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CHANGE AND EFFECT: THE EVOLUTION OF CANADIAN DEFENCE POLICY FROM 1964 TO 2017 AND ITS IMPACT ON ARMY CAPABILITIES

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the key changes to Canadian defence policy from the promulgation of the *1964 White Paper on Defence* to the most recent 2017 *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada Defence Policy Report* (SSE), with particular regard for their impact upon the Canadian Army.

This analysis demonstrates that the ad hoc and partisan nature of Canadian defence policy combined with disparities implicit in the time horizons associated with the realignment of capabilities through changed force structures and equipment procurement, results in a persistent mismatch between government policy and ambitions and army capabilities.

Chapter 2 provides a synopsis and summary of the key pieces of formal defence policy embodied in the key policy instruments from 1964 to 2017 to identify those items of continuity and disparity amongst them to draw the conclusions and themes emerging from the changing policy approaches. Chapter 3 analyses the key impacts that the various changes in Canadian defence policy have had upon army capabilities, equipment and capability development. In so doing, this study will attempt to identify the key correlations and divergences between defence policy and army capability and attempt to explain anomalies identified therein. Chapter 4 concludes with an indication of key observations, lessons and potential implications stemming from this analysis.

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Canada is a peculiar nation. A nation perhaps best characterized by its many conflicting dualities: expansive territories and oceans populated by relatively few, vast uninhabited, in some cases uninhabitable, lands punctuated by major metropolitan centers. Inherently multilateral and pluralistic, it is a moderate nation charting a progressive, liberal course in the world. Through the good fortunes of geography, Canada can rightly be described as a fortress surrounded by vast moats. Similarly, it shares a single, lengthy border with a relatively like-minded, politically stable ally and economic heavyweight with similar lineage and cultural origins – the only remaining, though increasingly contested, superpower.

These unique circumstances coalesce to create a unique Canadian security and defence context. Its colonial origins belie an innate tendency to look inwards rather than outwards. Moreover, the extraordinary and swift scaling of disproportionately large military forces to fight in two successive episodes of world war has perpetuated a false sense of security that defence capabilities can be rapidly scaled and delivered just-in-time should the need arise – often referred to as the so called “Militia Myth.”¹ Indeed, these historical undertones, combined with a history largely devoid of war and unrest, have led some to question the need for defence forces at all, while others suggest their re-purposing as a “constabulary force.”² Writing in 1987, the renowned expert on Canadian Defence Policy Dr. Douglas Bland questioned, “Why does Canada have such a minuscule military capability? Our Reserve forces are next to unusable, we have no logistic of

¹James Wood, *Militia Myths: Ideas of the Canadian Citizen Soldier, 1896-1921* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2010), 5.

²Joseph T. Jockel, *The Canadian Forces: Hard Choices, Soft Power* (Toronto: Brown Book Company Limited, 1999), 32.

industrial stockpiles, and no workable plans for mobilizing either our individuals or our other resources.”³ Questions and assertions equally ponderable today as when they were written more than thirty years ago.

The answer to this perennial question is one best analysed and understood through the lens of defence policy. “Policy”, it has been said, “is ideas in action.”⁴ More specifically policy is defined by a prominent Canadian thinker Glen Milne as:

...a clear goal and or direction. It comes from the considered election of one choice among competing compelling choices. Policy directs, but does not consist of, operational programs and details. It is best expressed as vision and goals, with associated strategic objectives, work plan and a program of activities, resources and leadership to achieve that choice⁵.

Insofar as the military’s role as the ultimate guarantor of the survival of the state against threats both domestic and foreign, it follows then that defence policy can be interpreted as a national expression of a society’s self-image and its place within the world. Though not formally codified by statute in terms of prescribed review cycles and promulgation, defence policy statements and defence white papers have alternately served as the strategic roadmap expressing political intent, expectations and ambition regarding the objectives, roles, and capabilities with which the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) ought to be structured, resourced, and prepared to serve the country in the maintenance of peace and security both at home and abroad. This work will seek to identify how key elements of Canadian defence policy have been articulated over the last half century with specific attention to its enactment and resulting impacts upon the Canadian Army.

³Douglas L. Bland, *Administration of Defence Policy in Canada 1947-1985* (Kingston: Ronald P. Frye and Company, 1987), x.

⁴Ibid., ix.

⁵Glen Milne, *Making Policy: A Guide to the Federal Government’s Policy Process* (Ottawa: Glen Milne, 2014), 18.

Though not the senior service, nor certainly the most technologically advanced, the army is the oldest of the constituent elements of the Canadian Armed Forces and arguably the one Canadians most closely identify with. For the purposes of this analysis, the term army and Canadian Army will be used interchangeably to refer to the various names applied to Canada's conventional land forces throughout the period under review.⁶ Perhaps a reflection of its nature as a people-centric rather than a platform-centric organization, or the greater distribution of its units throughout the country – when Canadians think of their military, they think most often of their army. Despite its nature as a people-centric organization, whose capabilities have historically been contemplated in terms of strength and numbers, modern armies are, like the other service branches becoming increasingly dependent upon platforms and equipment. Consequently, the capabilities of modern armies have been increasingly a function of the synergistic effects of equipment, technology, and doctrine in the hands of well-led and well-trained soldiers. Moreover, capabilities being function of the size, organization, and equipment of an army, are inherently intertwined with defence policy which sets out the political-strategic guidance, resources, and ambition which ought logically to shape the conception, design and formulation of the army's capabilities.

This paper will examine in what important ways Canadian defence policy has changed from the promulgation of the *1964 White Paper on Defence* to the most recent *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada Defence Policy Report (SSE)* in 2017. In conducting a historical survey of the key policy instruments throughout this timeframe, this work will first identify significant changes outlined in them with specific attention to the contextual

⁶More specifically, it will include those land-based elements of the Mobile Force, Mobile Forces Command, Canadian Forces Europe (CFE), then Land Forces Command (LFC) and finally, as it is now referred to, the Canadian Army.

situation within which the policy was established, the way security interests, roles and objectives were defined and elaborated, as well as key themes and statements related to defence resourcing. Understanding the inherent correlation between defence policy and capability maintenance and development, it will then assess how the changes in Canadian defence policy have impacted army capabilities and force structure throughout this timeframe.

This analysis will demonstrate that the ad hoc and partisan nature of Canadian defence policy combined with disparities implicit in the time horizons associated with realignment of capabilities through changed force structures and equipment procurement results in a persistent mismatch between government policy and ambitions and army capabilities. Further, the relatively long duration of equipment life cycles often results in a constrained force structure decision space wherein army force structuring decisions are based primarily upon existing equipment or force structures that are sub-optimally resourced rather than a methodical, principled approach. In reaching these broad conclusions, this paper will identify the key factors and complexities which have led to misalignment between policy outcomes, resources, capabilities and long-term planning throughout the period under consideration.

This analysis will first set out in Chapter 2 to provide a synopsis and summary of the key pieces of formal defence policy embodied in defence white papers and defence policy statements from 1964 to 2017 to identify those items of continuity and disparity amongst them to draw the conclusions and themes emerging from the changing policy approaches. Chapter 3 analyses the key impacts that the various changes in Canadian defence policy have had upon army capabilities, equipment and capability development.

In so doing, this study will attempt to identify the key correlations and divergences between defence policy and army capability and attempt to explain anomalies identified therein. Having reviewed such a broad period of changes to defence policy and army capabilities and capability development, the paper will conclude with an indication of key observations, lessons and potential implications stemming from this analysis. For practical purposes, given the vast nature of the topics that this paper will explore, it will not seek to identify all the constraints, factors, people and political imperatives which were at play and led to the formulation of these policies and capabilities per se, nor will it include any detailed discussion of Special Operations Forces or Primary Reserve force structures.

CHAPTER 2 – THE EVOLUTION OF CANADIAN DEFENCE POLICY

Introduction

Canadian defence policy statements and white papers on defence, in and of themselves, do not represent a complete body of policy and are often amplified, clarified, and amended through speeches, statements and responses to questions in parliament of key members of the government including the Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence. However, from a historical perspective, the various defence policy documents crafted by successive governments since the end of the Second World War serve as key snapshots of defence thinking and policy in Canada. Not including what is generally considered to be the original policy document issued by the Liberal government of Prime Minister MacKenzie-King and Minister Claxton in *Canada's Defence 1947*, there has since been no fewer than eight major government policy statements referred to as either defence policy statements or defence white papers.

This chapter will sequentially analyse the key elements of the various defence policy instruments beginning with the 1964 white paper through to SSE released in released in June 2017. In reviewing the various policy documents throughout this timeframe, this analysis will focus upon the historical context and strategic assessment within which they were crafted, the identification and prioritization of defence roles, objectives and missions, key themes and policy announcements and statements surrounding the level of funding and resourcing of defence capabilities. Through this analysis it will become clear that the successive iterations of defence policy have charted minor course corrections and adjustments over the last half-century to deal with fundamental changes to the international and security environment; however, the key

tenets of Canadian defence policy have endured throughout this timeframe. Specifically, while the ordering of policy aims and objectives have been re-prioritized on occasion, Canadian defence policy during this period has been based upon three imperatives: two strategic imperatives (the defence of Canada and North America) and one strategic choice (the deployment of the CAF in response to international contingencies).⁷ Despite the enduring nature of these fundamental defence objectives, it will be shown that what has changed more notably throughout this period is the level of resourcing and operational tempo with which the various governments were willing to support and commit defence capabilities generally, and the Canadian Army specifically.

In reaching these conclusions, this chapter will analyse seven of the eight policy documents promulgated since and including the 1964 *White Paper on Defence*. Of note, analysis of the key changes outlined in *Defence Update 1988-1989* will be included in the section containing the 1987 *Challenge and Commitment*. Similarly, the 1992 *Canadian Defence Policy* statement will be excluded from this analysis given the relatively short period in which this policy could be practically implemented before the ouster of the Conservative government shortly after its release. Analysis of the remaining seven policy documents will focus sequentially upon the historical context and strategic assessment within which the policy was crafted, the delineation of national interest, roles and objectives of the CAF, key themes and announcements outlined in the policy, as well as statements regarding resourcing and funding levels for the Department of National Defence (DND). These central aspects of defence policy factor prominently in the

⁷Douglas L. Bland, *Canada's National Defence, Volume 1: Defence Policy* (Kingston: School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, 1997), 112.

translation of policy ends into tangibly military capabilities with which to achieve the policy goals.

1964 – White Paper on Defence

In the period following the promulgation of *Canada's Defence 1947*, numerous historic events had served to alter the defence landscape within which the CAF/DND was operating. Most notably amongst the many events, alliances, and issues that permeated the intervening period were the accession of Canada within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in April 1949, the deployment of CAF elements to the Korean War from 1950 – 1953 under the authority of the United Nations (UN), as well as the deployment of an army brigade group and air forces to bolster NATO forces in Western Europe in 1951 against the perceived growing threat emanating from the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact countries resulting in the Cold War. Other noteworthy developments and deployments of forces within this period include an increasing trend of contributions to UN peacekeeping and observer forces including such regions as the Sinai, Indo-China, the Middle East and the Congo. Perhaps most poignantly, by 1964, the threat of nuclear annihilation embodied in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis undoubtedly weighed heavily on the minds of policy makers and Canadians writ large.⁸

Couched within the background of these events and realities it is perhaps not surprising that the 1964 *White Paper on Defence* is framed broadly within the context of the various international organizations and alliances to which Canada was a party. What is more striking is that despite the significant effort made to articulate potential adversaries and threats to Canada, albeit with some restraint, many of the force planning,

⁸Brian W. Tomlin, Norman Hillmer and Fen Osler Hampson, *Canada's International Policies: Agendas, Alternatives and Politics* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2008), 104.

capabilities and structures articulated within the document are set more within the context of alliance obligations than with reference to potential threats and adversaries. The predominant threat was clearly articulated as resulting from the Soviet Union and the “European Communist states.”⁹ Interestingly, the policy also notes the growing threat posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons stating that “[t]he production of some nuclear weapons by Communist China during the next decade cannot be discounted, but it is not likely to acquire an effective nuclear arsenal...[comparable] with that of the U.S.A. or U.S.S.R. during this period.”¹⁰ Indeed, given the historical undertones of a very real existential threat and the potential for large-scale conventional or nuclear war between East and West, the policy’s acknowledgement of a “range of potential conflict [extending] from the possibility of all-out thermonuclear war, through large-scale limited war, to insurrection, guerilla activity and political upheaval”¹¹ likely figured prominently in the rationale underpinning the Mobile Force¹² that the policy would ultimately advocate. Within the context of this strategic assessment and international outlook the policy concludes, “...[t]he contribution Canada can make to the deterrence of war is limited by the size of our human and material resources. Nevertheless, what we can contribute is far from negligible. We have an obligation to make that contribution.”¹³

Within this internationalist outlook and framework, it is unsurprising that the objectives and the methods to achieve them espoused within this document are decidedly multilateral. Indeed, of all the defence policy documents analysed herein, this is the only

⁹Canada, Department of National Defence, *White Paper on Defence* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1964), 10.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 10.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 11.

¹²The 1964 White Paper on Defence referred to elements of Canadian Land Forces as Mobile Forces. Specifically, it referred to a Mobile Force in Canada and a Mobile Force for NATO in addition to the forces specifically committed to NATO in Europe.

¹³*Ibid.*, 12.

one to frame Canadian defence imperatives outside of the now commonplace order of defending Canada, defending North America, and contributing to international peace and security. For instance, the white paper begins by stating as objectives, "...to preserve the peace by supporting collective defence measures to deter military aggression; to support Canadian foreign policy...and to provide for the protection and surveillance of our territory, our air-space and our coastal waters."¹⁴ The statement goes on to enunciate four parallel methods to achieve those objectives through collective measures, collective defence, partnership with the United States of America (USA), and National Measures.¹⁵ In fact, it again confirms this relative ranking of defence priorities again in Section III when discussing considerations affecting future policy, placing NATO strategy ahead of substantiation for Canada's position regarding nuclear weapons, defence of Canada, North American defence and peacekeeping. This systematic contextualization of national interests is thus a clear indication of the fact that in the 1960s Canadian defence and security was viewed as inextricably linked to collective defence through the NATO alliance.¹⁶

Beyond the framing of Canadian defence interests within collective defence and collective measures, the 1964 white paper is generally best known for the introduction of civilian management approaches within the department and the organizational changes that it directed through the unification of the armed forces. Defence programming was to be introduced to DND to "...enable defence resources to be allocated to Defence

¹⁴Ibid., 5.

¹⁵Ibid., 6.

¹⁶Douglas L. Bland, *Canada's National Defence, Volume 1: Defence Policy* (Kingston: School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, 1997), 59.

Programs in the most effective manner from the point of view of ultimate military output and in accordance with a clear and detailed plan.”¹⁷

More notoriously, the paper directed the integration of the forces. Whereas the armed services were previously organized by service (Royal Canadian Navy (RCN), the Canadian Army, and the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF)) and co-ordinated by committee through the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff, this white paper laid the framework for statutory changes to the National Defence Act that would ultimately unite the various services, create the Chief of the Defence Staff, and reorganize the various units and formations within the CAF by operational commands rather than functional services. In rationalizing this change, the paper draws heavily on the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Government Organization citing nearly a full page from the commission’s report.¹⁸ Additionally, the paper states that “[t]he fundamental considerations are operational control and effectiveness, the streamlining of procedures and, in particular, the decision-making process, and the reduction of overhead.”¹⁹ In fact, the improvements in effectiveness and efficiencies that the integration of the armed forces were expected to yield were to be centrally important in re-allocating funds from within the defence budget to capital expenditures from operations and maintenance to “permit a goal of 25 per cent of the budget to be devoted to capital equipment being realized in the years ahead.”²⁰ This reallocation of funds towards capital purchases was to be centrally important to the army in order to help fund the re-equipping of the Mobile Force.

¹⁷Canada. Department of National Defence, *White Paper on Defence* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1964), 20.

¹⁸Ibid., 18.

¹⁹Ibid., 19.

²⁰Ibid.

In all, the 1964 *White Paper on Defence* firmly espoused Canadian national interests within the confines of its alliance commitments and initiated significant command, organizational, resource management and procurement changes within the DND. Most notably impacting the future of the Canadian Army was the unification of the forces which led to a disjointed approach to force development and the creation of three essentially separate fiefdoms with a heavily armoured brigade in Europe, two presumably medium weight brigades (yet to be equipped) and a lighter special service force in Canada, and the Militia as a separate entity altogether. In time, the bulk of the reserve forces would ultimately come under the auspices of Mobile Command, but the broader force development and generation challenges associated with the Europe-based and Canadian-based forces would result in a fragmented army.²¹ Moreover, the savings and efficiencies that unification were expected to yield did not materialize resulting in a funding gap for the re-equipping of the Mobile Force brigades in Canada.

1971 – Defence in the 70s

The several years intervening between the election of the Trudeau liberal government in 1968 gave witness to significant changes at home and abroad in the social, economic, and international relations fronts. Most notably, the nation's centennial gave rise to a renewed sense of nationhood, national identity and pride; albeit with the cross-current undertones of separatism and civil unrest in Quebec that would culminate the Front de libération du Québec (FLQ) crisis in 1970. In the USA, attention was shifting from the Western European front with NATO to containment of the spread of communism and expansion of its role in East Asia culminating in the Vietnam War.

²¹Kasurak, Peter, *A National Force: The Evolution of Canada's Army, 1950-2000* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013), 107.

Indeed, the war, along with social injustices back home, resulted in increased civil unrest in the USA as well. Internationally, the Arab-Israeli war in 1967 along with other less successful forays in the realm of peacekeeping led to the perception that "...the prospects for effective international peacekeeping, which were viewed with some optimism in 1964, have not developed as had been hoped."²² Finally, the emergence of "...strategic nuclear balance between the USA and the Soviet Union..."²³ gave rise to the concept of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) combined with increasing proliferation with the "...emergence of China as a nuclear power."²⁴ Within this historical context, it is not surprising that the release of *Defence in the 70s* signalled important changes and reversals in relation to previous Canadian defence policy.

In this framework, the white paper draws upon many of these threads to rationalize a refocusing of defence priorities and a general reduction in defence spending. Specifically, it notes the prevailing stability afforded by nuclear deterrence as well as the ongoing Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) and the potential for negotiations on the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) in Europe along with Western Europe's resurgent economic independence as substantiation for a reduced footprint there.²⁵ Beyond the international outlook and the already noted increased skepticism regarding the viability and effectiveness of peacekeeping operations, it highlights the importance of the forces in fulfilling sovereignty and control mandates for Canadian territory, as well as a prominent role regarding national development policy objectives including the fostering of national unity and identity, bilingualism, economic and

²²Canada. Department of National Defence, *White Paper on Defence: Defence in the 70s* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1971), 1.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid., 5.

industrial development.²⁶ This changed strategic outlook would factor prominently in the reordering of defence objectives and priorities.

Amongst the many changes that this policy announced was a re-characterization of the national interest and the relative priorities of defence roles and objectives. Whereas the previous liberal government had framed Canadian defence policy within the context of collective defence measures with its allies, the Trudeau government signalled a Canada-centric approach to defence policy. Specifically, this policy was the first to espouse national aims or national interests as follows:

that Canada will continue secure as an independent political entity; that Canada...will enjoy enlarging prosperity in the widest possible sense; [and] that all Canadians will see in the life they have and the contribution they make to humanity something worthwhile preserving in identity and purpose.”²⁷

Given those national aims and interests, it is not surprising that it marked the re-prioritization of defence roles and objectives to include firstly the protection of Canadian sovereignty, followed by the defence of North America, the fulfilment of NATO commitments, and international peacekeeping. Indeed, it has since been noted by several prominent analysts that the Liberal government intended to fully withdraw Canadian Forces from Europe but in the end bowed to diplomatic pressure to maintain a sizeable, albeit reduced presence from 10,000 formerly stationed in Europe to 5,000.²⁸ Despite this policy direction as Dr. Bland remarks, “...by 1979 (and much earlier by some accounts) Canada’s defence policy had returned to the policy of 1969: Canada had a

²⁶Ibid., 5-15.

²⁷Ibid., 3.

²⁸Ibid.

defence policy that was mainly a NATO policy only the forces were now seriously depleted.”²⁹

Beyond the re-nationalization of Canadian defence imperatives and the reduced focus and commitment towards NATO commitments, *Defence in the 70s* also introduced some important themes of note relevant to this study. Specifically, it articulated important changes to procurement policy, more changes to the organization and management of the department, and finally, it formally relegated defence expenditures as subservient to those required to fulfill other social and economic ends. With respect to procurement policy, the paper highlighted that Canada lacked sufficient size and scale to economically develop unique solutions to its defence requirements resulting in the “...need for co-operative efforts in producing [its] major equipment needs.”³⁰ Another noteworthy assertion was the emergence of an otherwise obscure statement in relation to the general structure and capabilities of the forces, which noted “[w]ith the limited resources available for Canadian defence needs, it is desirable to have versatile forces and multi-purpose equipment rather than a high degree of specialization.”³¹ This was the first such declaration regarding Canadian military capabilities and equipment and has largely remained intact for more than a half-century. Affecting the department more generally was the undertaking of a Management Review Group which was to study “the present relationships between the military, civil and research organizations of the Department and...make recommendations to ensure there exists effective planning and control.”³² In

²⁹Douglas L. Bland, *Canada's National Defence, Volume 1: Defence Policy* (Kingston: School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, 1997), 113.

³⁰Canada. Department of National Defence, *White Paper on Defence: Defence in the 70s* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1971), 15.

³¹*Ibid.*, 16.

³²*Ibid.*, 42-43.

the end, this review would result in a further restructuring of the department to reinforce civil control of the military.³³ In addition to these changes to procurement policy and subsequent changes to the organizational structure, responsibilities and accountabilities within the department, the policy's statements regarding the funding and resourcing of DND and the forces was particularly notable and ominous.

Leveraging the perceived, or at least declared, increased stability afforded by nuclear deterrence, a less bipolar world, the improved economic capacity and capability of Western European nations and a focus inward upon national interests and the defence of Canada over alliance obligations, the statement made clear for the first time, in policy terms, that defence capabilities and capacity was to be explicitly cost-constrained. For instance, the document specifically stated that defence expenditures were to be subservient to social and economic ones and that “[a] decision on the appropriate size of the defence budget can be made only in the context of the Government’s national priorities and in light of its consequent programs.”³⁴ Furthermore, the paper outlined that despite mounting pressures on the defence budget owing to a period of extraordinarily high inflation in the 1970s ranging between 4 and 12 per cent, the policy stipulated that the defence budget would “remain within 1 per cent of the present ceiling...”³⁵ and that “[t]he defence budget for the years 1973/74 and beyond [would] be established on the basis of program forecasts and estimates in accordance with the practice followed by other Government Departments.”³⁶ This significant budget constraint, combined with the

³³Peter Kasurak, *A National Force: The Evolution of Canada's Army, 1950-2000* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013), 157-161.

³⁴Canada. Department of National Defence, *White Paper on Defence: Defence in the 70s* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1971), 41.

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶*Ibid.*, 42.

prevailing high rate of inflation throughout the period, significantly eroded the department's capital programs and ultimately led to a budgetary crisis in 1974-1975. The budget constraint and requirements impasse would ultimately be curtailed through the Defence Structure Review process; however, the interruption in viable long-term procurement planning throughout the department generally, and the army more specifically, cannot be overstated, particularly within the context of the re-equipping of the Mobile Force that had never fully materialized.³⁷

In sum, the Trudeau government's *Defence in the 70s* signalled many significant policy reversals and other course corrections as compared to the Pearson government's earlier internationalist approach. The tone was now much more introspective focussing upon Canadian interests, sovereignty, stability, and prosperity reflected in the explicit re-prioritization of defence objectives and imperatives.³⁸ More importantly, the paper signalled significant reductions to both the size and budget of the department and made clear that defence requirements were second fiddle to social and economic programs. Within the context of a high inflationary environment, the austerity imposed by the white paper would ultimately be modestly reversed through the defence structure review, but not before reaching crisis status.³⁹ In all, these policy changes would have significant impacts upon the army in terms of reduced size and strength, and particularly with respect to undermining the long-term planning required to implement procurement programs implied by the under-resourcing of capability and development staff.

³⁷Peter Kasurak, *A National Force: The Evolution of Canada's Army, 1950-2000* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013), 142.

³⁸Brian W. Tomlin, Norman Hillmer and Fen Osler Hampson, *Canada's International Policies: Agendas, Alternatives and Politics* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2008), 106.

³⁹Peter Kasurak, *A National Force: The Evolution of Canada's Army, 1950-2000* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013), 138-143.

1987 – Challenge and Commitment: A Defence Policy for Canada

Whereas, the Trudeau government's policy paper marked the beginning of a period which might be characterized as budgetary famine for the CAF/DND, the Mulroney government's 1987 policy paper, *Challenge and Commitment* was intended to signal the start of a budgetary feast. Indeed, while the Trudeau government ultimately had to loosen the fiscal purse strings to avoid a crisis in the mid-1970s, the Mulroney government intended to make clear just how inadequately resourced the forces had become, particularly with respect to perceived increasing tensions between East and West which had manifested in the significant numerical superiority of Soviet forces in Western Europe by the mid-1980s. In fact, as Bland notes the conservative policy document was the one, "...many thought should have been issued in 1970."⁴⁰ The irony, of course, is that in only a few short years, the Soviet Union would crumble, making most of the assumptions upon which this policy statement was based, fundamentally invalid and ushering in a new era of hapless capability development and strategic planning within the forces.

The policy paper begins by noting significant changes regarding the Government's outlook upon the international environment which included amongst others the state of East-West tensions and its implications within Central and Western Europe, the growing importance of the Asia-Pacific region, the challenge to sovereignty in the Arctic and the Arctic Ocean, and the trend towards regional conflict, strife and instability throughout the world. Again here, the paper notes many of the same challenges and trends as those in *Defence in the 70s* with the caveat that:

⁴⁰Douglas L. Bland, *Canada's National Defence, Volume 1: Defence Policy* (Kingston: School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, 1997), 186.

[s]ixteen years later, it is evident that the great hopes of the early 1970s have not been realized...developments in Europe and the Far East have led to a greater diffusion of power. The change, however, has not been such as to alter perceptibly the central fact of confrontation in East-West relations.⁴¹

Unlike its predecessor, however, this policy paper went to great lengths to detail the force imbalances vis-à-vis the “Military Threat” embodied in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic’s (USSR) clear numerical superiority in virtually all respects as compared to those of the USA and NATO. Indeed, in the context of Canadian defence policy papers, *Challenge and Commitment* is unique in terms of its rhetoric characterizing the USSR as a strategic adversary along with a detailed analysis of the state of East-West military capabilities and strengths which, along with the decades of neglect under previous governments, would ultimately serve as the justification for a substantial increase in defence spending.

In addition to the more explicit rhetoric regarding the existential threat posed by the Soviet Union’s seemingly unending growth in military strength, the policy advocated a renewed, though nuanced, emphasis upon collective defence arrangements and commitments to NATO allies, while at the same time identifying the important role the forces played in maintaining national sovereignty and international stability through peacekeeping operations abroad. For example, the paper identifies three major components of Canadian security policy including: “defence and collective security, arms control and disarmament, and the peaceful resolution of disputes.”⁴² In essence, the policy marked a return to the internationalist approach, while reconciling the stated

⁴¹Canada. Department of National Defence, *Challenge and Commitment: A Defence Policy for Canada* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply Services Canada, 1987), 1.

⁴²Ibid., 3.

primary importance of collective approaches to defence within the confines of strategic deterrence and conventional defence by linking them to Canadian interests:

Canada has no aggressive intentions toward any country. Our objective is to deter the use of force or coercion against Canada and Canadian interests and to be able to respond adequately should deterrence fail. Such deterrence requires standing and reserve forces equipped, trained and positioned to meet any likely threat. Canada's population and resource base are not today and in the foreseeable future could not become sufficient to defend, unaided, the second-largest country in the world. The Government believes that this objective can only be met within the collective security framework provided by [NATO].⁴³

Thus, the relative importance of defence priorities had been reordered, again supporting the rationale for an increased CAF presence within Western Europe with arms control added as a distinct element within the broader policy objectives.

The central theme throughout the Conservative defence policy was, as its title implied, the significant neglect and underinvestment which the CAF had endured throughout the last 16 years resulting in the disparity between international and alliance commitments in relation to military capabilities and capacity to meet them. Indeed, the document was overtly partisan and held no punches in laying blame for the many challenges and issues facing the forces. For instance, in introducing the section specifically devoted to explaining the "Commitment-Capability Gap" it stated that, "[t]his review has confirmed that we are not able to meet [Canada's military] commitments fully and effectively. After decades of neglect, there is indeed a significant "commitment-capability gap."⁴⁴ It goes on to explain that:

In recent years more money has been spent to purchase equipment. The results will eventually be seen in the form of new frigates, low-level air defence batteries and many other essential but less significant improvements. Nevertheless, even this funding is insufficient to

⁴³Ibid., 17

⁴⁴Ibid., 43.

overcome the “bow-wave” of deferred equipment acquisition built up since the 1960s. If this condition were allowed to continue unaltered, it would soon lead to “rust-out”, the unplanned and pervasive deterioration in the military capabilities of the Canadian Forces.⁴⁵

In addition to this central theme of the policy statement, two other key topics were introduced of consequence to the army. Firstly, the policy paper outlined significant planned changes to Canadian Forces Europe (CFE) which included the increased strength of 4 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group (4 CMBG) and the shifting of the Canada-based Containerized Air-Sea Transportable (CAST) Brigade Group’s task from northern Norway to the Central European front “thus enabling the Canadian Army to field a division-sized force in a crisis.”⁴⁶ Further, the policy promised new (additional) tanks and low-level air defence procurements corresponding with their intent to furnish a more robust and viable defence force in Europe in the event of hostilities.

The other notable theme was the increased prominence given to Reserves within the policy document, which had previously received negligible, if any, specific attention. Importantly, the increased emphasis on Reserve forces was sold primarily as a means of addressing the rising costs associated with maintaining the size and scale of forces-in-being that the Cold War seemed to be demanding.⁴⁷ The intent was to introduce a Total Force structure entailing “the Reserve Force [being] developed not only to augment the Regular Force but also to take on other specific tasks.”⁴⁸ The Government’s ambitions for the Reserves were such that they envisioned them contributing to defence operations in Canada, establishing a force of lightly armed guards to protect military vital points, and training replacements for land forces overseas. In fact, the paper noted that, “[i]n the

⁴⁵Ibid., 45.

⁴⁶Ibid., 62.

⁴⁷Ibid., 65.

⁴⁸Ibid., 66.

longer term, it will be necessary to implement a complete Reserve Force Development Plan. As a result, Reserve strength will increase to about 90,000.”⁴⁹ Of course, many of the ambitions for the Reserves, along with those for the Regular Force and the defence budget did not come to fruition in light of the changed security environment and international outlook following the collapse of the USSR.

Though the budgetary and capability commitments did not ultimately materialize, this policy statement introduced some novel concepts and approaches to defence budgeting that are worthy of discussion for the purposes of this study. Specifically, it announced that “[a] rolling five-year funding plan [would] be introduced within a fifteen-year planning framework. An annual Cabinet review each autumn, [would] establish firm budgets for the following five-year period, and planning guidance for the remaining ten years.”⁵⁰ Despite the logic and the need for such an approach, it was unfortunately introduced in a period when the intended, indeed promised, stability in funding was not to materialize. Notably, the policy pledged “...real annual growth in the defence budget of two per cent per year after inflation for the fifteen-year planning period”⁵¹ Thus, despite the intention to introduce a more stable, predictable funding regime through which the forces could take a longer-term view of its capital program, the original pledge would be short-lived because of the changing international and security context with nominal, let alone real, defence spending declining from 1989 onwards.

In all, the 1987 *Challenge and Commitment* policy statement represented a reversal from the previous liberal policy and introduced several novel approaches and ideas to the forum of Canadian defence. Though in 1987 the international outlook had

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid., 67.

⁵¹Ibid.

not materially changed from the previous decades with the main existential threat to the Western world, a gloomier security picture was drawn to justify significant additional resources and expenditure. Further, the defence objectives and priorities were reordered, ironically more closely resembling the Pearsonian internationalist approach, contextualized within Canadian national interests. All of this led to a pledge of increased and more stable, predictable funding to enable a methodical approach to the inherently long-term planning required to develop military capabilities. Despite the renewed investment that the policy espoused, a more sober and austere approach would eventually materialize following the collapse of the USSR. As Dr. Bland asserts:

By 1989, *Challenge and Commitment* was a mere footnote in the history books. It failed as public policy and it was irrelevant in a world turned upside down by President Gorbachev. Nevertheless, members of the Canadian Forces who had believed they were to get the tools to do the job and “honest financing” were sorely disappointed.⁵²

Thus, in the end, it marked a change in aspiration and ambition akin to the approaches set out in the 1964 white paper but was undermined and reversed in implementation by the changing security environment, making the outcome more akin to a continuation of neglect.

1994 – White Paper on Defence

The election of the Chrétien government marked a new era in austerity and cost-constrained defence policy. Indeed, the defence budget had already begun to be paired down following the *Defence Update 1988-89*, and the promulgation of the 1992 *Canadian Defence Policy* statement, which severely curtailed the original ambitions outlined in *Challenge and Commitment*.

⁵²Douglas L. Bland, *Canada's National Defence, Volume 1: Defence Policy* (Kingston: School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, 1997), 188-189.

This period of austerity was the Government's response to two complementary imperatives. Firstly, following the collapse of the USSR in December 1991, many commentators throughout the Western world anticipated a significant "peace dividend" resulting from the perceived lesser requirement for defence spending following the demise of the existential threat that had given rise to the Cold War. Similarly, significant structural changes in Western economies resulting from the proliferation of technology, automation, and international trade agreements, combined with many years of excessive Government spending had brought about a fiscal crisis necessitating significant reductions to restore fiscal balance. Despite, these realities, the other, albeit unrecognized, reality was that the end of the Cold War had precipitated, greater uncertainty and instability throughout the world resulting in an unprecedented period of high operational tempo for the CAF, despite successively reduced defence budgets. Specifically, throughout the period of the late 1980s and early 1990s the forces had deployed sizeable contributions to a range of operational theatres including Cyprus, the first Gulf War, Somalia, Rwanda and the Balkans in addition to other smaller missions. These are the confluence of factors that necessitated a significant restatement of Canadian defence policy in 1994.

In terms of the white paper's assessment of the security outlook, it noted the drastically changed situation and resulting challenge that this presented from a defence planning perspective, but also made clear the imperative of reducing the deficit. The most obvious change from previous policies was that "[a]t present, there is no immediate direct military threat to Canada, and today's conflicts are far from Canada's shores."⁵³

⁵³Canada. Department of National Defence *1994 White Paper on Defence* (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 1994), 3.

Despite this reality, the policy noted mounting global pressures and new challenges and dimensions confronting defence planners in the form of threats to human security including the exponential growth in refugees, failed states, the resurgence of historical grievances giving rise to regional conflict, and weapons proliferation⁵⁴ as key drivers that would ultimately serve to substantiate the need to "...maintain a prudent level of military force..."⁵⁵ rather than "...dispense with the maritime, land and air capabilities of modern armed forces."⁵⁶ What was either not recognized at the time, or wilfully ignored, was that these new human security challenges were engendering a consequential rise in the frequency and scale with which CAF elements were being deployed on international operations, and the increasing risk and precariousness of those operations as compared to the traditional Cold War defence planning assumptions and force postures. The other notable discussion contained within this white paper as compared to previous policy statements was the specific chapter devoted to *Domestic Considerations* which painted the political, social, and economic backdrop within which the policy was devised and making the case for significant reductions in defence spending within the context of economic prosperity and mounting Government deficits.

These various changes in the security and domestic environment signalled yet another reversal in the relative priorities of the Government's defence objectives. Indeed, the ordering of objectives was realigned with those first espoused in *Defence in the 70s* with titular changes referring to them as: (1) the protection of Canada, (2) Canada-United States Defence Cooperation, and (3) contributing to International Security.⁵⁷ Further, in

⁵⁴Ibid., 12-13.

⁵⁵Ibid., 3.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid., 17, 20, 24.

recognition of the changed security environment, what was unique within these defence priorities was the enumeration of specific objectives within each of these defence domains that would ultimately give rise to the Capability-Based Planning (CBP)⁵⁸ approach. This marked a significant shift from what had previously been framed as either threat-based and commitment-based planning approaches. For instance, in terms of protecting Canada, the policy stipulated specific timelines for response to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, as well as the capability to mount an “...immediate and effective response to terrorist incidents.”⁵⁹ Similarly, within the context of continental defence the policy noted the requirement to “...maintain the ability to operate effectively at sea, on land, and in the air with the military forces of the United States in defending the northern half of the Western hemisphere.”⁶⁰ Most importantly and prescriptively, however, were the objectives declared within the context of contributing to international security. Noting the dual requirement to support the two most important multilateral security institutions to which Canada belongs, the statement noted the inherent challenges confronting both including the “serious problems”⁶¹ confronting the UN and the need for a “reformed NATO.”⁶² In recognition of these challenges and the resource-constrained defence policy which it intended to implement, it noted the importance of national considerations and the range of choice when selecting how, and under what umbrella the Government would deploy its scarce resources on future operations. Within this context,

⁵⁸Capability-Based Planning is a planning method that focuses upon the related and synergistic effects of equipment, people, infrastructure and information systems which produce defence capabilities to meet defence policy goals as defined by governments.

⁵⁹Ibid., 19.

⁶⁰Ibid., 23.

⁶¹Ibid., 25.

⁶²Ibid.

the army-specific force generation outputs for contributing to international security were first enumerated as including:

- Maintain the capability to assist the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade in the protection and evacuation of Canadians from areas threatened by imminent conflict;
- Participate in multilateral operations anywhere in the world under UN auspices, or in the defence of a NATO member, and, to that end,
 - be able to deploy, or redeploy from other multilateral operations, a joint task force headquarters and, as single units or in combination, one or more of the following elements: three separate battle groups or a brigade group (comprised of three infantry battalions, an armoured regiment and an artillery regiment, with appropriate combat support and combat service support.
 - provide: within three weeks, single elements or the vanguard components of this force and be able to sustain them indefinitely in a low-threat environment, and within three months, the remaining elements of the full contingency force.
 - earmark: an infantry battalion group as either a stand-by force for the UN, or to serve with NATO's Immediate Reaction Force.⁶³

Thus, while the 1994 white paper represented a return to the priorities first outlined nearly twenty-three years ago by the Trudeau government, it also introduced important nuanced changes within them and marked a shift towards capability-based planning.

In addition to the changed security environment, domestic context, and resulting changes to the roles and objectives and expected operational outputs of the CAF that the white paper hailed, it contained several key themes – some new, other reaffirmations. Most importantly amongst these themes was the policy's role in reaffirming the Government's intent to retain "multi-purpose combat-capable forces...able to operate with the modern forces maintained by our allies and like-minded nations against a capable opponent – that is, they must [be] able to fight 'alongside the best, against the

⁶³Ibid., 30.

best.”⁶⁴ While seemingly benign in hindsight, this policy re-affirmation was contemporaneously of central importance with prominent Canadians, such as the Council of 21, advocating for the wholesale divestment of such forces in favour of a low-cost, constabulary force primarily dedicated to peacekeeping. The paper also re-affirmed the Total Force approach to force structure and generation and significantly directed a reduction in the Primary Reserve to 23,000 personnel and the concurrent expansion of the army’s Regular field force by 3,000 personnel. The policy statement also articulated significant changes to the mobilization concept, particularly within the army including a four-stage approach to mobilization in the event of crisis or war ranging from traditional force generation, to force enhancement, expansion and national mobilization.⁶⁵ However, the most common theme throughout the document was the various references to austerity and reduced funding for the defence portfolio.

The most prevalent theme, in a tone not too dissimilar from previous policies particularly *Defence in the 70s*, was the clear emphasis of achieving the stated defence policy objectives, roles and operational outputs within the fundamental imperative of cost. For instance, the words ‘cost’ and ‘budget’ are used no fewer than 25 and 22 times respectively. As already noted, the policy was the first to explicitly paint the bleak political, social, and economic imperatives that permeated the domestic environment with a dedicated chapter. The Minister’s own introductory remarks reinforce this interpretation characterizing the policy as “...an effective, realistic and affordable policy.”⁶⁶ Moreover, the paper made clear the extent of the reduced funding for defence stating, “the defence funding assumptions contained in the 1994 budget envisaged a level

⁶⁴Ibid., 3.

⁶⁵Ibid., 33-34.

⁶⁶Ibid., 5.

of defence spending in the year 2000 that, in real terms, would be less than 60 percent of that assumed in the 1987 Defence White Paper.”⁶⁷ The implications of this reduced funding, particularly from a capability development and procurement perspective would ultimately be significant and far reaching. As already noted, the increased operational tempo that coincided with the supposed peace dividend, implied an inherent uptick in the proportion of the defence budget devoted to operations and maintenance with a corresponding decrease to the capital program. The resulting second and third order effects would therefore be significant as Robert Hartfiel, the author of a comprehensive study of the period 1993-2004, notes:

The failure to reinvest in capital does not have an immediate effect; it is felt only five or ten years later when older equipment begins to wear out and there is nothing available to replace it (Lagassé 2005). As a consequence of this failure to reinvest, the list of weapons systems needing replacement lengthened. Facing a cascade of obsolescence, new procurement programs were delayed or cancelled. Aging equipment was allowed to “rust-out,” then deemed too expensive to replace. As Desmond Morton remarked in 2003, the costs of replacing so many platforms at once “has shaped up as one of the biggest headaches Canada’s defence planners face in the twenty-first century” (2003: 152).⁶⁸

To complicate matters, deferred defence capital expenditures often only become costlier in the future meaning that in real terms, a dollar of capital expenditures on capabilities deferred today will often become costlier to replace in the future as a function of the length of the period through which the investment is deferred. Thus, the implications of an approach based upon affordability and cost-constraint outlined within this white paper would have a substantial impact in terms of its first, second, and third order effects both upon the army’s capital program and its human resources.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Robert Michael Hartfiel, “Planning Without Guidance: Canadian Defence Policy and Planning, 1993 – 2004”. *Canadian Public Administration* 53, no. 3, (September, 2010): 328-329.

In sum, the *1994 White Paper on Defence* was a significant document in the evolution of Canadian defence policy. Within its place as the first policy statement to fully mature and be implemented following the end of the Cold War, it marked a shift from the traditional commitment-based and threat-based approaches to defence planning to a capability-based approach to planning.⁶⁹ Moreover, it was the first to so specifically and methodically detail the force generation outputs that the government expected the forces to be able to deliver upon, within the framework of Canadian-centric defence and security imperatives, while at the same time marking a significant shift away from the alliance imperatives of the Cold War. Finally, and most importantly, it made explicit the Government's clear intent to meet defence and security objectives within a drastically reduced financial envelope.

2005 – A Role of Pride and Influence in the World: Defence

The 2005 *A Role of Pride and Influence in the World: Defence* policy statement marked the first time in Canadian history that defence policy was both crafted within the broader context of a formal national security policy and nested within an international policy statement. Even though the security environment and strategic assessment had not fundamentally changed since the *1994 White Paper on Defence*, the attacks of 11 September 2001, and the Global War on Terrorism that it yielded, served to underscore and cement in the minds of Canadians the very real linkages and inseparability of international and national security. Indeed, as the document itself notes, the policy in many senses was superseded by fundamental changes which had been implemented, but not yet codified in policy. These contextual changes combined with the change of

⁶⁹Douglas L. Bland and Sean M. Maloney, *Campaigns for International Security* (Kingston: School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, 2004) 43-47.

government to the Paul Martin Liberal government thus became the impetus for a re-statement of defence policy. As will be seen, this statement largely built on many of the same tenets and ideas espoused in 1994, albeit with the promise of greater resourcing and still more changes to the command and control and organizational structure of the CAF with the promise of a more effective, relevant, and responsive military.⁷⁰

Through the lens of the document's strategic assessment and outlook upon the security environment, it is broadly aligned with the 1994 white paper with the notable additional emphasis upon combating terrorism. Of the remaining themes, the policy notes many of the same conclusions. For instance, it notes that "the prospect of a global conflict involving the major powers is still remote, and there remains no Soviet-type military threat to Canadian territory"⁷¹ and cites failed and failing states, weapons of mass destruction (previously weapons proliferation) and regional flashpoints (previously resurgence of old hatreds) as the key issues that might necessitate the intervention of the CAF. Thus, except for added emphasis upon terrorism and the inherent security challenge presented by it, little had changed from the perspective of strategic outlook and would translate into broadly similar statements regarding national interest, roles and objectives of the military.

In its broad statements regarding the national interest and the resulting prioritization of defence roles and objectives, the policy statement was again largely like its predecessor with added emphasis afforded to domestic security. For instance, for the first time in the history of Canadian defence policy statements, the ordering of the two strategic imperatives and one strategic choice, protecting Canada, defending North

⁷⁰Canada. Department of National Defence, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World (Defence)* (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2005), 11.

⁷¹Ibid., 5.

America, and contributing to a safer and more secure world had not changed.⁷² However, the statement was more emphatic of the centrality of domestic security as expounded by the newly released National Security Policy⁷³ noting that “the Canadian Forces must also be prepared to support civil authorities in dealing with terrorism, a threat that is likely to persist well into the future.”⁷⁴ Similarly, the statement noted “a new North American and Security context”⁷⁵ but was particularly thin on the implications and objectives that this would imply beyond the central importance of the defence relationship with the USA, the need for interoperability, exploring ways to enhance bi-national security and “continuing to participate in international operations overseas to address threats at their source.”⁷⁶ Thus, beyond the nuances of rhetoric and emphasis, the policy changed little with respect to its statements regarding the national interest, roles and objectives of the forces in comparison to its predecessor.

The key changes that were outlined in the 2005 statement related to the command and control, organizational structure and resourcing that would be afforded to the CAF to make it more “effective, relevant, and responsive.” Essentially, these buzzwords encapsulated transformation initiatives which would include changes to the command and control structure of the forces and the creation of fully integrated units. More specifically this would lead to the creation of the so-called “dot-com” structure including the creation of the Canadian Expeditionary Forces Command (CEFCOM), Canada Command (CANADACOM), the Canadian Operational Support Command (CANOSCOM) and the

⁷²Douglas L. Bland, *Canada's National Defence, Volume 1: Defence Policy* (Kingston: School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, 1997), 112.

⁷³Canada. Privy Council Office, *Securing an Open Society: Canada's National Security Policy* (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2004), vii.

⁷⁴Canada. Department of National Defence, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World (Defence)* (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2005), 16.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 21.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 23.

Special Operations Group (SOG) which would later become the Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM). In terms of integrated units, the policy outlined the need for three key joint formations to affect the conduct of future operations including the SOG, the creation of a high-readiness Standing Contingency Task Force (SCTF) to “respond rapidly to emerging crises...ready to deploy on 10 days’ notice...”⁷⁷ and the creation of Mission-Specific Task Forces (MSTF). While many of the transformation initiatives would be subsequently modified and the SCTF would never be implemented, the intent underlying these initiatives was clear: to make the forces more effective, relevant and responsive while addressing the challenges inherent in the evolving security environment. While the funding and resourcing of these changes was less clear and specific, austerity and cost-constraints were no longer the key imperatives.

In sharp contrast to the 1994 white paper, the 2005 policy statement was much less focussed upon funding, budgeting, and costs. Whereas the previous statement was prolific in its use of such terms, the 2005 statement referred to such terms sparsely. More importantly, where reference was made to funding it was largely to denote additional funding being afforded to the department to implement the transformational changes and increased resources deemed necessary to carry out its mandate. For instance, the policy noted the significant additional funding of some \$1.2 billion to DND following the tragic events of September 11.⁷⁸ Moreover, the government pledged “...the largest reinvestment in Canada’s military in over 20 years, totaling approximately \$13 billion...[including] new baseline funding and significant additional resources for capital

⁷⁷Ibid., 13.

⁷⁸Ibid., 16.

programs.”⁷⁹ Thus, from the perspective of funding the cuts and bleeding announced over a decade earlier had ceased, and this policy marked an important reversal and a new period of reinvestment in defence capabilities and capacity.

To conclude, the 2005 policy statement represented a nuanced continuity of strategic ends but promised changes in both the ways and means to achieve those ends. The stated national interests, roles and objectives of the military were broadly similar with added emphasis upon the threat of terrorism and the interrelationships of international and national security. However, the policy promised new command and control and organizational structures in a bid to make the forces more joint with a view to achieving improved operational effectiveness, relevance and responsiveness in dealing with the increased probability of attack posed by terrorism and the necessary resources and funding to affect those changes.

2008 – Canada First Defence Strategy

Released only three years after the Liberal government’s 2005 defence policy statement, with relatively few developments in terms of the international strategic context and security environment, it is not surprising that Prime Minister Harper’s Conservative government defence policy was broadly similar to its predecessor. The intervening period leading to the release of the *2008 – Canada First Defence Strategy* (CFDS) included the continuation of conflicts in South West Asia and the Middle East including Afghanistan, Iraq and the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah War. From a Canadian perspective, these regional conflicts translated directly into continued operations in Afghanistan as part of Operation *Archer* and *Athena* in 2005 and 2006, as well as the 2006 evacuation of Canadian Citizens in Lebanon as part of Operation *Lion*. Most notably the deployment of

⁷⁹Ibid., 1.

CAF elements to Kandahar, Afghanistan in January 2006 marked the first widespread combat actions in which Canadian conventional units had participated since the Korean war resulting in some 70 fatalities⁸⁰ up to May 2008 when CFDS was released. As will be seen, operations in Afghanistan factored prominently in continued reinvestment in the military under this policy within a broadly similar strategic outlook.

Not surprisingly, the CFDS policy statement highlights many of the same threats to Canadian security and the international context as the 2005 policy statement.

Importantly, in another display of partisanship akin to that displayed in *Challenge and Commitment* statement, CFDS opened its strategic assessment as follows:

Looking back, it is clear that the peace dividend that resulted from the end of the Cold War was relatively short-lived. The 1990s saw the emergence of difficult security challenges, including failed and failing states, civil wars and global terrorism. Many countries, including Canada, were slow to fully appreciate and adjust to these new realities. During this period, governments dramatically under-invested in the Canadian Forces, leaving them seriously unprepared to deal effectively with this increasingly complex global environment.⁸¹

Beyond highlighting the persistent underfunding of the Canadian Forces stemming from the so-called “Peace Dividend” at the end of the Cold War, the policy statement pointed to many of the same themes and threats to global security as its predecessors including ethnic and border conflicts, fragile states, regional tensions, terrorism, weapons proliferation and threats to human security.⁸² Notable additions to the list of security concerns included the “...ongoing buildup of conventional forces in Asia

⁸⁰Canada. Veterans Affairs Canada, “Canada in Afghanistan - Fallen Canadian Armed Forces Members,” last accessed 4 May 2018, <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/history/canadian-armed-forces/afghanistan-remembered/fallen?filterYr=2008>

⁸¹Canada. Department of National Defence, *Canada First Defence Strategy* (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2008), 6.

⁸²*Ibid.*, 6.

Pacific countries...⁸³ as well as a renewed focus upon Canada's Arctic region as a result of "...changing weather patterns...making it more accessible to sea traffic and economic activity."⁸⁴ Thus, in terms of its strategic outlook, the paper was broadly similar to the assessment outlined in 2005 by the previous Liberal government, with added emphasis upon the destabilizing nature of the buildup of forces in the Asia-Pacific region and surveillance and control of the north.

With negligible changes to the security environment then, it is not surprising that the policy statements characterization of national interest, roles, and objectives was also broadly similar with minor refinements and additional detail. Specifically, CFDS highlighted the same three main roles for the CAF in the same order including "...defending Canada, defending North America and contributing to international peace and security..."⁸⁵ Beyond these three roles, the policy delineated six core missions ranging from the "conduct [of] daily domestic and continental operations..", through to "lead[ing] and/or conduct[ing] a major international operation for an extended period [and the] deploy[ment of] forces in response to crises elsewhere in the world for shorter periods."⁸⁶ The delineation of these six core missions, though broadly similar in terms of missions, tasks and capability outputs as the earlier 2005 policy statement, would have significant impact upon the Canadian Army's force structure and Managed Readiness Plan (MRP) as will later be illustrated. Perhaps most remarkably in this domain, however, was the degree to which the CFDS leveraged the military's recent operations in

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵Ibid., 7.

⁸⁶Ibid., 10.

Afghanistan to substantiate significant additional investment in the CAF as illustrated in the following inlaid vignette:

The Canadian Forces have learned many lessons from their complex mission in Afghanistan, and will continue to incorporate those lessons into their operational planning and training. Among other things, the Afghanistan mission has reinforced the need to:

- Maintain combat-capable units at the right level of readiness.
- Provide deployed personnel with the right mix of equipment so they can take part, on their own or with allies, in the full spectrum of operations – from countering asymmetric threats like improvised explosive devices, to contributing to reconstruction efforts in a harsh and unforgiving environment.
- Work closely and develop a coherent overarching strategy with departmental partners.⁸⁷

To summarize then, the framing of strategic imperatives within CFDS was largely similar with added detail and clarity surrounding the government's level of ambition, capability and the readiness that it expected of the CAF with the recent experience in Afghanistan serving as the backdrop and rationale supporting these.

While particularly short on detail and specifics at only 16 pages in length (excluding the Prime Minister and Minister's introductory remarks and executive summary), key themes and major announcements within the CFDS centred upon the need for reinvestment in the department to "...produce a first-class, modern military that is well trained, well equipped and ready to take on the challenges of the 21st century."⁸⁸ Indeed, in yet another parallel to the 1987 *Challenge and Commitment* paper, the CFDS made reference to various gaps across in military capabilities and pledged to rectify them through a 20-year plan to deliver "...a balanced, multi-role, combat-capable force that will give the Government the necessary flexibility to respond to a full range of challenges

⁸⁷Ibid., 9.

⁸⁸Ibid., 3.

in the years ahead.”⁸⁹ This commitment to investment in the forces coincided with significant additional funding and a reiteration of the promise for stable, predictable funding to facilitate the long-term planning necessary to rebuild neglected capabilities.

Specifically, the CFDS outlined a:

strategic investment plan...[b]uilding on Budget 2006, which increased defence baseline funding by \$5.3 billion over 5 years...[and] to raise the annual increase in defence funding to 2 percent from the current 1.5 percent starting in fiscal year 2011-12.

The promised additional spending and intent to reinvest in the forces was correlated to key additional capabilities which included growing the size of the forces to 70,000 Regular and 30,000 Reserve personnel by 2028 as well as previously announced and new procurements for CH-47F Chinook Helicopters, Trucks, and Land Combat Vehicles and Systems.⁹⁰ Thus, while the CFDS itself noted that the 20-year aggregate spending breakdown for the CAF would result in only 12 percent devoted to procure new equipment, it did signal a further commitment by the government to reinvest in the military capabilities and capacity in line with the level of ambition and intent indicated with the CAF’s six core missions.

In all, the CFDS represented broad continuity from the previous defence policy statement with some minor changes and a notable commitment to reinvest in the forces and to provide a stable, long-term funding framework to enable the development of the identified military capabilities. As it represented a minor course correction from its predecessor, it is perhaps not surprising that it was one of the shortest, most succinct policy statement’s in the nation’s history.

⁸⁹Ibid., 5.

⁹⁰Ibid., 12.

Unfortunately, in yet another parallel to the 1987 *Challenge and Commitment* paper, many of the commitments made under the banner of CFDS would yet again be broken as a function of the government's renewed fiscal austerity measures following the 2008 global financial crisis along with the under-resourcing and significant political turmoil stemming from several prominent military procurement files including the Next-Generation Fighter Capability and the National Shipbuilding Strategy.

2017 – Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy

The election of the Trudeau government in November 2015 provided the impetus for the final and most recent iteration of Canadian Defence Policy. Beyond the end of nearly a decade of Conservative government rule, the period had also borne witness to significant changes globally and within Canada. Canadian combat operations in Afghanistan had ceased in 2011 and the last remnants of CAF participation in the NATO training mission in Afghanistan had been withdrawn by March 2014. This period was also marked by CAF contributions to events unfolding in Libya under Operation *Mobile* and against Daesh elements in Iraq from August 2014 onwards as part of Operation *Impact*, both of which were devoid of conventional army manoeuvre elements. More importantly, the intervening period was marked by renewed rising tensions between East and West as characterized by Russian aggression against Georgia in 2008 and the Ukraine in 2014 and the USA's strategic rebalancing towards the Asia-Pacific. These contextual events provided the backdrop for the most recent refresh of Canadian defence policy which resulted in the release of *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy* in June 2017 (SSE). As will be illustrated, however, this iteration of Canadian

defence policy was, again, largely a continuation of past trends, and promises, intent and ambition.

The policy statement's analysis of key global trends and its strategic assessment is broadly like its two most recent forerunners with a few noteworthy additions. For instance, many of the same key challenges to traditional state and human security are cited such as regional conflicts, violent extremism and terrorism, and weapons proliferation which figure prominently within the assessment of global trends. Nonetheless, the statement identified three "...key security trends will continue to shape events: the evolving balance of power, the changing nature of conflict, and the rapid evolution of technology."⁹¹ Moreover, within these it identified several new issues including climate change, the influence of non-state actors, the implications of hybrid warfare, and the impact of changing technology leading to greater importance of social media and information as well as the cyber and space domains.⁹² Despite these enumerated differences what is perhaps most significant is the greater prominence given to rising state competition and the need for change in the systems of global governance, with explicit mention of "...Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea...[and] activities in the South China Sea [which] highlight the need for all states in the region to peacefully manage and resolve disputes in accordance with international law, and avoid coercion and other actions that could escalate tension."⁹³ The statement leveraged these recent events as well as increasing tensions with North Korean aggression concluding that "[t]he re-emergence of major power competition has reminded Canada and its allies of the

⁹¹Canada. Department of National Defence, *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy* (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2017), 49.

⁹²Ibid., 49-57.

⁹³Ibid., 50.

importance of deterrence.” Despite these developments, particularly the increasing prevalence of state competition and tensions, these changes did not translate into major re-characterizations of the national interest, roles and objectives of the CAF.

SSE was most like its recent predecessors in its articulation of the national interest and defence priorities, roles and objectives. It was the first defence policy statement to so succinctly and coherently summarize Canada’s primary strategic interest as the continued security and prosperity of the country while noting the fundamental importance of “...other factors, including global stability, the primacy of the rules-based international order, and the principle of collective defence [in] underpin[ning] Canadian security and prosperity.”⁹⁴ Despite the eloquent characterization of national interests and the above-noted changes to the strategic context and international security outlook and a so-called “...new strategic vision for defence...”⁹⁵, the policy maintained the status quo with regards to the two strategic imperatives and one strategic choice that underpinned Canadian defence policy. However, the three main roles for the forces were to be rebranded and characterized as the necessity to be “...strong at home, secure in North America, and engaged in the world.”⁹⁶ In terms of the core missions and level of ambition and intent for the contribution of CAF elements in support of international operations, SSE built upon the previously mandated six core missions outlined in CFDS to include a total of eight missions with the notable addition of specific mandates for search and rescue (though previously implied elsewhere) and the ability to “[e]ngage in capacity building to support the security of other nations and their ability to contribute to

⁹⁴Ibid.

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Ibid., 6.

security abroad.”⁹⁷ Perhaps most notably, however, was the unprecedented specificity with which this policy statement detailed the government’s ambition with respect to force generation and capacity for operational outputs which were stipulated as including more than 6,500 personnel deployed on up to nine lines of international operations concurrently.⁹⁸ Thus, from the perspective of its characterization of national interests, roles and objectives for the military, SSE largely represented continuity from those articulated in CFDS; however, the translation of those interests into specific force generation capacity and operational outputs represented increased ambition as compared to its predecessor.

Beyond the re-characterization of a new vision for defence, the other key theme highlighted throughout the document, in yet another continuation of past promises, was a renewed commitment to investment in CAF capabilities and defence funding. The requirement for additional funding and investment in the department came largely because of shortfalls from funding previously pledged but never implemented under CFDS, but also because of the increased ambition and capacity that was being directed by the government. Specifically, SSE outlined that:

the Government will grow annual defence spending over the next 10 years from \$17.1 billion in 2016-17 to \$24.6 billion in 2026-27 on an accrual basis...[and]...a rise in annual defence spending on a cash basis from \$18.9 billion in 2016-17 to \$32.7 billion in 2026-27.⁹⁹

This additional investment is expected to translate into an added 3,500 Regular Force and 1,500 Reserve Force personnel bringing the total size of the forces to 71,500 Regulars

⁹⁷Ibid., 17.

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹Ibid., 13.

and 30,000 Reserves.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, SSE has set out to fix defence funding through “stable, predictable, realistic funding...”¹⁰¹ stating that:

Defence investments will no longer be only planned in theory, then partially implemented or not implemented at all, because of imprecise or changing cost estimates. For the first time, this model is transparent, rigorously costed, and fully funded, including not just acquisition costs, but also operating and sustainment costs of new equipment. In accordance with long-standing practice, the Government of Canada will take the funding decisions necessary for future military deployments as well as decisions related to continental defence and NORAD modernization.¹⁰²

For the Canadian Army (CA), SSE has committed to recapitalize no fewer than ten specific land combat capabilities and aging vehicle fleets, modernized command and control systems and an expansion of its “light forces capability which will allow it to be more agile and effective in complex operational theatres, such as peace operations.”¹⁰³

Thus, SSE has sought to usher in, yet again, a new period of investment in the CAF and the necessary long-term stability in defence funding to enable a sustained, methodical approach to capability development. Only in the fullness of time will it be possible to assess to what extent this pledge, which as has been illustrated is not new, will pan out and be translated through implementation to yield increased capability.

In all then, SSE can be interpreted as a continuation and expansion of the previous pledges announced first in 2005, then again in 2008, to reinvest in the CAF and military capabilities. Despite significant developments in the strategic and international context within which it was written, this most recent policy statement the policy statement situates Canadian strategic interests, roles and objectives of the CAF in much the same light as CFDS with a modest expansion in the size of the forces and a commitment to

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 13, 16.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 43.

¹⁰²Ibid.

¹⁰³Ibid., 13.

long-term, stable funding necessary to furnish the necessary equipment and capabilities required to achieve the Government's stated levels of ambition for international engagement. Most notably, the policy statement has outlined an unprecedented level of ambition for operational outputs and capacity which will undoubtedly have significant impacts in terms of both equipment and force structures. Nonetheless, its commitment to fix defence funding and commitment to an ambitious capital program should enable the necessary planning and development of capabilities to be realized – so long as these commitments are enduring in nature.

Conclusion

Having surveyed the key policy documents from the *1964 White Paper on Defence* through to 2017 SSE policy statement, the following conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, while the relative priorities and objectives have shifted over the years with some pillars having either been added to or withdrawn from them as a result of strategic context, the government's agenda and policy platform, or a mix of the two, there is broad evidence for the conclusion that Canada's enduring defence priorities can best be summarized as including two strategic imperatives and one strategic choice.¹⁰⁴ More specifically, the essential priorities that have consistently been outlined throughout the years, include the defence of Canada, continental defence through a close bilateral defence relationship with the USA and defence-related contributions to international peace and security operations. The implications of these strategic priorities for the Canadian Army is worth noting given that the army's combat-capable force generation outputs figure most prominently in the latter, strategic choice dimension of relative

¹⁰⁴Douglas L. Bland, *Canada's National Defence, Volume 1: Defence Policy* (Kingston: School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, 1997), 3-4.

defence priorities. While the army always remains ready to respond to and support various government agencies in crisis consequence management, such operations are superfluous to the force's core competency as a multi-purpose, combat capable land force. This leaves the army in a particularly vulnerable position given that defence spending is generally considered to be the largest pool of discretionary government expenditures and that within this context, the army's outputs and core competencies are most closely aligned with the discretionary pillar of Canadian defence priorities; contributions to international peace and security operations.

Another noteworthy observation flowing from this historical survey is the inherent ad hoc nature and abruptness with which changes to Canadian defence policy have been made throughout the last half-century. Unlike other allies such as the USA whose defence policy review and promulgation cycles are congressionally mandated to a quadrennial cycle, in Canada no such statutory obligation exists. For instance, policy statement intervals in Canada have ranged from just over two and a half years apart, in the case of the April 1992 and December 1994 policy documents, to nearly 16 years separating the release of *Defence in the 70s* and the 1987 *Challenge and Commitment* policy statement. The haphazard nature with which Defence policy is made within this country arguably makes Canadian defence policy more open to subjective whim, and abrupt change rather than incremental, evolutionary development. This, as well, has significant implications for the CAF given that capability development and major capital procurements are inherently long-term planning and investment decisions. Consequently, the abrupt nature of policy change often results in significant waste in terms of staff effort to plan and prepare for ultimately unfunded procurements, or conversely, not having

sufficiently resourced or matured the planning, preparations and rationalization necessary to execute major capital programs when additional funding and ambition is announced.

Another central observation is the persistent pattern of under-funding and under-investment in DND and the CAF. For instance, of the seven policy statements reviewed here, only two have announced significant reductions in spending including the *Defence in the 70s* statement and the *1994 White Paper on Defence*. The balance of policy documents have committed to either modest or significant additional defence funding, the most notable of which was the *1987 Challenge and Commitment* policy statement. Of course, it is always easier to cut expenditures than to add to them as the former involves the relative certainty of reducing expenditures from a known and discreet pool of resources, commitments and expenditures, while the latter involves assumptions, estimation, the imperative to recruit, train, procure resources, and make the necessary commitments to execute a defined level of ambition and capability. Thus, reductions in defence spending almost certainly come to fruition, while pledges and commitments are not always executed as planned, and often, as in the case with the 1987 and 2008 defence policy statements pledged funding commitments are not borne out in budgetary cycles because of changes to the strategic context, or relative priorities of the various governments. The implications of this inclination toward persistent under-funding of defence is again most pronounced within the realm of capital procurements given the protracted timelines associated with such investment decisions. Consequently, this survey reinforces the notion asserted by Middlemiss and Sokolsky that: “[s]ince 1968 Canada has answered the question “how much is enough” by spending just enough – just

enough to keep its armed forces together and to allow the military to operate alongside allied units undertaking similar roles.”¹⁰⁵

The final observation flowing from this survey are the inherent challenges and difficulties associated with forecasting the strategic context and security environment and making wise, prudent, and balanced decisions regarding defence policy, funding and investment decisions. The most obvious example in this domain stems from the fundamental misjudgement of the defence and security implications following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. While some, understandably, wanted and expected a “peace dividend” associated with the extinction of any existential threat to Canadian security interests, the data and evidence clearly contradict this notion. For instance, the operational tempo of the CAF has been significantly higher since the end of the Cold War than before it. Moreover, the army was deployed in its most significant combat operations since the Korean War in little more than a decade from when some were calling for the institution of a “constabulary force” model for the Canadian Army. Thus, the importance of making moderate, well-considered, balanced and incremental changes to defence policy and investment decisions cannot be underestimated, particularly given the inherently uncertain and fluid domain of international relations and national security interests. These conclusions thus serve as the contextual background within which the policy implications have been translated into army capability development and force structures over the corresponding period which will now be examined in the ensuing chapters.

¹⁰⁵Danford W. Middlemiss and J.J. Sokolsky, *Canadian Defence: Decisions and Determinants* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989), 220.

CHAPTER 3 – THE IMPACT OF DEFENCE POLICY UPON THE CANADIAN ARMY

Introduction

Over the course of the past half-century, changes to the geopolitical, strategic context, security outlook along with domestic considerations have translated into shifting government priorities, ambitions, roles and objectives for defence. The previous chapter analysed the central changes and consistencies in Canadian defence policy throughout this period at the macro level. The present chapter will seek to analyse the major policy impacts and announcements specifically relating to Canadian Army capabilities and equipment throughout the same period, as well as the extent to which key policy announcements and capability development initiatives were implemented. As noted previously, despite the inherent incompleteness with which defence policy statements and white papers represent a fulsome picture of government policy and ambition, the various policy instruments generally capture the government's intent, particularly with respect to planned procurements, force structure and the level of ambition with which the government intends to employ defence resources in response to international and domestic contingencies. This chapter will also highlight critical structural constraints and junctures with respect to the army's capacity and ambition for capability development throughout the period in question.

In the interest of consistency, these topics will again be analysed sequentially progressing through the various defence policy instruments throughout the period from the *1964 White Paper on Defence* through to SSE (June 2017). This analysis will highlight the enduring dilemma of capability development, procurement and management of equipment within the context of an unpredictable defence policy. Specifically, the

abrupt and unpredictable nature of changes to defence policy constrains the decision-space with respect to capability investment decisions despite the inherently long-life of major weapon systems and equipment which implies a stable and predictable capability development and investment process. Despite this, except for the striking from the order of battle of 1 Canadian Division, 4 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group (4 CMBG), the Special Service Force and the Canadian Airborne Regiment (CAR) in the 1990s, the army's general force structure of three domestically-based brigade groups has remained largely intact throughout this period.

In reaching these conclusions, this chapter is sub-divided chronologically by the seven key policy documents examined already in Chapter 2. Each section will focus initially upon the key announcements with respect to army-specific planned equipment procurements and capabilities. The analysis will then examine the extent to which the various announcements and procurements were implemented. Where necessary, the section will briefly highlight structural constraints and critical junctures with respect to the army's capacity, ambition for capability development and major procurements to highlight the degree of similarity or dissonance between government policy and army ambition.

1964 – White Paper on Defence

Given the internationalist and commitment-based approach to Canadian defence policy highlighted in the 1964 *White Paper on Defence*, it is not surprising that the army-specific elements of the policy were largely based upon NATO contributions and commitments and took an inherently macro approach to army capabilities generically at the brigade level. Indeed, while the policy document highlights the other services and the roles they play with respect to meeting alliance obligations, as well as the potential for

employing CAF elements in enabling an “immediate and effective response to United Nations requirements,”¹⁰⁶ it is clear from the language used that the primary role of the Canadian Army during this period was in support of NATO deterrence and, if necessary, the defence of Europe. For instance, not only is NATO Europe listed first in terms of the policy’s description of the “Shape of the Canadian Forces 1964-1974”, the importance of the alliance is further characterized as the country’s “major defence contribution.” The central nature of Canada’s alliance contributions permeates the army’s force structure at the time, which is characterized as one brigade group stationed in Germany, and three brigades in Canada intended primarily for deployment to Europe in the event of hostilities.¹⁰⁷ In fact, beyond these broad-brushed statements with respect to size, structure and purpose, there is little more detail contained within this white paper other than the intent to re-equip the army as a Mobile Force, gradually convert the fourth brigade into a special service force, and, indirectly, the requirement to provide sufficient air and sea lift to facilitate the deployment of the Mobile Force should the need arise.¹⁰⁸

Despite the lack of direct and concrete announcements with respect to capabilities and force structure contained within the white paper, the period immediately following the release of this policy paper ultimately saw the procurement and introduction of several key pieces of equipment. As Kasurak notes, the period leading up to the promulgation of the 1964 *White Paper on Defence* saw considerable turbulence and conflicting visions with respect to both the size, scale and nature of army capabilities as both a function of the government’s initially uncertain intent and policy and a seeming

¹⁰⁶Canada. Department of National Defence, *White Paper on Defence* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1964), 24.

¹⁰⁷*Ibid.*, 21.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, 22-23.

disconnect in the translation of policy into tangible equipment procurement and force structures.¹⁰⁹ In the end, however, the policy would lead to the following changes to the army's strength:

...reduced from nearly 50,000 in 1963 to around 40,000 by 1968. The savings generated through force reduction assisted in part in securing the funding needed to deliver to the army new armoured personnel carriers, self-propelled artillery, mortars and other equipment.¹¹⁰

The policy was perhaps most significant from the perspective of the army in that it would cease to exist formally as such. Rather, it would be separated along three operational lines with "Mobile Command...responsible for the three Canada-based brigade groups, but not the NATO brigade or the Militia."¹¹¹ This would ultimately result in the NATO Brigade under command of Canadian Forces Europe (CFE), two brigades kept in reserve in Canada that were to be re-equipped and retrained as a Mobile Force as well as for rotational service with the NATO brigade, the re-role of the fourth brigade as a special service force, and the Reserve force as a separate entity under the Militia.¹¹² Importantly, the division of command authority and responsibilities led to a disjointed approach to capability development and doctrine beyond the tactical level and left strategic planning of land forces to the integrated staff at (what was then referred to as, Canadian Forces Headquarters (CFHQ)).¹¹³ Further, the implementation of the Mobile Force in Canada would ultimately prove problematic in terms of the conflicting

¹⁰⁹Peter Kasurak, *A National Force: The Evolution of Canada's Army, 1950-2000* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013), 81-89.

¹¹⁰Andrew Godefroy, "Chasing the Silver Bullet: The Evolution of Capability Development in the Canadian Army," *Canadian Military Journal* (Spring, 2007): 56.

¹¹¹Peter Kasurak, *A National Force: The Evolution of Canada's Army, 1950-2000* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013), 96.

¹¹²Canada. Department of National Defence, *White Paper on Defence* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1964), 22.

¹¹³Peter Kasurak, *A National Force: The Evolution of Canada's Army, 1950-2000* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013), 96.

requirements of being re-equipped so as to be both capable of immediate and effective response to United Nations requirements, but also being armoured forces capable of rotational service with the NATO brigade.

In the final analysis, despite the brevity and lack of detail contained within the 1964 white paper, the changes later announced by government following this policy document were to have significant, long-term impacts upon the Canadian Army both in terms of equipment procured and the repercussions that would propagate throughout the next several decades resulting from a fragmented management, command and control, and capability development framework for the Canadian Army. Indeed, the policy left a considerable chasm to bridge in reconciling the conflicting demands associated with a force that was to be both mobile, and armoured. Despite this and the changing structure and organization of the army changing through time, it is equally important to note that even with much changing, much has remained the same. For instance, the army's regular force continues to this day to be based predominantly upon three brigade groups and continues to employ a portion of the M-113 armoured personnel carrier fleet which, albeit modernized and life extended, were originally procured following this defence white paper.

1971 – Defence in the 70s

Defence in the 70s was similarly lacking in terms of highlighting major conceptual and capability-based changes to the Canadian Army. This is perhaps not surprising given the greater focus inwards upon Canadian sovereignty, internal security and continental defence and decidedly less emphasis upon NATO commitments that permeate the policy. Moreover, what little discussion and ambition is outlined within the white paper with respect to the army is, at best, an argument for the status quo, and in

many instances reductionist in terms of army capabilities, structures and equipment. Despite this, the only army procurement announced within the white paper for an air portable, light, tracked, direct-fire support¹¹⁴ was ultimately scrapped in favour of a diametrically opposed capability. Further, over the course of the ensuing 16 years, the army would re-establish a capability-driven systems approach to capability development resulting in the comprehensive design of a future army corps – one totally detached from stated government policy and ambition.

The few army-specific references and statements outlined in *Defence in the 70s* focussed generally upon the army's role and structures which would enable it to fulfill its mandate both domestically and internationally. For instance, with respect to the protection of Canada, the document made vague statements regarding the suitability of the status quo, asserting that the "...capabilities of the Canadian Forces are generally adequate for surveillance and control."¹¹⁵ The policy statement went on to highlight the air transportability of the three combat (now brigade) groups in Canada as well as the suitability of the CAR to operations in the North. It also implied an expanded role for the army to live and operate in the Arctic noting that the "...adequacy of existing equipment is also being studied, with particular emphasis on over-snow vehicles."¹¹⁶ Contrarily, with respect to the army's role within NATO and Europe the policy outlined a reduced level of ambition noting the recent decrease in ready forces stationed in Europe from 10,000 to 5,000 and a changed role for the army that implied a "high degree of mobility

¹¹⁴Canada. Department of National Defence, *White Paper on Defence: Defence in the 70s* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1971), 35.

¹¹⁵*Ibid.*, 24.

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*

needed for tactical reconnaissance missions in a Central Region reserve role.”¹¹⁷ Beyond this rather vague pronouncement, the white paper highlighted that the Centurion medium tank would be retired and replaced by an air portable “...light, tracked, direct-fire support vehicle.”¹¹⁸ This tank-replacement would be procured primarily for use in Europe but ultimately be introduced throughout the army resulting in “...enhanced compatibility of Canadian and European-based forces, and a lighter, more mobile land force capable of a wide range of missions.”¹¹⁹ However, as Kasurak ably elucidates, this procurement was the subject of fierce debate amongst NATO advocates and NATO skeptics and was ultimately symptomatic of the army’s abandonment of any pretence of building a light force in favour of a heavily equipped one.¹²⁰ The announcement made within the white paper, and the implication of procuring a British Scorpion type vehicle as the only viable candidate in production at the time, the original intent of a lightly equipped, highly mobile force was, after much review, superseded by the decision announced in November 1975 to procure 128 Leopard tanks.¹²¹ Thus, despite the limited and ambiguous direction and guidance outlined in *Defence in the 70s*, in the case of the Leopard tank and other major land systems and capabilities procured in the intervening period until the end of the Trudeau government in the early 1980s – the policy statement itself provided little insight as to the required force generation outputs, capabilities and capacity required of Canada’s army.

¹¹⁷Ibid., 34.

¹¹⁸Ibid.

¹¹⁹Ibid., 38.

¹²⁰Peter Kasurak, *A National Force: The Evolution of Canada’s Army, 1950-2000* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013), 96.

¹²¹Frank Maas, “From a Beetle to a Porsche: The Purchase of the Leopard C1 Tank for the Canadian Army,” *Canadian Military Journal* (Autumn, 2016): 17.

A deeper assessment of the evolution of Canadian defence policy in the ensuing sixteen years during which the Trudeau government was predominantly in power is beyond the subject of this work; however, what is clear during the period that followed *Defence in the 70s*, is that within the Canadian Army, the period was significant in terms of the professionalization of the capability development (then referred to as the combat development process). Specifically, it was characterized by the establishment of the Combat Development Committee (CDC) in 1974 which brought greater structure and clarity to the capability development process within the then disparate elements of the army, which at the time were divided in functional command between Canadian Forces Europe and Mobile Command.¹²² The re-formalization and centralization of capability development processes would eventually lead to the production of the *Combat Development Guide* (1976), and the introduction of operational research war games, simulation and modelling approaches to capability development, including Exercises *Bronze Nimbus* and *Bronze Rampart*, leading to a more scientific approach to questions surrounding equipment requirements and force structure. As Godefroy notes, “[t]he CDC opted for a capability driven [sic] systems based [sic] approach to combat development and focused upon the conceptual design of a future army corps.”¹²³ Over the course of the next decade, this re-invigorated capability development process would become more formalized, though ever more detached from the realities of political

¹²²Andrew Godefroy, “Chasing the Silver Bullet: The Evolution of Capability Development in the Canadian Army,” *Canadian Military Journal* (Spring, 2007): 57

¹²³Ibid.

ambition and fiscal constraints culminating in the *Land Force Combat System Study 1986-95*, colloquially referred to as *Corps '86*.¹²⁴

Despite the methodical process which this systems approach brought to the capability development process, its lack of regard for real world constraints ultimately resigned it to an exercise in futility. Indeed, as Kasurak notes:

The problem of squaring the corps concept with budget and policy was never resolved. When the system study was presented to the Defence Management Committee in December 1981, the committee acknowledged that it was logical and a defensible way of developing new requirements for the army, and that the idea of a blueprint for a larger force had some utility. It approved the results for study, training, adjustments to force structure, and guidance for future equipment purchases, but insisted that any proposed changes be submitted through the normal budgetary process. Moreover, the departmental executive insisted that any changes to the army be related to current commitments, tasks, and force structures, and take into account the fact that current army commitments called for only brigade groups or smaller units.¹²⁵

Furthermore, the fact that *Defence in the 70s* bore little resemblance to actual government policy by the late 1970s and early 1980s posed significant challenges to defence planners in terms of their ability to couch capability development within a broader policy statement that was representative of government ambition, plans and priorities. In short then, while the approach was logical, methodical and principled, its lack of regard for policy and budgetary coverage proved critical shortcomings that required greater consideration as a constraining force in the future.

In all, *Defence in the 70s* initially situated army-specific capabilities and force generation outputs within the broader strategic and policy context. However, in time the few vague and ambiguous statements contained in the white paper were ultimately

¹²⁴Peter Kasurak, *A National Force: The Evolution of Canada's Army, 1950-2000* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013), 185-199.

¹²⁵*Ibid.*, 198.

reversed or drastically altered. With presumably minimal political or policy amplification in the intervening period, the army proceeded to re-formalize and codify its approach to capability development and opted for a purist, first-principles approach without sufficient consideration of its alignment with political ambition and fiscal imperatives. The Mobile Force concept had been discarded in favour of more heavily equipped tank and mechanized forces espoused in *Corps '86*. The irony, of course, is that the approach, conclusions and structures espoused in *Corps '86* more closely resembled the level of political ambition and expenditure envisaged originally under the next incarnation of Canadian defence policy in the 1987 *Challenge and Commitment* statement.

1987 – Challenge and Commitment: A Defence Policy for Canada

While *Challenge and Commitment* opened the proverbial spigots for defence spending and signalled important changes to several army and air force commitments to NATO forces in Europe, it too provided little in the way of concrete policy direction for expected force generation outputs, and future capabilities and equipment procurements. While it provides an interesting snapshot of the size, force structure, and principal equipment resident within the various land forces at the time, beyond recognizing that in recent decades of the late 1970s and early 1980s the “army was able to replace a number of items of equipment...[albeit] in considerably smaller numbers than those they replaced,”¹²⁶ it made little mention of specific capabilities for recapitalization or further investment with the exception of low-level air defence.¹²⁷ Indeed, for a policy statement that pledged significant additional funding to “overcome the ‘bow wave’ of deferred

¹²⁶Canada. Department of National Defence, *Challenge and Commitment: A Defence Policy for Canada* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply Services Canada, 1987), 45.

¹²⁷Ibid.

equipment acquisition built up since the 1960s”¹²⁸ it is surprisingly short of detail regarding how the additional funding would be spent, particularly within the army context. Nonetheless, the rather abrupt end to the Cold War in the late 1980s meant that the limited and vague direction and guidance contained within the policy statement was stillborn and without consequence from a long-term, capability development perspective.

The key army-related changes that were outlined in the policy were focused primarily upon the consolidation of land forces within CFE in support of NATO commitments. Specifically, the policy highlighted that in addition to increasing the number of forces stationed in Europe by some 1,500 personnel. Whereas the permanent army field forces in Europe had previously been based upon 4 CMBG stationed in southern Germany with the further Canadian Air-Sea Transportable (CAST) Brigade Group committed to reinforce in Norway in time of crisis, in the event of hostilities, the government had altered its commitments to consolidate them in southern Germany, “...thus enabling the Canadian army to field a division-sized force in a crisis.”¹²⁹ Despite noting that this change would result in a number of minor changes and improvements, as well as the eventual pre-positioning of the Canada-based brigade’s equipment to Europe,¹³⁰ this changed little in terms of the size, capabilities and force-structures that were necessary for the army to maintain as the commitments had merely been geographically altered. More notable, therefore, was the announcement to field Low-Level Air Defence (LLAD) units in Europe to protect allied airfields in Europe which implied a significant capital investment and procurement program.

¹²⁸Ibid.

¹²⁹Ibid., 62.

¹³⁰Ibid.

In fact, as Kasurak notes, this lack of detail in terms of capital expenditures calls into question whether it was truly a lack of detail or blissful ignorance. For instance, he cites former Deputy Minister Buzz Nixon in the *Defence White Paper Review: The Changes, the Situation, the Outlook*, in identifying that several major army capital projects had not been mentioned in the policy statement including the multi-billion dollar Tactical Command and Control System (TCCS), helicopter replacements and the acquisition of an attack helicopter.¹³¹ However, what is clear, is the significant impact that the course-altering April 1989 federal budget had upon several previously announced procurements:

The tank project office established to purchase the tank[s] authorized in the White Paper was disbanded. The command, control, and communications project originally intended to outfit an expeditionary division was severely curtailed to equip only 4 CMBG and only with field radios, leaving the division without modern communications. The light armoured vehicle and related vehicle projects were cut back or placed on hold.¹³²

Thus, in less than two years from the date when it had been released, the policy statement which had pledged to correct the impending “bow-wave” of capital expenditures to avoid equipment rust-out, as well as a pledge to establish a new, long-term planning and funding process for the forces had essentially been cut at the knees. As already noted, while this sudden reversal stems largely, if not entirely, from the changed strategic context and security environment resulting from the collapse of the Berlin Wall and ultimately the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the policy process is unduly tilted towards reductionism and decline. Whereas the policy process leading to the release of *Challenge and Commitment* was based upon several decades of evolution

¹³¹Peter Kasurak, *A National Force: The Evolution of Canada's Army, 1950-2000* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013), 207-208.

¹³²*Ibid.*, 209.

in East-West relations, evolving and refined contributions to NATO and international commitments, in less than six months, following a significant upheaval of the world order and international relations, the government had presumably fully assessed the long-term impact of the changes, the implications for the security environment and its intended contributions to international peace and security then fully costed the impacts at the tactical level of all of these changes within the strategic environment. While the policy impacts of these contextual changes would not be formally codified for another two years, the direction and scale of government ambition were clearly foreshadowed in the April 1989 budget. These would only be exacerbated by the *1994 White Paper on Defence*.

1994 – White Paper on Defence

Before the *1994 White Paper on Defence* was released, some significant decisions were announced in the 1992 *Canadian Defence Policy* statement with lasting impact upon the size, structure, equipment and readiness levels expected of the Land Forces. Perhaps of greatest importance, the 1992 policy statement set in motion the termination of the 1st Canadian Division commitment to NATO, as well as the withdrawal of 4 CMBG elements from Europe and their subsequent removal from the order of battle.¹³³ In spite of this significant change, the policy statement confirmed that the land forces would continue to maintain a “...general purpose [sic] combat capability.”¹³⁴ Furthermore, in order to build upon the Total Force construct which had been initiated in the 1987 *Challenge and Commitment* paper, the 1992 policy statement announced that:

¹³³Canada. Department of National Defence, *Canadian Defence Policy* (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 1992), 24.

¹³⁴*Ibid.*

Command of all land forces will be exercised through a geographically oriented area structure. Within this structure, area commanders will be delegated command, support and training responsibility for all land forces – both Regulars and Reserves – within their geographical boundaries. In addition, they will have specified operational responsibilities, particularly with respect to domestic and territorial defence operations.¹³⁵

With respect to major capital programs and equipment procurement, the 1992 policy statement was one of the first policy instruments to paint such a complete picture of key programmed procurements which included: Light Armoured Vehicles (LAVs), modernized 105 mm howitzers, Tactical Command and Control Communications System (TCCCS), a close air-defence weapon, general engineering support equipment and a light logistic vehicle. While appearing, at first glance, a rather robust list by contemporary standards, the intonation that heavier equipment and capabilities would be found in the existing inventory, subtly implied that aging fleets such as the Leopard C1 tank, the M109 self-propelled howitzer and the M113 armoured personnel carrier would not be replaced.¹³⁶ Thus, the 1992 *Canadian Defence Policy* statement had set in motion substantial changes for the Canadian Army; however, in continuing to maintain the requirement for a general-purpose combat capability, the capital program for the modernization and replacement of medium weight, general-purpose capabilities remained relatively unscathed and largely intact.

As already noted, the 1994 *White Paper on Defence* was one primarily of austerity and reductions in both expenditures and force posture. Yet, within the army, the white paper introduced a clear disconnect between the status quo of force structures with modest increases to personnel, reduced resources, operations and maintenance funding,

¹³⁵Ibid., 25.

¹³⁶Peter Kasurak, *A National Force: The Evolution of Canada's Army, 1950-2000* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013), 256.

and the preservation of the status quo in terms of expected force generation outputs. For instance, despite the total strength of the Regular Force having gone from 84,000 in 1991 to 75,000 in 1995,¹³⁷ and the planned further reduction to approximately 60,000 by 1999¹³⁸ the paper announced that upwards of 10,000 CAF personnel could potentially be deployed concurrently on operations. While these reductions to force size were somewhat mitigated by the addition of up to 3,000 soldiers to the army field force, the expected force generation outputs remained unchanged to include a brigade group plus “an infantry battalion group as either a stand-by force for the UN, or to serve with NATO's Immediate Reaction Force.”¹³⁹

In the post-Cold War era, this confirmation of army force posture and readiness outputs was a significant development, particularly given the considerable calls for a broader policy change as outlined by the Canada 21 Council and other prominent analysts, which were advocating for a military equipped and focused upon peacekeeping and constabulary roles.¹⁴⁰ However, the dissonance between broadly similar force generation outputs as in the earlier Cold War era (less those CFE army elements), a significant reduction to personnel, and a persistently high operational tempo that began in the post-Cold War era, would all eventually lead to significant challenges in terms of meeting the government’s remits and continuing to train, viable multi-purpose land forces. By 2001, as renowned historian, Jack Granatstein, explains:

Both the SABRE brigade, a contingency mechanized brigade group that would be cobbled together from units in Canada in the event of a major

¹³⁷Canada. Department of National Defence, *Canadian Defence Policy* (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 1992), 25.

¹³⁸*Ibid.*, 34.

¹³⁹*Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁴⁰Joseph T. Jockel, *The Canadian Forces: Hard Choices, Soft Power* (Toronto: Brown Book Company Limited, 1999), 32.

crisis overseas, and the CANUS brigade, similarly structured and pledged to continental defence, had never trained together. The rapid reaction battalion, promised to both NATO and the UN, could not be deployed in the pledged twenty-one days unless the CF rented aircraft to move the unit and its equipment. The three understrength brigades in Canada...had not trained as brigades since 1992, and the brigade commanders had become general managers as much as or more than operational leaders.¹⁴¹

The disconnect between ends, ways and means was only beginning to rear its head.

Of even greater significance to the army's capacity for long-term, strategic planning at this critical juncture of poignant change, resource pressures, and operational strains were the impacts that the Management Command and Control Re-Engineering Team (MCCRT) brought about.¹⁴² Notably, it implied the reduction of one entire level of headquarters (1 Canadian Division), while at the same time maintaining the same operational capability combined with continued funding pressures and austerity measures resulting in the hollowing out of future land force development staffs.¹⁴³ As a direct consequence of the slashes directly to the capability development resources and staffs, by the mid-1990s "the absence of dedicated conceptual development, had restricted the overall debate concerning the future direction of the Canadian army."¹⁴⁴

In time, this lapse in strategic planning capacity would be addressed first with the creation of the Directorate of Land Strategic Concepts (DLSC) and the visioning of transformation to accept short-term savings to enable long-term strategic planning in a newly cost-constrained environment. These developments would eventually lead to the production of several strategic documents including *Advancing with Purpose: The Army*

¹⁴¹J.L. Granatstein, *Canada's Army: Waging War and Keeping the Peace*, 2nd ed, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 415-416.

¹⁴²Michael Rostek, "A Framework for Fundamental Change? The Management Command and Control Re-engineering Initiative," *Canadian Military Journal* (Winter, 2004-2005): 66-68.

¹⁴³Andrew Godefroy, "Chasing the Silver Bullet: The Evolution of Capability Development in the Canadian Army," *Canadian Military Journal* (Spring, 2007): 61.

¹⁴⁴*Ibid.*

Strategy (2002), and the *Future Force: Concepts for Future Army Capabilities* (2005).

These two keystone documents would lay the foundation for the development of the *Army of Tomorrow* concept and design work. Thus, while the lapse in long-term strategic planning capability and corporate knowledge would eventually be corrected, it would have considerable second and third order effects in terms of development timelines.

In all then, the decade following the end of the Cold-War marked a significant institutional turning point for the Canadian Army. What began with a large-scale reduction of land force elements stationed within CFE would ultimately result in the complete withdrawal from Germany by the mid-1990s, and the permanent striking of 4 CMBG and the Special Service Force (SSF) and the Canadian Airborne Regiment (CAR) from the order of battle. The re-distribution of equipment from these two formations would result in an army initially overborne by equipment with insufficient troop strength to adequately man, and perhaps more importantly, maintain the available equipment.¹⁴⁵ The deep cuts would significantly reduce field force strength with some moderating increases following in the 1994 *White Paper on Defence*. Similarly, while the government had committed to some key equipment re-capitalization and replacement projects, many were delayed or, in the case of heavy equipment, not planned. Thus, a decade following the declaration of the so-called “peace dividend”, while the government had managed to realize significant reductions to defence expenditures, within the army these cost savings had been realized at the significant cost implied by sacrificing future capability and readiness. However, as the cuts began to moderate, and a better sense for the new normal emerged, the army set about becoming “...a medium-weight, information

¹⁴⁵Peter Kasurak, *A National Force: The Evolution of Canada's Army, 1950-2000* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013), 256.

age force that was capable of applying the five operational functions...across the entire spectrum of conflict.”¹⁴⁶

2005 – A Role of Pride and Influence in the World: Defence

Within the context of Canadian Army capabilities, the 2005 defence policy statement confirmed the expected force generation outputs that it would be expected to deliver upon, and its role more broadly within the context of new force employment structures outlined within the policy paper. In outlining the shift to a more effective, relevant and responsive joint force, the policy described the key roles and mission sets that the army would be expected to deliver upon. Having critically identified a significant difference between the increased post-Cold war operational tempo and the post-Cold war force structure and operational capacity, the policy statement highlighted the ambition to increase the size of the army. With respect to new procurement projects, the statement announced plans to replace several key pieces of equipment but also indicated the intent to more robustly equip the army’s light forces in a bid to make them better suited to roles in support of the various joint force structures such as the SOG, MSTF, and SCTF.¹⁴⁷ These were the key changes outlined in the 2005 policy statement that warrant further examination.

The key army-specific initiatives outlined in the policy statement included increases to personnel strength, an improved light forces capability, and investments to improve intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and sensor systems as well as several key equipment platforms. Moreover, the policy announced the government’s

¹⁴⁶Andrew Godefroy, “Chasing the Silver Bullet: The Evolution of Capability Development in the Canadian Army,” *Canadian Military Journal* (Spring, 2007): 61.

¹⁴⁷Special Operations Group (SOG), Mission-Specific Task Force (MSTF), and Standing Contingency Task Force (SCTF).

intention to increase the size of the Canadian Army by 5,000 Regulars and 3,000 Reserves.¹⁴⁸ The increase in Regular strength being rationalized by the requirement to improve the army's capacity to force generate in support of the SOG, MSTF and SCTF, while the increase in Reserve strength was rationalized in terms of the improved responsiveness that it would yield in terms of responding "to domestic contingencies and address specific capabilities required for overseas deployments."¹⁴⁹

The policy statement provides little more in terms of the force structures, occupations and branches that these increases in personnel would affect. Ironically though, the expected force generation outputs enumerated in the 2005 Canadian defence policy statement had not drastically changed. Specifically, the force generation outputs outlined in the statement amount to roughly three battle groups or a brigade group and an infantry battalion group equating broadly to the expected outputs highlighted in the 1994 *White Paper on Defence*. Framed within this context, the requirement for an additional 5,000 Regulars is at first puzzling, unless the army had heretofore been unable to meet the force generation outputs within its existing Regular strength and force structures.

Apart from articulating that the army, like its sister services, would in the future be responsible for force generating components of the various force employment joint structures (SOG, MSTF, SCTF) envisaged within the policy statement, these changes indicated little change to army-specific force structures. However, with respect to new procurements and equipment, the statement pledged to replace several key platforms including the Leopard 1 tank, a new indirect fires capability and a new fleet of medium transport trucks to replace the aging Medium Support Vehicle Wheeled (MSVW)

¹⁴⁸Canada. Department of National Defence, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World (Defence)* (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2005), 14-15.

¹⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 15.

platform direly in need of replacement. Most notable amongst these capital programs was the plan to replace the Leopard 1 tank with a Light Armoured Vehicle (LAV)-based Mobile Gun System (MGS) and Multi-Mission Effects Vehicle (MMEV).¹⁵⁰ In addition to these planned procurements, the policy statement outlined the ambition “...to improve the communications, mobility, firepower and support capabilities of the light forces”¹⁵¹ to improve their ability to integrate within the SOG, SCTF and MSTF structures and to procure a variety of new intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance and sensor systems. In the end, these capital programs would have mixed results, primarily as a function of the fact that many of these projects were overtaken by events in Afghanistan, which forced significant re-prioritizations of army capital programs. Within less than two years, the army would cancel the MGS and MMEV projects, instead opting to replace the Leopard 1 tank with the Leopard 2 under the Tank Replacement Project. Similarly, the ambition to improve the capabilities and robustness of the army’s light forces virtually ceased, until they were ultimately reinvigorated in 2016. Perhaps most interestingly, however, was the fact that despite the planned investment in the creation of an afloat SCTF, there was no mention of any land-specific equipment or capabilities that would be required to support such a force structure. Thus, while the policy statement announced minimal changes to army force structures, the areas of planned capital investment were inherently coherent and logical within the frame of a more relevant, responsive and joint force.

Throughout this period, from a capability development perspective the army continued its efforts at concept development with the promulgation in 2007 of *Land*

¹⁵⁰Ibid.

¹⁵¹Ibid.

Operations 2021: Adaptive Dispersed Operations - The Force Employment Concept for Canada's Army of Tomorrow.¹⁵² This document, intended to serve as the conceptual framework for the design and build of the Army of Tomorrow, outlined the vision for Adaptive Dispersed Operations (ADO) which sought "...to create and sustain operational advantage over adept, adaptive adversaries through the employment of adaptive land forces alternatively dispersing and aggregating throughout the multidimensional battlespace."¹⁵³ It intended to achieve this employment concept using agile, lethal and non-lethal, net-enabled, multi-purpose forces capable of operating across the full-spectrum of conflict. Most interestingly, it articulated the need for light, medium and heavy forces – a significant departure from the level of ambition articulated by the previous defence policy only two years before; however, given the installment of the newly minted conservative Government the previous policy was no longer extant. Despite this, it is bizarre that the army would situate the estimate in advance of a more fulsome understanding of the intended policy choices and direction that this new government would ultimately articulate in the 2008 *Canada First Defence Strategy*.

2008 – Canada First Defence Strategy

The 2008 *Canada First Defence Strategy* (CFDS) was atypical of recent defence policy statements in terms of its brevity and the broad-brushed approach to articulating government intent and ambition in terms of capabilities, force structure and expected force generation outputs of all the various services, least of which for the Canadian Army. Indeed, the policy articulated most changes at the institutional level of the CAF, making it difficult to discern what, if any, specific changes would impact upon the army.

¹⁵²Canada. Department of National Defence, *Land Operations 2021: The Force Employment Concept of Canada's Army of Tomorrow* (Kingston: Directorate of Land Concepts and Design, 2007), 7.

¹⁵³Ibid.

Despite this lack of detail, the policy again pledged to increase the size of the forces in addition to announcing several new capital programs for all the services, but gave scant detail to changed expectations, if any, of force generation outputs, and the resulting force structures required to support them.

In keeping with the theme of little specific detail differentiated by service in Canadian defence policy statements, the CFDS announced increases to CAF strength with minimal discernable detail or substantiation. For example, with respect to personnel strength, the policy indicates the ambition to grow the forces by 2,000 Regular and 4,000 Reserve personnel¹⁵⁴ but gives no indication as to the breakdown by service of these increases other than to say that “[t]his expansion will allow the military to strengthen key joint and enabling capabilities.”¹⁵⁵ While these increases were a response to the significant burden being imposed by a sustained operational commitment throughout this period of upwards of 2,300 – 2,500 personnel on Operation *Archer* and *Athena* in Afghanistan, the document does not specifically make this link in rationalizing increases to the strength of the forces. Within this context, it is difficult therefore to assess what changes were envisioned to the army’s force structure other than augmentation of existing structures and organizations; however, it can be deduced from the characterization of the expansion, that they were not fundamentally intended to grow the force structures of army field formations.

Similarly, with respect to army capital programs, the policy was vague and ambiguous. Noting that the Government had already committed “significant resources to rebuilding the Forces and made decisions related to the most urgent equipment needs

¹⁵⁴Canada. Department of National Defence, *Canada First Defence Strategy* (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2008), 15.

¹⁵⁵*Ibid.*

while continuing the analysis supporting the Canada First Defence Strategy,”¹⁵⁶ it highlighted the recent procurement of trucks, mine-protected vehicles, and Leopard II tanks as urgent operational requirements in support of the war effort in Afghanistan. However, with respect to future procurements the sole announcement was the intention to procure a new Family of Land Combat Vehicles (FLCV) and Systems that would “provide a robust and flexible capability for Canada’s soldiers on high-risk missions abroad. The earliest investments in this project will provide enhanced capabilities for use in Afghanistan”¹⁵⁷ While not specifically outlined in the policy document, further refinement and evolution of the FLCV concept would result in four separate capital projects including the procurement of 550 LAV III Upgrade vehicles, 500 Tactical Armoured Patrol Vehicles (TAPV), 108 Close Combat Vehicles (CCV), and a variety of armoured engineer and Tactical Mobility Implements (TMI) for the Leopard II fleet through the Force Mobility Enhancement (FME) project.¹⁵⁸ While, the timing of the end of operations in Afghanistan was not known at the time, how exactly the Government intended to deliver any of these capital projects so expeditiously to be of any use in Afghanistan was not specified, particularly when one considers that the average major capital project requires upwards of four to eight years to deliver and achieve Initial Operational Capability (IOC). Such a drastic change in core equipment platforms in just less than three years warrants further examination.

The shift towards a medium weight, general-purpose then multi-purpose land force had first been articulated in the 1994 *White Paper on Defence*. Since that time, the

¹⁵⁶Ibid., 16.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., 17.

¹⁵⁸Canada. Department of National Defence, “Government of Canada to Renew Fleet of Land Combat Vehicles,” last accessed 2 May 2018, <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/news/article.page?doc=government-of-canada-to-renew-fleet-of-land-combat-vehicles/hnps1ufs>

army had set about designing and building itself into a LAV-based, medium weight force, with a light, albeit poorly resourced and equipped capability resident within a light infantry battalion in each of its three manoeuvre brigades. The 2005 policy then marked the intent to complete the transition to a medium-weight force through the replacement of the Leopard 1 tank fleet with the LAV-based MGS and MMEV complemented by more robust and capable light forces. Then in 2007, and in advance of an explicit change to Canadian defence policy, the army had identified the requirement for light, medium and heavy forces, presumably in response to the considerable casualties being sustained through operations in Afghanistan. The CFDS then formalized the intent to equip the army with robust light, medium and heavy-weight forces through the FLCV project which would procure three separate platforms within these weight classes. Despite these significant changes in less than three years, there had been no discernable change to the strategic context, security environment, and implied operational roles and missions expected of the Canadian Army, beyond the continuing conduct of operations in Afghanistan. Moreover, the army's own capability development document in 2009, *Towards Land Operations 2021: Studies in Support of the Army of Tomorrow Force Employment Concept* identified heavy components towards the bottom of a list of capability development priorities ranking the Leopard II tank and the CCV 25 and 26 respectively and the outputs of the FME project 29 and 30 out of 32 potential platforms.¹⁵⁹ It is therefore unsurprising that when it ultimately became clear that the CFDS was unaffordable, and the Government began to renege on planned funding

¹⁵⁹Canada. Department of National Defence, *Toward Land Operations 2021: Studies in Support of the Army of Tomorrow* (Kingston: Directorate of Land Concepts and Design, 2009), 6-15.

through its 2010 Deficit Reduction Action Plan¹⁶⁰, that one of the main victims within the army was the CCV project. Similarly, the army's Ground-Based Air Defence (GBAD) capability had been divested and appeared nowhere on the list of capability development priorities for investment.¹⁶¹

Such a flux in the relative priorities of capabilities, structures, and equipment in such a short period of time is truly indicative of the struggles that the Canadian Army, and major allies have had in terms of strategic visioning and planning following the attacks of 11 September 2001 and the hard-won lessons in more recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan as compared to the conventional threats of the Cold War era.

In all, the 2008 CFDS at first represented a modest growth plan for the increased size and strength of the CAF, with no discernable changes to force structures, yet significant additional equipment procurements. Most notably for the army, it marked a significant departure from a medium-weight, multi-purpose force complemented by light forces to a medium-weight, multi-purpose force complemented by both light and heavy forces. However, as noted above, when economics and affordability intervened following the 2008 financial crisis, and the resultant changes to government priorities and objectives, the plan for such a robust equipment package fizzled. This would result in a continued mismatch between the army's tanks, its mainstay medium-weight fleet of LAVs, and its TAPV fleet which would ultimately be fielded in mid-2016 along with the continued atrophy of its GBAD capability.

2017 – Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy

¹⁶⁰Canada. Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada, "Deficit Reduction Action Plan Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada," last accessed 2 May 2018, http://www.oic-ci.gc.ca/eng/ab-ans_cor-inf-inf-cor_drap-pard.aspx

¹⁶¹Canada. Department of National Defence, *Toward Land Operations 2021: Studies in Support of the Army of Tomorrow* (Kingston: Directorate of Land Concepts and Design, 2009), 6-15.

Released only in June 2017, it remains to be seen to what extent Canada's most recent defence policy statement SSE will be implemented and what, if any, corresponding changes to the army's force structure and capabilities that it will engender. Despite this, what is clear from the document is that for the army, it marks broadly a return to similar roles, capabilities and force structures envisaged in the 2005 *Defence Policy Statement*. The key army-specific tenets outlined in this policy statement follow in more detail.

With respect to the army's strength, the Regular army's target strength will remain unchanged despite a growth in the CAF strength of 3,500. Specifically, the policy statement highlights that the bulk of the growth in strength will be attributed to "...enable critical investments in important areas such as space and cyber, intelligence and targeting, and, most importantly, support to the health and welfare of military personnel."¹⁶²

Similarly, with no discernable growth in personnel strength there are no forecast changes to the army's force structure within the policy statement. Therefore, despite maintaining status quo with respect to army personnel strength and force structure, the 2017 policy statement implies growth in the potential force generation outputs envisaged for the forces; however, as the outputs are aggregated at the CAF level, it remains difficult to assess the army-specific remit. For instance, the policy statement outlines the ambition to conduct two sustained operations of 500 – 1500 personnel, two sustained operations of 100 – 500 personnel, in addition to one time-limited (6-9 months) deployments of 500-1500 personnel and two time-limited deployments of 100 – 500 personnel.¹⁶³ These concurrent operations are in addition to standing CAF high-readiness tasks related to Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), and Non-Combatant Evacuation (NEO)

¹⁶²Canada. Department of National Defence, *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy* (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2017), 13.

¹⁶³*Ibid.*, 19.

operations. Based upon these numbers, it is likely the Canadian Army could logically be presumed to force generate upwards of three battle-groups (BG) concurrently including a Brigade headquarters to support the requirement to conduct one sustained operation as the lead nation. The policy statement is, however, more detailed with respect to the procurement of new army capabilities and equipment.

In terms of the army's capital programs and equipment purchases, SSE announced a major recapitalization effort of myriad army platforms and systems. Amongst these, it pledged the replacement of the Armoured Combat Support Vehicle (ACSV) fleet, new logistics vehicles, heavy engineer equipment, light utility vehicles as well as command and control and intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance systems.¹⁶⁴ Perhaps most notably, however, was the intention to reacquire a GBAD capability which had previously been allowed to atrophy as well as a reinvigoration of more robustly equipped light forces. Therefore, while the bulk of these changes amount primarily to a recapitalization of existing capabilities, the latter two announcements stand out in highlighting a shift back to similar plans and programs as those espoused in the 2005 Defence Policy Statement. This change marks again a significant reversal in investment plans and priorities in just over a decade as a function of the army returning to its roots since the mid 1990s as a multi-purpose, medium weight force that can fulfill all the roles assigned it by defence policy.¹⁶⁵

Conclusion

To summarize the key findings of this historical policy survey and the analysis of key changes to army force structures, equipment programs and capability development

¹⁶⁴Ibid., 37.

¹⁶⁵Canada. Department of National Defence, *Advancing with Purpose: The Army Strategy*, 3rd ed, Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2014.

capacities since the 1964 *White Paper on Defence*, four key deductions emerge. Firstly, the changes to the command and control and organization of the Canadian Forces through the unification process in the 1960s caused considerable issues with respect to the development of methodical, coherent force and capability development processes within the Canadian Army. While this was ultimately rectified in the mid 1970s, the impact of these structural changes had significant effects over the longer term with respect to the development of doctrine, force development and procurement. Moreover, the lack of such an institutional capacity and responsibility likely had generational effects making it more difficult to fully develop this capacity over the ensuing period.

Second, despite a certain baseline of equipment procurement and recapitalization programs throughout this period, several major procurements could best be characterized as being the result of fits and starts. For instance, the procurement of the Leopard 1 tank in the 1970s in less than four years from Cabinet approval to full procurement, and then again through the Tank Replacement Project (TRP) in the early twenty-first century, albeit a more protracted affair, were both the result of extremely abbreviated procurement cycles. Moreover, as Kasurak identifies, in the initial procurement, the decision to purchase the tanks was diametrically opposed to the plan outlined in the extant policy statement and indicative of the army senior leadership's efforts to build a "big army."¹⁶⁶ Indeed, given the seeming pre-emptive nature of the development of a requirement for heavy forces in advance of the 2008 CFDS policy statement, the most recent procurement and attempted procurements of heavy platforms might too be characterized as another attempt to build the proverbial "big army."

¹⁶⁶Peter Kasurak, *A National Force: The Evolution of Canada's Army, 1950-2000*. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013), 172, 185, 199, 203, 209, 215.

Conversely, other capabilities in need of equipment procurement or recapitalization have not enjoyed the same level of attention and investment, despite their explicit identification in various policy statements. For instance, the requirement to resource more robust, capable, and effective light forces was first identified in the 2005 Defence Policy Statement yet went unfulfilled for a full 12 years before the requirement was again identified in advance of the 2017 SSE policy statement. In a similar vein, the army's GBAD capability was allowed to atrophy in the late 2000s, despite significant planned additional investment in capabilities which were ultimately scrapped such as the CCV. While the latter decision was arguably understandable given the prohibitive cost and the lack of an immediate threat within the context of the operational theatre in Afghanistan, the delay in investment in light forces is nearly incomprehensible, given the relative affordability of light in comparison to heavy forces, along with the significant contribution made by light forces throughout the Afghanistan conflict in the form of Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) tasks in support of the Afghan National Army (ANA).

Thirdly, in reviewing the various Canadian defence policy statements and white papers since 1964 a clear trend has emerged with respect to the increasing level of detail and specificity contained within them. Specifically, this review clearly indicates a pattern of increasing prescriptiveness, particularly with respect to the inclusion of major procurement plans, key force structures, missions, roles and objectives, and more recently tangible force generation capacity and outputs. For instance, the 1964 *White Paper on Defence* devoted little more than a page towards NATO forces in Europe and the Mobile Force's role internationally and domestically; whereas, SSE devotes two full pages to the

Canadian Army, highlights 11 major capital projects for army-specific planned investments and is much more prescriptive regarding the roles, missions and objectives framing government ambitions for operational employment with specific targets for force generation capacity. Within this broader trend, the turning point was the 1992 *Canadian Defence Policy* statement which was the first to outline in clear, unambiguous terms the various capabilities and capacities that government expected the CAF to deliver upon. Moreover, it was the first to enumerate in such detail the current force structure of the army, a vision of how it would change for the future, and the numerous planned procurements that would furnish the necessary equipment and capabilities to enable the plan.

The final trend that emerges from this analysis is a persistent gap between force strength and structure and expected force generation outputs – the actual number of forces required to maintain a given level of concurrent and sustained operational outputs. In substantiating the requirement for significant growth in the size of the army, the 2005 policy statement clearly made the case that despite the expectation of a peace dividend in the emerging post-Cold war environment, the opposite was true – it had ushered in a period of unprecedented instability throughout the world that resulted in the greatest demand for operational deployments of CAF elements in recent memory. Nonetheless, operational commitments throughout the period from the 1994 *White Paper on Defence* through to 2005 never exceeded the expected level of force generation outputs identified originally identified in the white paper. Similarly, in the period running from 2005 to 2008, despite a strenuous and demanding operational tempo in support of Operation *Athena* and *Archer* in Afghanistan, the army's contributions to expeditionary operations

once again never exceeded the expected force generation outputs outlined in the 2005 statement, despite identifying the need again for modest growth to the size of the CAF. While CFDS never identified clear objectives for force generation outputs and SSE's expectations have more recently been aggregated at the CAF level, the question of whether the Canadian Army has sufficient capacity to meet the mandated levels of force generation outputs over the course of a worst-case scenario sustained international operations with additional surge operations of limited duration is likely worthy of more detailed analysis.

CHAPTER 4 – CONCLUSION

This paper has sought to examine the important ways Canadian defence policy has changed from the promulgation of the *1964 White Paper on Defence* to the present. In reviewing the key defence policy statements and white papers throughout this timeframe, it highlighted the significant changes and continuities contained within them. It then assessed how these changes in defence policy have manifested and impacted army capabilities and force structure throughout this timeframe. In reviewing the historical context, domestic considerations and defence policy choices outlined by successive Canadian governments over the last half-century, this paper has shown that the ad hoc and partisan nature of Canadian defence policy combined with disparities implicit in the time horizons associated with the realignment of military capabilities results in a persistent mismatch between government policy and ambitions and army capabilities. However, it has also become clear that the opposite situation, where a given strategic context, or operational commitment, has necessitated expedited procurement of mission critical capabilities is also problematic.

This analysis has shown that the ad hoc, partisan, and unpredictability inherent in matters of Canadian defence policy combined with disparities implicit in the time horizons associated with realignment of capabilities through changed force structures and equipment procurement results in a persistent mismatch between government policy and ambitions and army capabilities. In reviewing the key policy documents from 1964 through to 2017, at the macro level of Canadian defence policy several key deductions were identified. While the relative priorities and objectives outlined in the policy statements have at times shifted, throughout this period and into the foreseeable future

Canada's enduring defence priorities can best be summarized as the defence of Canada, continental defence and defence-related contributions to international peace and security operations. With respect to the army, this deduction has added importance since, of the various services its capabilities predominantly correlate with the strategic choice dimension of relative defence priorities. This leaves the army in a particularly vulnerable position with respect to capital funding and programs.

Similarly, in the absence of a defined process review cycle for Canadian defence policy and programs such as those of other allies, Canadian defence policy choices and decision-making are particularly vulnerable to the inherent uncertainty, ad hoc and abrupt changes of direction associated with electoral cycles. Policy statement intervals in Canada have ranged from just over two and a half years apart, to nearly 16 years, and in many cases ceased being representative of the Government's true policy vision and intent within these timeframes based upon changes to the strategic context and security environment or economic and domestic policy considerations and constraints. These facts add another layer of complexity to the capability development and procurement process as the fundamental policy direction and assumptions upon which they are founded are open to sudden, abrupt change rather than incremental, evolutionary development.

Another clear trend has been the tendency to under-resource and under-invest in DND and the CAF. For instance, of the seven policy statements reviewed here, only two have announced significant reductions in spending. While the implementation of reduced funding is a virtual certainty, the uncertain timelines associated with ramping up capabilities (procuring new equipment, recruiting and training new personnel, etc.)

implies greater uncertainty in delivering them. This is particularly relevant to capital projects and procurements given the protracted timelines, analysis, and processes that must be adhered to, to ensure that they are well founded, effectively managed, and acquired in a manner that promotes access, competition and fairness.

Despite the inherent uncertainties and complexities involved in translating government policy into defence outputs, a theme of continuity has emerged within the army's force structure. Throughout the period reviewed, the brigade has remained the central building block of army capabilities and structures. Though reduced in size from, what was originally four brigades, to the current organization of three Canadian Mechanized Brigade Groups, the brigade was and remains the fundamental organization for the command and control of all arms land forces within the Canadian Army. The crux of the issues with respect to capability development have therefore been focused primarily upon how these brigades should be organized, equipped and structured and the relative priorities in terms of equipping manoeuvre and combat support arms within these varying structures.

In reviewing the consequences and impacts of the various defence policy statements upon army capabilities and capability development this paper has identified three important conclusions. Initially, organizational and structural changes to the DND/CAF stemming from the unification process in the 1960s caused considerable issues with respect to the development of methodical, coherent force and capability development processes within the Canadian Army. While a similar scenario for the army is unlikely in the foreseeable future, the problematic is still relevant today as embodied in the CAF's current dilemma with respect to the institutionalization of force development

responsibilities for joint capabilities. From an institutional perspective, wherever the institution has a force generation and force employment structure, it must also have a force development capacity.

Secondly, despite a baseline of equipment procurement and recapitalization programs throughout this period, several major procurements could best be characterized as being relatively ad hoc and poorly aligned, or in advance of formal changes to, Government policy. Meanwhile, other capabilities have not been properly resourced, despite their explicit mention in policy statements.

Finally, there is evidence of a persistent gap between force strength and structure and expected force generation outputs – the actual number of forces required to maintain a given level of concurrent and sustained operational outputs. This became most evident immediately following the end of the Cold war when operational tempo skyrocketed. In short, is the army certain that the assumptions underlying its force generation and managed readiness cycle are adequate to force generate in perpetuity the baseline outputs for sustained operations, particularly within a worst-case scenario where multiple or all surge lines of operation are demanded as well, and if not, how will this be risk-managed? More importantly, is this truly sustainable in an operational theatre with combat operations and frequent casualties. This is an area that warrants further attention and research based upon the experiences in the Balkans and more recently in Afghanistan.

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