

Defence Policy Review

Minister,

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the review process. I will address two separate but related aspects of Canadian Defence Policy – improving the sovereign protection of the Arctic and using the Canadian Armed Forces in cooperation and coordination with other government departments and agencies to do so.

Canadian defence policy and procurement planning is based on what is referred to as capability-based planning. It is centred on countering the opposing capabilities of potential aggressors. But armed forces are also available to do many other things in peacetime. Accordingly, I believe we also need to consider what I will call utility-based planning. This is particularly relevant when it comes to the future of our Arctic.

The utility of the Canadian Armed Forces is significant. Those armed forces – the people, the equipment and the logistics and communications infrastructure which supports them - is an investment not only in protecting Canada's interests abroad but in protecting our people and geography here at home. Military forces have always boasted a utility role – when Caesar's legions weren't fighting Rome's enemies, they built roads and aqueducts. So, today we see our forces engaged in humanitarian and disaster relief efforts – fighting floods, fires, hurricanes and earthquakes at home and abroad. And, they can do more!

During the cold war and its aftermath we reasoned that challenging adversaries in oceans and airspace other than our own and as part of a larger coalition was critical; and so it remains. However, our vast geography is dictating its own national challenge here at home. It's not that there exists a specific threat to the Arctic at this time or in the foreseeable future but the Canada's lackluster demonstration of interest in defending its sovereignty there means there is little to deter others from impinging upon our national interests in this important area. Those interests are the protection of the people and resources, the environment, search and rescue, scientific study and access for the purposes of transportation and communication. Moreover, with the increase in vessel traffic in the Arctic, we face a range of issues which, under present circumstances, will have to be dealt with in a harsh, unforgiving and largely unknown environment. This will require a whole-of-government effort including police, coast guard and armed forces.

Ultimately, if the Canadian Armed Forces are to defend the North, they must be able to operate effectively there. That means they need the ability to navigate, communicate, gather intelligence and surveillance data and carry out search and rescue. At the same time, they are already well-equipped and trained to undertake environmental surveillance and protection, scientific study, and support to northern communities. They have a relatively small presence there, albeit one which is expanding. Nevertheless, the CAF operate in the Arctic largely for training purposes to counter potential threats to the air, land and sea. As indicated, they could be made available for other tasks, many of which would also contribute to their training for combat roles.

Of course, Defence can't do it alone – nor should they. The Canadian Coast Guard, the RCMP and DFO through the Canadian Hydrographic Service (CHS) play key, and in the case of the Coast Guard, a lead role in the opening of the North. In 1993, the Osbaldeston report – *All The Ships That Sail* – looked at the roles of the then three federal fleets – The Navy, The Coast Guard and the Fisheries Protection Service and concluded that, while the Navy should remain apart there was potential to merge the others – as they later did with the Coast Guard and Fisheries Protection. The report's most significant recommendation was the formation of an *Interdepartmental Program Coordination and Review Committee (IPCRC)* to promote the shared use of resources. The Committee was formed and functioned well until its disbandment in September, 2001.

So, how to implement such a utility-based planning approach for the CAF in the Arctic? At present, the major obstacles separating the CAF and CCG as well as other government departments and agencies from closer cooperation is twofold – a lack of mandate on each other's part to do so and a fear that doing so will result in a funding drain one from the other.

Addressing these issues in government will not be easy. One way might be to initiate a major project at least partially funded from the centre. That project could be the Canadian discovery and exploration of the Arctic in the footsteps of the explorers who have gone before – Samuel de Champlain, Martin Frobisher, Henry Hudson, Alexander MacKenzie, David Thompson, Simon Fraser, Henry Kelsey, John Franklin, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, Joseph-Elzear Bernier and Dr. Joseph MacInnes to name only some of the most prominent. It would be a salutary start to Canada's sesquicentennial in 2017. An implementation approach could be as follows.

First, amend the mandate of the CAF and CCG to participate fully and together in the exploration of the Arctic. Second, develop a coordination protocol among the CAF, the CCG, the RCMP and CBSA, DFO/CHS and Environment Canada for Arctic exploration to provide a fully integrated interdepartmental approach with CCG in the lead. This could entail re-introduction of a version of the Osbaldeston Study's *Interdepartmental Program Review Committee (IPCRC)* to provide a working-level coordination and implementation group. Third, develop a long-term plan for Arctic operating access, travel and safety to include the following:

- a. a comprehensive cartographic, hydrographic and bathymetric survey of the Arctic, not limited as is now the case to relatively tight corridors based upon shipping routes, but to encompass all navigable waters;
- b. as a complement to this activity, deploy the required aids to navigation and a program for their maintenance;
- c. an increase the planned polar icebreaker capability by at least one more and ideally two more vessels;
- d. a pilotage system for the North West Passage. This would be an excellent way to employ northern people using their local knowledge;
- e. two or more SAR centers in the Arctic to host CAF and CCG SAR resources;
- f. addition to a number of existing Arctic ports of a large-ship-sized jetty with refueling and storage capability;
- g. modern communications to take advantage of the existing Iridium satellite system; and,
- h. improved surveillance satellite coverage of the Arctic landmass and Arctic ocean.

Implementation of such an approach could commence with the commissioning of the Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ships (AOPS) commencing in 2018 and result in their operations in both surveillance and the hydrographic and bathymetric survey conducted on behalf of the Canadian Hydrographic Service (CHS) – an agency of DFO by the CCG and DND. This is the most critical task but which will also potentially yield the most significance in terms of publically promoting and supporting Canadian sovereignty in the area.

Finally, an initiative such as this could yield real benefits in terms of our relations with the United States and Russia, both of whom share interest and concern regarding the future of the Arctic. We have long shared a scientific relationship with both and see the potential of Arctic access, development and environmental stewardship. It would be a meaningful contribution which would see Canada engage with the Russian Federation directly and through the Arctic Council.

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June, 2016