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CANADA

THE STATE OF READINESS OF THE CANADIAN FORCES

Report of the Standing Committee on National Defence

**James Bezan, M.P.
Chair**

DECEMBER 2012

41st PARLIAMENT, FIRST SESSION

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has the honour to present its

FIFTH REPORT

Pursuant to its mandate under Standing Order 108(2) the Committee has studied Maintaining the Readiness of the Canadian Forces, and has agreed to report the following:

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THE STATE OF READINESS OF THE CANADIAN FORCES

A. Introduction

Operational readiness is a key component of any effective military. Yet, determining precisely what constitutes readiness is not as straightforward as one might think. As noted by General Walter Natynczyk, Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS), “readiness is definitely the most complex, and probably the least well understood, pillar of the four supporting pillars described in the *Canada First Defence Strategy*.” Gen. Natynczyk went on to argue that it is important to maintain a balance across the four supporting pillars — readiness, personnel, equipment and infrastructure: “Invest too little or too much in any one of them and the result will be a military that is out of balance and unable to conduct the missions the government expects of it.”¹

The CDS also noted that readiness was the least tangible of the pillars, the hardest to quantify. But, in the end, he argued, “readiness is the degree of preparedness and responsiveness of our forces that allows one to deploy them with little notice in response to government direction. It’s the ability to get the right people, with the right skills and the right equipment, into the right place at the right time and to sustain that for as long as government requires.”² In a similar vein, the Auditor General (AG) has defined readiness as “a measure of the ability of a Canadian unit to undertake an approved task. Readiness includes several aspects, including personnel, training and equipment.”³ However, although these definitions make good sense as defining criteria of readiness, it is important to note that, as pointed out to the Committee by the CDS, one cannot achieve readiness by simply “making good investments in personnel, equipment and infrastructure.” It takes “thousands of hours of dedicated training, by both the soldiers and their leadership and instructors, to get them ready.” In addition, it also takes multiple phased exercises to build teams within the various units. Readiness is a process; it involves taking individuals through escalating levels of training before they can be deployed. Once the deployment is over, the process begins again in anticipation of the next mission. One has to rebuild the strength of the units and personnel that were involved in operations, and one needs to invest the necessary training to help newer recruits fill gaps in key trades.⁴

1 Walter Natynczyk, *Evidence*, November 3, 2011, 0850.

2 Ibid., 0855.

3 Office of the Auditor of Canada, *The Fall 2011 Report of the Auditor General of Canada, Chapter 5, Maintaining and Repairing Military Equipment — National Defence*, p. 5.

4 Walter Natynczyk, *Evidence*, November 3, 2011, 0855.

B. Ready For What?

Readiness is always a calculated response to what might be. It is also important to remember that policy dictates capability. If the readiness of our troops is not in line with policy, with what will be required of them, the consequences could be embarrassment, the inability to deploy, or worse, the loss of life as a consequence of ill preparation, or, more often than not, from simply not having an informed assessment.

What it is we need to be ready for is not easily answered. We have counselled caution in making predictions and overly optimistic assumptions. However, our judgements are also based on experience and we can therefore have a good idea of what might await us. Overall, it is essential to have a multi-purpose force that is trained and equipped to fight through the full spectrum of combat — from low to high intensity warfare. The *Canada First Defence Strategy* sets out the following six core missions for the Canadian Forces:

- “Conduct daily domestic and continental operations, including in the Arctic and through NORAD;
- Support a major international event in Canada, such as the 2010 Olympics;
- Respond to a major terrorist attack;
- Support civilian authorities during a crisis in Canada such as a natural disaster;
- Lead and/or conduct a major international operation for an extended period; and
- Deploy forces in response to crises elsewhere in the world for shorter periods.”⁵

When Gen. Natynczyk was asked whether or not the Canadian Forces would be able to perform all six missions simultaneously, his answer was an unequivocal yes: “we do have the wherewithal to do the six missions simultaneously.”⁶ According to the CFDS, the Canadian Forces will “need to be a fully integrated, flexible, multi-role and combat-capable military...that will constitute a core element of a whole-of-government approach to meeting security requirements, both domestically and internationally.”⁷

The assurance shown by the CDS stands in sharp contrast to what our predecessor, the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs, heard

5 Government of Canada, *Canada First Defence Strategy* (CFDS), 2008.

6 Walter Natynczyk, *Evidence*, November 3, 2011, 0910.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 3-4.

from DND personnel and others, when it did its first study on operational readiness in 2001-2002 ([Facing Our Responsibilities: The State of Readiness of the Canadian Forces](#)). It has been 10 years since our Committee last undertook a study on the operational readiness of the Canadian Forces. In the meantime, the Canadian Forces have completed the longest combat mission in Canadian military history. Thus, given our experiences since our previous study, we thought it prudent to revisit our stated goals and re-evaluate the priorities.

i. What We've Learned from Previous Studies

When the Committee undertook its study in 2001, its main concern was that the CF be fully capable of meeting the challenges that lay ahead. During previous studies, members had heard “much about equipment rust out, poor morale, inadequate living conditions, lack of training, unsustainable levels of operational tempo, funding shortfalls, etc.”⁸

Like today, it was also recognized that “operational readiness entails more than equipment and strategy.” As the Committee noted, “one can have the best technology and the most forward-thinking senior commanders, but above all, one must also have sufficient well-trained enthusiastic troops in order to defend the country’s vital interests. Conversely, morale is certainly furthered by good equipment. The choices that need to be made are not of an either/or nature.” The Committee also understood that readiness could never effectively be achieved if one of its elements was sacrificed in order to sustain another. At the time, it was apparent that quality of life issues had been put aside in order that “money for other essentials could be made available.” The conclusion reached was that in order to ensure operational readiness, it was necessary to “see to all facets of the Canadian Forces including quality of life, training, equipment, education and leadership.” It was also argued that we need to have a good sense of what it is one is getting ready for. One’s force structure must then be appropriate for the strategic environment in which one expects to operate.⁹

ii. Responding to Today’s Security Challenges

The *Canada First Defence Strategy* (CFDS) recognizes the fact that “we live in an uncertain world and that the security challenges facing Canada are real ... and that developments abroad can have a profound impact on the safety and interests of Canadians at home.” In 2001, the terrorist attacks of September 11 had an immediate and chilling effect. Those attacks, and others “carried out since, demonstrate how instability and state failure in distant lands can directly affect our own security and that of our allies.” The CFDS then points to the following as potential threats to international stability:

8 House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs, *Facing our Responsibilities: The State of Readiness of the Canadian Forces*, May 2002, p. 6.

9 Ibid., p. 2.

- Ethnic and border conflicts;
- Fragile states, resurgent nationalism, and global criminal networks;
- Unequal access to resources and uneven economic distribution;
- The proliferation of advanced weapons and the potential emergence of new, nuclear-capable adversarial states headed by unpredictable regimes;
- The influence of Islamist militants in key regions;
- National emergencies such as floods, forest fires, hurricanes and earthquakes that can overwhelm local capabilities; and
- Possible terrorist attacks, human and drug trafficking, and the potential outbreak of infectious diseases.¹⁰

Our 2002 report and the CFDS both recognize that such challenges require an understanding of security that goes beyond merely military considerations. As noted in the latter, “today’s deployments are far more dangerous, complex and challenging than in the past, and they require more than a purely military solution.” Thus, the Canadian Forces’ contribution in Afghanistan, while essential, was only one component of a “whole-of-government approach.” Confronting today’s threats requires us to draw upon a “wide range of governmental expertise and resources.” Furthermore, such operations will, more often than not, be conducted “under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).” At times, however, “the Canadian Forces will participate where circumstances dictate with like-minded states as a responsible member of the international community;” providing “appropriate resources in support of national interests and international objectives.”¹¹

In 2002, our Committee also concluded that human security was something we need to continue to address. Today, the “notion of security needs to be understood in a broader sense than previously. Our responsibilities are not only to our own security and well-being but also to that of others.”¹² Thus, both our earlier report and the CFDS recognized the fact that, if we are going to deal with the strategic challenges we today face, we need a broader understanding of “security”.

Kerry Buck, Assistant Deputy Minister, International Security Branch and Political Director, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, informed our Committee, “we do training of peacekeeping troops to ensure they understand women’s human rights

10 *Canada First Defence Strategy*, p. 6.

11 *Ibid*, p. 9.

12 *Facing Our Responsibilities: The State of Readiness of the Canadian Forces*, p. 6.

perspective in what they're doing and how international humanitarian law ensures protection of civilians from that perspective of women's human rights."¹³ When engaging internationally across the spectrum "from soft security to hard security engagements, cooperation with DND is absolutely integral" to the success of the mission. "Responding to conflict almost always requires a multi-dimensional approach, and close civilian and military cooperation."¹⁴

According to Jill Sinclair, Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy, Department of National Defence, complex peace operations that involve the protection of civilians also require our military to have a better understanding of the people they are responsible for protecting. She emphasized that understanding women's rights is also an important aspect of pre-deployment training. "Cultural training for the Canadian Forces at-large is a central part of the pre-deployment phase of their preparation."¹⁵

Such training enables CF personnel, both male and female, to better deal with the complexities of differing situations, whether these are dealing with child soldiers, religious differences or tribal conflict. In fact, there are situations where only women can enter into certain areas or perform certain tasks. Jill Sinclair noted that overall, the CF has had "great relationships at the tribal levels and with elders" due to the "sense of respect and dignity instilled in our military personnel before they deploy".¹⁶

In light of the foregoing, it is then apparent that readiness is a multi-faceted aspect of military preparedness and training; its scope going beyond that of conventional military tasks. As well, we will need to be able to cope with the emerging principles that are coming to govern inter-state behaviour. The most recent example was the multi-national intervention in Libya in 2011. The actions undertaken by the international community were authorized by United Nations Resolution 1973 (2011) which authorized Member States to "take all necessary measures...to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack..."¹⁷

C. Improvements to CF Readiness and Ongoing Challenges

i. Personnel and Equipment

Can we sustain the commitments made, and directions set forth, in the *Canada First Defence Strategy*? More importantly, can we guarantee that the men and women of the Canadian Forces will have the tools needed to do what we require of them? "How" we send our troops is as important a consideration as "why" we send them. The latter is a

13 Kerry Buck, *Evidence*, March 8, 2012, 1125.

14 Ibid.

15 Jill Sinclair, *Evidence*, March 8, 2012.

16 Ibid., 1125.

17 United Nations, UN Security Council Resolution 1973 (2011) on Libya.

matter of strategic and national self-interest; the former entails a moral commitment we make to the men and women who accept an “unconditional liability” when serving their country.

When appearing before the Committee 10 years ago, the then-Chief of the Naval Staff argued that the Navy would “not be able to deliver its mandated level of maritime defence capability without additional resources.” He worried that the Navy faced serious personnel shortages in a number of trades and specialties. He concluded that “aircraft fleet reductions, national procurement reductions and a shortage of personnel will have a direct impact on the Navy’s ability to conduct surveillance of and control Canadian territory.” Overall, these problems had the potential “to severely degrade fleet operations and effectiveness.”¹⁸

The then-Chief of the Air Staff told the Committee that “the Air Force is ‘one deep’ in many areas and has lost much of its flexibility, redundancy and ability to surge.” Personnel shortfalls meant that the Air Force could face a loss of capability. It would also be difficult, he argued, to meet “DND and government performance expectations.”¹⁹

The then-Chief of the Land Staff delivered the most pessimistic message. The Army, he told the Committee, was “overdrawn on its human capital account, in both the physical and psychological senses.” He further argued that the Army was not sustainable under the circumstances and he did not believe that the level of commitment to the mission in Bosnia could be sustained. The specific problems facing the Army included personnel fatigue, stress, and the impact of a high operational tempo. As well, regular and Reserve unit strengths and leadership cadres had fallen to critical levels. The testimony heard was a clear reminder that it is always important to distinguish between the theoretical or planned capabilities of the CF and the actual or real capabilities.²⁰

At the time, the Committee found this testimony rather disturbing. The Canadian Forces were in an obvious state of disrepair and, in the hope of improving matters, the Committee offered up a series of what it considered reasonable, albeit fairly wide-ranging recommendations.

During our current study, we heard of no such problems from the senior leadership of the Canadian Forces. When appearing before the Committee, Vice-Admiral Bruce Donaldson, Vice-Chief of the Defence Staff, told us that now that the Kandahar mission is completed, the CF needs to take steps to bring its resource requirements into

18 Ibid., p. 24.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid., p. 25. In 1995 1,029 Canadian troops served with the NATO Stabilization Force (SFOR). The number of Canadian personnel was gradually reduced after 2001 to 650 members by October 2004. The deployment was known as Operation PALLADIUM (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

balance with the broader economic priorities of Canadians and the longer-term capability requirements of the military. He simply accepted the fact that there will be a period of extended austerity and that adapting to the post-Afghanistan conflict will require making some important choices. “Building a new capability or even sustaining the current level of some capabilities will require trade-offs in others.”²¹ Trade-offs could come in the form of specialization and strategic investment.

In his appearance before the Committee, Lieutenant-General Peter J. Devlin, Chief of the Land Staff, told us that the army is different from what it was 10 years ago. In the wake of attacks on the World Trade Center, the world security situation changed dramatically and the Canadian Army was compelled to keep up with it. Today’s army “must be nimble, highly trained, and immediately responsive to a menu of new and unanticipated challenges.” It will have to be capable of operating in different theatres; often in more than one at the same time. In order to meet these challenges, training is now synchronized with the air force which has adjusted to the army’s “24-month managed readiness plan.” According to LGen Devlin, the two services have developed a new sense of respect for one another and operate together more effectively.²² In addition, he emphasized that the Army’s awareness and coordination with whole-of-government partners “has also grown tremendously” since Canada has been engaged in Afghanistan.

In terms of personnel and equipment, we were told that the Army is currently “reloading”. As the Commander explained: “We have been involved in the recovery of our people, our equipment, and our ideas from combat in Afghanistan, the reconstitution of the force, and the reorientation of the force.” At the same time, he was realistic as to what the future holds. He acknowledged that the end of combat operations in Afghanistan will lead to a decline in recruitment numbers for the Army. The 1,000 vehicles that are coming back from Afghanistan are currently being maintained in Edmonton. He stated that by the fall of 2012, the Army will have a battle group-type force equipped with all its relevant protection and armoured vehicles ready for deployment. The Commander was also realistic about cuts to the defence budget and their effect on the Army’s procurement plans. He noted that in its current vehicle purchases, the Army indicated the base number of vehicles it requires with an option that would provide for additional flexibility. For example, the Army is buying 500 tactical and patrol vehicles with an option of 100 more.

We are pleased to hear from the Army Commander that the Army Reserve will continue to be integrated with the regular force so that it can continue to play an important role in future operations at home and abroad. Reservists represent a pool of skilled individuals whose talents and dedication have not always been given proper recognition. The Afghanistan mission could not have been carried out without them. Although he recommended that the Army move away from integrating the two forces, Lieutenant-

21 Bruce Donaldson, *Evidence*, December 15, 2011.

22 Peter Devlin, *Evidence*, November 22, 2011, 0845, 0950.

General Andrew Leslie, in his report, acknowledged that Reservists would still be required to augment regular force units and formations for international operations. He noted the contributions made by Reservists in Afghanistan as follows: “To anyone who has soldiered with them, yes they are equal. They have undergone the same training and when they come off that ramp and set foot in Afghanistan, you can’t tell the Reservists from the Regulars. The Army could not have done what it did in Afghanistan without the Reserve. We would have crashed and burned. The country owes them a huge debt of gratitude.”²³

We are therefore supportive of the government’s decision to provide “employer assistance” to those who hire members of the Reserve. All those who believe in the valued contribution made by the Reserves recognize the fact we have a societal responsibility to ensure that the burden of fielding Reserve forces does not fall solely on either employer or Reservists themselves. Major-General Steve Bowes recognized that, “there are some areas where Reservists are uniquely qualified to provide a skill set that isn’t replicated in the regular force. Because they are not full-time soldiers, they have part-time careers — and full-time careers otherwise in many cases — and those skill sets translate into very usable experiences overseas.”²⁴ The government’s decision, in the last budget, to provide employer assistance when Reservists are deployed, is most welcome. In addition, as of June 2012, the federal government and all provincial and territorial governments have passed job protection legislation for Reservists. Our British and Australian allies have job protection legislation and financial support for employers. We should do no less. As a Committee, we unanimously support the government’s initiatives in this regard.

Vice-Admiral Paul Maddison, Commander, Royal Canadian Navy, told members that three core principles underlie the navy’s approach to readiness: first, there is the protection of Canada’s maritime interests at home; second, these same interests require the navy to be able to act globally; and third, readiness is about empowering the men and women of the RCN with “the tools they need to get the job done.” In support of these principles, the navy operates a high readiness task group, which is its principal asset for “major contingencies at home or abroad.” This task group consists of “one air defence destroyer, which also acts as the command platform for an embarked commander; two or three general purpose frigates; one underway replenishment ship; their embarked helicopters; and when dictated by the mission, one submarine.”²⁵

With regard to the navy, there have been long-standing questions as to the viability of its submarines and the wisdom of continuing with the program. VAdm Maddison assured the Committee that by the end of 2012, the navy will have two fully operational high readiness submarines: one on each coast. A third, at lesser readiness, will be

23 Quoted in, David Pratt, “Canada’s Citizen Soldiers: A Discussion Paper,” Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, March 2011, p. 69.

24 Steve Bowes, *Evidence*, October 20, 2012, 0925.

25 Paul Maddison, *Evidence*, December 6, 2011, 0855.

operational sometime in 2013. One of the four submarines will always be in what is called “deep maintenance”.²⁶

Professor James Fergusson, of the University of Manitoba, suggested in his testimony that “the argument made for Canada and submarines are [*sic*] more driven by naval images than they are [*sic*] by really strategic requirements relative to available resources.” He suggested that the Victoria class submarines are in fact of little use for surveillance purposes, nor did he think they could be effectively used in challenging potential adversaries. However, he did admit that, given the large investment already made in the program, it might do well to complete the project; we can’t escape the costs already incurred.²⁷ If the program is not seen to completion, we would lose a capability not easily regained. The training of crews is a long-term process and shore infrastructure is expensive. If we dispense with the Victoria class submarines and decide, at some future date, that we really do need this kind of capability, then providing for it could prove truly prohibitive.

Unfortunately, at this time, Committee members cannot find consensus on this issue. While some believe submarines to be an essential capability for our navy, others believe it is important for Canada to review its stated need for this capability. Nevertheless, when it comes to either abandoning or acquiring a major capability, we recognize that it is important to proceed with prudence.

With respect to the navy’s personnel shortages as identified in the Committee’s previous study, VAdm Maddison informed members that between 2004 and today, the RCN “actually became smaller”²⁸ while CF land combat forces grew. It became evident two or three years ago that if recruiting sailors was not made a CF priority, the navy “would not be able to sustain the readiness [it] needed to put ships to sea to meet the six core CFDS missions.”²⁹ As a result, the CDS made navy recruitment a priority and the Commander is pleased with the progress so far. He also predicted that the navy’s stressed trades, such as marine systems technical trades and the naval electronics technical trades, will recover by 2017. This influx of new sailors, however, has put stress on RCN schools and fleets — a stress which, as the Commander indicated, is currently necessary.

Lieutenant-General André Deschamps, Commander, Royal Canadian Air Force, addressed the question of whether or not the F-35 was the most appropriate replacement for the aging CF-18. According to him, the F-35 remains the appropriate choice for the RCAF. While some have suggested the Super Hornet instead of the F-35, he argued that, although it is a reliable aircraft “it isn’t the aircraft that Canada needs for the coming

26 Ibid., 0905.

27 James Fergusson, *Evidence*, March 1, 2012, 1200.

28 Paul Maddison, *Evidence*, December 6, 2011, 0910.

29 Ibid.

decades.” The stealth capabilities of the Super Hornet are not as good as those of the F-35.³⁰

In comparison to other possible contenders, the F-35 brings a “different set of skills to any conflict.” One of the major differences, according to LGen Deschamps, is the way the aircraft integrates information. The new technologies, that are part of the aircraft, allow pilots to access information very quickly and efficiently and to share it with others; the airplane “projects a net of information that’s massively larger than what can be done now.” He added that this capability is not available on other aircraft that are currently available.³¹

The Committee also heard from Roger Ingebrigsten, Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Norway, and Rear-Admiral Trond Grytling, Defence Attaché, Royal Norwegian Embassy. Mr. Ingebrigsten told members that the F-35 was considered the best replacement for Norway’s current fleet of F-16 fighters. Norway plans to procure 52 F-35s. He also noted that Norway “evaluated three different candidates, and the F-35 was number one in all areas.”³²

Our Committee is not in a position to determine which particular piece of equipment is best suited to fulfill a capability; that is the responsibility of experts. Our responsibility is to make recommendations on those capabilities we deem important for the CF to possess. In this regard, we firmly believe that Canada must replace its current fleet of CF-18s with aircraft that will allow us to fulfill our territorial needs and international obligations.

In terms of other platforms, the procurement of the C-17s and the C-130Js has satisfied RCAF requirements for strategic and tactical lift as recommended by our Committee 10 years ago. In addition, the Chinooks will also soon be delivered, adding to this lift capability which gives the CF greater flexibility in where it can move people and equipment within a short timeframe. According to the Commander, these platforms have already proven their worth, particularly in Afghanistan. The RCAF is also expecting the Cyclone in the coming years. However, whenever a new fleet is integrated into the air force, growing pains in terms of personnel and training challenges are inevitable and “will challenge [the RCAF’s] ability to maintain readiness.”³³

In terms of personnel, the RCAF has 26 trades of which 9 were classified as “stressed trades” last year. This year, the figure has improved to 7 trades. Due to new streamlined training processes, the Commander is “fairly confident” that the RCAF will “close the gap on those remaining trades.”³⁴ Producing pilots, however, will remain a stressed trade. According to the Commander, “the current shortage of 250 pilots has

30 André Deschamps, *Evidence*, December 13, 2011, 0950.

31 *Ibid.*, 0930.

32 Roger Ingebrigsten, *Evidence*, November 24, 2011, 0855.

33 André Deschamps, *Evidence*, December 13, 2012, 0855.

34 *Ibid.*

existed for at least 10 years.”³⁵ His current goal is to produce 105 pilots a year to start filling the gaps while absorbing regular losses due to retirements and career changes.

Another area of particular interest to members was that of Search and Rescue (SAR), the air and maritime components of which are the responsibility of DND. We all know of the questions that have recently been raised with respect to response times and readily available crews. Lieutenant-General Walt Semianiw, Commander of Canada Command, explained the criteria according to which SAR assets are located and readiness levels established. With respect to personnel, LGen Deschamps assured members that the SAR technician trade is healthy and, in fact, “slightly over establishment.”³⁶ However, last year, the RCAF could not retrain its flight engineers for the Cormorant or train enough of them to make up for this loss due to technical issues that had limited the availability of the helicopter. According to the Commander, only 7 out of 14 helicopters were available for missions. The government has since procured a number of spare parts made available recently by the U.S. as it shuts down its EH-101 helicopter fleet. As a result, the Commander is “reasonably optimistic”³⁷ that the level of availability of the Cormorant will improve as these spare parts move through the system. During this particular study, we did not take a detailed look at Search and Rescue, but nevertheless feel confident in asserting that adequate equipment is a crucial element in the success or failure of SAR missions. With respect to fixed-wing SAR aircraft, the RCAF is starting to benefit from the replacement of the older Hercules with the newer J models. In terms of the aged Buffalos, however, the Commander described the RCAF as “hanging in there.”³⁸ As a Committee, we believe that the replacement of the Buffalos is long overdue.

Finally, the CF is also responsible for protecting its own cyber infrastructure. Major-General Jonathan Vance, Director of Staff, Strategic Joint Staff, told the Committee that “over time our cyber capacity will need to increase, commensurate with the rest of the world’s cyber capacity.” While Canada has a good cyber capacity, we will need to continue to develop and invest in it.³⁹ Professor David Skillicorn, from Queen’s University’s School of Computing, made a similar observation. He also went on to suggest that if we are going to be effective in combating cyber threats, we will need to have analysts with an education that can incorporate both the social sciences and data analysis. It has been the tradition to rely on analysts trained primarily in the social sciences. Given the technical skills required in today’s cyber world, we require analysts who can bridge the gap between social science training and data analysis. He also noted that there are major synergies between “the things you have to think about to do cyber security and the things you have to think about

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid., 1025.

39 Jonathan Vance, *Evidence*, November 1, 2011, 0910.

to do signals intelligence.” As a result, he concluded that the “Communications Security Establishment is the right place to put cyber security and all of its related issues.”⁴⁰

ii. Transformation

The testimony we heard from the senior leadership of the CF helped to confirm the validity of our initial conclusions; especially the need to maintain a readily deployable, balanced multi-purpose force; the continuous relevance of education and training; and the need for modern equipment. Steven Staples, President of the Rideau Institute, reminded the Committee, “as LGen Leslie pointed out in his report, if we’re serious about the future — which we must be — the impact of reallocating thousands of people and billions of dollars from what we’re doing now to what we want to do to position us for tomorrow will require some dramatic changes.”⁴¹

CF readiness, however, is not solely confined to maintaining major platforms. In his testimony, MGen Vance noted that there is always a tendency to look at the “large pieces of the Canadian Forces: the battalions, the ships, the aircraft” as being the most important element of readiness, while forgetting the “enablers” that allow forces to operate effectively. Command and Control is one such example. According to him, one “cannot work in an alliance or coalition effort now without having very sophisticated capacity and technical ability for command and control.”⁴²

We were therefore encouraged by the recent announcement on May 11, 2012, regarding the streamlining of the CF Command and Control Structure. The CF sees these changes as a logical evolution of the CF Transformation Process initiated in 2005-2006 by General Rick Hillier. The changes brought about by Gen. Hillier were intended to meet the challenges of the security environment and to ensure the continued relevance of the CF. As a consequence, new operational commands were created: Canada Command, Canadian Expeditionary Force Command, Canadian Special Operations Forces Command, and Canadian Operational Support Command.⁴³

In 2010, as part of an ongoing review process within the defence institution, Gen. Natynczyk appointed LGen Leslie as Chief of Transformation. His Report on Transformation was released in September 2011 and in May 2012; the CF “announced the launch of a revised operational command and control structure with the creation of a single command, The Canadian Joint Operational Command (CJOC).” The CJOC consolidates the activities of Canada Command, Canadian Expeditionary Force Command, and Canadian Operational Support Command. The new headquarters will “be

40 David Skillicorn, *Evidence*, February 14, 2012, 1430.

41 Steven Staples, *Evidence*, February 9, 2012, 1210.

42 Jonathan Vance, *Evidence*, November 1, 2011, 0850.

43 Department of National Defence, *Canadian Forces Transformation: New Operational Command and Control Structure*, May 11, 2012.

responsible for conducting all CF operations in Canada, North America, and globally, in concert with national and international partners.”⁴⁴

One of the more important concerns of LGen Leslie’s report was to reduce administrative overhead and return uniformed personnel to operational units. His hope was to “rationalize the number of organizations and people involved in the planning, conduct and oversight of operations; bring coherence and efficiency to the management of the many diverse and disparate military capabilities that are spread across the entire organization; improve the emphasis on, and effectiveness of, joint operations and joint capability not just as enablers but as key future capabilities; and, to improve the coherence of the analysis, prioritization and delivery of future capability requirements.”⁴⁵

According to the Department, the new structures “will reduce the number of CF officers in strategic headquarters by up to 25 per cent and will make more efficient use of administrative resources.” These personnel can then be redistributed to “emerging capabilities and operational demands.”⁴⁶ We consider this an encouraging development. Our Committee will follow the transformation process closely and expects to receive detailed briefings and progress reports from relevant officials involved in the process. We also expect to hear the views of those most affected by the transformation.

Our Committee will also expect an update as to how the transformation process will affect the Reserves; especially the militia. We have already noted the critical contribution of the army reserve to the campaign in Afghanistan and we are therefore adamant that Reserve training not be sacrificed on the altar of budgetary restraint. Cutting the administrative component of Class B Reservists at headquarters is justifiable; this is a matter that has been discussed for years. However, if our militia is to remain an integral component of the Total Force, which it has proven itself to be, it will need the training and resources to sustain that capability.

iii. Training and Education

According to Professor Michael Hennessy, of the Royal Military College, we know enough of the uncertainties to be able to realistically suggest “some essential coping strategies for ensuring a robust response to emergent, though perhaps unanticipated, challenges.”⁴⁷ Since the publication of the *Canada First* Defence Strategy in 2008, there have been several significant international developments.

Coping with these challenges will be difficult, but, as he notes, “Except for Arctic issues and sovereignty patrols, our forces are structured primarily for highly discretionary

44 Ibid.

45 DND, *Report on Transformation*, 2011, p. xi.

46 Ibid.

47 Michael Hennessy, *Evidence*, February, 14, 2012, 1410.

external deployment.” The CF has had 15 years of experience in such external deployment and is “arguably much better organized to deploy and to sustain these external commitments than ever before.” He went on to note that in particular, “there are much better command, control, coordination, communications, and intelligence facilities, not just for the deployed forces, but also for our headquarters in Ottawa and for the national command authority. They are much better prepared now than in 1995, 2001, or 2008.⁴⁸

Readiness is “not simply about the kit or the command and control.” The most important element is the people in the Canadian Forces. Several of our witnesses referred to the fact that, if the CF is to remain effective, it must be able to recruit the best and the brightest. However, those recruited need to have the “personal strengths, mental agility, physical dexterity, and emotional resolve to thrive in harm’s way, while upholding the best of Canadian values.” Serving members require a high degree of what is generally referred to as cognitive readiness, that is, the intellectual and mental disposition to rise to a host of challenges and be able to formulate new responses.⁴⁹ According to Michael Hennessy, the importance of “cognitive readiness at the tactical, operational and higher levels” receives little recognition, but it is precisely these skills that are the foundation of CF “agility” and readiness.

Armed forces train according to doctrine which, in turn, is based “on captured experiences and reflections on that experience.” But, what is taught often lags behind contemporary experience. The danger is that as our forces withdraw from large scale external deployments, “the range of experiences will diminish and hard lessons may be lost.” This is especially true of the army. The navy and air force must continue to sail their ships and fly their planes on a continuing basis,⁵⁰ even though active training regimes are expensive. Regular active training regimes are necessary for the Army as well.

MGen Steve Bowes told members that the skills developed by the Army over the last several years are “perishable”. The challenge for army training will be to maintain the successes that have been learned while continuing to adapt to the challenging environment. At the same time, improvements have been made in operating jointly with the other services and in building mutual respect between the regular and reserve components of the Army.⁵¹

We saw this first hand on our visit to the Canadian Manoeuvre Training Centre (CMTC) in Wainwright where we participated in two training scenarios. The training package we witnessed was different from what the army was training for over the past several years when training for counter-insurgency operations for Afghanistan was a

48 Ibid., 1410-1415.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid., 1414.

51 Steve Bowes, *Evidence*, October 20, 2011, 0855.

priority. Although the skills learned over this time have been valuable, the army is back to training for more than what it encountered in Afghanistan. That is to say, it is training for a full spectrum of operations, from humanitarian assistance to combat, including the ability to fight a near-peer adversary alongside our allies and partners. MGen Bowes also noted that “there will be an increased emphasis on training in Arctic and jungle operations, mountain warfare, and littoral operations, as well as in parachute and air mobile operations.”⁵²

The two training scenarios we participated in included a number of tasks within this spectrum of operations. In the first scenario, soldiers were asked to help civilian authorities with transferring refugees from one area to a nearby camp. During this process, two suicide bombers attacked the area. The second scenario included the rescue and recovery of civilians after their bus was hit by an improvised explosive device (IED). This included a medical evacuation aboard a Sea King helicopter and therefore, coordination with the Royal Canadian Air Force was also tested. Throughout these scenarios, instructors at CMTC were silently monitoring and evaluating the soldiers at work. Feedback was provided once the training was over. This proved to be an incredible opportunity for us to gain insight into the training soldiers go through. The planning and organization behind these scenarios provide soldiers with as much of a real-life experience as possible down to the very last detail. The challenges and frustrations of operating in a foreign land with respect to culture and language, as well as the shock of witnessing the aftermath of an attack, are also seen as necessary experiences for these soldiers to encounter in training. Actors, including those with foreign language skills, are hired; makeup artists are on hand with fake blood, wounds and limbs, all to provide as much realism to the scenarios as possible. Our Committee felt privileged to be able to participate in these scenarios and is encouraged by how this training challenges our military personnel on how to think and behave in crisis situations whether they be engaging the enemy or conducting humanitarian activities.

According to Michael Hennessy, to be “ready” for deployment, especially an unanticipated mission requiring quick response, one must have invested in “the long term preparation for the travails of war.” Such investment is also a must for “alliance cooperation or coordination; the framing of new tactics; operational techniques; or the incorporation of, or response to, unimagined new weapons systems.” All of this requires well educated individuals.⁵³ As noted above, he told us that the last 15 years have seen great strides in the development of “national command-and-control coordination and intelligence assets.” Such progress is encouraging. Various capabilities have been significantly developed and if we are to be prepared for the future, it is important that we not overlook the “hard-learned lessons of the past 15 years” and again sink into an era of

52 Ibid.

53 Michael Hennessy, *Evidence*, February 14, 2012, 1410.

complacency. In the end, “it is the people in the loop who make the difference between being prepared and not being prepared.”⁵⁴

The importance of these skill sets was most recently demonstrated during the Libyan campaign when Canada again made an important contribution both in terms of equipment and personnel. CF members participated in conjunction with not only Alliance members, but also with regional non-NATO partners. In addition, Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) Lieutenant-General Charles Bouchard was appointed Joint Task Force Commander of Operation Unified Protector and operated from NATO Allied Joint Force Command Headquarters in Naples, Italy. In reflecting on the operation, LGen Bouchard noted: “I think this mission proved that we can actually rapidly mount an operation and bring people together, give them a common objective and successfully meet these objectives.”⁵⁵

The Libyan campaign also demonstrated the importance of maintaining forces at an appropriate level of readiness. For example, when HMCS Charlottetown was deployed to assist in a limited non-combat evacuation operation (NEO), once in theatre the mission quickly evolved “to directly assisting the air campaign and Misran forces.” In today’s “complex security environments, CF members must be prepared for the widest possible range of contingencies.” It is therefore important that the CF always “maintain some units capable of performing a full range of required international operations, which may include disaster assistance, non-combat evacuation, naval and air interdiction and hostage rescue amongst others.”⁵⁶

Adaptability is then a key component of readiness. Combat conditions can change very quickly and the ability to adapt is essential. This tells us that operational experience is crucial to the sustainability and effectiveness of a force. However, operational experience also needs to be buttressed by education. According to James Fergusson, to assume a particular training scenario, say Afghanistan, is readily transferable to other future combat environments could prove problematic. It is then important that we not be trapped by past experience. It is here where a broad appreciation of education is again crucial. What worries him is “that the education side is the most vulnerable right now because it’s really about the future, educating the enlisted personnel, but most importantly educating the officers, the young officers, who in 5 to 10 years will increasingly be taking up command positions.” According to him, the tendency has been to prefer operational experience over education. In times of restraint, and the pressures to do everything that is expected of them, the forces tend to prepare for the unexpected by relying on past

54 Ibid., 1415.

55 NATO, *We Answered the Call — The End of Operation Unified Protector*, October 31, 2011.

56 David Perry, *Leading From Behind is Still Leading: Canada and the International Intervention in Libya*, Conference of Defence Associations Institute, 2012, p. 4.

experience and thereby downplay the importance of “education.” The result may be the “loss” of an important capability that cannot be easily restored.⁵⁷

Professor Lee Windsor, of the University of New Brunswick offered similar observations when he argued that the tendency today, because of the technologically sophisticated nature of warfare, is to view military readiness largely in terms of equipment. He believed that allowing military readiness to “default to equipment” is a mistake. As he told the Committee: “I submit to you today that the most important elements of military readiness I have observed, the ones that define more than any other factors whether a unit can succeed in its mission and win on the battlefield, are training and education.” It is these distinctly intellectual preparations that “create both the will and the mental capacity” to deal with whatever is required to ensure mission success.⁵⁸

iv. Research and Development

In addition to the importance of investment in education, there is also the importance of research and development. When visiting the Toronto facilities of Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC), members of our Committee were very impressed with the work being done. What we saw and heard left us convinced that DRDC projects provided a significant contribution to the effectiveness and welfare of our military. The CDS himself recently praised the work of the DRDC by stating that, “You’ve saved lives. You’ve saved countless lives, and for that I’m truly indebted.”⁵⁹

However, as a result of funding reductions, certain important programs may be cut. DRDC is stopping work on a bomb detection project at its Suffield facility in Alberta and the Counter Terrorism Technology Centre, which “conducts research into chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive incidents will also be scaled back.”⁶⁰ The research done at Suffield and other sites is designed to protect front-line soldiers and enhance their effectiveness.

D. Defence Spending While Balancing the Books

Finally, there is the question of whether or not the CFDS is sustainable in light of recently announced budget cuts. Professor Douglas Bland warned that “Canadians should be wary of the old defence policy canard — that is, defence cuts disguised as transformation.” When it comes to this adage of finding efficiencies and doing “more with less”, Bland simply concluded that “in every case since 1962, every government’s policy aimed at finding efficiencies to allow the Canadian Forces to do more with less has

57 James Fergusson, *Evidence*, March 1, 2012, 1120.

58 Lee Windsor, *Evidence*, March 6, 2012, 1105.

59 David Pugliese, “DND Will Cut 242 Civilian Jobs,” *Postmedia News*, April 14, 2012.

60 *Ibid.*

produced in fact military forces capable of only doing less with less.”⁶¹ Others, upon having done a careful analysis of the potential effects of budget reductions, have argued that savings will come largely from the readiness pillar because of the large cuts to operations and maintenance. David Perry has concluded that decision makers have opted to “reduce the deployability of the military today in favour of preserving its capabilities for the future.”⁶²

However, by targeting operations and maintenance, the government may simply have decided that it will restore defence spending once its books are balanced and thereby decided not to sacrifice needed capabilities. According to Perry, this makes sense, because “it means preserving personnel and equipment that would take much longer to regenerate than readiness.”⁶³ This approach makes good sense to the Members of our Committee. In the previous Parliament, our Committee had undertaken a study of “The Role of Canadian Soldiers Post 2011.” If there was one consistent theme that ran throughout the testimony we heard, it was that our soldiers needed a respite. It is very unlikely that we will be involved in an Afghanistan-type operation anytime soon. At the same time, equipment is needed so that the CF can again contribute significantly when called upon.

All of our allies are going through similar cost-saving exercises, and the approach taken here is one we believe will, over the long run, stand the men and women of the CF in good stead. At the same time, our Committee is determined to monitor the transformation process closely in order to ensure that it delivers on its claims without sacrificing the interests and well-being of the serving members of our military.

A general consensus emerged among our witnesses in that they recognized the fact that, if we are to maintain an effective military during this time of restraint, we will have to balance the overall size of the force with the need for equipment, and readiness and training. It was also widely recognized that the scope of what we expect of our military has broadened appreciably. Along with combat and the traditional responsibility of “aid to the civil authority”, the CF may also be expected to help restore order in failed states, interdict international criminal activities, aid in reconstruction, and so on.

Some have suggested that rather than try to maintain a general purpose military, we should consider adopting what NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen has termed “smart defence”. As noted by Professor Philippe Lagassé, of the University of Ottawa, several Alliance members have realized that they can “no longer sensibly afford to field modern general purpose forces.” The consequence is that they must “either accept

61 Douglas Bland, *Evidence*, February 16, 2012, 1425.

62 David Perry, *Defence After the Recession*, Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, April 2012, p. 4.

63 Ibid.

an increasingly less capable and less technologically advanced general purpose force or they will need to find some means of burden sharing.”⁶⁴

According to him, the best approach for Canada to take, in response to the foregoing initiatives, is to maintain a baseline capability for domestic and continental missions. When it then comes to deploying internationally, we can be far more selective in the capabilities we maintain.⁶⁵ Samir Battiss, Canada Research Chair in Canadian Foreign and Defence Policy, acknowledges the virtues of smart defence and views the concept as a foregone conclusion. “The concept of mutual support is more appropriate. Whether it is a good or a bad idea is not the question: I believe it’s a necessity. It’s a good idea if you want to maintain a NATO that is capable of operating where it has to operate and where political leaders decide that it must.”⁶⁶

Given the reality that there is no certainty as to what precisely we need to be ready for, Canada can still make effective contributions to a variety of multilateral operations. As Professor Joel Sokolsky, from the Royal Military College of Canada, reminded the Committee, “there is a large measure of discretion when it comes to overseas readiness requirements and operations.” We cannot, of course, be ready for everything and entertain every request, but, given our privileged position with regard to our own national security, “we have the luxury of choosing which forces to acquire and which operations we will participate in, and the option of tailoring the size and composition of our overseas military commitments.”⁶⁷ Canada has the luxury of relative regional security and is thus able to decide where, and to what extent, the CF will be deployed. Further, Canadians are committed to the international community’s responsibility to intervene in situations where states fail to protect their citizens from mass atrocities. This commitment and all CF deployments must be solidly based on Canadian values and interests, and reflect our resources and capabilities. As he notes, “decisions can and will have to be made as to which capabilities we should retain and which operations we participate in, since we cannot be ready for everything and accept every request.”⁶⁸

Making defence policy is no easy matter. Unlike foreign policy, which guides defence policy, the direction and priorities of the latter are not easily changed. Changes in foreign policy can come about quickly; they may be the result of a change in government, a new minister, or a shift in overall focus and definition of interest. However, to carry out a radical change with regard to our air or maritime forces would take several years, especially if it required the acquisition of new equipment. Moreover, any serious mistake in defence policy is not easily remedied. When appearing before our Committee, Professor

64 Philippe Lagassé, *Evidence*, February 16, 2012, 1105.

65 Ibid.

66 Samir Battiss, *Evidence*, February 28, 2012, 1200.

67 Joel Sokolsky, *Evidence*, February 14, 2012, 1405.

68 Ibid., 1405-1410.

David Bercuson, from the University of Calgary, suggested that there are three reasons why we seem to have “so much difficulty in making defence policy in Canada.”⁶⁹

The first is that direct threats to Canada are best understood as “abstract threats.” We live in a relatively secure geographic environment compared to others like the Australians. When deploying to conflict zones, we believe ourselves to be doing so for reasons of national interest. In the case of major wars, the public readily understands the threat and the impact it has on them. However, when it comes to smaller conflicts in distant places like Afghanistan, the impact it might have on Canadian interests is not so readily apparent; for most, the threat remains an abstract one. In other words, “it is more difficult for Canadians to understand what’s at issue.”⁷⁰ When we today participate in multilateral operations, it can be very difficult to specify either the national benefits commensurate with the effort expended, or the probable costs of a more free-riding stance.

The second reason, according to Bercuson, is that the “political decision-making calendar does not coincide with long-term strategic developments.” The decision calendar is largely determined by elections and budgetary cycles, but it doesn’t matter what party is in office because the considerations are the same.” That is, long-term strategic developments, whether they catch us off guard like the Arab Spring, or whether they are ones that evolve over time, like the growth of naval power in China, don’t wait for the Canadian cycle.⁷¹

The third reason is that it takes a long time to build military capability. This applies not only to equipment but also to training. A modern infantry is not one that can be put into the field in a matter of weeks or even months. Building capability is a long-term process and not easily adjusted to the vagaries of budget cycles and economic downturns. At the same time, these circumstances are realities governments must deal with and often in the immediate term. Bercuson offered up the *Canada First Defence Strategy* as an example. The more time that has elapsed since the policy was announced in 2008, the more out of date it becomes – out of date in the sense that purchases will have to be postponed, training cut back, personnel reduced and programs abandoned, and out of touch in terms of initial commitments being unrealistic in a global recession. In the *Canada First Defence Strategy*, the government commits itself to reviewing the plan on a regular basis.

Professor Robert Huebert, from the University of Calgary, argued that, in the present context, we should be thinking more “strategically” rather than “tactically”. In the past, the tendency has been to rely overly on our allies when deciding our capabilities. According to him, we need to have our own independent strategic analysis. While we need to remain interoperable with our allies, our forces also need to be able to “act as an

69 David Bercuson, *Evidence*, February 28, 2012, 1105.

70 *Ibid.*

71 *Ibid.*

independent individual unit.” This is so because our allies, due to budget constraints or caveats, may not always be able, or willing, to provide us with the support needed. While we will continue to operate with allies, we also need to ensure that we provide our military the force protection it needs; the ability to act as “an independent individual unit is going to be much more critical for the safety of the Canadian forces that we deploy”.⁷²

Huebert also believes it important that we maintain a multi-purpose force that can deal with a host of issues. To be able to do so, we need a decision process in place that allows us to ask the “big questions” while at the same time providing for adjustments as circumstances change. Doing so may well require rethinking, if not abandoning, the use of “white papers” as foundations for policy-making. According to him, in the past, these have tended to hinder rather than promote an adaptive process. When it comes to the *Canada First Defence Strategy* it is important that it be viewed as a flexible document that does not become hostage to its particulars.⁷³

E. Conclusions and Recommendations

Our principal conclusion is that readiness is not simply one of the four pillars of the *Canada First Defence Strategy*. It represents a pivotal investment for Canada’s armed forces which, if not sustained and adapted to future requirements, may potentially compromise their ability to perform the three roles and fulfil the six core missions that are today expected of them.

Readiness will not be sustained without training opportunities for individuals and formations that are demanding, complex and engaging. It is imperative that the Canadian Army have regular manoeuvre training exercises alongside and involving all the new and renewed capabilities of the Royal Canadian Air Force. The Royal Canadian Navy also needs to train for combined operations with air and army support, as well as with Canada’s Special Forces. Future military missions will almost certainly continue to involve full-spectrum cooperation with allies and partners, as well as training forces and building institutions in fragile states. Joint exercises with NATO allies and with a growing range of partners will only serve to enhance prospects for mission success.

Since long before the War of 1812, Canada has relied on militia and Aboriginal forces — our citizen soldiers — to be ready for the call to arms. The Afghan mission has made today’s reserve force more capable than ever. To retain and attract the best talent, the Canadian Forces should offer reserve units a growing range of training and exercise opportunities that fully reflect the demands of major missions. We also need to continue to ensure that Canadian society and employers across the board are ready to support our regular force and Reservists through the full cycle of duty—from recruitment and training, through various missions, to their reintegration as veterans—with special attention to the

72 Robert Huebert, *Evidence*, March 15, 2012, 1105-1120.

73 *Ibid.*, 1125.

family challenges, physical injuries and mental health issues that arise as a direct result of their service. We look forward to returning to the issues of care for the ill and injured and the Reserve force in subsequent reports.

Our Committee has decided to conclude its reflections with the following observations and recommendations:

- We unanimously agree that the Reserves have proven themselves to be an essential component of Canada's armed forces. They have proven themselves in combat and we could not have accomplished what we did in Afghanistan without their valued contribution. To reinforce the readiness of our reserve force, we therefore recommend:
 - 1) That the Government of Canada continue to provide financial support to employers of Reservists to offset costs such as hiring and training replacement workers or increasing overtime hours for existing employees in order to compensate for the Reservists' absence.
 - 2) That the Government of Canada engage the provinces and territories to strengthen job protection legislation for Reservists.
- The Committee recognizes the importance of the growing threat of cyber attacks and cyber terrorism. While the Committee recognizes that Public Safety Canada is the lead organization for cyber security, given the importance of the issue, we recommend:
 - 3) That the Government of Canada give the Communications Security Establishment (CSE) the resources it requires to conduct training and exercises with allies to ensure Canada is ready to defend its critical infrastructure against cyber attacks.
- As heard in the testimony of Major General Vance, the CF is responsible for protecting its own cyber infrastructure. In testimony heard from Professor David Skillicorn, cyber analysts must be able to bridge the gap between social science training and data analysis. Therefore, we recommend:
 - 4) That the Government of Canada continue to develop and invest in the protection and security of the Canadian Forces' cyber infrastructure.
 - 5) That the Government of Canada continue to develop the Canadian Forces' cyber capacity with respect to personnel. Important to this development is to invest in analysts who can incorporate both the social sciences and data analysis.

- We have unanimously concluded that our best interests are served by the maintenance of a readily deployable, balanced, multi-purpose combat-capable force. Our readiness for future missions will depend critically on the readiness of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) assets to conduct missions, often on short notice, in all three environments—air, land and sea. Given our geography and alliance commitments, it is important that we be able to provide for surveillance and interdiction in all environments. We therefore recommend:
 - 6) That the Government of Canada continue to maintain a readily deployable, balanced, multi-purpose combat-ready force.
 - 7) That the Government of Canada maintain sufficient air mobile forces at high readiness to respond, on short notice, to natural disasters, humanitarian emergencies, NATO responsibilities or other overseas missions.
 - 8) That the Government of Canada enhance the readiness and reach of Canadian Forces ISR capabilities and continue to promote NATO's role as a hub for allied ISR assets in the widest possible range of potential missions.
- Given the fact that the CF is a modern force, expected to “interoperate” with allies throughout the spectrum of combat intensity, we recommend:
 - 9) That the Government of Canada ensure that the Royal Canadian Navy's submarine capability be maintained.
 - 10) That the Government of Canada ensure that the Royal Canadian Air Forces' fighter jet capability be maintained and that this capability be fully interoperable with our allies.
- We agree that the *Canada First* Defence Strategy (CFDS) was forward looking; however, given the time lapse since its publication and economic restraint, we believe it would be beneficial to provide Canadians with an update of the CFDS. We therefore recommend:
 - 11) That the Government of Canada issue an update of the *Canada First* Defence Strategy, with a particular focus on emerging capabilities, more rapid and efficient force projections and operational readiness.
- Insofar as our forces often deploy overseas only with their allies, it is important that they remain interoperable and that they are afforded the appropriate training and equipment in order to ensure their effectiveness. We therefore recommend:

- 12) That the Government of Canada ensure that the Canadian Forces continue to participate, on a regular basis, in NATO and other international training exercises with allies and partners.
- We all agree that education and training are paramount in maintaining the readiness of a modern force. We therefore recommend:
 - 13) That the Government of Canada continue to promote basic and advanced individual and collective training, higher education and specialized skills development as fundamental prerequisites for the overall readiness of Canada's armed forces.
 - We agree that the challenge for army training will be to maintain the successes that have been learned from past missions while still adapting to new environments as future missions present themselves. To do this, we recommend:
 - 14) That the Canadian Forces ensure that annual exercises be conducted at brigade level or higher.
 - 15) That the Canadian Forces ensure that army units, preferably a battle group, participate in an international joint exercise in an environment outside Canada on an annual basis.
 - 16) That the Canadian Forces continue to have regular and reserve units training and operate jointly as frequently as possible to ensure readiness and interoperability, as well as to enhance their ability to adapt to new environments.
 - 17) That the Government of Canada ensure that the Canadian Forces continue to restructure, to increase the tooth-to-tail ratio, and to place the highest priority on combat training and joint and combined exercise for deployable units to ensure that the readiness of the Canadian Army, Royal Canadian Air Force, Royal Canadian Navy and Special Forces remains second to none.
 - 18) That the Government of Canada ensure that the Department of National Defence evaluates the shortage of CF members in distressed trades and that the Department puts forward an action plan to overcome personnel shortages within the Canadian Forces.

APPENDIX A LIST OF WITNESSES

| Organizations and Individuals | Date | Meeting |
|--|------------|---------|
| Department of National Defence MGen Steve Bowes, Commander, Land Force Doctrine and Training System | 2011/10/20 | 7 |
| Department of National Defence MGen Jonathan Vance, Director of Staff, Strategic Joint Staff | 2011/11/01 | 10 |
| Department of National Defence Robert Cleroux, Chief Warrant Officer Gen Walter J. Natynczyk, Chief of the Defence Staff | 2011/11/03 | 11 |
| Department of National Defence MGen Mark E. McQuillan, Commander, Canadian Operational Support Command | 2011/11/17 | 13 |
| Department of National Defence LGen Peter J. Devlin, Chief of the Land Staff Sgt Maj Gino Moretti, Chief Warrant Officer, Land Staff | 2011/11/22 | 14 |
| Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Norway Roger Ingebrigtsen, Secretary of State RAdm Arne Røksund, Head of the Department, Defence Policy and Long-Term Planning | 2011/11/24 | 15 |
| Royal Norwegian Embassy Her Excellency Else Berit Eikeland, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway to Canada Radm Trond Grytting, Defence Attaché | | |
| Department of National Defence LGen Walter Semianiw, Commander, Canada Command | 2011/11/29 | 16 |
| Department of National Defence CPO 1 Claude Laurendeau, Chief Petty Officer, Navy VAdm Paul Maddison, Commander, Royal Canadian Navy | 2011/12/06 | 18 |

| Organizations and Individuals | Date | Meeting |
|---|-------------|----------------|
| Department of National Defence LGen André Deschamps, Commander, Royal Canadian Air Force | 2011/12/13 | 21 |
| Department of National Defence VAdm Bruce Donaldson, Vice-Chief of the Defence Staff | 2011/12/15 | 22 |
| Office of the Auditor General of Canada Jerome Berthelette, Assistant Auditor General Pierre Fréchette, Audit Project Leader Mathieu Tremblay, Audit Project Leader | 2012/02/07 | 24 |
| Union of National Defence Employees John MacLennan, National President Tim McGrath, Consultant | | |
| Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives David Macdonald, Senior Economist | 2012/02/09 | 25 |
| Conference of Defence Associations LGen Richard J. Evraire, Chairman Col Brian S. MacDonald, Senior Defence Analyst | | |
| Rideau Institute Steven Staples, President | | |
| As an individual BGen Glenn Nordick | 2012/02/14 | 26 |
| Queen's University Douglas L. Bland, Chair, Defence Management Studies Program, School of Policy Studies David Skillicorn, Professor, School of Computing | | |
| Royal Military College of Canada Michael Hennessy, Professor, Dean of Continuing Studies, Department of History Joel Sokolsky, Principal | | |
| University of Ottawa Philippe Lagassé, Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs | 2012/02/16 | 27 |
| Dalhousie University VAdm Gary L. Garnett, Research Fellow, Centre for Foreign Policy Studies | 2012/02/28 | 28 |

| Organizations and Individuals | Date | Meeting |
|--|-------------|----------------|
| Université du Québec à Montréal Samir Battiss, Analyst, Canada Research Chair in Canadian Foreign and Defence Policy Stéphane Roussel, Professor, Canada Research Chair in Canadian Foreign and Defence Policy | 2012/02/28 | 28 |
| University of Calgary David Bercuson, Director, Centre for Military and Strategic Studies | | |
| University of Manitoba James Fergusson, Director, Centre for Defence and Security Studies | 2012/03/01 | 29 |
| Public Policy Forum Larry Murray, Chair | 2012/03/06 | 30 |
| University of New Brunswick Lee Windsor, Deputy Director, Gregg Centre for the Study of War and Society | | |
| Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Kerry Buck, Assistant Deputy Minister, International Security Branch and Political Director Marie Gervais-Vidricaire, Director General, Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force | 2012/03/08 | 31 |
| Department of National Defence Jill Sinclair, Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy | | |
| University of Calgary Robert Huebert, Associate Director, Centre for Military and Strategic Studies | 2012/03/15 | 33 |

APPENDIX B LIST OF BRIEFS

Organizations and Individuals

Association of Canadian Community Colleges

REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the Committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this Report.

A copy of the relevant *Minutes of Proceedings* ([Meetings Nos.7, 10, 11, 13-16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24-31, 33, 34, 43, 44, 47, 49, 51, 52, and 56](#)) is tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

James Bezan, M.P.

Chair

Dissenting Opinion of the Official Opposition to the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence Report on Canadian Forces Readiness

A. Introduction

1) While we agree with much of the committee's majority report, there are a number of matters on which we, the New Democrat committee members, disagree with the majority of the committee members. Therefore we are not signing on to this report. In addition, there are a number of issues that do not appear in the report, or are only briefly mentioned, which we believe should be given a higher priority or greater emphasis when discussing the "readiness" of the Canadian Forces.

2) The committee's report draws heavily on the Canada First Defence Strategy (CFDS). The CFDS is outdated; even the Department of National Defence has told the government that it is unaffordable. Indeed, it has sometimes drawn criticism as little more than a shopping list for military procurement without a coherent strategy. Dr. Philippe Lagasse told our committee, "However well intentioned, CFDS quickly proved unrealistic. The strategy was over-optimistic about the costs of replacing the CF's major fleets and maintaining a general purpose force able to undertake operations on land, in the air across Canada, within North America, and throughout the world... Taken together, these problems have meant that CFDS left Canada with an unsustainable set of defence programs and policies."¹

3) In addition to being outdated and too expensive, the CFDS also lacks clear priorities for our military. There is a significant need for a white paper on National Defence to reassess the vision for a modern defence policy for Canada, based on priorities and affordability. A defence white paper would provide a more concrete and realistic foundation for the task of "readiness." Indeed, the most fundamental question is: ready for what?

4) Our military has three broad roles: The primary role is the defence of Canada and the protection of the safety and security of Canadians; secondly sharing in the defence of North America through NORAD and other commitments; and thirdly contributing to international peace and security through collective security, assisting in multilateral peacekeeping and humanitarian missions, and providing foreign policy support when required. Readiness is about equipping and training the members of the Canadian Forces for fulfilling these roles.

¹ Dr. Philippe Lagasse (Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Ottawa) Evidence, February 16, 2012.

B. Fighter Jets and Procurement Generally

5) One of the primary assets for the defence of the sovereignty of Canada and the security of its citizens is our fleet of CF-18 fighter jets. This is why the replacement program is so important to Canada's defence needs and why it is surprising that the majority report ignores the state of affairs created by the government's botched attempt to sole-source the F-35 fighter jets as a replacement for this current fleet. Much has been revealed since the Conservative Government's announcement in July of 2012 to purchase the F-35 from Lockheed Martin, after telling the House weeks earlier there would be an open competition. Readiness requires a competent and credible replacement program for needed assets and a procurement process that is both transparent and inspires public confidence that it is clearly based on actual requirements, rather than the desire to choose a specific product. The lack of such a process diminishes public support for the procurement and, at a minimum, delays are inevitable. This is particularly true with the F-35 project, given its enormous and uncertain cost, and the lack of public disclosure by the government.

6) New Democrats fully support the need for a replacement program for our existing fleet of C-18s. However, we believe that government has a responsibility to Canadians to accomplish this through an open and transparent tendering process, one that guarantees regional and industrial benefits for Canadians, and that results in an aircraft chosen based on the requirements for operational readiness to meet the actual needs of Canada's defence priorities.

7) An example of the temptations of sole sourcing is the tunnel vision implicit in the acceptance and promotion of the argument by this government that the F-35 were necessary for interoperability with our allies who were also buying them. However, General Stéphane Abrial, Supreme Allied Commander (Transformation) of NATO, put a different perspective on this when he told the Defence Committee that interoperability "does not imply that everybody is using the same equipment." According to General Abrial, "With interoperability you are different, but you work together. It starts with the mindset, with the brain, of course, through education and training."² He was referring to NATO members working together in common military actions. We were pleased to hear this perspective and clarification from such a senior and experienced NATO officer, himself a fighter pilot, who is charged with the responsibility for facilitating the coordination of the military assets of various countries in the NATO alliance.

² General Stéphane Abrial (Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, North Atlantic Treaty Organization), Evidence, May 3, 2012.

8) Other broader problems with the procurement process as it affects long term readiness have been identified. As the committee heard from Assistant Auditor General Jerome Berthelette, the Auditor General's report on the F-35s "concluded that National Defence's ability to meet its training and operational requirements over the long term is at risk because of a persistent maintenance and repair funding gap, ongoing weaknesses in the implementation and oversight of the new contracting approaches, and the lack of sufficient cost and performance information for decision-making."³

9) It was also troubling to learn that the procurement process is not a major focus of Canadian Forces transformation. For both training and performance of its duties, the Canadian Forces must have access to needed equipment in a timely fashion. The lack of efficiency of the procurement process is a perennial problem and clearly requires significant changes. There have been many voices calling for the reform of the procurement process including the Auditor General of Canada, parliamentary committees, outside experts, and internal and independent studies sponsored by the government itself.

10) Unfortunately, the Canadian Forces and the Department of National Defence are still not able to objectively identify the problems, nor have they found solutions. The piece-meal approach of the government in establishing the National Fighter Procurement Secretariat – the renamed "F-35 Secretariat" – for example, cannot substitute for a permanent solution. Furthermore, even in the short-term, it is not a substitute for the open and transparent process needed for such an important acquisition. Consideration should be given to the establishment of a separate arms-length procurement process (e.g. a Defence Procurement Agency) with substantial parliamentary oversight. A similar recommendation was made by the Defence Committee in 2008.

C. Search and Rescue

11) An important aspect of the protection of Canadians is the provision of search and rescue (SAR) services. In this context, the replacement of the fixed-wing search and rescue aircraft (FWSAR) should be dealt with as quickly as possible, but must ensure that a transparent and competitive bidding process is strictly adhered to, and cooperate fully with the Standing Committee on National Defence in facilitating parliamentary oversight. Also, in proceeding with the FWSAR replacement, the readiness capability should be based on a 30 minute response posture on a continuous, around the clock basis, as is the case in the United States and Australia for example. While this is currently the response posture for all CF search and rescue aircraft between the hours

³ Jerome Berthelette (Assistant Auditor General of Canada) Evidence, February 7, 2012, 1220.

of 8:00am and 4:00pm, Monday to Friday, a two hour response time is in place outside of these hours.

12) While the leadership of the Canadian Forces and the Government continues to defend the status quo it is clear that the two hour response time posture is an anomaly in the world and we believe is certainly below the standard that a country like Canada should be able to offer its citizens when they are faced with a life threatening emergency, especially at sea where time is of the essence. Even more disturbing is Department of Defence's own study showing that 83% of the incidents requiring search and rescue aircraft to be dispatched occur outside of the 8:00am-4:00pm, Monday to Friday window and are therefore subject to up to a two hour period before an aircraft departs from a base. Since one of the primary roles of the Canadian Forces is protecting the safety and security of Canadians, New Democrats believe that a 30 minute response posture on a continuous, around the clock basis should be maintained for search and rescue aircraft.

D. Evacuating Canadians Abroad

13) In the past 20 years, numerous missions executed by the Canadian forces involved evacuation of civilians caught in unstable environments. New Democrats strongly believes that the Canadian Forces should continue to play a strong role in helping Canadians facing emergencies at home and abroad. As the number of Canadians abroad continues to increase, the Canadian Forces needs to be ready at the request of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade to act quickly and swiftly to help Canadians facing emergencies due to a deteriorating political situation or natural disaster. In 2010, some 10,400 Canadians received assistance in more than 37 separate crises or emergency situations, including earthquakes in Haiti and Chile, the explosion at a hotel resort in Mexico and mudslides in Peru.

14) While not every evacuation requires the assistance of the Canadian Forces, certain circumstances require the CF to be tasked with a Non-combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO). The unprecedented evacuation of more than 14,000 Canadians from Lebanon in 2006, the rescue of Canadians in Haiti following the 2010 earthquake and the evacuation of Canadians in Libya in 2011 are all clear indications that readiness of the Canadian Forces in this regard is crucial. The recent evacuation operations have also showed that important improvements can be made in the coordination and execution of these types of operations. Given the growing challenge of ensuring the safety and wellbeing of Canadian citizens at home and abroad we regret that this component of readiness was not studied in more detail during the course of the readiness study, nor addressed in the committee's report.

E. Emergency and Humanitarian Relief

15) The Canadian Forces possesses unique capabilities that make it essential to disaster response plans here in Canada. These capabilities can and have been deployed to assist civilians throughout the world facing emergencies like natural catastrophes or other threatening circumstances. As Major-General Jonathan Vance told our committee: “The DART is a very good example of a high-readiness unit that can go off and support individuals in crisis around the world and sustain itself for a period of time.”⁴

16) Our committee heard very positive testimony about the ability of the Canadian Forces to assist in humanitarian assistance outside of Canada. For example, a representative from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade offered this observation: “I would simply say that since we've had the C-17s there's no question that our ability to get strategic airlift, to move stuff out quickly, to be places on the other side of the world, has vastly, vastly improved.”⁵

17) The Chief of Land Staff for the Canadian Forces, Lieutenant-General Peter J. Devlin, provided the committee with a comprehensive picture of the dexterity of the Canadian army, saying that it “must be nimble, highly trained, and immediately responsive to a menu of new and unanticipated challenges. It must be trained, equipped, and funded to operate in numerous theatres, often simultaneously: from snow in the Arctic to jungles in Africa, from a potential train derailment and evacuation in Port Hope to flooding on the Red River. It must be flexible enough that it can get fresh water using the disaster assistance response team, DART, to a tsunami-affected area in the South Pacific while at the same time delivering relief efforts to Haiti.”⁶

F. Peacekeeping

18) While the Canadian Forces has demonstrated real readiness in the recent past when providing humanitarian assistance or performing a NEO, an area in which Canada needs to be more ready is peacekeeping. Canada has a great interest in a strong, stable and peaceful multilateral system and has a strong history and reputation as an effective and leading participant. United Nations peacekeeping is one of the best tools to maintain a stable international order. Until 1995, Canada had participated in almost

⁴ Major-General Jonathan Vance (Director of Staff, Strategic Joint Staff), Evidence, November 01, 2011.

⁵ Jill Sinclair (Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy, Department of National Defence), Evidence, March 08, 2012.

⁶ Lieutenant-General Peter J. Devlin (Chief of the Land Staff, Department of National Defence), Evidence, November 22, 2011

every UN peacekeeping mission. Now the demand for United Nations peacekeeping has never been higher, but Canada's participation has never been lower. "We're currently participating in 8 of 16 active UN-led missions... As of January 2012 we had 198 uniformed personnel, 38 military and 160 police, deployed to UN operations."⁷ Canada has fallen from being the single largest contributor of UN peacekeepers, a position it often held before 1992, to 55th position today.

19) The UN, though far from perfect, has made considerable improvements in the way peace operations are carried out after some of the seriously flawed missions the 1990s. UN peacekeeping effectiveness has earned the confidence of the international community. The UN now supports more troops in the field than any actor in the world other than the United States, and more than the United Kingdom, France, China and Russia put together. Despite re-engagement by some of its NATO allies, as well as rising powers like Brazil, India and China, Canada's contribution to UN peace operations remains minimal. We believe that it's essential for the Canada Forces to be trained and equipped to take part in whole range of multilateral operations including United Nations Peacekeeping. Again we find it unfortunate that this was not examined in more detail during this study.

G. Education and Training

20) We recognize that an important part of our military's readiness is the formal education provided through Canada's two military colleges, the Royal Military College (RMC) at Kingston and the Collège militaire royal (CMR) at Saint-Jean. We believe that highly educated leadership in the military is essential to the successful carrying out of the Canadian Forces mandate and the proper conduct of military missions. Also a well-educated leadership is more capable of bringing originality, critical thinking and flexible problem solving to the tasks of military leadership, planning and organization, which are essential to readiness.

21) Recently, the Royal Military College was reportedly told "to cut \$1 million from its budget in the coming year, nothing the following year, then \$3.5 million for 2014-2015." According to Jean-Marc Noël, the President of the Canadian Military College Faculty Association, 32 out of 182 faculty positions – nearly 1/5 of the faculty will be eliminated, which could mean up to 160 fewer courses for cadets to choose from. In 1998, the Withers' Study Group was charged with overhauling the education at RMC. The group recommended that a well-rounded education was essential for the students.

⁷ Kerry Buck (Assistant Deputy Minister, International Security Branch and Political Director, DFAIT) Evidence, March 8, 2012.

22) Fewer courses mean fewer opportunities for students to pursue studies outside of their immediate area, ultimately depriving them of a well-rounded education. In addition, the program that brings experienced non-commissioned officers to RMC to earn degrees will also be eliminated. The long term impact of these changes will be detrimental and not easily reversed. The New Democrats believe that the funding to RMC should be immediately restored.

23) A second concern relates to francophone education at Collège militaire royal at Saint-Jean. In 1995, under the then Liberal Government, this degree granting military college was closed. Though re-opened as a two-year college in 2008, it no longer offers a full program to francophone students from Quebec and elsewhere in Canada. This is having an ongoing negative impact on the number of francophone compared to anglophone officers in the Canadian Forces. We believe that the Canadian Forces leadership from the bottom to the top of the chain of command should properly reflect the national linguistic and cultural duality of Canada as represented by our two official languages. This is not limited to bilingualism; francophone representation throughout the chain of command is imperative. We do not believe this can be fully achieved without a degree granting, French language campus and that therefore, Collège militaire royal at Saint-Jean should be restored as a full degree-granting institution.

24) Throughout the study, the committee heard about the constant challenge of recruiting specialised employees who are essential within the Canadian Forces. Several witnesses spoke of existing shortages of qualified employees in certain trades. For example, Major General Steve Bowes testified regarding the shortage of armour officers and vehicle technicians.⁸ Moreover, Vice Admiral Paul Maddison noted his concern with the number of marine engineers and naval electronics technicians. Of the naval electronic technicians he said, “This is a key tactical trade that requires top-drawer skill sets. These are the folks who maintain and groom our radars, our fire-control systems, our guns and missiles—and they are in short supply at the moment.”⁹

25) Further to what we heard at committee, the Fall 2012 Auditor General’s Report to the House of Commons also highlights shortages in trades that are engaged in military construction. According to the report, this has meant that “military and civilian real property staffs are stretched thin, with risks of undue stress and burnout, and ... junior staff have been taking on responsibilities beyond their capacities.” We therefore recommend that the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces

⁸ Major General Steve Bowes (Commander, Land Force Doctrine and Training System, Department of National Defence) Evidence, October 20, 2011.

⁹ Vice Admiral Paul Maddison (Commander, Royal Canadian Navy Evidence, Department of National Defence), Evidence) December 6, 2011.

evaluate and identify the shortfall of employees in the different trades and put forward an action plan to overcome these deficiencies within the Canadian Forces.

H. Infrastructure Readiness

26) Much like the procurement process, it is evident that there is a problem with the process for maintaining the infrastructure at the Canadian Forces bases throughout the country. And as is the case with procurement, these unaddressed problems cost time and money. The Fall 2012 Report of the Auditor General contains a chapter assessing DND's real property assets. The report found that while money was allocated for maintenance, repair and recapitalization, the bases were not receiving the financial resources in time to plan for the work needing to be accomplished in the construction cycle. The report went on to state that "fundamental change is required in the way National Defence manages its resources to support real property." The real property inventory is degrading on a daily basis and lacks a clear and coordinated management plan. Some buildings do not even meet basic safety and health requirements, such as the National Fire Code of Canada. In terms of readiness, the Auditor General found that the poor management of the real property of the Department of National Defence is having a critical impact on the operational capabilities of the Canadian forces.

I. Security and Oversight

27) In the most recent Auditor General's report, the chapter on cyber security outlines serious gaps in the ability of the Government of Canada to protect itself against cyber threats and to coordinate responses to attacks. The Communications Security Establishment (CSE) falls under the auspice of the Department of National Defence, and has been given new responsibilities regarding the protection of Canadian cyber security. It is therefore appropriate that we recommend a review of the lines of responsibility of various authorities within government, complete with a new layer of parliamentary oversight. In order for this to be effective consideration must be given to providing security clearance to parliamentarians who exercise this oversight.

28) According to Dr. Philippe Lagasse: "There should be a parliamentary committee with security clearance that's able to look at operational secrets and operational details so that Members of Parliament have a much better sense of exactly what is happening on the ground and whether the mission is operating as successfully as what they're being told."¹⁰ Such authority would enable parliamentarians to be aware of the true state of readiness of the Canadian Forces generally, including in areas such as cyber security

¹⁰ Dr. Philippe Lagasse (Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Ottawa) Evidence, February 16, 2012, 1240.

and intelligence, without compromising national security interests, a reason that has been used in the past to withhold information.

MAINTAINING READINESS IN THE CANADIAN FORCES

HON. JOHN MCKAY, P.C., M.P. MINORITY REPORT

Preamble

Our predecessor committee's report from 2002 entitled "Facing our Responsibilities: The State of Readiness of the Canadian Forces" was truly influential and its Chair, the Honourable David Pratt, P.C. eventually went on to become the Liberal Minister of Defence. As such he was able to implement some of the recommendations. This report on the state of military readiness was to have been an update on that report. Regrettably the Conservative majority report is long on description, short on analysis and devoid of any useful recommendations. Any report which deletes or minimizes any reference to military procurement, smart defence, our relationship with NATO or General Leslie's elegant report entitled "Report on Transformation 2011" is of questionable utility.

Introduction: Our Role as a Nation

There is an active and animated discussion in Canadian society about our role as a nation in international conflicts. Some argue that we should return to our Pearsonian roots of blue helmeted peacekeepers. Others argue that we are a warrior nation and point to our roles in World War One, World War Two and lately in Afghanistan and Libya. The truth is somewhere in between, and changes according to circumstances. Sometimes we are a warrior nation, and sometimes we are peacekeepers, but in all instances, we should act as a nation that strives to minimize, if not eliminate conflict and violence.

As we consider our military's future role and its state of readiness, it is important to reflect on the consequences that taking on that role will have on our armed forces. In recent years we have emphasized our military's involvement in conflict missions such as Afghanistan and Libya. The brave actions of our military in these missions have been rightly lauded and the Liberal Party is proud of the courageous sacrifices that our men and women in uniform have made.

Regrettably however, we have lost some of our capacity to intervene at earlier stages of conflict. If we had a more robust capacity to provide peacekeeping — peacemaking, possibly our thinking would have been changed about pre and post Afghanistan and Libya. "Winning the war" may actually be easier than winning the "peace".

Of course peacekeeping missions are not always the best course of action to address an emerging conflict, but when they can be considered and when they address an emerging issue rather than a burgeoning one, often they are the far less costly option. As our allies deal with the realities of fiscal restraint, preventing conflict should be an essential aspect of any country's defence policy. Lieutenant General Peter Devolin appeared before

the committee and assured Members that the Canadian Army trains its soldiers to be able to "move from combat through stability to peacekeeping with ease".¹ A careful balance between maintaining a capability for peacekeeping missions as well as combat missions should remain a core focus.

As such, the Liberal Party recommends that:

1) Continuing a balance in training, education and preparedness for both peacekeeping missions as well as combat missions should remain a core focus.

Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and Will to Intervene (WTI)

The most significant development in the last decade in foreign affairs and defence policy has been the R2P and its corollary the WTI doctrines. It is a certainty that there will never be an absence of conflict in the future so the real question becomes, how, and when it is appropriate to intervene. Our present century will most likely resemble previous ones. There "will be wars and rumors of wars, warfare will be both regular and irregular, regional and international order will be fragile, challenged, unstable and liable to collapse. We can all hope that for a future when we discard violence as an instrument of political communication," but prudence remains the supreme virtue in statecraft and teaches that we be prepared for the least pleasant.²

"When Canada signed on to the Responsibility to Protect protocols some argued that there is a corollary to that: the ability to protect. You need the ability to move resources if you're going to have influence. The strategic center was perhaps undeveloped at the time, so we didn't have the necessary forms of heavy lift; we didn't have good secure strategic command and the control architecture we have now. Those are really valuable improvements."³

We need to understand that the way we think about our "national self-interest" needs to change. It has been said that nations don't have values, they only have interests, and Canada is no different. There are very few conflicts, disasters, or pandemics in which Canada doesn't have a direct or indirect interest in.

1 Testimony of Lieutenant General Peter Devolin, November 22, 2011.

2 Colin S Grey — FightingTalk, Potomac Books Inc., Washington, DC. 2009, p 156-157.

3 Michael Hennessey — NDDN, February 14, 2012.

Therefore the Liberal Party recommends that:

2) The government commit explicitly to the doctrine of Right to and uses it as a touchstone to guide decisions on interventions and readiness.

3) The government create a national focal point for intervention in mass atrocities and other abuses of human rights.

Defence and Foreign Policy

Sir David Richard, the Chief of Defence Staff for Great Britain said at a CDI conference in Ottawa, "It's a bold man who plans for military idleness". Indeed it's a bold nation that plans for military idleness, and so a report on readiness should be welcome. The problem with a standalone "military" report on readiness is that it doesn't recognize that "military readiness" is necessarily driven by and depends upon "foreign policy readiness". The two are inextricably linked. However, the Conservative government has chosen not to release a foreign policy strategy, and as a result the military has been left to structure its state of readiness around a wish list. Absent an overarching foreign policy, the nation is left with a document like the Canadian First Defence Strategy which is nothing more than a glorified shopping list of military procurements, which has since been discredited as too expensive and unrealistic. Briefing notes prepared for the Associate Minister of Defence state "the funding reductions from Budget 2010 and the reduced funding line going forward will make the Canada First Defence Strategy (CFDS) unaffordable", yet for some reason the committee continues to reference the CFDS.

The Conservative Government lost its bid for the U.N. Security Council seat. Not only did we lose, we didn't even try to win. We are abdicating our role at the U.N. with serious defence consequences. It is no great insight to say that the U.N. is dysfunctional; however, it is the only international body that can authorize a military intervention.

Therefore the recommendation of the Liberal Party is that:

4) The Government forthwith release a White Paper outlining its vision of Canada's Foreign Policy and that contemporaneously updates the unrealistic Canada First Defence Strategy;

5) The Government table with Parliament a bi-annual strategic review outlining its assessment of potential threats to Canadian national interest that may need to be addressed;

6) The bi-annual strategic review be referred to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Defence which will report to Government, within six months, on its assessment of the review;

7) The Conservative Government re-engage at the United Nations so that when an intervention is contemplated Canada will be able to make its voice heard.

Cyber Intelligence

It has been said that surprise is one of the dominant characteristics of readiness and that cutting down on the number of surprises would be most helpful. It therefore follows that “cyber intelligence” is one of the most important assets of “readiness”.

During his testimony to the committee, General Vance said that “over time our cyber capacity will need to increase, commensurate with the rest of the world’s cyber capacity.” While Canada has a good cyber capacity, we will need to continue to develop and invest in it.⁴ Professor David Skillicorn, from Queen’s University’s School of Computing, made a similar observation. He also went on to suggest that if we are going to be effective in combating cyber threats we will need to have analysts with an education that can incorporate both the social sciences and data analysis. It has been the tradition to rely on analysts trained primarily in the social sciences. Given the technical skills required in today’s cyber world, we require analysts who can bridge the gap between social science training and data analysis. Professor Skillicorn also noted that there are major synergies between “the things you have to think about to do cyber security and the things you have to think about to do signals intelligence.” As a result, he concluded that the “Communications Security Establishment is the right place to put cyber security and all of its related issues.”⁵

The committee report spent very little time on the issues surrounding the gathering and application of military intelligence. Regrettably the report is also limited in its discussion on cyber intelligence. The committee heard some witnesses who testified on the threat and the recommendations contained in the committee report are good as far as they go. However, military doctrine is both defence and offence. We did not pursue the offensive capabilities of cyber intelligence and what role Canada could play, if any, in the use of cyber intelligence for offensive or pre-emptive purposes.

Subsequent to our hearings on readiness, the Auditor General released his Fall 2012 Report. In it he describes a major gap in our co-ordinating network.

“... the CCIRC (Canadian Cyber Incident Response Centre) cannot fully monitor Canada’s cyber threat environment, which hinders the Centre’s ability to provide timely advice on defending against new cyber threats. Furthermore, the Centre is still not operating on a 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week basis, as originally intended. This restriction

4 *Ibid.*, 0910.

5 *Evidence*, February 14, 2012, 1430.

on operating hours can delay the detection of emerging threats and the sharing of related information among stakeholders.”⁶

What is even more disturbing is the government’s response to the Auditor General’s report, as if going from 8am-5pm business hours to 15 hours per day is sufficient.

“As CCIRC is not operating around the clock, there is a risk that there will be a delay in the sharing of critical information linked to newly discovered vulnerabilities or active cyber events reported to CCIRC after operating hours. A restriction on operating hours means that CCIRC is not able to monitor the cyber threat environment 24 hours a day, as envisioned in its mandate. Public Safety Canada officials told us that the Department is now working to extend CCIRC’s coverage to 7 days a week, from 6:00am until 9:00pm (Ottawa time), although there are no plans to go to a 24-hour-a-day operation. Based on our discussions with officials, it is our opinion that operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week is important for the timely detection and notification of cyber threats, and for communicating with the computer emergency response teams of Canada’s foreign allies, which operate in different time zones.”⁷

All cyber intelligence is inter-related. For example, information gathered by Public Safety may or may not be relevant to the Department of National Defence (DND), but if DND doesn’t know about it in a timely fashion, then its utility can never be determined. One is left to wonder whether the Government of Canada even understands the full magnitude of this security threat let alone able to act upon it. There is a school of thought that argues that cyber warfare is the new total warfare. All persons and all systems would be affected and rendered dysfunctional with catastrophic consequences for the loser.

As such, the Liberal Party recommends that:

8) The Department of National Defence reviews its cyber security infrastructure in light of the Auditor General’s report and report to Parliament on any steps that it has taken to remedy any deficiencies, if any.

9) The communications and security establishment be the lead agency responsible for coordinating and managing Canada’s efforts in combating cyber terrorism and cyber warfare.

6 Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the house of Commons, Fall 2012 — Chapter 3: Protecting Canadian Critical Infrastructure Against Cyber Threats; p. 2.

7 Ibid., p. 16.

Recruitment

Canada is home to every ethnic group known to mankind. Many of these people have military and foreign affairs intelligence which could be of enormous value to our state of readiness.

We did receive repeated assurances from senior military personnel about the cultural and linguistic sensitivities in recruitment. Hopefully those sensitivities can be turned into intelligence — particularly military and foreign affairs intelligence. It's not obvious that the transition has fully occurred.

Therefore the Liberal Party recommends that:

10) The Canadian Forces actively recruit in diaspora communities people with specific linguistic and intelligence capabilities.

Education and Research

The importance of investment in education, research and development cannot be understated. When visiting the Toronto facilities of Defence Research and Development Canada, members of our Committee were very impressed with the work being done. What we saw and heard left us convinced that DRDC projects provided a significant contribution to the effectiveness and welfare of our military. The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), General Walter Natynczyk, himself recently praised the work of the DRDC by stating that, "You've saved lives. You've saved countless lives and for that I'm truly indebted."⁸

However, as a result of funding reductions certain important programs may be cut. DRDC is stopping work on a bomb detection project at its Suffield facility in Alberta and the Counter Terrorism Technology Centre, which "conducts research into chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive incidents."⁹ The research done at Suffield and other sites is designed to protect front line soldiers and enhance their effectiveness. Given the kinds of combat environments our troops are likely to find themselves in one can only wonder whether the budget cuts imposed on CDRC are in fact wise.

Similarly, the recent cuts to RMC should also be reconsidered. The school has been told "to cut \$1 million from its budget in the coming year, noting the following year, then \$3.5 million for 2014-2015." This could lead to the loss of as many as 32 academic staff and up to 160 fewer courses for cadets to choose from. As well, the program that

8 David Pugliese, DND Will Cut 242 Civilian Jobs, Postmedia News, April 14, 2012.

9 Ibid.

brings experienced non-commissioned officers to RMC to earn degrees will also be eliminated.¹⁰ Once lost, intellectual capital is not easily recouped.

As such, the liberal Party recommends that:

11) The budget cuts made to Defence Research Canada be restored.

12) Funding be restored to the Royal Military College and other staff colleges to the level before the recent budget cuts.

Procurement

In an era of fiscal restraint, the margins for procurement are razor thin. We agree with the Minister of Public Works who recently said “Frankly, when it comes to procurement, I’m a little tired of being told why something can’t be done. I’m also tired of being told I can only get partial buy-in for new ideas because people would rather see things fail first. And I’ve become tired of all of the duplication and competing agendas. I am fully aware of all of the internal obstacles to change, but I realize we won’t be able to transform the procurement system overnight.”

The fiascos surrounding procurement under this government have been well documented. Virtually without exception individual procurements are either over budget, behind schedule or festooned with announcements but no deliveries. It would be generous to describe Canadian military procurement as a mess. Examples of this include Fixed Wing Search and Rescue planes, military truck’s, close combat vehicles and the F-35’s.

The fondness of this government for procurement announcements and re-announcements reached a zenith of silliness with the Ministers’ \$47,000 F-35 press conference for a plane we may never purchase.

Over the last decade many arguments in favour of reforming the process have been made. These have included the Auditor General of Canada (AG), Parliamentary Committees and internal and independent studies sponsored by the government itself. Some have argued that “there is a lack of competitive bidding and a shortage of industrial and regional benefits for Canadian industry, and some have criticized the high costs associated with certain projects.” Needless to say, the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program has attracted considerable parliamentary, media and public attention in this regard. While both DND and Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) have implemented a variety of “initiatives aimed at streamlining the defence procurement process and reducing acquisition cycle times, in recent years,” problems with the process continue to be raised. Many have therefore suggested that what is needed is more far reaching reforms of the defence procurement process. One remedy that is often offered up

10 Paul Schliesmann, RMC Job Losses Confirmed, The Whig Standard, April 12, 2012.

is that defence procurement needs to be centralized under a single government department agency. The present system, critics argue, is too bureaucratic, too slow to respond and results in inefficiencies and duplication of work. A simpler system with a clear line of ministerial responsibility could be achieved with a single organization in charge of defence procurement.¹¹

In 2008 the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence, in its study on defence procurement, noted that while it believed “that the current system of splitting the procurement process and function between departments has many excellent qualities, including acting as a check and balance between departments, there are strong arguments to the contrary, including a clearer line of ministerial accountability, and a simpler process.” The Committee went on to recommend that the “government investigate ways of changing Department of National Defence procurement processes with the aim of substantially reducing procurement wait times for major defence capital projects” and that “this re-evaluation should include investigating an ‘in-house’ departmental procurement process (i.e. a Defence Department Procurement Agency).”¹²

The recent “turmoil” over the acquisition of the F-35 fighter jets, can only lead us to conclude that there is still something seriously wrong with the procurement process. The Liberal Party believes that the concerns over the manner in which defence equipment is procured have existed for far too long and that fundamental changes to the process need to be made.

As such, the Liberal Party recommends that:

13) The Government establish an independent Commission, consisting of one to three Commissioners, with appropriate staff support, to investigate the inefficiencies in the procurement process of military equipment and that it report its finding on appropriate measures for improvement to Government within one year.

14) That the findings of the Commission on procurement reform be referred to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Defence for consideration, once tabled with the government.

Transformation

Unfortunately the committee did not have the benefit of hearing from General Leslie, who spent a year analyzing transformation and sustainment. His report titled “Report on Transformation 2011” is a must read for those wishing to study and understand transformation a “sine qua non” of readiness. It is one of the most comprehensive reviews

11 Ibid p. 7-8.

12 Report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, Procurement and Associated Processes, p. 12.

of military readiness since the beginning of the Afghan conflict. The Committee is without the views of the Minister on General Leslie's observations about lapsed funding, administrative incoherence, ever escalating growth of contractors and non-combat personnel or his recommendation on the redress between "tooth" and "tail". Regrettably, the government has yet to table a formal response to General Leslie's observations. There is therefore no benchmark against which to measure the military's transformation. Without a benchmark there can be neither success nor failure — only muddle.

Therefore the Liberal Party recommends that:

15) The government immediately table with Parliament its formal response to General Leslie's report;

16) The Department of National Defence report to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Defence on an annual basis as to the developments in the transformation process. Reports should include detailed and transparent information on staff reductions, effects on the reserves including staffing numbers, training time, progress made on job protection and employer support; time lines for equipment acquisition; and so on.

