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Canadian Foreign Policy and Coalitions: an Essay

Douglas Bland

Prepared for the

International Security Research and Outreach Programme
International Security Bureau

January 2002



Department of Foreign Affairs
and International Trade

Ministère des Affaires étrangères
et du Commerce international

Canadian Foreign Policy and Coalitions: an Essay

Dept. of Foreign Affairs
Min. des Affaires étrangères

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OUTLINE

Acting through coalitions is a defining and traditional characteristic of Canadian foreign policy. This tradition is rooted in Canada's political and cultural history, its relative power among states, and in the modus operandi of the international community. Foreign policy by coalition is also, however, a pragmatic strategic choice, for Canada would be essentially isolated from the major events and decisions in the international community in the absence of coalitions or a Canadian reluctance to join them. The fundamental question, therefore is not whether acting coalitions ought to remain central to Canada's foreign policy, but how can Canada influence the shape and operating expectations of established and emerging coalitions to best benefit Canada's national interests. / Assuming C. offers any

For Canada, coalitions formed outside traditional alliances have and will continue to pose several challenges to policy coordination, public confidence and support, doctrine, defence programme and capabilities development, leadership, sustainment, and national command. The underlying questions, however, concern assessments of the most likely configurations of future coalitions, the political requirement for building them, and what Canada might do in these modern circumstances to give greatest effect to its foreign policies and national interest while continuing to act through coalitions. Benefits

though joining any & every coalition can dissipate effort + resources.

RÉSUMÉ

La participation à des coalitions constitue une caractéristique traditionnelle de base de la politique étrangère canadienne. Cette tradition s'ancre dans l'histoire culturelle et politique du Canada, le statut de relative puissance de ce pays parmi les autres États, et le *modus operandi* de la communauté internationale. Une politique étrangère basée sur les coalitions représente également un choix stratégique pragmatique, dans la mesure où le Canada, sans une telle participation ou une réticence à se joindre aux coalitions, s'isolerait des événements importants et des décisions marquant la vie internationale. Dans ce contexte, la question fondamentale n'est pas savoir si une action basée sur une participation aux coalitions doit demeurer un élément central de la politique étrangère canadienne, mais de savoir comment le Canada peut déterminer, en fonction de ses intérêts nationaux, la forme et les enjeux des coalitions établies ou ad hoc.

Pour le Canada, les coalitions formées à l'extérieur des alliances traditionnelles posent et continueront de poser des défis nombreux que se soient à la coordination de la politique, la confiance et le soutien populaires, la doctrine, le développement des capacités de défense, le leadership, l'effort militaire et le commandement national. Les questions sous-jacentes sont liées à l'évaluation des configurations les plus probables des coalitions à venir, les exigences politiques pour les construire, et aux efforts qui doivent être entrepris, dans les circonstances modernes actuelles, pour obtenir le meilleur des effets sur la politique extérieure et les intérêts nationaux.

PREFACE

The views expressed in this essay are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade or the Government of Canada.

The International Security Research and Outreach Program commissioned a study to address the following issues:

- i) What is the state of current thinking on coalition operations?
- ii) What are the likeliest coalition configurations over the next decade?
- iii) What are the political requirements for piecing together and ensuring the success of coalitions?
- iv) What institutional forms are required to manage Canadian participation in coalitions?
- v) What constraints could coalitions pose for Canadian foreign policy?

Does
he
answer
questions?

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade wishes to acknowledge the work performed under contract through the International Security and Outreach Programme in the preparation of this essay by the author: Dr. Douglas Bland.

This is an abridged version of the paper originally presented by the author.

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December 2001

CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND COALITION OPERATIONS: AN ESSAY

INTRODUCTION: REINFORCING TRADITION

Acting through coalitions is a defining and traditional characteristic of Canadian foreign policy. This tradition is rooted in Canada's political and cultural history, its relative power among states, and in the *modus operandi* of the international community. Foreign policy by coalition is also, however, a pragmatic strategic choice, for Canada would be essentially isolated from the major events and decisions in the international community in the absence of coalitions or a Canadian reluctance to join them. The fundamental question, therefore, is not whether acting through coalitions ought to remain central to Canada's foreign policy, but how can Canada influence the shape and operating expectations of established and emerging coalitions to best benefit Canada's national interests.

The question is particularly relevant today given the challenges facing traditional alliances like NATO, the frequency with which states seek to form and act through coalitions – if sometimes only briefly and for specific and narrow purposes – and the emphasis in Canadian foreign policy over the last few years to build non-traditional “coalitions of the willing” to address humanitarian and other global issues. Indeed, there is general agreement among scholars and practitioners that even the major western powers “must treat multinational action as a central organizing principle for defence [that will] affect every facet of their preparations, from equipment acquisition to operational planning and concept development.”¹

In these circumstances, Canada ought to have appropriate policies and an agile bureaucratic machinery to allow governments to assess when, where, and with whom Canada will act in its own interests in both traditional alliances and in coalitions of the moment. This essay addresses these matters broadly, but mainly in the context of Canadian military participation in coalitions formed inside and outside traditional alliances established for conventional military operations and “Operations Other Than War”(OOTW).

For Canada, coalitions formed outside traditional alliances have and will continue to pose several challenges to policy coordination, doctrine, defence programme and capabilities development, leadership, sustainment, and national command. The underlying questions, however, concern assessments of the most likely configurations of future coalitions, the political requirements for building them, and what policies and procedures Canada might adopt in these modern circumstances to give greatest effect to its foreign policies and national interest while continuing to act through coalitions.

Coalitions have a few distinct characteristics: they are more or less formal undertakings of two or more states, encompassed by a promise to act within some definite area, time, or circumstance;

¹. James P. Thomas, “The Military Challenges of Transatlantic Coalitions,” *Adelphi Paper*, no 333, The International Institute For Strategic Studies, (London: May 2000), p.79.

or to
share
risks,
burdens,
benefits
or to
derive
benefits
from
partners

and they supply a mechanism for consultation between partners from time to time. Security-related coalitions usually provide for a commitment "to some future action. The action involved could entail almost anything - detailed military planning, consultations during a crisis, or a promise by one state to abstain from an upcoming war"². In Canadian foreign policy, coalitions tend to be positive undertakings between Canada and other states in order to aggregate their political, economic, and military powers to accomplish national goals that none can effectively achieve alone. The promise to act in concert, however, may be more or less ephemeral depending on the circumstances.

The temporal nature of most agreements that underpin coalitions highlights another major feature. Coalitions exist in an environment of competing interests, attitudes, and perceptions which create what Michael Ward termed an "alliance dynamic" characterized by "contradictory tendencies operating within bureaucratic meshes."³ In other words, coalitions are political creatures subject to changing international events and domestic attitudes and thus require continual maintenance and management within and between states. In reality, the more likely that "the promise" will be called or the more critical the events then and afterwards, the greater the need for reliable mechanisms to shape the concerted efforts of coalitions.

Long-standing alliances like NATO have developed elaborate mechanisms for consultation and military command, but even NATO suffers great pains in sustaining a united goal in a crisis - witness, for instance, the allied campaign in Kosovo. Coalitions of the moment cobbled together even with the best of intentions and in the face of serious crisis confront major difficulties holding together and conducting dangerous operations. History is replete with examples of these dynamics. But today, the effect of media reporting on domestic and international audiences increasingly seems to overwhelm decisionmakers and commanders, such that one must assume that coalitions agreed in peacetime will be greatly stressed in crisis and conflict.

At issue, especially in active military coalitions, including those not ostensibly aimed at combat operations, is the fact that coalition leaders are certain to make decisions about national "blood and treasure." There are few states in which citizens will comfortably assent to sacrifices seemingly imposed by outsiders no matter their indifference to the terms of a coalition agreed in peacetime. These general tendencies ought to warn Canadian political leaders and senior defence and foreign policy planners to beware of coalitions. At least leaders ought to carefully place decisions related to Canada and coalitions within a national interests framework and to insist on a firm national voice in any coalition decisions that directly affect Canada and Canadians.

↳ not same as getting voice, e.g. Kosovo.
↳ or avoid losing future voice!

will ideal
but we don't
do this.

². As quoted in Douglas Gibling and John Vasquez, "Uncovering the Dangerous Alliances, 1495-1980, *International Studies Quarterly* (1998), p. 787.

³. Michael Ward, *Research Gaps in Alliance Dynamics* (Denver: University of Denver Press, 1982), p.74.

THE CENTRAL ISSUES

Politicians and policy planners need to consider seven major issues as they contemplate making coalitions central to foreign policy, before they commit Canada to any coalition, during the negotiation of coalition terms, and whenever a coalition goes into action.

A Criteria for Association It is essential for policy advisors to develop some criteria aimed at helping leaders determine when Canada will join a coalition, where in the world Canada's interests lie that can be advanced in coalitions, and with whom Canada is willing to associate itself. Although one could argue that the criteria are already established in the context of relationships with the North Atlantic alliance, the United Nations and the United States, the "new world order" and the emergence of coalitions of the moment sponsored by various entities for particular missions suggests, at least, that foreign and defence planners consider and confirm these criteria in these new circumstances.

/ what might generic criteria be? shd be re-evaluated regularly.

A National Security Strategy A balance between foreign policy ends and national means was met generally, if not ideally, during most of the Cold War era and for United Nations operations conducted during the same period. Since about 1989, however, the usual bases for coordination and planning have been upset and, arguably, no comprehensive national strategy has replaced the old "strategy of commitments."⁴

Military planning in the absence of a national security strategy has been complicated by a significant reduction in national defence budgets, the so-called revolution in military affairs, and the fact that old age has rendered much of Canada's defence capabilities obsolete. Chiefs of defence and other military leaders and defence officials have been forced to take decisions on capabilities production in the short and long term without much guidance from governments or coordination with foreign policy goals. For example, should planners prepare the future force according to the directive of *Defence 1994*, "to fight along side the best against the best" – a significant and expensive objective by any estimation – or to support "soft power" humanitarian interventions worldwide in "coalitions of the willing," where the region and "the willing" may be unfamiliar to the Canadian Forces. Even if the choices were not as stark as these (and they are not always so), there are few clear beacons for military planners to follow when making choices about where to direct Canada's long-term defence programme.

here explaining? ... but tools must be flexible. → what would look like one?

b/c things are changing @ very fast pace.

Defence planners, however, are not completely innocent in these circumstances. Quite naturally, military officers and other authorities in the force-development process have their own notions of what kind of armed force Canada needs. They also have their own ideas about why, where and with whom Canada should make coalitions. These ideas and attitudes shape the decisions these individuals take with regard to defence capabilities, the distribution of resources between capabilities and missions, and in the military arrangements and procedures they make with allies.

⁴. Douglas L. Bland, *Chiefs of Defence: Government and the Unified Command of the Canadian Armed Forces* (Toronto: Canadian Institute for Strategic Studies, 1995), pp. 214-24.

judgements, but can be made beforehand

These difficulties can create two types of problems. First, when military decisions are made in the absence of a national strategy there is no way to know whether these decisions will affect foreign policy goals for better or worse. But one thing is sure, they will condition that foreign policy insofar as hard assets drive foreign policy choices. Second, changing foreign policy goals and (more often) the aspirations of politicians in crisis situations may tempt leaders to demand the deployment of the Canadian Forces in circumstances for which they are ill-equipped or otherwise not ready.

no understanding of basing decisions on what int'l security env't NEEDS.

multi-purpose capability

In an era of standing coalitions and coalitions of the moment which might involve the Canadian Forces and other Canadians in anything from combat operations to humanitarian actions in insecure regions of the world, the government and especially the armed forces must be appropriately prepared for a wide-ranging operational environment. If Canadian governments believe that Canada ought to continue its alliance with traditional friends and also be prepared to join coalitions of the moment under United Nations or another leadership, then it must support a full range of intervention capabilities. On the other hand, governments could choose in advance a smaller range of coalition possibilities and develop a national security and foreign policy strategy of ends and means appropriate to that choice.

is it?

or avoidance of loss thereof

A policy of "go small or stay at home," however, might carry penalties or sideline Canada in a world where multilateralism is the organizing principle of international relations and where influence accrues to those willing and able to share the burdens that flow from this principle. In the absence of a national strategy that spells out with reasonable precision the objectives for foreign and defence policy and matches these goals to appropriate means, no one can predict with certainty where the diverse planning now resident in departments and the Canadian Forces will take Canadian foreign policy.⁵

could be strict devised before 9/11 have been adequate to deal w/ aftermath?

this is what strat is about - ends, means, ways.

Ends and Means A Canadian foreign policy based, even in part, on acting through coalitions cannot escape the joining of ends and means. Nor can foreign policy planners leave entirely to others the fundamental decisions about what means are appropriate to policy ends lest the means drive the ends. Ends and means may become discordant through weak appreciations, incoherent direction and planning, or inattention over time. However, major difficulties in execution can arise from failure to maintain at reasonable levels of readiness those resources necessary to coalition operations.

means can drive ends

only not is disproportionate use of means

Means in this context fall into two broad designations, soft and hard assets, each of several capabilities, some of which are controlled by domestic decisions and some by international agreement. **Soft assets** are highly flexible, readily assembled, unobtrusive, and process-oriented. On the other hand, hard assets are physical, technical, obvious in deployment, normally requiring substantial and continuous preparation for employment, costly, and needing to be deployed in large numbers to give much effect to events.

complementary

Soft and hard assets are (or ought to be) ~~complimentary~~ and compatible. However, whereas soft assets can be developed quickly from national and international sources, hard assets are difficult and

⁵. See, for example, Louis Delvoie, "Canada and International Security Operations: The Search For Policy Rationales" *Canadian Military Journal*, Volume 1, No. 2, (Summer 2000), pp. 13-24.

expensive to develop, characteristics that have important consequences for foreign policy and defence planners. Generally, soft assets – money, people skilled in diplomacy and the technical functions of particular coalitions, and the mechanisms for intra-coalition policymaking – are most important to diplomatic coalitions meant to unite declarations of intent and to confirm commitments before humanitarian and security coalitions are brought into action. Hard assets, on the other hand, are predominant whenever a coalition wishes to display its unity through a show of force and whenever a coalition resorts to overt operations.

Hard assets are the stuff of security coalitions in action. Foremost, hard assets are people in governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and armed forces who through their skills and initiative move declared policies into actual policies. These people must be recruited, trained, deployed, and cared for by governments and international organizations if coalitions are to have effect anywhere. Hard assets include, as well, equipment of various sorts, stockpiles of expendable resources, land, sea, and air transportation means, communication devices and networks, and other tangible items that allow people to construct working coalitions in the field.

National armed forces are the most obvious hard asset in any coalition. Yet, developing and maintaining appropriate hard military capabilities to service coalitions is a considerable difficulty for governments and military leaders. Ideally, governments would define their foreign policy related to coalitions in sufficient detail to allow diplomatic and military planners to develop appropriate capabilities for these purposes. Afterwards, governments would modify commitments to coalitions carefully thereafter to maintain a reasonable balance between foreign policy ends and available military means.

What about unforeseen?

dem & forget. Cole barely breaks consensus

Legitimacy, Responsibility, and Accountability in Coalitions During the Kosovo war, opposition politicians, opinion-makers, and some citizens in Canada and elsewhere questioned the legitimacy of the campaign on the grounds that it had not been sanctioned by the United Nations. Although the general public supported this coalition and its methods, they seem more at ease when an international body, and especially the United Nations, blesses coalitions Canadians join. Yet, holding together a public consensus for a coalition, while manoeuvring through the realities of the United Nations can be a considerable challenge for diplomats facing a crisis. This difficulty may be acute whenever the crisis is more important to Canada and her traditional allies than to other states, or whenever the Security Council is divided on an issue. In these circumstances Canadian leaders may choose to act with whatever legitimacy they can construct outside the United Nations, rely on public support for traditional alliances like NATO, or exercise Parliament's vested right to do what is best for Canada in the circumstances.

But policymakers should take care not to vest in others such duties and responsibilities that fall to Canadian governments. Notwithstanding the heartfelt arguments of true believers who contend that "collective security" wielded by the United Nations is the only legitimate source for the use of force in international affairs, the fact is that governments and not the United Nations are the only legitimate actors in international relations. Even when solemn undertakings are made by states, the effectiveness of such agreements depends on the will of individual governments to uphold them. Political leaders and policymakers court danger whenever they allow or imply that issues and decisions that affect domestic interests and Canadians will be placed unreservedly in the hands of

coalitions, international bureaucrats, or foreign military commanders. In liberal democracies the duty of the government to account to the public for the decisions it takes cannot be deflected to some other entity in the international world. *unless convenient to do so!*

Although coalitions of states usually recognize formally the sovereignty of each state, in practice who decides what often depends on the relative strengths and the interests of the partners. Nevertheless, "alliance dynamics" are propelled by state's interests, not by good will alone and, therefore, Canada must be prepared with policies, ideas, and techniques to safeguard and enhance its interests and sovereignty whenever it contemplates joining or remaining in any coalition.

Few issues rouse greater emotion and defensiveness among political leaders, experienced officers and officials, and in public audiences than those dealing with the national blood and treasure. Coalitions breed suspicions about who is carrying the burden, who is allocating allied resources to whom, and who is making decisions about which armed forces will take the brunt of the fighting. Reasonable people in peacetime can make arrangement for equitable burden-sharing and the command of coalition forces, but in the midst of a particular crisis these arrangements might be greatly stressed. This expectation is even more likely if the coalition were to suffer some serious setback during operations. While the "body-bag" issue may be overblown in national capitals, it is, and always has been, a profound matter to those conducting multinational operations.

How?
based
on what?
+ set?

Holding individuals with authority and responsibilities to account for what they are asked to do, what they say they will do, and what they do in fact is the hallmark of Canada's liberal democracy. This principle ought to be as true in international operations as it is in domestic undertakings. Therefore, whenever Canada enters any coalition it becomes essential to demand that the coalition establish a precise mechanism of accountability within the coalition. Furthermore, the participants must reinforce, if necessary, the mechanism for accountability within the national contingent and between the national contingent and officials, officers, and politicians at home.

(True)

Managing Coalition Dynamics Inside Government Politicians, officials, scholars, and others have long criticized the federal bureaucracy and the Canadian Forces for failing to coordinate foreign and defence policies more effectively. The usual complaint is that policies are too often separately conceived and administered and that this habit compromises the national interest. Proponents for greater coordination argue that if Canada is to protect itself from and help redress the many security and humanitarian problems of the world, then it must offer credible hard, as well as soft, national security options to Canadians and the international community. But reaching this objective will require a concerted and unified assessment of Canada's sometimes conflicting foreign, defence, and internal security policies.

There are many reasons why Canada's planning for and execution of coalition operations seem awkward. A chief reason lies in the structure of the federal system, especially with regard to international relations and coalition-building and operations. Successful internal and external operations ought to be based on a single concerted security policy built on its own foundation, not on the hope that success might simply appear from several separately conceived and administered departmental policies.

suggested aspects of E7E10 has not been followed up.

Some believe that a more efficient committee system might lead to better policy coordination. They offer, for instance, a "national security council" as a device to bring responsibility for policy and operations now resident in several departments and agencies into harmony.⁶ But these suggestions might only complicate an already complex bureaucratic mesh. Rather than committees, federal planners need direction and standards upon which to build an operating system for a world in which states seek results through coalitions.⁷

+ surprises

Coalition Traps Coalitions are never benign organizations. Every engagement Canada undertakes with other states to form coalitions and to bring them into action carries risks and costs. In some circumstances, "entangling alliances" contain traps and snares which may disrupt national policy choices into the future and entail costs not easily recognized when the coalition was shaped initially. Canada always faces a foreign policy dilemma whenever major powers or the United Nations come calling on Canada to join a coalition which may touch important domestic interests and issues. Joining any coalition implies a commitment to the policies and actions that emerge as a coalition consensus, but without any assurance that Canada will be able to shape that consensus to any major degree. On the other hand, avoiding a coalition could result in questions of policy affecting Canada's interests being taken by foreign individuals and organizations without authority from Canadian governments.

2 being pushed (actively or through request)

Public Support Canadians tend to support military and humanitarian interventions abroad. This conclusion is evident in the wide public acceptance of Canadian participation in the Gulf war, the Balkan missions – including the war in Kosovo – and the numerous expeditions undertaken within the UN mandate. Furthermore, Canadians seem willing to accept casualties in such operations under certain conditions.⁸ Generally, besides NATO and NORAD for which there is continuous support, the general public seems prepared to support interventions in crises and conflicts that have no direct bearing on Canada's vital national interests so long as several criteria are met: the mission is evidently just; the situation has a significant humanitarian context; the need to intervene is encouraged by national opinion-makers; the tasks seem to be within the competence and capabilities of the Canadian Forces and other agencies; the deployment and plans appear reasonable; and the mission is undertaken by some type of coalition under the authority of NATO or the United Nations.

? True

OSCE works too! also: clear exit strategy preferred

WHERE IN THE WORLD, HOW AND WITH WHOM?

The hard experiences of the Canadian Forces in the 1990s exposed a number of recurring difficulties in modern coalition and multinational operations. Generally, they fall into six categories:

⁶ Jane Boulden, *A National Security Council for Canada?* The Claxton Papers, No. 2, (Kingston: School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, 2000).

⁷ Douglas Bland, "Defence and Security: The Next Generation," *Policy Options*, 22, 2 (March 2001): 40-47.

⁸ Douglas Bland, *Parliament, Defence Policy and the Canadian Armed Forces*, The Claxton Papers, No. 1 (Kingston: School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, 1999), p. 8.

weak mandates and directions; uncertain international command; confused civilian and military relationships, especially between international commanders and international officials; over-tasking of individuals and some types of units; incompatible communications and logistics systems; and contradictory force protection and rules of engagement orders, among other matters. These problems occur within national contingents and between contingents as well as between force commanders and international authorities, particularly during UN mandated operations.⁹

Some elements of these difficulties can be resolved for particular operations and in some coalitions before anyone is deployed. Others can be addressed once the units are gathered in the theatre of operations, although allowing forces to deploy with the hope that "things can be sorted out on the ground" is a precarious way to do business.

+ frequent because circumstances do change

This observation is particularly telling when people in the midst of a crisis expect arriving forces to immediately swing into action to remedy their sometimes desperate circumstances. However, many problems and the frustrations caused by recurring and continual difficulties can only be addressed through the development of international regimes or codes and policies that set in place principles, norms, and procedures for international, multinational coalitions. But before Canada enters into any negotiations, Canadian political leaders, officers, and officials must decide what principles, norms, and procedures best serve Canada's laws, foreign policies, military capabilities and the nation's interests. In Canada, fundamental inconsistencies between foreign policy ends and Canadian Forces means plagued foreign and defence planning throughout the 1990s, creating, according to Louis Delvoie, "a policy vacuum" with dangerous consequences for Canada.¹⁰

Choosing where in the world Canada is willing and able to act in multinational operations, including humanitarian operations, is a difficult political decision complicated by public and political perceptions that Canada is a leader in international peacekeeping. This national myth encourages Canadians to expect the government to participate in, if not lead, significant international coalitions. The nature of international crises and Canada's apparent enthusiasm for intervention gives an erratic shape to many aspects of foreign policy planning. However, coherent, coordinated diplomatic and military policy and plans suffer without prior basic consideration and choices about where Canada can and ought to act in international affairs.

over past 10 yrs there has been quite a high % of cons in Africa.

Choosing among three obvious coalition leaders seems appropriate. Canada could continue its traditional emphasis in North America and Europe, to include, perhaps, a broad definition of where Europe begins and ends, and emphasize operations with NATO. On the other hand, Canada might emphasize coalitions of the moment, usually formed under the direct auspices of the United Nations. Third, Canada might more closely identify its defence and foreign policy with American aims and programs and ally itself mainly with American-led coalitions. Each of these general options carries its own costs and benefits and any decision on where to go should be made in that context. Therefore, no matter the choice, governments ought to make an explicit and inseparable decision to

⁹. For a recent Canadian example, see Brigadier General Robin Gagnon, "Multilateral Intervention Forces," *Policy Options* 22, 2 (March 2001):19-24.

¹⁰. Louis Delvoie, "Canada And International Security Operations," p. 13.

build a defence and foreign affairs establishment capable of deploying and maintaining over a long period the requisite forces such operations demand.

Although Canada's coalition policies since 1950 have been shaped largely by the United Nations and NATO, and more recently by coalitions of the moment conceived and constructed at the edges of these institutions, are these the only options in Canada's foreign policy future? Might not other international organizations, the OAS or ASEAN, for example, sponsor some types of international actions which could not conveniently be arranged through the United Nations or NATO. For the moment, it is safe and conventional to assume that Canada will always be a partner in NATO, the United Nations or coalitions of the moment and with the United States and that the characteristics of each partnership will condition Canadian's particular responses to international affairs.

i.e.
all of
the
above.

The North Atlantic Alliance The North Atlantic Alliance is the principle coalition overseeing security matters in Europe west of the Russian-Eastern Baltic-Ukrainian-Romania boundary and in the Mediterranean Sea. Its regime is well-known to Canadians and its political/military mechanisms are sound and practised. The alliance has overwhelming military power in the region and further afield in some circumstances. Although NATO functions by consensus, the major powers, and unquestionably, the United States play a dominate role in policy decisions and in any operation the alliance might undertake. In the past, the allies have expected each member to join, as their capabilities permitted, every NATO mission and certainly those anticipated in "general war" circumstances. More recently in the Balkan missions, states' operational commitments to NATO have become more discretionary. That is to say, national interests and sensitivities have become more significant in decisions about who will join operations and what they might bring to each mission.

Once cohesion and unbreakable consensus were the dominate characteristics of the alliance standing before the Soviet Union. Today, carefully controlled "flexible responses" to particular situations by various combinations of states and military organizations allows the alliance to act together in name, but without unduly stressing states' interests. From another perspective, the Macedonia operation hints at a greater willingness of the European powers to lead alliance actions without significant contributions by the United States. But this opinion might be overdrawn given the (current) small scale of the operation.

Recent developments in NATO and the evolving European defence entity may change Canada's response to coalition operations within the alliance. For instance, it may no longer be necessary to join every NATO initiative simply to show Canada's solidarity with the allies. Canadian Forces deployments, especially, might be more discrete and concentrated (as arguably they have been recently) without fear that they will be criticized in Brussels or at home. On the other hand, commitments to actual operations once made are difficult to undo - witness 25 years in Cyprus and ten years in the Balkans. If the only prospect for withdrawal from the Balkans is "peace in our times," then Canada and the Canadian Forces might be committed to the region for a very long time. In this event, foreign policy officials might consider drafting a specific policy aimed at Canada's participation in NATO coalitions.

important
That NATO meets
(regularly) to re-examine
its strategic
direction
(1991/1992)

The United Nations Arguably, as the United Nations takes a more prominent role as the legitimizing authority for international security operations, and especially for interventions by the international community in the affairs of sovereign states, coalitions blessed by the United Nations may become the main mechanism through which most states act in their own interests and, presumably, in the interests of the global community. The United Nations is, therefore, the second foundation institution – and Canada's preferred institution – for coalition-building.

In fact, building coalitions within the coalition has become a principal business of the United Nations Security Council and its secretary general. Over the years, however, the United Nations has experienced considerable difficulty building effective coalitions to maintain stable conditions in contested areas, for instance, in the Middle East, Africa, and the Balkans. Various ideas and reports, such as the UN Brahimi Report, point to the continuing need to reform the United Nations if it is to better anticipate, plan for, organize, and support all but simple, small, and less risky coalition operations.

The UN must also accept that it can, should not intervene everywhere, part. if there is little appetite of PS.

The United Nations will probably remain the "legitimizer" for most international interventions that involve member states and it will continue to promote interventions whenever the secretary general can build a momentum for them within the Security Council and among public opinion. Canada, because of its support for the United Nations and because it is a rich country with limited advanced capabilities, can expect to be called upon by the secretary general to commit soft and hard assets to future UN operations. Given that the United Nations will most likely be charged with humanitarian and OOTW-type interventions in underdeveloped regions of the world, there are two policy questions for Canada. What type of capabilities is Canada prepared to develop which would best serve the missions that will probably fall to the United Nations? Second, what is Canada prepared to do to enhance the United Nations' ability to conduct coalition operations?

Brahimi SHIRBRIG-TUNSA

Answering the first question requires an assessment of the likely force requirements for typical United Nations intervention operations. Canadian policymakers could develop a force model for Canada, one that would likely include diplomatic, military, police and NGO capabilities, as the basis for a national strategy to support the United Nations. Military planners, of course, have other imperatives that drive force development and they are spelt out in the government's *Defence 1994*. Leaning the military force model too far towards United Nations' needs might compromise other national defence requirements. By the same measure, leaning too far toward "battlespace" warfare and the so-called Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) might compromise Canada's ability to aid and support the United Nations or to join "non-conventional operations" where stealth and people are central to plans. The goals and their consequences for force development need to be reconciled within a national strategy for action through coalitions.

but we have a balanced military platform!

11?

Helping the United Nations is never easy. If it were easy to change patterns of international behaviour through the United Nations, then the worthy recommendations of dedicated people would have accomplished this task years ago. The United Nations is not beset by a puzzle in search of a solution. Rather, the United Nations is a political institution and functions along political lines much as its founders anticipated. However, once the United Nations has decided to intervene in some dispute or crisis, then there are ways that might enhance the effect and efficiency of that intervention. Many, if not all, of the important recommendations have been made, in some cases many times. But

UN only as good as member states enable it

a crucial area frequently criticized in Canada and elsewhere concerns the command and control of UN forces or, rather, the weaknesses or absence of UN command and control capabilities.

Here is an area where Canada might put forward ideas and an effort to make a difference in the interest of the both the United Nations and Canadians deployed under the United Nations. When the United Nations was established it drew on western wartime experiences in coalition operations and in the command and control of multinational armed forces. The United Nations formed a Military Staff Committee (MSC) almost identical to NATO's Military Committee with the intent that the MSC would provide the central planning staff for United Nations military planning and operations. The MSC collapsed as a consequence of the Cold War but it still exists and meets routinely, although without any intent of achieving anything meaningful. Reviving the MSC and supplying it with highly qualified military and civilian staff officers might provide the United Nations with the competent unit appropriately linked to national chiefs of staff (again as in NATO) through which the United Nations could build a unified operational entity comparable to NATO's International Military Staff. Canada could lead the way in such an endeavour.

Military leadership in the diplomacy of UN-mandated multinational operations is a prominent characteristic of recent coalitions. Few diplomats or soldiers were prepared for this outcome when international interventions began to multiply and as they developed into quasi-military campaigns unlike any operation of the Cold War-peacekeeping era. Whether in the Gulf war, or in Bosnia, Kosovo, Zaire, Rwanda, Haiti, and East Timor, senior military officers and commanders have been asked or required to take decisions far outside the usual, expected range of military matters.¹¹ Officers, including Canadians at times, are increasingly involved in political, legal, and ethical questions upon which they must decide in order to ensure coherent coalition operations. Many officers are frustrated by the confusion that swirls out of the United Nations, NATO's political committees, and national capitals. They are frustrated not only by orders and counter-orders, but also by the restrictions that follow from the notion that leaders of intervention forces ought to be "even-handed" no matter the circumstances of the actions of people in the region.

General Wesley Clark, SACEUR and overall commander of allied forces during the Kosovo war, recalls that he was asked to "use forces, not force," but to do so following "the principles of any military operation." But what was especially vexing to Clark as he dealt with conflicts in the Balkans was that the United Nations had derived the idea that commanders would be given "unlimited obligations" to protect civilians, deliver aid, secure safe areas, and so on, but "very limited authority" to accomplish any of these things.¹² The formulation is a perversion of military principles and commanders' expectations and it contributed greatly to coalition difficulties in the field. This difficulty is exacerbated when the belligerents know that commanders of UN and other coalition forces are greatly restricted from using the military force placed under their command. Hostile political leaders, some of whom are former military officers, have little respect for and are unlikely to be swayed by international commanders who they know have no right to act on their own initiative. What Clark suggested should be the policy in all allied coalitions and what he was seeking

¹¹. See, Gagnon, "Multinational Intervention Forces", op. cit.

¹². General Wesley Clark, *Waging Modern War* (New York: Public Affairs, 2001), p. 59.

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under the Dayton Accords was "to limit the obligations of the military – you can't do everything with military forces – but to give the commander unlimited authority to accomplish these limited obligations."¹³

Sorting out the new civil-military relations between nations in coalitions and "international commanders" is an essential part of building clear methods for acting through coalitions. Canada might take the initiative in sorting out this messy relationship in international affairs by first qualifying its own policies with regard to Canadian Forces officers deployed and assigned as coalition commanders.

Coalitions of the Moment Typically today, many international interventions take place outside the Cold War allied framework and the "Cyprus model" of peacekeeping. "Coalitions of the willing" in Somalia, the Balkans, Africa, and East Timor have brought together nations and armed forces who often are strangers. One thing about these new types of operations is that not much is known in advance of their assembly and deployment. There are few principles or rules or decisions in place before a crisis occurs and Canadian officers and officials and strangers are forced to cobble together operating procedures in the midst of a crisis. Furthermore, because each operation tends to be unique in important ways, these same officials are often forced to define a Canadian position and an operational response in haste at home and overseas. Repeatedly, they and others have complained about the inadequacy of the machinery of national government and international organizations in these circumstances.

Partnership with the United States Canada has enjoyed a long and beneficial security relationship with the United States under bilateral and multilateral agreements. There is no reason to believe that the fundamentals of this relationship will change soon, unless the American government comes to believe that Canada is failing in significant ways to uphold its obligations to the coalition. While some Americans inside and outside government have indeed tried to make this point, they have not carried much weight in Washington or Ottawa. This reality stemmed largely from the fact that the United States felt that its armed forces provided adequate defence in North America and leaders and administrators in Washington were usually content with Canada's political support for its security decisions.

The recent terror attacks on the United States and the growing apprehension that they will increase in number and ferocity may change fundamental assumptions about the Canada/U.S. defence and security relationship. This change will be all the more dramatic if Americans believe that "the longest undefended border" must be defended and according to American standards because Canada cannot be trusted to take the necessary actions to deter and prevent terrorists from entering the United States.

Thus, Canada's most important coalition may be headed for radical change from the one based since 1945 on a threat from air attacks and from 1989 on no threat at all, to an overwhelming, all-encompassing concern for the security of the homeland. In this circumstance, the United States will undoubtedly look to Canada to share the burden of homeland security in hitherto unimagined ways

¹³. Ibid.

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W which will impose considerable tangible and intangible costs on Canadians. Canada faces no greater foreign and defence policy challenge than finding an appropriate and credible way to reassure the United States that Canada can live up to traditional 1938 Roosevelt-Mackenzie King agreement under which the prime minister assured the president that no attack on the United States could come through Canadian territory.

Canada must, however, view its coalition relationship with the United States more broadly and as well as outside North America. It is difficult to see how NATO, the United Nations or any important coalition of the moment could succeed without American political and logistical support and its armed forces at times. Nor should one exaggerate so-called “neo-isolationism” or “unilateralism” in American foreign policy. Careful policy planners in the United States tend to agree that coalitions are essential – for advanced basing of military forces, for instance – if the United States is to exploit its technological superiority in any regional conflict. They agree also that the American public expects a collective response and a sharing of burdens between the United States and traditional allies. But perhaps the main reason why the United States may usually seek to act through coalitions is that coalitions “are reassuring to others [states] and may contribute more to stability than attempts by the world’s only superpower to unilaterally impose deterrence [and conflict resolutions]” on the rest of the world.¹⁴ The challenge, therefore, is not to get the United States to act within coalitions, but to shape coalitions in the context of each partner’s interests, needs, and constraints.

While there is no doubt that the United States would act to defend its interests when necessary and seems now likely to look for allies in such situations, it is not as certain that the United States will always eagerly join coalitions devised by other states for other purposes. But Canada and other states whose foreign policies are closely associated with the United States and which depend, more or less, on American soft and hard assets, cannot usually wait for a happy coincident of their goals and American interests. Therefore, it would be especially useful to find ways in which Canada could help keep the United States continuously engaged in global security issues beyond those that directly affect America’s vital interests.

There are, of course, scores of initiatives aimed at bolstering America’s international “engagement.” However, those that attempt to embroil the United States in every regional conflict outside America’s definition of its vital interests might simply defeat the general intent and particular operation. First, overdependence on the United States in coalitions can appear to Americans as though allies were “in effect ‘taxing’ the American public” to the detriment of the United States¹⁵. This perception might only fuel the rhetoric and opinions of those in the United States who believe that “entangling alliances” are essentially wrong-headed. Moreover, where these types of

¹⁴. Max Manwaring ed., *Deterrence in the 21st Century*, (Portland, Or, Frank Cass, 2001) pp. 60-71.

¹⁵. David Haglund, “Allied Force or Allied Forces: The Allies’ Perspective,” *Alliance Politics, Kosovo, and NATO’s War: Allied Force or Forced Allies*, ed. Pierre Martin and Mark Brawley (New York: Palgrave, 2000), p. 92.

engagements result in American casualties, then the negative effect of coalition-building with the United States can be greatly exacerbated, as the American experiences in Somalia demonstrate.

On the other hand, involving American armed forces in UN operations and coalitions of the moment can worsen unintentionally already tense situations and lead to conflicts between coalition forces and local inhabitants. Americans for many reasons are international targets which some people wish to fire on simply to gain attention at home and abroad. Thus, putting Americans in situations – especially on the ground – where inhabitants might see them as opponents could turn a manageable situation into a hostile situation. Allies and coalition-builders ought to carefully consider the consequences of organizing coalitions around American assets and armed forces before they devise policies that assume that engaging Americans in multilateral coalitions is universally beneficial to national and international security interests.

What then might Canada do in these circumstances? Ironically, the best policy might be to support those Americans who argue for the restricted engagement of the United States in coalitions formed for missions outside America's direct interests. Doing this, however, would require others, including Canada, to pick up the American burden to relieve the United States from having to lead and underpin every coalition in NATO, the United Nations and elsewhere. Specifically, Canada and the other states would have to build the requisite command and control mechanisms, develop armed forces, especially army units and formations, and accept the costs these policies would entail. They would have to willingly lead when crises arise and to sustain their efforts until some reasonable outcome can be achieved.

This logic is behind much of what is happening with a greater European defence entity and it is expressed in the British deployment to Sierra Leone. However, keeping the U.S. engaged by giving it room for disengagement will fail if the political will and effective soft and hard assets are not forthcoming. What can Canada do to enhance its foreign policy through coalitions? Canada could begin the long process of building a credible Canadian capability to lead and support multilateral coalitions at levels commensurate with its traditions, wealth, international position, and global responsibilities.

ORDER AND GOOD GOVERNMENT IN COALITIONS BEGIN AT HOME

Although ad hoc and "lead department" procedures may work reasonably well for isolated crises and as a means to assemble a force for unique deployments under NATO or UN rules, it is a demonstrably weak system under present circumstances. This type of system is undependable when crises abound, when mandates, circumstances, and command authority are unclear; when deployments are prolonged and daily events are unpredictable; and when Canada's efforts involve resources from many departments, agencies, and national and international NGOs. The departmental system of public administration tends to be unresponsive, when it is asked to manage issues for which no one department is clearly the leader, no matter the skills or dedication of the various officials. Moreover, issues that have no home tend to be orphans, left outside the routine of collective senior management.

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Experience in coalitions of the 1990s suggests that the next generation of national defence and security organizations ought to be constructed around the following general notions:

- * Multilateral security and humanitarian operations are often interwoven activities;
- * Many operations – current overseas NATO operations and domestic drug operations – are more or less continuous;
- * Many types of operations involve inseparable aspects of several related problems – military security operations become entangled in the maze of refugees' difficulties involving housing, medical care, feeding, and safety -- all of which flow seamlessly into many other matters and jurisdictions;
- * These types of operations routinely include Canadian Forces units, police forces, governments and departments of governments at various levels; NGOs, international organizations, and, among other things, military, diplomatic, humanitarian, legal, logistical, and intelligence functions;
- * In Canada, no national/federal department or agency has sole responsibility for *conducting operations* in these circumstances and the traditional departmental division of responsibility for military, foreign policy, police, and domestic and international operations while perhaps just sufficient for generating policy and forces, is incompatible with and inhibits the development of an unified coherent responsibility for coordinating and directing continuous operations.

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Reaching these goals and reacting to presently perceived weaknesses may require an internal "machinery of government" response and an external operational response.

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The Machinery of Government Aspect

In broad terms, the defence and security establishment must direct and manage four activities related to international security conditions. These activities include continual capability maintenance and force development – that is, keeping what you need in good order and renewing or replacing these capabilities over time. In a defence system, as in Canada, based on "capability planning" rather than commitment planning it is obviously critically important to select and maintain the right capabilities – right in terms of the long-term national strategy.

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The second major purpose of the machinery for the higher direction of defence and security is to anticipate needs and events in the near and middle terms with sufficient reliability to allow governments to act in a timely, unhurried way to changing circumstances. Third, officials and officers must be allowed the discretion and have the instruments to change policy declarations into fact. In the context of this essay, this means that they must be entrusted to deploy the right forces to the right place, at the right time, and then to sustain them there.

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Finally, every activity must be carefully recorded to facilitate audits, accountability, and Canadians' right to know what is done in their name. Whenever decisions are taken by ad hoc

organizations, one outcome is certain— no one will understand who decided what and who is accountable for the actions and decisions of subordinates at the conclusion of the activity.

There are two general approaches one might consider as ways to redress the shortcomings of the present department-based system. Under one conception, it is the process that needs to be modernized. That is to say, the machinery for interdepartmental and agency activities related to foreign, defence, and humanitarian interventions in coalitions should be changed to ensure better information-sharing, common analysis, policy formulation, and operational control. In other words, better coordination of separate responsibilities is the key to improved advice to governments, improved policies, and improved responses to crises. The process reform model would aim to provide governments with a coherent, coordinated plan for coalition operations before governments make commitments and to manage ongoing operations on the same basis. The reformed process model would also be aimed at establishing a one-door-in, one-door-out avenue for all Canadian dealings with other states and international organizations before and during coalition operations.

Although some might say that such a system is now in place, reformers and those who are simply uneasy with the present system are looking for some process beyond enhanced ad hoc committees. Reforming the policy and operations process would involve four main elements: some type of directive providing authority over planning, if not every decision, a permanent staff trained in "coalition dynamics," a regularized process and procedures, and an appropriate reporting channel to government. Again some might see these characteristics in the Privy Council Office, but others suggest that the PCO as ~~presently~~ ^{currently} organized cannot correct present defects without inappropriately involving itself in the internal affairs of departments and other central agencies.

A popular solution is to establish in Canada a type of national security council as an independent agency dedicated to overall security planning inside and outside Canada.¹⁶ This recommendation, while apparently based in organizational change, is in fact a process response where the staff and the methods for interdepartmental coordination and direction would be much more significant than the image of a "council" might suggest. Proponents often point to the National Security Council (NSC) in the United States, but they tend also to overlook the internecine clashes that continually erupt in Washington as the NSC wrestles with other departments and agencies for control over national security planning and operations. But, perhaps, the greatest barrier to the national security council concept in Canada is that it simply does not fit the Westminster pattern of government and attempts to pound it into the departmental structure in Ottawa would likely be stoutly resisted.¹⁷

Structural reform is a second model for security coordination and control of coalition operations. The premise of this idea is that the effective management of coordinated defence and security policy and operations requires the efficient combination of ministerial authority and a staff specifically organized for this purpose. As no minister (other than the prime minister) has responsibility for the

¹⁶. See, for example, Jane Boulden, *A National Security Council for Canada?*, *op. cit.*

¹⁷. Douglas Bland, "Defence and Security. The Next Generation," *op. cit.* p. 43.

overall direction and management of defence and security policy, operations and resources, then the answer might be to create this new entity.¹⁸

The Operational Aspect

The next generation defence and security structure must direct most of the traditional things foreign affairs departments, ministries of defence, and departments of security have directed over many decades. They are now also involved in sundry other exercises and areas that once fell to civil departments or, most often, to no clearly defined authority at all. Whether we identify these activities as OOTW, or peace-building, or "defence diplomacy," to recall but a few current labels, it is evident that these types of operations do not fall nicely into traditional departments. Now when the Canadian Forces deploys overseas, soldiers are as likely as not to be joined by diplomats, public servants, civilians, the media, and NGOs, large and small. Yet Canadian public administration has not fully acknowledged the consequences of this important change. Perhaps what is needed is a new operational concept to move Canada into the future world of international interventions.

It is not new to suggest that when units of the Canadian Forces are deployed abroad, their activities ought to be coordinated with Canadian diplomats in that region. Sometimes such cooperation is effective, but sometimes it is not.¹⁹ This oversight might not be too egregious in routine operations in established coalitions or multinational missions. It might, however, be significant in other, more dangerous, and more important cases. Besides, as other elements of the government, including the RCMP and Canadian-sponsored NGOs, join Canadian Forces units in the field, national coordination may be increasingly important and appropriate. But the chief reason why Canadian diplomats and military officers ought to improve coordination in the field is because national interests expressed in a coherent national policy require the careful matching of foreign policy goals to military action not just in Ottawa but, arguable, more critically in-theatre.

If one were to begin from the proposition that Canada had a coherent, coordinated national policy for acting through coalitions and that it would be expressed abroad in multinational operations which included various Canadian soft and hard assets, then it seems appropriate that some coordinating mechanism should direct these elements towards national goals. Joining ends to means, in other words, requires more than simply building physical instruments appropriate to national goals. It must mean, also, the continuous coordination of ends and means in the field. This objective cannot be met from Ottawa, no matter the marvels of modern telecommunications.

It might be useful to begin the planning process not at its usual starting point, with formed military units and government resources, **but by looking at each mission as a singular event.** That is to say, by designing missions built to need and by drawing on a wide range of Canadian resources,

¹⁸. Ibid., pp. 43-44.

¹⁹. During an interview with a Canadian scholar who recently returned from a research period in the former Yugoslavia it was alleged that commanders of Canadian Forces units in the theatre had barely spoken with Canadian diplomats, let alone coordinated their reactions to events in the region.

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individuals, and organizations. The notion is to develop "team Canada" formations for overseas deployments in multilateral coalitions.

In the future, when military, police, diplomatic, and NGO elements are required for a mission, they should be fashioned, organized, equipped, and trained according to a national plan. Each contingent should be assembled in Canada prior to deployment to allow individuals to work together preparing to conduct a unified Canadian mission. Although some might worry that NGOs would not wish to relinquish their independence by joining a government-sponsored mission, there are surely a combination of incentives that governments can offer to encourage their participation in a national effort. However, the point relevant to this essay is that Canada cannot advance this or any other new ideas if we are locked into departmental structures that seem inevitably prone to thwart them. Only by developing the requisite unified bureaucracy first, will we be able to move into a different way of looking at and efficiently managing Canada's international commitments²⁰.

The requisite unified bureaucracy, perhaps a National Security Agency (NSA), ought to be composed of two main elements: a permanent staff drawn from appropriate department agencies, the Canadian Forces, and the RCMP; and a National Security Operations Centre to maintain intelligence and data concerning ongoing operations and to act as a communications hub for government. The director of this NSA should report to the Clerk of the Privy Council and have direct and easy access to departments and other agencies that provide resources for Canada's overseas operations.

Who would its Minister be?

Significant Canadian efforts in coalitions might best be controlled through the establishment of a national entity deployed to the theatre. It should function as a coordinating committee headed by a senior diplomat (who might be in the region or specially appointed for the operation), the national commander of deployed Canadian Forces, and appropriate representatives from police, NGOs, and Canadian agencies in-theatre. This permanent committee should be supported as necessary by an inter-agency staff along with logistical resources. Its main purpose would be to coordinate Canadian efforts in the field, and to ensure that the NSA receives routinely one comprehensive report from the source rather than summary information from several separated departments. Although this committee should not be empowered to direct operations or to interfere in communications between parent organizations in Canada and their units in the field, the mere fact that policy and means would be coordinated near the scene of the action would enhance the effectiveness of both.

CANADA AND COALITIONS: PRINCIPLES, NORMS, AND RULES

General Dwight D. Eisenhower concluded after the Second World War that "the first and most enduring lesson of the Mediterranean and European campaigns was the proof that war can be waged effectively by a coalition." It is a notion that turns on its head centuries of military and political lore.

²⁰ A particular model of this type of "unified bureaucracy" was recently formed in DND. Under an "all hazards approach," the MND created the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness, under an associated deputy minister of national defence. See, Margaret Purdy, "What Is the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness?" *National Network News*, 8, 2 (Summer 2001): pp. 21-23.

Napoleon's maxim was, "if you must fight, fight coalitions." History showed coalitions as weak structures fractured by national interests, incompatible forces, and divided command. What Eisenhower and the political leaders of the western alliance discovered was a winning pattern of behaviour built on a regime of agreed principles, norms, rules, and procedures around which leaders' expectations converged. Eisenhower, Lord Ismay (the first secretary general of NATO) and others who devised the wartime practices for cooperation within the great coalition carried the pattern into the North Atlantic Alliance. Although circumstances today are much different from those in 1950, the "enduring lesson" from that period may provide helpful signs for present policymakers. If Canada were to develop for itself a regime for coalition-building and for coalition mechanisms to use as a guide in policymaking at home and as a basis for negotiation abroad, then what principles, norms, rules, and procedures would be included?

There are only a few principles, norms, rules, and procedures, many of which are already established in NATO and to some degree in the United Nations. Any Canadian policy dealing with coalitions ought to include the following minimal regime.

National Sovereignty The *sine qua non* of multinational alliances is the unconditional sovereignty of member states. Notwithstanding the fact that coalition arrangements invariably require the sharing of responsibilities and capabilities, each state voluntarily makes its own decision to join and on its level of participation. Furthermore, it is then free to reconsider these decisions at any time. The independence of member states negates voting or any type of institutional leadership that might be construed as compelling nations to act outside their appreciation of their national interests. Decisions in coalitions, therefore, are taken only by consensus. This principle, however, does not necessarily confer on any state a right to veto the decisions of others, or the right of any state to abstain or withdraw from any decision taken by the coalition.

Equality of Rights and Access Sovereign nations in coalitions by definition are equal in all respects. The presumption of equality has important consequences for coalition procedures and operations requiring, for instance, unhindered access for each member to all committees, organizations, plans, and information of the coalition. Although the duties within an alliance may be distributed according to agreements, the benefits of belonging to the coalition accrue to each state equally. In NATO, for example, Iceland, which has no armed forces, enjoys the same rights and protection under the North Atlantic Treaty as any of the major alliance powers. Coalitions, therefore, must establish a well-understood system of rules and procedures to ensure appropriate national representation within the coalition in accordance with an agreed formula based on levels of commitment, capabilities, national sensitivities, and tradition.

Supremacy of National Political Authorities Civilians elected to parliaments are the unconditional leaders of states and, therefore, they constitute the civil authority in any coalition states may form. This principle reinforces national sovereignty and establishes the norm for the construction of coalition structures and relations between political leaders, national delegations to coalitions, and officials and military officers temporarily assigned to coalition headquarters or units for any purpose. Practically, this principle necessitates that the central mechanism of coalitions be built on a council or committee structure headed by prime ministers or heads of state supported by subordinate multinational committees of officials and military officers depending on the nature of

the alliance. The overriding principle that directs civil-military relations in multinational coalitions (as it is in liberal democracies) is military deference to the civil authority.

Integration and Internationalization of Structures for Decision Making The lessons of previous alliances emphasize the critical importance of mechanisms for managing coalition affairs. The principles of national sovereignty and equality led NATO, the United Nations, and other successful coalitions to build multinational mechanisms or structures that incorporate the central coordination of policy, standard decision-making procedures, and the internationalization of political and military staffs. These types of structures provide the most efficient way for coalitions to develop sophisticated set of plans and procedures linked by modern communications systems to undertake complex operations involving the interests of many states.

Rule by Consensus Coalitions of equals necessarily rule by consensus. That is, as a norm, if not a principle, all decisions, recommendations, and plans must have the concurrence of all members before they can be put into action. An implicit understanding underlying the rule of consensus in most coalitions is that those who take decisions that may lead to the expenditure of "blood and treasure" must be prepared also to take the risks that such decisions may entail. An inherent respect of the relationship between risks and decision is usually supported by a tacit observation of "the rule of the most affected," whereby those members least affected acquiesce to the preferred solutions of those who are directly at risk.

The Military Regime Military affairs in coalitions, even in those where combat is not anticipated, require careful management and control not only because of the nature of armed forces, but also because national armed forces are a conspicuous link to domestic public opinion. Whenever coalition military operations harm national armed forces, public interest will be aroused and the cohesion of the coalition might be jeopardized. The United Nations, for instance, has been greatly criticized and suffers as a coalition leader because of its many shortcomings in managing coalition operations in the field.

The western allies and North Atlantic Alliance established norms to help redress the most difficult aspects of multinational military operations. There are only a few norms and rules but they have been effective and could be easily transferred into any coalition. Indeed, the "NATO-standard" is the basis for the United Nations Military Staff Committee system (which is, unfortunately, moribund), and UN operations during the Korean and Gulf wars. More recently, this regime is used as the foundation for the reform of military forces in states seeking entry into NATO and European military organizations.

Predominance of National Chiefs of Defence National chiefs of defence, or committees of service chiefs, are responsible for the organization, deployment, and conduct of operations of national military forces. They are ultimately accountable for these responsibilities to national political leaders, who in turn are accountable to the people. Two strong sentiments rooted in nationalism and the nation-state militate against any uncontrolled surrender of this responsibility and accountability to foreign officers. Ultimately, the choice between competing national and coalition military needs will be made within the national, not the international, political process and chiefs of defence will inevitably be part of that process. Chiefs of defence must be appropriately integrated

into an alliance chain of command to provide an essential link between national and international defence-policy planning, a link that may be supplemented but cannot be replaced by an allied commander. Therefore, planning for any coalition that may use armed forces in any manner must involve, from the very beginning, chiefs of defence and must then pay attention to their technical advice.

Command Relationships Military authority, as Richard Leighton has described it, is "a kind of reserve power" and although it may not often be used, national military leaders and their subordinates know that it can be applied to compel obedience. Military leaders of coalition forces composed of sovereign states have never held the same kind of reserve power or final authority as have national military leaders. Command relationships and the authority given to coalition commanders are usually constrained by the notion that national defence and the responsibility for the employment and safety of national armed forces are the inalienable province of national leaders.

Thus, coalition operations commanders never receive unfettered command of national armed forces and their authority is limited in important ways. They have no power to discipline national forces or even individuals placed under their command, but must defer to national leaders and procedures. Commanders have power of command only over troops that nations agree to provide to them, for limited periods, and for specific operations. Finally, coalitions usually impose general prohibitions against reorganizing national forces or assigning them missions separate from their parent units, or to new regions without national authority. National civil authorities may make exceptions to these rules in emergencies, where national contributions are small, or when allied units are organized, for symbolic reasons, into international formations.

Logistics and Operations Coalition commanders exercise little control over the logistical support they need to conduct operations. This separation between logistics and operations challenges military doctrine, but in coalitions, equipping and supplying forces is a national responsibility independent of commanders for reasons that have little to do with war and everything to do with national sovereignty, economics, and politics. Commanders and their staffs may determine desirable stock levels for each contingency plan, they may set "standards," usage rates, and so on, but a response to those demands depends on political decisions that can only be taken in capitals. This norm places significant responsibilities on national political and military authorities to ensure that forces, including government-sponsored civilians and NGOs, are adequately prepared in very sense for the missions they undertake and to critically assess promises from other states to meet national needs.

This seemingly simple regime has a universal appeal and provides NATO and the United Nations with a framework to build effective, operational forces for crisis and wartime. Few traditional allies would be surprised at this schematic for coalition politics, but new allies and passing partners might find it odd. Nevertheless, Canadian officers and officials might benefit from careful consideration of these principles, norms, and rules and the consequences they inevitably impose on policymakers, international commanders, and states. Though some might wish to escape these impositions, they are drawn from a long history of liberal democracies in partnership and this fact makes them very difficult to avoid.

CONCLUSION: THE WAITING AGENDA

Strategy has many definitions, but the most useful for policymakers is the notion that strategy is the result of sets of decisions joining ends to means taken by people with the authority to decide and to oversee the implementation of those decisions. Although foreign policy is the province of the minister of foreign affairs, that policy is in fact dependent in many cases on resources that belong to others. Designing a Canadian foreign policy strategy which has at its centre the idea of achieving Canadian goals through coalitions must necessarily involve people of authority from other departments and agencies of the Canadian government led by politicians. **If ministers directed officials, military officers, and other authorities to bring forward a national strategy aimed at advancing Canadian interests through coalitions, then what issues would be placed on the agenda before an interdepartmental forum?**

The National Interest Doubtless, the primary matter would be to discover what "national interests" could be and should be advanced in coalitions. Because coalition dynamics invariably require compromises, it would seem that coalition politics ought to be restricted to those things that Canada cannot achieve on its own. However, coalition politics might also be used as an avenue along which Canada could and should involve itself in the affairs of others and of the world community in general. For instance, Canada might not always have access to negotiations between the United States and Latin American states, but by maintaining a connection to the United States and Latin American states through the Western Hemispheric coalition, the Organization of American States, does give Canadian policymakers access to aspects of these important relationships by right of association. The basic question for the strategic forum is, however, what is the connection between Canada's strategic imperatives and its strategic choices and with each coalition, old and new?

Why, Where, and with Whom Quite naturally, the second item on the agenda should bring forward a discussion of the national parameters that would guide a Canadian coalition strategy. In other words, as discussed in this essay, why would Canada decide to join or to maintain a particular coalition? Where in the world can Canada best achieve its purposes most efficiently and with whom would Canada seek and accept alliance? This is not an easy policy framework to design and build. But if there are no boundaries to where, when, and with whom Canada will act, then there can be no way to understand or to limit demands for resources from departments or to place reasonable conditions on Canadian expectations in matters of international affairs.

The Canadian Rules Canada cannot join other states nor take on obligations that flow from coalitions without regard for national laws, costs, domestic politics and policies, and the need to maintain public support for foreign policy. It is critically important, therefore, that policy planners and individuals who lead Canadians in coalition operations have at hand a basic national regime for coalitions – Canadian rules of the game – to guide their actions and decisions. The next question on the agenda for Canadian leaders is this: What are the explicit terms under which Canada will join and support coalitions in international affairs?

The National Mechanism for Coalition Plans and Operations A single meeting or even several routine meetings of officials will never satisfy the need for Canada to continuously anticipate, plan for, and manage coalition politics in Canada's interests. Perhaps the most difficult coalition that

policymakers will find is the one they must fashion in Ottawa between the myriad players who supposedly have a stake in foreign policy formulation and outcomes. **However, forging some mechanism beyond ad hoc interdepartmental committees to control coalition policies is a decisive matter.** The new mechanism ought to take a Canadian perspective and thus it should not be composed of “representatives” sent by departments. The mechanism should be especially designed to build coherence between intentions and outcomes. In this regard, the mechanism might best be situated under a minister who has responsibility for the resources that change coalition intentions into fact so long as the minister’s decisions are carefully guided by a strong national strategy.

Joining Ends to Means Michael Ignatieff, commenting on the need to use force to defend human rights, concluded that “if we will the ends, we had better will the right means. For the means we select may betray our ends.”²¹ The warning is germane to Canada’s situation and the growing disparity between what Canadians wish to do in international affairs, what they think Canada can do, and what capabilities are really available now and may be available in the future to do anything meaningful. The arguments between military experts may not be comprehensible to everyone, but even an informed casual observer would understand that in the long term – say out to 2020 – if budgets remain constant relative to today, the Canadian Forces will have fewer resources and fewer people to deal with a world that is most likely to be more, not less, turbulent. Notwithstanding that some capabilities will certainly be greatly enhanced and “more lethal,” it is not certain that they will be especially suited to the usual pattern of international security affairs; that is, to situations short of conventional war.

A national foreign and defence strategy for 2020 must join ends to means and allocate resources appropriately between strategic imperatives and strategic choices. Care must be taken to avoid the allure of “double-hatting” assets (assigning multiple duties to the same resources) to cover gaps in capabilities because it leads to the assumption, which will invariably be proved false in a crisis, that all contingencies are covered and that one person or one unit can be everywhere and do everything all the time. Matching Canadians’ will to national means would be a critical item on any agenda to craft a coherent coalition strategy for Canada.

Canada, Helpful Fixer or Helpful Follower? In 1963, Robert Sutherland, a respected senior defence analyst, declared in a paper on national strategy which he had prepared for defence minister, Paul Hellyer, that:

There is . . . a distinct limit to how far one can define a Canadian position in advance of discussions with our allies. In the course of such discussions it must be anticipated that Canada’s position would be necessarily subject to reconsideration and redefinition . . . the most that is possible at the present time is to define an “initial” Canadian position, accepting the fact that this position might require substantial revision in the course of discussions.

From the point of view of the Department of National Defence, it would be highly advantageous to discover a strategic rationale which would impart to Canada’s defence programs

²¹. Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond*. (New York: Henry Holt, 2000).

a wholly Canadian character. Unfortunately, such a rationale does not exist and one cannot be invented.²²

Hellyer rejected this "little Canada" concept and tried but failed, to win support in Cabinet for a fuller, more mature strategy for Canada in the 1960s. Though many things have changed since that report was written, some might say that not much has changed at all in the way some Canadians think about Canada's place in international affairs and multilateral coalitions.

Certainly, Canada cannot expect to lead the major powers, but is it true that Canada can only act on its own behalf in coalitions led by others? This is an assumption that needs to be tested. Neither Canada's interests nor those of the international community can be well served if the major powers, especially the United States, must lead every international coalition or if Canadians think of themselves as merely helpful followers.

New Players, New Methods Coalitions today, as usual, are created around states and their diplomats, armed forces, and other agencies. But multinational coalitions now also include various mixes of non-traditional allies and entirely new allies from national and international NGOs and from international organizations. Diplomatic and military leadership may come from states or from international organizations, principally the United Nations and NATO. Arrangements, therefore, within coalitions are seldom sure at the outset and often ambiguous in the field, especially where NGOs are important actors. Nevertheless, these arrangements can have a significant impact on Canada's interests, domestic and foreign policies, and on the lives of members of the Canadian Forces. But arrangements are complicated in some new coalitions because they are predicated not only on sovereign states and their rights and laws, but also on the assumed rights of non-state actors and the international standing of various multi-jurisdictional entities. Officials and officers preparing a national strategy for Canada must consider in their deliberations the terms and conditions that will underpin future Canadian commitments to multinational/multi-jurisdictional coalitions and the rules governing Canadians assigned to such coalitions.

Trusting Canadians Public support for foreign policy is of paramount importance to the successful implementation of such policies over the longer term. This fact is especially pertinent whenever Canada acts through coalitions in an environment where every step in the field may be recorded and broadcast immediately by the media. An agenda for a forum on a national coalition strategy for Canada must include some consideration of how Canadians will be informed of the choices Canada faces in international relations. This may be a daunting assignment in a crisis, if the public and the commentators are ignorant of Canada's real capabilities and the circumstances in which Canadian diplomacy is played out.

Too often Canadians seem to have higher expectations of foreign policy than the circumstances suggest. For instance, many Canadians, including most members of Parliament, believe that Canada is an important participant and a leader in international peacekeeping missions worldwide. They appear convinced that Canada has "influence" in NATO and the United Nations because of the

²². As quoted in Douglas Bland, *Chiefs of Defence. Government and the Unified Command of the Canadian Armed Forces*, op. cit. p. 226.

commitments made there, but the reality is different.²³ Consequently, the public may be disillusioned when they discover a more sober truth, as many did when they found Canada outside the "~~Contact Group~~" directing NATO operations in the former Yugoslavia. *Joint*

we have to know where to direct them

A forum on a national strategy to guide coalition policy ought to address three items concerning public support. First, to redress any public misunderstanding of Canada's capabilities to act through coalitions, politicians should forthrightly explain the state of Canadian diplomatic and military assets and the situation of prominent Canadian-based NGOs. Second, leaders should organize a public campaign to describe to citizens the complexities of the "new world disorder" and the consequences it brings to Canadian foreign policy. Third, politicians should describe the opportunities available for Canadians to take the lead in some types of multinational coalitions and the costs such efforts might entail. The public might then appreciate that while Canada could build coalitions of the willing around soft assets where risks are low – as in specific arms control areas and international judicial matters -- they might also lower their expectations of Canada's ability to act in coalitions where hard assets are needed and high risks are anticipated. Alternatively, Canadians might decide to assemble the means needed to match the vision they have of Canada in the world.

Sh

A Framework Document for Acting Through Coalitions An officials' forum on a national strategy for acting through coalitions ought to produce for political leaders a framework document to govern *Coalitions and Canadian Foreign Policy*. This document (perhaps even a Cabinet "white paper" given the continuing emergency) ought to provide a comprehensive, coherent, and authorized statement of intent and an indication of the resources needed to achieve it. It should be written to inform the public, to guide and control the policy discretion of officials and Canadian Forces officers, and to bring order to the ends and means of foreign and defence policies.

Although Canada could sit still, leaving international responsibilities to others, it would then risk sliding out of sight in international affairs. Canadians would then have to accept that other states, willing to take the risks and pay the price, would set the agenda and receive any resulting benefits. Canadians would also have to set aside a legacy of sacrifice and compassion and a willingness to champion values that have defined Canada at home and abroad. On the other hand, an ambitious document might introduce Canadians to a road towards a new horizon and to a national policy that would place Canada in the vanguard of the gathering movement toward international peace and security through multinational coalitions.

But a crusade, even if led by a new generation of political leaders, fuelled only on rhetoric will go nowhere. Canada, to regain the prominence it once held in the international community, ought to heed the words and courage of the man who did so much to create it long ago. Lester Pearson believed "that the maintenance of an overwhelming superiority of force on the side of peace is the best guarantee today of the maintenance of peace" and Canadians were willing then to back his words with their own efforts. Few could credibly argue that Canadians today are less willing to back sound policies aimed at bringing greater peace and security to the international community.

²³. Douglas Bland, *Parliament, Defence Policy and the Canadian Armed Forces*, op. cit. pp. 34-35.

Canada has a respected international tradition to uphold. But Canadians in their own interest also has a responsibility to allies and the global community to help organize international affairs on a foundation built on peaceful change and security for all while defending liberal democracy at home and promoting it reasonably abroad. Diplomatic and security coalitions will continue to be a central instrument – an organizing principle – through which Canada achieves these related aims. Coalitions, fortunately, can also be the most productive means for explaining, guarding, and realizing Canada's national interests. The challenge, therefore, is to collect our national thoughts, construct a national consensus on Canada's place in the world to guide politicians, military officers, and officials, and then to build the machinery of government and the soft and hard assets that will turn policy visions into policies outcomes.

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