The Dispatch

FALL 2012

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J.L. Granatstein addresses the myth of Canada as a peacekeeping nation, and concludes that history shows Canada as a warrior nation with major defence alliances, stressing that it is essential to know the difference between history and myth.

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Looking at the US-Japan Relationship Through Open Eyes

David Wright calls on the United States to look at its relationship with Japan through open eyes and not only acknowledge, but put down, the lies of a right-wing lobby group called the Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact that claims the WWII attack on Pearl Harbor was actually an act of aggression by the United States against Japan.

A Case for Drones

Frank Harvey investigates the Obama Administration's increased use of drone technology. This increase appears to be high, but the hands-on approach of the President on the implementation of this strategy ensures an important check on the abuse of this new technology.

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Brian Flemming examines China's attempts to seek a permanent observer seat on the Arctic Council. With Canada to begin a two-year term as Chair of the Council, the country will have a unique opportunity to showcase its diplomatic skills in handling the China relationship.

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Funding Canadian Defence

Michael Jeffery investigates the danger of cutting resources to the Canadian Forces that affect military personnel levels. Placing too much of an emphasis on procurement and cutting force levels in exchange could result in a dangerous reduction of capability.

Armed Drones for Canada?

Roland Paris suggests that drones may be purchased to fill the gaps in the Canadian Air Force given the rising costs of the F-35 project. While drones may add unique value to the military, it will be essential for Canada to set parameters on their use before making the acquisition.

Leaving Afghanistan

John Ferris states that as Canada's role in Afghanistan is quickly winding down we will revisit our historical need to monitor and ensure the balance of power in the region, but this will be accomplished through politics rather than war.

Canada's Place in the Mystical North

Colin Robertson explores Canada's interests in the Arctic, commending Operation Nanook, which forces Canada to pay attention to the Arctic at least once a year, and concluding that we have a vital role to play in the Arctic and should take our turn chairing the Arctic Council as an essential opportunity for leadership in the region.

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Ray Henault has a long and distinguished career with the Canadian Forces and is the longest-serving 4-Star General in CF History. From June 2001 to February 2005, Gen. (Ret'd) Henault served as Chief of the Defence Staff, a period marked by the highest operational tempo for the Canadian Forces in 50 years.

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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

Written by:
David Bercuson

At the end of March this year the Security and Defence Forum (SDF) of the Department of National Defence went out of existence. Few people outside the small Canadian defence policy business would have taken any notice. After all, the current government is in the process of cutting several billion dollars out of the defence budget as part of a larger plan to eliminate Canada's deficit by 2015. Few Canadians can or should argue with that goal. As former Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen declared some time ago, a nation's security is highly dependent on the strength of its economy. All over western Europe, in the US and even in economically healthy Australia, defence budgets are being slashed due to high deficit to GDP ratios, rising bond yields and recurrent national debt crises. In comparison to the US economy, the Canadian economy did fairly well in the Great Recession, but the government's task now is to ensure a return to government solvency as quickly as possible. Given the under spending in DND in Fiscal Years 2009/2010 and 2010/2011, deep defence cuts were inevitable.

But the SDF, which was part of the mandate of the Directorate of Public Policy inside DND, ate up a piddling $2.5 million and in return helped sustain centres of excellence programs at 12 universities across Canada making it much easier for dozens of academics and former practitioners in the military and diplomatic service and hundreds of graduate and honour students to study Canadian security and defence issues. Conferences and symposia were held, papers and books were published, websites were maintained, and theses and honours papers were produced annually. There was a Chair of Defence Management at Queen's University that regularly tackled defence management and defence economics issues. Two of the SDF programs were located at Francophone universities, giving Quebec students a window on advanced defence issues, access that is sorely needed.

Now all that has gone, sacrificed for a tiny proportion of the national defence cut.

There is no good argument to be made that the SDF program, for all its high value, should have been spared a cut. After all, virtually every department in Ottawa has been told to chop at least 5% of its budget. But the SDF program was cut by 80%, leaving a pittance of $500,000 which has not even been allocated yet.

There has been no transparency in any of the SDF cutting process. Cuts were hinted at for about 18 months before the axe fell, but there was no information on the size of the cuts, how they were to be implemented, and what, if anything was to be done with the remaining funds. Centres were asked to provide their views on how the remaining $500K ought to be disbursed, but there was no substantial reaction from DND.

No one can measure the impact that the SDF had on Canadian security and defence policy making in the years that the program ran (it had started up in the 1970s). But surely the very minimum impact it had was to help create and engage advanced thinking about Canadian security and defence issues. In a nation that regularly ignores such matters until Canadian soldiers, sailors, airmen and women are being killed or wounded in service to their nation, that was good enough.

Disclaimer: The author of this piece is Director of the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary, a former affiliate of the SDF program.

David Bercuson is the Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Director of Programs, the Director of the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary, and a former Honorary Lieutenant Colonel of the 41st Combat Engineer Regiment.

Should Canada Worry? North Korea's Evolving Missile Threat

Written by:
Andrew Godefroy

To mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of the nation's late founding leader Kim Il-sung, on 13 April 2012 North Korea made its fourth attempt to launch a satellite into orbit aboard a Taep'o-dong 2 (Korean: 대포동 2호) rocket. It was the third test for this variant of the finicky launcher, which some analysts have speculated when finally successful, may be able to carry as much as 1000kg of payload approximately 4000km down range. Yet, unsurprising to most observers, this test ended in early failure when the rocket's first stage plummeted into the Yellow Sea 165km west of Seoul after reaching an altitude of 70km and the second stage failed to ignite altogether. According to North Korean officials the rocket's payload, also lost, was an Earth observation satellite known as Kwangmyŏngsŏng-3 (Bright Star-3).

Uncharacteristically open about the rocket's failure, and vehemently denying that it is attempting to circumvent United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions aimed at curbing its ability to develop ballistic missiles, North Korea has continued to insist that both this and the previous launches were part of a sovereign right "in line with the Outer Space Treaty which stipulates the use of space for peaceful purposes shall be the right of all countries. Accordingly, the US or any other existing satellite launchers are not entitled to interfere in the DPRK's satellite launch for peaceful purpose." According to another official statement read on the central news agency in Pyongyang on 19 April, a spokesman for the North Korean Committee for Space Technology announced,

> Those who sympathize with truth and love justice were unanimous in praising the plan with much expectation. But, the unjust and ill-tempered hostile forces have worked hard to mislead public opinion with groundless assertions and sophism. The US and Japanese reactionaries and their special class stooge Lee Myung Bak are taking the lead in the smear campaign. It is their brigandish [sic] assertion and their lackey's nonsensical talk that the DPRK should not be allowed to launch a satellite for peaceful purposes.

North Korean Unha-3 Rocket
Photo Source: msnbc.msn.com

North Korea's current missile and space development strategy presents a difficult paradigm for western security and defence. The country's attempt to join the exclusive club of space faring nations is a legitimate right, yet in order to do so, North Korea risks violating a number of international security resolutions and sanctions designed to limit their ability to develop limited range intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM). And in some ways the country already has. Besides the short to mid range missile capabilities of the Taep'o-dong 2, for example, other variants have the potential to achieve an operational range of 600 plus km, making it plausible for North Korea to eventually reach targets well beyond regional East Asia. No less disconcerting is North Korea's disregard for international sanctions regarding the transfer of such technologies to other states. Some reports contend that the DPRK has already offered missile

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knowledge and technology to Iran in direct violation of UNSC resolutions 1718 and 1874 that explicitly prohibit such activities. Any further flagrant proliferation of these technologies could invite a whole host of security nightmares for other states.

So what does this mean for North American, and by default, Canadian security and defence? In the short-term perhaps it means nothing. Speaking to the press in Washington DC on 19 April, Director of the US Missile Defense Agency, Lt. Gen. Patrick O'Reilly, assured reporters that North Korea is far from being able to threaten the United States or Canada with a long-range missile. "Our experience has been you need a lot of testing and flight testing in order to validate and have reliance in the capability. They do not, and it's been evident every time they test," O'Reilly told the press. Will this still be the case five or ten years down the road? The North Korean leadership has repeatedly demonstrated its willingness to indiscriminately fire upon its immediate neighbor, South Korea, so what would really deter the new leader and his inner circle from an opportunity to strike Japan, or if "provoked", North America even?

The Canada First Defence Strategy makes no mention of ballistic missile defence, and its section on the defence of North America only suggests that Canada will remain a fully capable and interoperable partner with the US concerning our common defence and security requirements. With North Korea's potential missile threat evolving, should we be worried there's no apparent greater detail given to the issue? Again, perhaps only time will tell.

Andrew B. Godefroy CD, Ph.D (RMC) is a strategic analyst and historian working in Canadian strategic studies, foreign and defence policy, defence conceptual modeling, leadership and command, and science, technology, and security.

Canada & the World Speaker Series: Asia Pacific

CDFAI will be hosting its fourth annual four-part Speaker Series starting in October.

This series will focus on Canada's relations with the Asia Pacific region, mainly those nations bordering the South China Sea and Japan.

The venue is the Calgary Golf & Country Club and the attendance will be kept relatively small in order for everyone to engage the speaker in the moderated Q&A session.

The reception will commence at 6:00 PM, with the dinner at 6:30PM, and the evening will end by 9:15PM.

The price for this series is $1,500 per person or $15,000 for a table of ten to the four events. As per CRA guidelines, a portion of the series ticket price will be issued as a charitable tax receipt (Charity Registration #87982 7913RR0001).

Dinner Dates and Speakers:

October 22, 2012: Jim Boutillier
"Defence & Security"
Special Advisor on Asia Pacific Security at the Maritime Forces Pacific Headquarters

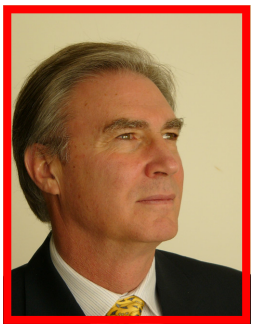
November 20, 2012: Wendy Dobson
"Trade"
Professor at the Rotman School of Management and former President of the CD Howe Institute

February 5, 2013: Don Campbell
"Investment"
Senior Strategy Advisor at Davis LLP and former EVP at CAE who had a distinguished career with International Trade

March 7, 2013: Yuen Pau Woo
"Culture & Immigration"
President & CEO of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

For tickets or information please contact Lynn Arsenault at (403) 231-7605 or larsenault@cdfai.org

Obama Foreign Policy: Muddling Through Another Four Years?



Written by:
Stephen Randall

As the United States moves toward the Fall 2012 election it is useful to assess the foreign policy record of the Barack Obama administration and to speculate on where a second Democratic administration is likely to lead, if the party is successful in November, as well as what such a victory might mean for relations with Canada.

Few would deny that the Obama record over the past four years has been uneven, even inconsistent. That should come as no surprise to observers of the 2008 campaign in which, then Senator, Obama reflected the same mixture of vague idealism with a strong strain of pragmatism that has come to characterize his presidency.

Obama Thinking
Photo Source: wikipedia.org

Writing in *Foreign Policy* in January 2012, Walter Mead identified what he views as the split personality of Obama foreign policy, that is the difficulty Obama has had reconciling his Jeffersonian inclinations with his Wilsonian values. In the first case the inspiration is to engage in limited global commitments and move to dismantle the national security state that was strengthened by the Bush administration in the aftermath of 9/11. In the second instance, the inspiration is to seek a strong global foreign policy tempered by the promotion of democracy and human rights. For Mead, unless Obama is able to reconcile these divergent approaches to policy, he risks the same failures that ultimately overwhelmed the Carter administration. Mead may well be correct, but there are no signs that President Obama himself, or his foreign policy team, are committed to any reversal of course.

"Obama appears to be just as wedded to the retention of a realistic foreign policy, with a strong military, a strong national government and little dismantelling of the national security state"

The 2010 National Security Strategy released by the Obama administration makes quite clear what the administration's policy blueprint is. The key elements are strengthening security at home; defeating Al-Qaeda and its affiliates; reversing the spread of nuclear and biological weapons; advancing peace in the Middle East; and ensuring strong alliances. In principle there is little, if any, abstract idealism in such goals, although there has been a decided gap between articulation and action.

As President Obama has pursued a consistently multilateral foreign policy, rarely deviating toward the kind of unilateralism that characterized the approach of his predecessor, and which also undermined the international standing of the United States during those post-9/11 years. Although the administration has taken a hard line on Iran and Pakistan, in the former case over its nuclear program, in the latter case over its lack of full cooperation in dealing with the Taliban and Al-Qaeda, it has also sought to do so in consultation and collaboration where possible with not only key allies but also more difficult partners, notably Russia and China. Few who watched the press conference with Obama and Vladimir Putin, solemn, stony faced, and brief in his remarks, that followed their bilateral meeting in Los Cabos on June 18 would come away with the impression that the relationship is other than a pragmatic one. Yet, differences aside, they have made progress in the past three years on arms limitation talks, on cooperation in

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addressing the crisis in Syria and some marginal collaboration over Iran. The United States also supported Russia's WTO bid, and Putin drew particular attention to that assistance.

The most recent international approval ratings of the Obama administration, however, underline the problem the administration has had in moving from rhetoric to accomplishment. The Pew Research survey in June 2012, notes that the confidence in the administration's international policies has slumped from an early 57% to only 27%, the largest decline occurring in China, from 57% to 27%, a shocking 30% decline. In Russia, approval has declined from 40% to 22% in spite of the signs of bilateral progress in the relationship. Among Muslim countries, where approval was only 34% to begin, there has also been a notable decline to 15%, clearly indicating that the administration's efforts to curry favour with moderate Islamists has failed. European approval remains strong at 63%, although even there a decline is noted from 78% in 2009. Most European nations nonetheless give Obama himself high marks for foreign policy leadership, led by Germany and France, although the comparison was strictly with the Bush administration. High levels of narcotics cartel driven violence in Mexico, and the continued US war on drugs, has contributed to a decline in Mexico's confidence in Obama's policies from 56% to 39%. Brazilians express more confidence. The Pew survey results underline the widespread perception that the administration has not accomplished many of its initial goals, including addressing climate change, or advancing the peace process in the Middle East.

If there are challenges elsewhere for the Obama administration the Canadian relationship appears to be on comparatively sound footing. There are challenges, including the buy American provisions that were included in the US stimulus package, and there were grumblings that the Obama administration played election year politics on the approval process for the Keystone pipeline project, an initiative that is seen as key to the prosperity of the Canadian energy sector. It is clear that no approval will be forthcoming until well after the November election. Enhancing the ease of movement of goods across the Ontario-Michigan boarder remains an issue until a new bridge can be completed. The bilateral relationship has, in general, been comfortable for the past three years. The Harper and Obama governments have had a shared vision of the importance of security, reflected in the 2011 declaration on perimeter security and economic competitiveness. The most positive sign of good Canada-US relations came at the recent G-20 meetings in Los Cabos, where Prime Minister Harper succeeded in gaining a US invitation to participate in the Trans-Pacific Partnership talks.

In all of this there is little of the visionary that was evident in the 2008 campaign. Obama appears to be just as wedded to the retention of a realistic foreign policy, with a strong military, a strong national government and little dismantling of the national security state to which he seemed committed four short years ago.

Stephen Randall, FRSC, is Professor of History at the University of Calgary. He is a specialist in United States foreign policy and Latin American international relations and politics.

Canada as Peacekeeper? Or Canada the Warrior Nation?

Written by:
J.L. Granatstein

Is Canada a peacekeeping nation? Or is it a warrior nation? These questions are the subject of two Spring 2012 books by Noah Richler (What We Talk About When We Talk About War) and Ian McKay and Jamie Swift (Warrior Nation: Rebranding Canada in an Age of Anxiety). They are notable for the vigour of their arguments and, not least, because both take aim at the Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute and at David Bercuson and Jack Granatstein. Yes, David and me. Ordinarily, I would not respond to attacks of this sort (David can make his own decisions!), but the issue is important and worth a reply.

That Canada was a warrior nation I take as a given. The nation's 20th Century record speaks for itself, as do the military efforts in Afghanistan and Libya in the first years of this century. This is Canadian history, and the authors may not like this, but they simply must accept it – and by and large they do. What they object to, what they attribute in part to Bercuson and me, is the way military history has been pushed to the forefront of public consciousness, or so they claim, and the way in which the Harper government has used this interpretation of the past and the Afghan War to change the public narrative. In effect, they argue that Canada has become a warrior nation thanks to the current government's efforts and the writings of a few military historians sheltering under the broad wings of the CDFAI.

There is some truth in this, but mostly it's a lot of hooey. The government built up the military – and is now rolling back the defence budget. Despite my best efforts, polls demonstrate Canadians know very little of their military past. Moreover, other than in a few universities, Canadian military history is not much taught. But there is substantial publishing in the field, and the public buys and reads these books. More military history sells, I suspect, than McKay's unreadable tomes on the glories of the Canadian left. But that's a dispute for another day.

What was the narrative before the warriors "perverted" it? To Richler and McKay-Swift, Canada as peacekeeper is much more realistic, more acceptable to the public, more attuned to what Canada is and should be. Now, there is no doubt that the Canadian Forces has done much good work in peacekeeping since the early 1950s, and there is similarly no debate that the public likes this role. Every opinion poll confirms this. And there is also no gain saying the fact that governments, Liberal and Conservative, have exploited this, building the grand peacekeeping monument in Ottawa, putting peacekeeping on our coins and bills, and talking it up at every opportunity until recently.

Richler at least understands that this was largely myth-making, but he prefers the peacekeeping myth to the war-fighting reality. McKay and Swift sometimes seem to accept the myth as fact.

It is, of course, made up of whole cloth. Peacekeeping was never more than a subsidiary role for the CF. NATO and NORAD commitments absorbed most of the personnel and budgetary resources, while peacekeeping at its peak received at most ten percent. But the myth appealed to Canadians, and their governments, eager to cut budgets and looking for a uniquely Canadian role to trumpet, went along with the story.

A personal anecdote, one that Richler uses in his book to slam me. When I went to Ottawa in 1998 to become the Director and CEO of the (old) Canadian War Museum, I found the third floor of the cramped museum devoted to peacekeeping. Why? I asked. Because my predecessor had polled visitors and been told they wanted to see more on peacekeeping. The problem was that the CWM's exhibits almost completely omitted NATO and NORAD, a total bowdlerization of postwar history. So I reduced the peacekeeping exhibits substantially and put in big exhibits on Canada's two main alliances. To Richler, this was the triumph of the warrior nation idea over the peacekeeping ideal. Maybe, but to me, it was simply getting the history right, the task of a museum just as much as it is (or should be) of historians.

Getting it right matters. So does smashing myths and creating new ones. But surely it is critical to understand the difference between history and myth first.

J.L. Granatstein is one of Canada's most distinguished historians focusing on 20th Century Canadian national history.

Canada, NATO and the African Union

Written by:
Alexander Moens and
Jimmy Peterson

Canadian foreign policy has made more headlines engaging in robust peace operations with NATO than in pursuing multilateral diplomacy and soft power. The build-up of the Canadian Armed Forces since 2005 was crucial to maintain Canada's frontline contributor status to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. Canada also undertook a visible role in enforcing UN Security Council Resolution 1973 in Libya alongside the United States, France and Great Britain.

But foreign policy is seldom one-sided or simplistic. Less known to Canadians is the role Canada is playing in supporting the African Union (AU). Canada has provided equipment and training resources to the AU Mission in Southern Sudan (AMIS) in 2005, and to the hybrid AU-UN operations in Darfur (UNAMID) since 2008. Canada trains personnel for the African Standby Force (ASF) and contributes to African policing and humanitarian efforts. Recently, Canada announced that it would provide support for the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). There are three interesting patterns in this activity in Africa when examined in light of the switch to a more robust foreign policy stance under Stephen Harper.

First, Canada's work in Africa combines the hard security approach of NATO with soft power concepts embodied in human security, the responsibility to protect (R2P), and the role of the International Criminal Court in dealing with crimes against humanity. In effect, the Liberal Party's agenda is not abandoned, but is merged with the Conservative Party's agenda on stronger methods (NATO).

Second, Canada and other allies such as Norway do not pursue NATO-led operations in competition with the United Nations or the AU. In Sudan and Somalia, the mandate came either from the UN Security Council, or from a widely respected NATO-AU agreement when a Chinese veto prevented UN action.[1] The UN takes part in some aspects of peace building while NATO assists the AU with force planning, command and control, and military training. NATO allies such as Canada provide airlift to Nigerian and Kenyan soldiers to be deployed as UN/AU peace keepers. Third, the 'partnership' developed between NATO and the AU not only respects the AU as the security driver in Africa, but helps build conditions to develop a security regime in the long run. The AU has enshrined the principles of human security and R2P and instituted a collective security mechanism to implement these principles in its Constitutive Act. NATO builds on this design by avoiding Western troops on the ground and supporting the AU where it is weak, for example in C4SIR, command and control, and logistics.

The trust built between NATO and the AU was broken in the Libyan crisis when NATO's air mission helped end the Qaddafi regime. The AU was not united, but it had a "Road Map" that did not envision outside military force in helping to topple Qaddafi. Justifiably or not, many African decision makers feel NATO disrespected Africa's emerging security regime. The NATO-AU relationship hangs in the balance.

"Canada should expand NATO's technical and military support for AU operations and training in order to help build an effective African Standby Force and a strong security regime."

Meanwhile, the African security environment is worsening while the security framework is fragile. NATO is a better toolbox to help Africa than the UN. Canada should take the diplomatic lead with like-minded allies to negotiate a durable NATO-AU political relationship. In addition, Canada should expand NATO's technical and military support for AU operations and training in order to help build an effective African Standby Force and a strong security regime. For example, the newly recognized state of South Sudan is under siege by the aggressive tactics of the regime in Sudan. NATO needs to help the AU to stop attacks launched by Khartoum to avoid war and a massive humanitarian disaster.

[1] Such was the case with AMIS in 2005. In preparation for NATO and EU cooperation with the AU, both sides fully consulted the UN. Facing a likely veto by China in the UNSC to launch a UN mission to Darfur in 2005, the AU decided to launch AMIS instead based on its new mandate. See: G. Segell, "The First NATO Mission to Africa: Darfur:, *Scientia Militaria: South African Journal of Military Studies* 36.2, 2008, p. 4.

Alexander Moens is a Professor of Political Science and Jimmy Peterson researcher and BA candidate. Both are at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada.

Looking at the US-Japan Relationship Through Open Eyes

Written by:
David Curtis Wright

On 7 December, 2011, the seventieth anniversary of the Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, I received an unsolicited and unwanted mass email (spam, in other words) contending that America, and not Japan, was the aggressor that started the Pacific War between the two countries.

No, really. This contention was made in all seriousness by the laughably misnamed "Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact," a far-right ultranationalist group in Japan that seeks to whitewash, or completely deny, Japan's wartime atrocities. (The society does have its critics, both inside and outside Japan, who dispute its historical allegations and misrepresentations. Perhaps someday these critics might consider establishing a Society for the Denunciation of Historical Farce.) In 2008 Toshio Tamogami, then chief of staff of Japan's Air Self-Defence Force, parroted this nonsense about Pearl Harbor and was stripped of his post and ordered into retirement for it.

Among other absurd and brazen denials of history from this, and other similar groups in Japan, are that the Rape of Nanking never happened; that there never were any "comfort women" forced into servicing Japanese soldiers in the countries Japan invaded, but only willing and paid prostitutes; and that a still largely unacknowledged and unthanked Japan waged a selfless and noble war in East and Southeast Asia against Communism and Western imperialism and attempted, alas unsuccessfully, to create a new order in Asia run for and by Asians.

Ishihara Shintaro, the Governor of Tokyo since 1999, has shot off his mouth about some of these issues, including a denial of the Rape of Nanking in 1990. (Perhaps not very surprising, this same individual also made a misogynist remark in 2001 to the effect that women who live beyond their reproductive years are useless.)

Virtually nobody in the region takes this seriously. Anyone who has spent any time at all in East and Southeast Asia knows that with the singular exception of a significant segment of the Taiwanese, all peoples in the region retain bitter historical memories of Japan's invasion and oppression of their countries or regions and detest the far-right groups in Japan that attempt to whitewash Japanese wartime atrocities. These include mainland China, Hong Kong, Korea (both sides), Malaysia, Mongolia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Vietnam.

The far right in Japan is fond of quoting Radhabinod Pal, the lone dissenting member of the international panel of judges who presided over the International Military Tribunal for the Far East from 1946 to 1948: "When time shall have softened passion and prejudice, when Reason shall have stripped the mask from misrepresentation, then Justice, holding evenly her scales, will require much of past censure and praise to change places." They seldom admit that in this statement Pal was quoting Jefferson Davis. (They also ignore the inconvenient fact that Justice Pal affirmed the reality of the Rape of Nanking and other Japanese wartime atrocities.) But in a deliciously ironic way, their indirect and unacknowledged invocation of Davis's flight of fancy makes the point of sober and clear-eyed historians who know the truth about Japan's spectacular wartime brutality: The hope for eventual historical vindication of Japanese imperialism is about as dim as that for Davis's Confederate States.

The United States must not be seen in Asia as oblivious or indifferent to Japan's wartime past. In the new strategic closeness between the US and Japan, the US needs to tread carefully and avoid any hint or whiff of ignoring or downplaying Japan's deplorable historical record of wartime aggression, oppression, and human rights violations throughout much of Asia. The United States and Japan clearly need each other now, but America must enter this marriage of convenience with its eyes open. Since both Japan and the United States have some measure of image problems in the Asia-Pacific region (the former more than the latter), America should take care lest its newly strengthened strategic alliance with Japan multiply these image problems synergistically.

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A Case for Drones

Written by:
Frank Harvey

George W. Bush was repeatedly vilified for embracing a number of highly contentious foreign policy initiatives, almost all of which have been adopted by Obama's White House. The decision to keep Guantanamo open to prosecute high value detainees surprised many, but so has Obama's decision to accelerate the pace of drone strikes against the Taliban and al Qaeda supporters in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Yemen. According to a recent study by CNN security analyst Peter Bergen, within the first two years of Obama's presidency, the average use of attack drones increased from one strike every 40 days to one strike every four days. Every branch of the US military is now acquiring drone capabilities.

Unrelenting advances in technology will inevitably produce lighter, more maneuverable attack drones with enhanced surveillance capabilities, extended flight times, precision targeting and lethality. Without having to deploy troops or operators, drones essentially undercut the enemy's primary weapon, counter-coercion, by stripping away opportunities to exploit casualty numbers to gain political or military leverage against Western democracies. As Defence Minister Peter MacKay explains, "these eyes-on systems that can literally read a license plate from outer space have increased our ability to decrease civilian casualties." Drones have become an essential alternative to costly military campaigns and massive counter-insurgency operations, which explains why NATO has allocated $1.7B towards their own program.

The 2012 National Defence Act is the most recent reaffirmation of congressional support for the president's authority "to use all necessary and appropriate force pursuant to the" 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (passed shortly after 9/11). Targets include individuals "who planned, authorized, committed, or aided" the 9/11 attacks, "harbored those responsible for those attacks," or "substantially supported al-Qaeda, the Taliban, or associated forces that are engaged in hostilities against the United States or its coalition partners." Legal advisers in both the Bush and Obama administrations have also defended their actions with reference to the right of self-defence included in Article 51 of the UN charter, and the UN's Chapter VII mandate assigned to NATO's International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan – a mandate buttressed by nine other UN resolutions.

A good part of the legal defence for targeted killings is grounded in the conviction that the US remains in a state of armed conflict against terrorists and affiliated supporters. Critics dismiss this 'license to kill' as excessively broad and essentially illegal. "It is imperative," Louise Arbour argues, "to impose conditions on the use of these drones, by establishing strict criteria for target selection and ensuring compliance with international law." But 'strict compliance' is problematic – the US and its NATO allies are engaged in an unconventional, asymmetric war with features (and an enemy) that arguably fall outside the parameters of laws designed primarily for the management of state-based conflicts. 'Strictly' speaking, non-state enemy combatants, belligerents, insurgents and terrorists are not soldiers, and remain uninhibited by any moral imperatives tied to international law, or the principles of Just War. Attacking, capturing or prosecuting these individuals will inevitably require adjustments to conventional laws of warfare and military justice.

American Drone over Afghanistan
Photo Source: ceasefiremagazine.co.uk

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Perhaps the most compelling criticism of Obama's drone strategy is the slippery-slope argument. Early stages of the program focused on 'personality' strikes directed at Taliban or al Qaeda leaders with a reasonably low risk of civilian casualties. The administration has shifted to "signature strikes" or "crowd killings", in which the standards for targeting are slightly more relaxed/flexible. A target with 'signature' characteristics of an al Qaeda or Taliban operation, meeting or convoy could make the list. One US official, quoted in the *New York Times*, justified the approach this way: "Al Qaeda is an insular, paranoid organization – innocent neighbors don't hitchhike rides in the back of trucks headed for the border with guns and bombs." It is reasonable to conclude, officials argue, that adults who attach themselves to convoys with known terrorists or insurgents are facilitating activities that threaten coalition forces.

"Drones have become an essential alternative to costly military campaigns and massive counter-insurgency."

Proponents believe that signature strikes diminish the threat by damaging the enemy's capacity to organize, mobilize, plan, attack, recruit or replace leaders with willing candidates. Evidence compiled by the New America Foundation indicates that drones are "decimating" Taliban leadership in Pakistan. The question is: how far down the chain of command should Washington go to enhance security and deterrence? Targeting has now expanded to more distant areas of Pakistan and Yemen against militants who pose a direct threat to these governments, but may not represent a serious threat to the US. Where should flexibility end? In the absence of any serious public scrutiny or strong political opposition, and in the context of recent US intelligence failures, the dual trends towards accelerated use and flexibility are worrisome, particularly if the strategy continues to damage an important counter-terrorist alliance with Pakistan.

Of course, Pakistan's recent decision to re-open NATO supply routes into Afghanistan is a pretty clear indication that both sides value a strong partnership that will continue to accommodate an accelerated drone strategy against common enemies. Moreover, concerns about excessive flexibility or diminishing accountability should not be exaggerated. In a recent *New York Times* report on the administration's drone strategy, Jo Becker and Scott Shane (29 May, 2012) reveal that most of the key decisions on targeted strikes are made by President Obama, James Cartwright (Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff), John Brennan (Obama's chief counterterrorism adviser), and about two dozen security officials during weekly meetings at the White House. Obama's National Security Advisor, Thomas Donilon, addressed the question of accountability this way: Obama "is determined that he will make these decisions about how far and wide these operations will go…he's responsible for the position of the United States in the world. He's determined to keep the tether pretty short." Accepting personal responsibility for the program reinforces the image of a dedicated president committed to national security. But Obama's hands-on strategy also serves as a powerful check (or brake) on the abuse of authority or technology as he will ultimately be blamed for any serious errors tied to slippery slopes.

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Canada and China in the Arctic

Written by:
Brian Flemming

The interest of China in the Arctic is growing exponentially. This interest first became dramatically obvious when the large Chinese Arctic icebreaking research vessel, "Snow Dragon," sailed into Tuktoyaktuk in 1999, unexpectedly and unannounced, much to the consternation of Canadian officials.

Another newly-built Chinese Arctic research ship was scheduled to have arrived in the Arctic last summer. And the "Snow Dragon" this past summer will have transited the rapidly opening Arctic Ocean – not by way of the North West Passage or the Northern Sea Route over Russia – from the Beaufort Sea to the east coast of Greenland, through the fabled "over-the-top passage" of the future.

China does not challenge any claims Canada and other littoral Arctic Ocean countries acquired under the Third United Nations Law of the Sea (UNCLOSIII) convention, but very much wants a greater say in the future of the northern ocean, particularly those parts of that lie beyond national jurisdictions.

Canada will soon be in a position to encourage, or to stymie, China's Arctic ambitions because Canada will, in April 2013, begin a two-year term as chair of the Arctic Council. China will, during that period, again seek a permanent observer's seat on that Council. Indeed, in May of 2012, China described itself as a "near-Arctic state", thereby clearly telling the world how important its greater involvement in the Arctic Council would be.

Canada has already told the European Union, which has also been seeking permanent observer status, that the EU does not "belong" at the Arctic table. How then will Canada be able to justify any support for a Chinese place on the Arctic Council? It will not be easy but can be done if Prime Minister Harper and his government want to continue improving the Canada-Chinese relationship that Harper so spectacularly wrong-footed when he first came to power.

The diplomacy required to bring China to the table must start in the capitals of other "Arctic powers", notably Norway, Sweden and Russia. Sweden recently announced that it wants the question of Chinese participation to be resolved by May, 2013, a mere month after Canada takes the chair. But Norway's clash with China over the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Chinese dissident Liu Xiabo may lead to Norway's blocking of the China application. And Russia is not showing much support for a Chinese seat.

Even if China were to be elected to permanent observer status it will have to be patient – in the way Deng Xiaoping suggested it should be in its international relations – until all at the Council become more comfortable with China's presence.

There is no question that the Arctic Council, founded in 1996, as a very loose, non-managerial institution, is becoming more important as it moves far from its original purpose of being a promoter of Arctic scientific research, conservation and mapping. Last year's agreement on Arctic search and rescue missions, plus other potential future agreements on subjects, such as an Arctic marine strategic plan, are rapidly making the Council more important as a broader international forum despite some odd changes in the Council's priorities that were promulgated recently.

Indeed, the time appears to have come for a fundamental rethinking and restructuring of the Council. That process will include considering how and why non-littoral Arctic states, like China, might contribute more fully to the scientific study of the Arctic Ocean and, eventually, to help develop the vast resources that lie under that ocean.

Canada will soon have a unique chance to show how diplomatically skillful it is and, simultaneously, to build new bridges to an emerging world power. Indeed, how Canada handles this file could define the middle years of the majority Harper government.

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The Russian Iron Stance on Syria

Written by:
Aurélie Campana

On 19 July 2012, Russia – and China – vetoed for the third time a Security Council resolution, blocking a new attempt to impose sanctions on Syria. While the uprisings in Syria are turning into a civil war whose outcomes remain uncertain, the permanent members of the Security Council are engaged in a tough diplomatic game, making any UN-sponsored solution more and more unlikely. Over the last year, Russia has positioned itself as a key player in this crisis, offering strong diplomatic and material support to the discredited Al-Assad regime. How to explain the Russian iron stance on this conflict?

Many analysts consider Russia to be mainly motivated by geopolitical and economic considerations. True, Russia has strong political interests in the region. The Syrian port of Tartus hosts the last Russian supply naval base located outside the former Soviet Union and Russia is the most important Syria arms supplier. Besides, Syria remains up-to-now a state-client of Russia and its main ally in this strategic area. But these considerations alone don't account for the Russian unconditional support for the Al-Assad clan. In fact, the Russian obstructionist strategy results from a combination of factors linked with both Russian foreign and domestic policies.

"While the upsurge of violence continues, Russia seems to buy Bashar Al Assad time to negotiate a safe exit."

Since day one of the Syrian crisis, Russia has expressed fundamental political and ethical differences with the West. While Western democracies and their allies underline the daily human rights violations, the loss of legitimacy of the Al-Assad regime, the need to impose sanctions and even consider a military intervention to stop violence, Moscow points out the "domestic" nature of the crisis and calls for a political dialogue between the government and the opposition, without any external interference. Russian officials, echoing the Syrian official discourse, are keen to put the blame on "terrorists" and "foreign elements" for the violence that is tearing Syria apart. In a context where domestic street protests have dented his image, Putin remains more than ever suspicious of street politics and is obsessed, like most of the Russian political class, with the preservation of state sovereignty. This logic, as well as Russian practice to quell any forms of opposition, certainly inspires the Kremlin's diplomatic stances.

Assad and Putin Shaking Hands
Photo Source: apollospaeks.blogtownhall.com

The word sovereignty has become, since the mid-2000s, a key concept in Russia. Indeed, the emphasis put on the respect for sovereignty on the international scene shows a fundamental difference regarding the core principles that should organize and maintain world order. Russia repeatedly calls for the respect of Syrian sovereignty while Western countries and members of the Arab League brandish the doctrine of humanitarian intervention. By the same token, the Russian leadership warns against any external intervention that would ultimately lead to a regime change and to the implementation of a democratization process. Since NATO's intervention in Serbia in 1999, Russians have developed an allergy to the Western discourses calling for external interventions aimed to protect civilian populations. Russian officials frequently denounce what they call "Western hypocrisy": according to this view, Western countries, led by the United States, would use the threat to peace and security to impose a Western-like model of state, and to advance NATO's agenda.

The recent Libyan crisis turned this allergy into an

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aversion. Many Russian officials consider that Western countries misused the Security Council Resolution to pave the way for military action. The Syrian crisis provides newly "re-elected" President Putin an opportunity to reaffirm his firm attachment to the principle of non-intervention. Russian strong stance on the international scene also serves domestic purposes as Putin is attempting to capitalize on anti-Western rhetoric to rouse people's patriotism.

While the upsurge of violence continues, Russia seems to buy Bashar Al Assad time to negotiate a safe exit. Such a position remains risky: a military victory of the Syrian opposition to the regime would not only mean that Russia would have to step down on Syria, but also that Russia's position would be undermined on the international scene.

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Funding Canadian Defence

Written by:
Michael Jeffery

In his June column, Dr. J.L. Granatstein argued that it was time the government review its defence policy and, in light of the changing global scene and the nation's economic challenges, decide what they want the CF to be. I endorse Dr. Granatstein's call for a defence policy review, but would caution that while the pressure of tightening budgets is real, Canada's defence strategy must be shaped by an environment of increasing risks. Unquestionably, these are challenging times for the government as they face difficult economic decisions, and for the military leadership as they endeavour to maintain an effective CF within a reduced resource envelope. At times such as these it is easy to seek the relatively simpler world where resources match the demand and, since funding is inadequate, look to adjust the requirement. Such an approach is dangerous.

Peter MacKay with Canadian Forces
Photo Source: forces.gc.ca

There is no question that current economic constraints require the government and the military leadership to make tough decisions. The danger though is that under the pressure of budget cuts this can lead to short sightedness in thinking and structuring solutions based on what we want to spend rather than addressing the risks faced by the nation. Such solutions may resonate with the defence bureaucrat and be pleasing to the politician who is dealing with budget shortfalls, but it is not sound defence planning in a world of growing risks and uncertainty.

The defence problem Canada has long faced is not one of policy, but rather the ability or willingness of government to resource that policy. The policy fundamentals of Canadian defence: Defending Canada, Defending North America and Contributing to International Peace and Security, have been with us as long as Canada has been a nation. What has shifted over time is the funding of those policies. As the funding has fluctuated, so too has the size and capability of the forces.

Canada's approach to military structure historically has been to maintain a relatively balanced general purpose combat capability that would provide a foundation for domestic defence while allowing the deployment internationally of sufficient capability to contribute to collective action. This balanced force, while small, permitted a response no matter the threat and provided the foundation for rapid growth in capability if required. This has proven to be an effective risk mitigation strategy in a world of increasing uncertainty.

But with the growth in cost of people and technology, military structure and capability, relative to the size of the defence budget, has over the years shrunk and is now at its lowest ebb since early post WWII. While structural reductions were, to some degree, offset by improvements in technology, the trend is clearly in the direction of less capability. Faced with large expenditures on such capabilities as new fighter aircraft and major ship replacements, the problem for the CF will get worse.

Given these pressures, the military leadership, often at political urging, has routinely explored a variety of asymmetric structuring options. These usually focus on finding a special niche for the CF, or following a defence strategy implicitly demanding fewer resources: a much smaller army with a relatively larger Navy and Air Force focused on domestic defence; or a relatively larger army for expeditionary use supported by a tailored Navy and Air Force. There have even been discussions about doing away with one of the services.

The problem with these options is they assume that we know what the future holds or, at worst, the risks if we get

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it wrong are manageable. The reality is that, while intentions can change overnight, capability requires years, often decades, to develop. It is fine to decide today, in the context of the threats as we see them, and under the pressure of resource reductions, to drastically reduce or eliminate a major military capability, but it means that if, or when, new threats emerge we are unprepared. Cutting the military cloth to fit the fiscal framework may make good financial sense but it must be done with an objective assessment of the risks to the nation.

Canada has long operated on the basis that military engagement was discretionary. However, we face a world that is rapidly restructuring, with western nations in "reduced circumstances" both economically and militarily. While we don't know what the future holds, there is little doubt that the risks to global stability are increasing with the potential that our way of life could be in jeopardy. Canadians may like to think that any war is one of choice. but the reality may be otherwise.

If the resources allocated do not permit the maintenance of a balanced force of sufficient size and capability, then perhaps it is the resource side of the equation that needs to be addressed. We cannot forget that the principle role of the Federal government is defence and security of the nation and this may very well require increased investment in defence.

One thing is certain, the future is not business as usual and the choice may be between a serious reduction in military capability and an increase in defence funding. For a nation used to defence on the cheap, we may have to start paying our bills.

Michael Jeffery is a retired member of the Canadian Forces and a former Army Commander. He is a consultant focusing on defence, security and strategic planning.

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Armed Drones for Canada?

Written by:
Roland Paris

The next great debate in Canadian defence policy is likely to centre on the acquisition of armed drones by the Canadian Forces – as well it should, given the potential for such weapons systems to be misused.

At the time of this writing, Ottawa has not revealed whether it intends to buy unmanned aerial vehicles in addition to – as a partial substitute for – the federal government's increasingly expensive plan to purchase 65 manned F-35 fighter jets.

There are compelling reasons to consider drones for the Canadian Forces. We have the longest coastline in the world, with relatively few ships and planes to patrol it. The Arctic is particularly costly and difficult to patrol regularly, yet untapped undersea oil and gas reserves are fueling international competition over control of the Arctic. Drones, which are generally cheaper to purchase and operate than manned aircraft and patrol ships, could help to fill large gaps in Canada's coastal and offshore surveillance and defence system.

Moreover, drones are powerful weapons in coalition warfare. The Libyan campaign of 2011, for example, relied in part on American drones to identify and attack targets. Since then, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) announced that it would spend nearly $4B to purchase and operate armed drones over the next 20 years. These systems also offer Canada a means of participating in coalition military operations overseas without endangering the lives of Canadian pilots.

David Pugliese of the *Ottawa Citizen* unearthed evidence that senior Canadian defence officials pitched the idea of buying armed drones in 2011. In February 2012, unnamed sources in the Department of National Defence told John Ivison of the *National Post* that the department was preparing to tender a contract for a half-dozen armed drones. There have also been reports that the U.S. defence contractor, Northrop Grumman, is developing an updated version of its Global Hawk drone to operate in the punishing Arctic, and that it is hoping to sell this system to Canada.

The mounting costs of the F-35 program will almost certainly drive Ottawa to decide whether or not to purchase drones within the next few years. The odds strongly favour a positive decision. Although the federal government is unlikely to completely abandon its plan to replace aging CF-18s with newer, manned fighters, the size of this acquisition may be reduced – and cheaper drones are likely to fill part of this gap, among others.

Before Ottawa decides to buy armed drone systems, however, a critical question needs to be debated and resolved: How exactly will Canada use the weapons carried by these drones?

For several years, the United States has employed a growing fleet of armed drones to kill people it deems a threat to the US, including in countries where the US is not currently at war, such as Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia. The administrations of both George W. Bush and Barack Obama have claimed that such assassinations are legal. These claims are not convincing. Rather, they encourage other countries to acquire drone technology and perhaps eventually to use this technology in their own assassination campaigns.

Canada should have nothing to do with such activities. Before acquiring lethal drones, therefore, the Canadian government should clearly indicate that it will not participate in, or facilitate, "targeted killing," either overtly or covertly. Indeed, Ottawa should be doing what previous Canadian governments, regardless of party, have traditionally done very well: leading an international effort to develop new multilateral rules in an area of international concern – in this case, rules to limit the misuse of robotic weapons.

There is nothing intrinsically wrong with armed drones, or the idea of Canada equipping its armed forces with such weapons systems. If they are managed wisely – and if the doctrine governing their use includes clear and effective safeguards – drones may be an important addition to Canada's arsenal, not to mention a means of patrolling our coastlines and coastal seas. Without such safeguards, however, the costs of acquiring armed drones will be much more than financial.

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Leaving Afghanistan

Written by:
John Ferris

"But Afghan wars are not like wars in Europe. The trouble only became serious when the war was over." So wrote one seasoned British frontier official in 1931.[1] We confront that situation today.

In 2012, probably no matter of foreign policy bores Canadians more than Afghanistan. Canadian governments never gave their public a clear and honest explanation of why we were fighting there. The explanations on offer were emotive and impossible for us to achieve, such as transforming Afghan society. Popular feelings about our experiences in Afghanistan are sour: no one wants to know. The general sense is that our soldiers fought well, but our policy failed. Certainly, the costs were high enough, but that effort was not simply a failure – at least, not yet. Canadians fought and died in Afghanistan for political and negative reasons: to prevent it from ever again being a base for attacks against us. Over the past decade, western actions destroyed Al Qeada, and probably deterred the Taliban from ever again loaning their territory for such attacks. We improved life in some areas of Afghanistan, and created counter weights to the Taliban. We also had failures, not surprisingly. Intention and effect have paradoxical relations in counter-insurgency. Effects flow from whatever one tries to do, actually achieves, or does without trying, and from the resistance it inspires, silent or violent. Thus, the allies we armed in Afghanistan soon will become free agents, perhaps damaging our interests.

The western presence in Afghanistan is winding down, and our position is waning. So, can we achieve our political aims in that country? In historical terms, that question is commonly: confronted by every foreign country that has tried to control Afghanistan. Failure to handle this issue properly can be costly, as events after 1990 showed. By allowing Pakistan and some local factions to seize Afghanistan, we let a threat emerge against us. Yet such failures are not inevitable. Efforts to control Afghanistan fail for simple reasons. Getting into Afghanistan is easy: the problem is getting out. The population is so factionalized and power so atomized that the country cannot be pacified, requiring large garrisons. Yet, it is poor, worthless to foreigners. At some stage, control costs more than it is worth, and foreigners leave. This step, ironically, also can transform their position. When occupying Afghanistan, one plays one's weaknesses against their strengths; when managing Afghanis from outside, their weaknesses become paramount. Precisely the characteristics that make Afghanistan difficult to master, make it easy to manipulate. No Afghani government ever has survived simply through its own revenues: all need external aid. One can buy influence among Afghanis for cheap. Little power is needed to achieve goals against them; though outside rivals attracted by its weakness and significance must be checked through other means.

Soldiers Heading Home
Photo Source: saltspringnews.com

The British experience illustrates how one may win politically by leaving Afghanistan, after failing to do so through military means during an occupation. Britain attempted to conquer Afghanistan, only between 1838-41 and 1878-81. Otherwise, it treated Afghanistan as an independent polity on imperial frontiers, using means like indifference, aid, annexation, bullying and bribery, while foreswearing conquest and rule behind the throne. Withdrawal from Afghanistan actually boosted Britain's leverage. After its first shock, and only true failure, in 1841, Britain learned to live with uncertainty, civil war and regime change in Afghanistan. It bought influence from Amirs for pennies on the pound, through annual subsidies of L 35,000 in the 1850s, rising to L 90,000 in the 1890s, along with gifts of enough firearms to let their man overawe any internal rivals, yet too small to threaten Britain. During periods of civil strife, as in 1880, 1915-17 and 1929-30, it identified a strong ally, even men whom it once had distrusted, and helped them to defeat his rivals. Britain learned to manage the *Amirs*, to ensure they

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walked the line between too much strength and too little, to judge their character and intentions, and to develop means of influence. Britain succeeded when three conditions coincided: it had something to offer, was feared, and found Afghans willing to cooperate. Since British policy in Afghanistan was linked to rivalry with other powers it also needed a means to monitor and manage, as well as to solve problems in Kabul abroad either by diplomatic pressure in St Petersburg, or by countering subversion launched by Germany, Turkey, Japan and the USSR. This policy met Britain's aims on the cheap, until it abandoned its empire in India.

We are on the verge of declaring victory and withdrawing our military presence from Afghanistan. Western publics imagine that then we will be able to forget about it, but they are wrong, because their governments, above all the United States, will not make the same mistake they did in 1990. In order to achieve political success, we will have to do as the British once did, and hope that we can do so nearly as well. Unfortunately, success will be harder than it was a century ago, because so many external powers – Iran, India, Pakistan, China, Russia, and possibly Saudi Arabia – will intervene, all backing local contenders. The trouble in Afghanistan will start to become serious for us only after our war is over, so much so that we will go on fighting it: simply through different means, politics.

[1] Sir Evelyn Howell, *Mizh: A Monograph of Government's Relations with the Mahsud Tribe*
(Karachi: Oxford in Asia Historical Reprint Series, 1979, original, Simla, 1931), p.80

Mohammed Yaqub Khan with British Officers in May 1879
Photo Source: wikipedia.org

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Canada's Place in the Mystical North

Written by:
Colin Robertson

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's annual tour, coincident with the Canadian Forces' Operation Nanook, guarantees that, at least for a week, southern Canada looks to our North.

This year the western scenario of the Forces exercise involved a barge carrying toxic chemicals colliding with a ferry shuttling travellers across the Mackenzie River, obliging the evacuation of Tsiigehtchic. Last year, the scenario involved a plane accident that sadly turned to reality with the First Air flight crash near Resolute Bay.

In situations such as this, while the civil authorities lead, as we have witnessed through disasters in the south, be it forest fires, ice storms or hurricanes, it is our Forces that have the necessary capacity to support and respond to environmental and other calamities.

Operation Nanook is the most visible of ongoing exercises directed from Joint Task Force North in Yellowknife.

Critics describe these activities as "militarization" of our North.

They are wrong.

We face no imminent threat to our Arctic sovereignty. The real challenges – bears and black flies, ice, cold and permafrost – are the same that confronted explorers such as Alexander Mackenzie and Sir John Franklin. These exercises are more about safety and security than defence. They are about useful tasks such as landing an RCAF Twin Otter, the "farm truck" of the North, on the Dempster Highway.

Historically, our attention to the North has been mostly in reaction to American interests, real or imagined. The Second World War gave us a highway to link Alaska with the lower 48 states. The Cold War created a dotted network of radar stations – the DEW line – that on the map gave the appearance of presence, however illusory. The SS Manhattan's 1969 voyage through the Northwest Passage sparked a debate around the right of passage.

American interest has also been a driver for economic development from the Gold Rush to the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. The former obliged us to provide order, through our Mounties and territorial government. The pipeline proposal sparked the Berger Commission that put a moratorium on development. It served as an impetus for the negotiation of northern land claims allowing aboriginal peoples to take greater control of their lands and lives.

Local governments have spawned economic development agencies such as the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, chaired by former NWT premier Nellie Cournoyea. These kinds of institutions, administered by and for northerners, that will be best equipped to deal with sustainability and address the social ills: drug addiction; alcoholism; and a suicide rate five times that in the south.

Operation Nanook 2012
Photo Source: news.xinhuanet.com

Hunting and fishing will always be part of the northern tradition and way of life, but there is a recognition that change is coming because of rising temperatures and technological innovation giving greater access to the riches of the North. There is a determination and an economic base providing jobs with a future that goes beyond tourism. This puts a premium on education. It also means, as recommended recently by the Canadian Council of Chief Executives, welcoming investment and resource development on the basis of full partnership.

Industry should consult the Canadian Forces, which have both practical experience and expertise in dealing with

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northerners and their unique governance structure. The Canadian Rangers, for example, successfully draw on the talent of northerners in service of their communities as well as the Canadian Forces.

For Canadians, the North has a mystical appeal. Space seems infinite while time is measured less by the clock than by the sun and the seasons.

With most of us huddled within a hundred miles of the 49th parallel, our real frontier – north of 60 – is a place where the population is smaller than Prince Edward Island's. The land mass – 40% of Canada – is bigger than Europe. The cultural and demographic differences between the territories – in the Northwest Territories, for example, there are 11 official languages – obliges patience. Building trust takes time.

We come from all corners of the globe but geography and climate define us as people of the north. We correctly celebrate our "true north strong and free" in our art and literature.

We may think we know all we need to know about the North.

We don't.

Arctic Council Logo
Photo Source: arcticstudies.pbworks.com

Yet we do have experts in our universities, within industry and the public service. Connecting these dots of knowledge and creating more Canada Research Chairs, devoted to study of the North, would be useful initiatives by the Conservative government. We could use this expertise as we re-take the chair of the Arctic Council in 2013.

Initiated as a "high-level forum" through the Ottawa Declaration in 1996, the eight-nation Arctic Council is useful. It was the catalyst for the 2011 search and rescue mutual co-operation agreement.

We should use our two-year term as chair to give a voice, as observers, to other nations with northern interests, especially China, whose goods will eventually transit polar routes. The inevitable opening of new sea lanes is another incentive to get moving with the construction of our icebreakers and Arctic patrol ships.

It's also a reminder to avoid the folly of flag-waving, especially as we prepare to submit our extended continental shelf claim to the UN. The brouhaha with Denmark over Hans Island, and then that created when the Russian submersible Artika planted a flag near the North Pole in 2007 are less diplomatic crisis than opera bouffe.

To prevent such silliness from escalating, let's institutionalize the meetings at the chief-of-staff level begun in Goose Bay earlier this year by General Walter Natynczyk.

There is a map in Inuvik airport of the circumpolar region. Sitting atop the world it is a graphic reminder that Canada has both place and stature in the North. Let's continue to exercise it.

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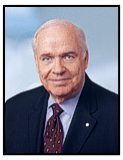

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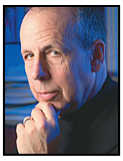

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Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute

CDFAI is a research institute focused on Canada's international engagement in all its forms: diplomacy, trade, the military, and aid. Established in 2001, CDFAI's vision is for Canada to have a respected, influential voice in the international arena based on a comprehensive foreign policy, which expresses our national interests, political and social values, military capabilities, economic strength and willingness to be engaged with action that is timely and credible.

CDFAI was created to address the ongoing discrepancy between what Canadians need to know about Canadian international activities and what they do know. Historically, Canadians tend to think of foreign policy – if they think of it at all – as a matter of trade and markets. They are unaware of the importance of Canada engaging diplomatically, militarily, and via international aid in the ongoing struggle to maintain a world that is friendly to the free flow of goods, services, people and ideas across borders and to the spread of human rights. CDFAI seeks to inform and educate Canadians about the connection between a prosperous and free Canada and a world of globalization and liberal internationalism.

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