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**Exigencies of Future Deployments:
What Canada must Exact from its
Military Partners**

by Senator Hugh Segal and Jessica Y. McLean
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POLICY PAPER

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► **Executive Summary**

An increase in global threats, failing states, and crisis prone regions around the world, coupled with shrinking defence budgets in the US, as well as budget cuts in Canada's most loyal joint deployment partners – France, the UK, and The Netherlands – indicates there will be no less of a demand for Canadian deployable capacity over the next few years. In this context, understanding the 'political' requirements for various kinds of deployments is important and a key planning area for defence policy makers as well as military and strategic practitioners.

To better understand the future of Canadian military deployments it is first necessary to examine the historical context of our post-war NATO and UN deployments as well as Prime Minister Harper's 2006 commitment that required all significant military deployments to have parliamentary approval.

Each deployment since WW II has been unique. The command structures, intelligence-sharing, mission design and assigned areas of responsibility for Canada, whether under the UN or NATO, have varied by the deployment itself and the nature of the mission. This requires our political and command requirements to adapt to the mission at hand.

But whether or not Canada will participate in future deployments relies on not just being able to answer the question of "why", but also "why us". Reticence on the part of NATO allies will continue to be a problem in the future and so Canada must be capable to ensure it only takes part in "coalition of the willing" deployments to ensure realistic burden sharing. The pivot towards the Pacific will also require fresh and deeper intelligence cooperation with Australia, other Commonwealth partners in the region and enhanced interoperable capacity with our American allies.





Budgetary constraints and fiscal pressures in the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and the Netherlands, four of Canada's anchor partners in post-war joint deployments, have created a new and more challenging framework for addressing strategic global threats. China's continued build-up of military capacity and its increased defence spending, at a remarkable 11 percent per year, add to this framework. It is made more problematic by well-armed and financed non-state actors in places like the Maghreb, the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa. In addition are the gyrations of rogue states such as Syria, Iran and North Korea. It would take an especially sunny and liberal disposition to believe in a peaceful and diplomatic way ahead, given this cloudy and problematic picture. The only rational conclusion for the Canadian political and military leadership is that Canada will be called upon to do more, to deploy more frequently and in a more diversified way, and that our economic, democratic and values-based interventions will require enhanced capacity. We will need more than a well-equipped and well-trained navy, air force and army, with the tactical and strategic lift to deploy when necessary. We will also need the right mix of real-time intelligence, multi-sourced and connected to our allies, and the right political framework in order for deployments to succeed. This is in part because of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's initiative requiring parliamentary approval prior to any meaningful deployment. It's on this last issue – the right political framework – that this brief paper seeks to engage. A new world strategic horizon requires a new political framework. Canada must also have reasonable political and command structure requirements from its allies in order for deployments to be viable.

THE CONTEXT OF FOREIGN DEPLOYMENT

It is much to Prime Minister Harper's credit that his Conservative government established a formal policy that no new foreign deployments would transpire without a vote in Parliament. In so doing, he echoed the 1939 decision of then Prime Minister Mackenzie King at the outset of the Second World War, when Parliament declared war against the Nazis following the invasion of Poland. This parliamentary role has been ignored by most subsequent Liberal and Progressive Conservative governments in Canada. King's purpose had been to reinforce the post-Statute of Westminster independence of Canadian decision-making, while Harper's reflected respect for Parliament. Between the end of the Korean War and the election of the Harper government, very few foreign deployments followed a parliamentary vote. There were "take-note debates" and consultations with opposition parties, but formal votes have been quite recent. Previous governments, especially those with majorities, assumed that the cabinet and prime minister had the authority to commit and deploy troops. The new premise goes further than requiring that any meaningful military deployment abroad receive parliamentary approval. It also means that when a deployment is committed, Canada should seek political requirements from our allies and authorizing multinational authorities, such as the UN and NATO, that reflect core military exigencies and democratic values.

Canada has little history of deploying to overseas theatres without joint-allied interests or focuses. Multilateral defence policy has been the cornerstone of Canadian defence and foreign policy since our first foreign deployment in the Boer War, at the turn of the 19th century. The Article 5 collective defence commitments of the Atlantic Charter have been at the foundation of Canadian defence and foreign policy for six decades. These are unlikely to change or to be



relaxed. A rational analysis of the political needs for future deployments must thus consider Canada's alliances. A large part of this must therefore involve NATO.

Following World War II, the threat of the rising Soviet Union prompted 12 like-minded, democratic nations to create this alliance. It was mandated to provide substantial military capabilities, deterrence and ultimately defence in the event of an attack from Warsaw Pact countries on Allied territory. NATO members were bound by the very principles that the spread of the Soviet Union threatened to destroy: free institutions and democratic concepts.¹ Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, NATO quickly expanded, taking in new members such as Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, to Russia's dismay. This widening alliance sought to promote good relations with countries that the Iron Curtain had estranged, to create a flexible response in case of attack and to enshrine an even stronger nuclear deterrence. The 28 current NATO members constitute a remarkable coalition of democracies.

A key threat to Canada's vital interests today comes from sponsors of terrorism, non-state actors supported by sponsoring states and rogue states that have the capacity to contemplate and deploy violent insurgencies or violence against their own people. These then inflame local populations and diasporas in a way that produces more violence and instability. Everything from the safety of sea routes against piracy and the interruption of trade to the security of Canadians at home and abroad can be affected by these kinds of asymmetrical threats. A failed state – for instance Afghanistan, circa 2000 – can spawn terrorist training bases and networks that target the world.

THE NATO CONTEXT

The turbulent 1990s saw the disintegration of the Soviet Union and numerous ethnic and humanitarian crises in Africa and Eastern Europe. Many predicted the fall of NATO, along with the fall of the Berlin Wall. Yet the alliance was able to devise new strategic concepts during the Rome Summit of 1999 and the Lisbon Summit of 2010, transforming the organization from a team of contained Atlantic defenders to one of – albeit imperfect – global security-keepers and crisis-managers. Terrorism, cyber-attacks, missile defence, natural disasters, piracy and energy insecurity know no boundaries. “Partnership deployments” conducted among NATO allies (such as the campaigns in Afghanistan and Libya) became a more typical form of Canadian engagement. As the alliance became more involved in missions extending beyond NATO geography, expanded partnerships with countries like Japan and Australia became intrinsic to its success. Enduring post-Cold War threats in the Middle East, the Gulf of Aden, the Mediterranean and even in cyberspace demand a much more global collective security approach, as opposed to a transatlantic self-defence mentality. NATO's strategic objectives for the next decade continue to be collective defence, crisis management, co-operative security and nuclear deterrence.²

Even with a strengthened mandate, the alliance does not operate in a utopic environment, where all of its members agree on every issue. It is an imperfect international body that has made costly mistakes in its missions abroad. However, NATO's achievements and effectiveness in bringing greater stability outweigh the sometimes slow learning curve of this constantly adapting global security alliance. The missions in Bosnia and Kosovo tested its new global

¹ Hallams, E. (2009). NATO at 60, going global? *International Journal*, p.439

² Rutherford, I. P. (2011). NATO's New Strategic Concept, Nuclear Weapons and Global Zero. *International Journal*, p.463



strategic concept. Although some disagreed with the non-UN mandated bombing campaign over Kosovo, NATO was instrumental in putting an end to the violence in the Balkans, as well as Yugoslavia's ultimate acceptance of UN Resolution 1244.³ A recent Serbia-Kosovo agreement underlines how successful the deployments by NATO and Canada were in the former Yugoslavia, both in providing stability at the time and in promoting opportunity later.

While the recent Libyan mission lacked cohesion and unanimous support, even with UN Security Council Resolution 1973 authorizing the intervention, it can be deemed successful. Eight countries (France, the U.K., Belgium, Norway, Canada, Denmark, Italy and the U.S.) contributed to the air campaign, while other members ignored pleas from NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen for greater participation.⁴ Although NATO achieved its goal of stopping Colonel Muammar Gaddafi from killing thousands of his own people, the mission also demonstrated the challenges and setbacks of an alliance splitting into coalitions of the willing and the unwilling.⁵ Managing these types of situations in the future, given that there is already significant mission fatigue, will only get more difficult if NATO's membership and partnering-doctrine remain stagnant. It will become even more paralyzed in the context of an aging UN.

As Kosovo exposed divisions in the alliance in the 1990s, Afghanistan was the next decade's most challenging "out-of-region" cause. Support from the international community for Operation Enduring Freedom was initially overwhelming, following the tragic events of September 11th. It waned as the nature of the mission gradually changed from ousting the Taliban to nation-building, counterinsurgency, civil war prevention, joint army training and infrastructure rebuilding. As with Kosovo, member-states began drafting caveats, insisting that a certain number of states contribute troops before they sent theirs. They requested that their troops refrain from combat, or insisted on pulling out after a specific number of months. (The involvement continues to diminish, as many European parliaments claw back the exit dates of their militaries.)⁶ In the 28-member NATO alliance, only four countries – the U.S., U.K., Canada and the Netherlands – engage in counterinsurgency. Remarkably, even when these countries take on combat roles, they are also called upon to carry out complex civil and humanitarian efforts. Understandably, not all countries can be asked to strap on boots and fight, which requires military sophistication, equipment procurement capacity and hefty defence budgets. But there are many ways to help. Other nations such as Turkey, and non-member partners such as Australia, for example, have contributed immeasurably to the Afghanistan mission by providing money, resources, human capital and public support. Greater participation from member nations in many forms would mean more resources, enhanced involvement and the better co-operation needed to deal with today's security threats and to shoulder the global burden. Improved mission leadership, joint military training and greater intelligence-sharing fosters a sense of responsibility and commitment to a mission, significantly increasing its chances of success and decreasing mission fatigue.

³ Manulak, M. (2011). Forceful persuasion or half-hearted diplomacy? Lessons from the Kosovo Crisis. *International Journal*, p.352, p.362

⁴ Noetzel, T., Schreer, B. (2012). More Flexible, Less Coherent: Nato after Lisbon. *Australian Journal of International Affairs. Volume 66. Number 1*, p.31

⁵ Mérand, M., & Foucault, F. (2012). The Challenge of Burden-Sharing. *International Journal*, p.423

⁶ Hodge, C. C. (2009). Short Shrift for the Long War. Nato's Neglect of the Afghan Mission. *International Journal*, p.155



CANADA'S "COALITION OF THE WILLING" REQUIREMENTS

The Afghanistan and Libya experiences establish two clear but different principles relative to Canada's needs in joint operations. In Afghanistan, there was a jointly perceived threat, joint control via an integrated command structure, separate and established areas of operations, which brought together a real-time, multi-source intelligence capacity. This meant that Canada, through its Parliament and government, recognized the Taliban-Al Qaeda threat in Afghanistan as real. Canada determined that it would participate in a forward and out-of-region NATO military deployment and decided the size, strength and capacities of its deployment. The Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan, headed by former Deputy Prime Minister John Manley (joined by Senator Pamela Wallin, then a former diplomat and journalist, as well as Derek Burney, a former Canadian Ambassador to the U.S., Jake Epp, a former minister and Paul Teller, a former member of the Privy Council,) in 2008 re-assessed the nature, durability and disposition of Canada's continuing deployment, leading up to the end of Canada's initial commitment period in 2011.

Gone are the days when others decide Canada's terms of deployment. Add the parliamentary requisite imposed by Stephen Harper, and the full dynamic of Canada's requirements emerge. The bi-partisan panel produced a bi-partisan parliamentary stance (that included the Liberals and Conservatives, but excluded the NDP.) The need for Canada to determine the elements of threat perception, to agree on the mission's importance, as well as to design its own deployment and intelligence linkages cannot be overstated. Some of the clearest lessons come from the Afghanistan context.

The fact that two different political parties insisted on similar dynamics underlines the extent to which these requirements span political divides and reflect a working consensus. The need for parliamentary approval is likely to continue, although a "peacekeeping" bias can be expected. It is important to note, however, that modern deployments no longer find much "peace to keep." This will likely be a pretext for Liberals and New Democrats, should they come to power, to simply avoid deployments that might involve serious combat or exposure. This would explain the NDP's opposition to combat deployment in Afghanistan, as long as it feels no threat, save for a direct attack on Canada. The conditions that Canada would require in order to participate in a "joint-alliance" deployment would simply never exist under a Liberal or NDP government. For the Liberals, there would be less clarity but more nostalgia for the largely mythological "peacekeeping" era of Lester B. Pearson.

The conflict in Libya, which was out of NATO's region but abutted its southern flank, established another key principle. Beyond commonality in terms of threat assessment (the freedom to deploy as appropriate, the freedom to determine the length and terms of that deployment, plus linked-up intelligence,) Canada could also be in command when appropriate. Since the Korean War, Canada has been the junior partner in deployments, given the relatively small size of its forces and the modest percentage of GDP that Canada spends on its military, despite recent procurements and increases under the Harper government. The Libyan "no fly-zone" air campaign revealed that when circumstances and command requirements mesh with Canadian experience and capacity, Canada can step up. And it did. The position of Royal Canadian Air Force Lt.-Gen. Charles Bouchard as commander of the entire operation reflected the "command access" and rotation role that Canada has every right to expect. This echoed the role of the Royal Canadian Navy during the First Gulf War, when a Canadian naval officer commanded the



multinational logistics and terrorist interdiction fleet – a force many times the size of our own navy.

While Canada can and should assert its requirements in joint missions led by others, it need not avoid missions that, while multinational, are led by Canada and Canadians. This could mean intervening in a failed state in the Caribbean or providing assistance following a natural disaster, such as the 2010 Haiti earthquake. In Haiti, Canada's presence was the highest per capita of any force on the ground. Our specific areas of expertise include civil-relations and special-force deployments, as well as joined-up air, sea and land activities in nearby neighbourhoods, such as the Arctic and the Caribbean. Reticence of others to lead need not be contagious. It is vital that, especially through a period of cost-containment and regrouping following the Afghanistan combat intensity, Canadian Forces leadership not let bureaucratic small-mindedness and Treasury Board intellectual penury diminish their "deployability" and their joined-up military intelligence capacity, given the risks to Canada and to our relationships with our allies.

For Canada beyond the Libyan campaign, given the recent U.S. "pivot" toward the Pacific, our relationship with the U.S. as the dominant China-balancing power in the Pacific will be central. There is now a history, quite broad and multi-varied, of Canada-U.S. alliance dynamics and mutual requirements. There is a new core strategic concept for NATO that, upgraded in 2010, underlines a broader role for the alliance on cyber security, terrorism and crisis management. Each member helps directly with boots on the ground, ships in the sea, aircraft in the skies or financial and other resources when other deployments are not possible. A more robust co-operative engagement with Russia, especially on anti-piracy and anti-terrorist challenges, is also suggested.

In the Pacific, Canada's deployment options and geopolitical intent would be greatly enhanced by deepening what is already a mutually supportive and strong historical relationship with Australia. The balance that existed for half a century in the Atlantic sphere – between the old USSR, the Warsaw Pact countries and NATO – served a deeply constructive, stabilizing purpose, in which Canada had many diverse roles. Canadian deployment choices and exigencies were enhanced during this period.

No similar balancing framework exists in the Pacific. China's increasing defence expenditures, while enormous and unmatched in scope worldwide, still do not bring it close to parity with the technological, operational and strategic reach of the U.S. But the gap has begun to close. An engagement framework with Commonwealth allies such as Australia, India, Malaysia and New Zealand, framed around a balance of stability and some constructive trust-building interface with the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, dominated by China and Russia, would allow Canada and its allies to be forces for stability, free trade and constructive international relations in the region. That will enhance Canada's capacity to have choices and options on a range of trade, scientific and migration policies in the region that reflect its vital interests.

Demands for deployment in traditional NATO engagements in the past, and more recently, are relatively clear predictions of deployment conditions in the future. But in a world of cyber attacks, asymmetrical terrorist risks and an Asian-centric, medium-term prospect, the resources, links and joint activities in the region will depend on the capacity of Canadians to play a constructive stability-building role, consistent with our values, capacities and democratic needs. This is not a "maybe yes, maybe no" option. In order for Canada to have clear and precise requirements for joint deployments in the Pacific region, whether humanitarian, combat,



security support or anti-terrorist related, a Pacific concept for our military is an important prerequisite. This should be an important requirement for our military and political leadership.



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