



ON TRACK

THE CONFERENCE OF DEFENCE ASSOCIATIONS INSTITUTE

L'INSTITUT DE LA CONFÉRENCE DES ASSOCIATIONS DE LA DÉFENSE

A CRITICAL LOOK AT EMERGING CANADIAN DEFENCE POLICY

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

CANADA-US STRATEGIC RELATIONS

**ANGLO-FRENCH DEFENCE
COOPERATION**

CHINA IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

**DETERRENCE CONCEPTS IN THE
BALTIC SEA**

ON TRACK

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CDA Institute / L'Institut de la CAD

151 Slater Street, Suite 412A

151, rue Slater, Suite 412A

Ottawa ON K1P 5H3

Phone / Téléphone: (613) 236 9903

Email / Courriel: mhobman@cdainstitute.ca

Website / Site Web: www.cdainstitute.ca

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Mission Statement. It is the goal of the CDA Institute to promote informed public debate on security and defence issues and the vital role played by the Canadian Armed Forces in society. It is intended that ON TRACK facilitate this educational mandate by featuring articles that explore security, defence, and strategic issues that may have an impact on Canadian interests and on the safety of its citizens. The views expressed in ON TRACK are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the CDA Institute.

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Énoncé de mission. L'Institut de la CAD a pour but de non seulement encourager un débat public éclairé à propos des problématiques concernant la sécurité et de défense canadienne, mais aussi de promouvoir le rôle vital joué par les Forces armées canadiennes dans la société. Nous souhaitons que « ON TRACK » facilite ce mandat éducatif en mettant en vedette une gamme d'articles qui explorent la sécurité, la défense et le domaine stratégique pouvant avoir un impact sur les intérêts du Canada et sur la sécurité de ses citoyens. Les points de vues exprimés dans « ON TRACK » reflètent les vues des auteurs et pas nécessairement ceux de l'Institut de la CAD.

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COVER PHOTO: Canadian Forces Combat Camera, DND. A member of the multinational brigade from 5 Canadian Mechanized Brigade-Group sits in the turret of a Light Armoured Vehicle III, in Santa Margarida, Portugal, during JOINTEX 15 as part of NATO's exercise Trident Juncture 15 on October 30, 2015.

PHOTO DE LA PAGE COUVERTURE: Caméra de combat des Forces canadiennes, MDN. Un membre de la brigade multinationale du 5e Groupe-brigade mécanisé du Canada se trouve sur la tourelle d'un véhicule blindé léger III, à Santa Margarida, au Portugal, au cours de JOINTEX 15, dans le cadre de l'exercice Trident Juncture 16 de l'OTAN, le 30 octobre 2015.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Dr. David McDonough

Our new Canadian government intends to conduct a wide-ranging defence review in 2016.

The CDA and the CDA Institute look forward to more information on defence priorities and the opportunity to contribute to this review over the coming year. Importantly, we should remember that security developments abroad – a number of which are explored in this issue of ON TRACK – are unlikely to hold still or stay quiescent during this process.

This issue begins with an Editorial on “iconoclastic ideas” about defence by CDA Institute Board Member **Dr. John Scott Cowan**, based on his excellent keynote address at the CDA Institute’s Annual Graduate Student Symposium that took place in Kingston in October 2015.

The new government’s approach to security and defence issues is explored by CDA Institute Board Member **Richard Cohen**, who provides some insightful reflection on what appears (or does not) in the government’s recently released Ministerial mandate letters.

A key element of how the new government will undoubtedly approach security and defence matters concerns the Canada-US alliance, a point that was particularly emphasized in the mandate letters. We are pleased to have **Dr. David Bercuson**, University of Calgary, to comment on some of the more troubling challenges facing this alliance.

Like its predecessor, the new government has indicated its commitment to retain Canada’s military contributions to Ukraine, Eastern Europe, and the Baltics. An often unexplored area of Canada’s involvement in this region concerns arms verification, which is overseen by the Directorate of Arms Control Verification on the Strategic Joint Staff. We are fortunate that **Colonel P.J. Williams**, Head of Verification for Canada, is here to provide further details about this work.

As Canada prepares to undertake a defence review, it will undoubtedly explore some of the more important defence engagement initiatives by its key allies. Among the most important has been the growing defence cooperation evident between France and the UK, which has only accelerated since budgetary austerity became more prevalent in Europe. **Dr. Meghan Fitzpatrick**, who completed a PhD at King’s College

London, explores how both countries have dealt with this new reality.

Lessons can also perhaps be learned from how other middle powers, such as South Korea, have adapted to the evolving security policies of their great power neighbour(s). Indeed, South Korea faces the unenviable position of balancing between two regional great powers (China and Japan), alongside an alliance with an extra-regional superpower (United States), making its foreign and security policy particularly complicated. To make sense of its approach, **Dr. Ian Bowers** from the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies offers his thoughts on South Korea’s strategic response to China’s rise.

Readers of the CDA Institute’s Blog: The Forum will likely be aware of **Adam MacDonald**’s writings on a variety of Asia-Pacific security issues, the broad geo-strategic analysis by **David Law**, and **Michael Lambert**’s posts about Russian behavior and Europe’s response. In this issue of ON TRACK, we are delighted to have all three expert commentators offer more in-depth analysis of three key issues: China’s more aggressive approach to the South China Sea, the emergent strategic cooperation between China and Russia, and Russia’s application of hybrid warfare. All three developments will likely be increasingly significant challenges for both Canadian policy-makers and those of our allies alike.

This issue concludes with three articles that explore different aspects of the nuclear dilemma facing Russia and the West. In the first article, **Magnus Christiansson** from the Swedish Defence University looks at the role of deterrence between Russia and the West in the Baltic Sea region. The second article by **Nancy Teeple**, a PhD candidate at Simon Fraser University, explores some of the benefits of a minimum deterrence posture. The concluding article is by **Dr. Douglas Ross**, Simon Fraser University, who looks at potential instability in the Russia-US security dilemma.

Sincerely yours,
David McDonough, PhD

LE MOT DU RÉDACTEUR

David McDonough, Ph. D.

Le nouveau gouvernement a l'intention de conduire un examen de la défense en 2016.

La CAD et l'Institut de la CAD attendent avec intérêt plus d'information sur les priorités de la défense et l'occasion de contribuer à cet examen au cours de l'année à venir. D'une manière primordiale, nous devrions nous rappeler que les développements de sécurité à l'étranger – un certain nombre qui sont explorés dans cette édition d'ON TRACK – sont susceptibles à des changements que nous ne pouvons pas prédire régulièrement avec confiance ou certitude pendant ce processus.

Cette édition commence avec un éditorial sur « des idées iconoclastes » au sujet de la défense par **Dr. John Scott Cowan**, membre du conseil de l'Institut de la CAD, basé sur son excellent exposé d'orientation au Symposium de l'Institut de la CAD qui a eu lieu à Kingston en octobre 2015.

La nouvelle approche du gouvernement aux questions de la sécurité et de la défense est explorée par **Richard Cohen**, un membre du conseil de l'Institut de la CAD, qui fournit une réflexion sur ce qui apparaît (ou pas) dans les lettres ministérielles récemment sorties du mandat du gouvernement.

Un élément clé de la façon dont le nouveau gouvernement approchera la sécurité concerne l'alliance Canada-États-Unis, qui a été en particulier soulignée dans les lettres de mandat ministérielles. Nous sommes heureux d'avoir **Dr. David Bercuson**, de l'Université de Calgary, à présenter ses observations sur certains des défis plus préoccupants faisant face à cette alliance.

Comme son prédécesseur, le nouveau gouvernement a indiqué ses intentions de maintenir les contributions militaires du Canada vers l'Ukraine, l'Europe de l'Est, et les Pays Bas. Un domaine de la participation canadienne souvent inconnu dans cette région concerne la vérification de l'armement, qui est surveillée par la Direction de Vérification du Contrôle des Armements (DVCA) des Forces armées canadiennes. Nous sommes heureux que le **Colonel P.J. Williams**, chef de vérification pour le Canada, soit ici pour fournir d'autres détails sur ce travail.

Lorsque le Canada se prépare à entreprendre une critique de la défense, il explorera assurément certaines des initiatives plus importantes d'engagement de la défense par ses alliés principaux. Parmi les plus importants a été la coopération de défense évidente

entre la France et le R-U, qui s'est accéléré depuis que l'austérité budgétaire est devenue plus répandue en Europe. **Dr. Meghan Fitzpatrick**, du « King's College London » au Royaume-Uni, considère comment les deux pays se sont adaptés à cette nouvelle réalité.

Les leçons peuvent également être instruites de la Corée du Sud, qui a dû s'adapter aux politiques de sécurité en évolution de ses grandes puissances avoisinantes. En effet, la Corée du Sud fait face à la position difficile d'équilibrage entre deux grandes puissances régionales (la Chine et le Japon), à côté d'une alliance avec la superpuissance extrarégionale (les États-Unis), rendant sa politique étrangère encore plus compliquée. **Dr. Ian Bowers**, de l'Institut Norvégien pour des Études de la Défense (Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies), offre ses pensées sur la réponse stratégique de la Corée du Sud à la hausse de la Chine.

Lecteurs du blog de l'Institut de la CAD, le Forum, se rendront vraisemblablement compte des compositions d'**Adam MacDonald**, sur les multiples problèmes de sécurité de l'Asie et du Pacifique, de l'analyste géostratégique **David Law**, et de l'analyste **Michael Lambert** du comportement russe et de la réponse de l'Europe. Dans cette édition d'ON TRACK, nous sommes enchantés d'offrir trois analyses sur des questions clés: une approche plus agressive de la Chine vers la mer de sud de la Chine, la coopération stratégique émergente entre la Chine et la Russie, et la guerre hybride de la Russie. Chacun des trois développements posera vraisemblablement des défis de plus en plus significatifs pour les analystes de politiques canadiens et ceux de nos alliés.

Cette édition conclut avec trois articles qui explorent différents aspects du dilemme nucléaire faisant face à la Russie et à l'occident. Dans le premier article, **Magnus Christiansson**, de l'université suédoise de la défense, considère le rôle de la dissuasion entre la Russie et l'ouest dans la région de la mer baltique. Le deuxième article, par **Nancy Teeple**, une candidate de doctorat à l'Université Simon Fraser, explore certains des avantages d'une posture minimale de dissuasion. Cette édition conclut avec un article par **Dr. Douglas Ross**, de l'Université Simon Fraser, qui considère l'instabilité potentielle dans le dilemme de sécurité Russie-États-Unis.

Cordialement

David McDonough, Ph.D.

EDITORIAL

ICONOCLASTIC IDEAS IN DEFENCE

by Dr. John Scott Cowan

In the liberal democracies at peace, armed forces are political footballs first, economic engines second, and instruments of national policy and protection third. It has become popular to argue for “efficiency” in the armed forces, but an underlying problem with the usual political connotations of this idea is that “efficiency” in normal government operations implies slimness, and the absence of robustness. No redundant parallel systems, no ability to cope if the power goes off or the river rises or the computer is hacked. So if a government system is “efficient,” meaning “economical,” perhaps you will wait some extra days or months for it to do what you need done, or perhaps it won’t deliver those services, say, during an ice storm, a labour disturbance, or even perhaps when some of its staff are on vacation.

This usual concept of “efficiency” does not work for the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), which, as the force of last resort, needs to be capable of operating well under conditions of chaos and complexity, when very little else is working. Hence an armed force needs the robustness that relies upon some redundant systems and some capability beyond an idealized minimum.

This does not mean that there is no analogous concept of efficiency, in which pointless expenditures are eschewed and capabilities are selected based on real anticipated need, rather than

vanity or custom. But they may involve operating differently than other parts of government.

There are impediments to looking forward without blinders. A new Canadian political context, with fixed election dates, has made for a perpetual election campaign replete with

"This usual concept of 'efficiency' does not work for the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), which, as the force of last resort, needs to be capable of operating well under conditions of chaos and complexity, when very little else is working."

oversimplified sound bites. And, during the five years or so following a shooting war (and I certainly count Afghanistan as one), there is a tendency within armed forces to look forward by looking back, assuming that future conflict will emulate the past, as some (but certainly not all) of those who fought figure they know it all, and that there is nothing new to learn.

What follows touches on three areas where, in my view, radical ideas need to be allowed to flourish. They are procurement, technology, and departmental structure.

Procurement

In Canada, government procurement is a miniaturized version of US procurement.

There is open bidding to supply something described in a specification, followed by an additional process of negotiating economic benefits under the completely false assumption that such economic offset benefits do not add to the price. We do it this way in part to show that the contract was not awarded to some favoured entity. Clean hands for the perpetual campaign trail. It takes forever. By the time a purchase actually comes to pass, the specification is dated and nearly meaningless.

In a Defence Science Advisory Board (DSAB) study that I chaired a few years ago, we realized that this process is okay for buying toilet paper, but not for some unique, complex military item. Unlike the US, Canada’s defence industrial base is so weak that forcing competitive bidding is like forcing two drunks to fight. They both fall down from the slightest hit. If the government wants something complex, it should get it by forcing cooperation amongst them, not competition. This strengthens both. This has worked during crises in the past, but it does mean trusting probity in government.

At the same time, I would advocate that responsibility for seeking to maximize economic offsets in Canada be accorded to a department other than the Department of National Defence (DND), and that department should be given its own budget, and use those additional funds as inducements to persuade successful

bidders to place much larger quantities of work in Canada. Doing what we do now, by pretending that such “added value” is costless, merely inflates all initial bids by industry, in anticipation of subsequently being beaten about head and shoulders in the second process to secure the offsets.

If we separate these components, we will actually know what we are paying for in terms of regional economic development, and the basic price of a commodity will seem more logical. This separation has, as well, the great merit of being honest, rather than the present entirely duplicitous system.

And finally, Canada is terrible about getting the benefit from Canadian intellectual property (IP) to stay in Canada. To this end, for any useful IP owned by the Crown, the Crown should retain a full licence to use the IP itself, and then give the IP away free to whatever Canadian player has the best chance of exploiting it. This recommendation, in a DSAB report that I chaired years ago, was strongly supported by the then Assistant Deputy Minister (Science and Technology) in DND, but the government still doesn't get it. Canada has a terrible record of not getting through the demonstration phase with IP from Canadian sources, and hence the big profits from the eventual exploitation of Canadian IP usually accrue to players not based in Canada.

Technology

Armed forces have always had a love-hate relationship with technological change. Everyone wants the “magic bullet” (quite literally), but the first iteration or use of new gizmos often goes badly, as doctrine does not immediately catch up with the technology. We suffered this for a while with the armed LAVs, and we will have legal and doctrinal problems about

drones for a long while, just like the anticipated policy and legal issues with driverless cars.

So instead we slip into old-style pseudo-scientific debates devoid of meaning. The twin engine vs single engine debate for fighter aircraft is a case in point, where in fact today there is virtually no difference in survivability based upon number of engines. Not so thirty years ago, but

on top, and also equipping them with excellent indirect fire weapons, which cause projectiles to come from above (Jutland, 1916).

(c) Building elegant, fast fighter aircraft just before World War II with endurance of a couple of hours, because that's how it was done in World War I. They could not protect bombers for anything other than short trips, nor could they range



Dr. John Scott Cowan giving his keynote address at the 2015 Annual Graduate Student Symposium at the Royal Military College of Canada in Kingston. (Image credit: 45eNord.)

true now. Or think about stealth. Is any aircraft which is stealthy today likely to be anywhere near as stealthy after another 10 or 15 years of signal processing research? Very unlikely.

Dated thinking about new technology in warfare is a long-standing tradition. A few examples of the last 155 years follow:

- (a) Building a ship so powerful no opponent could approach close to it, but then equipping it extensively to repel boarders (Warrior 1860).
- (b) Building warships magnificently armoured on the sides, but not much

far afield. By 1945, many fighters had endurances of 4-6 hours,

(d) Designing advanced eight-wheeled armoured vehicles that place the driver in the most dangerous and hard-to-reach spot, so that the steering can still be direct linkage, rather than fly-by-wire, because highway traffic acts do not yet allow fly-by-wire steering (which is OK for jet airliners), rather than obtaining an exception to those acts. (Today).

Even in the cyber realm we have the same problem, because while we can defend against cyber-attacks, we dare not attack



our tormentors, because we don't know, geographically, where we are attacking, with very different legal frameworks if the entity attacking us, and which we wish to attack is in Canada, or in an allied state, or in a non-allied state with which we may or may not be at war. Our laws and doctrine need to be modified to allow appropriate proportionate response using cyber tools without differentiation as to the geography.

Departmental Structure

The DND is a government department, subject to all of the tens of thousands of rules of the federal government. It holds us back and lingers with many requirements which are fine for routine bureaucracies but which impede the ability to respond to crises. Furthermore, a sizeable minority of the department's public servants have little interest in or loyalty to the first purposes of the CAF. In fact, for a civil servant in most of the generic job classes, the way ahead is through general skills, not specialized ones that could strand you in a particular department, and sometimes the way to get ahead is to leap from department to department on an upward trajectory, leaving bits of wreckage in one's wake.

There are two potential cures for the over-bureaucratized system. The more radical cure is the Special Operating Agency (SOA). If the defence department was tiny, and was essentially a policy shop around Assistant Deputy Minister (Policy), the CAF, as the effector device, could be outside the department, functioning somewhat separately as an SOA of government. It would be responsible for delivery of effects (i.e., force projection), and like other SOAs (e.g., NAVCAN) could be a separate employer. That is the quickest

way out of some of the goofier rules of government and to some flexibility in financial management, as well as being able to reward specialized knowledge and institutional loyalty among the civilian employees.

A less radical method would be to learn a structural lesson from the Brits. In the UK, departmental loyalties are very strong

and specialized knowledge relevant to the work of a particular department can be well rewarded. This is because in Britain civil servants have a home department. They may work up to 50 percent of their career in other departments. But, while there is a method for changing one's home department, there is a home department, so specialized knowledge and competence in the more arcane aspects of one's home department is rewarded by advancement. This change in the reward system would hugely change attitudes. In our federal government, only the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) has such a scheme. They have, of course, uniformed members and civil servants, but they also have a specialized group called "civilian members," with terms of service between the other two. Perhaps it is a concept that DND should further explore.

I have touched on only three specific areas. But our long cherished assumptions in other areas of defence thinking may be out of date too. It would help indeed if there were more opportunities for considering some of the slightly radical options. ■

This piece is a shortened extract from a keynote address by Dr. John Scott Cowan at the CDA Institute Annual Graduate Student Symposium, 15 October 2015.

Dr. John Scott Cowan was Principal of the Royal Military College of Canada in Kingston (1999-2008), President of the CDA Institute (2008-2012), Chair of DSAB (now called the Defence Advisory Board of Canada) (2010-2013), and is Honorary Colonel, Princess of Wales' Own Regiment. During 1986-99 he held VP positions at the University of Ottawa and then Queen's University.

SUNNY WAYS IN A DARKENING WORLD: A CRITICAL LOOK AT EMERGING CANADIAN DEFENCE POLICY

by Richard Cohen

"Russia has bolstered its military and asserted itself on the world stage with a forcefulness not seen since the Cold War"¹

The Trudeau government takes office at a difficult time. Major economies are struggling; the Chinese economic engine has slowed down; oil is in oversupply and prices are crashing with cascading negative effects, not least in Canada. The Middle East and large parts of North and Central Africa are in turmoil and floods of refugees have poured into Europe and are now reaching our own shores. The political and military situation in Central and Eastern Europe is more unstable than at any time since World War II. Malevolent players, state and non-state, are seeking to redress old 'wrongs' and aggressively assert themselves. At their head is Vladimir Putin. Disdain for 'Western' norms and values that seemed firmly entrenched since the end of the Cold War has become the new mantra.

Despite the gathering clouds, Justin Trudeau has promised Canadians a sunnier world. Conservative 'belligerency' is being replaced by international cooperation and multilateralism. Near the top of the agenda is a renewal of Canada's love affair with the United Nations. The Liberals have announced a return to Canada's 'traditional' role as honest broker on the international stage, under the motto '*Canada is back!*'

During the election campaign, the Liberals surprised everyone when they announced the exclusion of the F-35, the

West's only '5th generation' fighter, in the 'open and transparent' competition to replace Canada's aging CF-18 fighter fleet. The F-35 was too aggressive, too sophisticated, and too expensive for a country that wants to be an international force for peace. Prime Minister Trudeau's promise to end Canada's participation in the bombing operations against the 'Islamic State' in Iraq and Syria also fits the new approach. Canada's CF-18s are to be withdrawn in favour of an 'enhanced training and humanitarian' role. But the Prime Minister has not explained to anyone's satisfaction the political or military reasons for this decision.

The Conservative Legacy

The national defence legacy that the Liberals inherited from their predecessors is a mixed one. The Conservative government's strong rhetoric on defence did not always translate into real action. During the Afghan campaign, the Harper government moved quickly to procure new equipment, often by single sourcing suppliers. Tanks, strategic lift aircraft, heavy lift helicopters and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) were pushed through a notoriously ponderous procurement system in order to equip our 'brave men and women' in the field.

The Canada First Defence Strategy (CFDS), promulgated in 2008, formalised the Conservatives' long-term commitment to a strong military. CFDS dealt primarily with procurement and personnel numbers based on defined and guaranteed funding

levels. It was a decent start. But CFDS contained little analysis to justify the strategy and the forecast costs of the major equipment projects were challenged from the beginning.

As the campaign in Afghanistan wound down, the Conservative government became less interested in things military. Despite the fragile security situation in Kandahar province, and to the disappointment of our partners in Regional Command South, Steven Harper insisted that all Canadian troops be withdrawn from Afghanistan by July 2011. This was arguably the first time in our history that Canada left the battlefield before the end of a conflict. Only after intense US pressure did Harper agree to a 'non-combat' training mission in Afghanistan, based in safe areas in and around Kabul – a decision that looks very much like the current government's promise to move to a 'non-combat' role in the war against the Islamic State!

Caution and timidity on defence marked the final years of the Conservatives' tenure. The government's drawn out equivocation on the F-35 program showed a lack of political courage in the face of loud and not always well-informed opposition. Like many governments before them, the Conservatives had trouble with military procurement. Billions of dollars were 'lapsed' because of a lack of experienced staff, diverse bureaucratic interests, inter-departmental rivalries and political vacillation. As the Conservatives searched for ways to meet their fundamental

promise of a balanced budget by 2015, defence spending became a prime target. (It's ironic that a Liberal commitment to running budget deficits was a major factor in their election win in that same year!)

The basic premise of CFDS, long term 'predicable and guaranteed' funding, was swept aside by the Conservatives in a drive to balance the books. In the rush to save money and with little consideration of its strategic implications, Canada announced it was pulling out of two key NATO programs; the Allied Ground Surveillance System (AGS), a new multinational airborne surveillance capability; and our long term role in the NATO Airborne Warning And Control System (AWACS) force, ironically at the time AWACS was demonstrating its real value in a shooting war over Libya.

The Conservative record on defence was not all negative. During the Afghan campaign, the government's high profile public support of the troops in Kandahar, bolstered by two strong Chiefs of Defence Staff and a highly popular and engaged Defence Minister, helped to restore the reputation and the morale of the Armed Forces. In 2011, Canada provided the operational commander as well as aircraft and ships to the NATO-led campaign to bring down Colonel Gaddafi. In 2014, the Conservatives sent CF-18 fighter jets, support aircraft, and Special Forces trainers to fight the IS in Iraq and Syria. And the government reacted robustly to Russian actions in Eastern Ukraine by contributing fighter aircraft, a ship and a training team as part of a NATO show of solidarity.

However, all this activity camouflaged the fact that these recent, relatively small military contributions represented a major part Canada's total deployable capability, especially in the air and at sea. If Putin had decided to push further in Ukraine or the Baltic States, there would not have been much left in the Canadian defence cupboard to contribute to the fight.

The Conservative government boosted defence spending in the early years. But Canada's defence budgets never moved much above 1 percent of GDP, near the bottom of NATO countries. Although the government signed up to the NATO goal of 2 percent, it never had any intention of reaching that target.

The October 2015 Election; Liberals Take Over

It was not surprising that defence was barely mentioned during the election campaign. None of the political parties advocated a significant increase in defence spending in spite of the clear signs that the world was becoming a more dangerous place. The defence of Canada was not a subject that stirred much public debate. The two defence commitments that were made by the Liberals during the campaign, pulling Canadian CF-18s out of the fight against the IS and dropping the F-35, were a bid to appeal to progressive voters, not a real statement of strategy.

The Minister's Mandate

In November 2015, soon after the government was sworn into office, the Prime Minister sent open mandate letters to his cabinet ministers, including the new Minister of National Defence, Harjit Sajjan.

The PM's directives to Mr. Sajjan were:

- *Protect Canadian sovereignty.*
- *Defend North America.*
- *Provide disaster relief and conduct search and rescue.*
- *Support United Nations peace operations.*
- *Contribute to the security of our allies and to allied and coalition operations abroad.*

The only change here was United Nations peacekeeping. Given the Liberals' strong criticism of the Conservatives for their neglect of the UN, that was not a surprise.

- *Ensure that the Canadian Armed Forces have the equipment they need*
- *Maintain current National Defence spending levels, including current planned increases.*

'Maintaining current spending levels' (inherited from the Conservatives) seems clear enough. But the new government, elected on the basis of a large number of expensive promises, and now facing a serious dip in revenues, may be tempted to raid the military's share of its 'discretionary spending!'

- *End Canada's combat mission in Iraq and Syria, refocusing Canada's efforts in the region on the training of local forces and humanitarian support.*

The Liberals have not yet announced (as of this writing) when they will end Canada's bombing missions in Iraq and Syria. Clearly there's a lot going on behind the scenes, including no doubt discussions with less than happy allies. Although Canadian aircraft are a small part of the overall effort, they represent about 16 percent of non-US assets in the theatre.

Despite assurances by the Liberals that the US and our other partners understand Canada's position, the government's determination to stop the combat mission sends a strange signal when everyone else is ramping up the fight against the IS. It seems especially odd when the combat mission has the support of a strong majority of Canadians.

- *Launch an open and transparent competition to replace the CF-18 fighter aircraft, focusing on options that match Canada's defence needs.*

Oddly the Minister's mandate letter doesn't mention excluding the F-35. The Liberals announced to great fanfare during the campaign that they plan to "reduce the procurement budget for replacing the CF-18s, and will instead purchase one of the many, lower-priced options that better match Canada's defence needs."²



Canadian and American military personnel undertaking training as part of Exercise *Allied Spirit IV* in Hohenfels, Germany on 15 January 2016 during Operation *Reassurance*. (Image credit: Corporal Nathan Moulton, Land Task Force Imagery, OP *Reassurance*.)

It's possible that the government is having second thoughts on this one. First, they will probably discover that the other contenders are not much less expensive than the F-35 over its life cycle. And second, most of the government's senior military advisors are convinced that the F-35 is the best choice for Canada.³ However, the Liberals have said that they want to re-write the requirements for the new fighter, something known to soldiers as 'situating the appreciation!' So it's possible that Mr. Trudeau may stick to his campaign promise. 'Evidence-based' decision-making may not apply here!

- *Invest in strengthening the Navy, while meeting the commitments that were made as part of the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy (NSPS).*

The NSPS was the cornerstone of Conservative government's shipbuilding policy and it appears set to continue at a rather glacial pace – probably now even more slowly as the new government

(rightly!) reviews the process. It's unlikely that any major adjustments will be made that would upset the two selected shipyards, Irving Shipbuilding and Seaspan, and their strong political backers. However, the revelations (known by the government and the Navy for years!) that the money set aside to replace Canada's three destroyers and 12 frigates will not be enough to replace them all, is certainly forcing a rethink on the balance between the number of ships and their capabilities.

During the election campaign, the Liberals vowed to devote money saved from the 'expensive' F-35 to building more ships for the Navy. That much money will actually be 'saved' by buying a less capable fighter and that any money saved will translate into more ships, is almost certainly wishful thinking. As Jeffrey Simpson noted: "A forlorn hope is expressed in the [Liberal] platform that by not buying the F-35 stealth fighter jet, and opting for another jet, enough money will be saved to re-equip the navy, a fantasy of the first order."⁴

- *Renew Canada's commitment to United Nations peace operations. This includes ...mobile medical teams, to engineering support, to aircraft that can carry supplies and personnel.*
 - *Expand the training of military and civilian personnel deployed on peace operations.*
 - *Help the United Nations respond more quickly to emerging and escalating conflicts and providing well-trained personnel to international initiatives...such as mission commanders, staff officers, and headquarters units.*

A renewed commitment to UN peacekeeping is an important part of 'Canada is back!' But sensibly, the government seems to have recognised that providing blue-helmeted foot soldiers for UN peace operations is best left to others, mainly the countries that make a business out of UN missions. Instead, Canada's focus will be on command, training and specialist capabilities. Tone and rhetoric aside, Canada's new UN peacekeeping role

may turn out to be not very different from the Conservative government's highly criticised meager contributions to UN operations!

- *Maintain Canada's strong commitments to the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD) and to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).*

NORAD is the cornerstone of our defence relationship with the US. It remains to be seen just how the Liberal government will reconcile our commitment to North American defence with a replacement fighter less advanced and capable than the F-35. The F-35 will be the US Air Force's main, if not only, interceptor assigned to the NORAD mission. Issues around interoperability, stealth, information networking, and range, amongst others, could well make our continuing 'strong commitment' problematic.

At some stage, too, Justin Trudeau will also have to decide whether Canada should finally join the North American ballistic missile defence system. The last Liberal government, under Paul Martin, refused to join BMD. The Conservatives, during their 10 years in power, could not muster the political courage to reverse this decision despite growing awkwardness within NORAD and the clear military logic of a combined North American approach to missile defence. Trudeau's hand may be forced. The growing ballistic missile threats from countries like Iran and North Korea may persuade a new US president that Canada should no longer be a 'free rider' on missile defence!

As for NATO, the new government will certainly 'talk the good talk' but, like their predecessors, it is very unlikely to consider raising defence spending to the NATO target of 2 percent of GDP. Despite deteriorating international security, including real dangers to Canada, a big shock will be needed to shake Canadians and their government into doubling our military spending!

A 'lower-priced option that better matches Canada's defence needs' than the F-35 could also seriously restrict Canada's options for participation in future NATO operations, where adversaries like the Russians and the Chinese and others will be flying their own sophisticated, fifth-generation fighters or will be armed with advanced surface-to-air missiles. The prospect of being shot out of the sky before you know the other fellow is there will not be a comforting thought for Canadian pilots or their government in the years to come! (For many years, Canadian defence procurement has not factored in losses due to enemy action!)

- *Renew Canada's focus on surveillance and control of Canadian territory and approaches, particularly our Arctic regions.*

Stephen Harper apparently considered the North of almost existential importance to Canada. But for almost 10 years little was done to improve our awareness of what was going on in vast areas of the Arctic. With a Russian northern military build-up in full swing and keen interest of other non-Arctic countries like China, it is difficult to say there is 'no military threat'.

The Joint Unmanned Surveillance Target Acquisition System (JUSTAS) program, currently on the books at National Defence, could dramatically improve our real time surveillance in the North. The discussion has been over whether Canada, with the limited money allocated to the program, should buy operational warfighting UAVs or acquire a long-range, long-endurance UAV surveillance capability, ideal for coverage of the Arctic. If the new government is really intent on improving awareness and control in the Arctic, it should move JUSTAS in that direction.

- *Conduct an open and transparent review process to create a new defence strategy for Canada, replacing the now-outdated Canada First Defence Strategy.*

The Liberals are right to say that CFDS is an outdated document. It was published in 2008 and in the last few years it has been seriously weakened by successive cuts in defence spending. More importantly, the world in which CFDS was conceived has changed dramatically. Canada's new defence strategy should be based on a careful analysis of the longer term domestic and international trends and threats. The changing strategic balance, accelerated by US retrenchment, should trigger a re-think of our interests and the best way to defend them.

Since the end of the Cold War, and arguably for some time before that, Canada's armed forces have moved from a primary focus on conventional war-fighting to forces designed and structured for counter-insurgency and asymmetric warfare. The rise of China, Russia, and other powerful actors has renewed the threat of interstate 'symmetric war!' which many people had imagined had gone out of fashion. Now the new strategic landscape requires a fundamental reassessment of the purpose and the size and shape of our armed forces.

What's not in the Mandate

Two major election promises don't appear in the Defence Minister's mandate:

"We will fix the broken procurement system" and;

"We will implement the recommendations made in the Canadian Forces' Report on Transformation."⁵

Neither of these issues lend themselves to quick or easy solutions. Successive governments have wrestled with them without notable success. The Conservatives did make an effort to improve the procurement process but it's too early to tell how effective those changes will be. And it's clear that more needs to be done to better streamline procurement. As Brian Crowley, Managing Director of the MacDonald-Laurier Institute, has rightly pointed out, the "reality [is] that governments struggle to do relatively

simple tasks like deliver the mail, build needed infrastructure and equip our soldiers.”⁶

Lieutenant-General Andrew Leslie (Ret'd), now Chief Government Whip, authored the 2011 *Report on Transformation*. Its aim was to “reduce overhead and improve efficiency and effectiveness”⁷ of the Armed Forces. Gen Leslie is no doubt keen to move ahead with many of his recommendations. But he seems to have been sidelined from defence policy making in the new government, at least for the time being.

That being said, it looks as though the government will include a detailed look at the procurement process as part of the ‘new defence strategy’ promised by the end of 2016. It’s possible that some of Gen Leslie’s recommendations may form part of the strategy.

A New Approach to Defence: Reversing the Trend

In its first Speech from the Throne, delivered by the Governor General in December, the Liberal government devoted just 36 words to defence! It announced that it “will invest in building a leaner, more agile, better-equipped military.” Almost every government, of whatever political stripe, has used these words!

Matt Gurney commented in the *National Post* that the danger is that “leaner will simply mean smaller and less capable... The problem, of course is that there’s only so small a military can be before it is no longer really effective.” For those of us who believe that the world is becoming a more dangerous and less sunny place, it’s clear that a larger, more capable armed forces are needed to maintain the peace and to preserve our way of life.

The 2016 defence strategy review is an opportunity to analyse the dangers facing Canada and to determine how we should best confront them. The Minister

has promised that the review will be open to public input, like the British and Australian defence reviews. There will also be consultation with the US and other close allies.

The danger is that the strategy review, or White Paper, will attempt to cover too much ground, including for example, a detailed study of the procurement process. What Canada has long needed is a well-researched defence strategy document that avoids becoming a numbers game tied to funding forecasts. The strategy process should start by avoiding consideration of costs. It should recommend armed forces that are best designed, equipped, and trained to meet the new strategic realities. Only once an optimal force structure is decided should priorities be set and choices made to tailor the force to realistic funding expectations.

One thing is certain. More money, perhaps a lot more, will be needed to create armed forces to face the growing threats to Canada and our allies. The conclusions of an open and credible defence review should be provide a strong incentive for the government to take the first tentative steps toward the NATO goal of 2 percent of GDP defence spending.

Boosting Canada’s defence posture will not be easy, especially as it will be expensive. But Canadians must be alerted to the dangers of the darkening world around us. It’s up to us, who clearly see the growing threats, to persuade Canadians and our government that in spite of all the other priorities, ensuring Canada’s safety and security should be at the top of the list. Now is the time to act! ■

Richard Cohen is president of RSC Strategic Connections, a senior associate with Hill+Knowlton Strategies, and sits on the Board of Directors at the CDA Institute. He was a senior adviser to defence minister Peter MacKay and he was a career soldier in the Canadian and British armed forces.

Notes

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3. One senior officer asked me privately whether I would buy an older model car from a company whose production line was about to end or a more modern car from a company with plans to produce it for decades to come. The choice is obvious!
4. Jeffery Simpson, “Why Sajjan will be wrestling with military spending,” *Globe and Mail*, 16 January 2016
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8. Matt Gurney, “What does a ‘leaner’ military mean, exactly?” *National Post*, 7 December 2015, <http://news.nationalpost.com/full-comment/matt-gurney-what-does-a-leaner-military-mean-exactly>.

CANADA-US STRATEGIC RELATIONS

by Dr. David Bercuson

The Canada-United States strategic relationship began in August 1940 with the meeting in Ogdensburg, New York, between President Franklin Roosevelt and Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King. Called at Roosevelt's request, the meeting was designed to kick-start a continental defence architecture following the surrender of France the previous June and the growing possibility that Winston Churchill's Britain might not be able to hold out against the onslaught Hitler would now surely unleash. King was eager to meet Roosevelt because Canada harboured major concerns about how it might defend itself and Newfoundland (not yet formally part of Canada but coming under whatever protection Canada could offer) after the fall of France. The short meeting produced the Ogdensburg Agreement, established the Permanent Joint Board of Defence, and began to sketch some of the defence arrangements that would ensure the security of Newfoundland, the Canadian east coast, and the Atlantic approaches to ports north of New York.

The Ogdensburg meeting marked the start of the Canada-US strategic relationship, which has evolved to a network of literally thousands of agreements covering defence arrangements – such as NORAD – joint operations, personnel exchanges, the sharing of defence intelligence, and so on. But the root causes of this cooperation remain the same. Canada is the northern door to the United States and must cooperate with the US to ensure the security of that door while Canada

itself lies under the domestic defence umbrella of the United States and relies on that umbrella to secure its own strategic defence. These related factors are, of course, inter-connected and constant, no matter what partisan political objectives may be entertained by whoever governs on either side of the international boundary.

One good contemporary example is the question of ballistic missile defence (BMD). The United States has been working in fits and starts on BMD since the Reagan era. Some US administrations have dedicated larger sums of money to its development and testing, others have dedicated less. President George W. Bush initiated an actual albeit limited deployment of BMD, while his successor has continued to allow BMD development to proceed. But this highly expensive project has suffered through defence cuts that grew out of confrontations between the President and Congress, and no one is quite certain today whether the US can actually deploy a BMD system that will work 100 percent of the time. Many tests have succeeded, many have failed, but up to now BMD is still rather low on the list of new defence systems that the US plans to acquire in coming decades.

During the Reagan administration, Canada was asked to join the BMD program, not to put cash into it, but to allow its territory to be used in establishing detection sites and possibly even launch facilities. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, who enjoyed an excellent relationship with President Reagan, declined to accept

the US invitation and no harm seemed to arise in the strategic relationship between the two countries. When Canada was asked again during Paul Martin's tenure as prime minister, Ottawa refused a second time. No outward sign of US displeasure followed, but a slow but steady shifting of northern defence responsibilities from NORAD to the US's Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) began. USNORTHCOM, like all other US regional defence commands, is all-American. Canada is represented at USNORTHCOM, as it is in several other US commands, but plays no part in the determination of plans and procedures as it does in NORAD.

The fourth North Korean nuclear test (claimed by Pyongyang to be a "small" hydrogen bomb) will accelerate US work on BMD. Hawaii and the US west coast are either now, or will soon be, within reach of a North Korean atomic weapon sitting atop a North Korean intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). It is only a matter of time. Without an operable BMD system, the US will find it even more difficult to deal with North Korea. And even if cooler heads prevail in the White House, Congressional pressure to push ahead with BMD will be very strong. Can Canada continue to ignore BMD? It is hardly likely, as the threat of North Korea grows in proportion to its nuclear arsenal and its ballistic missiles. And yet, as of this writing, the BMD issue has not even surfaced on the defence agenda of the new Liberal government.

At the moment, another imbroglio is developing between the two countries which, if not corrected in the immediate future, will certainly add to the growing distance between Ottawa and Washington on defence cooperation. Canada's slowly diminishing fleet of CF-18 Hornet fighter jets is also growing more elderly with each passing year. These jets have undergone one complete refit and are about to undergo a second to extend their lives into the 2020s, but they are old and increasingly lacking in the newest air-to-ground and air-to-air combat technologies. The continuing delay in Ottawa in making a decision – any decision – for the replacement of the CF-18 pushes back the date when some up-to-date replacement will take the skies to defend Canadian, and therefore American, airspace in the vast northern regions of Canada. This growing commitment-capability gap will not endear Canada to US military or civil leaders.

One of the basic characteristics of Canada's strategic relationship with the United States has been the concept of "defence

against help." Put simply, the notion reflects the idea that since the defence of their northern border is a vital national security interest of the United States, that the border (and the approaches to it) will be defended one way or another – either by Canada (to the satisfaction of the United States) or by the United States itself. Thus the defence of that border is also a vital national interest for Canada because the more the United States "helps" Canada, the more sovereignty Canada loses. Canadian governments have recognized this reality since at least the end of the Second World War, even though the US never explicitly spelled out this reality. But how much defence of the northern border by Canada is enough to satisfy the United States? How much resources must Canada pour into defence to keep the US at bay? There is no ironclad formula but rather an ongoing political process played out largely in Ottawa, wherein domestic budgetary priorities are weighed again the imperatives of US requirements. The basic policy question in Ottawa is "how little can we get away with?"

Since the end of the Cold War, the answer was "less and less." There were two defence budget upticks in the period after the Paul Martin government took office, the first under Martin, the second under Harper. But since the early years of the Harper government, and especially since the Great Recession, defence spending began to drift lower once again. Today it stands at about 1 percent of GDP. And, although the percentage of defence spending as a part of GDP is at best a rough calculation, there is no question that defence spending today – for a variety of reasons – is not much better than it was at the end of the so-called "decade of darkness." What has changed is that the United States is now back into an almost completely antagonistic relationship with Russia on a number of fronts and North American air and sea defence will shortly resume a position of significance in US defence planning. When that happens, the US will once again look north and see significant weakness in Canadian defence capabilities.

Despite Canadian defence weakness

A Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) CF-18 undergoing aerial refueling. (Image credit: Canadian Armed Forces.)



in North America, the relationships between the armed forces of Canada and the United States are solid and continue to improve in planning for and executing expeditionary operations. The relationships of all three Canadian services with their US counterparts are strong. Planning and training continues and is expanding and, as of this writing, Canada's small but persistent air combat effort in the Middle East continues. These relationships are vitally important because the US military is still the standard of excellence around the globe. Although the Royal Canadian Navy and Air Force have carried out operations, and sometimes even commanded them, without the presence of US ships and aircraft, it is inconceivable that any large or prolonged Canadian Armed Forces missions at sea or in the air could be sustained without US assistance if not direct participation.

As far as Canadian ground forces are concerned, Afghanistan provided solid proof that the Canadian Army should not participate in any expeditionary capacity without US logistical, medical, close-air support, air transport, or intelligence to say the very least. When Canada assumed responsibility for Kandahar province in early 2006 and US forces withdrew to be replaced by NATO forces and capabilities, Canada's ability to accomplish its mission diminished. One lesson that Canada must learn from its five years in Kandahar is that Canadian ground forces must operate in conjunction with US air and ground forces no matter the mission – including the possible UN peacekeeping operations that the new government seems set to embark upon. The Canadian Army is dependent on US capabilities. The Canadian Army is also no longer combat capable across a wide spectrum of possible



Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) patrols Kandahar in 26 August 2008. (Image credit: ISAF Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Duran.)

operations and should begin to plan, train, and equip to operate as a complement or supplement to US forces in deploying abroad. Canadian voters will not give any Canadian government the mandate to rebuild the Canadian Army to anything like Cold War levels – even the diminished levels after Trudeau Sr. halved Canada's NATO deployments in the early 1970s. So instead of trying to maintain ground forces that would continue to buy Canada credibility within NATO, the army should be designed to add political leverage to Canada's capability to get anything done in Washington.

In the near future, the Canada-US strategic relationship faces a serious crisis at the political (i.e., strategic) level. The ever increasing geo-political challenges from China in the Asia-Pacific region and the growing animosity between the United States and China will lead to even greater global instability than is the case now. Factor in the continuing critical state of the Middle East and the danger that the European Union may begin to unravel due to rising nationalism and the pressures of the Syrian refugee crisis, and the result is growing pressure in the US Congress to increase defence spending both for

homeland defence and operations abroad. Consider also that the next US president will probably take a more activist view of the American role abroad than the current one and the gap between Canadian defence spending and that of the US will almost certainly grow. The pressure on Canada to do more – at the very least to maintain what little we are already doing – will grow after President Obama leaves office and the chummy relationship between our very new prime minister and the White House melts away, especially if the new president is a Republican.

The Canada –US strategic relationship is 75 years old and counting. It is based on the obvious facts of geography, economics, and history. But Canada's ongoing refusal to take defence seriously, most obviously in the F-35 fiasco, does not bode well for easy going in the near future. ■

Dr. David Bercuson is Director of the University of Calgary's Centre for Military, Security and Strategic Studies, and Director of Programs of the Canadian Global Affairs Institute. Dr. Bercuson's latest book is *Long Night of the Tankers: Hitler's War Against Caribbean Oil, 1942-1945* (co-written with Dr. Holger Herwig).

CANADA'S DIRECTORATE OF ARMS CONTROL VERIFICATION

by Colonel P.J. Williams

US President Ronald Reagan was fond of saying "Trust, but verify" in the context of nuclear arms control negotiations with the former Soviet Union in the 1980s. It is therefore somewhat ironic that this proverb is actually of Russian origin, and has since been taken up as the motto of America's Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA¹). These days, for many of us who work in the arms control verification (ACV) business, that phrase remains our watchword.

Canada is a proud and highly active member of the Euro-Atlantic conventional ACV community. This article will outline the history of Canada's involvement in this field and bring the reader up to date with the nation's Euro-Atlantic conventional ACV efforts, particularly since the onset of the Ukraine crisis in early 2014.

Conventional ACV operations are centered on a number of international agreements or regimes, which had their genesis in the period following the end of the Cold War:

- The *Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe*² (CFE), which was signed in Paris on 19 November 1990. It established comprehensive



Canadian and Russian Federation Open Skies personnel on board a Canadian Open Skies aircraft during a Canadian-led observation flight over the Russian Federation. (Image credit: supplied by author.)

limits on key categories of conventional military equipment in Europe (from the Atlantic to the Urals) and mandated the destruction of excess weaponry. Since 2007, the Russian Federation has suspended its participation in the Treaty;

- The *Vienna Document*, created in 1990, which has been revised periodically and whose current version is the Vienna Document 2011³ (VD 11). The Vienna Document is an agreement between all 57 participating states (pS) of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), based in Vienna. It consists of a set

of confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) to enhance transparency, including an annual exchange of military information, on-site inspections and notifications of certain types of military activities;

- The *Treaty on Open Skies*⁴ (OS), signed in Helsinki on 24 March 1992, which entered into force on 1 January 2002. The Treaty allows its 34 OSCE members to conduct a predetermined number of unarmed observation flights to collect imagery of territory of other Treaty States Parties. Canada and Hungary are Co-Depositors⁵ of the Treaty;

- The *Dayton Peace Accords*⁶ (DPA). The DPA on Bosnia was initiated at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, on 21 November 1995, and signed in Paris on 14 December 1995. Under this agreement, the parties agree to cooperate fully with all entities, including those authorized by the UN Security Council, in implementing the peace settlement and investigating and prosecuting war crimes and other violations of international humanitarian law;

(SALW), in effect since 2001, and which seeks to counter illicit and uncontrolled SALW proliferation.

Of all the 57 OSCE pS, only 11 are involved in all of the above regimes; Canada is one of them. Canadians can be justifiably proud of such participation.

Indeed, Canada has been in the conventional ACV business for some time. Prior to 1989, Canada conducted ACV operations on a somewhat *ad hoc* basis, with specific capabilities being

where Canada had sizeable land and air forces based, and where Canadian ACV inspectors worked for a time.

With the withdrawal of Canadian Armed Forces members from Europe in the early 1990s, the ACV inspectors were also repatriated, becoming part of the Ottawa-based military staff at the strategic level. This is the situation which currently exists, where what is now called the Directorate of Arms Control Verification (DACV) is part of the Strategic Joint Staff. Indeed, placement of DACV at the strategic level is a proven model, followed by the vast majority of OSCE nations which possess an ACV capability. In the Canadian context, DACV reports to Director General Operations, who in turn reports to the Director of Staff (DOS), who heads the Strategic Joint Staff. The DOS in turn reports to the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS).

The Directorate's mission is to plan, coordinate, and execute international arms control, verification, observation, and confidence/security building operations in fulfilment of

Canada's legally and politically binding obligations and rights, as detailed in those treaties, agreements, and arrangements established within the framework of the OSCE, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the UN, including the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

Like its partner verification centres across the OSCE, DACV achieves strategic threat reduction and conflict prevention objectives through the following:

- The *Chemical Weapons Convention*⁷ (CWC), which entered into force in 1997. The parties' main obligation under the convention is to prohibit the use and production of chemical weapons, as well as the destruction of all current chemical weapons. The destruction activities are verified by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons; and
- The *UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons*⁸

generated on an "as required" basis. With the proliferation of several arms control regimes at the end of the Cold War, Canada, along with other nations, realized that a standing capability was required.

In Canada's case, a small team was formed in 1990 at National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) to study and further define what an ACV capability would consist of. Over the subsequent years, arms control staffs were stood up both in Ottawa and in Lahr, Germany,



The Canadian ACV team leader (LCol Francois Casault, L) in discussion with the Commander of the Russian Federation 108th Air Assault Regiment, during a Vienna Document mission in Russia. (Image credit: Directorate of Arms Control Verification.)



Canadian, Italian and British inspectors, with Russian escorts, during an arms control verification mission in the North Caucasus region of the Russian Federation in 2013. (Image credit: supplied by author.)

- Providing early warning through treaty monitoring, observation, and verification;
- Pursuing strategic compliance through active enforcement of international mechanisms to prohibit, constrain, or otherwise limit military activities, equipment, and personnel; and
- Preventing, reducing, or mitigating emerging unconventional and asymmetric threats through proliferation security cooperation and collaborative partnerships.

To accomplish its mission, the DACV is organized into a small headquarters element and three sections, comprised of a mix of military and civilian staff, and Regular and Reserve military personnel, drawn from army and air force occupations:⁹

- 2 Section, responsible for ground-based verification operations, exercising Canada's rights and meeting its responsibilities under

- CFE, VD 11, DPA, CWC and SALW;
- 3 Section, which provides logistical, administrative, communications, and training support for the Directorate; and
- 4 Section, which implements Canada's obligations and rights under OS.

Personnel posted to DACV as inspectors receive training in their respective ACV regimes at various training installations in Europe. Some receive Russian language training – Russian being one of the six OSCE official languages.¹⁰ To maintain the highly technical skills required under the OS, periodic Joint Training Flights are conducted with allies.

Conducting military diplomacy in the most practical sense, and in the spirit of promoting openness and transparency, DACV works with a variety of Government of Canada stakeholders in order to fulfil its mission. Within the Department of National Defence (DND), DACV works closely with the Assistant

Deputy Minister (Policy) Group, and externally with Global Affairs Canada (GAC) (formerly the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development), both with its headquarters in Ottawa and its delegation to the OSCE in Vienna. It is through this interaction that decisions are made about where the DACV conducts its operations, the level of effort devoted to the various types of operations, and the countries with whom Canada will partner when it deploys abroad.

Conducting operations is the core business of ACV, particularly those that take place abroad. In so doing, Canada is exercising its rights under the various arms control regimes. More importantly, on Canada's behalf, DACV is confirming that other pS are meeting their obligations *under* these same agreements. Currently, the area or zone of application of the CFE and VD 11 is limited to Europe and the former Soviet Union. Under certain circumstances, Canadian Armed Forces personnel and equipment within these geographic limits are subject to

inspection, as was the case during NATO's Exercise *Trident Juncture* in Europe in the fall 2015.

The OS Treaty also includes the territory of North America, and *inter alia*, permits the Russian Federation to conduct unarmed observation flights over both Canada and the United States, occasions during which Canada is required to meet its treaty obligations. Inspections and observation flights are meant to be somewhat intrusive, so normally notification of such missions, including OS flights over Canada, can take place as little as 72 hours beforehand.

For each of CFE, VD 11, and OS, a number of mission quotas are established, so it becomes critical to plan for and execute missions in areas of interest for Canada before the quotas are exhausted.

Since the Russian annexation of Crimea in early 2014, DACV has been operating frequently in the Ukraine. Responding to a Ukrainian request for an international verification team to visit following the annexation, DACV sent two of its officers on the very first international ACV mission during the crisis. In response to the Ukrainian requests to investigate "unusual military activity," Canada has thus far led four VD 11 missions to eastern Ukraine, near the Minsk II buffer zone; this is more than any other OSCE nation. These missions are not without risk, as seen when a German-led VD 11 team was held against their will, by separatists, in Sloviansk. DACV also conducts other verification missions on the ground in areas of so-called "frozen conflicts,"¹¹



Canadian inspectors, with Russian escorts, during an arms control verification mission in the North Caucasus region of the Russian Federation in 2013. (Image credit: supplied by author.)

paying attention to those nations where foreign forces are present without the consent of the state concerned (i.e., the presence of Russian Federation forces in the Republic of Moldova).

Canada has also been very visible in the air under OS. On an annual basis, DACV executes observation flights over the territory of the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and Georgia. Like the ground missions, these are conducted with multinational teams in order to represent as broad a spectrum of OSCE pS as possible, while also assisting in resource sharing.

For Canadian-led missions, a specially configured Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) CC-130 Hercules transport aircraft fitted with a treaty compliant imaging system (to capture images of no more than 30 cm resolution) supports ACV operations.

Representatives of the "Observed State"

are on board the aircraft of the "Observing State" to verify that the observation flight is conducted in accordance with treaty provisions. Since the onset of the Ukraine crisis, Canada has led or participated in 11 OS observation flights over the Russian Federation, three over Ukraine and two over Georgia. In the same period, the Russian Federation has conducted one OS mission over Canada.

Conducting missions under the auspices of CFE, VD 11 and OS occupies the bulk of the DACV's efforts. There are other areas in which DACV contributes to international ACV efforts. As part of its work in the SALW domain, DACV members have conducted capacity-building efforts as far afield as Africa, the Americas and, more recently, in Moldova, which still has surplus quantities of Soviet-era munitions stored under less than optimal conditions. In order to prevent the loss or compromise of these stocks and to avoid a catastrophic event such as an unintended explosion,

DACV members and other international partners deliver training in physical security and stockpile management best practices for host nation forces.

Additionally, whenever if a suspected chemical weapon is found in Canada,¹² a somewhat rare occurrence, the Office for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in The Hague is notified. These weapons are occasionally found at Canadian Forces Base Suffield, Alberta, where chemical weapons testing took place through the 1940s and 1960s. An OPCW team is then sometimes dispatched to the location, accompanied by DACV and GAC staff. The suspected weapon is then analyzed, and destroyed in accordance with CCW protocols. Finally, though Canada's military presence in the Balkans has diminished greatly since the 1990s, the DACV still operates there, most recently on a DPA mission to Montenegro, in partnership with Croatia, in May 2015.

All of this makes the jobs of the members of the DACV both highly active and rewarding, particularly given the ongoing crisis in Ukraine and frozen conflicts elsewhere within the area of application for security building measures. Ideally, the activities of DACV and its partner OSCE ACV organizations are able to provide warning of or work to pre-empt conflict. Once conflict starts, DACVs strategic agility and multinational nature can be a highly useful resource in the government's toolbox to monitor and respond to the situation in crisis areas. Canada can be proud of its legacy and ongoing activities in ACV operations. ■

Colonel Peter Williams is the Director Arms Control Verification on the Strategic Joint Staff and Head of Verification for Canada. Follow us on Twitter (in English): @sjsacv (or in French): @emisvca.

Notes

1. DTRA is Canada's counterpart United States arms control verification agency.

2. *Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe* (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, 19 November 1990), <http://www.osce.org/library/14087?download=true>
3. *Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures*, FSC.DOC/1/11 (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, 30 November 2011), <http://www.osce.org/fsc/86597?download=true>
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5. In accordance with Articles 16, 76 and 77 of the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, after a treaty has been concluded, the written instruments, which provide formal evidence of consent to be bound, and also reservations and declarations, are placed in the custody of a depositary. Unless the treaty provides otherwise, the deposit of the instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession establishes the consent of a state to be bound by the treaty. For treaties with a small number of parties, the depositary will usually be the government of the state on whose territory the treaty was signed. Sometimes various states are chosen as depositaries. Multilateral treaties usually designate an international organization or the Secretary-General of the United Nations as depositaries. The depositary must accept all notifications and documents related to the treaty, examine whether all formal requirements are met, deposit them, register the treaty, and notify all relevant acts to the parties concerned.
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7. *Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction* (Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 2005), <https://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/>
8. *Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects*, UN Document A/CONF.192/15, <http://www.poa-iss.org/PoA/pohtml.aspx>
9. The regimes are currently written in such a way that naval forces are excluded from most all verification operations.
10. The others being English, French, German, Spanish, and Italian.
11. In international relations, a frozen conflict is a situation in which active armed conflict has been brought to an end, but no peace treaty or other political framework resolves the conflict to the satisfaction of the combatants. Therefore, legally the conflict can start again at any moment, creating an environment of insecurity and instability. See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frozen_conflict.
12. This normally occurs at Canadian Forces Base Suffield, Alberta, where chemical weapons testing took place in the 1940s-1960s.

ALBION AND MARIANNE: REFLECTIONS ON ANGLO-FRENCH DEFENCE COOPERATION

by Dr. Meghan Fitzpatrick

'Il n'y a pas de liberté, il n'y a pas d'égalité, il n'y a pas de fraternité sans sécurité.'
-French President Nicolas Sarkozy

In a volatile and insecure world, countries frequently work in concert with one another in order to improve their military capabilities and strengthen overall security. The present campaign against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) highlights the need for multinational cooperation and underlines the critical importance of alliances between major defence spenders like the United Kingdom and France. Over the last few months, we have seen the release of the latest UK Strategic Defence and Security Review and National Security Strategy. In the foreword, Prime Minister David Cameron reaffirms his government's support for its partners, arguing that, "Britain's safety and security depends not just on our own efforts, but on working hand in glove with our allies to deal with the common threats that face us all, from terrorism to climate change. When confronted by danger, we are stronger together."¹ The recent terrorist attacks in Paris have also lent a sense of urgency to cooperative efforts between the two countries. With this backdrop in mind, it is a pivotal time to reflect upon the history and present state of Anglo-French relations, examine the challenges ahead and consider the prospects for the future.

Throughout history, the UK and France have been both enemies and allies. Since the Entente Cordiale of 1904, they have also been linked together as partners. As former empires, both countries share

a similar worldview. Divested of their colonial possessions, the UK and France are now medium-sized powers looking to effectively navigate an increasingly multipolar world. Well matched in terms of wealth, resources and population, they are accustomed to punching well above their weight politically and militarily. Determined to maintain this position, they remain two of the top ten defence spending countries in the world and are the biggest in Europe.

In light of their shared strategic interests, the British and French armed forces have cooperated closely with one another in the past and collaborated heavily in areas such as defence acquisition. Successful efforts have included the development of surface-to-air missile systems and fast-jet aircraft. However, the relationship is fraught with complexity and multilateral procurement efforts involving both countries have not always been successful. On several occasions, expensive and elaborate projects have been abandoned in favour of national programs. Examples include the development of the Type 45 destroyer, the *Trigat* medium-range anti-tank missile, and the multi-role armoured vehicle. As a result, both sides fear that the other partner may abandon future projects for the sake of financial expediency or if the political mood suits. Furthermore, there is historical evidence of intelligence leaks in commercially sensitive areas.² Since the end of World War II, Britain and France have also adopted different postures on how best to generate defence and security. Choosing to fortify ties with the United

States and emphasize the centrality of NATO, the British have primarily seen the world through an Atlanticist lens. In contrast, the French have placed themselves at the centre of a continental network bolstered by the establishment and growth of organizations like the European Union (EU).

Despite disagreement and divergence of opinion, cross-Channel collaboration has increased in recent years. Financial concerns are at the root of this development. European defence budgets have declined dramatically since the end of the Cold War—a process further accelerated by the 2008 financial crisis and resulting austerity measures. Consequently, the armed forces in both countries have been subject to redundancies and severe budgetary cuts. In addition to their financial woes, both nations have become increasingly exasperated by the behaviour of other EU member states. These countries are often unable or reluctant to contribute money and manpower to, "high intensity crisis management operations...[or] Common Security and Defence Policy missions."³ Growing frustration prompted a French return to NATO's integrated military command in 2009. This atmosphere also contributed to the conclusion of the Lancaster House Treaties in 2010.

Signed by French president Nicolas Sarkozy and British Prime Minister David Cameron on 2 November 2010, the Lancaster House Treaties are a series of agreements designed to, "maximise capacity through coordinating

development, acquisition, deployment and maintenance of a range of capabilities, facilities, equipment, materials and services, to perform missions across the full spectrum of operations.”⁴ As Alice Pannier of Science Po has pointed out, “the letter of the Treaty indicated the two states’ commitment to pursue cooperation in two main areas of conventional defence: the ability of their armed forces to work together and deploy in operations (Articles 2 and 5), and joint procurement together with the fostering of defence industrial integration (Articles 6, 7, 8 and 9).”⁵ Major goals included the development of an integrated carrier strike group, a common support plan for the A400M air transport fleet, joint funding and delivery of the next generation of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and a strategic plan for the complex weapons sector. The treaties initially received a mixed reception, with some Eurosceptic MPs expressing concern regarding France’s reliability as an ally. Speaking to the press at the time, Conservative backbencher Bernard

Jenkin went so far as to comment, “there is a long term history of duplicity on the French part when it comes to dealing with their allies.”⁶ Be that as it may, both parties were guardedly optimistic about the possibilities for the future.

Since 2010, the British and French governments have been quick to highlight the warmth and strength of their relationship and to celebrate the progress they have made in meeting the terms of Lancaster. Undeniably, the treaties have generated many positive developments, including the formation of the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (CJEF) expected to become operational sometime this year. Designed as a means to respond to short, high-intensity operations, the CJEF includes service personnel from all three branches of the armed forces. In preparation, the UK and France have conducted a series of annual exercises that are geared to help troops practice important skills together and learn to communicate effectively.

During 2015 alone, several major training exercises were completed on both sides of the Channel (e.g., Griffin Rise, Eagles Amarante). The British and French have also participated in larger multinational initiatives including Exercise Joint Warrior. Held bi-annually, it represents Europe’s largest military exercise and attracts global participation.⁷ Most recently, the British Royal Air Force and French Air Force dispatched aircraft to Langley, Virginia to take part in the inaugural Trilateral Exercise. Training alongside colleagues from the United States, personnel practiced operating in “realistic counter-air and strike scenarios.”⁸

Significant progress has also been made on the development and acquisition of defence hardware. For example, European company MBDA was awarded an, “integrated development and production contract,” for the Anglo-French anti-ship missile Sea Venom in January 2014.⁹ Shortly thereafter, the British and French governments also came through on

British Prime Minister David Cameron and French President François Hollande at the UK-France Summit in 2014. (Image credit: Prime Minister’s Office.)



promises to invest in unmanned aerial technology by launching a two-year feasibility study for the Future Combat Air System (FCAS). Worth £120 million thus far, the FCAS project involves three industrial partners from each country including BAE Systems and Dassault.¹⁰

While it is clear that the treaties have resulted in many benefits, there have also been major setbacks and failures. Most notably, in 2012 the UK reversed its decision to acquire a variant of the F-35 compatible with the catapult system with which French aircraft carriers are equipped. Instead, they opted in favour of purchasing the F-35B short take-off/vertical landing (STOVL) version. As Alessandro Marrone and Alessandro Ungaro of the Istituto Affari Internazionali have commented, this jeopardizes “interoperability between the two armed forces,” on a major strategic issue.¹¹

Moving forward, the Anglo-French alliance will undoubtedly face further challenges including how best to marshal the resources of industry. Despite sustained efforts to encourage pooling and sharing initiatives and multilateral collaboration, national based procurement programs continue to dominate the European defence market. In 2012, the European Defence Agency reported that, “more than 80% of contracts in the defence sector were still assigned nationally.”¹² Governments are generally wary of engaging in large or ambitious programs in cooperation with other states because of the challenges such initiatives pose to sovereignty and the ability to act independently (e.g., when choosing whether or not to use military force).

Collaborative programs can also represent a political gamble if local jobs are put at risk in favour of wider interests. In the UK, the defence industrial sector currently employs around 155,000 people directly and 145,000 indirectly through the supply chain with annual revenues of around £22.1 billion. Defence is a similarly big business in France where roughly 400,000

people were employed as of 2013.¹³ Both countries are anxious to preserve these jobs and support the development of new home-grown initiatives. For example, the British government recently reaffirmed its commitment to local industry in the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review, emphasizing the importance of maintaining the, “skills and capabilities,” needed to remain, “globally competitive.”¹⁴ Moreover, the French defence industry has been resistant to foreign participation in the past and remains highly protectionist. Consequently, it remains to be seen how this will ultimately impact Anglo-French cooperative projects and any further rationalization of the European defence industry.

The UK’s relationship with its continental neighbours is also presently in flux. Upon his return to office this year, Prime Minister Cameron promised the British electorate a referendum on EU membership by no later than the end of 2017. Analysts and observers are divided as to the possible impact of a UK exit. Some believe that a British withdrawal would deepen existing divisions, leave the EU defence community “in tatters” and even weaken NATO.¹⁵ Others argue that such a departure will help the UK to forge a better, more productive working relationship with the EU. No matter the outcome, the debate regarding Brexit opens old wounds and unresolved, uncomfortable questions at a time when Europe is in sore need of greater unity.

General Sir Nicholas Houghton recently delivered the annual Chief of the Defence Staff lecture at the Royal United Services Institute in London. Reflecting on the events of the past year and the present state of affairs, he was quick to emphasize the importance of allies throughout his speech. Addressing the assembled audience, he stressed that, “there is only so much security that any one nation can achieve alone.”¹⁶ For better or worse, the United Kingdom and France are tied together for reasons of history and geography. What’s more, they continue to

share key strategic objectives.

We are presently living in a rapidly evolving world where security threats are omnipresent and new challenges continually emerge. In the past five years alone, we have witnessed the rise of an increasingly aggressive Russia, unprecedented levels of international migration, and the continued threat of terrorism. Therefore, there is more pressure than ever for the British and French to cooperate effectively and address these issues proactively. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that the United States will continue to insure the health of European security interests. While this was true during the Cold War, the Americans have been less enthusiastic to intervene in Europe as of late. As American interests shift to the east, Europe will be expected to generate its own security.

The UK and France have achieved a great deal over the past five years and have the opportunity to stand as leaders in the field. Only by harnessing their combined resources and talents can they tackle the defence and security issues they both face with confidence and vigour. ■

A graduate of King’s College London’s Department of War Studies, Dr. Meghan Fitzpatrick is a defence and security researcher and analyst. Her book, Invisible Scars: A Portrait of Mental Health in the Korean War and Beyond is forthcoming in 2016. You can find her work through Twitter (@kmegfitz) and major online platforms and journals such as UK Defence Viewpoints and the Indian Military Review.

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STUCK IN THE MIDDLE: SOUTH KOREA'S STRATEGIC RESPONSE TO CHINA'S RISE

by Dr. Ian Bowers

Rising, pivoting, and normalizing, the three powers of Northeast Asia: China, the US, and Japan are adjusting to a geo-strategic reality where the military pre-eminence of the United States is being challenged. In the midst of this structural shift sits South Korea. Policy-makers in Seoul are in an unenviable position; they are faced with a seemingly unpredictable and implacable foe in North Korea, which requires the maintenance of a long-standing alliance with the US. At the same time, they are exposed to the economic and geostrategic might of a rising China.

This article explores how South Korea is navigating China's rise through this strategic, economic and diplomatic maze. China has become South Korea's largest trading partner and Seoul has sought to gain traction over North Korea through sustained diplomatic engagement with Beijing. Nevertheless, South Korea still looks to the US as the ultimate guarantor of their security. How long Seoul can maintain this balancing act will ultimately be determined by the security situation on the peninsula and the level of geostrategic tension between China and the US.

South Korea's Strategic Thought and China

To understand how South Korea is adjusting to China's rise, two key pillars of Seoul's strategic thinking must be considered. The first is that South Korea's strategic thought remains dominated

by the threat posed by North Korea. The unsatisfactory peace found after the Korean War and the continued tensions along the demilitarized zone (DMZ), have led to a South Korean security establishment largely focused on deterring North Korean provocations and attacks. This ongoing threat has also resulted in the embedding of the United States into South Korea's security architecture.

The second is Seoul's appreciation of its wider security environment being underpinned by the perception of South Korea, a middle power, being historically and unduly influenced by the geostrategic interests and great power machinations of the larger regional powers which surround it.

As a result, despite being a longstanding US ally and Japan's closest democratic neighbour, South Korea has proven reluctant to directly criticize China over its heavy-handed and unilateral approach to disputes in the East and South China Seas. China maintains significant influence over North Korea, influence which South Korea, particularly under the current government of President Park Geun-hye has sought to leverage. South Korea, in its drive to maintain economic growth, has also become particularly vulnerable to instability in China's economic system.¹ China's rise has increased its relative economic importance to Seoul. Over 25 percent of South Korea's exports go to China; a massive change given that when relations

normalised in 1992, that figure was only 3.5 percent.² In June 2015, the two nations agreed a Free Trade Agreement and Seoul was also a founding member of the Asia Infrastructure Bank (AIIB), a move that was seen as being against Washington's wishes.

China has also become a partner of sorts in South Korea's history war with Japan. Both countries have strong national identities formed around freedom from Japanese occupation and have united to condemn perceived historical revisionism in Japan. The 2014 Chinese building of a museum dedicated to a prominent South Korean nationalist who assassinated a Japanese official during the colonial period did raise questions regarding Seoul's future strategic alignment in relation to Japan, as did President Park's attendance of China's 2015 Victory Day parade.

However, it would be mistaken to read too much into this united ideational front. South Korea's security relationship with China, despite the creation of some dialogues, remains extremely limited. The Park administration for better or worse has likely used the extant narrative of highlighting Japanese historical issues to garner Beijing's political support on North Korea. The success of which may have been demonstrated in the summer of 2015, when during the August tensions on the Peninsula, China reportedly deployed forces to the North Korean border.³

This does not mean however, that South Korea disregards China as a potential threat. Seoul is concerned about the security implications of China's rise, its assertive actions, and potential future regional influence. The South Korean Navy has reportedly come under pressure from the People's Liberation Army's Navy (PLAN) during operations in international waters in the Yellow Sea. Growing PLAN capabilities and operational ambition will undoubtedly complicate future South Korean deterrence operations and the capacity of the US to operate in support of their South Korean allies off North Korea's west coast. Following the sinking of the ROKS *Cheonan*, China heavily criticized the potential presence of a US Navy aircraft carrier in the Yellow Sea for a bilateral exercise despite it being in international waters. South Korea's continued development of its submarine fleet, which while useful in a North Korean scenario, is equally aimed at maintaining an independent, effective deterrent posture in light of China's and to some extent Japan's naval strength.⁴

South Korea and China have an ongoing maritime dispute over the status of the Socotra Rock,⁵ a submerged rock approximately 150 km off the Southwest coast of South Korea and illegal fishing by Chinese fishing vessels is a constant problem. South Korea's Navy and Coastguard have proven to be very robust in dealing with these issues. Interventions by the South Korean Coast Guard to prevent illegal Chinese fishing have cost the lives of both a Chinese fisherman and South Korean Coast Guard officers and in December 2015, the South Korean Navy fired warning shots at an unknown vessel – which was later identified as a Chinese patrol boat – that had been operating in South Korean waters near the contested Northern Limit Line.⁶ It is important to note that China manages these problems in a politically lower key than it has following similar incidents with Japan, reflecting the relative lack of strategic tension between Seoul and Beijing despite their geographic proximity.

South Korea is extremely wary of the direct and indirect impact of China's rise on its security. However, due to its relative size and the threat from North Korea, Seoul must view China in a different light than Washington or Tokyo. Japan and the US have publically stated that China's military modernization and threat to the status quo is a matter of concern, while Seoul is more reticent about its true security perceptions surrounding Beijing.⁷ This is the reality of being a medium power, circumspection is always advantageous.

The United States and Japan

South Korean economic and political engagement with China has exposed it to some criticism in the US and given the ever present threat from the North, Seoul must always be careful to manage and maintain its relationship with the United States. In this vein South Korea must measure the risk/reward balance carefully and weigh the advantages of such cooperation with the US forces in terms of alliance maintenance and peninsular security against the potential political and economic blowback from China.

There have been relatively consistent concerns in Washington regarding burden-sharing and South Korea's commitment to wider US security interests and thus Seoul must accommodate some US demands to maintain their patron's good favour.⁸ The issue of missile defence, as an example, remains extremely problematic for Seoul. While its Ministry of Defense has committed to building a system indigenously, it is under apparent pressure to join the US (and potentially US-Japanese) missile defence architecture or at least allow the US to deploy the THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) missile defense systems on the peninsula.⁹ Beijing has publically stated that the deployment of US interceptors on South Korean soil would be an unwanted development.¹⁰

This balancing act has also been exposed

in the ongoing South China Sea dispute between China, the US, and a number of other claimant states. South Korea has provided guarded support for the US, with the South Korean defense minister Han Min-goo stating in November 2015: "It is our stance that freedom of navigation and freedom of flight should be ensured in this area, and that any conflicts be resolved according to relevant agreements and established international norms."¹¹ While tacitly supporting the US, South Korea has not explicitly criticized China and is unlikely to deploy assets into the region.

Nevertheless, the US rebalance to Asia and North Korea's continued nuclear program should, from Seoul's perspective, lessen the fear of alliance abandonment. Both the 2015 *US National Security Strategy* and *National Military Strategy* include the regional dangers of nuclear proliferation on the Korean Peninsula and potential future danger to the US homeland.¹² Additionally, the US Army's principle facilities in East Asia are in South Korea, providing Seoul with a powerful domestic US lobby for a continued US presence in the country.

Cooperation with Japan is a further sticking point. While public and political opinion, influenced by history, play a significant role in limiting coordination between the two Northeast Asia democracies, greater security cooperation between Seoul and Tokyo does not provide explicit benefits for South Korea in terms of the threat from the DPRK and risks alienating Beijing. Nevertheless, Washington's increasing focus on and policy statements regarding increased bilateral cooperation between South Korean and Japan and trilateral cooperation with the US places Seoul under pressure to engage with Japan in order to ensure its own security vis-à-vis the alliance.¹³

While the South Korea-Japan security relationship has traditionally developed spasmodically, some level of cooperation has been consistent and in extremis

coordination tends to heighten. This was notable following China's announcement of the Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) over the East China Sea in 2013. Although Seoul's criticism was muted in comparison to Tokyo's, they did hold their bi-annual SAREX search and rescue exercise in waters covered by the Chinese ADIZ.¹⁴ This could be construed as the two countries forming a united front against China's actions. However, cooperating with Japan over the ADIZ was a response to a specific set of events and demonstrates a willingness in Seoul to push back against Beijing when deemed necessary. Following from this, despite some concerns in Tokyo, it is unthinkable that Seoul would join Beijing in strategically pressuring Japan. The alliance cost alone would be exorbitant and such a move would be a departure from the current approach of maintaining independence in the ongoing territorial disputes between Japan and China.

South Korea walks a fine line; Seoul must be careful not to antagonize China by engaging in activity with the US that could contribute to Beijing's fear of containment. This is a risky strategy and is dependent on continued American understanding of South Korea's unique strategic outlook. If the security environment in East Asia deteriorates, pitting the US or Japan against China, it is very likely that South Korea will need to make some hard choices as to its strategic position. For now, however, Seoul will continue to manage its relations, looking to Beijing for economic growth and to the US for its security, avoiding a decision that it hopes will not truly have to be made. ■

Dr. Ian Bowers is an Assistant Professor at the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies. His areas of research include South Korean security, Asian naval modernisation and conventional deterrence. His most recent work is *Security, Strategy and Military Change in the 21st Century*, co-edited with Jo Inge Bekkevold and Michael Raska (2015).

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CHINA IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA: MAINTAINING STRATEGIC AMBIGUITY WHILE CHANGING FACTS ON THE GROUND

by Adam MacDonald

The South China Sea (SCS), defined by numerous overlapping territorial and maritime claims between nine countries, is seen as one of the most likely flashpoints of conflict in East Asia. China, with the largest maritime and territorial claims, is the most powerful and unpredictable agent. The United States, officially neutral on the legality of these disputes, is concerned Chinese actions are part a more bellicose and uncompromising strategy to re-order regional power dynamics at their expense. While becoming a central priority for leaders in Beijing, China's SCS strategy remains one of opacity. Beijing has never fully formalized the exact extent and justifications of their claims nor the mechanisms of adjudication. At the same, China has pursued extensive reclamation projects and military deployments in these waters in order to consolidate control over disputed territories. China's SCS strategy, therefore, can be defined as one of purposeful strategic ambiguity on their objectives alongside a concerted effort to change the facts on the ground, ensuring topographically features remain under their control regardless of legal decisions or international pressures.

China claims sovereignty over all the features in the SCS, including islands occupied by others and their associated territorial waters granted under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). It is uncertain whether such maritime zoning rights are also being claimed for rocks submerged during low-tide (which according to UNCLOS are

not entitled to a territorial waters zone) or will be once these features exist above low and high tide due to land reclamation projects. Ambiguity also surrounds whether China is claiming the entirety of the SCS as an extended Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), past the 200 nm authorized under UNCLOS. Chinese maritime and territorial claims are based on the notion of 'historic waters,' a concept not recognized by UNCLOS. Extended EEZ claims must be based on scientific evidence that the continental shelf of a country extends beyond 200 nm from their coastline. The 'historic waters' justification may also represent rebuttal of the legitimacy of UNCLOS in term of its legal criteria, moving Chinese opposition beyond differences of legal interpretations towards a rejection of the entire legal framework itself.

The lack of clarity regarding Beijing's aims in the SCS raises serious concerns in Washington, which has responded with recent Freedom of Navigation (FON) patrols by military vessels and aircraft. But what is the US protesting in the SCS? There are three possibilities. First, the US could be protesting China's sovereignty claims over disputed features, but this is unlikely due to US neutrality and would logically require the US to conduct patrols against other claimants (including US defence treaty allies) which have occupied other disputed islands and rocks. President Obama's explicit call for China to halt reclamation projects seems to be based not on a legal perspective, but rather a strategic imperative arguing that

these actions are destabilizing, eroding the possibility of a peaceful resolution of these disputes. Exclusively targeting Chinese actions to the exclusion of others, though, may entice other claimants in the SCS to take stronger action to pursue their claims.

A second protestation may be towards China's claim to a territorial sea around the built-up, low-tide features of the SCS, which are not entitled to one according to UNCLOS. This would only apply to Subi, Hughes, and Mischief Reefs, all areas under Chinese control. But Beijing has never formally declared a territorial sea around these features. The 27 October 2015 FON patrol by USS *Lassen*, coming within 12nm of Subi Reef, supports Washington's attempt to force China to clarify their legal position on this matter. Chinese officials, however, have been extremely subtle in their wording of opposition to such actions. With respect to the above mentioned American FON patrol, Chinese condemnations were swift, but avoided legal terms such as 'territorial sea' and 'violations' for more legally-neutral ones such as 'waters near' and 'harmed' sovereignty interests.

A third possible American objection concerns the general threat by China to FON in the SCS as a whole. If China perceives the SCS as some sort of internal waterway, would Beijing try to control, let alone limit, movement in SCS – either to commercial traffic and/or other military vessels and aircraft? At this time, there is no indication China

is intent on restricting access subject to their approval (like the imposition of an Air Defence Identification Zone over the East China Sea in 2013). The increasing presence and patrolling of Chinese military and constabulary assets in these waters, however, is altering the balance

anti-China containment strategy, justify such actions as pressuring China to clarify formal legal positions on specific issues. Such a tactic, however, could put America's position in a contradictory state of affairs, attempting to balance their legal neutrality towards these



Cuarteron Reef, South China Sea. (Image credit: Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative.)



Subi Reef, South China Sea. (Image credit: Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative.)

of power locally; developments that marginalize US power in the region and complicate obligations to defence treaty allies entangled in maritime disputes with Beijing, specifically the Philippines in the SCS and Japan in the East China Sea. Washington, attempting to avoid the portrayal of FON patrols as part of an

disputes while reaffirming commitment to defence treaty allies and partners in the region as a counter-weight to China's growing power and influence.

The degree of importance of the SCS disputes to Beijing is another area of ambiguity. Despite some commentators'

assertions to the contrary, China has never listed the SCS as a 'core interest,' a concept relatively new to the jargon-dominated world of Chinese foreign policy. Originally coined in 2004, the term is to designate an issue – originally pertaining to the re-unification of Taiwan (and expanded to include Tibet and Xinjiang in 2006) – in which there exists little to no room to negotiate about the ultimate aims of Beijing. In 2010, debate began as to whether the SCS was now a Chinese 'core interest.' To date, however, no official proclamation has ever been made other than a loose affiliation of the SCS disputes with the term 'core interests' under the broad category of sovereignty itself. Expansion of the term, while providing flexibility to Chinese leaders to highlight uncompromising issues – especially in their relations with the US – has diluted its significance. Some China observers even argue the concept is increasingly meaningless in diplomatic talks as it is now used inter-changeably with the term 'important issues,' which carries no specific definition.¹ Despite its uncertain status in the hierarchy of national interests, the SCS issue has climbed the priority ladder over the past half-decade, with Beijing determined to consolidate their current holdings while ensuring outside actors – namely the US – are neutralized from effectively influencing these matters.

Over the past decade, Beijing has undertaken a major reconfiguration of how it promotes and defends their claims in the SCS. After decades of simply declaring control, a number of claimants began in the 1970s to pursue ownership of the barren and largely uninhabited islands and rocks populating these waters leading to direct and violent confrontations, especially between Vietnam and China. One of the original justifications of employing constabulary forces to the region was to either protect one's fishing fleets or ejecting others' from claimed waters. China, furthermore, relied heavily of the use of fishing fleets to defend and promote

national claims in the absence of a strong maritime enforcement capability. While these agents remain active, they are not front line actors in claimant disputes anymore as China has heavily invested in and deployed new maritime assets – specifically naval and constabulary – into these waters.

The Chinese Coast Guard (CCG) has become the lead agency in patrolling and maintaining control of claimed waters in the SCS and East China Sea. Established in 2013 under the State Oceanic Administration, the CCG was the result of a large bureaucratic re-organization to aggregate the various maritime constabulary organizations into one command structure. Before this process, there were up to nine different agencies with maritime enforcement mandates and assets. These disparate organizations, and the lack of centralized control over their operations greatly complicated the security situation in

both the SCS and East China Sea.² China's first unified coast guard is a valuable national instrument of power, as it arouses less opposition and risk of escalation than the use of naval warships in these disputes. The CCG, however, is undergoing a large-scale modernization project augmenting the size of its fleet with vessels capable of being equipped with medium to large calibre deck guns and helicopters. While already the largest in the SCS, the CCG will be larger than all other SCS claimants' coast guards combined in the next half-decade if these trends continue.

The People's Liberation Army's Navy (PLAN) is also undergoing an extensive modernization effort supporting Beijing's desire to become a maritime power. Given the geography of the region and the importance of oceanic commercial trade, China is heavily investing in the construction of a navy which can defend and promote its interests further

abroad, moving beyond its traditional mandate of coastal defence and support to the army. The PLAN has been active in exercising and operating in the SCS, but largely functions further afield from direct areas of confrontation in an over-watch position able to support the CCG when needed. While the CCG is tasked with confronting other claimants' constabulary forces when the need arises, the PLAN is focused on neutralizing American sea power to marginalize their ability to intervene.

Such a strategy is not only specific to the SCS but can also be seen across the entire East Asian region, as Beijing prioritizes the construction of a maritime force focused on anti-access and area denial capacities and strategies. At this point, it is uncertain whether the PLAN will remain focused on sea denial, frustrating American power projection in their immediate environment, or further transform into a blue-water navy

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attempting to wrestler sea control from the US and her allies in East Asia and elsewhere.³

Another major endeavour of Beijing is the extensive land-reclamation projects occurring on controlled islets and rocks. It should be noted that China neither was the first to initiate the practice nor remains the only one engaged in it; but the scale and intensity of their operations dwarf all others combined. Upon these newly reclaimed features, Beijing is building a number of small scale runways and other infrastructure projects, which appear in part designed to support military operations. Concerns that islands and newly reclaimed rocks, however, will be bristled with defence installations is overblown for they will not be able to store large amounts of supplies and fuel and shall be quite exposed to precision strike with little in the way of direct assistance from mainland China.⁴ While not discrediting their military application and potential, these projects should be interpreted as outposts of symbolic importance, as opposed to hardened and strengthened military facilities that irrevocable change the balance of power in the region.

Arguments that the quarrels in the SCS are rooted in contests over fishing grounds or potential resources located within them (the latter being greatly exaggerated as to their economic viability) are off the mark. These disputes, also, were of little historical importance to leaders in Beijing until relatively recently, thus domestic nationalist arguments cannot account for their sudden surge in significance. The overriding and guiding rationale for Chinese interests in these matters is best explained strategically – as a test of American resolve to determine if the US will allow Beijing to deviate from international law and norms in determining their ownership. China, furthermore, is not pursuing an overt and aggressive revisionist challenge in East Asia but rather a desire to re-make regional dynamics and create greater

degrees of freedom away from US influence. Despite concerns of militarizing the region, Beijing has generally acted cautiously to avoid actions that may lead to violent exchanges (vice their engagements with Vietnam in the 1970s). If, however, China pursues activities such as aggressively evicting other claimants from islets and rocks; imposing an Air Defence Identification Zone; or attempting to control commercial traffic in the SCS, these would spark an immediate American reaction (and most likely widespread regional support) which ultimately would be detrimental to Beijing's interests.

Beijing is not looking for a quick or decisive result in the SCS, but rather to create an environment where the long-term trajectories are favorable to their interests. This entails neutralizing American military and political influence in order to negotiate these disputes on a bilateral vice multilateral basis (as advocated by ASEAN), where Beijing's massive economic and political leverage may strong arm many of its smaller neighbours. China will maintain purposeful ambiguity regarding its ultimate aims in the SCS while continuing to consolidate islands and rocks already under its control. The SCS, therefore, may become a frozen dispute. As much as the smaller claimants may want to resolve these issues now before China becomes too powerful, the maintenance of stability within Sino-American relations cannot be compromised over disputes of ownership over a small number of relatively uninteresting and unimportant islands and islet groups – and Beijing is betting that Washington believes this too. ■

Adam P. MacDonald is an independent academic based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Receiving his Masters in Political Science from the University of Victoria in 2010, Adam specializes in geopolitical developments in the Arctic and East Asia. He has been published in various Canadian and international journals and

is a regular contributor to the East Asia Forum and Frontline Defence. He is, as well, a member of the Nova Scotia Health Research Ethics Board.

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REFLECTIONS ON THE SINO-RUSSIAN RELATIONSHIP

by David Law

Whither the relationship between the Russian Federation (RF) and the People's Republic of China (PRC)? Will the two countries continue on their current strategically ambiguous path? Will their competition in Central Asia lead them to conflict? Will they become full-blooded allies, goose-stepping in unison against the West? One way or the other, it would seem that the direction of Russia-China relations over the next decade or so could be decisive for world peace and stability.

This article looks at how the relationship has evolved since the two countries' current leaders assumed their positions in 2012 and how it might evolve going forward.

Towards a "Special Relationship" (Xi Jinping in 2013)

When Putin returned to the Russian Presidency in 2012 and Xi Jinping became head of the Communist Party of China that same year, the numbers underlying the bilateral relationship looked formidable. Bilateral trade continued to boom. Prices for Russian energy products were stronger than ever. China had the resources to finance projects in cooperation with Russia that were politically desirable, even if not necessarily economically sound.

A certain symmetry in the political circumstances of the two leaders was also evident. Putin reassumed the Presidency amidst significant protests

against the succession scheme he and his predecessor – and successor – had cooked up. Within four months of becoming Communist Party General Secretary, Xi had occupied the other top posts in the Chinese hierarchy, State President and Chairman of the Central Military Commission. Both men would have to prove themselves in what were to become increasingly challenging circumstances. But, assuming they would manage, both leaders could look forward to an extended period of working together, at least a decade, perhaps more.

It soon became apparent that the two Presidents had complementary ideas about how they planned to proceed. Both Putin and Xi set out to reinvigorate the effort to establish a multipolar world – code for reducing the influence of the United States and its allies over international affairs and creating more space for their ambitions. As part of this approach, they undertook efforts to enhance their country's military capacity and project a more muscular foreign policy, exploiting complex issues in their respective 'near abroad' regions in an effort to rally their populations around a nationalist agenda. Both countries seemed poised to use their resources to build on their existing bilateral cooperation in energy provision and infrastructure in Central Asia. With the US withdrawal from Afghanistan already announced for 2014, they could expect to face new tests in Southwest Asia.

Putin and Xi also sought to strengthen

political control over independent sources of thinking in the media and civil society, and ensure that the courts knew where justice lay. In China, Xi would launch a colossal anti-corruption campaign. This was ostensibly about restoring discipline and propriety in the party. But, as it worked its way through the system, it became clear that this was just as much about neutralizing political opponents. In Russia, in a tragic, landmark event, Boris Nemtsov, a liberal politician and leading opponent of Putin, was assassinated in 2015, the first murder of a mainstream politician since Stalin's time.

Of course, the two leaders presided over two very different political systems, one communist, the other post-communist. But while Putin has publically repudiated communism as a viable system of governance, Mikhail Gorbachev, the last leader of the Soviet communist party, has even observed that Putin is actually more communist than he was.¹

Reality Sets In

Within a year of the two leaders' rise to the top, their agenda started to run into trouble. The *série noire* began when Russian economy, which under Putin had registered seven percent growth rates since his first becoming Prime Minister in 1999 – with the exception of 2008, when almost everyone's economy went south. Yet, by 2013, Russian growth limped in at 1.3 percent. The numbers for the first half of 2014 were even less rosy.

This was probably decisive in setting the stage for the annexation of Crimea that year and the subsequent effort to create a Russia-controlled, or at least pro-Russian, territory in Eastern Ukraine, while blocking Kiev's ambition to move closer to the European Union. Putin sought to change the domestic conversation in Russia from the economy to a renewed Russian *grandeur*. If you were to believe the opinion polls (which I don't), he succeeded.

Russia's actions in Ukraine, including its widely assumed responsibility for the shooting down of the Malaysian Airlines passenger plane over rebel-held territory in Ukraine's Donbass, triggered a series of economic sanctions against Russia that remain in place. These are widely considered to have contributed to the further fall of the Russian economy in 2014-15, the plunge of the ruble, and the collapse of Russia's purchasing power. The other factor, of course, has been the rising reserves of energy products beyond Moscow's control, as fracking has brought new resources to market, the Saudis have maintained production levels, and the Americans have lifted restrictions on energy exports. At the same time, the EU and Ukraine have moved to cut their energy dependence on Russia.

New energy resources are expected to come to market in 2016 as the sanctions against Iran are lifted and if the peace agreement in Libya takes hold. At the time of writing – January 2016 – the barrel is now at around \$30 US, with some analysts predicting a further slide to \$20 or even \$10. This is having huge implications for the world economy, not the least for Russia, which has relied on revenues from petroleum products to feed roughly fifty percent of its federal budget.²

Ukraine proved to be the first of several foreign policy issues in the Putin-Xi era where the two countries did not see eye-to-eye, even if every effort was made to avoid overt opposition. So, in the

United Nations General Assembly vote supporting Ukraine's territorial integrity and proclaiming invalid the Russia-organized referendum on Crimea's annexation in spring 2014, China was one of the 58 countries that abstained (100 voted for, 11 against, 24 were absent).

As for Central Asia, despite their interest in stabilizing the region, Russia and China have yet to forge a viable *modus vivendi* on how they should work together. Beijing has favoured the idea of using the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), in which both it and Russia are members alongside four out of the five erstwhile Soviet Central Asian states, as a critical policy vehicle for sponsoring infrastructure projects in Central Asia and addressing its security challenges. Russia prefers the structures it has evolved in former Soviet space for these tasks, such as the Eurasian Economic Community (a would-be Russian-dominated EU-like structure), re-baptized the Eurasian Economic Union in 2015, and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (a would-be Russian-dominated NATO-like body) established in 1992.

In September 2013, having seen its proposals in the SCO stall, Xi Jinping conducted a 10-day official tour of Central Asia and signed a string of bilateral economic and business deals, even using his visit to Kazakhstan to announce the "Silk Road Economic Belt," a bold proposal to finance and build roads, rail links, pipelines, and other infrastructure across Central Asia and to create direct routes for Chinese exports to Europe. The following month, Xi proposed a "Maritime Silk Road" focused on South Asia that is to include major investments in portuary infrastructure.³

China has also been guarded about Russia's foray into the Syrian crisis in the fall of 2015, urging all parties to make a greater negotiating effort and avoiding any overt support for Russia's intervention there. Similarly, Beijing

reacted to Turkey's shoot-down of the SU-24 in November 2015 with a call for clarification of what actually transpired.⁴ Xi was clearly not interested in sharing Putin's rage in response to the incident.

Russia has been similarly reluctant with respect to China's efforts to work for control over the South China Seas. Russia has close trading and political relations with several states of the region – Vietnam and the Philippines in particular – that are at odds with Beijing on its interpretation of boundaries in their contiguous waters.⁵ Interestingly, the Americans, at the same time as they have opposed China's efforts to seek a controlling role in the South China Seas, have made port calls and conducted friendly exercises with their Chinese counterparts.

In 2015, the issue of the health of the Chinese economy came to the fore. After years of chalking up seven percent plus growth rates, and sometimes well above that, the number for this past year is widely estimated to be under seven percent, with some Western analysts contending that it is even less, official Chinese statistics notwithstanding. Who can tell? There is no independent oversight of anything in the Middle Kingdom. Chinese markets at year's end and at the new year's beginning have voted with their feet, sending the Chinese stock market – and others around the world – significantly lower.

One way of looking at this is to say that Chinese Communist Party, in power for 66 years, may find itself in a place close to where the Soviet Communist Party did at 72 when it lost its monopoly of power in the USSR. After several years of impressive performance growth rates, as of roughly 1974 the Soviet economy went south. Economists contend that this resulted from an objective need to make the transition from extensive to intensive growth. The failure to do so ushered in Gorbachev's effort to reform the system while keeping the key institutional fixtures of the Soviet system in place.



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping shake hands at the 2015 BRICS Summit. (Image credit: www.kremlin.ru.)

President Xi Jinping's economic reforms may be attempting to do what Gorbachev tried to do before it became too late.

Be that as it may, the Chinese economy is definitely losing steam. This has compromised Russia's effort to pivot to China in response to Western sanctions. For example, the landmark gas agreement Russia and China struck in 2014, celebrated as an example of their new era of partnership, seems under strain as China goes to other providers for better prices. Similarly, plans for a second pipeline to increase shipments to China now appear doubtful.

So, the picture for Sino-Russian relations at the outset of 2016 pales in comparison with the expectations of 2012. But it would be unwise to write off the relationship just yet. The two countries continue to stage joint military exercises, such as those that took place in the Eastern Mediterranean in May 2015 and in the Sea of Japan in August of that same

year.⁶ They also attended their respective parades in 2015 marking the seventieth anniversary of their countries' victories in World War II, while several Western leaders stayed away. They have consulted on the Arctic and declared that they have a common interest in taking advantage of the emerging possibilities of being able to navigate the northern passage for trade, commerce, and whatever else they might find could benefit from its use.⁷ And, at the most recent SCO summit in September 2015, an event to which Russia's and China's other BRICS partners (Brazil, India, South Africa) were invited, an invitation to India and Pakistan to join the SCO was confirmed.⁸

End of a Dream or Start of a Nightmare?

To return to the questions posed at the outset, my sense is that the unlikely scenario is one of conflict between the two countries. To be sure, Russia and China have had their difficult moments

through history. This included the Sino-Soviet split, which lasted some three decades and featured a 1969 shooting incident on the Ussuri River, then part of their as yet unregulated border. (This occurred at the same time as China was allowing the USSR to send military materiel to the Viet Cong through their territory – but that is another story.)

In any event, there is no historical animosity in the relationship such as between, say, Azerbaijan and Armenia, or Israel and Palestine. And the dominant expansion patterns of the two countries have traditionally not tended to target one another's territory. Does that mean conflict between the two powers can forever be excluded? No, but for my money this variant only moves into the realm of possibility if one or the other is overwhelmed by centrifugal tendencies.

Strategic ambiguity, what I have identified as the current paradigm, could well continue for some time. But note that in

a state of strategic ambiguity, scenarios are possible that are not at all benign from a Western standpoint. For example, there could be a situation in which Russia or China presumed that a certain action in its near abroad would spark a similar initiative in the other country's near abroad, creating a chain of circumstances overwhelming the West.

The third possibility mentioned at the outset would have Russia and China marching in coordinated fashion to realize their regional objectives and ready to defy the West in the process. As unlikely as this might seem, there is a modern precedent for such a scenario. In 1939, as France and Germany were negotiating with the Soviet Union in an effort to mount a common front against Germany, Hitler convinced Stalin that he could offer a better deal. The result was an ostensibly secret pact of non-belligerence, whereby they agreed to divide up the territory of six countries. Two years later, Germany and the Soviet Union were at each other's throats but in the meantime the world was engaged in its second Great War.

It may well be that our current futures will look quite different from those described above. The bottom line is that when authoritarian states start running into economic challenges of the qualitative kind, their default position tends to be to play the foreign policy and military card, even when their hands are less than strong. ■

For more on how Russia and China can work together internationally, see David Law's World War IV series of posts on the CDA Institute Blog: The Forum, in particular Part 3 (<https://www.cdainstitute.ca/en/blog/entry/what-s-in-a-world-war-knocking-on-the-door-of-world-war-iv-part-3>).

David Law is a Canadian security and governance practitioner with over three decades of experience in the field. He has undertaken consultancy assignments in

more than 40 countries around the world. Presently, he is a Senior Associate with the Kitchener-based Security Governance Group, and a Senior Fellow with its sister organization, the Centre for Security Governance.

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QUELLE STRATÉGIE POUR MOSCOU VIS-À-VIS DES ETATS DE FACTO POUR DONNER NAISSANCE AU PROCESSUS DE GUERRE HYBRIDE ?

par Michael Lambert

Le concept de Guerre hybride n'est pas sans faire référence à celui de subversion employé dans les Empires coloniaux au XIXème et XXème siècle. Si les termes de "guerre" et "hybride" ne sont pas en eux même novateurs, la combinaison entre plusieurs stratégies d'influence et de médiatisation et l'argument militaire l'est davantage.

Conformément aux premiers travaux sur la question,¹ la guerre dite "hybride" sert les intérêts d'un pays. Pour autant, cette première dimension semble en elle-même réfutable dans la mesure où les exemples récents ne vont pas directement dans ce sens. Les deux cas que sont Novorossia et ISIS s'avèrent révélateurs, avec une entité autonome servant les intérêts de la Russie mais sans y avoir été rattachée, et une région autonome souhaitant son indépendance et en guerre avec tous les autres Etats du Moyen-Orient situés dans sa périphérie.

Les questions sur la structure de la Guerre hybride, son fonctionnement, son émergence et la relation entre les acteurs qui l'alimentent semblent toujours entières. Pourtant, leur maîtrise amènera au développement des stratégies de contre-Guerre hybride, inconnues au moment de la rédaction de cet article.

Dans la mesure où l'Etat Islamique dispose d'une relative autonomie

budgétaire et militaire depuis la saisie des armements appartenant à l'armée irakienne et grâce à la vente de pétrole par des réseaux illégaux, il semble plus pertinent de concentrer notre attention sur l'espace post-soviétique où les Etats *de facto* dépendent davantage de leurs partenaires, ce qui facilite leur instrumentalisation.

Cette région se compose à l'heure actuelle de plusieurs populations antagonistes et dont la présence est le résultat direct de la politique de déplacement des populations voulu par Staline après la Seconde Guerre mondiale. La présence de russophones en Moldavie, pays latin, est un reliquat manifeste de cette période. A cette fragmentation ethnique s'ajoute également la présence d'un terreau favorable à l'émergence du processus de Guerre hybride tel qu'on le connaît. Ainsi, sur les six membres du Partenariat oriental lancé par l'Union européenne lors du Sommet de Prague en 2009, cinq comportent un ou plusieurs Etats *de facto*. C'est le cas de la Transnistrie en Moldavie, de l'Abkhazie et l'Ossétie du Sud en Géorgie, du Haut Karabakh en Arménie et Azerbaïdjan, et plus récemment de Novorossia en Ukraine.

Dans toutes ces régions séparatistes, non reconnues par la communauté internationale, on retrouve une présence militaire russe et des équipements

militaires soviétiques qui constituent un danger légitime pour la sécurité internationale. Il est important de mentionner que la présence du Kremlin n'est pas pour autant illégale. Dans le cas de la Transnistrie, les 1500 soldats russes stationnés sur place sont officiellement membre des troupes de Maintien de la Paix de la Communauté des Etats Indépendants.³ En Abkhazie et Ossétie du Sud, deux régions reconnues par Moscou, la présence russe s'impose dans le cadre d'accords bilatéraux. Reste alors le cas plus complexe et contemporain que constitue Novorossia en Ukraine où Moscou semble soutenir les séparatistes mais sans support militaire officiel.

En se penchant sur le cas ukrainien, on constate que le Kremlin s'est retrouvé dans l'impossibilité d'intervenir militairement pour défendre ses intérêts économiques et son hégémonie militaire en mer Noire.

Kiev n'ayant pas déclaré la guerre à Moscou, le Président russe ne pouvait pas avancer la possibilité d'une ingérence militaire directe, qui aurait été mal perçue par la communauté internationale et probablement sujette à une réponse militaire de la part des Occidentaux. Il lui était également illégitime de demander à envoyer des forces de Maintien de la Paix de la CEI pour protéger les russophones ou minorités du pays dans la mesure où les manifestants de la Place Maiden ne

revendiquaient aucune partie spécifique du territoire et ne s'opposaient pas à la pratique du russe comme langue de communication inter-ethnique.

Ainsi, à l'aube du lancement de l'Union eurasiatique, dont l'Ukraine devait être un pays membre, le Kremlin s'est retrouvé dans l'incapacité de contrecarrer le changement gouvernemental et d'endiguer le rapprochement avec l'Union européenne dans le cadre de l'Accord d'Association. Cette attitude pro-occidentale constituait cependant un danger pour Moscou dans la mesure où l'éloignement de Kiev vis-à-vis du projet d'Union eurasiatique affaiblissait économiquement cette dernière et laissait à envisager une présence accrue de l'OTAN et des Etats-Unis en mer Noire, zone que le Kremlin juge comme étant sa "zone légitime d'influence."⁴

La Russie devait alors parvenir à trouver un moyen, une stratégie pour endiguer le rapprochement entre les Etats-Unis, l'Europe et l'Ukraine, et c'est dans ce contexte que débuta le processus de mise en place de Guerre hybride dans le Donbass.

Bien que n'étant pas totalement russophone, le Donbass dispose proportionnellement de plus d'habitants d'origine russe que le reste du pays, exception faite de la Crimée.⁵ Il est alors plus facile pour le Kremlin d'utiliser des médias russes et du sentiment patriotique des citoyens d'origine russe ou proche de la Russie. Qui plus est, cette présence russophone explique les connections économiques intenses entre la Russie et la région, ce qui a permis au Kremlin d'avancer l'idée que l'Accord d'Association allait être défavorable à l'économie régionale.

Jouant sur le sentiment pro-russe et anti-occidental dans la région, le Kremlin commença à intensifier la propagande anti-Europe et anti-OTAN dès le courant de l'année 2014.⁶ Présentant l'Union européenne comme étant sous le contrôle

de l'Allemagne avec des références historiques au nazisme. L'image frappante de cette période reste celle d'un panneau d'affichage représentant l'Ukraine divisée en deux avec du côté pro-Occident une svastika, et de l'autre le drapeau de la Fédération russe.

Cette stratégie de communication, qui avait pour objectif de faire naître des tensions entre les deux parties du pays, n'est pas officiellement présentée comme étant le souhait du gouvernement russe. Dans la pratique, cela reste néanmoins le cas car les médias russes et think-tanks sont financés ou sous contrôle direct du gouvernement russe, et ne peuvent diffuser des reportages allant contre la conception officielle voulue par le Kremlin, sous peine de fermeture ou d'une amende conséquente. On retrouve alors l'idée d'une instrumentalisation des médias, essentiellement télévisés, afin d'accroître les tensions séparatistes en Ukraine.

Cette première phase d'excitation médiatique amena certains groupes d'individus à manifester leur hostilité envers les réformes du gouvernement central, le tout dans un calme relatif. Ces derniers n'ayant pas accès aux armes, il leur était en effet impossible de parvenir à s'insurger contre le gouvernement de Kiev ou de mener des actions violentes, contrairement à la Crimée où l'armée russe était stationnée depuis plusieurs années.

C'est dans ce contexte que naît la deuxième phase du processus de Guerre hybride, essentiellement militaire. A ce stade, la Russie ne peut toujours pas justifier l'envoi de troupes sur le terrain, encore moins d'armes pour alimenter les séparatistes. Mais pour que le conflit dégénère, il est essentiel d'approvisionner en armes les groupes pro-russes du Donbass.

On retrouve alors deux options possibles que sont l'approvisionnement en équipement par l'envoi d'armes dans des

camions banalisés, n'appartenant pas officiellement à l'armée russe, pas plus que les instructeurs qui se rendent en Ukraine. Ou bien l'utilisation des réseaux mafieux et des groupes paramilitaires pour les y exporter. Cette dernière option semble la plus réaliste dans la mesure où l'armée russe peut facilement faire disparaître des équipements militaires dans des zones dites "grises", ces derniers se retrouvant alors dans les mains de groupes armés ayant un intérêt à les vendre pour en tirer un bénéfice substantiel.

Le Kremlin peut envoyer des armes en Ossétie du Sud ou en Abkhazie, afin que celles-ci disparaissent vers le Caucase russe et se retrouvent par la suite en Ukraine.⁷ Cette stratégie permet aux manifestants anti-occidentaux de s'armer et de bénéficier d'une formation militaire sans impliquer officiellement la Russie, les transformant de fait en séparatistes armés et violents vis-à-vis du gouvernement ukrainien.

La troisième phase comporte pour sa part un caractère résolument diplomatique. Les séparatistes du Donbass, devenu Novorossia, entretiennent un conflit ouvert avec Kiev depuis qu'ils disposent d'armements. Leur objectif immédiat est de renverser le pouvoir central, ce qui s'avère néanmoins être impossible.

Si le cas de l'Ukraine conduit à un conflit relativement figé avec un cantonnement des protagonistes, rien n'empêche d'envisager la possibilité qu'un jour un mouvement séparatiste puisse renverser un gouvernement, l'amenant alors à contrôler l'ensemble d'un pays et ainsi réorienter la politique nationale.

Dans le cas du conflit entre Novorossia et le reste de l'Ukraine, la Russie doit parvenir à soutenir les séparatistes pour qu'ils ne soient pas en situation défavorable par rapport à l'armée nationale, et dans un même temps limiter la visibilité de l'intervention de Moscou pour endiguer les pressions de la communauté internationale. Il est alors



A Ukrainian soldier taking part in urban warfare training provided by Canadian military personnel during Operation Unifier. (Image credit: Canadian Forces Combat Camera, DND.)

impossible pour le Kremlin d'équiper les séparatistes en matériel de pointe, comme cela serait le cas avec des tanks T-90 ou des avions de chasse de type Mig, mais ces derniers doivent cependant recevoir une aide matérielle conséquente pour entretenir le conflit.

La raison de ce conflit ouvert et qui n'a pas d'intérêt à s'arrêter est résolument économique. Il est en effet impossible pour Kiev de prétendre pouvoir intégrer l'Union européenne ou l'OTAN sans satisfaire à des standards élevés et coûteux, chose qu'elle ne peut pas faire en devant investir massivement dans sa défense nationale. La création d'un Etat de facto, comme pour chaque autre pays du Partenariat oriental, exception faite de la Biélorussie, constitue alors un frein à toute forme de rapprochement avec l'Europe et l'Alliance. Ce *statu quo* assure au Kremlin de ne pas voir s'étendre l'influence occidentale dans sa zone d'influence, une situation similaire à celle en Géorgie et en Moldavie et s'apparente

à un équilibre de Nash.⁸

La Russie dispose alors de deux options que sont la reconnaissance des séparatistes comme nouvel État, à l'image de l'Abkhazie et de l'Ossétie du Sud en 2008, ou le maintien d'un caractère ambigu, comme en Transnistrie. La reconnaissance n'est pas l'approche la plus pertinente, dans la mesure où cela engendre des conséquences diplomatiques lourdes et fait perdre à la Russie l'avantage de pouvoir menacer Kiev de le faire à l'avenir. Une reconnaissance de Novorossia permettrait certes à la Russie d'intégrer plus facilement le nouvel Etat au sein de la Fédération ou de l'Union eurasiatique, mais amènerait à une rupture des négociations avec Kiev qui peut encore espérer compter sur la Russie pour exercer des pressions sur les séparatistes pour qu'ils réintègrent le territoire national. Le Kremlin, en ne reconnaissant pas les séparatistes et en jouant sur l'ambiguïté, garde alors un coup d'avance et un moyen de

pression si Kiev se décidait à entamer un rapprochement avec l'Occident.

Mais le cas ukrainien n'est pas aussi problématique qu'il ne le laisse paraître au premier abord. Le pays est membre du Partenariat oriental, et joue un rôle de premier plan pour la sécurité en mer Noire, mais n'est membre ni de l'Union européenne ni de l'OTAN, pas plus que de la zone Euro. En conséquence, la stratégie de mise en place du processus de Guerre hybride déstabilise le pays, qui ne peut plus satisfaire aux exigences occidentales pour un rapprochement avec Bruxelles et Washington, mais ne constitue pas un risque majeur pour la stabilité sur le continent.

En revanche, et conformément au processus mis en place par la Russie, il serait tout à fait envisageable pour le Kremlin d'utiliser les minorités russophones dans les pays Baltes, bien que ces dernières soient bien intégrées, pour déstabiliser un pays comme

l'Estonie.

Une telle situation laisserait apparaître un schéma plus problématique dans la mesure où déstabiliser Tallinn reviendrait à montrer qu'il est possible d'attaquer un Etat membre de l'Union européenne, sans craindre une réponse coercitive dans la mesure où il n'existe pas d'armée commune. Cela permettrait également au gouvernement russe d'évaluer la réponse apportée par l'OTAN. Car si l'Article 5 du Traité de Washington couvre les attaques directes contre un Etat membre de l'Alliance, celui-ci est beaucoup moins explicite en ce qui concerne les guerres civiles, et ne prend pas en compte le principe de Guerre hybride. Ainsi, si dans le cas des attaques terroristes du 11 septembre 2001 les Etats-Unis purent justifier une intervention en Afghanistan avec le support de l'Alliance, la situation serait autrement plus complexe avec une puissance nucléaire comme la Russie. Si aucune réaction de l'Alliance ne se ferait sentir en Estonie, on assisterait alors à une remise en cause du principe fondateur d'entraide au sein de l'OTAN, avec des conséquences militaires défavorables pour les pays en Europe de l'Est et pourtant membres de l'Union européenne.

Qui plus est, déstabiliser l'Estonie, pays membre de la Zone Euro, amènerait les marchés internationaux à s'interroger sur la valeur réelle de la monnaie et sur son avenir.

Pour résumer, le processus de Guerre hybride mis en place la première fois par Moscou pendant la Guerre froide en Finlande, puis amélioré avec les Etats de facto dans les pays du Partenariat oriental, laisse craindre qu'un schéma similaire se produise dans une Europe sans défense commune au XXIème siècle.

La participation de l'Estonie et de la Lettonie au sein des institutions internationales concerne dès lors l'ensemble des pays membres de l'Union et de l'Alliance, dont la France, dans la

mesure où ces derniers partagent la même monnaie et dépendent économiquement les uns des autres. Non sans oublier qu'une attaque contre Tallinn reviendrait à s'attaquer au fleuron de la cyberdéfense et cybersécurité en raison de la présence du Centre d'excellence en cyberdéfense de l'OTAN (CCDCOE)⁹ où la France participe activement depuis 2013 aux côtés d'autres pays membres de l'Union européenne, des Etats-Unis et du Canada. ■

Michael Lambert est doctorant au Collège doctoral de la Sorbonne et à l'Université de Tampere, il travaille actuellement au Ministère de la Défense française – IRSEM et à l'institut Franco-Allemand sur les questions de soft et smart power.

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DETERRENCE CONCEPTS IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

by Magnus Christiansson

The European Nightmare

The Russian attack on Ukraine in February 2014 was a strategic surprise. Russia used tiptoeing tactics for an invasion of Crimea and its willingness to take risks and behave aggressively shocked the transatlantic community. This chain of events has led to a crisis for the entire transatlantic security system, or as NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen put it: "Russia's military aggression in Ukraine is the most serious crisis in Europe since the fall of the Berlin Wall."¹

The aggression illustrated the weakness of the liberal security regime in Europe, the rise of Russia as the leading military power in the European neighborhood, and that large scale military confrontation, including inter-state war, is back on the strategic agenda. A few confusing days exposed the hubris and naivety which underpinned the transatlantic community's failure to notice the fundamental challenge posed by the Putin regime. The European ignorance was all the more inexcusable as Russia did nothing to conceal its strategic objectives. The Russian policies, their manifestation in a number of official doctrines as well as provocative and aggressive actions from 2005 onwards, had provided ample evidence of the risks at hand. Russia backed away from the treaties and norms of the post-Cold War order in Europe, started to exercise according to a Cold War play book, and committed to an ambitious re-armament program for its Armed

Forces. The attack on Ukraine in 2014 was a splash of cold water in the faces of an ignorant Western political leadership.

After the initial confusion, a debate ensued about a response to the Russian aggression and the long-term priorities for NATO. One dangerous scenario is that Europe will become so militarily weak that it could be subject to nuclear blackmailing or an outright "Finlandization." Another creeping danger is that the Putin regime is successful in splintering the European project via anti-liberal political forces which have gathered strength across Europe.

From a military strategic perspective, the main issue concerns decision-making procedures of the Alliance: the risk of Russian aggression against a member state in a coup de main while NATO is politically paralyzed. Thus, Russia might use local advantage of conventional forces to swiftly occupy some part of the Baltic states and create a *fait accompli* situation below the nuclear threshold. Russia could then use or threaten to use sub-strategic nuclear weapons in order to offset a powerful NATO response ("coercive escalation" or "de-escalation of aggression" in Russian terminology). Presently, there are very few US theatre nuclear forces in Europe. In other words, the US is *de facto* decoupled from Europe; there is no chain of risk that runs direct from the outposts to the very nerve center of the transatlantic Alliance. This means that the NATO would face two problematic options after Russian aggression: passing

a potentially devastating nuclear tipping point or backing down. While the Kremlin would not in itself gain anything of strategic importance in the Baltic rim land, this move might, over the course of a few hours, splinter the Alliance and propel us into a world order where US security guarantees are completely obsolete.

Hence, the transatlantic community is facing a strategic problem known to us from the Cold War era. The notion that military aggression could be used to fracture NATO politically was the central component in the "Hamburg Grab" scenario, which was based on the rationale that the US "cannot stake the continued existence of the North American cities against a Soviet raid on Bornholm, or Finmark, Thrace or even Hamburg."² The price would be the end of the US as a security guarantor.

Today, this scenario is not only contemplated by paranoid representatives from the Baltic Sea region, but exists as a strategic concern for US decision-makers. Lieutenant-General Frederick Hodges elaborated publicly on it at a seminar in Washington in October 2015:

Right now, if they [the Russians] wanted to they could shut down the Baltic Sea because of the amount of soldiers they have there, the electronic warfare capabilities they have there, the air defence capabilities they have there, and the long range anti-ship missile capability that they have. And of course you know they have already

exercised putting Iskander missiles into Kaliningrad which have nuclear capabilities and can reach any target in the Baltic.³

Transatlantic deterrence policies revisited the security dilemma reminiscent of the Cold War, but with different contemporary technological, geopolitical, and fiscal conditions. This short article concerns this strategic problem. Though there is a diversified debate on this issue, this article will focus on the transatlantic strategic deliberations and its connections between the US and the countries around the Baltic Sea. In the following, I will argue that there is an ongoing competition between deterrence conceptualized as trip-wire, and deterrence conceptualized as threshold.

Obama's Trip-Wire in Europe

A trip-wire is essentially based on external military capabilities which are activated if triggered by an opponent. The deterrent logic is based on a promise to act once the trip-wire has been triggered. The core of

the metaphor is the external response, and the content of the triggering capability is only secondary. The metaphor is partly harmonious with the idea of offshore balancing in US strategy. The fundamental idea behind offshore balancing is that permanent US deployments and security commitments are not necessary to stop Russia from dominating Eastern Europe. Only when there is an immediate threat to regional stability should the US intervene. Consequently, NATO countries should not be home to any permanent US bases, and in times of crisis they should be offered rotational presence which is regarded as sufficient to create credible deterrence.

There have been several indicators that the Obama administration has pursued a grand strategy according to some of the core aspects of offshore balancing. It has combined a policy of "reset" with the Putin regime, while "reassuring" European allies about the US commitment to European security. Importantly, the force posture is no longer built upon forward deployment in Europe. The main strategic idea seems to be that the European allies and Russia

should know that the US cavalry will go "onshore" in the event of a European contingency.

The Obama administration's approach in 2014-2015 has been to set up a trip-wire in Eastern Europe. The initiatives have been bilateral as well as multilateral in a NATO context. In Warsaw in June 2014, President Obama announced his call on the US Congress for a US\$985 million support for what was labelled the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI).⁴ This initiative is primarily based on rotational presence (continuous under the label "Operation Atlantic Resolve" as well as periodical under the label "European Activity Set") and it reinforced the early responses after the Russian annexation of Crimea. NATO replicated this development following the Wales Summit in September 2014. The main initiative, "Readiness Action Plan," is heavily dependent on US commitment to support the brigade sized Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) designed for Eastern Europe contingencies. NATO has also increased the Multinational

US soldiers open fire on "opposing forces" in a battle simulation during Saber Strike 2014 at Rukla Training Area, Lithuania, 16 June 2014. (Image credit: Joshua Leonard/US Army.)



Corps Northeast in Szczecin, Poland. The headquarters in Szczecin will organize regional exercises and link up preparatory staff elements, NATO Force Integration Units (NFIU), in the Baltic states, Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria for the VJTF.

In short, this has all the hallmarks of a trip-wire strategy. The whole point of US presence is that it is not static. The role of battalion-sized prepositioning in Europe is hardly that it should repel Russian aggression, but rather to display a credible capability and willingness to defend NATO countries in a time of crisis. It is a signal to the Putin regime that aggression towards allies in Eastern Europe would trigger US involvement. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the trip-wire strategy is not combined with any change in the nuclear posture. The ERI is a parallel track to Obama's nuclear policies.

Norway is an example of a neighbor to Russia which has started to analyze the merits of a national trip-wire strategy. An expert commission was initiated in December 2014, and it produced a report on Norwegian defence in April 2015. Traditionally, the findings of expert commissions have had an important influence on the conceptual development of Norwegian defence.

Today Norway has two major preparatory arrangements with the US: the Marine Corps Pre-positioning Program-Norway and the Collocated Operating Bases. The pre-positioning program in Trøndelag supports a US Marine Air Ground Task Force of some 4,500 soldiers. The air bases at Bodø and Sola are prepared for US air contributions in a time of crisis and war.

What is noticeable is not the military pre-positioning as such, but its place in Norwegian strategy. According to the expert commission, Norway is not capable of any step-level escalation, which means that its deterrent is inherently dependent on US reinforcements. In fact, it suggests that the very task of national defence in a serious crisis or war should only be conducted together with other NATO

countries. Consequently, the suggested operational concept is built upon early warning in order to trigger Allied involvement and an initial phase limited to Norwegian forces alone should be evaded. The concept makes prepositioning and rotational presence credible preparations for an Allied struggle *over* Norway, not a struggle *against* Norway.

The Emerging Debate: Towards a Threshold in Europe?

The main problem with trip-wires is not that they are relatively easy to trigger. Rather, the challenge is that the level of commitment made by the US might not be credible in the eyes of the Putin regime. As discussed below, this is the main point of contention for the critics of trip-wires: the US has not moved into a position where it is impossible to back away from its European commitments. Rotational forces are an ambiguous commitment and could offer several opportunities for withdrawal from a conflict. Furthermore, a trip-wire also opens the way for an ambiguous response in a military contingency, and the relatively light US footprint becomes a question mark in an escalation to nuclear conflict.

A threshold is essentially based on specific present military capabilities. Unlike a trip-wire, the credibility of a threshold is very much dependent on the content and strength of military forces. Consequently, threshold as a deterrent concept includes the presence of forces which raise the cost for Russian aggression throughout all identified rungs of a conflict ladder. This resonates with the ideas of a more asserted and engaged US strategy for Europe. According to this line of reasoning, forward deployment and permanent presence in order to create credibility for security guarantees, as well as a revised nuclear strategy, are all components in a policy to deter Russia from dominating Eastern Europe.

In his annual statement to the House Armed Service Committee in 2015, SACEUR (Supreme Allied Commander

Europe) and Commander of US Forces in Europe, Philip Breedlove, requested a noticeable shift of strategy in this direction. The reason for this assessment is that trip-wires are based on a promise of action which is less likely to have a lasting effect on the Russian strategic calculus: "virtual presence means actual absence."⁵ Alternatively, Breedlove advocated a threshold strategy: "The cornerstone of EUCOM's strategy is physical presence,"⁶ based on the conviction that "permanently stationed forces are a force multiplier that rotational deployments can never match."⁷

Likewise, the physical presence of the US in Europe has been the main request from the Baltic states after the aggression against Crimea. In particular, Estonian President Toomas Ilves has used several opportunities to make his case publically for a permanent US contribution to the Baltic states. According to Ilves, the main argument is that the existing defence capabilities are too weak to stop Russian aggression, while the VJTF is considered to be too slow-moving to make any difference against a Russian attack. He fears that the Western resolve to protect the Baltics in a confrontation with Russia is falling apart. For the Baltic states it is not an option to hope for a trip-wire to launch a US intervention.

Though the Obama administration still maintains the trip-wire strategy, there have been several indicators that it is slowly being modified. One major reason for this tendency is that it is becoming increasingly difficult to separate a conventional US deterrence posture and the dream of a world without nuclear weapons. In fact, "Operation *Atlantic Resolve*" has forged a link between US Strategic Command and NATO's regional exercises.

More importantly, there have been clear indicators that the Obama administration has started to revise its nuclear policy for Europe. In his confirmation hearing before Congress, Defense Secretary Ashton Carter recognized the problem facing the US in the case of nuclear brinkmanship in Europe. Already a joint



Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion of the Norwegian army during their military exercise in Rena. (Image credit: Army Recognition.)

hearing with Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, Rose Gottemoeller and Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Brian McKeon in 2014 pointed to a revision of policy. As indicated in the June 2015 “National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016” call for the Obama administration to explore “options for expanding the presence of United States ground forces of the size of Brigade Combat Team in Eastern Europe,”⁸ there is a broader political interest in modifying the current US policy.

Returning to the Baltic Sea region, a Swedish concept for threshold was introduced by former Special Advisor to the Swedish Chief of Defence Krister Andrén in a report from February 2014. A central part of the argument is that Sweden is faced with the risk of aggression against key areas and societal functions. Given the current status of the Swedish military defence and the limitations of re-building a national defence for a small state, the report makes the case for a change in strategic direction in order to create a

“detering capability threshold.” While the Nordic countries are too small to create a full spectrum of deterring capabilities, the report maintains that the Nordic countries should develop a national and regional capability threshold.

Furthermore, the current Finnish defence policy has many similarities with the Swedish threshold concept. While the general Finnish approach to military defence is based on self-reliance, the emphasis of the latest defence bill regards a limited attack against key regions or functions. While the bill is somewhat obscure regarding the exact meaning of the term “detering threshold,” in practice the Finnish policy has come to appreciate many of the features described in the Swedish concept. In 2012 Finland was allowed, as the second country outside of the US, to purchase AGM-158 Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missiles (JASSM) designed for the upgraded F/A-18 Hornets. While this is a US investment into European security, to Finland it will (once it becomes operational in 2016) create a second-strike option in line

with the threshold concept. The same is evident regarding the procurement of long-range surface-to-surface missiles which was cleared by the US Senate in 2012. However, due to a strained financial situation, Finland had to cancel this deal in 2014.

In the Polish case, the fundamental understanding of the transatlantic link regards the US military presence in Europe in general, and in Poland in particular. Poland has repeatedly raised concerns at the executive level about the US commitment to Europe, as well as concerns about German passivity in the face of Russian aggression. In fact, US policies have, as one analyst concluded, “led Poland to give more attention to its own strategic and military options should the American security guarantee grow even weaker.”⁹

In the 2013 “White Book” from the National Security Bureau (an advisory body to the Polish President), the concept for a pessimistic scenario of deteriorating security situation in Europe is that Poland

would be forced to fundamentally redefine its security policy and focus on building up its own defence and deterrence capabilities. In 2014, Poland adopted a revised *Strategy for National Security*. One of its three priorities is to ensure readiness and strengthen national defence capabilities in areas where NATO might be hindered.

Importantly, this trend of more self-reliance is also visible in the Polish defence procurement strategy. The ambitious “Modernization Plan for the Armed Forces in the Years 2013-2022” includes no less than 14 prioritized procurement programs. The priorities of the plan reveal that it is set to prepare Poland for a limited conflict without direct foreign support, and should be interpreted as being in line with the concept of a national threshold. The air and missile defence programme (“The Shield of Poland”) is clearly Poland’s top defence priority. However, conceptually a shield needs to be complemented with a sword. Thus, in 2014 Poland was allowed, as the third country outside the US, to purchase AGM-158 JASSM.

The Future Deterrence Posture in Europe

In the 1960s, the flexible response strategy raised concerns about the nuclear policy of the Alliance in a conflict escalation, which caused some countries to develop an autonomous strategic force. As we have noted earlier, today most countries around the Baltic Sea are aiming for national deterrent (i.e., a capability to punish Russia according to the calculated value of the country for Russia, sometimes called “proportional deterrence”) in order to protect their vital interests, which they fear the US trip-wire strategy may be in danger of gradually sacrificing. Essentially, the problem with a growing gap between Russian and Alliance nuclear capabilities in Europe is unresolved, and this is a growing concern in the Baltic Sea region.

However, the debate regarding trip-wires and thresholds is currently overshadowed by the disturbing fact that Russia is likely

to be capable of a land grab in the Baltic Sea region *without* necessarily relying on nuclear forces as deterrent against further US involvement. The Obama administration’s trip-wire strategy is faced with the prospect of not having any plausible conventional options to strike back against a Russian aggression. In this sense, I would argue that the situation is more dangerous than during the Cold War. In summer 2015, RAND staged a table top war game for the US Army based on current correlation of forces in Europe, featuring a Russian hybrid attack on the Baltics. The game was played 16 times with eight different teams, and the conclusion was always that the US was unable to defend the Baltics.

It is deeply alarming that the next US president is facing a situation where the Russian rearmament has provided the Putin regime with a usable conventional army that outmatches anything that NATO can muster in Europe. This makes it likely that the debate about deterrence posture in Europe will continue with even greater urgency. ■

Magnus Christiansson is Associate Lecturer in the Department of Strategy at the Swedish Defence University. His main interests are transatlantic security, risk studies and security in the Baltic Sea region. He regularly comments on NATO question in Swedish media and is a regular guest lecturer at national and international conferences. From 2006-2009 Magnus Christiansson served as the Secretary General of the Swedish Atlantic Council.

Notes

1. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, “A Strong NATO in a Changed World,” speech at the Brussels Forum, 21 March 2014, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_108225.htm.
2. Alastair Buchan and Philip Windsor, *Arms and Stability in Europe* (Chatham: The Institute for Strategic Studies, 1963), p. 152.

3. LGen Frederick Hodges remarks on the panel “Preparing for the Warsaw NATO Summit” at Center for European Policy Analysis conference Transatlantic Security in a Cold Climate, Washington D.C., 1 October 2015.
4. The White House, “Remarks by President Obama and President Komorowski in a Joint Press Conference,” Belweder Palace, Warsaw, 3 June 2014, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/06/03/remarks-president-obama-and-president-komorowski-poland-joint-press-conf>.
5. EUCOM, “Statement by General Philip Breedlove, Commander US Forces in Europe,” House Armed Service Committee, 25 February 2015, p. 20.
6. Ibid., p. 10.
7. Ibid., p. 3.
8. US Congress, *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016*, September 2015, p. 899, <http://docs.house.gov/billssthisweek/20150928/CRPT-114hrpt270.pdf>.
9. Andrew A. Michta, “Polish Hard Power: Investing in the Military as Europe Cuts Back” in Gary J. Schmitt, ed., *A Hard Look at Hard Power: Assessing the defense capabilities of key U.S. allies and security partners* (Carlisle: US Army War College Press, 2015), p. 161.

A MINIMUM DETERRENCE NUCLEAR POSTURE AND THE CHALLENGE OF DETERRENCE FAILURE

by Nancy Jane Teeple

President Barack Obama's 2009 Prague agenda and the 2010 New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START), which took place under the US reset policy on relations with Russia, seemed to encourage the fulfillment of obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to reduce nuclear weapons stockpiles and move towards global nuclear disarmament. These conditions would have been ripe for a possible shift to a minimum deterrence nuclear posture, especially with Obama's proposal to further reduce warhead numbers one-third below New START levels.¹ However, such conditions were not long-lasting. With the return of Vladimir Putin to the Russian Presidency in 2012, increasingly belligerent statements have come out of the Kremlin in response to what Russia views as provocative activity by the US and NATO in Eastern Europe.

With increasing levels of tension in Russia-US/NATO relations over the status of eastern Ukraine, NATO's expansion eastward towards Russia's borders, and the planned installation of ballistic missile defence sites in former Soviet satellites, concern over the possible use of nuclear weapons has emerged. This destabilizing development grew out of a shift in the US nuclear posture since the 2001 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), which saw an increasingly offensively-oriented structure of nuclear and non-nuclear forces defining the New Triad.² The modernization of the nuclear triad during the Bush administration in response to emerging threats from rogue

state and non-state actors, provoked a response by Russia and a rising peer-competitor in a nuclear-armed China, as both states perceiving US offensive nuclear capabilities based around counterforce "deterrence by denial" strategies as threatening to their nuclear capabilities and therefore second-strike options.

In 2010, when the New START treaty was negotiated, the Obama administration committed to reducing nuclear warhead numbers and delivery vehicles, while paradoxically maintaining the US counterforce posture and modernizing the Triad with offensive strike capabilities that included conventional counterforce capabilities among flexible strike options.³ This situation further cemented a nuclear security dilemma between the US and its nuclear rivals – Russia and China.

The United States currently enjoys a nuclear superior position relative to its Russian and Chinese strategic competitors. It has a first-strike oriented nuclear arsenal and counterforce posture that leaves room for the possible use of nuclear weapons in the event that a crisis escalates and deterrence fails. This warfighting strategy has arms controllers concerned about the potential for escalation to all-out nuclear exchange. Given the competition with both Russia and China on the nuclear front, US nuclear policy strongly suggests that it is moving towards a position of nuclear primacy, with the development of ballistic missile defences (BMD), Conventional

Prompt Global Strike (CPGS), and new cruise missile technologies, including long range standoff (LRSO) weapons. This unilateral superiority would allow the US to have full protection of its nuclear forces through comprehensive ballistic missile defences, while retaining the ability to target the adversary's command and control (C2) and nuclear forces through a variety of offensive counterforce innovations provided by the New Triad.

The guidance and planning for the employment of nuclear forces in the 2010 NPR under the Obama administration, compared with the 2001 NPR under the previous administration, remains ambiguous with respect to options for nuclear use in response to various types of nuclear and non-nuclear threats.⁴ Daryl Kimball, Tom Collina, and Kelsey Davenport address the strategic ambiguities in Obama's revision of the 2010 NPR, such as the problem of conflicting strategies with negative security assurances.⁵ They note that although Robert Gates stated that nuclear weapons are "a weapon of last resort," the United States would only consider the use of nuclear weapons in "extreme circumstances to defend the vital interests of the United States or its allies and partners." In addition, they highlight statements that "the NPR foresees 'a narrow range of contingencies' in which the United States might still use nuclear weapons to deter an attack with conventional, chemical, or biological weapons" for states not covered under the



A (retired) Titan II intercontinental ballistic missile in an underground missile silo. (Image credit: Steve Jurvetson via Flickr.)

US negative security assurances.⁶ Arms control experts have also noted that in spite of New START arms reductions and global disarmament objectives, the Obama administration is distinguished from previous administrations in that it has cut the least number of nuclear warheads.⁷

The ambiguity of US nuclear options, in addition to the threat posed by its offensive nuclear forces, contributes to the uncertainty and fear felt by Russia and China, especially with respect to how the US employs its strategic forces in the near- to long-term. This condition gives rise to attempts by Russia and China to offset the US advantage by developing their own offensive capabilities, which spirals into arms races. This situation threatens the longevity of New START, the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, and possibly even the NPT,

which includes a clause that allows states to withdraw from the treaty.⁸ Under these conditions, how can the world's key nuclear powers – the US, Russia, and China – find a way to stabilize relations and move towards less provocative postures and smaller nuclear arsenals?

A minimum deterrence nuclear posture has been proposed by a number of nuclear policy analysts and advisors from the end of the Cold War to the present,⁹ in order to promote stability through reductions in warheads, delivery systems, forward deployments, and less threatening postures. The concept of minimum deterrence is about maintaining the minimal number of nuclear warheads required to maintain a credible nuclear deterrent based on a secure second-strike capability. Under Keith Payne's distinction between minimum deterrence and mutually

assured destruction (MAD) being about numbers in terms of “how much is enough,” a minimum deterrence nuclear posture is highly defensive, requiring even fewer numbers than MAD.¹⁰ Both postures are considered non-threatening, and therefore stabilizing, being founded on a “no first use” policy.

The security dilemma logic can be seen in the latter part of the Cold War as well as the current situation. In a dynamic involving nuclear rivalry, one state's offensive advantage in the force employment of nuclear deterrence postures and systems creates perceptions of threat and vulnerability in the other, resulting in an offensive response by the other state to close the vulnerability gap. This condition creates competition and arms races, which becomes destabilizing as states pursue capabilities to disarm the other's capability: counterforce

targeting postures through “deterrence by denial” strategies. On the other hand, by the same logic, the defensive employment of nuclear deterrence postures and systems by one state tends to communicate benign intentions to the other, reducing perceptions of threat and vulnerability, resulting in less aggressive actions to counter vulnerability gaps, and encouraging mutually non-threatening nuclear behaviour. This condition encourages cooperation and arms reductions through nuclear strategies that promote no-first use policies, relying on countervalue postures oriented towards the more defensive second-strike or “deterrence by punishment.”

Both of these approaches focus on deterrence, the essence of which is about threatening the use of nuclear weapons in order to prevent the use of nuclear weapons, whether through counterforce or countervalue targeting. In the current age of counterforce and offence-dominant nuclear weapons systems, the non-use of nuclear weapons is being reconsidered. Under the New Triad, nuclear use has become an option, with the development of nuclear weapons with greater precision, smaller yields, capabilities to penetrate deeply buried and hardened targets (such as missile silos), in addition to innovations in stealth. The limited use of nuclear weapons has become increasingly viable, even more so than during the 1970s Schlesinger Doctrine and the later Carter Administration's countervailing strategy. The failure of deterrence is being considered by today's strategists in light of the deteriorating relations between the US and Russia.

The dynamic between NATO and Russia in Eastern Europe has intensified since Russia's seizure of the Crimean peninsula and attempts to annex Ukraine's provinces of Luhansk and Donetsk. Being threatened by NATO's support for Ukrainian resistance against pro-Russian separatists, Russia has planned the deployment of *Iskander* tactical missiles in the Kaliningrad region.

President Putin stated that Russia would use tactical nuclear weapons to prevent NATO expansion.¹¹ Russia maintains its earlier doctrine of considering the employment of theatre nuclear weapons to de-escalate a conflict. A 2006 report of the US Nuclear Strategy Forum states that:

Russian military leaders have openly stated that Russia has deliberately lowered the nuclear use threshold and talk about the use of nuclear weapons in regional and local wars ... The Russian press routinely reports that Russia is conducting exercises, with Putin and Ivanov present, involving simulated nuclear weapon strikes against the U.S. and NATO.¹²

In response to accusations that it is violating the INF Treaty,¹³ Russia has reaffirmed its reliance on nuclear weapons to defend its national interests in the region. This reliance is intended to compensate for its conventional inferiority to US/NATO forces. NATO's Strategic Concept maintains its policy of deterrence based on both conventional and nuclear forces in Europe, with its B-61 bombs and aerial delivery deployed in number of NATO countries; although its credibility as a deterrent has been under debate by arms control experts.¹⁴

Russia may be pushed to test NATO's resolve. Direct confrontation between nuclear rivals may result in the tactical employment of theatre nuclear weapons, which has the potential for escalation to the strategic level, despite Russia's assertion that employment would shock the US and NATO into de-escalation and negotiation. In considering the credibility of Russia's threat to use nuclear weapons at the tactical or strategic level, the Vice Chairman of Strategic Command, Lieutenant-General James Kowalski stated that although a Russian nuclear attack on the United States is a “remote possibility,”¹⁵ the use of nuclear weapons on the battlefield has unfortunately become a potential threat against NATO

in Europe. Under these conditions, the constraints imposed by the INF Treaty could fall apart, as one or both states withdraw. Such actions could be followed by the unraveling of New START if the security dilemma intensifies to such a level that cooperation on arms reductions is abandoned.

The failure of deterrence, resulting in tactical or strategic nuclear use, is the worst-case scenario that can result from highly destabilizing counterforce strategies, accompanied by nuclear forces comprised of large numbers of warheads and offensive delivery technologies. Essentially, nuclear warfighting, with tailored and flexible nuclear forces designed for the spectrum of options, is in direct opposition to the stability-enhancing minimum deterrence alternative. How could such a shift in strategic posture occur?

Both the US and Russia must find this option as non-threatening to their national security and broader strategic interests. Russia might be receptive if it does not perceive its interests in Eastern Europe as being threatened by NATO actions. This includes NATO's efforts to prevent Russia from re-acquiring former Soviet territory (as seen with Crimea in 2014, and currently with Donetsk and Luhansk), and NATO pursuing ballistic missile defences (Aegis Ashore) in states close to Russian territory. Russia might also be receptive to minimum deterrence, so long as it sees the United States demonstrate its commitment to such a shift in posture. This requires transparency, verification that neither side pursues offensive capabilities, inspections, and clear communication of intentions by leadership to avoid misperceptions. Like the US, Russia is not likely to be receptive to a posture that places it at a disadvantage to its American rival.

The United States is not likely to be receptive to minimum deterrence, because of its interest in maintaining

global primacy through superior strategic forces. A superior counterforce system supplemented with anti-ballistic missile defences to protect cities and launch sites, would ensure that the US would be completely secure from its adversaries' nuclear threats, because such a system would be unchallenged. In terms of reductions of nuclear warheads and delivery systems, the US also has obligations under its extended deterrence platform with NATO partners in Europe and in the Asia Pacific; in the latter area by providing defence for allies against a rising hegemon, as China embarks on its own strategy of anti-access and area denial. In addition, there is the concern among advocates within the US defence community for maintaining a credible counterforce "deterrence by denial" option. Receptivity to minimum deterrence is challenged by the fear that if the US cuts its arsenal its nuclear rivals may not follow suit, and may in fact reach parity or surpass the US in offensive nuclear capabilities, placing it at a disadvantage. This fear was articulated by former US Secretary of Defense

Harold Brown in 1979: "when we build, they build ... when we cut, they build."

Influential actors within the United States defence community view national security through the lens of military superiority and the ability to project power abroad at all corners of the globe. Minimum deterrence does not provide for such a position, but rather puts the US on equal footing with its adversaries, and requires compromising the basic principles and values on which it bases its doctrine of preserving security through primacy and counterforce dominance. A change in thinking about the role of nuclear weapons in preserving national security and defending allies requires consideration of how the pursuit of unilateral superiority is destabilizing and lends itself to increasing the risk of nuclear use by adversaries feeling threatened by US offensive nuclear forces and NATO actions that threaten their strategic interests. A minimum deterrence nuclear posture would require the United States to dispense with the development of new offensive

technologies, precision and low-yield warhead development, and broad missile defences, and trust in its adversaries to do the same. The nuclear security dilemma militates against this outcome at the current time, as military competition appears to govern international relations between the US and Russia, and the US and China in the near- to long-term. ■

Nancy Jane Teeple is a PhD Candidate (ABD) and occasional instructor in the Department of Political Science at Simon Fraser University. Her research areas are international security and foreign policy analysis, exploring issues in nuclear strategy and arms control, Arctic security and defence, and intelligence. Prior to her doctoral studies, Nancy contracted as a Strategic Analyst at the Directorate of Land Concepts and Designs (now Land Warfare Centre) at CFB Kingston.

Notes

1. Proposed by President Obama in his Berlin speech in 2013. See Greg Thielmann, "Latest New START

An Aegis Ashore missile defence weapon system in Kauai, Hawaii. An identical system is located in Romania. (Image credit: US Defense Department.)



- Data Shows Nuclear Posture – and Nuclear Posturing,” *Arms Control Now* (13 October 2015), <https://www.armscontrol.org/blog/ArmsControlNow/2015-10-13/Latest-New-START-Data-Shows-Nuclear-Posture%E2%80%94and-Nuclear-Posturing>.
2. The three legs of the triad was traditionally comprised of bomber aircraft, sea-launched ballistic missiles (SLBNs), and land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). The New Triad places these three legs within one leg of the triad, creating two new legs – one comprised of ballistic missile defences and one comprised of a responsive infrastructure. At the centre of the New Triad is command and control, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance (C2ISR). The New Triad was intended to reflect adaptation to the new challenges of the 21st century strategic environment. Hans M. Kristensen, Robert S. Norris, and Ivan Oelrich, *From Counterforce to Minimal Deterrence: A New Policy on the Path Toward Eliminating Nuclear Weapons*, Occasional Paper No. 7 (Federation of American Scientists, April 2009), p. 17.
 3. Ibid., pp. 15-18.
 4. Eli Jacobs, “Warfighting vs. Deterrence: A False Distinction,” *CSIS Blog* (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 12 September 2011), <http://csis.org/blog/warfighting-vs-deterrence-false-distinction>.
 5. Under the NPT, this obligation prevents the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states.
 6. Daryl Kimball, Tom Z. Collina, and Kelsey Davenport, “U.S. ‘Negative Security Assurances’ at a Glance,” *Arms Control Association* (September 2012), <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/negsec>. Also see United States, Department of Defense, *Nuclear Posture Review Report* (April 2010), p. 16.
 7. Hans Kristensen, “How Presidents Arm and Disarm,” *Strategic Security Blog* (Federation of American Scientists, 15 October 2014), <http://fas.org/blogs/security/2014/10/stockpilereductions/>.
 8. Article X.1 “Each Party shall in exercising its national sovereignty have the right to withdraw from the Treaty if it decides that extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of this Treaty, have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country.” See United Nations, *The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (NPT), 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty, <http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2005/index.html>.
 9. Also referred to as “minimal deterrence.” See Kristensen, et al., *From Counterforce to Minimal Deterrence*, and Peter Gizewski, ed., *Toward Minimum Deterrence: How Low Can We Go?* Aurora Papers 11 (Ottawa: The Canadian Centre for Arms Control and Disarmament, 1991).
 10. Keith B. Payne, *Deterrence in the Second Nuclear Age* (University Press of Kentucky, 1996), p. 64.
 11. Mike Bird, “Former CIA Bureau Chief: Putin is ‘perfectly willing’ to use nuclear weapons in Europe,” *Business Insider UK* (10 July 2015), <http://uk.businessinsider.com/cia-bureau-chief-says-putin-open-to-using-nuclear-weapons-in-europe-2015-7>.
 12. Mark Schneider, *The Nuclear Forces and Doctrine of the Russia Federation* (United States Nuclear Strategy Forum, 2006), p. 1.
 13. Russia is accused of flight testing an RS-26 ballistic missile in a distance that falls within the prohibited range of 500-5,500 km. In addition, Russia developed and flight tested the Iskander-K (R-500) which is a ground-launched cruise missile (GLCM) variant of the Iskander-M short-range ballistic missile above the 500 km range limit. Ground-launch cruise missiles are prohibited by the INF Treaty. Russia’s response is that the US has violated the INF because of its employment of aerial drones, which Russia claims constitutes ground-launched cruise missiles.
 14. Edmond Seay, “NATO’s Incredible Nuclear Strategy: Why U.S. Weapons in Europe Deter No One,” *Arms Control Today* (2 November 2011), https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2011_11/NATO_Incredible_Nuclear_Strategy_Why_US_Weapons_in_Europe_Deter_No_One.
 15. Unofficial Transcript 073113 Air Force Association, National Defense Industrial Association and Reserve Officers Association Capitol Hill Breakfast Forum with Lieutenant General James Kowalski, Commander, United States Air Force Global Strike Command, on “Nuclear Deterrent, Prompt Strike, and Triad Perspectives,” NDIA/AFA/ROA seminars, <http://secure.afa.org/HBS/>.

RUSSIA-US SECURITY DILEMMA INTENSIFIES: MOSCOW DOUBLES DOWN ON 'DOOMSDAY' TECHNOLOGIES

by Dr. Douglas A. Ross

In early November, Russian leadership 'accidentally on purpose' leaked design specifications for an unmanned underwater vehicle (UUV) capable of delivering a high-yield thermonuclear weapon to major port cities of strategic rivals in Europe and North America. The thinly disguised threat (or actual program, as the case may be) is meant to underscore the reality that nothing that the Pentagon deploys over the next decade in the way of advanced anti-ballistic missile (ABM) technologies, 'Prompt Conventional Global Strike' (PCGS) capabilities, or new, more stealthy intercontinental bombers and cruise missiles will be able to take away Russia's 'assured destruction' capability against the United States and its allies. Arms control analyst and strategic China watcher Jeffrey Lewis published the limited publicly available information on the 'Status-6' weapon system (also known as *Kanyon*) in the November issue of *Foreign Policy* magazine as well as on his personal blog.¹

The keynote speech that President Vladimir Putin gave to the Sochi conference at which this slide was leaked focused on the need to defeat American missile defences. This new weapon system is just one in a series of measures taken by the Soviet and later the Russian military to ensure the country's nuclear war-making credibility.

The 'PERIMETR' automated launch system for the entire Soviet (and now Russian) nuclear arsenal was an early effort to assure retaliatory capability that

was designed in the early to mid-1980s and has been operational continuously since 1985. Driven by fears of President Reagan's 'Star Wars' ABM development effort, PERIMETR (also known as the 'Dead Hand') was meant to deter surprise nuclear decapitation attacks on Moscow, and neutralize any American missile defences by the sheer volume and simultaneity of the retaliatory response.² Any effort to destroy Moscow in a surprise nuclear first-strike (by stealth cruise missiles or stealth aircraft, or no-warning Pershing II ballistic missiles in West Germany in the 1980s) would automatically signal computers under the Ural mountains to direct the launch of the entire nuclear arsenal at predetermined targets in the US and Europe – *with minimal and perfunctory human facilitation*. With the Dead Hand in place, Russian commanders need not panic if their early warning radars send out signals of imminent strategic attack; they can stay calm knowing that any real attack would be punished massively even if they themselves were destroyed.

Thirty years after creation of the Dead Hand, the Status-6 weapon system is a further effort by Moscow to find offsetting military capabilities to neutralize both new American ABM capabilities (the ultra-secret Space-Based Infra-Red Surveillance system expected to become operational in 2016 and will provide critical cueing information to ground-based tracking radars) and new NATO European ABM interceptor launch sites under NATO's Phased Adaptive Approach

programme slated for deployment soon in Poland and Romania, as well as on Aegis-class ships in the Baltic or Mediterranean Sea.

Also relevant to the strategic defence offset effort is Moscow's apparent decision to hollow out (or jettison entirely) the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty by deploying a new generation of dual-capable *Kalibr* sea-launched cruise missiles (SLCMs). The demonstration launch of 26 SLCMs from a cruiser and submarines in the southern Caspian Sea in late September 2015 for strikes on Syrian rebels showed definitively that Russia has now caught up to American cruise missile targeting capabilities. In its nuclear-strike version, the *Kalibr* has a much greater range (the small nuclear warhead is far lighter than the conventional explosives warhead permitting much more fuel on board). From the northern portion of the Black Sea near Sevastopol, nuclear-armed SLCMs launched from ships or submarines could hit targets deep in the United Kingdom. The Novator company that makes the *Kalibr* cruise missiles has also built one version that can fit a quad box launcher inside a standard commercial shipping container.

The submarine drones recently revealed are to be carried by attack submarines and released in open-ocean. Under their own propulsion, they may be able to travel up to 10,000 km without surfacing before detonation. The weapons are designed to bathe large urban areas and their population with highly lethal, very long-



Russia's *Alexander Nevsky* (K-550) Borey-class nuclear ballistic missile submarine in Vilyuchinsk. (Image credit: Ministry of Defense, Russian Federation.)

lived radioactive fallout that would render the target city uninhabitable for many decades. Such weapons by implication would be built with a jacket of cobalt (or perhaps tantalum or zinc) to achieve their enduring highly poisonous quality. Depending on the nuclear explosive yield selected, many tens of thousands would die promptly and perhaps hundreds of thousands in weeks and months to come from radioactive poisoning. The yield according to the slide image description glimpsed in television coverage is intended to produce a *local* and not *global* effect. Thus, it would be large enough to cause mass casualties and, not coincidentally, prevent the port cities in question from being able to perform resupply functions in any land war in Europe between NATO and Russia.

While military planners in Russia may have intended the weapon to play a military role, the allegedly accidental leak of the image is almost certainly an additional threat by President Putin that Russia has diverse options for launching selective, coercive, counter-value nuclear

attacks should they be necessary to halt an American-NATO assault on Russia – if all else fails. The new drones, if built, could hold the citizens of the large port cities in North America as nuclear hostages. Think Montreal, Halifax, Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Norfolk/Newport News, King's Bay (Georgia), Miami, Tampa, New Orleans, Houston. In the Pacific, think San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco/Oakland, Seattle/Puget Sound, Vancouver/Victoria, and Honolulu. ABM interceptors would be irrelevant. And if these UUVs were much smaller than conventional submarines and quiet enough, a new system of underwater acoustic surveillance hydrophones might not be able to detect them. Anti-submarine warfare screens could prove difficult and expensive to mount. The drones might also be programmable for deployment in peacetime with an extended dormancy period, and subsequent activation in time of escalating conflict.

Status-6 is a conceptual and technological relative of the 'Doomsday bombs' depicted in Stanley Kubrick's 1964 film

'Dr. Strangelove,' but in only one respect: the exploitation of radioactivity as a poison. In the film, (and in the book on which it was based), many nuclear weapons were buried in the Soviet high Arctic region rigged to detonate by a computer if a nuclear weapon exploded anywhere on Soviet territory. The fallout from such huge weapons (think of the 100 megaton bomb tested in October 1961 at a reduced yield of 57 MT to allow the aircrew to escape) would be global. The top of the mushroom cloud for the 1961 blast, for example, reached an altitude of 64 km (well above the stratosphere) and was 95 km wide. A large number of such explosions would generate fallout lethal to most life in the northern hemisphere, as the radioactivity spread widely in high altitude winds and eventually fell back to earth. In the film, the risk of near global lethality was being used as an all-or-nothing deterrent.³

But the drone submarine is premised on discrete, possibly sequential not simultaneous attacks on single cities – and not at all for the purpose of causing a hemispheric wide ecological catastrophe. It suggests rather scenarios of calculated mass murder by increments, something that many if not most American analysts consider to be "bat-shit crazy." Jeffrey Lewis undoubtedly is not alone in his disgust for such tactics and the "sick bastards" who "dream up this kind of weapon."⁴

For American nuclear strategists, using nuclear weapons is to be done as a last resort and only with highly accurate weapons that have as small an explosive

yield as possible. For leftist 'doves' in the American debate and many centrist 'owls,' new highly accurate conventional weapons should be used wherever possible to substitute for low-yield nuclear strikes. The Precision Guided Munition (PGM) revolution and the stealth technology breakthrough means the US should be able to defeat most adversaries without having to use any nuclear weapons at all. Missile defences they hope will be able to block any last gasp retaliation by rogue states such as North Korea or Iran.

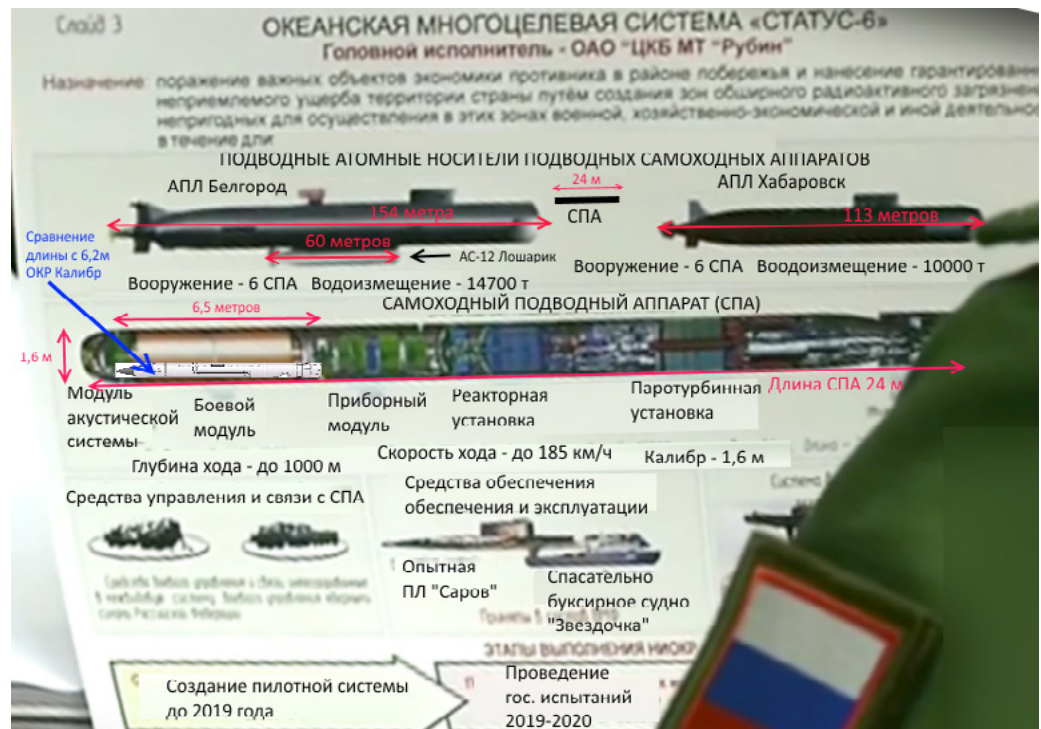
Americans hold this perspective as the globally dominant military power on the planet. For the Russians and the Chinese, while they might aspire to matching American capabilities in PGMs, truly global intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance (ISR), and PCGS, strategic parity remains a long way off.

Limited nuclear war scenarios are in fact what a previous generation of strategists foresaw as the likely product of counterforce arms races that risk setting in motion counterforce wars. Whoever is losing such a confrontation will sooner or later escalate to 'countervalue strikes' against population centres to demand an immediate end to the conflict. Such is the "inner logic of nuclear war," as Hans Morgenthau termed it. Were he alive today, Morgenthau probably would not be surprised at recent Russian nuclear weapons development. When you are number two, you try harder – much harder, especially if your country lost 27 million people in its last major war. And when your major strategic rival is developing the world's only comprehensive network of missile defence alongside many wealthy overseas allies willing to contribute to it, the need for some asymmetrical offsets is extremely compelling. For Russia that means new cheap nuclear-armed cruise missiles and developing strategic offsets such as 'Status-6.' For the Chinese, it

means growing their nuclear arsenal and developing very high altitude anti-satellite weapons able to destroy American assets even if in geosynchronous orbits.

When both Ukraine and Georgia were being touted as prospective members of NATO in 2007 and 2008, it was the last straw for President Putin. It was bad enough that the Baltic states and Poland and other eastern European states became part of NATO, but Ukraine was

in Western Europe for 'sharing' with Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, and Turkey, the Russians retained several thousand such weapons and refused all requests for transparency concerning this weapon category. These weapons were to be the basis for a refurbished nuclear warfighting capability in the event of a US-NATO attack on Russia with much superior conventional forces. But even this residual deployment of fewer than 200 tactical nuclear weapons is seen with



Status-6 full name and size comparison (in Russian). (Image credit: Madnessgenius.)

an ancient part of Russian history. At that point the modernization of the Russian nuclear deterrent began in earnest. Strategic bombers were refurbished and new nuclear-armed cruise missiles were slated for development for them. New intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) were ordered, as were new sea-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) for the new missile-launching Borey-class submarines already on order.

Putin refused all suggestions from both Americans and Europeans that it was time to set negotiated constraints on non-strategic nuclear weapons (NSNWs). While the Americans eliminated all but 180 of their NSNWs deployed with NATO

apprehension in Moscow, since all such weapons are within a decade likely to be arming stealthy F-35 strike aircraft with British, Dutch, Belgian, Italian and Turkish insignia. With Washington pushing ahead quickly with the procurement of 100 new, highly stealthy long-range strike bombers (LRS-B), Russian anxiety about strategic vulnerability may well increase.

It has been difficult for both casual observers and professional analysts to believe that Vladimir Putin and his circle of advisers truly have felt insecure about NATO's steady expansion since 1995. Instead Western Europeans and North Americans alike have attributed Russian strategic nuclear force modernization,

expansion of tactical nuclear strike capabilities, the seizure of Crimea, and the fomenting of secessionist activity in eastern Ukraine to Moscow's renewed geopolitical expansionary ambitions. Putin's malign egotistical influence is seen as the root cause. Typically, the Russians are said to be seeking to restore their country's great power status via aggression against Kiev, by disruptive military flights in or near European airspace, by the resumption of nuclear-capable bomber training missions near North American and Western European air defence identification zones, and most recently by the direct deployment of strike aircraft in Syria to attack non-ISIL opposition forces and thereby assure Bashar al-Assad's continued control of coastal Syria (and an increased number of Syrian refugees headed for Europe). Typically, Russian complaints that the Orange Revolution was a CIA/US State Department political *coup d'état* (and, they have claimed, a dry run for similar subversive tactics against Moscow) are dismissed out of hand as the fantasies of a Russian criminal autocracy.

Karen Dawisha's indictment of Putin's 'kleptocracy' is to be sure disturbing. Corrupt governmental practices (kickbacks and absurdly priced 'permits' for construction), abuse of state power to expropriate wealth and redistribute it to the cronies in the Moscow elite, and a system of 'protection' money extraction to benefit the most well-connected oligarchs are defining characteristics of post-Soviet Russia.⁵ Putin's bloody rise to dominance of Russian politics has been most discouraging for liberal thinkers in the West who had hopes for an emerging democratic peace among the global great powers.⁶ The murder of the popular opposition leader Boris Nemtsov just outside the walls of the Kremlin in February 2015 was the latest act of political assassination intended to intimidate all other opposition to, or criticism of, Putin's policies. Nemtsov had been leading a campaign protesting Putin's attacks on Ukraine.

Unfortunately the implications for NATO countries of present Russian fears about NATO's territorial expansion and a deepened American global strategic superiority go well beyond anxiety about regional instability in Europe and the projection of Russian state-orchestrated criminal influence into European and American politics and society. The core bilateral strategic stability of the Russo-American nuclear relationship is being undermined by actions on both sides.

Henry Kissinger has commented that the "demonization of Vladimir Putin is not a policy; it is an alibi for the absence of one."⁷ Acknowledging that a strategically diminished Russia is still a great power has proven impossible in many quarters. In their contempt for Putin, Western governments are at risk of forgetting the essential need for a visible commitment to 'peaceful coexistence' and weapons development self-restraint in Russia-West relations. The alternative is a costly and dangerous arms race that will be all the more unstable because it will directly stimulate Chinese innovative weapons development as well.

Both the US government and NATO European leaders have failed to develop a coherent approach to managing and easing Russian insecurity since the 2002 unilateral abrogation of the ABM Treaty of 1972 by President George W. Bush. Russian fears with regard to developing American ABM systems architecture have only worsened over the past decade. In negotiating the New START Treaty in 2010, Russian officials insisted that wording be inserted into the treaty preamble that stressed the need for the US to restrain its deployment of ABM defences, both qualitatively and quantitatively. That restraint has not been in evidence. As a result, the Russians are redeploying MIRV (multiple, independently-targetable, reentry vehicle) warheads on their new ICBMs and SLBMs. Maneuvering reentry vehicles have been tested as well to further the ability of Russian ballistic missiles to penetrate to targets in Europe and

North America that may be protected by missile defences. Withdrawal by Moscow from New START is unfortunately quite conceivable.

The Cold War's nuclear legacy has been much reduced but it has not been controlled. Much of the nuclear 'overkill' that reached its maximum in the 1980s (about 70,000 bombs and warheads globally) has been scaled well back (to some 16,000). That takes the world back to 1959 when the Americans (15,468), the Russians (1,060) and the British (25) had an estimated total of 16,553 nuclear weapons.⁸ But 1959 was not a happy time in US-Russian relations. The imbalance in perceived strategic capability helped induce the Soviet leaders to take the dangerous step of deploying missiles in Cuba that produced the most dangerous crisis of the Cold War. Without prudential restraint on both sides today, that history is at risk of being repeated. Both governments in their haste to re-establish security for themselves, are simply aggravating the insecurity of the other. ■

Dr. Douglas A. Ross has been Full Professor of Political Science at Simon Fraser University since 1988. Major research interests include Canadian foreign and defence policies, strategic studies and arms control, approaches to grand strategy, environmental crises and national security.

Notes

1. See Jeffrey Lewis, "Russian Underwater Drone Slide," *Arms Control Blog*, 11 November 2015, <http://www.armscontrolwonk.com/archive/1200449/russian-underwater-drone-slide/>. Also Jeffrey Lewis, "Putin's Domsday Machine," *Foreign Policy*, 12 November 2015, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/11/12/putins-domsday-machine-nuclear-weapon-us-russia/>.
2. See the interview comments by Bruce Blair and the late Valery Yarynich who helped design

PERIMETR in Nicholas Thompson, "Inside the Apocalyptic Soviet Doomsday Machine," *Wired*, 21 September 2009, <http://www.wired.com/2009/09/mf-deadhand/>.

3. In the late 1970s, Soviet researchers revealed to American physicists at MIT that they had done the engineering physics for building a 1,000 megaton weapon. Government officials present for the briefing seized the boards on which the mathematical equations and formulas were written.
4. Lewis, "Putin's Doomsday Machine."
5. Karen Dawisha, *Putin's Kleptocracy: Who Owns Russia?* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2014).
6. See Gillian Findlay's video documentary, "Putin's Long Shadow," Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, first broadcast 9 January 2015, <http://www.cbc.ca/fifth/episodes/2014-2015/putins-long-shadow>.
7. Henry Kissinger, "To settle the Ukraine crisis, start at the end," *The Washington Post*, 5 March 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/henry-kissinger-to-settle-the-ukraine-crisis-start-at-the-end/2014/03/05/46dad868-a496-11e3-8466-d34c451760b9_story.html.
8. Federation of American Scientists September 2015 estimate, <http://fas.org/issues/nuclear-weapons/status-world-nuclear-forces/>. See also estimates of warhead totals for 1945-2002 at the Natural Resources Defense Council website, <http://www.nrdc.org/nuclear/nudb/datab19.asp>.

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