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Canada’s Defence Review—where do the Reserves fit in?

Canada’s Defence Review—where do the Reserves fit in?
From the Editor

I t has been a remarkably busy year in Canadian defence policy. The debate over a replacement for the CF-18 and a constellation of other major procurement issues grinds on seemingly without end, there is the realignment of the commitment against Daesh/Islamic State in Northern Mesopotamia, with the concomitant issue of what Canada’s small training force in the region will do when and if the Kurds we have been mentoring actually do go into Mosul (and how those same Kurds will react if we depart). There is the new commitment to NATO in Latvia, the ongoing commitment to training in Ukraine, and finally the apparently impending commitment to ‘peace support operations’, probably in West Africa (or Colombia?) which Minister Harjit Sajjan has noted may indeed involve kinetic situations. And hovering over everything, the potential impact of a Trump Presidency.

In the background of ‘events’, as Sir Harold MacMillan used to call them, we are working through the Defence Policy Review announced on April 6 of this year. The process mandated six officially-convened policy roundtables but an astonishingly active cottage industry of free-enterprise, partisan and non-partisan roundtables sprang up alongside them (one was held at RCMI in which several Members participated). In addition, on-line public input was solicited and by the time inputs closed August 1, 20,000 Canadians had submitted their views. When we stop to consider that in an ordinary year, probably one-third of the active defence policy community in Canada can (and does, every February) fit inside the Chateau Laurier ballroom, these are remarkable numbers.

Our current Sitrep features two contributions to Review exercises commissioned by the Conference of Defence Associations Institute (CDAI) in Ottawa, and the Canadian Global Affairs Institute (CGAI) in Calgary. One is a political and historical scene-setter by Dr. Kim Richard Nossal of Queen’s University, the other a proposal of options for the Reserves by defence commentator Col George Petrolekas (Ret’d). LCol John Selkirk (Ret’d) of Reserves 2000 contributes a live response to new Reserves policy announcements from the Department of National Defence which appear very beneficial to Canada’s citizen soldiers.

History is never static and even over a very few years viewpoints may shift. A recent public revisitation of the question ‘Was Afghanistan Worth It?’ sparks a commissioned contribution from policy analyst Marko Gombac of the NATO Association of Canada.

While the debate over manned fighter aircraft continues, the Armed Forces are on the verge of acquiring (by 2021) a flotilla of unarmed UAV’s. NATO Association’s procurement reviewer Elise Wagner contributes her views on the acquisition.

In early July, the NATO Experts’ Forum convened alongside the NATO Warsaw Summit. The NATO Association of Canada sent a delegation of four, all of whom are RCMI Members. NATO Association Executive Director Robert Baines reports on their activities.

Finally, we have the news that HMS Terror, the second ship of Sir John Franklin’s doomed Arctic expedition, has (almost certainly but awaiting verification) been located. Lt(N) Joseph Frey (Ret’d) of the Royal Canadian Geographic Society contributes some preliminary thoughts on the significance of an astounding find.

Yours sincerely,

Eric S. Morse
Vice-Chair, Security Studies / Editor ad interim.

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The 2016 Defence Policy Review: the perspective of history

by Kim Richard Nossal

Editor's Note: On May 11 2016 the Conference of Defence Associations convened a roundtable on the Canadian Defence Policy Review at which two of the members of the Ministerial Advisory Panel, Gen. Raymond R. Henault and Margaret Purdy, were present. (The full membership of the Panel consists of: The Honourable Louise Arbour, former Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada and a member of the Advisory Board of The Coalition for the International Criminal Court, The Honourable Bill Graham, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, and former Minister of National Defence, General (Ret'd) Raymond R. Henault, former Chief of the Defence Staff, and past Chairman of the NATO Military Committee (CMC), Margaret Purdy, former Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet (Security and Intelligence) in the Privy Council Office, and former Associate Deputy Minister of National Defence.)

I have been asked to provide some very brief and general comments to frame our discussion today, I want to offer four observations that we might keep in mind today, and that the members of the Ministerial Advisory Panel might reflect on in the months ahead.

First, we need to put the 2016 review into broader context. Unlike many of our allies, Canada rarely reviews its defence policy: in the last half century, there were only six defence reviews between 1964 and 2008; the one initiated by the minister of national defence, Harjit Sajjan, this year is the seventh. By contrast, the United States reviews defence every four years with its Quadrennial Defense Review, and many other allies review their defence policies more frequently than in Canada.

However, the rarity of the process we are engaged in today should not blind us to the reality that the process of reviewing defence policy in Canada is actually very regular — indeed, it is as regular as clockwork. It is just that Canadian defence-review “clocks” do not measure time in a normal way, by hours or years.

Rather, in Canada, there is another regularity at work — and the years in which our defence reviews were published gives away the nature of that regularity: 1964, 1971, 1987, 1994, 2005, 2008, and now 2016.

In other words, when Canadians get a new prime minister, it is time for a new defence review. The reviews initiated by the Liberal government of Lester Pearson and his Liberal successor Pierre Elliott Trudeau; by the Progressive Conservative government of Brian Mulroney (initiated in 1984, but not delivered until 1987); by the Liberal government of Jean Chrétien, and his Liberal successor Paul Martin; and the CPC government of Stephen Harper were all driven by the desire of a new prime minister to distance himself from the defence policies of his predecessors, and to leave his own mark on Canada’s defence policy. And Justin Trudeau’s defence review is very much in this mode.

However, equally important is what did not follow these reviews: in not one instance did a government that initiated a defence review think it necessary to revisit that review during the remainder of its term in office, even though Trudeau, Mulroney, Chrétien and Harper were all in office for close to a decade or more.

What would be useful is if this particular regularity might be broken. In other words, rather than publishing a fancy review of defence policy that will adorn the desks of defence folks for a while before it gets put up on a shelf and forgotten about, it would be useful if the government committed to coming back to this review on a regular basis—in four or five years.

Given the government’s majority, we know that we will not be going to the polls until 21 October 2019, and so it would be useful if in the 2016 review the government would commit to a process of reviewing the review in 2020-21.

If the Liberals were re-elected in October 2019, a review published in 2021 would provide an opportunity to rethink defence for their second term. And if a new government were to come to office, they would have the opportunity to do the traditional review and put their own stamp on defence policy.

But what we need to do, it seems to me, is to make reviewing defence policy a regular part of the policy process in this country, as it is in many other countries.

Second, and in a related way, we need to ensure that there is a longer-term perspective with regard to the procurement

Continued on page 15
A New Life for the Army Reserve
by John Selkirk

For too many years the Militia, now more frequently referred to as the Army Reserve, has faced an uncertain future. There has been nothing as confrontational as the outright disbandment of units or even sub-units, but recruiting, training and retention policies designed with an emphasis on full-time service has resulted in a long and slow decline of units comprised of part-time reservists. Fortunately, and perhaps in the nick of time, some of the most egregious policies that allowed and abetted this death of a thousand cuts have recently been rescinded.

The Army Reserve has been shrinking for years, commencing in earnest after Canada’s withdrawal from Afghanistan. In May of this year the Auditor General reported on the Army Reserve¹ and revealed the depth of the problem. He found that the Army Reserve was shrinking at a rate of about five percent per year from Fiscal Year 2013-14 to Fiscal Year 2014-15. In his appearance before the House Standing Committee on Public Accounts in June 2016² he confirmed that trend had continued to the date of his testimony.

Furthermore, the Auditor General’s report showed that although sufficient funding for 21,000 Army Reservists had been provided in Fiscal Year 2014-15 the average number of part-time and full-time reserve soldiers was only 19,544 and only 13,944 of them were sufficiently trained to be deployed.³

And, it must be remembered that included in that number there are approximately 1,500 are already on full-time callout and therefore may not be available to participate in other full-time activity.

Does any of this matter? In the post World War Two era the Canadian Army always rose to the occasion and did as was asked of it, both overseas and domestically. But as the Regular Army shrank from its Cold War maximum the Militia gradually had to contribute more and more.

The current Government is committed to expanding Canadian participation in UN Peace Support Operations while maintaining and expanding commitments to NATO and anti-terrorist operations in the Middle East.

Currently the Canadian Armed Forces is committed to a robust training assistance mission (some would say combat mission) in Iraq of over 800 personnel, mostly Army⁴, and another 200, predominantly Army, are engaged in a training mission in the Ukraine⁵. In addition the current Government recently announced it will provide a standing force of something in the order of a battalion group minus of approximately 450 to Latvia as part of a NATO deterrent force⁶ and a larger unit of about 600 for UN peace support operations in Africa.⁷ These commitments total 2,050 soldiers and if all the personnel deployed come from the full-time Regular Army (a few, such as certain logistic personnel could be sourced from the Regular Navy or Air Force), the Regular Army will be hard pressed to maintain them after the first one or two rotations. In addition there are several other missions around the world where Canadians are now serving in small numbers.

Experience has shown that in order to maintain that many soldiers on deployment another 2,050 are required to be in training for the next rotation and a further 2,050 are not available because they were on the previous rotation. Thus, 6,150 soldiers are required to maintain the missions. Provision must also be made to replace casualties that will occur during the course of the deployments, casualties that could stem from hostile action, accidents, and sickness as well as early returns for compassionate reasons. The total number of soldiers required is fully one third of the strength of the Regular Army and could not be sustained by Regular soldiers alone.

¹ LCol John Selkirk (Ret’d) is a former Honorary Colonel of the Brockville Rifles. He served in the Militia for 12 years and the Regular Army for 21 years. He is currently the Executive Director of Reserves 2000.
But the Army has another source of personnel. The Auditor General pointed out that by August of 2013 the Army Reserve provided almost half of the Army’s 40,143 soldiers and most of these reserve soldiers are from the combat arms, with the majority being infantry. The four operations will require a lot of combat arms soldiers and while total strength of the 19 combat arms units of the Regular Army should be about 11,000 soldiers, regrettably that is not the case, as the Regular Army has suffered its own recruiting and retention woes of late.

Thus the Canadian Army will have no choice but to plan to employ at least the same percentage of reservists on expeditionary and domestic operations, as it did while engaged in Afghanistan, on earlier operations in the Balkans and on other missions. The figure for expeditionary operations was about twenty percent for most rotations while the several occasions when reservists responded to domestic events were generally all hands available affairs.

But, as the Auditor General’s report shows the Army Reserve is shrinking. Can it still provide the augmentation required by the Regular Army?

The Army Reserve has been shrinking for several years, not because of government policy but because the Canadian Armed Forces instituted more and more procedures that worked against maintaining healthy Army Reserve units. Recruit quotas were set below predicted rates of attrition, the Canadian Forces Recruiting Group was only able to fill seventy percent of the Army Reserve’s already too small recruit quotas, training attrition of those recruits who were enrolled was running at fifty per cent and part-time soldiers’ pay was liable to be taken for other purposes without notice, leaving soldiers with commitments but not the means to meet them. And those are only the worst problems.

Fortunately, former Prime Minister Harper and Minister Kenney recognized the problems and a Memorandum to Cabinet in the summer of 2015 spelled out the need to reform departmental policies. In October 2015 the Chief of the Defence Staff issued a directive to increase the size of the Primary Reserve which recognized the need to change the existing procedures. The former Commander Canadian Army provided his direction to strengthen the Army Reserve in June 2016 and his successor recently amplified that direction with further guidance.

Authority for Army Reserve recruiting and enrollment will be returned to the Army, and one hopes that means to reserve units, by April 2017, with a goal of enrolling recruits in a matter of days or weeks and not the current average of over 180 days. How recruit quotas are set will be reviewed and basic training of recruits will occur at unit locations within the school year in which the recruit is enrolled. The latter should help to address the high rate of training attrition that has continued to rise as more training was conducted at centralized facilities as recruits spent too much time travelling and not enough training.

Attrition of trained soldiers must also be addressed. Less time training in centralized facilities will help with the retention of those who are instructing recruits. Predicable pay and more opportunities for summer training will encourage soldiers to remain with their part-time Army Reserve employment, for many of these soldiers are also students and need part-time and summer jobs. The retention of skilled soldiers will also mean that jobs units must perform, like recruiting and training recruits, can be spread among more soldiers which will reduce burnout while providing variety.

Thus, expanding overseas commitments and reserve policy reforms are coming together to create the conditions for the Army Reserve to pull out of a death spiral that had been created by circumstances beyond its control. Militia units cannot return to good health overnight, but the fundamentals required to do so would now seem to be in place.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is fond of saying Canada is back. The Canadian Army is a key Canadian resource which can put truth into that statement, but without a strong Army Reserve it will not be able to sustain the effort.

The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Institute or its members.

Notes
2 http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Language=e&Mode=1&Parl=42&Ses=1&DocId=8337228 See the AG’s testimony at approximately 1038 hrs.
3 See page 10 of the Auditor General’s Report.
5 http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/operations-abroad/op-unifier.page
8 Para 5.1 of the Auditor General’s Report.
9 The Army Reserve today is comprised of 55 infantry units, 19 armoured units, 19 artillery units and 10 combat engineer units, plus signals and logistics units. Had a NDHQ plan of the mid-1990s come to fruition the Army Reserve would now be predominately comprised of combat service support units.
10 Commander Canadian Army, LGen Hainse, 7 Jun 16, to the House Public Accounts Committee, 0900 hrs.
11 Para 5.54 of the Auditor General’s Report.
This essay is one in a series commissioned by the Canadian Global Affairs Institute of Calgary, Alberta in the context of defence, security and assistance reviews by the Trudeau Government, and reprinted in Sitrep with the CGAI’s permission.

For decades, successive governments of both political stripes have been unable to design a military Reserve force, which can be a highly effective component of the defence structure, that leverages capability and satisfies Reservists and Regular soldiers alike.

Equally, few other defence issues create as much political friction between the Canadian Forces and their governing civilian masters than the Reserves. The issues of roles, tasks, recruitment, retention, locales, history and costs perhaps indicate why it is such an intractable problem – let alone that the requirements of land forces, air forces and naval forces are completely different from one another.

In the years prior to the Second World War, in other words half of Canada’s history as a state, there were limited permanent armed forces and aside from a token land force, no navy to speak of. Air forces came much later.

In its first half century, Canada was a much more rural country than it is now, and depended on volunteers, organized in local regiments, who would train in peacetime, and mobilize to contribute to the nation’s defence. This structure served as planned for the First World War and again for the Second. There was no legal obligation to serve, service was a moral obligation and that historically underpinned the contractual relationship between the Reserves and future governments which would employ them.

The legacy of the World Wars resulted in dozens of units across the country, in towns and cities large and small. Units were woven into the social fabric of their localities, the battles they had fought indelibly engraved on the history of the young state and armouries which housed these units were part of the architectural landscape everywhere. There are few armouries that are not considered pieces of Canada’s heritage.

With the advent of the Cold War, particularly the sense of the Soviet threat in Europe and beyond, armies evolved from having manpower within a structure that could mobilize, to standing forces, many of them forward deployed. It was the emergence of ‘come as you are’ warfare.

In that construct, the Reserves increasingly became viewed by defence planners as a cost centre—a liability that was maintained for political reasons rather than operational effect. Bold changes might have been enacted in Canada as in the United States, where units were created and most importantly equipped for mobilization and real-time tasks, but they were not.

In the United States, Reserve air squadrons were equipped with fighter aircraft for continental defence and specialty aircraft for transport missions and air-to-air refuelling missions. The US Navy used Reservists in air roles too (the US Navy has a fighter arm and an air surveillance arm) but also as a surge capability for specialty ships (such as the USNS Comfort) or individual specialist reinforcement. All of this was underpinned by a training system that ensured that incoming soldiers and officers are trained identically to their Regular counterparts.

In contrast, in the early years of the Cold War Canada used its Reserves for national survival roles—a body of people that could be organized to assist civil organizations in case of nuclear attack. This was the case up until the late 1960s. The latter years of the Cold War represented the zenith of land training when units had access to equipment and trained to do the same things as their Regular brethren though at a lower tactical level.

However the gains of the 1990s were lost with the re-equipping of the army in the 1990s. Vehicles increased in complexity due to the addition of weapon systems and turrets. Drivers and crew commanders now needed technical courses simply to operate vehicles and the prevailing wisdom was that Reservists couldn’t be trained on such platforms. Thus, access to equipment and further training disappeared. The result was that the land Reserve moved to a system of individual augmentation to the Regular forces. Units were no longer tactical units of employment but units of administration.

That practice has continued to today and all recent overseas deployments have featured individual augmentation, generally up to 20% of deployed forces. Domestically, units of the Reserve have not had a formal role, notwithstanding that close to 7,000 volunteered to serve during the ice storm of 1998.

If the Reserves could generate that large a number in a time of domestic crisis why couldn’t this contribution be institutionalized, many governments have asked?

The issue stems from the tradition of the Reserves in Canada. The organization, the geographic footprint and the employment policies, including recruitment and pay, are mired in an anachronistic culture that has never been modernized for Canada’s current security needs.

A typical Reserve unit or regiment is composed of 140 soldiers of all ranks, in effect, producing a company of soldiers with the trappings of a regimental command structure. These companies have no vehicles and more importantly no
logistics capability. They cannot move themselves and cannot sustain themselves (food, fuel, water and medical). And hence assigning a true operational task to a Reserve regiment is unachievable. During summer training concentrations, various militia units are grouped into composite units for which the Regular force provides support. At least these composite units have a modicum of ability to deliver operational effect.

However, the individuals who constitute the Reserve still do not have an obligation to serve, and pay and benefits are so relatively low that the combined effect is that the attrition rate in the Reserve annually approaches 30%.

Therefore modernization of the organization is not enough. And any discussion on improving the operational output of the Reserves falters as improved operational output comes with a cost in equipment and salaries. This is something in which the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) writ large are not willing to invest especially when fiscal sustainability is a challenge for the Regular force itself.

Domestic operations perhaps illustrate this quandary best. The Conservative government introduced the idea of territorial defence battalions in around 2008 as part of the Canada First Defence Strategy (CFDS)—borrowing on the prospect of efficiency gained by creating composite units for training. Although individual units across the country were normally around 140 strong, at any given time, there were in Quebec and Ontario around 4,000 Reservists available. Grouping them for training and for operational employment in times of national crisis seemed to be a good idea — a notion built upon the contribution of the Reserves following the 1998 ice storm. For defence planners, grouping small numbers into a large organization looks good on paper, but accomplishes little without other fundamental changes to increase utility.

If a national crisis occurred today, planners would never consider the Reserves in their planning or even the larger groupings of the territorial defence battalions or the Arctic response companies because there is no obligation to serve. As most Reservists are either employed in civilian jobs, or going to school, planners have no idea who, or how many will show up. And so all contingency plans revolve around what can be relied upon—the Regular force. In cases where the response from the Reserves has been overwhelming, the contribution itself becomes part of the problem as a former Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) professed. According to him, “[h]undreds of reserves soldiers showing up, without all the right kit, no vehicles and no other equipment but their rifles and a willingness to help—we spent as much time organizing them, fitting them into regular units as we did using them.”

A former Minister of National Defence opined that high readiness units could be created in each of Canada’s four geographic areas but his military leaders, notwithstanding acknowledging the soundness of the idea, were unwilling to spend financial credits when the Regular force needed to fix its own decaying capabilities.

Beyond leveraging the land Reserve by creating viable unit structures with operational deliverables, the individuals within the land Reserve are a squandered resource. To this day there is no catalogue of individual skill sets brought from the civilian world or abilities.

This is not the case in the United States. For example, in Afghanistan, a US State Department official commented that Reservists had saved the American aid programs. While aid money was flowing into Afghanistan to build schools or other infrastructure or to convince farmers to grow licit crops rather than opium, there was no means to oversee the quality of construction or the effectiveness of farming programs. The United States, which does maintain personnel lists of civilian specialties, could quickly find contractors, plumbers, electricians and engineers within its Reserve ranks. These Reserve soldiers had far greater value to the US effort by applying their civilian skills rather than being used as general combat troops. They would quickly be regrouped to monitor construction, check on quality and ensure functional delivery of projects, and in the farming sector, Guardsmen from rural states were formed into agri-business units.

In Canada, the government has no idea what it has as individuals. In the culturally diverse urban centres where many units are located, Canada has no way of tapping into linguistic skills or cultural knowledge that could otherwise be readily harnessed.

In short, the following needs to be done:

- Territorial defence should be the prime focus of the land Reserve. It can continue to support individual augmentation to the Regular force for international operations, but territorial defence tasks should be the prime role.
- The basis of training and employment should be the territorial defence battalions and these battalions will have to be properly equipped and staffed.
- These high readiness units should have different remuneration and terms of service (as outlined below).
- For soldiers not within the territorial defence structure, the Canadian Armed Forces should update personnel databases to reflect civilian skill sets resident in the Reserve and linguistic capabilities of all its members.

What are the other uses for the land Reserve? If indeed the Defence Policy Review will deliver a ‘leaner’ military, in other words a smaller military or one which will abandon certain capabilities as being unsustainable, then the Reserves provide a means to retain capability or to surge capability. Some examples include:

- At present, the Canadian Army has a tank-based armoured regiment using 40-odd Leopard tanks. It is unlikely that the Defence Policy Review will result in these numbers being increased for Regular force service. Yet Canada acquired 100 tanks during the
war in Afghanistan. Those 60 tanks could be apportioned to the Reserve. It would be a means to retain a larger-scale armoured capability and an ability to surge tanks and tank crews in times of need.

- Niche abilities which are necessary in warfare but difficult to retain in peacetime such as psychological operations (psyps), information operations, civil-military relations could be retained in the Reserve more so than in the Regular forces. There are other such niche capabilities which could be assigned to the Reserves.

The naval Reserve has similar geographic constraints to the land Reserve but entirely different employment considerations. Crewing a ship is entirely different to creating a land force unit.

Naval divisions were located across the country some with access to inland waters but in all cases far from oceans. Individuals were trained to supplement crews but did not have access to vessels. The acquisition of Maritime Coastal Defence Vessels (MCDVs)—small warships for coastal patrol and minelaying—gave the naval Reserve access to ships but the utilization of the vessels for months-long deployments meant that naval Reservists in effect emerged as a semi-permanent force rather than a uniquely Reserve force. For the naval Reserve, if it continues to exist, there are in essence three options:

- accept that the structure serves to generate individuals to form crews which will then be employed on a full-time basis;
- continue to train individuals for Regular force augmentation; and
- develop ships that would only be used in crisis to which Reservists would surge. This by default means that Reserve employment policies and terms of service would have to be fundamentally altered.

What are the air Reserve considerations? Reserve continental air defence in the United States is conducted almost exclusively by US Air Force Reserve and US Air National Guard units. This would likely be far beyond what Canada is capable of in terms of scale or acquisition of aircraft. However there are niche operational capabilities that should be explored. In Canada, like the land Reserves, air units are tied to geography; in other words, a Canadian unit recruits and survives based on its local demographics. For the air force, which has Reserve squadrons in Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg, the vitality of the squadrons depends on recruiting locally. Their operations are equally restricted to where these squadrons are located in part because Canadian Reserve squadrons only fly utility helicopters and in the case of Winnipeg fly aircraft used to train navigators. It is remarkable that Canada no longer flies fighters, transport or special mission aircraft with its Reserves.

Conversely, the United States locates squadrons where their utility is greatest and aircrews and ground support staff are flown in to their place of duty if the local area does not produce sufficient numbers. In Canada, hypothetically it would work as follows for niche roles.

Many have commented that Canada does not have sufficient surveillance assets flying at borders or coastal areas. A Reserve maritime patrol capability could be maintained on both coasts drawing on aircrews from across the country who would fly to their duty station. Aircraft could be maintained by private industry but be made available for the days aircrews, maintainers and other staff would fly in for training. In the United States this is possible because the military runs a scheduled national air service, something Canada used to do. If that is cost prohibitive, then Reserve air squadrons should be located in areas which serve as bases for Canada’s preeminent airlines in order to have a trained population upon which to draw.

The three elements—land, air and sea—are unique in terms of Reserve issues. What has consistently been at the forefront of government frustration is the utility of its land Reserves. Discussion of Reserve issues (a metaphor for the militia) inevitably focuses on the land Reserve because it is by far the largest Reserve component, the most geographically present and chronically under-utilized.

In the last years of the Harper government, the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) was continually frustrated by the inability of the Canadian Armed Forces to improve land Reserve recruiting and retention or to carve out roles for the land Reserve.

There are ways out of this conundrum but it will require both an injection of willpower by the government to force change upon the CAF and equally a very large injection of funding with strict guidance on where and how it is to be spent.

**Enabling Policies**

**Recruiting**

Reserve recruiting is always secondary to the needs of the Regular force. Enrolment times for a Reservist frequently takes months – where it could be done in weeks. The bureaucracy of recruitment needs to be streamlined. For example there is no reason a military doctor has to do an enrolment medical, a civilian doctor can do it just as well as long as the criteria are clear. Transport Canada accredits doctors to do flight medicats across the country, it does not insist on having its own doctors do medicats.

**Retention**

A major cause of attrition (coupled with insufficient access to equipment and training) stems from pay inequity. The CAF does not consider that Reserve service comes over and above a normal work week for many. Only in overseas deployments is there salary equity. Reservists employed on
contract are paid 15% less than their Regular counterparts. Reservists who parade for training in their units are paid 30% less than their Regular counterparts while having no additional benefits as inducements such as medical care or dental care for themselves or their families.

As the table on this page illustrates, the Reserves in Canada receive different benefits than the Reserves in the United States.

Only having a modicum of the benefits available to US Reservists would utterly alter the dynamic of Reserve service, recruitment and retention in Canada. However in a Canadian context this would likely be unaffordable, but it could be offered to those who chose to serve in high readiness units or within the territorial defence battalions.

<table>
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<th>Items</th>
<th>Canada</th>
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<td>Pay 2Lt</td>
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<td>Enlistment bonus (must enlist for six years)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>up to $356 per month for 36 months</td>
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<tr>
<td>GI Bill Kicker</td>
<td>partially reflected in pay for pilots, legal officers, medical officers</td>
<td>additional $350 per month</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civilian Skills Bonus</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>90% of dental only – family not covered. Family only covered on overseas deployments</td>
<td>Low cost life, health and dental coverage, covering full family. All health care free when on active duty more than 30 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>similar to United States, however no military RRSP, no retirement health care</td>
<td>Retirement Plan Retirement Savings Plan Retirement Health Care Employment transition Preferential US Govt Hiring</td>
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Terms of Service

Reserve service in Canada is entirely voluntary. There is no period of minimum enlistment nor a liability to serve either in normal training or in a time of crisis. In the United States Reservists commit to serving one weekend a month and to a two-week annual training period. Benefits are earned if they sign to a six-year enlistment period. To wrest value from Canada’s Reserves, particularly for domestic operations, a 21-day liability to serve should be enacted. This would assure planners and the government of a guaranteed minimal cohort in times of national emergency.

Equipment

Reserve units, or territorial defence battalions, should have at their disposal at a minimum vehicles sufficient on which to train and to use on deployment. These do not need to be full-scale fighting vehicles analogous to their Regular force counterparts, but of sufficient quantity and quality to enable their utility.

Expeditionary Considerations

There is no reason to alter the voluntary nature of Regular force augmentation for ongoing missions. While the system of augmentation is imperfect, it has worked. To alter how Reservists serve abroad for extended periods (nearly six months of mission preparation and six months overseas service) would require extensive overhaul of the terms of service, job protection legislation and a series of other enabling legislation.

However, the liability for service for up to 21 days could mean Reserve units deploy in humanitarian assistance or disaster relief roles. Simply knowing that a resource would be available on call, even for 21 days, would permit planners actually to consider its usage and assign roles. Ostensibly this 21-day liability to serve would have greatest effect on domestic operations but could also be used for emergency international operations.

Conclusion

Canada’s Reservists are in many cases, even with their restricted training and equipment, far better than the regular armed forces of many states, even of some in NATO. The raw material from which the Reserve is formed in Canada is generally very well educated and possesses a base technical acuity for which other states strive. To turn the Reserve into a more operationally viable institution is a function of the investment the government is willing to make in terms of equipment, salaries and employment considerations. We do, at the end of the day, get the behaviour and results we are willing to invest in.

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References

Afghanistan: “Was it worth it?”

by Marko Gombac

The War in Afghanistan has taken a back seat in the Canadian public’s interest, a chapter in our history that has been closed by the rise of new series of security issues and threats, like the return of Russia as a major geopolitical player and the war in Syria. But many have been asking if our military engagement, if the contribution of those Canadian lives both lost and damaged, so far from home, was worth the effort. Answering this question is important not only to the Canadian public, but to the world in which we, as a country, hold a respected place as level-headed and diplomatic nation.

Public opinion is a common way of measuring the worthiness of government action and foreign policy decisions. Respecting and understanding the will of your constituent public, and working to exercise their collective will is the distinguishing principle of democracy. Public opinion is also fickle. At the outset of the war, 74% of Canadians supported the US led war in Afghanistan following the events of 9/11. Two months following the May 2008 decision of the House of Commons to extend the Canadian combat mission, 58% opposed and 36% agreed with the mission. At this point Canada had lost 86 soldiers in the war. A poll following the wrap up of combat operations conducted in 2011 saw that 30% of respondents agreed that the sacrifice was worth it, while 58% did not.

Combat operations from 2001 to 2014 claimed the lives of 158 of our soldiers. More than 2000 soldiers were injured in the war between 2002 and 2011. The hidden scars, the ones very few see, come back too. The Canadian Forces reported 168 suicides amongst regular forces members between 2000 and 2014. As suicide is often under reported, this figure is certainly higher. As public opinion seems to show, many civilians did not think these losses ‘worth it’. The story has been cast in black and white; an ahistorical account of the war after many had forgotten why we had gone, and more importantly why we had stayed. We see these numbers, but its not often said what this sacrifice brought.

It is chalked up to an overreaction, to blindly following our allies, even to standing for misguided principles. While public opinion may say that support had declined for the war, it also said that at one point we had, as Canadians, supported our mission in Afghanistan. The war was worth it to us once, but did our mission fail or did we simply miss what had been accomplished?

Why did we go?

Afghanistan has been called the Graveyard of Empires as well as the Gateway to the East. The mountain lands of the Pashto people. The Seleucids, the Parthians, the Timurids, the Mujahedeen, the Soviets, the Taliban, and finally NATO all found themselves in this mountainous land in the Middle East. It is a place that has stood witness to monumental changes in history, and following the events of 9/11, it was to play host to another: the beginning of the so-called War on Terror.

Before 2001 and the war it brought, Afghanistan’s modern history was plagued by conflict. In 1978, a Marxist revolution was countered by a western and Chinese backed Mujahedeen insurgency. Soviet forces deployed in December of 1979, marking the beginning of a 9 year war that would claim the lives of 14,000 Soviets, up to 90,000 Mujahedeen, and, according to some estimates, up to 2,000,000 civilians. The war was devastating, and following the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, the Najibullah government heading the Marxist Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, lost its only form of foreign aid when the Soviet Union fell in 1991.

Looking to gain more support internally against the Mujahedeen and various other militant parties, the government remodeled as an Islamic state, free of communist leanings. The government of Najibullah was ousted in 1992, and conflict in the country quickly resumed. Iran and Saudi Arabia funded separate militias in a proxy war that would smother the fledgling government institutions and pitch the country into lawlessness. Ahmad Shah Massoud, a powerful leader of the Mujahedeen during the Afghan-Soviet war, held the capital of Kabul until 1996, when the Taliban took the city and forced Massoud north where he formed the Northern Alliance, the group NATO would come to support in the following war.

Before the invasion, Afghanistan had gone through over 20 years of continuous warfare and instability. Its major infrastructure had been completely destroyed, millions of civilians had died, with over half a million from 1990 to 2001. Countless warring parties lead to a perpetual instability, with no concrete institutions in place to develop or rebuild the
country. The NATO invasion looked to be yet another chapter in a story of suffering and restlessness, millions of Afghans having fled their homes and desperately seeking shelter within the countries borders.

What Changed?

The NATO invasion and Canada’s involvement in Afghanistan would be markedly different however. Reconstruction became an integral part of the mission, both for the practical reasons of securing the region to ensure stability in the geopolitically important Middle East and for the revival of a nation in ruins. Through the work of provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) and countless hours and billions of dollars, much was achieved. Individual projects, like the Dahla Dam which are estimated to provide 10,000 seasonal jobs, and its irrigation system, the polio immunization project and school building efforts were part of the larger humanitarian effort of NGOs and international agencies that were secured by our leadership of coalition forces. The focus of rebuilding community leadership groups in the form of development councils resulted in more than 16,000 communities with elected leaders that direct which projects to pursue to match their individual needs.

In terms of health, under-5 mortality rate (per 1000 live births) went from 257 to 102 from 2003 to 2012. Maternal mortality ratio went from 1600 deaths for every 100,000 women in 2003 to 327 in the same bracket by 2010. From 2005 to 2012, the proportion of blood samples screened for HIV and STDS went from 32% to nearly 100%. In the same time period, the prevalence of contraceptives increased by 11% nationally.

Education is touted as a major success. Children attending primary school went from no girls and only 1 million boys in 2001, to 7.8 million students in 2012 of which 2.9 million were girls. In 2012, the proportion of pupils who started grade 1 and reached the final grade of primary education was 64%, up 19% from 2003. The literacy rate of 13 to 24 year olds has gone from 34% to 47% from 2003 to 2012.

Opium cultivation continues to be a problem. Since an initial decline following the invasion of 75,000 hectares of land to around 10,000 hectares being used for opium cultivation, this number has skyrocketed to an all time high of just over 200,000 hectares being used for opium cultivation. The increase occurred despite the number of Afghans dependent on opium decreasing from 2.4 million in 2008 to 1.0 million in 2012. More work needs to be done to provide a viable and useful economic alternative to an illegal but lucrative crop, which only highlights the need to support and continue providing training to a weak Afghan state.

However, violence and insecurity have seen ups and downs since Canada's departure in a combat capacity. From 2010 to 2012, the number of gun crimes as a proportion of reported crimes rose by 4000. The amount of territory designated as hazardous by reason of anti-personnel weapons has only decreased marginally from 649 to 570 sq. km between 2010 and 2012. None of the work by PRTs, the UN, and countless NGOs would be possible without the removal of the totalitarian, fundamentalist government and the security provided by Coalition forces. The effect our withdrawal is shown in the increasing difficulty the young
afghan security forces are encountering from instability. The increase of instability and loss of hard won security directly threatens all the progress made so far.

Was it worth it?

Nation-building is no easy task. It can be argued that when the people of a nation do not build the foundations of their government and society it will not last. But once you as a foreign nation are involved in the process, it must be seen to fruition.

Our allies’ involvement in the past, and our duty to them now, is what obligates us to the Afghan people. While many will argue that principles leave people wanting when the real price of them comes home, that is the nature of principles. They are intrinsically good things, immutable testaments to ones character. When a whole nation acts, it stakes its collective principles and perceptions on those actions. The principles that you support form an essential part of your identity as a nation at home and abroad. We are a nation that struggles to give itself a national identity, perhaps because we don’t know where we stand on the world stage. Are we peacekeepers or staunch allies? Are we humanitarian aid providers or efficient war fighters? Or can those be separated?

Some call the actions of the West ‘imperialism’. In some ways, maybe. Arguably, it was arrogance in thinking, in the era that was called by Francis Fukuyama the ‘End of History’, that the West had a mandate to police the world. But what is the alternative? To look to our loyal allies and say that we appreciate you protecting us but we won’t be helping you? Our security for the last 70 odd years has been ensured by the United States of America’s spending of trillions in the defence of our continent, and to fail to come to their aid breaks a very simple human concept: trust. Trust is the foundation of society, and is the vital requirement as a foundation for peace between states. To break an agreement with those who have fought so long beside you, is the ultimate breach of trust.

In Afghanistan we worked to secure a country and then rebuild it, we did not come to plunder it. We made mistakes, but building a country from the ground up is no light task. Had we left Afghanistan following the deposition of the Taliban, public opinion would have shown the same response if not worse. We worked to improve the lives of people who suffered from a scarcity we could not fathom. It was not our material responsibility to do so, but it was certainly a moral one in terms of a nation that accepts responsibility for making the world better than we found it. Geographic location had blessed Canada with safety. It left the Afghan people at one of the cockpits of the world, in nearly constant flux with little stability. We felt the responsibility to try to help fix that situation. To question what may have caused Canadian forces, our government, and our people to feel that responsibility, is beside the point. Guilt, sympathy, kindness; the cause is irrelevant because the action is itself morally just.

The West’s extensive involvement in the modern history of Afghanistan, its use as a battleground for Soviet and Western political ambitions, requires us to work toward fixing the situation. The people of Afghanistan have been fighting for self-determination and true independence from reliance on foreign powers for decades.

It is our very ability to acknowledge and remedy our mistakes, which makes us a unique nation and a respected nation. To seek the morally right path is what we strive for. Those who sacrificed their bodies and minds did not do so for a paycheck or to line a contractor’s pockets. They did it because they felt a kinship and duty to their allies who had been attacked. They saw their own people threatened and stood up to defend them. That very same love of their homeland and their people created the sympathy in their hearts for those people who did not have anything. We stayed because we cared what happened to those Afghan people. We cared about what happened to millions of lives and millions of futures.

Canada’s mission in Afghanistan is not over. Call it state building, call it regime change. Whatever we call it we must know that it bears our name, the soil stained with our blood, sweat, tears and those of our allies. It will continue to be watered by the blood, sweat, and tears of the Afghan people who call it their home. How the new state of Afghanistan fares is not only directly resultant from our involvement, but will shape their history for generations. We must not let this mission be anything but a success, for it stands testament to who we are as a nation. It is easy to sit in comfort and watch nations around you suffer and call it pragmatism. It’s just as easy to call it pacifism. But for one of the first times in history, an invasion has been followed by reconstruction, reordering, rebuilding. Once we go somewhere to establish our own security, we choose to stay and leave something more than war and death and a declaration of victory.

Canada’s wars are wars of choice. Our people make sacrifices in war so that many more may find a hope of peace. In the World Wars we sacrificed so that our people would not know the horrors of war. Now we sacrifice so that others may also know a higher standard of living, a different mode of existence. Whether it is through direct combat missions and provincial reconstruction teams, or protection for NGOs delivering aid, our efforts are worthy and we will continue to ask what we can do better and how we can be better people. We must continue to do so at home, and we must continue to do so abroad. There can be no democracy if our population remains passive, uneducated, and uncritical, and there can be no peace if those who can act fail to do so. •

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After a Decade, Canada has Drones

by Elise Wagner

This article first appeared September 3 on the NATO Association of Canada’s website, http://natoassociation.ca/.

In a press release, the Canadian government announced that it is purchasing unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) from the US Navy with delivery set for 2021. Canada has been working to purchase UAVs for quite some time and the $14.2 million dollar contract will go a long way in increasing surveillance capabilities. Drone procurement has suffered a series of setbacks over the course of the last decade, but has proven to be ultimately successful in light of the recent purchase. This initial acquisition by the Canadian government will hopefully lead to an expansion of the fleet in the future.

The new UAVs, RQ-21A Blackjacks, include some of the newest developments in drone technology. Manufactured by Insitu, a subsidiary of Boeing, the Blackjack has a 16ft wingspan, can reach an altitude of up to 19,500ft, and has a 16 hour endurance. Significantly, the Blackjacks are unarmed UAVs unlike their more famous cousin, the MQ-1 Predator drone which uses AGM-114 Hellfire missiles. Consequently, the Blackjack will be used to collect image and signal intelligence and conduct reconnaissance missions. Canada is the first foreign government to acquire the technology from the United States and as such, training is also included in the multi-million dollar contract. The US Navy only received its first Blackjacks in August of this year after awarding its first contract to Insitu in 2013.

The project of acquiring new UAVs for the Canadian Armed Forces has been a long one. After the Joint Uninhabited Surveillance and Target Acquisition System (JUSTAS) project received a green light from the Department of National Defence (DND) in 2000, it purchased several CU-161 Sperwer UAVs for the war in Afghanistan in 2003. Operational until 2009, these French-made drones were short range surveillance vehicles which frequently broke down. In 2006, JUSTAS developed a $500 million implementation program to acquire long range surveillance and armed drones. However, the initiative never got off the ground.

In 2009, Canada leased several Heron surveillance UAVs from Israel after the Manley Commission recommended acquiring UAV capabilities conditional on Canada's continued involvement in the war in Afghanistan. During this time and for several years afterwards, the JUSTAS project requested funding from Department of National Defence for a permanent drone fleet. It was repeatedly denied the federal funding until 2014. However, a debate on how many drones Canadian forces needed, as well as the optics of the F-35 purchase, blocked the JUSTAS project once again. In early 2015, the Canadian government once again began to look for a contract to equip the CAF with UAVs and the contract for the Blackjacks was signed a few weeks ago.

One success of the Blackjack purchase is the timeline. Just last year, the Canadian government expected to award a contract by 2019 and acquire their new UAVs by 2023. If all goes according to plan, the Canadian Armed Forces will have the new Blackjacks two years ahead of that date, a feat not often attained in defence procurement.

While the Canadian forces have improved surveillance capacity, five drones do not equal a fleet. In 2012, the US military had almost 7,500 drones that were operational, 161 of which were Predator drones. In terms of size, a better comparison may be between the Canadian and British militaries. Even in this case however, Britain currently has 500 UAVs, outnumbering Canada’s resources 100 to 1. Furthermore, none of the new Canadian UAVs have the capability to perform airstrikes. Chief of Defence Staff Jonathan Vance spoke to the press in March of this year, stating that, “in my view there's little point to having a UAV that can see a danger but can't strike it if it needs to.”

UAVs continue to be an important tool in fighting the Islamic State, the militant group currently occupying parts of Syria and Iraq, by providing intelligence to deployed troops. In addition, the Blackjack UAVs will also be able to support Canadian security initiatives at home. This will include patrolling coastal areas and surveillance of Arctic waters.

Elise Wagner is the Program Editor for Procurement at the NATO Association of Canada. She is currently finishing her undergraduate degree in international relations, history, and French at the University of Toronto. In her studies, she has focused on global security and sources of instability in post-colonial Africa. Elise hopes to carve out a career in journalism in the near future. In her spare time, Elise coaches soccer and enjoys classical music.

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Four Canadians in Warsaw: The NATO Association of Canada delegation to the 2016 NATO Experts’ Forum

by Robert Baines

When the leaders of NATO gathered in Poland this past July, four RCMI Members were present representing the NATO Association of Canada at the Warsaw Summit Experts’ Forum. This forum was made up of representatives and opinion leaders from NATO member and partner countries brought together to discuss the challenges facing NATO and the future of the alliance.

The NATO Association of Canada is part of an international network of similar NGOs in NATO member and partner countries mandated to educate and engage citizens about the importance of the NATO alliance. That engagement included significant participation by the delegation at the discussions surrounding the Warsaw Summit, July 7-9, 2016.

Robert Baines, Patrick Curtis, Kathryn Langley-Hope and Garrick Ngai, were among the several hundred participants at the forum. It was organized by the Polish Institute of International Affairs and took place in the Warsaw National Stadium grounds beside the NATO Summit discussions.

At the forum, presentations were made by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, Polish President Andrzej Duda, as well as the Presidents of Ukraine, Croatia, Latvia and the Prime Minister of Montenegro, NATO’s newest member. Speeches were intermingled with discussions by leading thinkers on global security threats, including several conversations with former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and NATO member ministers of Defence and Foreign Affairs.

Fellow participants included a diverse group of academics, policy experts, bloggers, think tank leaders and members of NATO government delegations (when they were not actively involved in the summit negotiations). This was a group of people for whom NATO was a usual diet of discussion. It was thus a surprise to see so much guarded optimism regarding the anticipated Summit communiqué.

A steady flow of words like, “unity”, “solidarity” and “resolve,” were continually buttressing the declarations of the heads of government and their ministers when addressing the Summit Forum. It seemed that all of the right noises were being made. A NATO Summit is itself a re-affirming act of solidarity every two years and underlines the consensus of the alliance in supporting the principles of collective defence. This year included particularly strong emphasis on this joint purpose.

There was significant participation from our neighbours to the south including some top academics and the heads of the Centre for Strategic & International Studies, the German Marshall Fund of the United States and the Atlantic Council of the United States.

Canada received very favourable mentions on several occasions as a result of the announcement of our country’s commitment to become one of four Framework Nations for NATO’s Operation Reassurance. As one of the major contributors to this operation, the Canadian government took the decision to lead the Latvian battlegroup of 1000 soldiers (including 450 Canadians) to demonstrate the solidarity of NATO in the face of the perceived threat from Russia. As already mentioned, the issue of solidarity was a major theme of the discussions, stoked by the recent result of the Brexit referendum as well as multiple comments made by US Presidential candidate Donald Trump.

Mr. Trump’s reckless treatment of some of the foundations of international security was taken very seriously by members of the forum. The multilateral security arrangements that hold up the international system need to be clearly beneficial to all. And while the overwhelming majority of attendees agreed that NATO and the current international security architecture were essential, there was acknowledgement that NATO needed to do a better job of explaining its reason for being to the average citizens of member countries.

This is not a unique problem. A huge disconnect exists between most citizens and the multilateral institutions which are so integral to the international system and global security.

There was discussion that this disconnect may lie beyond the reach of simple public discourse. To some degree the disconnect is cultural. Whereas after the Second World War, citizens of NATO countries understood the value of security because they had a firsthand experience of war, that is no longer the case. Perhaps the most interesting discussions surrounded the enigmatic solutions to this problem.
of military systems required by defence policy. Defence procurement is one of the most difficult tasks facing democratic governments, partly because it takes so long that procurement projects extend well beyond the life of a single Parliament. Committing to an on-going process of defence policy review will encourage the creation of longer-term consistency in procurement.

Third, defence reviews in Canada have invariably been stove-pipe affairs: this review is conducted directed by the minister of national defence. The purpose of the review is to craft a defence policy that, in the words of the government itself, seeks “to ensure that DND and the CAF have what they need to confront new threats and challenges in the years ahead.”

This is, on the face of it, a rational way to proceed, given the way that government is organized and the way that the Canadian Armed Forces are funded.

Yet there are at least two fundamental problems with a stove-pipe approach.

One is that there is a tendency for the various tribes of the Canadian Armed Forces to see the review process as the opportunity to press for their particular tribe to be privileged in the review outcome—rather than for the review to determine what military capabilities need to be embraced.

Another consequence of the stove-pipe is that defence policy cannot really be made without a broader assessment of what those threats and challenges are, and what Canada’s foreign policy and its national security policy will be.

So while the defence review is in essence a vertical activity, it would be useful if there was some “horizontality” in the mix—in other words, involving other government departments in a whole-of-government approach.

My fourth and final observation is that defence reviews often tend to be written without the broader polity in mind. Those who craft the review can too quickly lose sight of one unchanging political reality that we have seen since Confederation in 1867: Canadians are happy to spend as little on defence during times of systemic peace as they can possibly get away with. As my colleague Joel Sokolsky likes to remind us, Canadians are not so much free riders in defence as they are “easy riders.” It was true in the latter half of the 19th century; it was true in the years between the world wars; it was true during the post-Cold War era; and it remains true today.

This enduring verity has crucial implications for the defence policy review. Defence policies that are written without the “easy riding” nature of Canadians in mind will be quickly abandoned. Consider the 1987 defence white paper, or the 2008 Canada First Defence Strategy, both of which were testaments to what happens when the desires of the defence establishment comes up against the persistent cheapness of Canadians, a cheapness that is always well represented in Cabinet.

In short, the defence policy embraced in the 2016 review has to “fit” the country that it is designed for. It is for that reason that whatever defence policy comes out of the stove-pipe, it must get owned by the Cabinet as a whole. If it is just introduced by Minister Sajjan and passed distractedly on the nod by other ministers, it will suffer the same fate as the 1987 and 2008 reviews—useful fodder for the chatterati but not much else.

For only if Cabinet as a whole buys into a defence policy will it provide the consistent funding that is so necessary for the delivery of a coherent and rational defence policy for Canada.

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Reports that Sir John Franklin’s second ship HMS Terror has been discovered off Canada’s King William Island, in aptly named Terror Bay, means a major new piece of the Franklin puzzle has been found. As a member of the Parks Canada-led 2014 Victoria Strait Expedition which discovered Franklin’s flagship HMS Erebus, I look forward to more light being shed on the final months of Franklin’s ill-fated 1845 British expedition which attempted to find the Northwest Passage.

In addition to the Parks Canada marine archaeology team, the 2014 Victoria Strait Expedition had several partners including The Royal Canadian Geographical Society, along with the Canadian Coast Guard, and the Royal Canadian Navy. The Arctic Research Foundation (ARF), founded by HCapt (N) Jim Balsillie, finances the R/V Martin Bergmann, which was a partner that year, and in previous and subsequent searches as well.

On September 2, 2016 Sammy Kogvik, a Canadian Ranger and a resident of Gjoa Haven, an Inuit community on the east coast of King William Island, was aboard the Martin Bergmann. While the Martin Bergmann sailed to Victoria Strait on the west coast of King William Island to join an expedition flotilla consisting of vessels from Parks Canada, the Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker CCGS Sir Wilfrid Laurier and HMCS Shawinigan, Kogvik recounted that several years previously, while on a hunting trip, he came across a mast sticking through the sea ice in Terror Bay. As a result of the tip, the crew diverted Martin Bergmann to Terror Bay, and the discovery of the wreck followed.

According to reports, an ROV (Remotely Operated Underwater Vehicle) was used to penetrate the ship to gather video and photographs. News of the discovery was announced by a British media outlet. While ARF officials quickly ID’d the vessel as Terror, Parks Canada’s underwater archaeology team, which has been leading the search for the two-ships over many years, has at the time of writing apparently not yet visited the site and have not confirmed this. This confirmation might await a new season as winter conditions settle into the area.

The location of Terror, intact, in Terror Bay may cause the historical interpretation of the expedition’s end to be rewritten. The only written record left behind by Franklin’s crew, the Victory Point note, found on the north west coast of King William Island, gives the location of where Erebus and Terror were abandoned—in Victoria Strait. Some historical Inuit accounts described a ship being crushed there by ice and sinking quickly. The discovery of Terror, completely intact and in Terror Bay raises more questions than it answers.

HMS Terror should be of interest to Americans, not only were the Erebus and Terror the first two ships to circumnavigate the Antarctic, but Terror was part of the British bombardment fleet that attacked Baltimore’s Fort McHenry. As a heavy bombardment vessel designed to attack coastal fortifications Terror’s heavy mortar fire contributed to those lines of the Star Spangled Banner, “the rockets red glare, bombs bursting in air”. Terror along with Erebus are going to be treasure troves of mid-19th Century technology and information, and the next number of years are going to be exciting to see what Parks Canada marine archaeologists will recover from these two venerable ships and the new light that they will shed on Franklin’s expedition.

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