and unambiguous definition becomes even more important. Canada's national interests and values need to be articulated, discussed, and reinforced. It is simply inadequate to state a given action is being undertaken because of national interests or values and to leave it at that. While perhaps good politics, this approach does not lend

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[1]Major-General Andrew Leslie, "Boots on the Ground: Thoughts on the Future of the Canadian Forces," *Canadian Military Journal*, Volume 6, Number 1 (Spring 2005):19.

itself to unity of purpose or the building of support. Instead, it allows causes to fragment and will to evaporate.

Canadians need to be informed of the purposes behind the government's decisions, and this must be done intelligently. As Sharon Hobson noted, this is not a military function.[2] Indeed the appropriateness of using the military to "sell" its given missions is debateable. This is a role for our government. It is the Canadian government which decides where to send its soldiers and what their purposes are. It must also be the Canadian government which ensures that its public is informed of the government's intentions and goals.

Militarily, the implications may be profound. As German General Klaus Naumann noted, "armed forces mirror the characteristics of the societies that they are sworn to defend."[3] That said, there is a growing dichotomy between the beliefs resident in military culture and those in Canadian society. Colonel Mike Capstick argued in the aftermath of the attacks of 9/11 that the Canadian Army's cultural foundation "must continue to be based on the primary purpose stated in *Canada's Army* – to defend Canada, and when called upon, to fight and win."[4] But combat, for many Canadians, is unacceptable.

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[2]Hobson, *The Information Gap...*, 15.

[3]General Klaus Naumann, "The Responsibility to Protect – Humanitarian Intervention and the Use of Military Force," *Canadian Military Journal*, Volume 5, Number 4 (Winter 2004-2005): 24.

[4]Colonel M.D. Capstick, "Defining the Culture: The Canadian Army in the 21st Century," *Canadian Military Journal*, Volume 4, Number 1 (Spring 2003): 51. *Canada's Army* was the capstone doctrinal manual for the Canadian Army, published in 1998. It was intended to "establish the doctrinal foundation for the professional competency of all ranks in the army, and serves [sic] as the basic source document for all instruction and training leading to that end." Department of National Defence, *Canada's Army: We Stand on Guard for Thee* (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services, 1998), i.

The majority of Canadians do not seem to agree with the idea that their Army exists to "fight and win." As has been shown, most believe that our military's most important role is peacekeeping.[5] Some might argue that this would change in a war for national survival, but most Canadians have never experienced this. In a climate where most Canadians do not feel threatened, it is unlikely that this attitude will change unless it becomes far more informed than at present. It seems clear that there is a growing split between how Canadians view the use of armed force and the ethos of the Canadian military. If the military is to remain relevant, both it and the government need to find a way to bridge this cultural divide.

Second, although recruiting numbers remain acceptable, the logical deduction is that this will not continue. The CDS, General Hillier, recently announced that recruiting was not an issue and that 21,000 recruits had been brought into the Canadian Forces in the last three years.[6] But this must be taken in context. This intake has not significantly raised the size of the Canadian Forces, scarcely covering the attrition caused by retirements and releases. Further, the number of new recruits represents less than a tenth of one percent of the Canadian population. Though we are having some success in meeting our present quotas, the numbers are not really all that large. Donna Winslow

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[5]In a 2004 article written as a result of the 60th Anniversary of the D-Day landings, journalist Jonathon Gatehouse asked the Canadian populace the provocative question, "What would you die for?" The results were interesting, in that only 32% said that they would be willing "to die for their country." In Gatehouse's view "The times have changed, so have the threats we face. How much our values have altered is what remains to be tested." Interestingly, Gatehouse makes the assertion that the distaste that Canadians hold for military action has its roots in peacekeeping and "is a function of whom we live next to." Jonathon Gatehouse, "What Would You Die For?" *Maclean's,* Volume 117, Number 23, June 7, 2004, 34-38.

[6]Simon Fuller, "Afghan Mission Recruitment Draw: Hillier," *Winnipeg Free Press*, 24 February 2008, [newspaper on-line], http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/canada/v-printerfriendly/story/4131498p-4724241c.html ; Internet; accessed 24 February 2008.

also draws attention to this issue and asserts that "few Canadians will opt to be part of this distinct group [the army] in Canadian society."[7] Combined with the fact that our society is aging, military recruiting will need to be conducted in a far more intelligent fashion than ever before – and it must draw from all segments of society.

One possibility is to allow immigrants to gain citizenship through military service, as General Hillier has previously suggested.[8] This would assist in the formation of positive attitudes towards the military in the various ethnic sub-cultures within Canadian society, as well as offering potential second and third order effects. Assets like linguistic capability and cultural familiarity which benefit the military's operational capabilities far beyond increasing the numbers may also be brought to the fore. Additionally, military service may also serve as a means of disseminating Canadian national values, thus addressing another core issue related to how Canadians perceive military service.[9]

Recognizing that the multicultural nature of our society affects the national will to conduct military operations, it is doubtful that wide-ranging public support for anything other than peacekeeping, or perhaps a war of national survival, will ever be achieved. Military and political planners must be cognizant of the divisive effect international operations have on our society when developing options for military intervention. This calls for a significant degree of leadership at the political and strategic level when deployments are considered. Why going to war is the best option for Canada will need to

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[7]Winslow, "Canadian Society and Its Army...," 11.

[8]General Hillier introduced the idea in a speech at the Conference of Defence Association, Annual General Meeting, in Ottawa in February 2006. General RickHillier, "Transcript of the Speech Delivered By General Rick Hillier, Chief of the Defence Staff, Conference of Defence Association, Annual General Meeting," Ottawa, 24 February 2006, http://www.cda-cdai.ca/CDA_GMs/AGM69/Hillier.pdf; Internet; accessed 1 March 2008.

[9]Instruction on Canada's national interests will not necessarily result from this approach.

be explained in terms of national values and interests that are understood and accepted by the Canadian public. What the Canadian Forces are doing will need to be explained at the start of a mission and on a continuous basis thereafter. Sustained support for any mission almost certainly will be directly related to the Canadian public's understanding of what the military is doing and why it is important.

Also, Canada's ability to maintain sufficient will to go to war over an extended period of time is now in question. If one accepts that national support will drop over time, strategists must favour short-duration operations if they expect to be supported by the Canadian public. The other option is an increased effort by the government to explain the mission to its citizens. However, as can be seen in the example of Minister Graham in 2005, there is no guarantee that this will be successful, particularly when casualties start to be taken or if the effort is not sustained.

The implications for Canadian society offer more contradictions and questions than hard answers. Canadians appear to believe in multilateralism and institutions like the United Nations, but they also seem reluctant to pay the price when the world community decides to use force to achieve its aims. The Chrétien government cited the lack of a United Nations resolution as justification for not going to war in Iraq – even when it was a clear multilateral effort, supporting our two most significant allies. The war in Afghanistan is currently being fought by NATO under a United Nations mandate, yet even with the sanction of a body in which Canadians generally believe, support for the war in Afghanistan is dropping.

Similarly, many Canadians support the concept of "responsibility to protect," advocating intervention in sovereign states which fail to meet the obligations that they

hold to their own citizens.[10] Yet intervening with military power will almost certainly involve combat, something Canadian society generally does not seem to support. The inherent contradiction in the hawkish nature of what Canadians say that they want, contrasted with the dovish approach that they appear to prefer, is striking to say the least.

More important, though, is the question of national values. The first Canadian battalion commander in Afghanistan observed that "When we send Canadian soldiers overseas, even for combat duties, we are exporting Canadian values."[11] Yet, there is no firm consensus, even within government, as to what comprises our fundamental national values. There is variation from region to region, across the sub-cultures that form Canadian society, and between the generations.

Canada needs to decide what it stands for. It is not enough to rely on a beer commercial to articulate what Canadians hold important.[12] We need to do more than just study what Canadians believe in; the government should play a fundamental role in shaping the debate and reinforcing those elements of our national values to which it believes a majority of Canadians subscribe, as well as ensuring that its institutions keep up and adapt to the shifts within Canadian society. Education must play a fundamental

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[10]Dr Erika Simpson, "The Responsibility to Protect: A Seminar on the Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty," (Canadian Pugwash Group Workshop, University of Toronto), 23 March 2002, http://publish.uwo.ca/~simpson/documents/Simpson.2002-The%20responsibility%20to%20protect.pdf; Internet; accessed 24 February 2008.

[11]Lieutenant-Colonel P. Stogran, "Fledgling Swans Take Flight: The Third Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry In Afghanistan," *Canadian Army Journal*, Volume 7.3/7.4 (Fall/Winter 2004): 19.

[12]For a full description of the Molson Canadian "I Am Canadian" beer commercial, see Robert M. MacGregor, "I Am Canadian: National Identity in Beer Commercials," *The Journal of Popular Culture*, Volume 37, Issue 2 (November 2003): 276-286.

role in fostering debate and discussion on what it is to be a Canadian and what values we hold to be important.

There can be little doubt that the nature of Canadian society changed dramatically over the 20th Century. We are now a diverse, multicultural, and very fragmented nation. Unlike one hundred years ago, we are no longer a country where the majority of the populace believes in using force to attain national goals. The reasons for this are relatively simple to understand; a belief in peacekeeping as our primary military role, anti-Americanism, and the media all have contributed to how Canadians envision their role in the world. More significantly, however, the most profound influences in shaping this evolving attitude have been our lack of agreement on what our national interests and values are and the changing nature of Canadian society itself.

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