

Speaking Notes for

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Let me begin by saying what a pleasure it is to be here at the CDA Conference once again. This Conference does a tremendous amount to stimulate public discussion on some very important defence and security issues, so I would like to take this opportunity to offer my congratulations to all of the hard working people at the CDA.

Perhaps the most important factor in determining where we will be going from a defence and security standpoint in the next two decades lies in the assumptions that form the very basis of our defence policy and our force planning scenarios. A number of the planning documents I have seen sketch out about seven general assumptions that can be made about what the next twenty years may hold. I think it is worthwhile to look at these assumptions in light of September 11. While September 11 shocked us to the core, it was not outside the parameters of what had been described for years as asymmetrical warfare.

In as much as we can "expect the unexpected," it is not unreasonable to believe that there will be some continuity within the "unexpected". Let's have a look at these assumptions. The first assumption is that the United States will remain the dominant military power. Given its unassailable military might – in all dimensions – I think it safe to say that few expect America to soon face a serious challenger. The sheer size of its current defence budget, and the apparent willingness to bear increased expenditures, suggest that the next 20 years, at least, will be characterized by a uni-polar strategic environment.

From the perspective of America's allies, this is proving a source of both consolation and worry. Consolation comes from the mere fact that America and its allies are as secure from conventional military threats as anyone could possibly hope. Worry comes from the realization that we will, in all

likelihood, be facing increased asymmetrical threats for which traditional military planning and doctrine offer little in the way of solution.

We can no longer know with any real degree of certainty which nations, combination of nations, or non-state actors will pose a threat to our individual or collective security. Our historical emphasis on planning to meet “traditional threats”, that is a readily identifiable foe, needs to be buttressed with the ability to anticipate the capabilities that an adversary might employ. Indeed, as the traditional foe, so to speak, becomes increasingly difficult to identify, the emphasis on planning against capabilities becomes more and more important. Thus, while we may not be able to predict who might initiate an attack, we can plan against the methods that might be used.

The obvious corollary to this is that, as we plan against the capabilities of others, we will need to pay careful attention to the future capabilities required by our own forces. Our future “capability” will be as much dependent on new doctrine, organization, training and education as it will on hardware. Success in the field will depend on our ability to mount joint and combined operations as required.

At the same time, it is important to note that an emphasis on capabilities-based planning does not mean that we abandon our White Paper commitment to a combat capable multi-purpose force. Change may well entail little more than a matter of emphases rather than a fundamental change “in kind”. But, given the reality of combined operations, we may well find that certain assets can be done away with – allowing us to focus on new and essential capabilities.

A further worry for us and our allies is that the Americans may decide to “go it alone.” If defence spending, among Alliance members is not deemed sufficient, and, if Americans come to believe that they are having to bear a disproportionate amount of risk and expense, then unilateralism may well become the order of the day. The U.S. is moving quickly on restructuring and on the development of forward-looking doctrine and standards of interoperability.

If Alliance members do not keep pace, we could well face problems on the horizon. September 11th has shown us that future responses to crisis – at least as far as the Americans are concerned – will be made quickly and resolutely.

What is of particular importance to Canadians is the extent to which we are willing to harmonize our national security with that of the United States. Many observers and some politicians, still cling to the old bromide that any harmonization in this regard will result in a reduction of our sovereignty. At the same time, they rarely pause to ask themselves what the consequences might be of not tightening-up our domestic security processes.

On this issue I find myself in complete agreement with Peter Haydon when he argues that “rather than being a renunciation of Canadian sovereignty...harmonization of national security policies is an affirmation of sovereignty.” Our sovereignty “demands that we manage our internal affairs in such a

way that situations cannot arise which our neighbours to the south might see as a threat to their security.

If Canada is seen as a threat to American security, the Americans will take unilateral action to counter that threat. Hence, Canadian sovereignty is served by ensuring that we do not allow any thing to happen in Canada that is seen as a threat to the United States.”

There are a lot of things one can change in politics, but geography is definitely not one of them. Our proximity to the US means that we must work with the Americans on a host of trade, environmental, energy and security issues to name just a few. There is absolutely nothing wrong with admitting that sometimes our best interests lie in cooperation with the Americans. NORAD has long been proof of that. A mature state is one that engages its important allies and, if we are to effectively engage the Americans, then we need to take homeland defence seriously.

The second assumption is that Canada will remain engaged in international affairs and require armed forces. Generally, I believe this is a safe assumption. Fundamentally, I trust in the basic good sense of the Canadian people to understand where our interests lie and what our responsibilities are.

But, those of us concerned about defence and security issues cannot afford to be complacent. The specter of Canada 21 is still with us. There are still those who argue that Canada’s contribution to international peace and security should be limited to the odd peacekeeping engagement. And even then, whatever role is agreed to should only take place once the fighting has stopped.

The proponents of this approach have promoted what I would describe as the “cult of peacekeeping.” They would like us to believe that peacekeeping – in its benign Pearsonian variant – is the singular most important pillar and distinguishing feature of Canadian foreign policy and the singular most important role for the Canadian Forces.

Don’t get me wrong, Canadians have every right to be extremely proud of our peacekeeping heritage. But the Canadian Forces are not, and, must never be, a “one trick pony.” So, the suggestion that we do peacekeeping and very little else undermines our ability to make a broader contribution to both collective security and international stability. Indeed, in the long run, it even imperils our ability to do modern peacekeeping properly.

There are those in this country, and we see them quite often in the media these days, who would prefer that Canada adopt a quasi-neutralist position in world affairs. They tend to be rabidly anti-American and see this position as a means to differentiate us from the U.S on the world stage. They see no need to maintain a fleet of fighter jets or frigates, or, for that matter, any real combat capability.

While perhaps well-meaning, these people in my view understand neither the dimensions of peacekeeping, nor what constitutes real sovereignty. Our experiences in the Medak Pocket and Rwanda have clearly taught us that to be prepared for peacekeeping means one needs to be prepared for war –

anything less is irresponsible. The Medak Pocket showed us how quickly traditional peacekeeping can turn to conflict. Rwanda was an unfortunate, though clear lesson, of the fact that when international forces become embroiled in domestic conflict they need to be equipped, and of an adequate complement, to be able to fight to protect innocent civilians and prevent genocide. Rwanda hopefully taught the world that the absence of both military capability and political will and can be a lethal combination – in this case it produced one of the most horrible slaughters in human history.

So our sovereignty will not be assured by simple-minded notions of Canada as peacekeeper. We have a multi-lateral tradition that is firmly rooted in support for the concept of collective security. It has been a mainstay of our foreign and defence policies and must continue to be so. Half-baked notions of quasi neutrality (however disguised) and pacifism have never been part of the Canadian creed and I hope they never will be. We ensure our sovereignty by being active and full participants on the world stage, by contributing to collective security and by providing adequate protection and surveillance of our territory.

The third assumption posits that the Canadian Forces may well be committed to operations of mid-intensity warfare. If the past ten years are any indication, we can readily expect that the CF will be engaged in a wide range of operations, both joint and combined. These operations will extend from search and rescue, disaster relief, international humanitarian assistance through to higher intensity coalition operations running from peace support through to combat operations.

The implication here, of course, is that if we are to engage in mid-intensity coalition operations, we will need to structure our military accordingly. This may require a fairly extensive reorganization of the CF into clearly defined domestic and expeditionary capabilities. As Haydon has argued, “force planning for the modern coalition forces can be likened to a Rubick’s Cube. The planners have to keep on turning the faces of the cube until they have the desired mix of capabilities for a specific mission.”

Having the individual capabilities available, and trained, means that one can quickly respond to a crisis. However, this requires sophistication in force planning well beyond that done during the Cold War.

Aside from being able to quickly respond to crises, a further advantage of modern force planning is that all coalition members need not be able to provide all capabilities. A degree of specialization is then both sensible and acceptable. But, the capabilities brought to the table must be completely interoperable and combat capable.

To those who argue that such operational integration constitutes an erosion of sovereignty, I would simply say that they are completely wrong. The right of a state to choose what its military forces will or will not do is the very means by which sovereignty is upheld. Not to have significant capabilities and not to participate simply leaves one marginalized on the world stage.

The fourth assumption is that Canada will continue to seek security through collective and cooperative efforts – primarily with the United States, and other NATO, Pacific and hemispheric partners. Again, I would consider this a fairly safe assumption.

Yet, we must be alert to the fact that there are forces pulling at the fabric of NATO and the concept of collective security. We are also confronted with a paradox: NATO could face problems if the Europeans refuse to spend enough on defence, and, at the same time, NATO may run into trouble if the Europeans were to significantly increase their defence expenditures. I am sure that many of you would agree that the former is more likely than the latter.

It is no secret that some of our European NATO allies are wary of U.S. power and resent American hegemony. Europeans are developing their own European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) that they hope will help them forge a greater role for themselves both within the Alliance and internationally. It comes as no surprise that France is the greatest champion of the cause.

In and of itself this is not a bad thing. Indeed, America has long encouraged its European allies to reform and modernize their militaries and to take greater responsibility for matters of decidedly European strategic interest. Of course, it remains to be seen if Europe is prepared to pay the cost for a modern, deployable and combat capable military as laid out in the Helsinki headline goals of providing for a 60,000 member force deployable for up to one year.

If Europe is willing to bear the cost, then what? Will a European definition of strategic interest come to significantly differ from that of the U.S.? Might Europeans one day decide that the trans-Atlantic alliance no longer serves their interest? If this should occur, NATO could face some troubled times over the next twenty years.

On the other hand, what if the Europeans decide simply to maintain or even reduce current levels of defence spending. Such a scenario could also spell trouble. America, the hegemonic power, might finally decide to divest itself of the expense and encumbrance of an Alliance they no longer see meeting their national interests and for which they believe themselves to have paid too much. After all, the U.S. led the Kosovo campaign and maintains large numbers of troops not only in Bosnia, but, in Europe generally.

Where does this leave Canada?

Well, I believe that it is in our best interest to rely on our multilateral tradition and our self-ascribed role as helpful fixer. Since the 1940s successive Canadian governments have actively supported a wide-ranging network of multilateral institutions and associations; NATO being one of the paramount ones.

I tend to believe that our support for multilateralism, the NATO alliance and coalitions is one part altruism mixed with two parts realism. The realism is based upon the self interested assumption that international stability can best be achieved if we use multilateral institutions to curb the unilateralism of

large powers. From that standpoint, I believe that Canada must tailor its defence and foreign policy decisions in a way that ensures that the NATO Alliance not only continues to survive, but becomes an even more relevant vehicle for peace and security.

The fifth assumption is that Canada will need the independent capacity to assert its sovereignty. For most, this is little more than a truism. It is we who need to patrol and protect our exclusive economic zone. It is only by being able to project credible power in these regions that we can hope to properly husband our natural resources.

If we do not protect our polar regions, who will? As the polar ice cap melts, the tendency for even our best ally to transit our territory, without formal permission, might well prove irresistible. In the end, the protection of northern sovereignty requires more than sending bureaucrats to international meetings and the spouting of relevant quotations from international law.

The sixth point is that while the methods of war may change as a result of the revolution in military affairs (RMA), the nature of war will not. War will always be a dirty business, a very blunt instrument in the conduct of international relations. It is therefore imperative that we provide our troops with the best training available and the resources to do their jobs properly. They willingly accept the unlimited liability of military service – the least we can do is respect that choice and provide them with the best that is available.

As well, if we are to continue to be relevant players we must remain abreast of the RMA. We need to identify the capabilities that will allow us to inter-operate with our allies, especially the Americans. The dictates of homeland defence will present us with new challenges. The trick is to be forward looking, self-confident, and to be willing to take risk.

The last assumption is that there will be no substantial change in the fiscal environment of the Canadian Forces. I am prepared to believe that depending upon how political events evolve this assumption may be the least valid. We simply cannot predict how international events may unfold to force either a substantial increase or decrease in funding levels for the Canadian Forces.

A final observation. We must be as prepared as we possibly can to meet the security challenges of the future. What will this mean for us? In large part it will simply mean drawing on our strengths from the past. We have always sent expeditionary forces to fight alongside like-minded allies. We will need to continue to do so.

But, the new reality also demands that we come to terms with the dilemma of asymmetrical warfare and the doctrine and operational concepts required to deal with it. We must be willing, from a position of self-confidence and strength, to work with our allies and to determine our relative and comparative advantages – none except one can bring all that is required to the table. However, the approach we need to take cannot be a minimalist one.

In conclusion, as you can see, I am not prepared to launch into any radical predictions of where we will be twenty years from now. However, I believe it is safe to say that the next twenty years will be a lot like the last ten with perhaps a few surprises along the way. The bi polar stability of the Cold War and the doctrine of mutual assured destruction is thankfully gone forever.

I think the basic precepts contained in the 1994 White Paper on Defence will serve us well providing there is some periodic fine-tuning and adjustments, especially in areas such as force planning, the RMA and asymmetrical warfare. What is clear to me is that over the next twenty years in pursuing international peace and security, the world will need Canada. What is also clear to me is that Canada will need modern well-trained, interoperable, multipurpose combat capable forces.

Thank you.