ON TRACK

CANADA'S GLOBAL DEFENCE AND SECURITY E-MAGAZINE

CONFERENCE OF DEFENCE ASSOCIATIONS INSTITUTE | L'INSTITUT DE LA CONFÉRENCE DES ASSOCIATIONS DE LA DÉFENSE

The Promises and Pitfalls of **Foreign Military Training**: Implications for the Canadian Armed Forces

VOLUME 29 | NOVEMBER 2022

ON TRACK
VOLUME 28 | FALL 2022

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The Promises and Pitfalls of Foreign Military Training: Implications for the Canadian Armed Forces

Dr. Marc-Olivier Cantin

Introduction

The provision of military training to foreign armies has long been a staple of the Canadian Armed Forces' (CAF) efforts to promote norms of civilian control, military professionalism, and humanitarianism abroad. From their involvement in training programs in newly independent African nations to more recent training missions in Afghanistan, Iraq and Ukraine, the CAF has indeed developed, over time, an internationally-recognized expertise in inculcating military values and practices among allies and partners (Grant-Waddell 2014). Foreign military training (FMT) is now identified by Canada and most other developed nations as a key tool to

advance foreign policy objectives and to project soft power (Martinez Machain 2021). The centrality of FMT missions in the activities of modern militaries is made abundantly clear when considering the efforts and resources that the US Army injected in such missions since the early 2000s:

> *Between 1999 and 2016, across 34 different programs, the USA trained some 2,395,272 trainees from virtually every country in the world, peaking at 292,753 in 2008. Iraq and Afghanistan accounted for over half of these trainees, but even leaving these two countries aside, the total figure was 971,054, with as many as 78,722 individuals in a single year (2016). The United States spent some $14.8 billion worldwide on its training efforts and sold training worth another $4.9 billion* (McLauchlin, Seymour, and Martel 2022, 286).

Although the FMT operations of the CAF are far more modest in size and scope, they are nonetheless an essential component of the Canadian military's endeavors to secure vital strategic interests. Through Operation Unifier alone, Canada has injected nearly $1 billion and has sent thousands of Canadian soldiers to train and support the Armed Forces of Ukraine (Government of Canada 2022).

Yet, despite the ubiquity of FMT missions in contemporary international relations, recent research has highlighted how such missions can also generate unwanted consequences that run against operational objectives and may leave recipient countries in worst conditions than prior to receiving training. Scholars have shown, for instance, that FMT can shift the balance of power between the military and the regime, leading to coups, or increase repression capabilities, which may then be used to infringe on human rights (Savage and Caverley 2017).

This contrasting picture raises important questions regarding the benefits and drawbacks of FMT for both supplying and recipient nations. Building on the discussions held during the *Metro Expert Series Webinar* titled "The Promises and Pitfalls of Foreign Military Training: Implications for the CAF", which took place on May 6th 2022, this special issue of *On Track* will seek to address these questions, striving to identify on key lessons learned that can inform the future FMT operations of the CAF. Organized by the CDA Institute, this webinar featured presentations from four experts from the academic world (Dr. Carla Martinez Machain, Dr. Renanah Miles Joyce, Dr. Jesse Dillon Savage, and Dr. Adam Scharpf) and two senior officials from the CAF with first-hand experience with such missions (MGen Gregory Smith and MGen James Ferron (retd)).

This *On Track* issue contains four in-depth papers written by three of the above experts and two other contributors (Dr. William Reno and Lt. Col. Jahara Matisek). In this introduction, first, I briefly survey the history of Canadian FMT. I then review existing research and draw on recent examples to highlight to potential benefits and downsides of FMT missions. Finally, I introduce the four papers and discuss the implications of this project for research and policy.

A Brief History of Canadian FMT

FMT covers a wide spectrum of activities, including "the basic training of soldiers, the advanced training of Non-Commissioned Officers, or the development of senior military commanders. It can focus on technical or language training at service schools or the mentoring of military commanders in an operational setting. And such training can take place in the sponsor nation's military centres or in the receiving nation" (Jeffery 2013). In essence, the stated objective of FMT is to increase the effectiveness and bolster the operational, logistical, tactical and/or fighting capabilities of foreign armies so that recipient countries "may achieve internal security and stability, which in turn should contribute to regional stability" (ibid). Evidently, such training is also provided with the intent to advance supplying nations' strategic interests in the region.

The earliest instances of FMT missions carried out by the CAF occurred in the wake of the Second World War, as tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union started to flare up. In the early 1960s, Canada began to provide training and other forms of support to the militaries of African countries such as Ghana and Tanzania as they transitioned towards independence, a series of initiatives that were part of wider global efforts by Western and especially NATO states to thwart communist influence in the region (Kilford 2009, 187).

Building on these initial experiences, in 1964 the Pearson administration announced the formation of an *Interdepartmental Military Assistance Committee* to establish a clearer and more formalized strategy regarding the provision of military assistance abroad. The Committee, which was also designed to evaluate requests from non-NATO countries for military assistance, stated that one of the key goals of the Canadian military on the world stage would be to contribute to "the establishment of efficient and stable military forces in friendly countries where armed forces are often the single group of disciplined and trained personnel, and usually a good influence for law and order" (ibid, 160).

The 1960s also saw the creation of the Military Training Assistance Program (MTAP), which was later renamed as the Military Training and Cooperation

Programme (MTCP) and whose original purpose was to provide military training and support to several newly independent Commonwealth nations (Rasiulis 2001). As Jeffery (2013, 6) notes, the majority of training activities carried out under the MTCP "takes place at Canadian schools and training centres but the programme also sponsors training activities in other locations around the world including Africa, the Caribbean, and South America. […] Since its inception, MTCP has provided training to more than 70 nations, including nations involved in the NATO Partnership for Peace, and a number of UN countries. In addition, it has enhanced the ability of approximately 750 foreign persons per year to communicate in English and/or French".

Yet, the training missions carried out by the CAF in the 20th century were significantly smaller in terms of personnel deployed and in the scope of their objectives in comparison to later missions Canadian soldiers would be called to lead in the 21st century. After a few years of active counter-insurgency operations in the southern provinces of Afghanistan, the CAF's focus began to shift towards FMT in the spring of 2009, when the NATO Training Mission - Afghanistan (NTM-A) was established, aiming to increase the capacity of the Afghan National Army as to transfer full responsibility for the country's security by the end of 2014 (NATO 2009). Operation ATTENTION - also known as the Canadian Contribution to the Training Mission in Afghanistan or CCTM-A - was Canada's participation in this mission and it sought to deliver "training and professional development support to the national security forces of Afghanistan: the Afghan National Army (ANA), the Afghan Air Force (AAF), and the Afghan National Police (ANP)" (Government of Canada 2013).

Operation IMPACT in Iraq represented the second large-scale FMT mission that the CAF undertook in the 21st century. Launched on 3 October 2014 by the Harper administration, Op. IMPACT was initially designed to facilitate the deployment of Canadian troops and aircraft to join the international coalition against ISIS. Yet, in February 2016, the Trudeau government revised the mission statement to shift the focus away from air strikes, support and surveillance, instead towards training the Iraqi military, announcing an increase in the numbers of trainers and additional funds of more than $1.6 billion over the next three years (Mas 2016). In 2018, Canada began to assume command of the NATO training mission in the country, deploying around 250 troops in and around Baghdad to conduct a "train the trainer" mission in order to develop the capacity of the Iraqi army, stabilize the country, and prevent the re-emergence of ISIS (Brewster 2018).

Shortly after the launch of Op. IMPACT, the CAF were called to engage in yet another wide-ranging FMT mission, this time to

respond to the growing threat of Russian expansionism in Eastern Europe. Beginning in September 2015, Canada indeed started to send groups of about 200 soldiers to Ukraine every six months, whom have trained "33,346 Security Forces of Ukraine (SFU) candidates [through] 726 course serials spanning all lines of effort" (Government of Canada 2022). Given the funds that have been invested in these training activities (nearly $1 billion since 2014) and the length of the deployment (which is expected to last until March 2025), Op. UNIFIER is rapidly becoming one of the largest FMT missions in CAF history.

Although the CAF have been and are still currently involved in FMT activities in other locations, the missions in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Ukraine – by their size, scope, and length – represent the main milestones that have promoted the development of Canadian expertise in FMT. It is through these three missions that Canada has learned the key lessons that now inform its approach towards military assistance abroad. Yet, despite the time, effort, and resources invested in FMT in the last decades, there remain doubts about the benefits that both supplying and recipient countries can actually reap from such training. Indeed, recent research and international events have raised questions about the potential unintended consequences of FMT.

The Effects of Foreign Military Training: A Mixed Picture

Historically, FMT has been a key foreign policy tool leveraged by developed nations to build bilateral defence relations, wield influence and soft power, and increase capacity in partner countries (Martinez Machain 2021). In many cases, FMT is provided as part of the international security strategy of great powers, who offer training to "create, consolidate, or extend spheres of influence on the world stage in response to the actions of rivals" (Cantin et al. 2020; Nieman et al. 2021). By increasing the military capabilities of states of strategic interest, supplying nations can also promote burden sharing, allowing recipient nations to take on a "greater share of the international load in maintaining peace and security" (Jeffery 2013). From an operational standpoint, FMT can also improve interoperability, streamline and standardize procedures, and improve communication to make future joint missions more efficient and seamless. FMT missions, moreover, typically represent an invaluable opportunity for the defence industry of suppliers to make inroads in recipients' procurement schemes and processes, creating new markets and exports. Yet, it remains that one of the main stated objectives of FMT is to inculcate rank-and-file soldiers and senior officials in foreign armies with democratic values, the rule of law, standards of human rights, military professionalism, and principles of civilian control of the military.

However, although FMT can, under certain conditions, help socialize recipient armies to adhere to such norms, the reality is that it is typically "hard to change beliefs about standards of appropriate behavior in the security domain" and that capacities can sometimes be strengthened faster than norms can be internalized, increasing the risk that training may generate unintended consequences (Joyce 2020).

One of the main risks that have been highlighted by recent research and events is the possibility that the increase in capacity acquired through FMT may shift the balance of power between civilian authorities and the military, leading to coups (Savage and Caverley 2017; Cantin et al. 2020). In fact, the existence of such a relationship has been hypothesized since the very first instances of FMT missions carried out by the CAF. Indeed, in the mid 1960s, Ghana's army, which had been trained by the Canadian military, overthrew president Kwame Nkrumah (Engler 2020). Since then, many other episodes have occurred. On 18 August 2020, for instance, a small group of Malian officers trained by foreign armies (including the CAF) overthrew the civilian government in a coup, marking the second time in eight years that officers trained by western militaries ousted the authorities (Cantin et al. 2020). Recent reports have suggested that similar dynamics occurred in Haiti as well, where officers trained by the Canadian RCMP allegedly led the coup to oust President Aristide (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2021). These events thus led commentators to raise questions about the potential unintended consequences of Canadian FMT missions, sparking debates about the need to review or altogether stop foreign training programs (CBC News 2012; York 2013; Charbonneau and Sears 2020; Berthiaume 2020).

Academic research has also highlighted the risk that the military capacities acquired through FMT missions may be leveraged by recipient armies for repressive purposes, using new skills and resources to infringe on the human rights of local populations (McCoy 2005). A US State Department report, for instance, noted that the American soldiers had trained "at least 17 high-ranking foreigners at some of its top schools who were later convicted or accused of criminal and human rights abuses in their own countries" (Chadwick 2017; for a similar story regarding the British Army, see Taylor 2021).

The above suggests, therefore, that the actual outcomes of FMT missions may vary significantly across contexts and locations. Given the importance of FMT in the foreign policies and military strategies of most Western countries, including Canada, it appears essential to reflect on lessons learned, best practices and ways forward to ensure that the time and resources that we deploy to trained foreign militaries is worth the investment.

IN THIS ISSUE OF ON TRACK

This issue of *On Track* contains in-depth analyses from leading academic experts on FMT, who cover a wide range of topics including soft power dynamics and the way FMT can increase supplying states' influence in recipient countries; the demand side of security assistance; the effects of FMT on coups in recipient countries; the impact of FMT on civil-military relations; and the inculcation of norms and values through such training. All papers reflect on the importance of their findings for the Canadian Armed Forces and discuss key policy implications.

The first article – co-authored by **Lt. Col. Jahara Matisek, Military Professor at the U.S. Naval War College, and Dr. William Reno, Professor at Northwestern University** – argues that a lack of broader strategic vision hampers efforts to identify when Canadian FMT missions actually achieve their goals. The authors suggest that, by failing to clearly articulate how FMT advances Canada's long-term national interests, political leaders are undermining public support for such missions and are leaving Canadian trainers to wonder how their efforts concretely matter. Matisek and Reno contend that Canadian leaders must move beyond mere expressions of values and instead define clear and measurable goals and endpoints. The authors conclude by offering actionable policy recommendations based on their observations of Canadian FMT efforts in Ukraine and Niger.

The second article – written by **Dr. Adam Scharpf, Assistant Professor in Comparative Politics at the University of Copenhagen** – analyses FMT from the perspective of recipient countries. It explores how the provision of FMT generates a dilemma for the governments of such countries, to which they respond strategically by weighing the political and military costs of receiving military aid, and as a result, adapting their demands accordingly. According to Scharpf, recipients carefully evaluate geopolitical interests, domestic military requirements, and the threats posed by potentially disloyal, foreign-trained security personnel to decide whether and how much FMT to demand. Importantly, these strategic calculations shape not only the timing and nature of military training provision, but it also sets limits on what such training can achieve. This has crucial implications for supplying nations like Canada, who must pay attention to local dynamics in recipient countries to ensure that training programs achieve expected results.

The third article – written by **Dr. Carla Martinez Machain, Professor of Political Science at University at Buffalo, SUNY** – examines how donors can use FMT as a form of soft power that they can wield to influence the normative and behavioral tendencies of recipient countries.

Martinez Machain shows that influence is best attained not by the threat of removing something of value to recipient countries, but through the transformation of their mindset and preferences. In particular, training that directly focuses on the inculcation of liberal norms of human rights and humanitarianism can help decrease the use of repression by the military in recipient nations. The article highlights the need for supplying nations like Canada to commit for the long term and avoid shortcuts, since shaping partners' preferences to match our own does not happen overnight.

The fourth and final article – written by **Dr. Jesse Dillon Savage, Ussher Assistant Professor in Global Politics at Trinity College Dublin** – discusses the effects of foreign military training on civil-military relations and coup propensity. It investigates how FMT can foster tensions between civilian elites and the military by promoting norms, creating networks, and increasing capabilities that may alter the domestic balance of power, suggesting that training missions may affect both the propensity and the capacity of trainees to stage coups. Importantly, however, Savage highlights the fact that the effect of FMT on civil-military relations is likely to be contingent on several factors, including the content of training programs and inculcated norms, regime type, and local political contexts.

Conclusion

As a middle power that benefits from an inter-connected, rules-based world, Canada is well positioned to be a global leader in the provision of foreign military training. Drawing on the expertise they acquired through several decades of conducting training missions abroad, the Canadian Armed Forces can indeed serve as a key actor in efforts to increase partner capabilities, inculcate liberal norms, reduce vulnerabilities, and alleviate burdens, as a new and highly uncertain security environment takes form. As great power revisionism, resource competition, state failure and authoritarianism threaten Canada's core strategic interests, the benefits that can be accrued through FMT are becoming increasingly attractive. Yet, as the articles in this issue highlight, FMT is no panacea and can even generate unintended consequences if not provided as part of a broader assistance strategy that is both long-term and sensitive to local realities, contexts, and challenges. Indeed, while military skills and capabilities can be imparted relatively quickly, it appears that the development of principled and professional military forces and institutions takes time, effort, and nurturing. Crucially, achieving these goals will require better ways to measure the effectiveness of FMT programs, something that will be best achieved through closer cooperation between scientific researchers and military officials. Improving the evaluation of the match between mission goals and outcomes,

between Canada's geostrategic interests and actual on-the-ground results, is indeed a common thread in the articles below.

As the future of Op. Unifier in Ukraine remains uncertain as a result of the ongoing Russian aggression, it appears necessary for the CAF to engage in introspection and to reflect on whether the objectives and modalities of FMT missions should be revisited to respond to what NATO's Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg described as the "new normal" at the CDAI's 2022 Ottawa Conference (Stoltenberg 2022). This re-evaluation of the way in which we train foreign militaries should be carried out by taking into account the lessons we learned in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere, but also by assessing how the missions of tomorrow will differ from those of yesterday.

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(1/4) Canadian Foreign Military Training: What Good is it among other Allied Providers?

Lt. Col. Jahara W. Matisek & Dr. William Reno [1]

The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) is among the better providers of foreign military training (FMT) in terms of imparting technical skills, building professional relationships, and inculcating key tenets of military professionalism and civil-military relations (Jeffery 2013). We include peacekeeping, crisis management, and stability operations within this FMT framework, and recognize the value of personal interactions as deployed forces regularly work with local host-nation security forces, from the ministerial to the tactical levels, to accomplish a mission and maintain unit safety. These authors regularly encounter trainees who report CAF training has played

positive roles in their professional development. Reactions of this sort and more systematic evidence indicates that Canadian FMT performs well enough in technical operational terms in enhancing recipient skills and abilities (Evaluation of the Military Training and Cooperation Program 2019). Canada's commitment to FMT has been considerable, involving more than 125,000 personnel over the last 70 years and more than 4,000 Royal Canadian Mounted Police since 1989. Yet it has been difficult to identify when missions have achieved their goals, or even what these goals may be, complaints we have heard from some trainers and a reflection of a broader lack of strategic vision (Veterans: Government of Canada 2022).[2]

The failure of Canada's political leadership to articulate a clear explanation of how FMT advances Canada's long-term national interest undermines public support for missions and leaves CAF personnel to wonder how their FMT efforts matter beyond building personal connections. Canadian government rationales for FMT bear some resemblance to American efforts to explain why US and NATO forces remained in Afghanistan long after the overthrow of the first Taliban government, not to mention the death of Bin Laden in 2011. Was the continued presence there to prevent terrorist attacks, to establish democracy, to build an Afghan army, to defend American credibility, to protect women's rights? These are 'not wrong' reasons, though many are expressions of values, not goals. It was hard to know when ends were achieved, and how national interests were advanced, a vagueness that troubled many policymakers (including those supposedly responsible for defining ends), military commanders, and US citizens (Malkasian 2021). Though the failure of the Canadian government to articulate a long-term strategic rationale for its considerable FMT commitment has much less serious implications, it is a chronic problem and has a similar tendency to become hostage to short-term domestic priorities. This is a structural problem, due in part to Canada's place within the NATO alliance. Most CAF FMT missions are intended to signal Canadian willingness to support the strategic objectives of other NATO members, particularly the US. FMT also is justified as an element of broader development efforts, security sector reform that contributes to democracy, as an expression of Canadian people's commitment to an international system based on shared rules and norms, as 'soft power' diplomacy built on personal ties between trainers and trainees.

Like US rationales for staying in Afghanistan, these 'not wrong' reasons touch on important long-term strategic aims. But they also rely on expressions of values and are short on defining goals and endpoints. This leaves political leaders to explain missions in haphazard ways to the public, often subject more to domestic political considerations of the moment and less to Canada's long-term

strategic vision. None of this is to say that Canada's armed forces and political leaders take FMT lightly. Canada's Military Training and Cooperation Program identifies its primary role in interacting with foreign militaries as promoting "democratic principles, the rule of law, international stability, and the protection of human rights" (Government of Canada 2016), all of which contributes to core strategic aims. But rationales proliferate: the international assistance priority of the Canadian government is "to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in all our development, humanitarian and peace and security assistance." (Government of Canada 2022) This means CAF has to deliver security force assistance (SFA) – trying to make partner security forces militarily effective – while simultaneously meeting "Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy" goals in FMT programs (Government of Canada 2021).

In the section below, we explain how Canadian FMT fits into the broader framework of NATO and how this situation presents inherent difficulties to easily define and explain an easily defensible strategic goal. We then identify the Canadian paradox of FMT, which is premised on numerous disconnects between strategic objectives, domestic politics, and symbolic CAF participation in various overseas operations in a risk-averse fashion. Then we look briefly at Canadian FMT in Ukraine (2014-present) and Niger (2013-present), informed by fieldwork and dozens of interviews in Ukraine (August 2020) and Niger (July 2021). We offer five policy recommendations for Canadian political and military leaders to ensure that future CAF participation in FMT activities achieve a higher payoff with regards to attaining domestic and international objectives. We conclude with a return to the underlying argument, that FMT programs would benefit from less of a tendency of high-level policymakers to define the ends of FMT in terms of how Canadians see themselves, and wishful thinking that FMT outcomes will conform to these desires. The substantial know-how that currently exists among Canada's FMT practitioners should be applied toward clearly defined strategic aims policymakers are willing to publicly defend. This change requires recognizing that FMT operations are not ends in and of themselves and instead should be treated as an instrument of national power to coordinate with others to achieve sustainable political goals.

Context of Foreign Military Training among NATO Allies

During the Cold War (1947-1991), the US led the bulk of FMT activities as part of the larger competition with the Soviet Union. From 1952 to 1971 – the Canadian government, specifically the Department of External Affairs, tried to use the CAF to engage in FMT to elevate Canada's stature in international affairs, resting on Canada's contributions to sustaining core western

institutions such as NATO and the Commonwealth (Donaghy 1995). Initially, CAF leadership and some politicians were more focused on building the country's own armed forces. Military spending increased from $227m in 1947 to $1.8bn in 1952, a remarkable 7.5 percent of GDP, to emphasize Canada's contribution to the Western security partnership (Granatstein 2011). By the late 1960s it was apparent that Ottawa had no taste for joining the US effort in Vietnam, unlike the Korean War (1950-1953) where several hundred Canadian soldiers died in combat while serving as part of a UN-mandated force. In that political context, size did not matter as much as it did at the start of the Cold War. Presence was still important, and FMT could serve as a good instrument that was low-cost in material and political terms. Nevertheless, in 1971 Tanzania's government ended a Canadian FMT mission, preferring instead a Chinese mission. At this juncture, politics in Ottawa – especially Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's hostility towards military aid – meant that there was no political support to try to compete against China to win over Tanzanian government and military officials who seemed to get everything they wanted from Beijing (Miles Joyce 2022b).

This political shift under the Trudeau Government left the Canadian Military Training Assistance Program (MTAP—established in 1963) to facilitate "closer defence relationships…to share the common burden of maintaining international peace and security" (Rasiulis 2001). MTAP's strategic rationale was familiar, "to achieve influence in areas of strategic interest to Canada… as diplomatic and military representatives find it considerably easier to gain access and exert influence in countries with a core group of Canadian-trained professional military leaders (Canadian Foreign Policy Institute 2020)." Canada's FMT now was defined as a 'soft power' tool. The problem is that it is hard to measure how much soft power FMT generates; and for what purpose; and why spending dollars on FMT rather than global promotion of Canadian alternative rock (for example) is a good way to seek soft power. In any event, this lack of strategic focus is likely to result in FMT designs that are self-reflective rather than suited to situations at hand, leaving at least some operators to wonder how what they do contributes to national interests.

FMT across NATO members can best be classified in five different contributory categories: *Superpower*, *Former Superpower*, *Quid Pro Quo*, *Multinational*, and *Symbolic*. These categories are fluid but help provide a roadmap and rationale for understanding the logic of FMT in the NATO alliance and how Canada's 'soft power' approach fits within this strategic framework.

The US occupies the *Superpower* category, spending over $330 billion on FMT since 2000. The US supplies the bulk of global FMT as an element of maintaining the post-

Cold War international security order (Security Assistance Monitor n.d). While some FMT missions spearheaded by the US over the last two decades have appeared more values and rules-based (such as deploying US troops to assist and advise during West Africa's 2014 Ebola outbreak), more immediate US national interests are cited, such as FMT's role in the invasion and occupation of Iraq (2003-2011) (Operation UNITED ASSISTANCE 2016). Canada sent military personnel to Iraq as part of Operation IMPACT (2014-present), primarily special operations forces and aircraft, as part of a broader US-led coalition of 83 members known as Operation Inherent Resolve to advise Iraqi and Kurdish forces and defeat the Islamic State (Government of Canada 2021; Matisek and Fowler 2020). Superpower FMT is no guarantee of achieving desired effects. Militaries of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Somalia were merely Fabergé Egg armies: Broken easily by insurgents when US advisors were not around to monitor and support them (Matisek 2018). In these cases, it is difficult for intervening forces to create a new system of civil-military relations that differs substantially from the political context and realities of the government.

The *Former Superpower* category includes France, Italy, and UK. They pursue FMT as a specialized tool that simultaneously enhances their value as NATO partners while using FMT to address political instability and violent extremism in countries that are sources of migration to Europe (Gegout 2018; Daily Sabah 2020). Politicians, policy makers and FMT designers often argue that their country has a 'special relationship' with former colonies, and that long engagement and extensive interpersonal ties make them better FMT providers in these settings. While FMT providers often have experience and insights that enhance their performance, this essay's two authors hear complaints from FMT recipients that providers can be 'arrogant' and place their national interests over local needs. Canada has indirectly supported such FMT operations, such as Operation FREQUENCE, where CAF cargo aircraft airlifted French troops and equipment in support of the Operation(s) SERVAL and BARKHANE in Africa's Sahel region (Government of Canada 2022). Primary FMT providers, however, have the advantage of operating under a clear set of rationales related to national interests linked to addressing instability in countries with which providers have long-standing relationships.

The *Quid Pro Quo* category includes former Soviet States (especially Poland, Baltic States, and Romania). Governments in these countries prioritize deterrence of Russian aggression, and if that fails, NATO support to resist aggression. They view FMT (as both recipients and providers of FMT) through a quid pro lens; to be seen as eager partners in return for assurances that partners will help them out in a bind. These partnerships with NATO members, especially with the US, thus

address their core strategic interests vis-à-vis Russia. Whether providing or receiving FMT, their armed forces gain experience, access to materiel and professional military networks that boosts the own capacities. Their external provision of FMT, including in places that in of themselves are of little strategic concern to them, is about reciprocity; support missions now to increase the probability that during a crisis NATO partners will come to their aid. Through dozens of interviews in 2021 with defense officials in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, most expressed concern about their places in the NATO alliance and viewed contributions of sizeable numbers (high per capita relative to bigger countries) of personnel for FMT missions in other countries as central to their national interests in gaining reliable protection from more powerful partners to deter Russian aggressions and come to their aid in the event deterrence fails. Canada has conducted Operation REASSURANCE to Central and Eastern Europe since 2014, currently the largest deployment of Canadian military personnel (over 1,000), for "conducting training, exercises, and some NATO-specific tasks" (Government of Canada 2022). *Quid Pro Quo* governments welcome Canada's role as part of building broad intra-NATO partnerships as part of their strategic vision, a clarity not necessarily shared on the Canadian side.

The *Multinational* FMT contributory category applies to NATO members that provide personnel to missions that fall under the control of International governmental organizations (IGOs) such as the European Union (EU) and United Nations (UN). Participation demonstrates a commitment to the legitimacy of international norms and rules – that due to various constraints (e.g., resources, political risk aversion, etc.) – is a feasible way for a country to contribute personnel for FMT missions. Contributions of this sort tend to reflect domestic political constraints, such as a need to avoid significant expense or risk while supporting domestically popular values and preferences. Nevertheless, their lack of clear strategic purpose makes long-term FMT missions of this sort hard to justify, such as when a soldier's misbehaviour appears in media or there is a casualty, and members of the public question why their government is sending troops to that place. This dilemma facing policymakers reflects this category of FMT's weak link to strategic purpose, a condition that the public often is quicker than policymakers to detect. In any event, Canada's participation in IGO peacekeeping and stability operations is at its lowest point in recent history with only 27 military and 29 police deployed for UN missions as of May 2021. This places Canada at 68th in the world – a stark contrast to 1992 when Canada contributed over 3,300 personnel to UN peacekeeping operations making it 1st in the world (Carroll 2016).[3] Canada no longer can claim to be a 'superpower of peacekeeping,'

which further muddies the link between FMT operations and strategic purpose.

Countries with governments and publics that have limited public appetite for offensive military operations (e.g., Canada, Netherlands, Belgium, etc.) occupy the final FMT category of *Symbolic* providers. Usually with under-resourced militaries, participation in various FMT activities is one of the few ways their militaries can promote talented military personnel. The symbolic role of Canada in the NATO alliance is a well-established position, mainly because Canadian leaders consistently defined their primary problem as a nuclear war between the USSR and US, which drove some Canadian military actions towards supporting US efforts at deterrence, however broadly defined (Johnson 1985). Regardless, Canadian participation in external military interventions puts capable military leaders in a difficult position of trying to accomplish an effective FMT mission, while a home government constrains their ability through restrictive rules of engagement (ROEs) (Chuka and Hrychuk 2022). The imposition of political constraints by Ottawa and a war-averse Canadian public puts deployed Canadian troops in a difficult position of wanting to perform as professionals but knowing they must be overly attentive to risk-avoidance. Hence, many CAF commanders end up placing the utmost value on keeping Canadian troops safe, which from a Clausewitizian perspective, undermines the effectiveness and capabilities of these FMT personnel – and damages relationships and influence capabilities with host-nation governments and their armed forces.

All operations should be attentive to risk, but risk should be balanced against the value of objectives. As a rule of thumb, if anything more than zero risk is intolerable, the purpose of the operation must not be very important to policymakers who worry that even the slightest incident will cause the public to wonder and begin to question what is going on. This tension between using FMT to signal support for global values and institutions (multinational FMT) or to signal vague commitment (symbolic FMT) is indicative of a paradox: the deployment of military forces designed to provide necessary forces and capabilities to commanders in support of national interests yet are deployed in ways that do not support and may distract from those interests.

Canada's Foreign Military Training Dilemma

Canada symbolic-heavy orientation towards FMT leaves the primary CAF objective in this dimension to focus on building and maintaining relationships with other NATO members, as with CAF training for Afghanistan's armed forces from 2006 and its important role in the NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan after its establishment in 2009. Canada's commitment was oriented toward the US and other partners rather than the

recipients and what assistance to recipients can do for Canada (Klassen and Albo 2013). This is not to minimize Canada's significant battlefield role in Afghanistan from the earliest days of the conflict in 2001 to the 15 March 2014 handover to coalition partners, involving the deployment of over 40,000 troops, a strength of commitment during which CAF had the highest per-capita casualty rate among coalition members.

The political purpose of Canada's FMT missions of this sort resembles aspects of the *quid pro quo* countries, in that FMT missions in Afghanistan were oriented less to Afghanistan as an end and instead were about solidifying these countries' place in the NATO alliance. There was strategic clarity in this relationship: Eastern European contingents trained Afghan soldiers so that NATO partners, especially the US, would be more likely to stand by these NATO members in case of likely future Article 5 scenario involving Russian aggression. FMT on these terms exhibits strategic purpose. FMT operations in Afghanistan are ways to that desired end, and their location in Afghanistan only incidental to that end.

Canada, however, does not face geostrategic vulnerabilities like the Baltic states and other eastern European NATO members. Thresholds for acceptable risk thus are lower because stakes (i.e., strategic purpose) are lower. One consequence of this lack of strategic clarity is that it is easier to pin blame on CAF personnel when FMT operations go wrong. For example, some may see the 1993 "Somalia Affair" or the Afghan detainee torture issue and charges against Captain Robert Semrauas as examples of throwing soldiers under the bus (Razack 2004). This is hardly the first-time senior officers have blamed subordinates, but some suspect it happens more often in the CAF as best described by retired Lt Col John Conrad (Conrad 2011). This observation is not meant to excuse bad behavior. Professional conduct is important for maintaining overall reputation—a feature that can have strategic effects—and to avoid tactical consequences of indiscipline. The problem lies in perceptions among solders and the public that a mission's goals are vague and that responses to insubordination are, whether true or not, reflective of policymaker concerns about domestic politics and the absence of a clear strategic focus (despite the assertion in various official documents).

Resolving some of these problems means FMT should be closer aligned to the strategic focus of the national interest that leaders in Ottawa set out. Canada's National Security Policy mentions failed and failing states and the need to restore stability and government institutions but lacks a clear connection to FMT that one finds in Europe's *former superpower* providers in those places. They are responding to specific domestic political consequences of migration and extremism that affect their publics as consequences of failures of governance in other countries. If

there is no strategic vision for the task, Canada would be better off not symbolically deploying CAF personnel. The bulk of CAF overseas operations from 1990 to the mid-2000s was focused on "peacekeeping," but the subsequent decline in Canada's peacekeeping acknowledges this lack of strategic effect, not to mention tepid domestic support. This is most evident with token military aid contributions by Canada and the US to Haiti in October 2022, since there is only about 160,000 Haitians living in Canada, and there is little public appetite or national interests involved with the renewed chaos in Haiti (Martinez and Trinh 2022).[4]

Resolving the Canadian dilemma of FMT requires a focus on operations matched to what Canada's government and CAF do well, which is high quality technical skills transfer and good professional relationships. However, the paradox remains that just because Canadians are good at providing FMT, long-term influence and lasting improvement in host-nation security forces is not a guarantee. Issues of aligning host-nation interests with that of Canada and other NATO providers of FMT, are precisely why achieving objectives can be so difficult: Numerous disconnects can emerge where partner forces can deviate from expected behavior and FMT donors might lack resources or a genuine interest in monitoring partner behaviour.

A limited scope would enable a longer-term commitment and ensure the development of 'soft power' and actionable influence in specified counties. Personal professional relationships have more value in terms of operational and strategic goals if there is confidence of a longer time horizon. Such an assurance of a long-term relationship is a factor that enables the eastern European FMT connections to Ukrainians, most noticeably with the 2016 establishment of the "Trilateral Brigade" (*The Grand Hetman Kostiantyn Ostrogski Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade*) in Lublin, Poland, which is a joint military unit of Lithuanian, Polish, and Ukrainian troops (Matisek and Reno 2022). Finally, there is a beyond-operations dimension in which personal military-to-military relationships (M2M) develop human capital that is valuable in future situations that are hard to predict with precision during the actual FMT operation. Through interviews with Ukrainian and NATO personnel in 2022, M2M is playing a significant role in the Russo-Ukrainian War through the emergence of informal SFA: NATO troops (to include CAF troops) advising Ukrainian troops on weapon systems and tactics through unofficial channels (e.g., Signal group chats, etc.).

Fieldwork Insights: Canadian FMT in Ukraine and Niger

Ukraine

Following the Russian invasion of Crimea in 2014, 16 countries established bilateral security assistance missions to Ukraine. Known as Operation UNIFIER (or Joint Task Force — Ukraine (JTF-U)), by early 2022,

Canada had trained 33,346 candidates in the Security Forces of Ukraine (SFU) and 1,951 members of the National Guard of Ukraine (NGU), at the cost of over $890 million (Government of Canada 2022). However, after interviewing a CAF member that was responsible for assisting the Ukrainians on social media warfare and influence campaigns, it became clear how frustrated he was with the layers of Ottawa bureaucracy and ROEs, making it difficult to train and assist Ukrainian cyber specialists on how to better counter, defeat, and attack Russian propaganda and dis- and mis-information. The worst rule – that the Major argued hamstrung his relationship with the Ukrainians and undermined his effectiveness – was that he could only advise the Ukrainians on influence campaigns in the Ukrainian language. He contended that he needed to able to conduct strategic communication and narrative warfare in the Russian language – to reach certain target audiences as well – but was denied. This rule reflects Ottawa's risk-aversion seeping into FMT and the conduct of a non-kinetic military operation in cyberspace. The strategic disconnect is ironic, given that Canada is home to more than 1.3 million Ukrainians – making it the 5th largest ethnic group in Canada.

Weeks before the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the US, Canada, and other NATO countries removed all "boots on the ground" (military advisors and SOF) from Ukraine for de-escalation purposes. However, as Ukrainian "Hybrid Defense" forces (e.g., soldiers, SOF, territorial defense fighters, volunteers, partisans, farmers with tractors, foreign fighters, civilians using intel sharing apps to identify Russian units, etc.) repelled and cut-off overextended Russian troops, logistics, and armor columns, the international community and Canada transitioned into an over-the-horizon FMT mission to Ukraine, with substantial training of Ukrainian personnel in Poland and Germany. Canada has provided an additional $626 million in military aid to Ukraine since the war began, and in April 2022 deployed about 100 troops on a humanitarian mission to Poland to assist Ukrainian refugees (Government of Canada 2022; Baig 2022). While all 260 troops from Operation UNIFIER were moved from Ukraine to Poland before the Russian invasion, there is still a possibility that some of those troops have remained in an FMT role given that CAF is "in the process of temporarily relocating components of Joint Task Force — Ukraine (JTF-U) to elsewhere in Europe," and that "the decision does not signal the end of the training mission. The Defence Department would not confirm how many troops have left and what will happen next" (Brewster 2022). Nevertheless, some veterans of Operation UNIFIER believe their efforts facilitated Ukrainian military reforms in moving beyond an overly centralized Soviet model. Critics of Canadian FMT in Ukraine, such as Glen Grant (retired British Lt Col),

point out that the initial Canadian "focus was all medical. It was defensive stuff. Canada didn't want to be seen to be helping anybody to kill anybody," with Grant adding that "It's nice helping them [Ukrainians] after they're shot. But it would have been a lot better if we were helping them before they're shot, so they don't get shot" (Lawrynuik 2022).

One might wonder if this record counts as "success." It confirms the professionalism and operational proficiency of CAF personnel. Shortcomings are easier to identify at the policy level; in decisions that are not made by CAF leadership. It is the task of political leadership to define aims and explain their relationships to national interests. Absent the clear articulation of strategic goals and attention to ways and means of achieving those goals. It is difficult to turn performance on the ground into strategic effects. It is easier for bureaucrats to hedge their bets amidst uncertainty and hesitate when facing increased risk. Canada certainly was not alone in this regard in the early days of the Russian assault.

Niger

Gaining Independence from France in 1960, Niger has been marred by instability, authoritarianism, and military coups. Military rule lasted until 1993 when multiparty presidential elections were held. Then a Tuareg rebellion erupted, another military coup in 1996, then a rigged presidential election. In 1999, Nigerien President Maïnassara (former Armed Forces Chief of Staff) was assassinated during a military coup. Nine months later, Mamadou Tandja was elected president, was reelected in 2004, then in 2009 changed the constitution to allow himself a third term, which led to more upheaval. Three months into his third term, he was deposed via military coup, a junta ruled the country until elections in early 2011, just as jihadist violence spread, there was more public discontent, protests, and arrests of senior army officers (Miles 2021). Moving ahead to 2021 to not tire the reader, days before the inauguration of a new president, the first peaceful transfer of power in the country's history, a coup was foiled by the government, caught as it was between continued insurgency and declining security.

In this remarkably turbulent context, Canada began Operation NABERIUS in 2013, which is funded by Global Affairs Canada's (GAC) Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building Program (CTCBP) to advise and train the Forces Armées Nigériennes (FAN) to fight violent extremists in their own country and join a French-supported regional coalition to aid operations elsewhere in the Sahel region. About 50 Canadian special operations personnel are deployed to Niger to train the FAN on the ABCs of soldiering, but also "leadership training," to include "laws of armed conflict, operational planning, human rights law, gender equality and perspectives, protection of vulnerable populations" (Government of Canada 2020). While

admirable from a 'soft power' perspective, CAF participation in FMT with the FAN pales in comparison to the US footprint in Niger, with the US having spent over $500 million on FMT to the FAN since 2012 – making it "one of the largest [US] security assistance and training programs in sub-Saharan Africa" (U.S Embassy Niger 2021).

The Canadian FMT role in Niger is appropriate. One of the authors, recently returned from Niger, found most FAN personnel unaware of the Canadian presence, or if they are, see it in positive terms because as one said, "they are not French, even if they speak French." One of the perils of FMT in that environment is that popular political rhetoric blames the worsening security situation on the French presence and supposed hidden agendas, even to the extent of proposing that there is a secret French – extremist alliance to destroy Niger and seize its resources! US forces get off light, as FAN members appreciate the kinetic focus of counter-terrorism operations and an otherwise low profile and use of contractors in training operations. Professional standards and rules are valued in some quarters in FAN, and one suspects this is due in part to their role in individual officers' career strategies in which training in a foreign country and personal connections to foreign officers can help them rise in their own military establishment. The content of Canadian training programs is still valuable from the provider perspective in this context, as it may influence recipient behavior, though it will play a minimal role in creating strategic effects on the ground and many Canadians might see it as a waste of money—the risk-averse attitude in Ottawa in this instance makes sense.

Policy Recommendations for the Future of Canadian Engagement with Foreign Militaries

Canada's largely *Symbolic* FMT can be modified to stress Canada's contribution to the NATO alliance (Kristiansen and Home 2020). Five major lines of effort would help political and military leadership in Ottawa address FMT's strategic vagueness.

First, Canada's public might appreciate more communication from political leaders about the contributions their armed forces make in multilateral environments. For instance, a 2018 polling report of the Canadian public found that "Awareness of and familiarity with the [Canadian Armed Forces] was generally very low; virtually non-existent among those in the younger age group" (Brewster 2018). Politicians may be wary of taking risks to support Canadian military operations. No doubt some Canadians were relieved that troops left Afghanistan in 2014 rather than in a rush at the end of August 2021. In any event, the capacity of a democratically elected government to explain to citizens why their troops are exposed to potential harm is a good measure of whether an operation is politically sustainable. Operations that ambitious backbenchers 'discover' and exploit for

political gain often are bad ideas from the start.

Second, because the CAF mainly conducts FMT through cobbling together forces from various units across the country, team unity and partnerships with host-nation personnel suffer from ministerial departments down to the tactical unit level. This practice can contribute to the sort of problems US forces faced in Afghanistan (2001-2021) and Iraq (2003-2011), where 1-year rotations without organizational continuity meant that institutional building with host-nation forces suffered as newly arriving units lacked a proper administrative changeover with the departing unit, meaning the advisors and the trainees had to (re)start all over again (Zweibelson 2015; Robinson 2018). This is a near-universal complaint the authors hear among US FMT planners and operators. Canada could do well to extend rotations, increase overlap, and maximize incentives for government and military personnel. This would help them master their jobs and roles in-country and to align efforts with one another and other allied and partner countries, in trying to accomplish similar objectives in the host-nation.

Third, risk-averse policymakers typically impose overly restrictive ROEs. Most famously, the ROEs imposed on CAF personnel during the 1994 Rwandan Genocide prevented Lt. Gen. Roméo Dallaire from responding more forcefully to protect more lives (Dallaire 2009; Meffe 2017). A more typical example is how initial CAF participation in the International Military Assistance and Training Team (IMATT) in Sierra Leone (2000-present) was hampered by ROEs that limited CAF movement only to Freetown due to safety concerns, while other militaries operated in the rest of the country to provide stability and improve host-nation security capabilities (Black 2015; Government of Canada 2018). Thus, the CAF should encourage initiative and ensure that ROEs are tied to the international laws of armed conflict (LOAC), not to caveats imposed by leaders in Ottawa.

Fourth, the MTAP – now known as the Military Training and Cooperation Program (MTCP) – should be appropriately funded and resourced. One option would be to establish something like what used to be MTAP advisor brigades or battalions dedicated to certain regions. This alternative would develop niche advisor capabilities and knowledge for FMT. The UK and US have established primary advisor units known as a Specialised Infantry Group (SIG) and the Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB) respectively. This change saves money and personnel, leaving conventional combat units to focus on large scale combat operations. Professional advisor units for the CAF will enable defence institution building (DIB), often lacking in FMT delivery (Miles Joyce 2022a). The importance of DIB cannot be overstated as FMT only has a short-term effect. DIB requires a longer-term

commitment to the partner security forces which means focused engagements at the ministerial and strategic levels, to ensure training and advice is internalized so that they build institutions that remain and grow after advisors go home (Miles Joyce, Kerr, and Cate 2017).

Finally, the Departments of Global Affairs and National Defence should invest more resources in their intelligence capabilities to assess the "will to fight" and "political willpower" of partner governments and militaries to absorb FMT and engage in systematic reforms and DIB (Matisek and Reno 2019). The failure to understand (or to accept) how brittle the Afghan military would be once western advisors left the country in May of 2021 should motivate more effort in this direction (Matisek 2021). Likewise, US and many other western government failed to grasp the will and capacity of Ukrainian military units to resist a Russian invasion.[5] Good Canadian intelligence could be a force multiplier for CAF leadership and deployed advisors (and also the NATO alliance), assisting in identifying critical individuals in foreign governments and militaries that can help or impede efforts at FMT. Without good intelligence on the political context in which donors are providing FMT, security aid and assistance only facilitates patronage and corruption.

The Canadian military has a niche advantage in being able to provide very high-quality training and sought-after professional military networks when it comes to training and advising militaries. This advantage would be enhanced if changes are made to the way the CAF is organized. Professional advisor units offer good opportunity to build on some of Canada's inherent strengths in ways that would promote public support and would be appropriate to Canada's strategic aims. Many advisors and trainers these authors have met stress the importance of recruiting specific personality types that seek long-term cultural and personal engagement – and the NATO Security Force Assistance Center of Excellence published a 2022 report that identified the sort of skills, attitudes, and traits needed for an SFA operator to excel at FMT (Di Pietro et. al 2022). The sentiment of having the right kind of personality for a professional advisor is pronounced among *quid pro quo* and *former superpower* FMT providers and reflects the importance of using niche excellence to demonstrate commitment to strategic partners, increase their own capacities, and build long-term personal relationships that may have effects in addressing future challenges.

In concrete terms with respect to Ukraine, advisor units could play an important role in strengthening partnerships with NATO members and connect FMT to a core strategic aim of supporting an open global order and Canada's role in it. They could do so in a politically legible way, utilizing Canadian citizens' personal connections to these countries, given that 10% or more of prairie

province Canadians are of Ukrainian background. However, complaints heard from Canadian advisors and Nigerien FMT recipients is the issue of human rights and whether these can be codified into current FAN operations when the political context in Niger does not support western imposed realities. This is a similar problem that NATO forces encountered in Afghanistan where Afghan commanders would regularly complain about having to play by the imposed rules of NATO, which did not take into account the way in which the Taliban exploited these superficial realities to their own benefit (Shea 2013). All too often, FMT programs pursue various objectives that attempt to achieve legitimacy, human rights, international law, and military effectiveness, all at the same time. SFA recipients end up getting trapped in the paradox of trying to adhere to externally imposed expectations and being militarily capable (Knowles and Matisek 2020).

Politicians and policymakers in Ottawa need to decide if the policies they support and operations they fund are worth the risk of explaining and defending before the public. Doing so in a more committed and forceful way that the public accepts would empower Canada's military leadership to act more effectively, benefitting national interests and the Western rules-based order. Hence, there is a need to develop a deeper level of strategic thinking within the Canadian government, beyond the usual generic and cliché thinking on 'whole-of-society' approaches to foreign policy problems. Elected leaders, appointees, and those bureaucrats serving in strategic positions need more than a public administration background. Such individuals need to be educated in war studies, strategic studies, defence studies, ad/or international relations. Moreover, such academic backgrounds should also be aligned with copious experience on the ground in these tough overseas environments – not just on Wellington Street. But again, this all points to the rationale and strategic purpose of FMT. Does it mean Canada should be supporting and assisting foreign militaries for the purposes of helping the US and/or NATO? Or is there a genuine reason why Canada should be engaging in FMT, beyond trying to accommodate certain domestic groups lobbying for a more robust CAF engagement in foreign policy problems? Regardless, the Canadian public – and its elected leaders and military – need a realistic vision for policy alignment with the future of CAF operations, be it for simplistic peacekeeping purposes or for making certain partner militaries more capable.

Endnotes:

[1] This material is based upon work supported by the Air Force Office of Scientific Research under award number FA9550-20-1-0277. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, and/or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Air Force.

[2] For more on the RCMP and role in deployed FMT operations, see: https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/peace-operations

[3] For recent Canadian peacekeeping data, see: https://peacekeepingcanada.com/canada-and-un-peacekeeping-fact-sheet/.

[4] For current numbers on Haitians living in Canada: https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/haitian-canadians.

[5] The Bureau of Intelligence and Research (US Department of State) was the only intelligence agency to accurately predict the weakness of the Afghan military and also the robustness of Ukrainian military capabilities to resist a Russian invasion.

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(2/4) The Recipient Dilemma of Foreign Military Training

Dr. Adam Scharpf

Introduction

Foreign military training and education (FMT) is a key instrument in the state's toolbox of international politics. Every year, countries such as Canada, China, Great Britain, Russia, and the United States (US) provide a wide range of training to soldiers from other countries. As part of the Military Training and Cooperation Programme since the end of the Cold War, the Canadian Armed Forces have provided training to more than 70 nations. The United States annually trains around 100,000 foreign military and police personnel. Russia regularly provides training to troops in Central Asia and has advised security forces in Venezuela. France maintains more than a dozen military schools in Africa.

Since the war in Ukraine, foreign powers training soldiers has become the focus of public debate. In response to Russia's invasion of Crimea and the insurgency of Russian-backed separatists in the Donbas, Canada and select allies started to train Ukrainian troops within the Multinational Joint Commission framework. While this halted on the eve of the Russian invasion in Ukraine, Operation Unifier has now resumed. According to some observers (e.g., Bonenberger 2022; Michaels 2022), the Operation and the Multinational Joint Commission are a success already as Ukrainian forces managed to stop the advancing Russian forces.

In contrast to the Ukrainian success story, billions of dollars of security assistance and years of FMT could not stop Taliban forces in Afghanistan in 2021. After the withdrawal of US and allied forces, insurgents managed to take over the capital within days. Moreover, in 2014, despite the US led-coalition educating hundreds of thousands of military and police personnel, the Islamic State managed to capture significant parts of the Iraq.

The grave failures in Afghanistan and Iraq compared to the supposed success story of FMT in Ukraine raise important questions for donor countries such as Canada: What are the benefits of external training for supplying nations? Are foreign training programs an effective tool for achieving foreign policy objectives? Under which conditions can foreign training be successful? What are potential downsides and how can donors prevent or mitigate them?

To provide answers to these questions, this article's focus is on FMT's recipients rather than the donors. I outline how the provision of FMT generates a dilemma for recipient governments, to which they respond strategically. Recipients carefully decide whether and how much FMT they request in order to balance their geopolitical interests, domestic military requirements, and the threats posed by potentially disloyal, foreign-trained security personnel. In doing so, recipient governments adapt their demand to expected political and military costs and benefits. The strategic demand not only influences when and how much military training governments accept from supplying nations, but it also sets limits on what FMT can achieve.

Next, I give an overview of FMT research to highlight how studies have largely overlooked the political interests and concerns of recipient governments. I then summarize key findings from a recently published study (Scharpf 2020), which highlights the diplomatic and military considerations behind recipients' request for FMT. From these insights, I derive three important lessons about the effectiveness of foreign training programs in today's world. I close with an outlook.

What we Know about Foreign Military Training: Donor Interests Matter

Every year, countries such as Canada, China, Russia, and the United States train and educate foreign security personnel. According to Western decision makers, the aim of FMT is to build loyal and capable allies, which share democratic principles, value the rule of law, and protect human rights (e.g., Gates 2010). Research has made ample progress in understanding why and to whom donor countries offer such military aid (McLauchlin, Seymour, and Martel 2022; Savage 2021). Countries generally use FMT as an instrument to influence other states (Martinez Machain 2021).

In practice, supplying nations often (have to) weigh their goals and prioritize some over others. Research suggests that strategic interests determine when and to whom training is offered. For example, during the Cold War, the United States and allies like Canada provided countries with military aid to contain communism (Poe and Meernik 1995). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, it then geared its security policies toward assisting civil liberties and political democratization (Blanton 2000). During the "War on Terror," Washington supported those countries where it saw its own security interests threatened, rather than those most in need (Fleck and Kilby 2010; Boutton and Carter 2014).

Most scientific studies focus on the suppliers of FMT. What is less studied and understood is the variation in the motivation of recipient countries to accept such offers. This is surprising since security assistance often fails exactly because recipient governments do not share the goals of sponsors (Bapat 2011; Biddle, Macdonald, and Baker 2018; Ladwig 2017). The cases of Afghanistan and Iraq demonstrate how diverging political interests result in the squandering of military resources and a failure to improve local security. Given that recipients often do not share the goals behind military aid programs, it seems paramount for donor states to understand under which conditions receiving states will "successfully" accept FMT.

The Missing Link: The Political Concerns of Recipient Governments

While donating states are often sensitive to avoid insulting receiving states or appear overbearing, scholars and practitioners have paid surprisingly little attention to the interests of recipient governments. The lack of understanding of why states demand FMT has a simple reason. Both scholars and practitioners often assume that FMT is cheap and a "gift" for states who get it. Training programs are said to professionalize security forces, teaching soldiers how to protect their citizens while respecting human rights, democracy, and civilian authority (Atkinson 2014; Mujkic, Asencio, and Byrne 2018; Ruby and Gibler 2010). Given these benefits, it seems straightforward to hypothesize that the limit to foreign aid rests with the donating state and that receiving governments will

always take as much foreign training as they are offered. Among policy circles, this has led to the belief that recipient countries will always take as much foreign training as they can get.

However, the belief of "cheap aid" crucially underestimates the political risks that FMT might have for recipient governments. FMT can be dangerous for two reasons. First, it may produce powerful military figures that disagree with or even oppose the political leaders in power. Examples from Egypt, Gambia, Haiti, Mali, Pakistan, and Thailand, as well as the 1966 overthrow of Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah by the Canadian-trained army, show how foreign-trained officers have repeatedly staged coups and ousted their governments (Jeffery 2013; Keating 2012; Turse 2017). FMT commonly exposes trainees to ideas and notions that reflect the donor's political values and interests, but might be at odds with their own political leadership. Moreover, foreign training often produce an elitist self-image among trainees. This sense of superiority is particularly prevalent among graduates of prestigious training facilities. Returning from renowned foreign academies or staff colleges, soldiers are more likely to challenge civilian authorities when they see their organization's wellbeing or their own interests as being at risk (Savage and Scharpf 2022). In the worst case, this motivates soldiers to overthrow their government.

Second, foreign military education also strengthens the ability of trainees to stage military revolts and coups (Savage and Caverley 2017). Training programs commonly aim at fostering efficient communication, discipline, and weapons handling. While such skills enhance the ability to successfully operate on the battlefield, they can also aid soldiers in carrying out coups. Additionally, foreign training often increases the influence of trainees over peers. Having graduated from a renowned foreign academy or program, officers might occupy influential positions in which they train subordinates (Atkinson 2014). In extreme cases, foreign-trained soldiers can use their status to recruit coup plotters and coordinate putsches.

Among potential recipients, all of this is a matter of great concern. Foreign-trained soldiers can pose a significant internal risk to the stability and survival of governments. FMT is therefore anything but politically cheap. In short, it can be risky for certain governments to receive FMT. For recipients this generates a dilemma. One the one hand, more foreign-trained personnel increases the security forces' capacity to protect the state from domestic and foreign security threats, on the other hand, it may also increase the chances that parts of the security apparatus successfully go against those in power.

In order to form expectations about when and where FMT can be effective, it is important to

understand and explain how recipient governments resolve this dilemma.

The Two Logics of Foreign Military Training Programs

To understand under which conditions countries accept FMT, I have systematically studied the decisions of recipient governments to send their soldiers abroad for training (Scharpf 2020). To this end, I have quantitatively analyzed more than 60,700 course attendances by Latin American soldiers at the most notorious US foreign training facility: the School of the Americas (SOA). While the SOA has been the predominant training facility for military personnel from Latin America, offering professional military education on topics ranging from military leadership to counterinsurgency operations, it has repeatedly made headlines as the "School of Dictators" or the "School of Assassins." Graduates underwent strong socialization, many served as US informants, and some even plotted against their governments after their return. From a scientific point of view, the SOA offers the perfect laboratory to study the cost–benefit calculations that shape the recipients' demand for external training.

The results of my research show that for recipient governments FMT is a foreign policy tool first, and a defense policy tool second. This means that recipients use foreign military training to achieve two strategic objectives: First, they use FMT to strengthen their relations with the donor. That is, they signal international reliability to the donor country by constantly sending some soldiers to its programs. This is the *diplomatic logic* of FMT. Second, recipients use foreign training to increase the capacity of their security forces to counter acute security threats. That is, recipients outsource parts of the training to increase their security forces' effectiveness. This is the *military logic* of FMT. Both logics influence the decision of recipient governments of how much foreign training they eventually accept.

The Diplomatic Logic

My research shows that in order to demonstrate their international commitment, while reducing the risk of potentially disloyal, runaway, and even coup-plotting security personnel, recipient governments usually only demand small amounts of training. Every year, Latin American governments sent a few soldiers to the SOA to signal their international closeness to the US. My analysis reveals that this diplomatic decision was independent of internal or external security concerns. As part of strengthening cooperative relations with the US, Latin American soldiers attended courses on general rather than on specialized military topics. Moreover, the results demonstrate that it was particularly new government leaders that sought to corroborate their long-term relations with the US. Attendances spiked right after they had assumed office. To

demonstrate their commitment, the governments of these leaders briefly increased the number of soldiers attending the SOA. Together, the empirical patterns suggest that governments use FMT to substantiate their political cooperation with the donor nation.

The Military Logic

My research also shows that training patterns change once recipient governments face imminent security threats. To make sure that the military could effectively neutralize emerging security threats, Latin American governments demanded more US training. At the time, the main security threats were related to left-wing insurgencies. In response, Latin American countries increased the numbers of soldiers in counterinsurgency courses, despite concerns that this would inject in the security apparatus soldiers with strong pro-US values. Overall, my findings show that in situations with acute security problems, recipient governments are willing to tolerate the heightened risk of military disloyalty if FMT promises quick gains in military effectiveness.

My analysis also suggests that US-led training increased the effectiveness of Latin American militaries. US-sponsored training helped preventing that individual guerrilla attacks escalated into full insurgent wars in recipient nations, albeit often with the use of extreme violence. While counterinsurgency training helped soldiers quelling the insurgent threat, training in conventional warfare had the opposite effect. On a larger note, this suggests that FMT can indeed increase military effectiveness, specifically when training content matches the type of security problem. Latin American recipients seem to have been well aware of this. They enrolled soldiers in those courses that prepared their troops best for the security problem at hand.

The Two Logics and the Effectiveness of Foreign Training Programs

The findings of my research carry several important insights into the effectiveness of foreign training programs in today's world. Since the end of the Cold War, the international system has become more multipolar, with donor states now competing for influence among recipient states. This has led to a proliferation of sponsors. Over the last decade, countries such as China, India, and Russia have expanded their FMT offerings to pursue their strategic interests and co-opt international partners (e.g., Bhalla 2019; Roth 2019; Van Oudenaren and Fisher 2016). Based on my research, I have identified four key lessons that might help Western donors such as the US and Canada to increase the effectiveness of their FMT efforts.

Policy Lesson #1: It Takes Two to Tango.

In international politics, even supposedly weak states often manage to extract significant political and military gains from powerful ones. My research demonstrates this

paradoxical outcome in the domain of FMT. The diplomatic and military interests of recipient nations shape the eventual impact of training programs. Like their counterparts, recipient governments carefully weigh the costs and benefits of security assistance programs, and they only tolerate the political costs of FMT if it promises greater international integration and gains in domestic security.

For donor states, flooding countries with foreign training programs is therefore ineffective at best and counterproductive at worst. Recipient governments are unlikely to take as much foreign training as offered by donors. And even if they do, those in power are likely to install safeguards that undercut the capacity-enhancing effect on the security apparatus and protect their rule, as happened, for example, in Iraq under Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki (De Bruin 2014). Supplying nations can therefore only aim at offering FMT that is tailored to local security needs in the hope of making it too costly for recipients to undercut its effects.

Policy Lesson #2: Manage Expectations and Detect Opportunities.

My research suggests that there are limits on how donor countries can use FMT to generate international cooperation. Recipient governments utilize foreign training to bolster their reputation as reliable partners—a strategy followed, for example, by the military government in Brazil during the Cold War. Each new president used US foreign training to allay concerns about the government's reliability (Scharpf 2020). FMT is therefore unlikely to lead international cooperation but it rather results from it. Foreign training programs strengthen existing international cooperation and substantiate bilateral relations.

However, there are situations where FMT can significantly increase the political influence of donor nations. Recipient governments are often willing to tolerate the risk of difficult-to-control security forces in exchange for quick gains in military capacity. The demand for training commonly peaks when recipients face domestic crises. Crisis contexts can open opportunities for donor states to increase their influence over allies and project influence in areas of strategic interest, as intended by Canada's Military Training and Cooperation Programme (MTCP). In the long-run, crisis-induced peaks in external training may therefore strengthen donor states' relations with sending countries.

Policy Lesson #3: Delivery-Type Matters.

Mobile training teams, such as the MTTs as part of the US International Military Education and Training (IMET) or Foreign Military Sales (FMS) programs, have become a standard feature of security assistance. My research explains why such training is attractive to recipient governments. With foreign instructors training personnel on-site, it is easier for recipient governments to

control movement and monitor what is taught to their troops. Moreover, mobile training programs often provide courses tailored to the military and political needs of recipients. Compared to training at foreign academies, close geographic proximity and customized content is likely to lower the coup risk emanating from such programs.

However, this is not without costs for donors. First, lower political costs also imply that a recipient country's demand is only a weak signal of political commitment. For donors, mobile training programs offer less guarantees of long-term security cooperation than the training of foreign soldiers at academies does. Second, while offering customized courses with little political content may increase the demand of recipients—since they may be less concerned about the impact on military loyalty—such training might also weaken recipient's long-term political commitment. By supporting today's partner with politically neutral training, donors may run the risk of nurturing tomorrow's foes.

The Look Ahead

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has sent shockwaves through the Western world. Threatened by Russian disinformation campaigns, cyberattacks, and further military aggression, a wide range of European states such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland, Georgia, and Sweden have responded with a heightened interest in deeper military cooperation. Besides the flagrant violation of international law and unbearable suffering caused in Ukraine, the war presents Canada and other countries with the chance to solidify their international role as a provider of military professionalism and security, while attempting to maximize the benefits of FMT.

Moreover, in light of the rising tensions between China and Taiwan, a heightened demand for western foreign military training and education by countries in the Asia-Pacific seems more likely than ever. The increasing interest is likely to reflect the countries' need for higher military capacity as well as the wish to demonstrate their international reliability. Additional consideration of the strategic interests of recipient countries will allow supplying nations to focus and realize the full potential of their foreign military training and education programs.

Social science research on FMT can provide important impetus here. However, research endeavors are currently hampered by the lack of data on the inner workings of FMT programs. Better data and more information would make it possible to find answers to important questions surrounding the effectiveness of FMT:

1) Who offers training? Most research has focused on the FMT offered by Western democracies, most notably the US (e.g., Martinez Machain 2021; McLauchlin, Seymour, and Martel 2022). However, there

is a range of autocratic donors such as China and Russia that also offer training to foreign security personnel. We know relatively little about these undertakings. As autocratic donors pursue different foreign interests, they are likely to orient their training efforts to different geographic regions, partners, and transmit different content. In light of the ongoing international crises, a more systematic look at the differences and similarities across FMT programs seems more important than ever.

2) Who participates? Researchers have gone to great lengths to analyze the impact of FMT on human rights, civil liberties, democratization, and coups. However, studies have only been able to assess these effects in aggregate, i.e. at the country level. With the exception of Atkinson (2014), Grewal (2022), and Miles Joyce (2022), little is still known about how participation influences the outlook and behavior of individual officers. Part of the problem is that researchers commonly do not know who participates in FMT in the first place. Robust scientific analyses would require better information on application processes, the profiles of applicants, and their vetting.

3) What is transmitted? Closely related, researchers still struggle to understand what ideas and messages participants extract from the content taught to them. An ongoing study (Savage and Scharpf 2022) shows that courses in unconventional warfare motivated military personnel to become politically involved. More research is necessary to assess how different courses, particularly in international humanitarian law and human rights, shape military behavior.

4) What happens afterwards? A key assumption in research on FMT is that training has political effects because graduates have the power to influence political decision-making. However, how this process exactly works is still unknown. Researchers commonly assume that graduating from prestigious foreign programs or academies improves the career prospects of officers, allowing them to attain important posts in the military, state, or political apparatus. Both scholars and practitioners would benefit from a better understanding of how FMT influences career patterns and the professional advancement of military personnel.

As with security cooperation and military exchange programs between countries, a closer cooperation between researchers and military professionals would be desirable to advance our scientific understanding on the functioning of foreign military training and education programs.

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(3/4) Military Influence Through Soft Power

Dr. Carla Martinez Machain

Introduction

When discussing Canadian foreign military training, scholars often cite a 1970 memo to Cabinet ministers regarding Canadian foreign military training in Africa that notes "Military leaders in many developing countries, if they do not actually form the government, frequently wield much more power and influence domestically than is the case in the majority of western domestic nations." (Canada, quoted in Kilford 2010, 19) The memo then goes on to state that the training is in Canada's "general interest on broad foreign policy," as it is a way to exert "influence" over future leaders, in part by exposing them to "Canadian values and attitudes." More than fifty years later, it is worth asking the question of whether foreign military training, by Canada or by other major or middle powers, can indeed build this type of

influence and whether it can be done so not by exchanging desired goods for that influence, but by promoting particular values, as a form of soft power. In this article I will discuss this question based on my own work as well as on other recent works on foreign military training.

The question of how to achieve influence through foreign military training is a policy-relevant one. In many interviews that I have conducted with policy practitioners a theme that I have heard is that evaluating the effectiveness of foreign military programs is difficult, but also something that policy practitioners have an interest in gaining information on. I've heard this from both military officers and members of the diplomatic corps. Many of them will recount anecdotal evidence of the programs working as intended, but note that there is little empirical evidence or effective metrics to assess them.

Regarding Canada in particular, a 2019 evaluation of the Military Training Cooperation Program (MTCP) noted that "Progress towards achievement of outcomes is difficult to assess for the MTCP, due to a lack of performance data and the nature of the program's outcomes" and stated that while anecdotally there is evidence of the programs achieving their intended aims, there is a paucity of data that would make it possible to systematically evaluate their effectiveness and efficiency (Government of Canada 2019). As noted by Mike Jeffery with regards to Canada, "Few studies on the effectiveness of that training have been conducted and the perspectives of the participants have a naturally positive tone," such that "determining the overall effectiveness of these programmes is less clear" (Jeffery 2013). My research begins to try to establish some effective metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of foreign military training. It has focused on two particular objectives of foreign military training: building influence over the recipient and establishing norms of respect for human rights, which is in and of itself a form of influence.

Conceptualizing Influence

The first point to address when discussing how (or whether) Canada can achieve influence through foreign military training is to define influence. In most general terms, we can think of influence as a way to alter the behaviour and/or preferences of other actors to better fit one's own preferences. This is a broad theoretical definition; the two sections that follow will present two different conceptualizations of influence that generate particular observable implications and mechanisms. The first stresses how, as noted by Robert Axelrod and Robert Keohane, influence can be achieved through bargaining, where the situation is a zero sum (what one gains must be someone else's loss) or cooperation (where at least one actor can be made better off without making the other worse off) (Axelrod and Keohane 1985). The

second conceptualization is one of achieving harmony with the recipient (at least within a particular realm of issues), which would imply that the preferences of Canada and the recipient of assistance are perfectly aligned.

Security Assistance as a Bargain over a Desired Good

Though much of my research on foreign military training has been focused on the United States, there are many conclusions that are generalizable to other major powers that engage in foreign military training. In particular, the US and Canada, both liberal democracies that carry out training and education in their own schools and in the recipient country, also have very similar objectives for their foreign military training. Both aim to enable interoperability with partner and allied states, and use the training to build partners' capacities as a way to decrease the burden on their own militaries. They also both aim to use training as a way to promote liberal values and civilian control of the military abroad, and, of course, to build influence among the recipients (Martinez Machain 2021).

In my research I have argued that there are two pathways through which military assistance can influence the recipients. The first is to think of military assistance as something desirable that the recipient wants, and would not want to lose. In this sense, military assistance can be used to reward those who are already engaging in behaviour that the provider prefers, to ensure that they continue engaging in that behaviour; or it can be used to persuade those who are engaging in an unwanted behaviour to shift away from it. Whether the aim behind the training is to maintain a desired behaviour or change an undesired one, the logic is the same: the assistance is used to encourage recipients to act in ways that fit with the training state's preferences. There is an implicit or explicit threat that the assistance will be removed if the recipient does not follow those preferences.

A U.S. example of this mechanism at work was when the United States' State Department ceased military training to Cameroon in 2019 in response to Cameroon's security forces violating the human rights of their population and being used to repress the political opposition. The action of removing valuable military assistance was carried out as a way to pressure Cameroon to be more transparent in investigating its military's alleged human rights violations. Much like other forms of deterrence, in the most effective cases it should not be necessary to remove the support, as the threat of suspension should be enough to elicit the desired behaviour.

In the case of Canada, though Canadian military trainers were clearly pulled out of Ukraine in February 2022 in anticipation of the Russian invasion due to safety concerns, there has also been controversy regarding whether Canadian forces trained members of

the extremist, white supremacist Azov Battalion, which has also been accused of war crimes and torture (Brewster 2022; Kuzmenko 2021). Though the Canadian government has denied training soldiers affiliated with Azov, there have been concerns expressed by Canadian media that Canadian military training resources are being channeled to human rights violators (Somos 2022). Because Canada is a medium power, military training missions such as this one receive much more media attention than they would in the United States. Thus, the Canadian government can use its concern about significant domestic political backlash from training white supremacists abroad to credibly threaten to withdraw training from Ukraine if these concerns are not addressed.[1] As of this writing, the Canadian military had resumed the training of Ukrainian forces in the UK (through Operation UNIFIER, beginning in August 2022).[2] In this new round of training there has not been significant concern expressed about there being white supremacists among the trainees. It is yet unclear whether this is because domestic pressure has led Canada to be more stringent in vetting trainees in Ukraine or whether Ukraine is considered a high salience case where the Canadian government is willing to overlook violations. As this case continues to develop, it will be a relevant one to study with regards to Canadian foreign policy priorities.

Security Assistance as Changing Preferences into Harmony

The second pathway through which foreign military training can influence the recipients is by changing the recipient's own preferences to ones that better fit those of the state providing the training. In other words, if the foreign military training itself is able to alter the way that recipients think and what they want, it will also create influence for the state providing it. This dynamic better fits the logic of the 1970 memo and its argument in favour of promoting Canadian values.

To again use a U.S. example, since the end of the Cold War the United States has emphasized principles of human rights and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in its foreign military training, ranging from advanced theoretical courses in professional military education to practical training and simulations on the field. For example, in 2014 a US Army Brigade Executive Officer noted during an interview that US Army regionally aligned forces in Guinea would train the local military through role playing exercises. For some exercises, they would have an entire village work as role players. The trainees would then have to interact with the role players in a scenario that required them to apply ethics and IHL concepts. Canada has similarly emphasized the promotion of human rights in its Military Training Cooperation Program (MTCP). The 2019 evaluation of the MTCP stated that interviewees noted the key role that topics of gender and women's rights

played in the training. As a specific example, it highlighted the case of Jordan in which MTCP training has provided more opportunities for women in the military and promoted human rights (Government of Canada 2019).

If these concepts become internalized through education and training, then influence will be exerted by changing the preferences of the recipient (having a preference for respecting human rights and following IHL) to better fit those of the state providing the training (in this example, under the assumption that the state providing the training has a preference against human rights violations around the world, all else being equal). This would be closer to the aforementioned concept of harmony.

Empirical Support for Changing Preferences

Though both mechanisms can be effective in achieving influence, the "changing preferences" mechanism can have a strong and long-lasting effectiveness, when done well. Specifically, I have studied how it is that US military training can influence respect for human rights by the security forces of the recipient country. If the pathway through which this could be done were through the explicit or implicit threat of removing something of value if the recipient did not take actions that were in US interests, then the content of the training itself should not matter; we should see an improvement in human rights regardless of the training's content. Instead, if influence is occurring by changing the preferences of the trainees by making them more conscientious regarding IHL, then it should only be training that specifically focuses on human rights that has an effect on their respect for human rights.

In my research I find support for the latter process (Martinez Machain 2019). It is only training that directly focuses on human rights that actually correlates with decreases in repression by the armed forces in the recipient country. It thus appears to be the case that at least in the realm of human rights, influence can be achieved through changing the mindset and preferences of recipients, a path closer to harmony than bargaining. If the path to achieving influence is one in which there is an implicit threat of aid loss, then it will only be effective in cases in which the major power providing the training is already in a strong bargaining position vis-à-vis the recipient. Of course, changing preferences and mindsets is a longer process that may take years to create results, whereas, when effective, the threat of removing support can have an immediate impact.

Another point to consider is that the threat to remove training is not always a credible one (and can often be perceived as cheap talk by the recipient). In past work we have found that a U.S. military deployment to a foreign state, which provides security to the host, only correlates with increased respect for human rights in hosts that are less

strategically important to the United States (Bell, Clay, and Martinez Machain 2017). The most strategically important hosts, such as those that are located close to conflicts the U.S. is involved in or to U.S. rivals, do not display improved human rights records. This is likely because they are aware of their own importance and how they would be more difficult to replace as hosts for the U.S. military, thus making them more essential and putting them in a better bargaining position.[3] Human rights are thus a lower priority concern for the United States in these states (Kiyani 2021).

These findings are not limited to the topic of human rights, which is only one aspect of U.S. foreign policy interests. The logic of creating influence through security aid by changing the recipients' preferences can be extended to other realms, such as voting alongside the U.S. in the U.N. Security Council or allowing the U.S. basing access.

Influence Beyond Human Rights

Several of the previous examples have involved the topic of human rights. To be clear, these theoretical mechanisms can explain influence in all realms, not just human rights. In fact, existing political science research shows that security concerns take priority over human rights in many liberal states' foreign policy (Kiyani 2021). Many Cold War-era examples of the US supporting human rights violators (and in the case of the School of the Americas, even providing training in torture methods), illustrate this dynamic. Beyond the issue of human rights, in my previous work I have found more evidence for interactions with the U.S. military, in various settings, leading to improved views of the United States, and in turn to behaviour more in line with U.S. preferences (Allen et. al 2020).

Political psychology's Contact Theory, developed by scholars such as Gordon W. Allport and Thomas Pettigrew, states that as individuals interact directly, share common experiences, and develop personal relationships with members of what they consider an "outgroup," they are more likely to overcome preconceived biases about them (Allport 1955; Pettigrew 1998). In particular, settings in which individuals are in peer roles and share common goals are effective at overcoming prejudice and creating affinity. This is why professional military education programs in which foreign recipients study alongside peers from the training country (such as those in which international officers study at the military colleges) can be particularly effective at creating views more favorable towards the training country and in turn leading to influence.

In my work I have found clear evidence that states can achieve influence through military-to-military interactions, such as foreign military training. Yet security assistance can also achieve influence on non-military foreign audiences through indirect pathways.[4] Though the military is of course an

instrument of hard power, military scholar Carol Atkinson has also coined the term "military soft power," making a reference to Joseph Nye's concept of soft power, which again involves changing another actor's preferences to be in line of one's one, as opposed to coercing them to change their behaviour (Atkinson 2014; Nye 1990). Of course, military soft power can also have negative externalities, such as Sharan Grewal's finding in Tunisia that US military training also correlates with more political attitudes among trainees (Grewal 2022). As noted by Savage and Caverley, this type of dynamic can even lead to an increased risk of coup initiation by foreign-educated officers (Savage and Caverley 2017).

Much of my existing work has focused on how contact between service members deployed abroad and host country civilians can affect the populations' perceptions of, and support for, the U.S. military presence in their country. Specifically, it finds that contact (in the form of personal relationships, casual everyday interactions, planned outreach, etc.) can increase both positive and negative assessments of the U.S. military, depending on the nature of contact. Thus, while the military is not a substitute for the diplomatic corps, it is important to be aware of the fact that every time service-members interact with host country populations there is the possibility of creating influence through a form of public diplomacy, while there is simultaneously a possibility for harming perceptions of the deploying country through negative interactions (such as crime, as has happened with gender-based crime instances by US service members in Okinawa). A key point to stress is that Canada does not have to maintain as broad of a basing network abroad as the United States. Canadian deployments are much smaller, usually part of a multinational effort, and much more likely to interact with the military than with civilians. Yet, as a country that deploys its troops abroad Canada should also be conscious of these dynamics. In fact, without the baggage of being perceived as an imperialist power as the United States does, Canadian forces may find themselves in an even more favorable position to build goodwill abroad in instances where they interact with civilian communities.

Regardless of the way in which security assistance is used to achieve influence, one important aspect in making it lasting and effective is that there must be follow-up from the training country to every action. For example, with regards to the effect of foreign military training on repression by the recipient state's armed forces, I found that this effect only occurs in cases in which there is continued monitoring and pressure by the training state. One example of this would be the case of the U.S. military actively working with the Colombian military to decrease their human rights violations during the Plan Colombia years (though it should be noted that some of the abusive behavior was

switched over to paramilitary forces instead). Recent and important work by Renanah Miles Joyce finds that when existing defense institutions are not developed at the same rate that foreign military trainees receive education, the influence of liberal norms is weakened when it comes into conflict with norms of cohesion. Thus, human rights training without institutional follow-up will not have the intended effect on respect for human rights by the military trainees (Miles Joyce 2022).

In the case of improving relations between host country communities and deployed U.S. military personnel, openness and communication between the military facility and neighboring communities was one of the key determinants in improving relations and addressing potential grievances. As noted by Jeffery, if Canada is to reap the benefits of building influence through foreign military training, it must also be willing to commit for the long term to its relationship with the partner country and avoid shortcuts (Jeffery 2013).

Endnotes

[1] I thank an anonymous reviewer for making this point.

[2] For more information, https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-unifier.html

[3] In addition, in some cases the U.S. may even have a preference for their allies to engage in human rights violations and repression when it is in the U.S.'s interest to maintain the regime in power. For more information, see Stravers, Andrew, and Dana El Kurd. "Strategic autocracy: American military forces and regime type." Journal of Global Security Studies 5, no. 3 (2020): 427-442 for a more extensive discussion of this dynamic.

[4] The more direct pathway through which military aid and training can influence civilian populations is through defence institution building. For an extensive discussion of defence institution building by the U.S. in Africa, see McNerney, Michael J., Stuart E. Johnson, Stephanie Pezard, David Stebbins, Renanah Miles, Angela O'Mahony, Chaoling Feng, and Tim Oliver. Defense institution building in Africa: an assessment. RAND Corporation National Defense Research Institute Santa Monica United States, 2016.

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(4/4) The Effects of Foreign Military Training on Civil-Military Relations

Dr. Jesse Dillon Savage

Introduction

Foreign military training and security assistance are important tools in the kit of states around the world. Many states, from great powers, to medium and smaller countries have attempted to use military training as a means of increasing their influence, improving the capacity of the recipients , and promoting certain norms such a respect for democracy, human rights, and civilian control(Atkinson 2006; Biddle 2017; McManus and Nieman 2019; Martinez Machain 2021). The recipients accept and respond to foreign military training and security assistance with similarly complex motivations (Biddle 2017; Biddle, Macdonald, and Baker 2018; Matisek and Reno 2019; Scharpf 2020). The question then is how successful are these efforts in

achieving their goals for either the providing or recipient state?

Anecdotally and empirically the results are very mixed. Recent salient examples highlight the variation at play. The failure of the Afghan National Army despite billions being invested in it by NATO may demonstrate some real limits. However, the ability of security assistance and training to complement Ukrainian efforts at military reform highlights that there are prospects for success in terms of promoting military effectiveness. These two cases highlight the complexity involved in determining causal relationships and understanding what policies might lead to success or not. These two recipient militaries had very different histories and trajectories, faced differing threat environments, and operated in different political contexts. From both an academic and policy perspective, disentangling these potentially complex interactions is an essential yet daunting task.

From the perspective of promoting liberal norms and improving civil-military relations, the effects are not always clearly positive either. In 1966, the Canadian trained Ghanaian military overthrew Kwame Nkrumah. The leaders of the 2009 Honduran coup, for example, were trained through the US International Military Education and Training (IMET) program. An American-trained officer led the March 2012 coup in Mali. Egypt's military, one of the largest recipients of US training, deposed that country's democratically elected president in 2013. More recent coups in west Africa were conducted by foreign trained officers as well. However, these observations are anecdotal.

However, systematic studies also fail to shed much light on the matter as well. The effects of foreign military training, if any exist, are likely to be heterogenous. That is, the effects of foreign military training will change conditional on other variables. Various factors such as donor identity, local institutions and beliefs, and types of security threat could all play important roles in shaping how security assistance is received and what effects training might have. Academics and policy-makers expecting standard outcomes across recipient countries as a result of such interventions are likely to be disappointed.

This paper will address one aspect of foreign military training and its effect on civil-military relations. It will argue that the academic literature on professionalization while limited in its empirical scope, has long been aware that professionalism of a military, especially in a developing country, can pose potential risks to civilian control . Changing norms, building networks, and enhancing the power of the military can all cause tension between civilian elites and its armed forces. And if these newly developed norms and practices do not accord with existing institutional structures, and the balance of power between the military and civilians is

upset due to increased professionalism or other mechanisms associated with education and training, then a significant breakdown within a state is possible. This is not to deny the potential positive outcomes that might result from foreign military training, but is something that needs to be considered by policy-makers.

Training, Professionalism, and Civil-Military Relations

The interaction between civilians and the military is what determines the quality of civil-military relations. And the propensity and capacity of the military to intervene in state affairs are key variables determining how this relationship unfolds. As propensity to intervene in political life decreases or increases, so will the military intervention into politics decrease or increase. Similarly, as capacity to intervene increases or decreases so too does intervention, as the expected payoff increases as capacity to succeed does (Powell 2012). The question is to understand how foreign military training might influence the propensity and capacity to intervene.

Propensity in this case refers to the perceived benefits of intervening in civilian politics for a military. These could be both material and normative. As the material benefit, relative to the alternative,[1] goes up, intervention should too. Similarly, as normative constraints are loosened or if there is a perceived normative imperative to intervene, then intervention should also become more likely. The opposite of course is also true, as normative constraints increase the propensity to intervene will drop. Capacity refers to the ability to successfully stage a coup. All else being equal, increased capacity should increase the probability of a successful coup. Increased ability to successfully stage a coup increases the payoffs of staging one. The reverse then is also true.[2]

These two factors are treated as distinct for analytical purposes, though in practice this may not be the case. For example, Quinliven (1999) suggests this might not always be the case. Instead, increased capacity might lead to officers better understanding the risks involved and hence will be less likely to stage a coup. In this case, increased capacity may have changed propensity. Similarly, normative transfer regarding organizational cohesion and outlook could well have effects on both capacity and propensity.

How might training and education and the resulting increased professionalism influence propensity and capacity to intervene in politics? In this case, following Brooks *et al* (2021), I adopt a broad understanding of professionalism. Professionalism in this case is not just the military as a profession, or the skills of soldiers and officers, but also the broader ethos, identity and sets of norms that are developed. There is an attractive story often told regarding military professionalism.[3] This Huntingtonian (Huntington 1981) narrative is that professionalism encourages

civilian control. By emphasizing the specialized role and skill that the military possesses, training that reinforces particular roles and identities and education encourages military actors to stay out of politics. In this case, education and specialized training focuses officers on the fact that becoming involved in politics beyond their remit may undermine the core goals of the military, reducing its effectiveness, and threatening its core mission.

There are some potential problems with this causal story. First, it focuses on only one parameter in the model. It draws our attention to propensity to intervene while ignoring capacity. In doing so, it, at a minimum, overstates the effects of training or education in a positive direction unless the effects of such training on capacity are zero. If training and education also have an effect on increasing capacity, then we need to determine if they reduce propensity by a sufficient amount to counteract this increased capacity.[4]

While there is little empirical research on the issue, that which does exist points in a troubling direction. For example, Böhmelt et al show that the presence of military academies are correlated with increased coup propensity (Böhmelt, Escribà-Folch, and Pilster 2019). In particular, they suggest military academies foster relationships between officers, helping them solve collective action problems, which then allows them to conduct coups more successfully.

Perhaps an even more profound problem is that it is not always clear that increased professionalism has obvious effects on the propensity part of the equation either. Using survey data of US academy cadets, Brooks et al (2021) demonstrate that a not insignificant minority of cadets, in an environment where normative transmission should be intense, retain politically motivated reasoning. In the US context, this may be troubling but manageable issue, but is likely to be more problematic in other countries with weak governance.

The implications of professionalism on the military's outlook is not always obvious. In a situation of strong, stable, democratic institutions, it is very possible that professionalism has the effects described by Huntington. The military is focused on an external threat, and sees its role as specialists to counter this threat. This may keep them out of politics to a greater extent, or at least conceive of their actions as apolitical.

However, where institutions are weak, rulers potentially corrupt, and where the military is focused on domestic threats increasing professionalism may have different results (Nordlinger 1977). In such a context, increasing the power of military by increasing their professionalism can have dramatic consequences for the relationship between civilians and the military. In this context, it

may not always be clear to the military what that their duties are and if their organizational interests are best served by staying outside of politics.

Foreign Military Training and Civil-Military Relations

The academic findings regarding how foreign military training influences civil-military relations maps onto the ambiguous findings of the literature on professionalism in general. Different studies find different results depending on how they measure training and how they set up their hypotheses.

Early empirical work often showed that foreign military training undermined civil-military relations. While lacking some sophistication on the empirical side, one interesting study in this line of thought was Rowe (1974). Indeed, his theory suggests a path forward. Unlike a lot of studies, Rowe hypothesised that the effects would differ based on regime type. In civilian regimes, strengthening the military and not strengthening civilian institutions , can lead to greater military intervention. In contrast, in military regimes, strengthening the military reinforced their control. This means that in some cases, coups increased and in others not. Though overall civil-military relations were not improved in either case.

More recent research suggested a more positive outcome associated with foreign military training (Atkinson 2006; Ruby and Gibler 2010). These works have tended to focus on the propensity mechanism. By engaging with foreign military officers or being educated abroad, officers imbibe norms. These norms then act as a constraint on their willingness to intervene in politics. In these studies, they observed either a decrease in the probability of coup or an increase in democratization.

In contrast, in research with Jonathan Caverley (Savage and Caverley 2017), I showed an association between the US International Military and Education Training (IMET) Program and an increase in coup propensity. We hypothesise that the mechanisms that connect training and coup propensity are due to an increase in human and social capital of those receiving training. We define these broadly. Human capital includes skill and knowledge. Social capital includes shared identities and networks. We argue that an increase in human capital has potentially negative ramifications because it increases the power of the military without providing many offsetting benefits to the ruling coalition. This then triggers three mechanisms that increase the probability of a coup by increasing both propensity and capability.

First, training and education can improve the capabilities and skills of officers or soldiers. Training could increase the recipients ability to develop plans and execute them, and this may translate to an increased ability to plan

and execute a coup. By increasing the probability of success, training makes coups more likely, all else being equal, as the payoffs are greater in expectation. In other words, training increases the capability which increases the willingness to intervene because the prospects of success are higher and hence expected payoffs greater. Propensity to stage a coup can still act as a constraint on whether or not it happens, but at the margins, a coup is more likely.

Second, we argue that training may help recipients of training and foreign education overcome collective action problems by increasing their human and social capital. The ability to overcome coordination problems among members of the military has been shown to be a key variable explaining coup success (Singh 2014; Little 2017). We build off this work. Militaries can often be factionalized, and these factions can have different opinions over whether to support or topple a government .[5] However, they all prefer to avoid fratricidal violence within the military and a potential descent into a civil war (Singh 2014).[6] This means that a coup will have a higher chance of success if these factions end up coordinating on the choice to stage a coup and will not occur in cases where they collectively decide to stay loyal. Singh then goes on to argue that if the pro-coup factions can successfully "make a fact", the anti-coup factions will go along. That is, if coup plotters can convince others they will stage a coup and be successful, this will draw others along in their wake. We argued that one potential effect of foreign military training and education is to make a fact for potential coup plotters. Not all recipients will want to stage a coup, but if they do training will facilitate this. We provide the example of Amadou Sanogo, who staged a successful coup in Mali in 2012 and who flaunted a US marine badge he received during training to call attention to his international experience (Whitehouse 2012).

Social capital as a fact making process highlights some of the complexities of understanding the effect of foreign military training on civil-military relations. Because the strategic interactions depend on the beliefs and perceptions of the various actors involved, the effects of training can be difficult to determine. In other words, training does not need to change norms or even capabilities to alter the quality of civil-military relations, it may simply change beliefs regarding others' norms and capabilities and this could change the equilibrium outcome.

The social capital mechanism could also work more directly. Similar to the findings of B**o**hmelt et al (2019), we argue foreign military training can solve collective action problems by fostering trust and building networks amongst trainees or between trainees and other members of the military. Furthermore, officers who have received foreign military training are often placed in

positions of influence. This then increases the capacity of the military to stage a coup.

Finally, we argue that the increased standing of these officers both internationally and domestically could have the effect of increasing propensity. If foreign-trained officers see themselves as having a higher standing in the international community than their civilian counterparts, they might think they have more leeway to intervene in their own domestic politics while avoiding punishment from the international community. If their international connections make officers believe the potential costs of coups are lower, their propensity to intervene will be increased.

However, these findings themselves are limited. In an excellent study, McLauchlin et al (McLauchlin, Seymour, and Martel 2022) collected data on a larger range of training programs. And while they replicated the main finding of Savage and Caverley (2017), they also demonstrated that the association between increased probability of a coup and foreign training was only found with the IMET program. This hints that there might be something particular about that program, either its content or nature or how states are selected to receive training through this program that leads to these outcomes and foreign training in general might have different results.

What Should Policy Makers Consider?

The disparity amongst all these findings demonstrates the difficulties of relying solely on macro, observational studies for inferences about how foreign military training and education programs influence civil-military relations. While they can be a useful guide in some cases, it is necessary to be discerning. Programs may have different emphases, they may be subject to different forms of selection , and hence it is hard to draw clear inferences. These difficulties in discerning clear causal effects or the presence of unexpected outcomes does not mean that foreign military training should not be a tool of states, but it does imply that policy makers should be cautious in its application and not expect uniform results.

Second, without data that speaks to particular causal mechanisms, it may be hard to know what the correct policy conclusions might be. Mechanisms are crucial for understanding any causal relationship, and in particular knowing what policy solutions to pursue. For example, and linked to the broader literature on how normative effects might be ambiguous in some contexts, Miles Joyce (Joyce 2022) demonstrates using micro level data that when foreign-trained officers face competing normative demands, this can undermine civil-military relations despite them having absorbed liberal norms. The competing imperatives of liberal respect for human rights and deference to civilian command leads to these officers being more inclined to

ignore both and favour their organizational interests. If similar outcomes were to be examined at the purely macro-level, the complexity of the causal story and the potential policy solutions could be missed. Instead, what Miles Joyce cleverly demonstrates is that norms transmission can occur even if they do not produce the expected behaviour.

In a fascinating study, Sharan Grewal (2022) has also demonstrated some factors that highlight the complexity of understanding how norms are transferred from one military to another. Grewal shows in a survey of Tunisian officers that those trained in the US compared to France are more political. While both the French and US militaries are broadly "apolitical", everyday practice differs across these two states, and these differences appear to matter when foreign-trained officers express their opinions about appropriate behaviour. This implies that policy-makers may need to consider more than just the content of training and also take into account broader political cultures.

These two innovative studies demonstrate that foreign training or education can have a positive effect on the normative outlook of recipients. This is good news for those policy makers who see this as one of their objectives. However, this good news is tempered by the complexities of what norms are transferred and how they interact with the domestic political context.

In more recent research, Savage and Scharpf (2022) probe a mechanism directly related to the content of foreign military training and education courses. Building off the existing civil-military relations literature, we argue that foreign training in counterinsurgency warfare is more likely to lead to increased politicisation of the military, while conventional training will improve civil-military relations. This is because counterinsurgency training focuses the attention of officers on domestic threats that could potentially be solved with domestic solutions and nation-building efforts, including 'civic-action' programs led by the military in the recipient state. Empirically, we find support for our hypotheses. In a good news, bad news way, training can both improve or worsen civil-military relations depending on the content provided.[7] This demonstrates that effects on propensity can be unexpected, but consistent with what we know of civil-military relations.

In other work, Caverley and Savage (2022) probe the social capital mechanism. Using a survey experiment in Armenia, we find little evidence that foreign trained officers are viewed more positively than those with domestic experience alone, in fact, compared to officers with only domestic training and education, foreign-trained officers are viewed more negatively in this experimental setting (while still being more popular than candidates for office with no military experience at all). These effects hold whether

the donor country was Russia, the United States or France. This shows that if social capital is having an effect, its effects, at least in Armenia, are occurring within the military or amongst elites. International training is not increasing the favourability with which foreign trained soldiers are perceived by the general population, it is reducing their favourability.

These studies point to the difficulty understanding the effects, if any, of foreign military training on civil-military relations. It also points to the difficulty of drawing straightforward conclusions from micro-mechanisms to macro-outcomes. Officers who receive foreign military training and education may imbibe norms, but these liberal norms might not always lead to greater civilian control, particularly when civilian leaders are demanding actions that compete with these norms. Similarly, increasing professionalism and organizational cohesion in the military in a developing country might not have the same positive effects that they have in consolidated democracies. If increased professionalism attributable to foreign military training and education reduces obstacles to collective action and increases military power relative to civilians it may drive intervention, even if other aspects of training reduce propensity. In other words, policy-makers from the provider and recipient states should be aware that training potentially has competing mechanisms that then interact with the local context.

One other implication is to think carefully about how these effects might manifest. This is in line with the research of Savage and Scharpf (2022). Much research has focused on easy to observe outcomes such as democratization and coups. However, everyday civil-military relations can be poor or improve without such extreme manifestations. Instead, what is worth thinking about is how militarization of politics might occur at a lower level or in more mundane ways such as officers taking on political roles or wielding informal influence over policy outside of their domain of expertise. This changes civil-military relations in important ways, but has perhaps drawn less attention.

Finally, and this is hardly a novel suggestion, important attention needs to paid to the political context in the country receiving the training.[8] Our theoretical understanding of how foreign military training and education is going to work on either propensity or capacity, in both a positive and negative way, to intervene will very often be all else equal. In the real world, things are rarely or never all else equal. In other words, policy-makers must consider the interaction effects and other variables in play. This is likely to be especially true for states like Canada. Such states make important contributions but may lack the political leverage of larger states and great powers.

Endnotes

[1] It is important to note that causality is counterfactual and actors will compare their payoffs to possible outcomes from actions not just the status quo.

[2] (Quinlivan 1999 suggests this might not always be the case. Instead, increased capacity might lead to officers better understanding the risks involved and hence not staging a coup.)

[3] For a more detailed discussion about how training influences civil-military relations in the context of weak institutions see (Savage 2021).

[4] This all setting aside the fact that even defining what is and is not an apolitical action from the military can be incredibly difficult (R. Brooks 2020).

[5] That is to say, different propensity to stage a coup.

[6] Singh develops this assumption from hundreds of interviews with members of the Ghanaian military. We borrow this as a theoretical assumption, but it could well be a variable that takes on different values depending on the context.

[7] Importantly, we focus on doctrinal beliefs, norms and ideas that the military in recipient states are likely most receptive to.

[8] See for example Matisek and Reno 2019.

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