

USNORTHCOM and Canadian Domestic Operations: An Opportunity for Positive Change

**A Monograph
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Armoured**



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The creation of USNORTHCOM in 2002 was a clear indication that the security environment in North America had undergone a radical transformation. Canada and the United States have a history of bi-national mutual defense arrangements spanning more than sixty years. This monograph examines the Canadian Forces operational ability to meet the challenges of this new security environment. The specific vehicle that we used to assess the Canadian Forces operational capability was the Canadian Forces response to the 1997 Red River Flood. The 1997 Red River Flood proves to be an interesting case study because it allows us to compare the respective military responses of both Canada and the U.S. to a disaster. Although we chose a disaster relief and humanitarian assistance operation as our vehicle for comparison, we contend that the operational level response of the Canadian Forces, and particularly the Army, is indicative of the military response we could expect for other disasters. Our case study reveals that by comparison the Canadian Forces had serious operational shortcomings in 1997. We conclude that the operational level shortcomings experienced by the Canadian Forces in 1997 are primarily the result of the force reductions and budget cuts laid out in Canada's 1994 Defence White Paper. Our examination reveals that the same shortcomings identified in Canada's defense policy are incorporated in the Canadian Forces operational level joint and army doctrines. We conclude that the Canadian Forces operational level shortcomings demonstrated in 1997 are extant. We recommend that the Canadian Forces use the creation of USNORTHCOM, and the radical change to the North American Security environment that it signifies, as the rationale for justifying the requisite resources to rectify its operational level shortcomings. We recommend that Canadian doctrine be amended to provide quantifiable measures of effectiveness for the conduct of operations. We recommend that operational level training be conducted to prepare the Canadian Forces and the Army to perform the disaster relief and humanitarian assistance tasks demanded of them by the Government. We recommend that the role of Canada's Reserve Forces be reexamined to determine if they can perform economy of force operations domestically. Finally, we recommend that use of force training be conducted, on a regular basis, for all soldiers who could be called upon to conduct domestic operations.

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Abstract

USNORTHCOM and Canadian Domestic Operations: An Opportunity for Positive Change
by Lieutenant-Colonel Stephen D. McCluskey, Armoured, 57 pages.

The creation of USNORTHCOM in 2002 was a clear indication that the security environment in North America had undergone a radical transformation. Canada and the United States have a history of bi-national mutual defense arrangements spanning more than sixty years. This monograph examines the Canadian Forces operational ability to meet the challenges of this new security environment. The specific vehicle that we used to assess the Canadian Forces operational capability was the Canadian Forces response to the 1997 Red River Flood.

The 1997 Red River Flood proves to be an interesting case study because it allows us to compare the respective military responses of both Canada and the U.S. to a disaster. Although we chose a disaster relief and humanitarian assistance operation as our vehicle for comparison, we contend that the operational level response of the Canadian Forces, and particularly the Army, is indicative of the military response we could expect for other disasters. Our case study reveals that by comparison the Canadian Forces had serious operational shortcomings in 1997. Both the subject and the case study are germane because, at the time of writing, a Canada/U.S. bi-national planning group is working in Colorado Springs to determine how both nations can assist each other militarily in the event of a disaster.

We conclude that the operational level shortcomings experienced by the Canadian Forces in 1997 are primarily the result of the force reductions and budget cuts laid out in Canada's *1994 Defence White Paper*. Our examination reveals that the same shortcomings identified in Canada's defense policy are incorporated in the Canadian Forces operational level joint and army doctrines. We conclude that the Canadian Forces operational level shortcomings demonstrated in 1997 are extant. We recommend that the Canadian Forces use the creation of USNORTHCOM, and the radical change to the North American Security environment that it signifies, as the rationale for justifying the requisite resources to rectify its operational level shortcomings. Simply put, in 1994 the Cold War was over and there was no specific threat that justified the level of defense expenditure of the previous decade. In 2004, there is a specific threat to North America and specifically to Canada's close friend, trading partner and ally – the United States. USNORTHCOM is tangible proof that the U.S. is prepared to meet that threat. Canada would be ill advised to ignore this proof. The bi-national planning group is also tangible evidence that Canada is preparing itself to operate in the new security environment but we find that this step alone is insufficient.

We recommend that Canadian doctrine be amended to provide quantifiable measures of effectiveness for the conduct of operations. We recommend that operational level training be conducted to prepare the Canadian Forces and the Army to perform the disaster relief and humanitarian assistance tasks demanded of them by the Government. We recommend that the role of Canada's Reserve Forces be reexamined to determine if they can perform economy of force operations domestically. Finally, we recommend that use of force training be conducted, on a regular basis, for all soldiers who could be called upon to conduct domestic operations.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

An old joke about Canadian geography starts with one brother, in London England, calling his brother in Vancouver and saying: “Mother is flying to Canada to come visit you. Can you pick her up at the airport?” The Vancouver brother asks: “Where is she flying in to?” The London brother says: “She is flying in to Toronto.” “Well then you pick her up,” says the Vancouver brother, “you’re closer.

Anonymous

Canada is a sovereign nation and as such wields all of the recognized national instruments of power: diplomatic, information, military and economic. It would be foolish however, not to acknowledge the influence of the United States on Canada’s national security. The United States is Canada’s largest economic trading partner. We share the world’s longest undefended border and by the fate of geography, we are dependant upon one another for the security of our respective homelands. The democratically elected government of Canada has certain obligations to the people of Canada. One of these obligations is to provide for the “Protection of Canada.”¹ Not surprisingly, the Canadian Government assigned this task to the Department of National Defence (DND). The last comprehensive strategic guidance given to DND, by the Government of Canada, was the *1994 Defence White Paper*. This Canadian document could be equated to the U.S. National Military Strategy. Under the rubric of “Protection of Canada,” DND was specifically directed to “be prepared to contribute to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief within 24 hours, and sustain the effort for as long as necessary.”² Presumably, some type of disaster would have to occur for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to be necessary. The first thing we need to do is to define disaster.

¹ Minister of National Defence, *1994 Defence White Paper* (Ottawa: Canada Communication Group-Publishing, 1994), 15.

² *Ibid.*, 19.

Natural Disaster

Dr. Martin E. Silverstein defines a disaster as, “an unexpected, destructive event resulting in any permutation of death, injury and property damage that overwhelms the resources of a community and disrupts societal processes.”³ The operative words in this definition are: unexpected, destructive, overwhelm and disrupt. Clearly then, DND must be ready to react, on short or no notice, to a destructive event that has overwhelmed local resources and disrupted the normal functioning of a portion of society. On the surface, this sounds like a reasonable expectation for a G-7 nation of its armed forces. Disasters are caused by natural events, hostile acts or accidents (industrial or otherwise). For the purposes of this monograph and because documentation is more readily available we will limit ourselves to natural disasters.

Canada has its share of potential and realized naturally occurring disasters: avalanches, blizzards, cold waves, crop disasters, droughts, earthquakes, epidemics, floods, fog, forest fires, frost and freeze-ups, ice jams in shipping lanes and other critical areas, hail, heat waves, high winds, hurricanes, ice storms, landslides, magnetic storms, sea and lake surges, severe thunderstorms, snow, tidal waves (tsunami), tornadoes, and torrential rain.⁴ It is important to recollect that Dr. Silverstein’s definition of disaster made no mention of a disaster respecting national borders. Notwithstanding the occasional power outage in Ontario, due to the third world quality of the U.S. power grid, these are the types of natural disasters that the Canadian Forces

³Dr. Silverstein has an august list of credentials which give him credibility on the subject of disasters which include, “former senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, served on the Reagan Transition Team for the Federal Emergency management Agency.” Dr. Martin E. Silverstein, *DISASTERS: Your Right to Survive* (Washington: Brassey’s (US), Inc., 1992), 3.

⁴ OCIEP can be equated to FEMA in the sense that one of its key mandates is “to be the government’s primary agency for ensuring national civil [emergency preparedness](#) – for all types of emergencies.” Until December 2003, OCIEP was an agency within the Department of National Defence. One of the first actions of Canada’s new Prime Minister, Paul Martin was to create a portfolio called Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada. The Deputy Prime Minister, Anne McLelland has been named as the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness and OCIEP has been removed from the DND portfolio and placed into the PSEP portfolio. At the time of writing there appear to be no changes to the role and responsibilities of OCIEP under the new portfolio. Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness, “Fact Sheets,” (online); available from http://www.ociepc-bpiepc.gc.ca/info_pro/NewsReleases/MA03-2609_e.asp; internet; accessed 28 September 2003.

can and in many cases have been called upon to help mitigate. Dr. Silverstein provides a vivid picture of the effects of a disaster when he states: “Whatever the origin of the unexpected event—earthquake, tanker truck collision, air crash or an armed attack within a favorite restaurant—common everyday pursuits are replaced instantly by a desperate struggle for escape and survival.”⁵ He goes on to say: “It should be remembered that looting and other conflict events are components of almost every disaster.”⁶ This adds a new wrinkle for military planners to work out when they plan military assistance to support the civil authorities in the aftermath of a natural disaster. Not only do they have to take into account force protection measures to deal with potential civil disturbances but they must also anticipate requests for support from local law enforcement agencies should those agencies find themselves overwhelmed. Those tasked to respond to natural disasters face some real challenges, not the least of which, warns Silverstein is that: “The world’s interest in disaster preparation begins to dwindle about six weeks after a catastrophe.”⁷ A bit like the ant and the grasshopper: the world’s, or public’s, interest in disaster preparation wanes after a relatively short period of time leaving those responsible for responding having to justify the investment of resources in anticipation of an event that may or may not occur in the near future. In a democracy, where the politician must respond to the will of the people, the competition for resources amongst federal departments can be quite fierce. The Department of National Defence, by necessity, competes for resources, primarily financial, with the other government departments. While the public may see more immediate benefit from allocating resources to education or health care, the government must balance those requirements against the requirement to prepare to respond to natural disasters. There is a direct correlation between the

⁵Silverstein, *Disasters: Your Right to Survive*, 3.

⁶*Ibid.*, 91.

⁷*Ibid.*, 93.

preparations for disaster response and the efficacy of that response. Given the unexpected nature of disasters, there will be little or no time to train the responders.

No disaster-response team functions well unless that team drills and drills in a variety of situations. Practice is the common element in all disaster preparation. And in practice must be as realistic as possible. All too often, drills are pro forma, desultory, or overly orchestrated for the benefit of the media. “Command post drills” involve the use of telephones and the passage of slips of paper. Because they are the cheapest and require the least exertion, they are probably the most common disaster drill system. They lack the stress of live drills ...they do not introduce the elements of blood, sweat, tears, fire and smoke.⁸

The Canadian Forces have three significant problems when it comes to dealing with disasters and conducting domestic humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations. The first problem is that geographically Canada is vast. The second problem is that the Canadian Forces have suffered significant cuts in personnel and funding over the last few decades. The third problem, resultant from the second, is that the Canadian Forces are quite small.

With a total area of 9,976,140 square kilometers, Canada is the second largest country in the world. Canada has 202,080 kilometers of coastline and, including Alaska, 8893 kilometers of borders with the United States. Geographically divided into ten Provinces and three Territories; Canada has a population of just over 32 million people. Despite the fact that Canada is as large North-South as it is East-West, approximately 85% of Canadians live in a long narrow strip that runs East-West parallel to the Canada/U.S. border.⁹ Ed Tsui points out that:

In the event of a natural disaster, such as an earthquake or volcano, thousands of lives are put at immediate risk. Many can be lost within hours or days of the incident if search and rescue and other life saving efforts are delayed. In these cases, a rapid initial response is critical, and often more easily applicable to the goal of saving lives.¹⁰

⁸Ibid., 96-97.

⁹Canadian geographic and population facts are available from numerous sources. A Google search on “Canada Facts” produced over four million hits. All of the facts listed in this paragraph are from: Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook*. (online); available from <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ca.html>; internet; accessed 28 September 2003.

¹⁰Ed Tsui, *Initial Response to Complex Emergencies and Natural Disasters*. In *Emergency Relief Operations*. Edited by Kevin M. Cahill, M.D. (New York: Fordham: University Press and The Center for International Health and Cooperation, 2003), 35-36.

Clearly then, time is a precious commodity when it comes to conducting disaster relief and humanitarian assistance operations. Given this temporal dimension of disaster response and the vast geography of Canada, it is clear that preparation must be a key component of the Canadian Forces directed response to domestic disaster relief and humanitarian assistance operations.

Humanitarian and disaster relief operations are encompassed under what the Canadian Forces calls “Domestic Operations:” “Canadian Forces domestic operations are any Canadian Forces activities which provide assistance in response to requests for support from the Canadian civil authorities, or from the Canadian public.”¹¹ Domestic operations cover a broad spectrum of military assistance. A request from a community organization to use a Reserve Force Armoury for a meeting is a domestic operation as is the request from the Premier of a Province to assist with disaster relief and humanitarian assistance in the aftermath of a natural disaster. The Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (DCDS), on behalf of the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS), controls all domestic operations. The DCDS has further delegated regional responsibility for domestic operations, which include humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations, to operational commanders. These regional commanders are: Commander Land Forces Atlantic Area (Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick), Commander Land Forces Quebec Area (Quebec), Commander Land Forces Central Area (Ontario), Commander Land Forces Western Area (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia), and Commander Canadian Forces Northern Area (Yukon Territory, Nunavut, and The North West Territories).¹² The figure below shows the areas of responsibility (AOR) assigned to the Land

¹¹The DCDS states, “This instruction fills a void in operational guidance that has been apparent for some time.” While G3 LFWA, from 2001-2002, the domestic operations staff officers as well as the Domestic Operations Detachments in Victoria, Edmonton, Regina and Winnipeg considered DCDS 2/98 the ‘domestic operations bible’. Department of National Defence, *NDHQ Instruction DCDS 2/98: Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Operations* (NDHQ file number: 3301-0 (DCDS), 10 July 1998), 1.

¹²*Ibid.*, 3-4.

Force Area (LFA) Commanders as well as the locations of Reserve Force Canadian Brigade Groups (CBGs) and Regular Force Canadian Mechanized Brigade Groups (CMBGs). It does not show Canadian Forces Northern Area (CFNA) as an AOR because CFNA is a DCDS command not an Army command.



Figure 1: LFA AORs (http://www.army.dnd.ca/LFCA_HQ/LFCA/Graphics/PDF/infoGuide.pdf, accessed 18 Dec 2003).

Natural and manmade disasters do not respect national borders. A few examples of this phenomenon are the Red River Flood of 1997 that caused significant damage on both sides of the border, the 2003 power outage in the North Eastern U.S. and Canada, and the 2003 forest fires in Western Canada and the U.S. The U.S. is highly reliant on Canadian oil imports and should an event occur that would interrupt this trade, both the U.S. and Canada would suffer. It is, therefore, in the interest of both nations to ensure that the disruptive effects of any large-scale disasters are mitigated as quickly as possible.

Problem, Background and Significance

The *1994 Defence White Paper*, was the last comprehensive strategic direction given to the Department of National Defense by the Government of Canada. It was written at a time when the Government assumed that, “there is no immediate direct military threat to Canada and that today’s conflicts are far from our shores.”¹³ In 1994 the Government of Canada perceived that the greatest threat faced by Canadians was “the steady growth of public sector debt.”¹⁴ Consequently, the Government decided that, “Although National Defence and the Canadian Forces have already made a large contribution to the national effort to reduce the deficit, the Government believes that additional cuts are both necessary and possible.”¹⁵ The White Paper goes on to advise that: “the defence budget will be under continuing pressure as the Government strives to bring the deficit under control. More reductions can and will be accommodated.”¹⁶ The world has changed significantly in the last decade and September 11th has proven that at least one assumption in the 1994 White Paper is no longer valid.

On 17 April 2002, U.S. Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld announced the creation of USNORTHCOM to “help the department better deal with natural disasters, attacks on U.S. soil, or other civil difficulties.”¹⁷ USNORTHCOM’s area of responsibility, he went on to say, includes, “the continental United States, Alaska, Canada and Mexico, portions of the Caribbean, and the contiguous waters out -- in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, out to a minimum of 500

¹³ Minister of National Defence, *1994 Defence White Paper*, 12.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 50.

¹⁷ Donald Rumsfeld. *U.S. Department of Defense: Special Briefing on the Unified Command Plan* (Presenter: Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, April 17 2002), 1.

miles, so they can defend in depth.”¹⁸ It is reasonable to conclude from this 17 April 2002 announcement that the U.S. clearly sees Canada as one of the keys to its physical security.

The same Liberal Government under Prime Minister Jean Chretien, that issued the 1994 Defence White Paper, ordered a “Defence Review” in 2001 but later downgraded the comprehensive “review” to a “Defence Update” and then refused to release the results to the public.¹⁹ My hypothesis is that the Canadian Army is ill prepared to perform its assigned disaster and humanitarian relief tasks and that the creation of USNORTHCOM provides an opportunity for the Canadian Army to improve its readiness to accomplish these tasks. My research question is: How can the Canadian Forces (CF), in particular the Army, leverage the creation of USNORTHCOM to improve its ability to conduct domestic humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations?

Methodology

This monograph focuses on the Canadian Army’s ability to conduct disaster relief and humanitarian assistance operations. It is intended to present viable recommendations that will assist the Army Staff and Operational Commanders in improving the ability of the Army to conduct domestic operations. Within the context of Canadian domestic operations we will work with the assumption that the Canadian Army’s readiness to deal with natural disasters is also indicative of its readiness to deal with disasters that result from human causes. Although the DCDS has tasked the Land Force Area (Army) Commanders, with geographic responsibility for all domestic operations this monograph will concentrate primarily on the Canadian Army’s ability to conduct domestic disaster relief and humanitarian assistance operations. In order to keep this monograph unclassified we will not address domestic security operations. The monograph makes two major assertions: the first is that the Canadian Army is ill prepared to conduct disaster relief

¹⁸Ibid, 3.

and humanitarian relief operations in response to a disaster and the second is that the Army can leverage the creation of USNORTHCOM to improve its readiness. The monograph relies on separate criteria to prove the first assertion. We will use ‘synchronization,’ ‘interoperability’ and ‘unity of effort’ as criteria to compare the Canadian and the U.S. military responses, at the operational level, to the same natural disaster. We will use ‘readiness’ to assess the Canadian Army’s current ability to perform its assigned tasks of providing disaster relief and humanitarian assistance. Criteria definitions are:

a. Interoperability (AJP-01(A) -Adapted) The ability of military systems, units or forces to provide services to and accept services from other systems, units or forces, including civilian systems, organizations and agencies, and use the services so exchanged to enable them to operate, cooperate and coordinate their civil-military activities and operations effectively and efficiently together. *CIVIL-MILITARY COOPERATION IN PEACE, EMERGENCIES, CRISIS AND WAR:*

B-GG-005-004/AF-023

b. Unity of Effort (CIDA/NGO) Political, civilian and military leaders have certain common objectives, which permit them to cooperate on strategic planning, and operations designed to achieve these common objectives. Civilian managers and military commanders base their specific operational objectives on these common objectives to achieve an effective unity of effort. Unity of effort also relies on the synergy created by political, civil and military elements deployed in a theatre or area of operations, focused on achieving the mission. Unity of effort implies a common strategy espoused by all stakeholders deployed and employed in an area of operations. *CIVIL-*

MILITARY COOPERATION IN PEACE, EMERGENCIES, CRISIS AND WAR: B-GG-005-004/AF-023

¹⁹ Sharon Hobson, “Canada’s Forces Running on Empty: Readiness at a Price,” Janes Defence Weekly, vol. 40, issue 11, 17 September 2003, 21.

c. Synchronization (B-GG-005-004/AF-000) The arrangement of military actions in time, space and purpose to produce maximum combat power at a decisive place and time. *CANADIAN FORCES OPERATIONS: B-GG-005-004/AF-000*

d. Readiness (Concise Oxford), ‘facility, prompt, quickness of action and ready or prepared state.’ The operative words in this definitions are: facility (with ease), prompt/quickness (to address the time sensitive nature of natural disaster response) and prepared (efforts made before an event to allow one to respond quickly and with facility).

In order to prove our hypothesis and get to the specific conclusions and recommendations we will have to cover a variety of topics and related questions. In Chapter One we identify the key characteristics of natural disasters: unexpected, destructive, overwhelming and disruptive. We identify the key challenges facing the Canadian Forces in dealing with natural disasters: a small force, geography, and limited resources. Additionally, this chapter describes the geographic disposition of the Canadian Army units tasked to support the civil authorities. The chapter then explores the implications of USNORTHCOM’s mandate and its assigned AOR revealing that the U.S. has recognized that it is in the national security interest of the U.S. to ensure that natural disasters do not have a significant impact on Canada/U.S. trade. This leaves us with Canada poorly prepared, the U.S. concerned, and the question of how can the Canadian Army leverage or exploit this situation to improve it’s ability to conduct domestic humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations. By inference, any improved ability would also have a direct impact on the Canadian Army’s ability to conduct other security/threat related domestic operations.

In Chapter Two we assert that natural disasters do not respect national boundaries and both Canada and the U.S. have an interest in dealing with them. We will use the Red River Flood of 1997 to provide a basis for comparing the Canadian and U.S. military responses to this same disaster. The post operations reports of both the Minnesota National Guard and Land Forces Western Area allow us to compare the respective command and control, communications, support

and organization of each force allowing us to compare the unity of effort, interoperability and synchronization of Canadian and U.S. forces conducting disaster relief and humanitarian assistance operations.

In Chapter Three we examine the nesting of the disaster relief and humanitarian assistance tasks, assigned to the Canadian Forces by the Government of Canada, with the operational tasks assigned by the Canadian Forces to the operational level formations. We also examine Canadian army doctrine, joint doctrine and National Defence Headquarters' instructions to determine if the assumptions made, at the time that the tasks were assigned and the doctrine was written, remain valid. We will show that the Canadian Forces have neither trained nor organized to accomplish the assigned disaster relief and humanitarian assistance tasks. Instead, the Canadian Forces maintain the assumption that the 'multi-purpose combat capability' of the Canadian Forces will permit an effective and timely response to natural disasters. We will use the 'readiness' criteria to show that this assumption is erroneous. This examination reveals that the Canadian Forces, and particularly the Army, are undermanned, under funded and poorly equipped to deal with natural disasters. It is for these reasons that the Canadian Forces, and particularly the Army, should look to the creation of USNORTHCOM as an opportunity to improve its ability to accomplish the disaster relief and humanitarian assistance tasks.

In Chapter Four we will summarize our conclusions and provide recommendations for rectifying the shortcomings that we have identified. Having demonstrated that the Canadian Forces are ill prepared for their disaster relief and humanitarian assistance tasks; we will explain how to leverage the creation of USNORTHCOM to improve the current capability of the Canadian Army.

CHAPTER TWO

Case Study: The 1997 Red River Flood

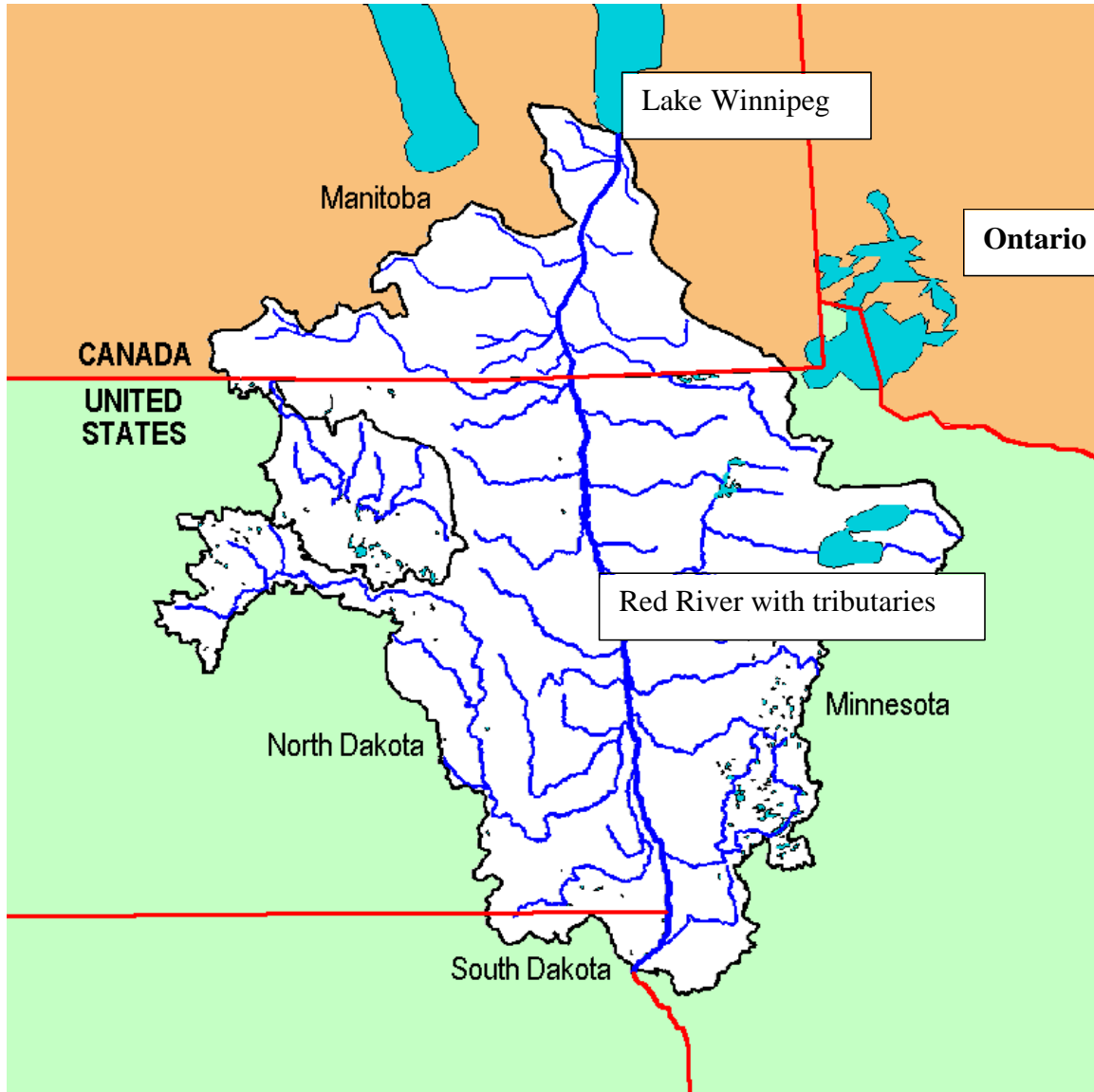


Figure 2: Red River Basin (<http://www.rrbdin.org/about.html>; accessed 10 November 2003). Amended by author.

Flooding in the Red River Basin should come as no surprise to anyone who has an interest in the region. A Google search of “Red River Hydrology” produced 16,700 sites. One of the better sites, (<http://www.rrbdin.org/PreviousFloodEvents.htm> accessed 10 November 2003), provides historic, hydrologic and forecast data for the Red River basin and is supported by the

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This site indicates that since record keeping on stream flow data commenced in the early 1800s, flooding has occurred quite regularly since 1815 with the most damaging floods occurring in 1950, 1966, 1979 and 1997. It is safe to conclude that with regard to future flooding in the Red River Basin it is simply a question of when not if. In 1996, all of the classic flood indicators were in place to indicate a Red River Basin flood in the spring of 1997. Heavy precipitation in the autumn of 1996 had left the region saturated. This was followed by very heavy snowfall throughout the winter of 96/97. Flood watchers were aware that these factors, if combined with a rapid spring melt, would produce significant flooding throughout the region. As State and Provincial authorities braced themselves, that rapid melt occurred during the early spring of 1997. The rapid melt and subsequent flooding commenced in the U.S. Midwest and over a period of two weeks proceeded north into Canada. The record level flood crest that proceeded from South to North did not pause as it passed from the U.S. into Canada.

We have specifically chosen this disaster as a case study because it: falls within USNORTHCOM's area of responsibility (AOR), it straddles the Canada/U.S. border, both Canadian and U.S. forces responded to it and because it will happen again. As we examine the post operational reports of Canadian and U.S. forces that responded to the 1997 natural disaster in the Red River Basin we make the assumption that they ought reasonably to have known that they would be called upon to do so and that they should have made some preparations. The 1994 CALL report on flood disaster operations describes a flood as a "disaster in slow motion."²⁰ For the purpose of comparison, we will examine the Canadian Force's and the Minnesota National Guard's (MNG) responses to the 1997 Red River flood.

²⁰U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, *1993 Midwest Flood Disaster Assistance Operation* (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Center For Army Lessons Learned, October 1994), i.

Land Forces Western Area

Land Forces Western Area's (LFWA) AOR covers the Canadian landmass from the Ontario/Manitoba border in the East, to the Pacific Ocean in the West. LFWA's subordinate formations are located as follows: 1CMBG and 1 Area Support Group – Edmonton, Alberta; 38 Canadian Brigade Group (CBG) - Winnipeg, Manitoba; 39 CBG - Calgary, Alberta and 41 CBG – Vancouver, British Columbia. In order to exercise its domestic operations responsibilities, LFWA has placed domestic operations detachments (Major and a Captain) in each Provincial Capital. The three CBGs were relieved of their domestic operations liaison responsibilities in 1997 and given the limited mandate of recruiting, training and retaining Reserve Force soldiers.²¹ At the time of the Red River Flood, the formation directly in the flood's path, 38 CBG in Winnipeg, had just been relieved of domestic operations responsibilities while the newly created LFWA Manitoba Domestic Operations Detachment was just being stood up to assume liaison responsibilities with the Province of Manitoba, on behalf of Commander LFWA.

In March of 1997, it was becoming apparent to LFWA that the potential for flooding in Southern Manitoba was far greater than in recent years. Commander LFWA and his staff initiated dialogue with National Defence Headquarters and with Air Command Headquarters on possible contingency operations in the event of Manitoba requesting CF support in the event of a flood. The direction from NDHQ was that, "Commander Land forces Western Area was appointed the Joint Force Commander, with responsibility for Canadian Forces support to the Province of Manitoba throughout the emergency."²²

²¹The LFWA POR is actually a collection of reports under a covering letter by Major-General Jeffries. Major General Jeffries was Commander LFWA and the Joint Force Commander for Op NOAH, (subsequently renamed Op ASSISTANCE). Included in this POR are, comments from the Commanders of the Maritime Component, Air Component and JTF 17 Wing, the lessons learned summary as well as the comments of the JF staff principles and special advisors. The LFWA POR was provided to us from the archives of the Army Lessons Learned Centre in Kingston Ontario. Commander Land Forces Western Area, "Operation ASSISTANCE Post Operation Report" (LFWA File no. 3350-105-26 (Op ASSISTANCE), 16 July 1997), D-6/18.

²² Ibid., D-3/18.

LFWA Headquarters is not deployable. On 4 March 1997 Commander LFWA appointed Commander 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group (1 CMBG) as the Joint Task Force (JTF) Commander with the direction that HQ 1 CMBG be prepared to deploy and effect command and control of the service components activated to respond to the crisis. On 14 April 1997 LFWA issued the flood contingency plan for what was initially designated as Op NOAH and on 15/16 April advance elements of 1CMBG deployed to Winnipeg. On 18 April, the Province of Manitoba requested CF assistance for the period of 21-24 April 1997 “in responding to communities affected by flooding.”²³

At this point, the planned command structure had Commander LFWA as the Chief of Defence Staff appointed Joint Force Commander, appointing Commander 1 CMBG as the JTF Commander. The JTF Commander had a Maritime Command Component (MCC) an Air Command Component (ACC) and no separate Land Forces Command Component (LCC) HQ. Land component units (Army) reported directly to the JTF Commander along with the ACC and MCC. Initially these army units included a Service Battalion(-), two Infantry Battalions, an Armoured Regiment, and Engineer Regiment, an Artillery Battery(-), a Military Police Platoon, two volunteer Reserve Companies from 38 CBG, and the Vanguard Companies from Land Forces Central Area (LFCA-Ontario) and Land Force Quebec Area (LFQA-Quebec). In order to cope with his span of control problems the JTF Commander grouped the company-sized elements, less 1 MP Platoon, with the battalion sized units. This left him with seven LCC (Army) units, a MCC and an ACC reporting to him and working through his brigade staff. Due to the span of control issues that arose from nine separate commanders reporting to him, this was clearly an unwieldy C2 structure for the JTF Commander.

In light of Commander 38 CBG’s extensive familiarity with the local situation, he was appointed as Chief of Staff of 1CMBG and double hatted as the Land Component Commander.

²³Ibid., Annex C.

This relieved some of the span of control problems for Brigadier-General Meating (JTF Commander and Commander 1 CMBG) but it did not relieve any pressure from his staff that remained double hatted as the HQ for both the JTF and 1CMBG. 1CMBG observed that, “The standard CMBG HQ organization at 23 staff members was found to be too small and limited to effectively deal with operations as a JTFHQ or even as a bde HQ working 24/7 on large scale domestic operations.”²⁴ HQ 1 CMBG was augmented by volunteers from 38 CBG but it remained double hatted as the 1 CMBG and JTF HQs until it was eventually relieved by 1 Canadian Division HQ.

On 19 April 1997 the Province of Manitoba, recognizing that its initial limited request for CF support was inadequate requested an open-ended commitment from the CF to commence on 21 April. On 24 April 1997 Op NOAH was renamed Op ASSISTANCE by the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff. On 26 April, 1st Canadian Division Headquarters (1 Cdn Div HQ) and 2 CMBG from Ontario were tasked to assist with the operation and 1 Cdn Div HQ replaced HQ 1 CMBG as the JTF HQ. The Joint Force Commander retained responsibility for the expanded force and deployed from his Area HQ in Edmonton to the JTF HQ in Winnipeg where he assumed direct command of the JTF. He still chose not to designate a separate Land Component HQ, however, he did reduce his span of control problems by splitting his AO into AOR North and AOR South with 2 CMBG becoming Task Force North and 1 CMBG becoming Task Force South. This revised C2 structure remained in place until 16 May 1997 when the JFHQ handed responsibility for draw down activities to another JTFHQ (based on 17 Wing Winnipeg with attached engineer units).

In the Op ASSISTANCE POR the JF, ACC and MCC Commanders unanimously conclude that the operation, despite some initial problems, was an unqualified success that reflected great credit upon the CF. They further agree upon a number of recommendations for capturing the valuable lessons learned and institutionalizing them for the future. We will

²⁴ Ibid., E1-2/4.

examine some of these problems and the subsequent recommendations using the criteria that we have selected.

Interoperability: The first problem faced by the CF service components, tasked to participate in this operation, was that they had not trained together for operations, domestic or otherwise. This was further exacerbated by the fact that Joint Doctrine is not taught to Canadian officers until they attend the Command Staff College as majors. Upon graduation they are granted the Passed Staff College (PSC) qualification. The LFWA POR noted, “only three of 35 majors/lieutenant-commanders working in the JFHQ were PSC qualified.”²⁵ It was also noted that the Joint Doctrine, extant in 1997, was insufficiently detailed to be of practical use at the operational level. Combined with this void in doctrine was the absence of a “comprehensive set of Joint SOPs.”²⁶ This leaves us with an ad-hoc Joint Force, pulled together on very short notice, lacking sufficient doctrine and SOPs with very few qualified staff officers facing an imminent crisis. They were very fortunate that, due to the ‘disaster in slow motion’ nature of the impending crisis, they had at least some warning time to cobble together an effective response.

Not surprisingly, the JF had some initial interoperability problems. They found that the communications equipment employed by the respective services proved incompatible.²⁷ There was no communication plan. When the service components arrived in Winnipeg and reported in to the 1CMBG/JTF HQ they found a staff that was so swamped that they were not even provided with an operations briefing. Service Component Commanders had to go from staff branch to staff branch in the JTF HQ to gain an appreciation of the situation. The service components also had to educate the “Army” component on the most effective means of employing their unique service

²⁵ Commander LFWA, Op ASSISTANCE POR, 6/7.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 5/7.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Annex A 3/2.

capabilities. These problems were not fully resolved with the transition from 1CMBG to 1 Cdn Div as the JTF HQ. The MCC Commander noted that:

The Div HQ is set up along the Army internal staff system and pays little attention to the needs of the “plugged in” components...The role of a Maritime Component Commander (MCC) was not well appreciated; we were not meant to be just a boat dispatcher but to carry out OPCOMD of the maritime assets... they [JTF HQ] failed to appreciate that both the ACC and MCC were “line officers”, (sic) not staff.²⁸

The ACC commander remarked upon the problems that he had with the piecemeal commitment of air assets to Op NOAH and subsequently to Op ASSISTANCE. He went on to say; “there had been no advanced planning with either the JF or the JTF/AC, there were initial coordination problems encountered switching the tasking process from OP NOAH to OP ASSISTANCE.”²⁹

Clearly, this ad-hoc JTF had some initial interoperability problems. Acknowledged by all components were the herculean efforts of all to overcome these shortcomings, on the fly as it were, to cobble together an interoperable Joint Task Force. One of the keys to molding the JTF into a functional organization was the distribution of Liaison Officers (LOs) between the JF service components. Sadly, the extensive need for LOs was not recognized until the respective component commanders were already on the ground in Winnipeg. The result was that LOs were taken from hide by the service components and dispatched to organizations with which they were unfamiliar. Lacking any prior training and in the midst of a rapidly developing crisis these LOs were required to facilitate the interoperability of the JTF. The absence either of training as a JTF or on domestic operations was a significant barrier to the Op ASSISTANCE JTF. The MCC Commander, Captain (N) Forcier remarked, “this crisis deployment inland required a lot of planning and logistics on the fly...jointness proved a real challenge for my staff.”³⁰ He went on to say: “we were continuously frustrated with the imposition of Div/Army procedures on the

²⁸ Ibid., Annex A 4/10-5/10.

²⁹ Ibid., Annex E.

³⁰ Ibid., 4/10.

other components.”³¹ It leaves us speculating about how effective the Op ASSISTANCE Joint Task Force would have been had they faced a more immediate disaster such as an earthquake.

Unity of Effort: As defined in Chapter One, unity of effort is achieved through the synergy created by political, civil and military elements deployed in a theatre or area of operations. It should be clear that the Air, Land and Maritime Components faced some very real challenges in coordinating their efforts in the midst of a developing crisis. Having never exercised together in the Joint context for a domestic operation, short on time and under extreme pressure it was a credit to all that they made it work. In the words of the JFC Major-General Jeffries: “if the spirit of cooperation between the three environments so evident throughout Op ASSISTANCE persists, the future of joint operations bodes very well.”³² Amongst the service components, there was a clear and unifying mission that all went to extreme lengths to accomplish. The question that begs answering at this point is: was all this initial confusion and friction simply a product of the imminent crisis or were there organizational and procedural issues that hindered the unity of effort of the Canadian Forces that responded to the Red River Flood? In fact, two key issues detracted from the unity of effort at the operational level.

The first issue is related to the lack of synergy, between the JF, NDHQ and the Premiere of Manitoba, on the issue of military assistance to law enforcement agencies (LEA). Not only was this a joint operation but it also required interagency planning and execution. Police services in the Province of Manitoba required CF support during the crisis and the CF struggled to incorporate this aspect of planning into what was an already complex operation for which they were poorly prepared.

It is evident that not all members of the JF nor the Province of Manitoba had a clear understanding of the CF use of force requirements specified by the National Defence Act (NDA).

³¹ Ibid., 5/10.

³² Ibid., 6.

During this CF operation, their immediate superiors tasked members in support of LEA but they were never provided with Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) approved rules of engagement (ROE). Col Grant, Commanding Officer of the 1 CMBG Armoured Regiment that deployed on this operation, subsequently wrote a paper, while a student on the Advance Military Studies Course, and alleged that soldiers tasked in support of LEA for this operation were neither “provided with adequate rules of engagement or an explanation of their duties and responsibilities as peace officers.”³³ He states, “in Winnipeg, although the military was seen as the saviour of the day, soldiers were placed in potentially dangerous positions without all of the legal protection to which they were entitled.”³⁴ The Premier of Manitoba wanted the CF to assist the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and City of Winnipeg Police Officers with tasks such as traffic control, evacuation notifications and transportation assistance. Unfortunately, he believed that his request for open-ended assistance on 19 April 1997 covered these tasks.³⁵ Apparently he was not informed that The National Defence Act and the 23 May, 1996 Order in Council specify that: any request to use the CF to assist LEA requires the approval of the Solicitor General of Canada. Due to this confusion and despite the fact that soldiers were already engaged in these tasks the Premier’s proper request for assistance to LEA was not submitted until 2 May, 1997.³⁶ During this period of confusion, and when he realized the error, the JFC accepted risk and “advised” the

³³ LCol T.J Grant was the Commanding Officer of the Lord Strathcona’s Horse (Royal Canadian Battlegroup) in April of 1997. When the flood struck Southern Manitoba, LCol Grant’s Battlegroup was conducting its operation readiness training, in Wainwright Alberta, for its impending deployment to Bosnia for SFOR Roto 1. One of the key components of this pre-deployment training was Rules of Engagement (ROE). The UN Chapter 7 ROE that the Battlegroup was almost fully trained on are significantly different than the ROE that Canadian soldiers would utilize for domestic operations. Colonel T.J. Grant, “Training on Rules of Engagement in Domestic Operations” (Canadian Forces College, Advanced Military Studies Course, 1998), (on-line); available from <http://wps.Canadian Forcesc.dnd.ca/papers/amsc1/014.html> ; accessed 18 September 2003, 7.

³⁴ Ibid., 9.

³⁵ Commander LFWA, Op ASSISTANCE POR, D-5/18 to D-14/18.

³⁶ Ibid., Annex C.

CDS that his soldiers were already assisting LEA. In the absence of either an approved ROE, or the authority to issue one himself, he had issued “guidance” on the use of force to CF members participating in Op ASSISTANCE. Major-General Jeffries advised NDHQ of the actions that he had taken. NDHQ and the CDS remained mute on this subject and never issued Rules of Engagement for Op ASSISTANCE.³⁷ Admittedly, there was the common operational objective of providing support to the civil authorities but NDHQ failed to provide the requisite guidance and authority on assistance to LEA.

The second detractor from the unity of effort of the JF was procedural. A Province may request CF support at any time that they feel they have a problem that is beyond their means to resolve. In order to limit nugatory requests for CF support, two things are made abundantly clear to the Province: the CF is a the “resource of last recourse” and the Province may be expected to pay for the CF support that they have requested.³⁸ These two conditions can, and in the case of the Red River Flood did, cause the Province of Manitoba to wait until the last possible moment before requesting CF assistance. Even when the Province of Manitoba did request support, it was not clear exactly what type of support the Province actually required.³⁹

This confusion or hesitancy is clear from the Province’s 18 April 1997 request for CF support for, “assistance in responding to communities affected by flooding...commencing on 21 April, 1997 and ending on 24 April, 1997.”⁴⁰ The next day the Province again wrote to the Deputy Minister of National Defense and requested an open-ended commitment of Canadian Forces support from “as early as April 21, 1997 to a date to be determined according to the receding of the flood waters.”⁴¹ What we find particularly interesting about this initial confusion

³⁷ Grant, “Training on Rules of Engagement in Domestic Operations,” 6.

³⁸ NDHQ, “Instruction DCDS 2/98 Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Operations,” 5 and 13.

³⁹ Commander LFWA, Op ASSISTANCE POR, D-2/18.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Annex D.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Annex C.

is that just south of the border the Governor of Minnesota had activated his Minnesota National Guard to provide assistance to the civil authorities on 3 April 1997.⁴² The LFWA POR notes that it was not until 18 April 1997 that it became apparent that the Province of Manitoba would require CF assistance and that the CF were still not certain “what type or how much support would be requested.”⁴³ Had any effort been made to establish contact or liaison with the U.S. forces operating south of the border, the CF would have gained an earlier appreciation of what type of support they would likely be rendering to the Province of Manitoba. Clearly there was an initial absence of synergy between the Provincial authorities and the CF right up until the crisis actually struck in late April 1997. Given that flooding in this region is historic and that LFWA had a clear mandate to be prepared to assist this lack of synergy is regrettable.

Synchronization: All elements of the JTF strove to synchronize their efforts in order to focus their effort at the time and place where it would be most effective. Despite this effort, the military formation closest to the burgeoning disaster was not committed to the operation. Referring back to Figure 1, it is evident that most of the Regular Force army units in LFWA are concentrated in Edmonton, Alberta, leaving the remaining provinces in LFWA’s AOR with very few Regular Force army units. It is also evident that LFWA has three subordinate CBGs located headquartered in Vancouver British Columbia, Calgary Alberta and Winnipeg Manitoba. This geographic dispersion of the Reserve Forces across LFWA could be leveraged for disaster response but it is not. The Red River Flood struck Southern Manitoba and proceeded north to threaten the City of Winnipeg. 38 CBG, headquartered in Winnipeg, with units across Manitoba and Saskatchewan, had no role other than augmentation and support of the Regular Force units

⁴²The MNG Operational Review is not available online from the Center for Army Lessons Learned but is stored electronically and can be requested from CALL at Fort Leavenworth. U.S. Department of Defense, “Minnesota National Guard Flood Fight ’97 Operational Review” comp. Major General Eugene R. Andreotti-The Adjutant General. n.p., n.d., 4.

⁴³ Commander LFWA, Op ASSISTANCE POR, D-2/18.

dispatched to assist the Province. This quixotic restraint on the commitment of Reserve Forces can also be traced back to the 1994 White Paper on Defence. While recognizing the “vital link” that the Reserve Forces provide between the CF and local communities, the Government stated that, “Their primary role will be the augmentation, sustainment and support of deployed forces.”⁴⁴ This concept may work well for overseas deployments but it makes little sense in the context of domestic operations when the Reserve Forces are much more proximate to the disaster than their Regular Force counterparts.

HQ 1 CMBG and the Edmonton based units had to travel over 1300 kilometers to reach Winnipeg. 1 Cdn Div HQ and 2CMBG had to travel over 2400 kilometers to reach Winnipeg and the Vanguard Company from Valcartier had to travel almost 3000 kilometers to reach Winnipeg. We do not suggest that these units were not required to conduct disaster relief and humanitarian assistance operations in Manitoba but there was already a Brigade, albeit a poorly equipped and resourced Brigade but eager to help nonetheless, that was in Manitoba but not mobilized. Synergy that was lost because 38 CBG, as a formation, was not mobilized and committed to the operation in support of the Province. It is clear from the LFWA POR that the JTF and JF were highly reliant upon the local knowledge and expertise of Col Tabbernor, Commander 38 Canadian Brigade Group and his soldiers. Despite giving much credit to the supporting effort of 38 CBG to 1 CMBG, there is no recommendation in the LFWA POR that calls for a reexamination of the ‘augmentation’ role assigned to CBGs for domestic operations. Given the vast geography of Canada, the temporal dimension of disasters, and the dispersion of CBGs in area’s where the Regular Forces are sparse, DND has relinquished a valuable response capability by underutilizing the Reserve Forces.

Minnesota National Guard

The U.S. Federal Response Plan (FRP), initially issued in 1992:

⁴⁴ MND, *1994 Defence White Paper*, 45.

outlines how the Federal Government implements the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended, to assist State and local governments when a major disaster or emergency overwhelms their ability to respond effectively to save lives; protect public health, safety, and property; and restore their communities.⁴⁵

The FRP provides the strategic framework that provides for the Federal response to disasters that overwhelm the resources of State governments. At either the request of a Governor, or on his own initiative the President can declare an emergency. With this declaration the Stafford Act, as expanded upon by the FRP, legislates coordination of the resources of 27 Federal Departments and Agencies as well as the American Red Cross, to assist the afflicted state. The President, with the declaration of an emergency, also names the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) who coordinates the requisite federal support to the state. The Department of Defense, upon the activation of the FCO generally appoints a Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO) and Defense Coordinating Element (DCE) to provide a single point of contact for the FCO to access federal military support. For Flood Fight '97 that is exactly what happened.

As the flood crest progressed from South to North through the Red River basin, the Governor of Minnesota had committed all of his State's assets, including the Minnesota National Guard (MNG), to save the lives, prevent the suffering and preserve the property of Minnesotans. At the request of the Governor of Minnesota, on 9 April 1997 the President declared an emergency for 21 counties in Minnesota.⁴⁶ That Presidential declaration initiated the formal responses proscribed by the Stafford Act and the Federal Response Plan to assist the State of Minnesota during the 1997 Red River Flood.

⁴⁵Federal Emergency Management Agency, *The Federal Response Plan-Interim January 2003* (online); available from <http://www.fema.gov/pdf/rrr/frp/frp2003.pdf>; accessed 17 Jan 2003, Foreword.

⁴⁶Colonel John Moilenan was the Defense Coordinating Officer, who deployed, with his Defense Coordinating Element, Readiness Group Snelling AAR from his own personal papers. Department of Defense, "Defense Coordinating Officer and Defense Coordinating Element After Action Report," File number (AFK-A-RG-SN (340a)), (United States Army Readiness Group Snelling: Saint Paul, Minnesota, 15 May 1997), 3-1.

In April of 1997, Colonel John Moilanen was the commander of Readiness Group Snelling and he was appointed as the Department of Defense DCO for the declared emergency in Minnesota. As the DCO he worked very closely with the FCO and gained valuable insight into not only the Federal aspects of the disaster response during the Red River Flood but also into the State and local response in Minnesota. He remains particularly impressed with the Title 32 military support provided to the Governor of Minnesota by the MNG. In fact, despite the widespread nature of the 97 flood and the significant damage that it caused, requests for Federal military support were limited to a two Requests for Assistance (RFA). The first RFA was for the transport of cots and blankets and the second RFA was for air transport of the FCO to the site of the Presidential visit to the disaster site.⁴⁷ Colonel Moilanen attributes the success of the MNG, in dealing with the disaster to three things: the MNG had trained specifically for the mission of disaster assistance; they were locals who had good working relationships with the Minnesota emergency response community; and, they were aware of the flood potential of the Red River valley and prepared for that eventuality.⁴⁸ It is in the context of the FRP that we will examine the response to the 1997 Red River Flood using our selected criteria.

Interoperability: The DCO and his DCE, in concert with FEMA Region V conducted a Military Support to Civil Authority (MSCA) Exercise in March of 1997. Not coincidentally, this was a flood response exercise. The MNG, at the direction of the State Adjutant General (AG) participated in the exercise. The AG in OPLAN 500-1 (State Active Duty Plan) in fact directs MNG participation in emergency operations exercises.⁴⁹ This OPLAN is quite comprehensive and it provides the specifics on the roles and responsibilities of every MNG unit in the event of a State emergency or crisis that would result in the Guard being activated by the Governor. The

⁴⁷ Ibid, 3-1 – 3-2.

⁴⁸ Colonel (Retired) John Moilanen, interview by author, telephone interview, Leavenworth Kansas, 11 January 2004.

⁴⁹ Minnesota National Guard, “Flood Fight ’97 Operational Review,” II-5 – II-24.

clear direction and policy provided by the FRP and the MNG State Active Duty Plan, coupled with the regular training conducted at the local, state and federal levels assured the interoperability of all responders to the 1997 Red River Flood. That being said there were two interoperability problems that the State of Minnesota had not anticipated. The first was that the State emergency HF radio network and communication plan would become overwhelmed by the number of extraneous communication devices that cropped up during the actual disaster: primarily cell phones and civilian radios.⁵⁰ The second interoperability problem was the control of airspace due to the number of civilian aircraft that brought observers to the fire and flood in East Grand Forks.⁵¹ In both of these instances, and in fact for all of the MNG AAR observations, the clear purpose of the AAR was to identify issues that could be prepared for through planning and exercise prior to the next emergency.⁵²

Unity of Effort: The MNG AAR corroborates Colonel Moilanen's observation that one of the keys to the success of the MNG was the fact that they were comprised of locals who had a personal stake in responding to the emergency. It was no accident that the MNG was successful in calling to active duty over 3000 Guardsman, effecting the evacuation of over 6000 citizens and conducting numerous security and support tasks in support of local law enforcement and other state agencies.⁵³ Once again, they had prepared by developing good working relationships with the local government officials, they had participated in local disaster response exercises and they were directed to "evaluate historic and/or potential disaster hazards in their local area."⁵⁴ The MNG and Readiness Group Snelling had well developed plans to deal with anticipated flooding in the region. These plans had been exercised and the key participants, through these exercises,

⁵⁰ Ibid., III-28.

⁵¹ Ibid., III-19.

⁵² Ibid., 4.

⁵³ Ibid., 4, 7, and I-1 – I-64.

had developed sound working relationships both vertically and horizontally with their military and civilian emergency response counterparts. It was this anticipation and preparation that clearly unified the efforts of the participants during 'Flood Fight '97.'

Synchronization: The key to the successful synchronization of the MNG's actions with the actions of the local, state and federal responders to the 1997 flood in Minnesota is directly attributable to the clearly enunciated plans for the graduated levels of response. Not only were these plans clearly enunciated but the key participants at each level, recognizing that flooding was a not uncommon occurrence in Minnesota, had trained and prepared for just such an eventuality. At the local level, first responders understood their role in the event of an emergency. When the Governor of Minnesota activated the MNG he brought a highly capable force into the disaster relief and humanitarian assistance operations in Minnesota. Through thorough planning and exercises the actions of the MNG and Readiness Group Snelling were already synchronized with state and federal agencies before the emergency was even declared. When the Governor declared that numerous counties in Minnesota were disaster areas and the President subsequently declared a state of emergency, the Federal Response Plan kicked in and a FCO became the sole point of contact for the coordination and provision of federal support to the State of Minnesota.

The DCO, while maintaining a close relationship with the MNG only took Requests for Assistance (RFA) from the FCO. FEMA and Readiness Group Snelling, had exercised the federal response to an emergency in Minnesota, with the Minnesota Emergency Measures Organizations (EMO) and the MNG, well before the emergency actually occurred. When the emergency did occur in the spring of 1997 responders at the local, state and federal level were well prepared through the activation of published plans, that had been exercised and the key participants were thoroughly familiar with their responsibilities and the responsibilities of the other responders.

⁵⁴ Ibid., II-6.

Case Study Summary

In terms of organization, Canada has no equivalent to the U.S. National Guard. The Premiere of a Province does not have the same authority to mobilize regional military forces as does the Governor of a State with a State National Guard. Our case study revealed that the commitment of the MNG to the flood fight greatly reduced the support requirement for federal forces. While Canada has regionally dispersed Reserve Forces, there was no mechanism to commit those forces, in support of the province, before committing federal forces. By comparison the federal forces in the U.S. case study received very few, focused RFAs while the CF was heavily committed to an ill-defined open-ended commitment to the Province of Manitoba. Clearly, the commitment of the MNG greatly reduced the burden on U.S. Federal Forces.

LFWA has a vast regional focus and maintains its situational awareness through its Domestic Operations Detachments. 38 Canadian Brigade Group, comprised of soldiers who live in Manitoba, has no assigned regional responsibility for disaster response. The Minnesota National Guard, on the other hand, was focused on disaster relief operations within the State of Minnesota. Given the more narrowly focused regional responsibilities of the MNG, they appeared to achieve a higher level of interoperability, unity of effort and synchronization with the Minnesota civil authorities that the Canadian JTF was able to achieve with the civil authorities of Manitoba. The MNG was able to leverage not just local knowledge of the terrain and conditions but more importantly, it was able to capitalize on its established relationships with the key civilian players in the Minnesota disaster relief community. It would be an oversimplification to suggest that simply living in the affected communities provided the impetus for the MNG to respond so effectively to the Red River Flood. Clearly, the Canadian Forces that responded to the crisis in Manitoba executed their assigned missions and tasks with determination but the one

thing that was lacking on the Canadian side of the border was the level of preparedness achieved south of the border.

The State Active Duty Plan directs the responses of the MNG, in support of the civil authorities, in response to a disaster or crisis. The plan was exercised at the operational level with the civil authorities, FEMA and Readiness Group Snelling before the crisis. The CF had not specifically planned for disaster relief operations in the Red River Valley. The Land, Air and Maritime components of the Canadian JTF had neither exercised nor operated together prior to mobilization for Op NOAH/ASSISTANCE. It was for this reason that we assess, that although the CF eventually achieved some level of interoperability, unity of effort and synchronization, the Minnesota National Guard and Readiness Group Snelling commenced operations in 97, having already achieved them.

Our study has revealed a striking contrast between U.S. and Canadian military assistance to law enforcement agencies during the Red River Flood in 1997. In the Canadian instance, although the regulations governing CF assistance to law enforcement agencies were clearly enunciated in existing legislation and doctrine, they were misunderstood and misapplied by the Province of Manitoba and the CF respectively. Colonel Grant's paper makes a compelling argument for the Canadian Forces to resolve these interagency disconnects to ensure that Canadian Forces personnel operate within and with the full protection of the law. Interestingly no similar problems were identified on the after action reviews by Readiness Group Snelling or the MNG. Once again, we must conclude that the anticipatory preparations on the U.S. side of the border had provided the key interagency participants with a working knowledge of the legislation governing military assistance to law enforcement agencies. Title 32 of the U.S. Code does not directly permit National Guardsmen to assist law enforcement agencies. More precisely, it does not prohibit their assistance to law enforcement agencies. Title 32 does permit the Governor of a state to activate his state National Guard to assist civil authorities. Federal troops, on the other hand are subject to the limitations imposed by Title 10 of the U.S. Code. Title 10 states:

Sec. 375. - Restriction on direct participation by military personnel

The Secretary of Defense shall prescribe such regulations as may be necessary to ensure that any activity (including the provision of any equipment or facility or the assignment or detail of any personnel) under this chapter does not include or permit direct participation by a member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine Corps in a search, seizure, arrest, or other similar activity unless participation in such activity by such member is otherwise authorized by law.⁵⁵

If Canada and the U.S. were to embark upon a bi-national military disaster response operation it is evident that the issue of assistance to law enforcement agencies would have to be clearly spelled out for military forces on both sides of the border. As our study has shown, clear policy governing military missions, tasks and responsibilities is only the first step in achieving interoperability, unity of effort and synchronization. It is of equal, if not greater, importance that these potential missions, tasks and responsibilities be planned and exercised before they are executed in operations.

⁵⁵ U.S. Code Title 10, (online); available from <http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/10/375.html> ; internet; accessed 11 December 2003.

CHAPTER THREE

Operational Analysis of Canadian Forces Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Operations

Harkening back to our definition of readiness in Chapter One, we now ask: how ready or prepared are the Canadian Forces to support the civil authorities in saving lives, preventing suffering and preserving property in the event of a natural disaster? In order to pursue this question we will examine a theory that compels a government to protect its nation. We will look for historic clues that indicate the Canadian Government's subscription to this theory. We will examine current Canadian doctrine and direction to determine if they support, at the operational level, viable effort to accomplish the assigned defense tasks of 'humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.'

The theory piece of this analysis is relatively straightforward. While we may believe that public confidence in a government is essential for the maintenance of order and discipline, few have expressed a theory that describes this as succinctly as Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch. In their book *Military Misfortunes*, they state: "Military organizations overall, and even particular installations, embody national pride and self-esteem. When they fail, and in particular when they fail catastrophically, confidence in government itself is shaken, for the first duty of government is national defense."⁵⁶ Granted, Cohen and Gooch were talking primarily about catastrophic failure in combat operations but their theory is also relevant should the military fail catastrophically in domestic operations. It is logical to conclude that, at the national strategic level, it is in a nation's interest to foster and maintain a military force capable of dealing with international as well as domestic emergencies that have a direct bearing upon that nation's citizenry. For the purpose of our examination, we will limit our examination of this theory to domestic emergencies and in

⁵⁶ Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch, *Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War* (New York: The Free Press, 1990), 31-32.

particular natural disasters. The Canadian public has an expectation that the CF will respond to natural disasters. Hurricane JUAN struck the Halifax/Dartmouth area of Nova Scotia on 29 September 2003 causing massive power outages and large-scale property damage. While provincial authorities bear primary responsibility for responding to natural disasters, commentary from the Halifax Herald was quite revealing:

Mr. McCallum moved swiftly to provide members of the Department of National Defence, of which he is also the minister, to assist in the cleanup efforts. And when we needed more of them, he provided them. This is a role one expects to be filled by our military, with its proud tradition of providing help when disaster strikes.⁵⁷

Should the CF demonstrate a lack of readiness to provide domestic disaster relief and humanitarian assistance then the theory holds that the citizenry of Canada would find its national pride and self-esteem shaken. There is some evidence that suggests that the Government of Canada subscribes to this theory.

In the 1994 Defence White Paper, we find the most compelling evidence indicating the Federal Government's belief that public confidence is linked to military readiness. In his signed introduction to the White Paper, Defence Minister Collenette states: "the unifying role of the Department and the Forces can only help build a stronger, more dynamic and prosperous country. In the final analysis, it may be said that a nation not worth defending is a nation not worth preserving."⁵⁸ Canada however is not an island and the White Paper also acknowledges the "common political, economic, social and cultural values Canada and the U.S. share," thus making "the two countries partners in the defence of North America."⁵⁹ Not coincidentally, the U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said pretty much the same thing in his congressional testimony on May 7, 2002: "we have a close and, indeed intimate relationship with our friends to

⁵⁷ Halifax Herald Limited, *No Time for Platitudes*, 3 October 2003 (online) available from <http://www.herald.ns.ca/stories/2003/10/03/fEditorial104.raw.html>; internet; accessed 4 October 2003.

⁵⁸ Minister of National Defence. *1994 Defence White Paper*, 2.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

the north...the United States and Canada are connected very closely to our mutual benefit.”⁶⁰

Given the mutually beneficial defense relationship between Canada and the U.S., the question of the CF’s readiness to meet its disaster relief and humanitarian assistance obligations bears examination. The case study of the 1997 Red River Flood revealed that initially the CF had some interoperability, unity of effort and synchronization problems. We will now turn Canadian strategic direction to the Canadian Forces and to extant Canadian Forces operational doctrine to determine if the CF is any more ready to perform its disaster relief and humanitarian assistance tasks than it was in 1997.

The 1994 White Paper on Defence was the last comprehensive guidance that the government of Canada provided to the Department of National Defence. Under Chapter 4 of the White Paper, titled “Protection of Canada,” the Federal Government states: “Specifically, the Canadian Forces will: ...be prepared to contribute to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief within 24 hours, and sustain this effort for as long as necessary;...”⁶¹ We also find the direction that explains the secondary role for Canadian Reserve Forces in disaster relief and humanitarian assistance tasks. Despite the fact that natural disasters are regional, and that the Reserve Forces are distributed regionally, the White Paper relegates the contribution to the Reserve Forces to augmentation and sustainment of the Regular Forces.⁶² This means that the Regular Force component of the Canadian Forces has the lead role in domestic disaster relief and humanitarian assistance tasks and the Reserve Force component has the secondary roles of augmentation and sustainment. The Government of Canada also described the desired capabilities of its Canadian Forces.

⁶⁰ Donald H. Rumsfeld, *Transcript of Testimony by Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld on Homeland Security before Senate Appropriations Committee* (Washington D.C. May 7, 2002), 28.

⁶¹ Minister of National Defence, *1994 Defence White Paper*, 15-19.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 44.

The White Paper directs the Canadian Forces to maintain, “multi-purpose, combat capable armed forces able to meet the challenges to Canada’s security both at home and abroad.”⁶³

The government, although it dedicated an entire chapter in the 1994 White Paper to “Combat Capable Forces,” left the definition of what these capabilities were rather vague. The 1994 White Paper does say that, “Canada cannot dispense with the maritime, land, and air combat capabilities of modern armed forces,” but it does not clearly identify what these capabilities are.⁶⁴ The

Government did specify that:

a country of Canada’s size and means cannot, and should not, attempt to cover the entire military spectrum,” and then went on to identify those capabilities that it did not see as necessary, specifically: “aircraft carriers, cruisers, medium-lift helicopters, medium-range patrol aircraft, as well as separate fleets of fighter aircraft for air defence and ground attack roles.”⁶⁵

Two things about the Governments direction are interesting. The first is that its most concise directions on the maintenance of capabilities are listed by exclusion and the second is that those excluded capabilities are identified as specific equipments rather than specific capabilities. The 1994 White Paper is the strategic guidance and direction that should drive Canadian Forces preparations to meet their assigned tasks. From the strategic direction provided by the 1994 White Paper we must now examine the Canadian Forces joint operational doctrine to determine how the Canadian Forces complied with the issued direction.

The Canadian Forces, like most modern military forces, has a vast body of doctrine. Canada has both joint and service doctrines that cover the operational and tactical levels of military operations. In addition to these bodies of doctrine, and much like a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction/Manual (CJCSI/M), the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (DCDS) occasionally issues direction to amplify or clarify operational issues. As it pertains to Canadian

⁶³Ibid., 2.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 12-14.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

domestic operations, we can trace the doctrinal links to the 1994 White Paper through joint doctrine, army doctrine and DCDS directions.

Canadian Forces Operations is the Canadian Forces joint doctrine that specifically addresses domestic operations. It states that: “The CF will maintain a general purpose combat capability with a view to employment in domestic operations only as a force of last resort.”⁶⁶ It clearly identifies the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) as responsible for the conduct of domestic operations that include the Canadian Force’s responses to fire, flood, drought, storm, earthquake, disease, accidents or pollution. This manual specifies that the CDS retains the right to designate a Land Force Area commander, commander Canadian Forces Northern Area (CFNA) or any other commander, as he sees fit, as the operational “on-site commander” for domestic operations.⁶⁷ Operational commanders are responsible for planning, synchronization and sustainment of assigned forces as well as the maintenance of contact and liaison with civil authorities to prepare for local contingencies.⁶⁸ The joint doctrine, with its references to “general purpose combat capability,” has clear links to the 1994 White Paper. It outlines the responsibilities of the operational commanders and describes the possible command and control contingencies for the conduct of domestic operations. So far so good, until we come to the statement: “Domestic operations will normally rely on the skills and equipment already possessed through general military training or trades training. Unique training will be conducted only on an exceptional basis, as directed and authorized by the CDS.”⁶⁹ We begin to see that some of the problems encountered during Op ASSISTANCE are likely to recur. One of the key operational level problems, with the CF response to the ’97 flood, was the lack of prior joint training. The service

⁶⁶Chief of Defence Staff, *Canadian Forces Operations*, (Office of Primary Interest: J7 DLLS 2, 18 December 2000), 13-7.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 13-4.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 13-4.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 13-11.

components assigned to the JTF had significant initial interoperability, synchronization and unity of effort problems, due largely to the fact that they had not jointly planned or exercised a joint CF response to what was clearly a predictable natural disaster. The other problem that we have with the ‘training by exception’ caveat, enunciated by this doctrine, is that it does not address the issue of use of force training identified by Colonel Grant. Referring specifically to use of force training, Colonel Grant found that this training is not conducted regularly, if at all, to prepare Canadian soldiers for domestic operations.⁷⁰ If a common component of natural disaster is civil unrest, and another is the unexpected nature of the event then should not use of force training, for the forces identified to respond to these events, be de rigueur rather than on an exceptional basis. It is evident that *Canadian Forces Operations* does not redress the problems encountered by the JTF during Op ASSISTANCE.

Canada’s Army is keystone (not capstone) army doctrine that addresses domestic operations. It states the Army’s mission as: “Within the overall responsibilities assigned the Canadian Forces, the army has been given the following mission: to generate and maintain combat capable, multi-purpose land forces to meet Canada’s defence policy objectives.”⁷¹ Once again, we see the combat capable, multi-purpose forces first called for in the 1994 White Paper. Once again, we find no precise definition of what those forces or specific capabilities are. The clear problem with this lack of definition, applied to such important terms, is that it leaves too many possible interpretations. What this manual does do is identify the domestic operations tasks assigned to the army:

Maintaining plans and resources to activate a joint headquarters for command and control of Canadian Forces operations within Canada; or alternatively, to provide personnel augmentation to any other Canadian Forces headquarters that may be activated for domestic operations;

⁷⁰ Grant, “Training on Rules of Engagement in Domestic Operations,” 13.

⁷¹ Chief of Defence Staff, *Canada’s Army: We Stand on Guard For Thee* (Office of Primary Interest: J7 DLLS 2, 1 April 1998), 63.

Maintaining Immediate Reaction Forces for domestic operations in aid of the civil power or assistance to civil authorities; and

Being prepared to contribute humanitarian assistance and conduct of disaster relief operations at home and abroad.⁷²

For amplification of these tasks we must refer to NDHQ Instruction DCDS 2/98: Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Operations.

The aim of the DCDS 2/98 instruction is “to promulgate Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) direction and guidance for the conduct of domestic operations by the CF.”⁷³ While it is an amplification of joint and army doctrine, it too can clearly be linked to the 1994 White Paper. It states: “General purpose combat training gives the CF a wide range of both specific and general capabilities that can be employed across the broad range of domestic operations.”⁷⁴ This instruction further refines the command and control relationships and responsibilities assigned to the operational commanders.

For command and control, the “DCDS controls all domestic operations on behalf of the CDS.”⁷⁵ For the Army, Land Force Area (LFA) commanders are designated as operational commanders and are warned that they could be designated a Joint Task Force commander for domestic operations. These LFA commanders have assigned geographic areas of responsibility (see figure 1) and DCDS 2/98 makes them responsible for liaison and planning with civil authorities. DCDS guidance on these planning and liaison functions warns that, “care must be taken not to engage in planning that implies a pre-commitment of specific resources, or to allow civil authorities to assume the ready or guaranteed availability of specific CF assets.”⁷⁶ While this appears to be prudent direction, what is absent is any direction to participate in any civil

⁷² Ibid., 64.

⁷³ NDHQ, “Instruction DCDS 2/98 Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Operations,” 2.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 17.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 3.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 7.

disaster response or humanitarian assistance exercises. The CF, much like the U.S. Army, is only funded for those activities that it is directed to undertake. Lacking any direction to participate in Provincial disaster assistance or humanitarian assistance exercises, the CF does not. Returning to Colonel Grant's paper he states unequivocally: "The Army conducts no training for domestic operations, even though it is a mandated task in the 1994 White Paper."⁷⁷ While this appears to be a very bold statement, the following direction from the DCDS gives it credence: "Domestic operations will normally rely on the skills and equipment already possessed through general military training or trades training."⁷⁸

The DCDS also gives direction on use of force training for domestic operations: "ECSs and other force generators are responsible for conducting use of force training for domestic operations as judged necessary and prudent to meet any anticipated need."⁷⁹ This sounds prudent and given the nature of natural disasters, coupled with the White Paper's specified task, the CF should be conducting use of force training for domestic operations on a regular basis.

Unfortunately, this does not appear to be the case. Colonel Grant concludes the Canadian Navy and JTF 2 (Canadian SOF) conduct training on domestic rules of engagement and use of force but that the army does not.⁸⁰ It is possible that this training void can be attributed to the DCDS. On the one hand he recognizes the temporal nature of natural disaster response: "The major impact of CF support in humanitarian assistance operation [sic] will occur in the first 24-36 hours after the disaster has taken place."⁸¹ On the other hand, he states: "The requirement to conduct or confirm

⁷⁷ Grant, "Training on Rules of Engagement in Domestic Operations," 13.

⁷⁸ NDHQ, "Instruction DCDS 2/98 Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Operations," 17.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁸⁰ Grant, "Training on Rules of Engagement in Domestic Operations," 13-15.

⁸¹ NDHQ, "Instruction DCDS 2/98 Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Operations," 6.

training in use of force may increase preparation time, and must be allowed for in planning.”⁸²

The CF cannot have it both ways. Either they are prepared to respond to no-notice natural disasters or they are not. There is little or no time to conduct training once the event has occurred. The absence of preparations leaves the responding forces to make it up while they are already engaged. This is what the Op ASSISTANCE JTF was required to do and, the way current Canadian doctrine and directions are written, this is what future military responders will be forced to do. The way the current doctrine and instructions are written, the CF must be ready to respond to no-notice natural disasters, having not prepared to do so and with no time to do so.

The problem here is that not only did the 1994 White Paper assign the tasks of disaster relief and humanitarian assistance it also told the CF how, in a financially strapped environment, the CF was to accomplish the tasks: ‘multi-purpose, combat capable forces.’ We have seen the ‘how,’ (multi-purpose, combat capable forces), reflected in joint doctrine, army doctrine and the DCDS 2/98 instruction. We have seen from our case study how these limitations on preparation for domestic operations affected the Op ASSISTANCE JTF’s efforts to provide a credible response to the 1997 Red River Flood.

DCDS 2/98 places distinct constraints (must do) and restraints (must not do) on the Army operational commanders tasked to prepare for domestic operations. The specific constraints include: be prepared to form a JTF; maintain an Immediate Reaction Unit (IRU) of 350 personnel on 24 hours notice to move with 85 of the 350 on 12 hours notice to move; and, conduct planning a liaison with civil authorities.⁸³ The restraints include: conduct training for domestic operations, except by exemption and as approved by the CDS; use Reserve Force units unless ‘authorized by the government and ordered by the CDS,’ (although individual Reservists may be employed on domestic operations if they volunteer); and, ‘pre-commit any CF resources to the

⁸² DCDS 2/98,18.

⁸³ Ibid., 3-E1/E3.

provincial/territorial authorities.’⁸⁴ We submit that domestic disaster relief and humanitarian assistance operations can be quite complex. By complex we mean that they will be joint, inter-agency and they will have to accommodate and support political interests. The CF’s response to the 97 Red River flood was a military response to a complex operation. At the tactical level, filling sand bags, assisting with evacuation notices and other tasks were relatively straightforward. At the operational level, Op ASSISTANCE was complex. The ad-hoc organization of a JTF that was responsible for supporting civil, while trying to synchronize the efforts of land, maritime and air forces, in an interagency environment, as the flood crest was rapidly proceeding North was complex.

The Op ASSISTANCE JTF managed to overcome the hindrances to its unity of effort, as well as its significant interoperability and synchronization problems, to provide credible support to the Province of Manitoba during the Red River Flood. It did not do this using solely its multi-purpose, combat capable forces. Soldiers did not deploy to Winnipeg with use of force training for domestic operations, they were given use of force guidance by the JTF commander after they were deployed, while already conducting assistance to law enforcement agencies, without an approved ROE. The JTF HQ did not bring the requisite command, control, communication, and information capabilities to the disaster; they had to develop them on the ground, in the face of an impending disaster. It was fortunate for the CF and the citizens of Manitoba that there was some warning and preparation time for the CF to respond to the Red River Flood. It was equally fortunate that despite its lack of preparations the JTF was manned with some exceptional leaders who, while under incredible pressure, were able to overcome the deficiencies in preparation. It leaves us wondering how the CF will fare in providing support to the civil and provincial authorities in the future when, due to the nature of the disaster, there is no warning or preparation time.

⁸⁴ DCDS 2/98, 3-18.

Our review of the relevant and extant joint doctrine, army doctrine, and DCDS direction, given the specified disaster relief and humanitarian assistance tasks, has revealed that the CF is no better prepared today, than it was in 1997, to conduct complex domestic operations. We cannot simply walk away from this conclusion without seeking to understand how the CF with its history of dedication and excellence could find itself in such a deplorable state. We reject outright any conjecture on CF incompetence but look instead to the CF transformation over the past several decades to find the reasons why the CF is so ill prepared to accomplish its specified tasks. Ultimately we seek to determine how the CF can leverage the creation of USNORTHCOM to improve its ability to conduct domestic operations.

The failing fortune of the Canadian Forces is not a current issue. It is well documented and has been enunciated by interested observers and by the Canadian Government itself. We contend that the declining fortune of the CF is directly attributable to financial cutbacks by successive Canadian Governments and concur with current analysts that the Canadian Forces are incapable of fulfilling their assigned defense mandate. We will not attempt to make the case that the CF is incapable of performing all of its specified tasks, although arguably this is so, but we will seek some understanding of how the CF finds itself so ill prepared to conduct complex humanitarian and disaster relief tasks at the operational level.

The Canadian Forces have been in a steady state of decline since the early 1960's. In his book *While Canada Slept*, Andrew Cohen charts, by year, the declining number of Canadian Forces personnel: 1962-126,430; 1970-98,000; 1983-80,000; 1990-78,000; and "the strength of the armed forces fell to 50,684 soldiers, sailors and aviators who could be deployed in battle in 2002."⁸⁵ The seeds of the decline over the last 15 years are also reflected in the 1994 White Paper on Defence. Citing the 'worsening financial condition of the country,' Canadian Defence Minister David Collenette outlined the Government of Canada's proposed reductions of CF

⁸⁵ Andrew Cohen, *While Canada Slept: How We Lost Our Place In The World* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd., 2003), 45-47.

personnel between 1994 and 1999.⁸⁶ These financially motivated force reduction targets drove the reduction of the Forces from 74,900 to 60,000 regular force personnel between 1994 and 1999. During the same period the force reductions targets for the primary reserve force was from 29,400 to 23,000.⁸⁷ The magnitude of these reductions led Cohen to claim, “Canada has become, for all intents and purposes defenseless.”⁸⁸ Cohen however is not a lone voice in the wilderness; other analysts preceded him.

In the forward to *Canada and Collective Security: Odd Man Out*, the former Canadian ambassador to NATO and the Federal Republic of Germany, John Halstead states that Canada, “has allowed its military capabilities to run down to the point at which they can no longer meet the commitments.”⁸⁹ The authors of this book, published in 1986, had already determined that the Canadian Forces were “underfunded [sic], understaffed and underequipped [sic].”⁹⁰ Sokolosky attempted to explain how the CF could have reached such a dilapidated state in a later work, where he stated: “cabinet has tended to provide the forces with amounts it has deemed both appropriate and affordable in a political sense, rather than with amounts deemed necessary by the forces in a military sense.”⁹¹ This friction between what a military needs and what it wants is the domain of the politician but the capability gap between strategic direction and expected military capability is the handicap borne by practitioners of the operational art. In the context of the Canadian Forces there exists a gap between the strategic direction given in the 1994 White Paper

⁸⁶Minister of National Defence, 1994 *Defence White Paper*, 40.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 46.

⁸⁸ Andrew Cohen, *How We Lost Our Place In The World*. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd., 2003), 173.

⁸⁹Joseph T. Jockel and Joel J Sokolosky, forword by John G.H. Halstead, *Canada and Collective Security: Odd Man Out*. (New York: Praeger, 1986), ix.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 5.

⁹¹ D.W. Middlemiss and J.J. Sokolosky, *Canadian Defence: Decisions and Determinants*. (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Canada Inc., 1989), 195.

and the capability of the CF to perform those tasks that is not bridged by ‘multi-purpose combat capable forces.’

In 2003, *Jane’s*, citing “chronic underfunding, overcommitment and government neglect,” concluded that: “The Canadian Army is stretched, stressed and insolvent.”⁹² *Jane’s* quotes the former commander of the Canadian Army, General Mike Jeffery, as stating: “our collective skills have now eroded to [such] a level that I have real concerns that we just can’t get them back.”⁹³ General Jeffery was not shy in his comments on the lack of training for the Canadian Army and the effect that this was having on the Army’s ability to conduct operations. Testifying before the Canadian Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, General Jeffery said:

It has been in the order of ten years since the Canadian army has done any significant training at the brigade level. Over time you lose that skill that expertise... Without that training you do not have capability, you just have organizations.⁹⁴

General Jeffery’s assessment of this training/capability gap has not escaped the notice of defence analysts. Andrew Richter, writing for the *Naval War College Review*, remarked that the consequence of funding only company level training in the Canadian Army has left that organization without the capabilities to perform their assigned tasks.⁹⁵ *Jane’s* lays the blame for insufficient training squarely at the feet of the Canadian Government citing a 23% cut to the Canadian Forces budget between 1994 and 1998.⁹⁶ Where then we ask is this ‘multi-purpose combat capability’ that the Canadian Forces, and the Army in particular, are supposed to fall back

⁹² Hobson, “Readiness as a Price,” 21-22.

⁹³ *Ibid*, 22.

⁹⁴ Senator Colin Kenny, Report of the Senate Standing Committee on National Security and Defence, “Defence of North America: A Canadian Responsibility” September 2002 (online) available from <http://www.parl.gc.ca/37/1/parlbus/commbus/senate/com-e/defe-e/rep-e/rep08sep02-e.htm>; internet accessed 17 September 2003, 17-18.

⁹⁵ Andrew C. Richter, “Alongside the Best” (*Naval War College Review*, Winter 2003, Vol. LVI, No. 1, 2003), 78-89.

⁹⁶ Hobson, “Readiness as a Price,” 21-25.

on to conduct complex, joint humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations? The Canadian Army has not been training at the brigade level, let alone the joint level since the 1994 White Paper was issued; and, their capabilities were in decline even before this. These capabilities, even without clear definition have not existed, at the operational level in the Canadian Forces for at least a decade. Despite these serious shortcomings, the Canadian Government still sees the creation of USNORTHCOM as an opportunity to explore the possibility of bi-national disaster response.

Senator Colin Kenney, in the 2002 Report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, remarked that: “The U.S. Government has made it clear that it intends to make the continent more secure, and that it will undertake this mission on its own, if need be.”⁹⁷ While recognizing that “Northern Command will be strictly a U.S. organization,” this rather frank acknowledgement of the Canada/U.S. security arrangement prompted Senator Kenney to recommend three specific measures for Canada and the U.S. to “upgrade their joint capacity to defend North America.”⁹⁸ One of those specific measures was the recommendation that: “A joint Canada-U.S. land force planning unit be established to allow the armies of the two neighbouring countries to plan for potential disasters, natural or otherwise, that jointly threaten both countries.”⁹⁹ In fact, both Canada and the U.S. have exchanged diplomatic notes and the Canada/U.S. Bi-National Planning Group has been working on these issues since the summer of 2003. The mission to the Canadian half of the Bi-National Planning Group is:

The BPG develops detailed bi-national maritime, land and civil support contingency plans and decision making arrangements in the event that threats, attacks, incidents, or emergency circumstances require bi-national military or

⁹⁷ Kenney, “Defence of North America: A Canadian Responsibility,” 20.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

civil/military response to maintain the security of Canada and the United States.¹⁰⁰

Clearly, both the Government of Canada and the Canadian Forces recognize that, the creation of USNORTHCOM signifies U.S. resolve to defend the United States and the approaches to it. In fact, I had the pleasure of attending a BPG planning session in January of 2004. The specific event scenario being examined was the bi-national military response, in support of the civil authorities, to a catastrophic earthquake in Washington and British Columbia. As one of eight scenarios that the BPG is mandated to examine, the planning session was attended by service representatives from both nations, USNORTHCOM, JFCOM, NDHQ, LFWA, OCIPEP, FEMA, Canada and U.S. Customs, POLADs from both nations, Emergency Measure Organizations from both British Columbia and Washington and many others. As is evident from the mission of the BPG and its planning activities, both nations are taking mutual defence very seriously and support to civil authorities is but one dimension of the overall scope of their efforts.

Canada and the U.S. have a long history of bi-national cooperative defense of North America. Today, NORAD is the most visible manifestation of such cooperative defense agreements between the two countries. For the American readers of this monograph: you still have an obligation to clean up the early warning radar sites that you maintained in the Canadian Arctic during the Cold war. Philippe Lagasse, in his monograph: *Tradition and Isolation: Canada NorthCom and the UCP*, does an excellent job of describing the history of Canada/U.S. bi-national defence arrangements. Through his examination of what the creation of USNORTHCOM means to Canadian national security, he concludes that:

The CF will work next to NorthCom in the land and maritime defence of North America, whether through operational planning groups or grander schemes following the NORAD model. The history of Canada-U.S. continental defence collaboration provides an abundance of evidence suggesting that Canadian

¹⁰⁰ Deputy Chief of Defence Staff, "DCDS Guidance-Reporting Relationships DCDS-Canadian Contingent Bi-National Planning Group" (File no. 1901-1 (SA DCDS), 5 June 2003), 1/4.

Sovereignty concerns will be overcome by the necessity of binational [sic] initiatives.¹⁰¹

The War of 1812 aside, Canada and the U.S. have a history of military cooperation that the creation of USNORTHCOM has caused to be re-examined. The risks, should Canada's military fail to do its part in the defence of North America, have been frankly acknowledged. Domestic operations, particularly Canada's military response, in support of the civil authorities, for humanitarian relief and disaster assistance tasks, serve as a fair indicator of the Canadian Forces ability to respond to a broader range of crises that could have adverse effects on both sides of the border. Our examination has revealed that, despite the radical change to the North American security environment, the CF is no more ready or prepared to meet these challenges than it was in 1997. We must now return to our original question: How can the Canadian Forces (CF), in particular the Army, leverage the creation of USNORTHCOM to improve its ability to conduct domestic humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations?

¹⁰¹ Philippe Lagasse, "Tradition and Isolation: Canada NorthCom and the UCP," (Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston, Ontario. n.d.), np. (online); available from <http://www.cda-cdai.ca/symposia/2002/lagasse.htm>; internet; accessed 1 October 2003.

CHAPTER FOUR

Conclusions and Recommendations

The creation of USNORTHCOM must be seen as more than a simple revision of the U.S. Unified Command Plan. It must be viewed as tangible evidence that the U.S. has reorganized its military to prepare for specific threats to North America. After September 11th the world changed. Canada became more strategically important as a possible avenue of approach for those who would wish to harm the U.S., thus the geographic area of responsibility assigned to Commander USNORTHCOM. Canadian Senator Kenny has recognized that the U.S., “intends to make the continent more secure, and that it will undertake this mission on its own, if need be.”¹⁰² This is how the Canadian Forces can leverage the creation of USNORTHCOM to improve its ability to conduct domestic humanitarian assistance and disaster relief tasks. By recognizing the true significance of USNORTHCOM, the CF and the Canadian Army must be honest with the Government of Canada about their operational shortfalls and insist on the means to rectify them. There is recognition, at the Canadian political level, of what the creation of USNORTHCOM signifies as well as the potential risks should the Canadian Forces not show themselves capable of responding to domestic emergencies and disasters. Canada still faces fiscal pressures that require the Government of prioritize financial expenditures, but; unlike 1994, the Canadian Forces has a more compelling case for sufficient funding to create a force that is robust enough to conduct the tasks that the Government of Canada has assigned it. The demanding and important work of the BPG in Colorado Springs is a good step in¹⁰³ the right direction but without significant change within the Canadian Forces themselves, it will be for naught. Without improving our operational capability to deal with complex domestic operations, it is only a matter of time until it becomes evident the Canadian Forces remain woefully ill prepared. Should this be

¹⁰² Kenney, “Defence of North America: A Canadian Responsibility,” 20.

the case, it is not likely to escape the notice of our friends in the U.S.

Conclusions

The “multi-purpose combat capability,” referred to in the Canadian 1994 White Paper on Defence, and throughout Canadian joint doctrine, army doctrine and DCDS 2/98, is non-existent at the operational level in the Canadian Army. Years and even decades of financial neglect of the Canadian Forces have left the Army overstressed and ill prepared to meet the tasks set out for it in the White Paper. When, due to financial limitations, an Army rarely conducts training above the company or tactical level, it can hardly be expected to rely on its inherent capabilities to operate at the joint operational level.

Given the unexpected nature of natural disasters, coupled with the time constraint for a CF response, specific training for domestic operations is required. From our case study we assess that the U.S. military (Minnesota National Guard and Readiness Group Snelling) were better synchronized, had more effortless unity of effort and a higher level of interoperability than the Canadian Op ASSISTANCE JTF. We attribute these advantages to the planning and training conducted by the Minnesota National Guard and Readiness Group Snelling with the civil, state and national responders to the natural disaster.

We conclude that the operational commanders, designated by the DCDS to respond to disasters, are not adequately prepared to conduct complex joint operations. Our case study, of the military response in support of the civil and provincial authorities, during the Red River flood in 1997, reveals that LFWA and the subordinate service components were ill prepared to form a JTF in response to that crisis. Extant doctrine and direction reveals that even though operational commanders in the Army have been directed to be prepared to form JTFs they have not been resourced to conduct training above unit level, let alone at the joint level, for well over a decade.

It is apparent that the Canadian Force’s training for the use of force on domestic operations is woefully inadequate. Our case study revealed that Canadian soldiers were assisting

local law enforcement agencies with neither the authority nor the requisite domestic rules of engagement training to do so. Our review of extant doctrine and instruction reveals that the requirement to train soldiers on use of force for domestic operations is too ambiguous to ensure that Canadian soldiers will be trained and ready to support law enforcement agencies in response to future natural disasters.

It is evident that Canada does not adequately leverage its Reserve Force capabilities to respond to local disasters. The Canadian Reserve Forces have regional presence across Canada yet in the event of a regional disaster they have been relegated to an augmentation role for the Regular Force. Our case study revealed that Canada has no equivalent to a State National Guard. Unlike the Governor of a State, the Premiere of a Province has no call on military assistance short of federal military assistance. Our case study revealed the potency of the Minnesota National Guard's response to a natural disaster in its own state. We assess that the potency of the Minnesota National Guard's response was due to the planning and training conducted by those forces in anticipation of a predictable natural disaster in their home state. We further conclude that the minimal support required of U.S. federal forces was due to the outstanding response by the State National Guard.

Clearly, the Canadian Forces had not planned for domestic operations, in support of civil and provincial authorities, for a disaster resultant from flooding of the Red River. Our analysis revealed that flooding in this region is a predictable occurrence. Despite the DCDS admonition to LFA/CFNAHQ Commanders that, "The majority of domestic operations requests and situations can be anticipated and routine procedures developed to handle them."¹⁰⁴ LFWA had not developed "routine procedures" to deal with it. The Minnesota National Guard and Readiness Group Snelling had anticipated the likelihood of disaster relief and humanitarian assistance operations in the event of flooding. They had developed plans and trained specifically for just

¹⁰⁴ NDHQ, "Instruction DCDS 2/98 Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Operations," 4.

such a contingency. The flood plain of the Red River valley, on the Canadian side of the border, is clearly within LFWA's area of responsibility. LFWA and the CF should have anticipated a request for support and prepared for it but they did not.

Recommendations

We recommend that the phrase "multi purpose combat capable forces," and all of its manifestations be expunged from Canadian military doctrine and replaced with specific capabilities that have quantifiable measures of effectiveness. The offending phrase may have a place in the Government's direction to the Canadian Forces but it is unconscionable that it finds its way, without definition, into the military doctrine and instructions that are supposed to guide the conduct of military operations.

We suggest that those operational commanders, who the DCDS has warned could be designated Joint Task Force Commanders, conduct training to prepare themselves and their headquarters for those tasks. Given the unexpected nature of natural disasters, and the 12-24 hours in which the CF is tasked to respond: this training must prepare the operational commanders, their staffs, and potential subordinate service components to rapidly form JTFs that are capable of achieving unity of effort, synchronization and interoperability. Given the number of operational level commanders that the DCDS has identified as potential JTF Commanders, and the size of the Canadian Forces, it would be an extremely onerous task to prepare them all for such short notice conversion to JTFs. Colonel Valle in his monograph determined that a Deployable Joint Task Force Augmentation Cell (DJTFAC) would benefit a JTF commander by providing him, "a rapidly deployable, educated and trained group of joint and combined planners."¹⁰⁵ The Canadian Forces are capable of projecting the costs of specific capabilities but it

¹⁰⁵It is recognized that standing up a JTF during a crisis can be very demanding. The DJTFAC concept is quite simple and could have utility in the Canadian context. Simply put a DJTFAC is a selected, trained group of officers that can be dispatched to assist an operational commander and his staff conduct a rapid transition to a JTF, capable of conducting joint operations. Canada could have only one DJTFAC, possibly

has no hope of petitioning for the funding to develop something as ill defined as “multi purpose combat capable forces.” On the other hand, it should be possible to estimate the cost of annual training to prepare the designated operational level headquarters for conversion to JTF HQs.

We advocate that use of force training for domestic operations become mandatory training for the Canadian Army. The specific frequency of this training should prepare soldiers to respond, on 12-24 hours notice, to domestic disaster relief and humanitarian assistance operations. We do not recommend that this training be deferred until the tasking is received and the unit has only 12-24 hours to prepare for deployment.

We recommend that the Canadian Forces examine the limitations placed upon the use of the Reserve Forces for the conduct of domestic operations. The “augmentation, support and sustainment of deployed forces”¹⁰⁶ limitations, imposed by the government of Canada, on the use of the Reserve force may well be denying a valuable response capability to the provincial authorities which in turn places a greater burden on Canada’s Regular Forces. We cannot recommend unequivocally that the Canadian Reserve Forces should be tasked with humanitarian and disaster relief operations; however, given the regional dispersion of these forces, the local nature of natural disasters and the effective response of the Minnesota National Guard, we recommend that the role of those forces for domestic operations be examined. The potential use of the Reserve Force for economy of force operations during disasters should be examined.

Summary

Canada has some choices to make with regard to its military. The creation of USNORTHCOM signified the conviction of the U.S. government that there does exist a credible

at the JTF HQ in Kingston. The DJTFAC concept is outlined in U.S. Joint Publication 1-02. Colonel Ramon Valle, “The Deployable Joint Task Force Augmentation Cell (DJTFAC)-A Viable Agent of Action During Consequence Management Operations,” School of Advance Military Studies, United States Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth Kansas, AY2002-2003, 50.

¹⁰⁶ Minister of National Defence, *1994 DEFENCE WHITE PAPER*, 45.

threat to North America. This threat assessment differs greatly from the assessment of the Government of Canada at the time that they issued the *1994 Defence White Paper*. We have shown that the CF and the Army have atrophied over the past decades but this loss of capability must be redressed in the current security environment. The significance of the creation of USNORTHCOM is the argument for a greater allocation of federal funding to the CF to develop and maintain the specific capabilities that Canada needs in this new security environment. No longer, can the CF and the Canadian Army rely upon impaired or non-existent capabilities to conduct complex domestic operations, the risks of doing so, as Senator Kenny pointed out, are too great.

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