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THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT OF JUSTIN TRUDEAU AND CANADIAN DEFENCE POLICY

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The Liberal Government of Justin Trudeau was elected in October 2015 with a strong Parliamentary majority. Candidate Trudeau ran on a platform of (modestly) increased government spending, a more active Canadian presence internationally, and leading a more open and transparent government. Trudeau did not talk much about defence issues on the campaign trail, although that was hardly a surprise given that defence is rarely an election issue in Canada. Since forming the government, that relative lack of attention has continued, although there have been a few issues that have attracted attention, including (1) the continuing controversy over the CF-18 replacement; (2) a NATO request to station troops in (Eastern) Europe; and (3) a pledge to re-commit troops to international peacekeeping.

While these issues indicate that the government has not completely ignored defence issues, there is little indication that defence is a priority, and is more likely viewed as an inconvenience for a party (and leader) that frequently criticized former Prime Minister Stephen Harper for emphasizing the country's military capabilities over its peacekeeping history.¹ Given the combination of perennially low defence spending – which seems likely to continue under Trudeau – and a general lack of concern about the military, Canada's defence prognosis is poor. However, in the paper's concluding section, some brief comments will be offered on whether the election victory of Donald Trump in the US changes this equation in any way.

Despite the fact that defence did not figure prominently in Canada's 2015 election, Trudeau's words had given cause for initial optimism. In their election platform, *Real Change*, the Liberals promised that they would “not let Canada's Armed Forces be short-changed,” and the document further noted that the party would “reinvest in building a leaner, more agile, better-equipped military, including adequate support systems for military personnel and their families.”² While the term “leaner” may have raised some concerns, suggesting a possibly smaller total defence force, the platform recognized that the military required new equipment. In addition, the comments about “adequate support systems” were most welcome, given the steady stream of media stories about the difficulties that military veterans and their families faced, especially in light of the Afghanistan mission. Lastly, in a further cause for optimism, the government announced that it would conduct a full-scale defence review (the first since 1994³), which would give it an opportunity to update the country's defence strategy while at the same time determine an appropriate level of funding.

That initial sense of optimism, however, was quickly undone by the government's subsequent actions. Most concerning was the budget of March 2016, which approached defence much like that of the Conservatives near the end of their mandate; i.e., it figured very little in the document, had few specifics, and what was there was not particularly reassuring. While no defence spending figure was provided – a practice that has become commonplace the past few years – documents tabled the

week before the budget revealed that spending would decline by \$400 million in 2016 (to about \$19 billion).⁴ But even more concerning was that the Liberals took away some \$3.7 billion in planned procurement, and said the money would be “re-allocated” at an unspecified future date.⁵ Incredibly, the government claimed this was a positive development for the Department of National Defence (DND) by ensuring “funding is available for large-scale capital projects when it is needed,”⁶ a reference to the difficulties that DND has had in spending its budget in recent years.⁷ In combination with similar sleight-of-hand moves taken by the Conservatives, the total amount stripped from DND since 2012 is now more than \$10 billion, a sum that dwarfs DND’s annual procurement budget (roughly \$4 billion on average).

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On the positive side, the Liberals did follow through on their promise to help veterans by increasing disability payments, expanding access to impairment allowances, and also offering a more generous income replacement program for the wounded, which will cost \$5.6 billion over six years.⁸ In addition, some \$200 million in new infrastructure projects for the department was allocated. But, as an overall impression, defence was simply not a major concern for the new government; one made clear by the fact that only four pages were dedicated to a discussion of defence plans in a 269 page document.⁹

Since the release of the budget, that impression has not changed. There is no indication the Liberals are considering an increase in defence spending, even while total government expenditures are increasing rapidly. Indeed, the government seems completely unconcerned by the growing deficit. The subject of spending attracted further comment the following month, when US Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump (since elected President in November) warned NATO members that under a Trump presidency, they could not count on American military support if they do not contribute adequately to their defence.¹⁰

In response, Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan questioned the value of measuring spending in strict financial terms – a tactic that has become increasingly common as Ottawa’s military budget has declined – while at the same time saying Canada’s casualties in Afghanistan should count as a “contribution” to Western defence. As the Minister stated, “contributions can be measured many different ways.”¹¹ A few months later, Sajjan reiterated that Canada “is stepping up in many regards,” but gave no indication that a spending boost is likely, adding that that “our spending will be based on the needs of our nation.”¹² In August 2016, Prime Minister Trudeau made much the same point to a question about defence spending, when he responded that Canada “continues to be a valid and valuable partner in NATO,” but similarly gave no hint that a spending boost was likely anytime soon.¹³ That said, the issue of low Canadian defence spending may become the subject of discus-

sion going forward, as most NATO members have begun increasing their defence budgets in light of recent Russian aggression.¹⁴

Among the other defence issues that have attracted attention, the most controversial is the same one that dogged Prime Minister Harper; the program to replace the aging CF-18s. In their election platform, and in comments on the campaign trail, the Liberals took a clear, unambiguous position – the F-35 would not be purchased, and instead a Liberal government would hold an “open and transparent” competition. They claimed this would result in the selection of a less expensive aircraft, saving the government “tens of billions” of dollars (a dubious suggestion, as the alternative aircraft are only marginally less expensive).¹⁵ Readers might note the immediate contradiction between the two statements, for if a contending aircraft is effectively removed from consideration before a competition is even held, the resulting competition cannot be considered “open,” a contradiction that has subsequently turned into a major political headache for the Liberals. That aside, however, the position was politically popular, as Trudeau capitalized on public sentiment that seemed to hold that everything the Tories had done on the file was suspect, and thus there was no possible way the F-35 could be the best choice for Canada’s military.

In the months that followed, that clarity seemed to come undone. In early 2016 it was reported that the government had decided to make a payment that allowed Ottawa to remain a partner in the F-35 development program, a move that suggested that a purchase of the aircraft was, in fact, possible.¹⁶ And a short time later it was reported that the F-35 would be one of the contenders in the procurement competition after all, whenever it is ultimately held. While a positive development in terms of the fairness of the competition, it was clearly at odds with the party’s promise that it would not be purchased.¹⁷ So, by the spring of 2016, the government’s insistence that it would never purchase the F-35 appeared to be changing.

In June, however, the government swung back to its initial position amid a flurry of reports that suggested that not only was it *not* going to purchase the F-35. Instead, it was re-considering its promise to hold a program competition at all, which would effectively constitute a repeat of what the Conservatives had done with their initial decision to purchase the F-35, the only difference being that a different aircraft would be selected. The initial story, first reported in *The National Post* (and never subsequently denied by the government), suggested the Liberals were planning on buying a small number of updated F-18s as an “interim measure,” citing an emerging “capabilities gap”¹⁸ – a puzzling rationale given the on-going CF-18 modernization and re-fit program (one announced just a few years ago), and the fact that DND itself has not been warning of any such “gap.”¹⁹

A few days after the story was first reported, the Prime Minister doubled down on the position that

the Liberals would never purchase the F-35, when he said the aircraft “does not work and is far from working.”²⁰ This was a reference to the troubled development progress of the plane,²¹ although curiously this statement was made just weeks before the US Air Force declared the aircraft ready for combat.²² On the same day, Defence Minister Sajjan, when pressed on the commitment to an “open and transparent” competition, refused to answer the question, saying only that a purchase of new fighter aircraft is long overdue.²³ The impression created was that the Liberals, rather than being committed to holding an open competition that would lead to a selection that had broad support, seem intent on reaching a closed decision in private, and that the aircraft that will be purchased has most likely already been identified.

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Perhaps recognizing the poor optics of these developments, the Liberals took a step back the following month, when they announced that the government will consult with industry to determine the best path forward.²⁴ Defence Minister Sajjan said that department officials would meet with representatives from interested companies to gauge what each has to offer, and what their production schedules look like. And in a sign that the F-35 manufacturer, Lockheed Martin, was not going to sit back and watch a potential order disappear – which might cause other countries to reconsider *their* orders – the company publicly warned Ottawa that if the planned purchase did not go ahead, it may terminate supplier contracts with dozens of Canadian companies, a warning the government has to take seriously given that thousands of jobs are potentially at stake.²⁵ It is also worth noting that in October 2016, representatives from Lockheed Martin met with Canadian defence officials to give them an update on the project.²⁶

In the fall of 2016 the situation remained fluid, with the government once again returning to the idea of interim Super Hornets. What does seem certain, though, is that the government is struggling with how to reconcile its contradictory campaign promises, a process fraught with political and financial implications. As noted earlier, the initial decision to publicly commit to not purchase the F-35 was politically motivated, and thus if the government ends up purchasing the aircraft (which seems unlikely), or if it backs away from an “open and transparent” competition (which seems possible), there will certainly be political consequences. Thus, navigating a political path forward will pose a difficult challenge for Trudeau, who up to this point has enjoyed enormous popularity, in no small part the result of his ability to satisfy differing constituencies that have very different expectations from the government.

With regard to possible financial implications, excluding a contending product like the F-35 from being considered in a contract, or being considered but only insofar as the requirements are written

in such a way as to largely preclude its selection – which may be a strategy the Liberals are considering – violates basic principles of international trade and raises the spectre of Lockheed Martin suing the Canadian government for damages.²⁷ That prospect may therefore explain the Liberals’ insistence of an emerging “capabilities gap.” By purchasing a small number of aircraft as an “interim” measure to fill a supposed “gap,” the government could avoid a legal challenge, while at the same time being able to say that it has not broken a campaign promise.²⁸ While it is unclear if such a strategy would prevent a lawsuit from being tabled, it may be the Liberals’ best option at this point, as the government has created a predicament from which there is no easy way out. Lastly, another option would be for the Liberals to voluntarily pay a penalty to Lockheed Martin for withdrawing from the development program and terminating its purchase, which DND has estimated could cost more than \$300 million.²⁹ However, doing so would come with a political price, thus diminishing its appeal.

A second defence issue that has attracted government attention is the NATO request to station troops in Eastern Europe in the aftermath of recent Russian aggression, which by the fall of 2016 included the deployment of battleships in the Mediterranean and Baltic Seas, and the stationing of nuclear-capable missile launchers near Poland. The purpose is to re-establish, albeit on a smaller scale, the troop presence that was a mainstay of the alliance during the Cold War, when it was widely believed that troops stationed in Western Europe acted as a “trip wire” – particularly for American involvement – and discouraged Soviet adventurism. While most of those forces were withdrawn in the 1990s, the current effort seeks to re-establish that presence and send a signal to Moscow that any attack on the Eastern allies will risk a showdown with the entire alliance.³⁰

In June 2016, NATO announced that it would deploy multinational battalions to four states that feel especially threatened by Russia – Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland.³¹ Almost immediately, the US, UK, and Germany agreed to lead one battalion each, but the identity of the fourth country was unclear. Pressure quickly began to build on Canada to be that state, and the Liberal government was essentially forced to consider the request.³²

Prime Minister Trudeau initially appeared to be in no hurry to reach a decision, perhaps realizing that given the small size of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and the fact that the military was still dealing with the after-effects of the long mission in Afghanistan, making a new force commitment would not be easy.³³ But that approach changed when US President Barack Obama visited Ottawa in late June. While he praised the new Prime Minister and the enduring friendship between both countries, he also had some surprisingly direct comments on the need for Canada to do more on the international stage. As the President stated, “as your NATO ally, and your friend, let me say that we will be more secure when every NATO member, including Canada, contributes its full share to

our common security...the world needs more Canada. NATO needs more Canada,”³⁴ a statement which indicated that the US expected Canada to step up to the plate and contribute.

Sure enough, *just one day* after the President’s remarks, the Trudeau government announced it had agreed to lead the battalion based in Latvia. The force will consist of up to 500 troops, six CF-18s, and a frigate, and will be deployed in early 2017 (and will stay at least through 2020). As the Chief of the Defence Staff, General Jonathan Vance noted, “you can use the term tripwire as [a] descriptor, but what [this force] really does is raise that calculus of risk. [Would Russia] take any steps against a NATO nation given that the alliance has decided to put in very credible combat forces?”³⁵ The timing strongly suggested that the decision was heavily influenced by the US, but not surprisingly, the government denied any connection.

The announcement was met with a quick denunciation by Russia, which said that it was “reminiscent of Cold War sabre-rattling, and a complete waste of money and resources.”³⁶ The Russians further noted that the allied troop presence would likely result in more tensions. Prime Minister Trudeau responded by saying that his government was “extremely enthusiastic” about helping NATO, and that there was a consensus that the West needed to be united against Russia’s “illegitimate” actions.³⁷ And, for his part, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg reassured observers that NATO “[does not want] a new Cold War....[But this deployment] will send a clear message that an attack on one ally will be an attack on the whole alliance.”³⁸ But the most surprising public comment was made by Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion, who said “it is terribly unfortunate that Canada has to deploy its forces in Latvia instead of having peacekeeping in Africa or in an area of the world where it is much more needed,”³⁹ a statement that reflected the government’s ambivalence about contributing to a mission that is more about deterrence and the threat of combat than it is about peacekeeping and diplomacy.

Lastly, a third defence issue that has attracted government attention is the promise to renew Canada’s UN peacekeeping presence. This was stated in the 2015 election platform, which noted that a Liberal government will “recommit to supporting peace operations with the United Nations, and will make our specialized capabilities – from mobile medical teams to engineering support to aircraft that can carry supplies and personnel – available on a case-by-case basis.”⁴⁰ Prime Minister Trudeau re-iterated that promise when he spoke to the UN General Assembly in March 2016, saying “it’s time for Canada to step up once again....we are determined to revitalize Canada’s role in peacekeeping.”⁴¹

The return to peacekeeping would reverse a slide in Canadian involvement that dates back to the controversial missions in Somalia and Bosnia in the 1990s. Indeed, by 2016, the total number of

Canadians involved in peacekeeping operations stood at less than 100, ranking Canada a distant 62 out of 126 countries contributing forces.⁴² This stands in sharp contrast to the peacekeeping role that Canada played during the Cold War, when it was one of the leading contributors. The decline has been the subject of much criticism from the left, which believes that Ottawa has abdicated its responsibility to help bring peace and stability to war-torn countries.⁴³ In addition, several observers have suggested that the government's promise may be linked to its strategy to win back a seat on the UN Security Council, as contributing peacekeeping forces has always been one method of showing support for the UN.

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As with several of the issues that the Liberals campaigned on, this one was heavily influenced by domestic politics. Specifically, the Liberals have drawn a sharp contrast with the Harper government, which downplayed Canada's peacekeeping tradition and instead emphasized our combat history and war-fighting tradition. While observers need to be careful about overstating this point, the suggestion is that Prime Minister Harper wanted Canada to be seen as a warrior country,⁴⁴ while Trudeau has emphasized the historic role that Canada has played in peacekeeping and conflict resolution. Notably, the Liberal position is politically popular, as an opinion poll taken in the weeks leading up to the 2015 election showed that 74 per cent of Canadians believe that peacekeeping should be the military's main priority, which is largely consistent with other polls conducted over the years.⁴⁵

By the fall of 2016, no formal decision has been made as to where Canadian peacekeepers would be sent, but there was increasing speculation that the choice had been whittled down to two possible missions – Mali and the Central African Republic. In a statement released in August, the government announced it was planning on committing up to 600 military personnel and 150 police officers for the mission, with \$450 million being budgeted,⁴⁶ and it was confirmed that the mission will include medical, training, and engineering components.

But other aspects will likely be included as well. In talks that Prime Minister Trudeau had with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon in February, they reportedly discussed the need for female police officers to deal with sexual assault allegations in conflict zones – an issue that has attracted considerable attention, in light of allegations against UN peacekeepers over the past few years.⁴⁷ And Defence Minister Sajjan has previously indicated that development, diplomacy, and capacity building through police training will be part of any new mission.⁴⁸ In November, it was further announced that the mission will last three years, and will be reassessed each year to ensure that it has an “enduring” impact. Defence Minister Sajjan also suggested that the mission could be spread out, with troops deployed in different countries at the same time.⁴⁹

The Liberal intention to return Canada to its peacekeeping past is an important development, and a potentially positive one, but observers should recognize the challenges that any new mission will face. The UN today has over 125,000 troops deployed in more than a dozen missions, and many of these – including the two that Canada is apparently considering – remain fraught with danger (in 2015 alone, 51 UN peacekeepers were killed in deliberate attacks), and the domestic situation in many of these countries is extremely unstable. African nations in particular are most in need of assistance, and while pledging our involvement might make the government (and many Canadians) feel good about our renewed global role, it may also lead to significant human costs and potential casualties, factors which could certainly lead to a decline in popular support over time.⁵⁰ So the return to peacekeeping is a decision that carries considerable risks.

In a final analysis, the new Liberal government is trying to navigate a new defence path forward, and it is still a little early to tell precisely what direction it will take. But some things seem clear enough. On spending, the indications are that the budget will remain relatively flat. But, at least until the election of Donald Trump, it seemed possible – perhaps even likely – that it was poised to fall over the course of the government's term. At some point, the government was likely to realize that it could not keep running \$30 billion annual deficits, and defence would have been a tempting target for budget-cutters. However, in the aftermath of Trump's win, the ground has shifted in Canadian politics, and defence is just one of many areas where the Liberals may now have to reconsider their plans.

As a candidate, Donald Trump made it clear that he expected all US allies to contribute more both to their own security, and to the larger NATO defence.⁵¹ He even suggested that states that do not spend adequately might be kicked out of the alliance, although like many of Trump's statements on the campaign trail, it is hard to know if he actually meant what he said.⁵² Regardless, his presidential victory will increase pressure on all member states – but particularly low spenders like Canada – to raise expenditures, or risk an early confrontation with the President-elect. That said, it is clear that Prime Minister Trudeau has a range of other issues that he views as more pressing priorities, so it will be interesting to see if this prospect changes his mind-set in any way.

In general, the new government appears to be largely reactive when it comes to defence. Only one of the issues examined in this paper constitutes a clear case of the Liberals' reacting to developments in the external environment (i.e., the decision to contribute forces to Eastern Europe). But even the decision to re-commit to peacekeeping seems at least partially attributable to external pressures, as part of the motivation appears to be the desire to win back a UN Security Council seat. And, with regards to the CF-18 replacement controversy, the government's actions to date raise more questions than answers; all that seems certain is that Trudeau seems determined to purchase a different

aircraft than his predecessor, regardless of how that decision gets made or whether it makes any strategic sense.

Overall, then, it seems apparent that defence is not a priority of Prime Minister Trudeau, with few indications that he values the military (unlike Harper's frequent comments on the valour of its soldiers). In many ways, then, the new government's thinking corresponds closely with several of its Liberal party predecessors –

in particular, the governments of Trudeau's father and Jean Chretien – in that it is likely to treat defence as a purely secondary concern. Thus, Canada's defence policy under the new government will likely reflect a Back-to-the-Future scenario, where budget cuts and equipment delays will continue to weaken the CAF, a force that can ill afford any further setbacks and has watched its military capabilities steadily erode for decades. That said, though, the election of Donald Trump was a political earthquake, and it will take some time to determine what effect (if any) it may ultimately have on the Liberal's defence plans.

About the Author

Andrew Richter is an associate professor of Political Science at the University of Windsor. His areas of interest are Canadian foreign and defence policy, Canada-US relations, and nuclear proliferation. He has published in a wide array of journals, including *The American Review of Canadian Studies*, *International Journal*, and *Comparative Strategy*. He is also the author of *Avoiding Armageddon: Canadian Military Strategy and Nuclear Weapons, 1950-1963* (UBC Press and Michigan State University Press, 2002).

Notes

1. Most famously, in October 2014, Trudeau rejected Canadian military involvement against the Islamic State (ISIL) in Iraq, saying that “rather than trying to whip out our CF-18s and show [the world] how big they are,” Canada should “talk more about the kind of humanitarian aid that Canada can and must be engaged in.” See Andrea Janus, “PMO Decries Trudeau Joke that Canada should not `Whip out our CF-18s,” *CTV News*, 2 October 2014, <http://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/pmo-decries-trudeau-joke-that-canada-should-not-whip-out-our-cf-18s-1.2035759>.
2. See 2015 Liberal Party Platform, *Real Change*, www.liberal.ca/re-alchange.
3. It is debatable whether the 2008 Canada First Defence Strategy was a comprehensive review, as there were no public consultations nor was there much attempt to identify a defence strategy. See Canada, Department of National Defence, *Canada First Defence Strategy* (Ottawa, 2008).
4. See Murray Brewster, “Defence Spending Expected to Drop \$400 M – Despite Liberal Pledge to Keep up with Tories: Sources,” *The National Post*, 8 March 2016, <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/canadian-politics/defence-spending-expected-to-drop-400m-despite-liberal-pledge-to-keep-up-with-tories-sources> and “Defence Spending Expected to Fall Despite Liberal Pledge to Keep up with Tories,” *The Globe and Mail*, 8 March 2016, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/defence-spending-expected-to-fall-despite-liberal-pledge-to-keep-up-with-tories/article29079637/>.
5. Steve Chase, “Military Left Waiting on Big Ticket Items as Liberals Shrink Funding in Budget,” *The Globe and Mail*, 22 March 2016, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/military-left-waiting-on-big-ticket-items-as-liberals-shrink-funding-in-budget/article29352298/>. As Finance Minister Bill Morneau stated, “when [DND] needs the money, [it] will be in the fiscal framework.”
6. Government of Canada, *Budget 2016: Growing the Middle Class*, p. 204, www.budget.gc.ca/2016/docs/plan/budget2016-en.pdf.
7. Between 2007 and 2015, DND returned almost \$10 billion back to Ottawa. See Murray Brewster, “Defence, CSIS, RCMP Unable to Spend \$11 Billion of the Budgets Since 2007,” *CBC News*, 20 February 2015, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/defence-csis-rcmp-unable-to-spend-11-billion-of-their-budgets-since-2007-1.2964507>.
8. Murray Brewster, “Liberal Budget Puts Off Military Equipment Purchases but Bumps Up Spending on Veterans,” *The National Post*, 22 March 2016, <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/canadian-politics/liberal-budget-puts-off-military-equipment-purchases-but-bumps-up-spending-on-veterans>.
9. See *Budget 2016: Growing the Middle Class*.
10. John Paul Tasker, “A Trump Presidency Could Add Pressure on Canada’s Defence Spending,” *CBC News*, 27 April 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/trump-obama-nato-spending-targets-1.3495736>. Canada currently spends a little less than 1 percent GDP on defence, about half the alliance target of 2 percent.
11. Alex Panetta, “Canada will not Commit to Doubling Defence Spending,” *Maclean’s*, 12 May 2016, <http://www.macleans.ca/politics/ottawa/sorry-trump-canada-isnt-committing-to-doubling-defence-spending/>.
12. Catharine Tunney, “Harjit Sajjan Says NATO Spending doesn’t Measure Canada’s True Contribution,” *CBC News*, 9 July 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/harjit-sajjan-nato-defence-spending-1.3671430>.
13. Lee Berthiaume, “Trudeau Defends Canada’s Military Spending Record, Points to NATO Contribution,” *The Toronto Star*, 5 July 2016, <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/07/05/trudeau-defends-canadas-military-spending-record-points-to-nato-contribution.html>.
14. NATO figures reveal that in 2016 overall alliance spending rose for the first time in over a decade. See Sam Jones, “Defence Spending by Nato’s Europe States Up as Uncertainty Rises,” *The Financial Times*, 30 May 2016, <https://www.ft.com/content/e0058620-259d-11e6-8ba3-cdd781d02d89>.
15. See “Trudeau Says Liberals won’t Buy F-35 Planes, use Savings to Increase Navy Spending,” *The Globe and Mail*, 20 September 2015, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/trudeau-says-liberals-wont-buy-f-35-planes-use-savings-to-increase-navy-spending/article26446887/>.
16. The payment maintained Canada’s place in the F-35 buyer’s pool and ensured that Canadian companies retained the right to bid on contracts. In June 2016, the government made its second payment of the year.
17. Arielle Piat-Sauvé, “F-35 Fighter Jet Purchase by Liberals may still be in the Mix,” *CBC News*, 25 February 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/f-35-fighter-jet-purchase-1.3464957>.
18. Lee Berthiaume, “Liberals Plan-

- ning to Buy Super Hornet Fighter Jets Before Making Final Decision on F-35s, Sources Say,” *The National Post*, 5 June 2016, <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/canadian-politics/liberals-planning-to-buy-super-hornet-fighter-jets-before-making-final-decision-on-f-35s-sources-say>. In November, the Post reported that the option remains very much on the table. See “Liberals Again Mulling Sole Source Purchase of Super Hornet Fighter Jets to Replace CF-18s,” *The National Post*, 17 November 2016.
19. Canada’s operational CF-18 fleet is down to 77 aircraft, but this figure has been slowly declining for years, and there have been no major changes that would account for this suddenly becoming a “crisis.”
 20. Lee Berthiaume, “Trudeau Says F-35s are ‘Far From Working’ as Liberals, Tories Spar over Fighter Jet Strategies,” *The National Post*, 7 June 2016, <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/canadian-politics/trudeau-says-f-35s-are-far-from-working-as-liberals-tories-spar-over-fighter-jet-strategies>.
 21. The program, which was launched in 2001, has suffered from huge cost overruns and myriad technical difficulties, many of which are still not fully resolved. The US General Accounting Office (GAO) has released multiple reports that have examined the slow progress of the plane. See, for example, *F-35 Joint Strike Fighter: Assessment Needed to Address Affordability Challenges* (GAO-15-364, 14 April 2015), www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-364.
 22. See “Air Force Declares F-35A Ready for Combat,” *Defense News*, 2 August 2016, <http://www.defensenews.com/story/breaking-news/2016/08/02/f35-ioc-air-force-operational-acc-com-bat/87948142/>.
 23. See Berthiaume, “Trudeau Says F-35s are ‘Far From Working.’”
 24. See Lee Berthiaume, “Harjit Sajjan Going Back to Drawing Board on Fighter Jets, Launching Consultations,” *CBC News*, 6 July 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/sajjan-procurement-fighter-jets-1.3666625>.
 25. See Murray Brewster, “Lockheed Martin Warns it will Pull \$825M in F-35 Contracts if Canada Buys Another Jet,” *CBC News*, 14 June 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/stealth-fighter-contracts-1.3629403> and “Lockheed Goes on the Offensive in Canada’s F-35 Debate,” *Defense News*, 15 June 2016. It might be noted that Lockheed has denied making any threats, saying that a Canadian decision to purchase a different aircraft would leave the firm “with no choice” but to pull work out of Canada.
 26. See “US Pitches F-35 Jet to Ottawa as Liberals Aim to Replace Fleet,” *The Globe and Mail*, 28 October 2016.
 27. In June 2016, a Lockheed Martin executive was quoted as saying that “if we get told that we’re not allowed to compete, then we’ll go and evaluate all of our alternatives at that point.” See Jordan Press, “Lockheed Martin Still Has Hopes to Sell Canada F-35 Fighter Jets,” *The Toronto Star*, 8 June 2016, <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/06/08/lockheed-martin-still-has-hopes-to-sell-canada-f-35-fighter-jets.html>.
 28. See Berthiaume, “Liberals Planning to Buy Super Hornet Fighter Jets.”
 29. According to DND, because Canada never officially signed a contract to purchase the aircraft, it can terminate its involvement in the program by providing 90 days written notification. See David Pugliese, “F-35 Exit Strategy: Canada Could Pay \$313M to Pull Out of Jet Program, Defence Documents Show,” *The National Post*, 23 August 2016, <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/canadian-politics/f-35-exit-strategy-canada-could-pay-about-313m-to-pull-out-of-jet-program-defence-documents-show>.
 30. See Julian Barnes, “NATO to Discuss Russia’s Risky Military Maneuvers,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 19 April 2016, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/nato-to-discuss-russias-risky-military-maneuvers-on-wednesday-1461059882>.
 31. See Ryan Browne, “NATO Chief: Four Battalions to Eastern Europe Amid Tensions with Russia,” *CNN.com*, 13 June 2016, <http://www.cnn.com/2016/06/13/politics/nato-battalions-poland-baltics-russia/>.
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 34. See Murray Brewster, “Obama Defends Progressive Values in Speech to Parliament,” *CBC News*, 29 June 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/obama-speech-parliament-1.3658244>.

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37. See Lee Berthiaume, “Trudeau Defends NATO Force, Slams Russia’s ‘Illegitimate’ Actions,” *The Canadian Press*, 9 July 2016, <http://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/trudeau-defends-nato-force-slams-russia-s-illegitimate-actions-1.2980160>.
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39. See Althia Raj, “Canada Preparing to Commit Troops to UN Peacekeeping Missions: Sources” *The Huffington Post*, 12 July 2016, http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2016/07/12/canada-un-peace-keeping_n_10954236.html.
40. See *Real Change*.
41. See Peter Edwards, “‘Time for Canada to Step up Once Again’ at United Nations, Trudeau Says,” *The Toronto Star*, 16 March 2016, <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/03/16/trudeau-says-canada-will-look-for-seat-on-un-security-council.html>.
42. See Murray Brewster, “Does Canada Still Contribute to Peacekeeping in the World?,” *The Toronto Star*, 29 September 2015, <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2015/09/29/does-canada-still-contribute-to-peacekeeping-in-the-world.html>.
43. See, for example, Paul Heinbecker, *Getting Back in the Game: A Foreign Policy Playbook for Canada* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 2010), and Noah Richler, *What We Talk About When We Talk About War* (Fredericton: Goose Lane Books, 2012).
44. Scholar Roland Paris has written that the Harper government rejected many elements of the liberal international consensus that had underpinned Canadian foreign policy in the post-war period and instead highlighted Canada’s participation in global conflicts. See “Are Canadians Still Liberal Internationalists? Foreign Policy and Public Opinion in the Harper Era,” *International Journal* 69, 3 (2014).
45. See Angus Reid Institute, “Election 2015: Canadians Profess Decline in International Reputation in Last Decade by Margin of 2:1,” 28 September 2015, <http://angusreid.org/election-2015-foreign-policy/>.
46. See Murray Brewster, “Liberals Commit \$450M, up to 600 Troops to UN Peacekeeping Missions,” *CBC News*, 26 August 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-peacekeeping-announcement-1.3736593>.
47. In 2015, the UN acknowledged that there were 69 allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation by military personnel that year alone. See David Shortell and Richard Roth, “UN: 69 Allegations of Sexual Abuse Against Peacekeepers Last Year,” *CNN.com*, 4 March 2016, <http://www.cnn.com/2016/03/04/world/un-peacekeepers-sexual-abuse/>.
48. See Brewster, “Liberals Commit \$450M, up to 600 Troops.”
49. See Tonda Macchareles, “Canada Committed to Three Year Deployment in Africa,” *The Toronto Star*, 11 November 2016, <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/11/11/canada-committed-to-three-year-deployment-in-africa.html>.
50. Defence Minister Sajjan acknowledged these risks in November 2016, when he said that the mission Canadian troops will perform will “have a level of risk where peacekeepers [could be] hurt, [or killed], we’ve been looking at the risk factor in a very serious way.” See *ibid.*
51. In an interview in March 2016, candidate Trump said “NATO is costing [the US] a fortune, and yes, [the US] is protecting Europe, but it is spending a lot of money....I think the distribution of costs has to be changed.” See Glen Kessler, “Trump’s Claim that the US Pays the ‘Lion’s Share’ for NATO,” *The Washington Post*, 30 March 2016, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/wp/2016/03/30/trumps-claim-that-the-u-s-pays-the-lions-share-for-nato/>.
52. In April 2016, Mr. Trump said that if elected, he would “call up [countries not spending much on defence] and say ‘fellas, you haven’t paid for years, give us the money or get the hell out.’” See Lydia Tomkiw, “Quotes from Donald Trump on NATO: What Republican Candidate Said about North Atlantic Treaty Organization and US Obligations,” *International Business Times*, 21 July 2016, <http://www.ibtimes.com/quotes-donald-trump-nato-what-republican-candidate-said-about-north-atlantic-treaty-2393661>.

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