PROPHESY OR PIE IN THE SKY?
CANADIAN FORCES TRANSFORMATION VS THE FUTURE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

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The recent Canadian Defence Policy Statement outlines a range of defense structures and capabilities aimed at transforming the Canadian Forces (CF) and making them more relevant, responsive and effective in the years ahead. Behind the leadership of General Rick Hillier, the Canadian Forces are in the midst of the most energetic and focused transformation ever and once complete, few elements of the Canadian Forces, whether operational, institutional or administrative, will be left untouched. Will these transformation initiatives be prophetic, delivering what is needed for future operations or simply a big Pie in the Sky, delivering a CF that looks different from the outside but is really not more capable? This essay will answer this question by examining the key factors that should drive the transformation such as the expected future roles, missions and tasks of the Canadian Forces and the future operating environment. It will conclude that despite a few shortcomings, General Hillier’s plan is on the mark and will predispose the Canadian Forces to be a much more relevant, responsive and effective element of national power.
PROPHECY OR PIE IN THE SKY? CANADIAN FORCES TRANSFORMATION VS
THE FUTURE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

Ninety-nine percent of the transformation in Western militaries has been focused on the high intensity fight...focused on the three-week rush from Kuwait to Baghdad, and nothing in that transformation effort has been focused on the three-year high intensity operations across the spectrum since then.

- General Rick Hillier
Chief of Defence Staff
Canadian Forces
22 July 2005

General Rick Hillier took office as Chief of Defence Staff of the Canadian Forces on 4 February 2005 with one goal in mind; he wanted to transform the Canadian Forces (CF) from a force with a ‘default setting’ on the Cold War into a fully integrated force capable to meet the challenges offered by the post 9/11 security environment. Avoiding the traps that big organizations normally fall into when trying to transform, he quickly went about setting and communicating his vision, creating a coalition with his senior leadership, creating special teams to study and implement the required transformation initiatives, and setting tight deadlines to ensure a sense of urgency. As a result, the CF are in the midst of the most energetic and focused transformation ever. If all the proposed changes come to fruition, few elements of the CF, whether operational, institutional or bureaucratic, will be left untouched.

This transformation initiative comes on the heels of Canada’s first-ever National Security Policy released in April 2004 as well as the publication of the Canadian Foreign Policy and Defence Policy Statements in May 2005. These documents are important drivers behind this transformation for three main reasons. First, as described by Dr Elinor Sloan of Carleton University, for the CF, they marked the “appropriate change in emphasis from primarily overseas-orientation of previous defence policy statements, to a greater focus on the defence of Canada and North America.” Second, to paraphrase Canada’s Foreign Affairs Minister responsible for the development of this foreign policy, they describe Canada’s vision as a country engaged internationally. From a more critical viewpoint and as explained by Dr Bercuson, the Director of the Center for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary, these combined Foreign and Defence policy statements are designed to set Canada “back on the course to regaining international influence.” As a modern and outward looking nation, Canada fully recognizes that in the post-9/11 world, its own security and prosperity depend on a secure global environment and that it must play a role in making it so. Third, the National Security Policy testifies to Canada’s commitment to use its military as well as its police
forces offshore to help restore and secure the peace, order and good government in failed or failing states.\textsuperscript{12}

This reemphasizing of Canada’s responsibility to contribute to continental and global security comes at a time when in many circles, whether founded or not, Canada is perceived as a country not capable or willing of contributing much to either.\textsuperscript{13} For Christopher Sands from the Center for Strategic and International Studies, this current perception, especially south of the border, is linked to Canada’s unwillingness to support the U.S. on Iraq in 2003 and more recently on Canada’s refusal to participate in the American’s Ballistic Missile Defence project. He argues that those two events have led Canada to be “reassessed by many U.S. officials... as an ally similar to the Netherlands.”\textsuperscript{14} To him that means that the U.S. now views Canada as a country that is “wealthy, talented, generally friendly, but a small contributor to the international order.”\textsuperscript{15} It is therefore not surprising that Canada now sees the transformation of its armed forces as key to achieving its national objectives and especially, to regaining some of its prestige internationally. According to defence analyst Stephen Thorne, there is a kind of consensus emerging amongst politicians and bureaucrats in Ottawa on the need to transform the CF into a “rapidly deployable, expeditionary force that is light weight, highly mobile and self-contained.”\textsuperscript{16} Consequently, the Canadian government has committed itself to the largest increase on defence spending in the last 20 years \textsuperscript{17} and has picked General Hillier, who was known to be a strong advocate of transformation, to be its Chief of Defence Staff.\textsuperscript{18}

For General Hillier, transforming the CF really means developing a force that can deal effectively with domestic contingencies and requirements while still being capable of selectively committing forces to international operations in such a way as to ensure a strong Canadian voice is heard on the international stage.\textsuperscript{19} For domestic contingencies, he wants a force able to contribute more when it comes to ensuring the protection of Canadians, especially with respect to the monitoring and protecting of avenues of approaches and collaboration with other government departments on consequence management related to natural disasters or terrorist attacks involving chemical or biological agents. For international operations, he wants a more effective, relevant and responsive CF better able of reinforcing Canada’s diplomatic and developmental efforts abroad. More specifically, as he stated in one of his commander’s guidance:

The Canadian Forces will become more effective by better integrating maritime, land, air and special operations forces. It will become more relevant,... by adapting its capabilities and force structure to deal with threats that arise from international instability, especially in fragile states. It will become more responsive by enhancing its ability to act quickly in the event of crises.\textsuperscript{20}
His transformation campaign plan calls for four distinct lines of operations. First, there is a need to review the Canadian Forces’ current command and control arrangement at the strategic and operational levels. Second, Force Development and Force Generation models must be integrated to meet the operational needs of the new defence policy and Canadian Forces’ vision. In particular, with this line of operation, he wants to remedy the acquisition process which senior leadership realizes is currently incapable of joint or general-purpose approach to the acquisition of major pieces of equipment or capability. Third, there is a need to take a critical look at the Canadian Forces’ current operational construct. Fourth, this transformation initiative must take a ‘Whole of Defence’ approach.22

Will these transformation initiatives be prophetic, delivering what is needed for future operations or simply a big Pie in the Sky, delivering a CF that looks different from the outside but is really not more capable (i.e. not more effective, relevant and responsive) than it currently is on the inside? This is the question this essay will answer. It will do this by focusing primarily on the operational construct proposed by General Hillier and his team and by identifying the gaps, if any, between the combat capabilities to be provided by the transformed CF and those required of the future security environment.

II – What will the Transformed CF Physically Look Like?

What is General Hillier’s vision for a CF that needs to be more effective, relevant, responsive and better able of reinforcing Canada’s diplomatic and developmental efforts abroad? As a first step, he sees the CF command and control structure reorganized into fully integrated and unified operational commands not unlike, as described by Dr Jack Granatstein, Chair of the Advisory Council of the Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, the U.S. forces.23 Domestically there will be Canada Command (Canada COM) whose responsibility, very much like the U.S. Northern Command, will be to defend Canada and North America.24 With a domestic unified command structured mirrored on the US Northern Command, Canada wants to eventually achieve a level of Canadian/U.S. cooperation on land and maritime-based threats similar to what currently exist between these two countries for aerial threats under NORAD agreements25 and which will remain unaffected by the transformation.26 For operations outside the continent of North America, Canada will create a mini-version of a U.S. regional combatant command in the form of the Canadian Expeditionary Force Command (CEFCOM). Commander CEFCOM will therefore have operational command of all the maritime, land and air force assets necessary to conduct humanitarian, peace support or combat operations internationally.27 A Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM) will also be
stood up with the mandate for conducting special operations both domestically and internationally. Finally, the transformed forces will also be much more integrated than before. In place of the current separate maritime, land and air headquarters spread across the country, a smaller number of joint force headquarters that integrate all three services will be created. Because most domestic operations involving the CF are regional in nature, this will make reaction as well as command and control of such operations much faster and easier.

The forces from the air, land and sea components of the CF to be employed by all of these unified command commanders will be grouped under four specific operational groupings or task forces based on mission, readiness or capability. The first of these is the Standing Contingency Task Force (SCTF). This SCTF will be established to respond rapidly to an emerging crisis internationally. As described in the recent Defence Policy Statement, this high-readiness task force made up of designated maritime, land, air and special operations elements all organized under a single integrated combat command structure will be capable of deploying within 10 days' notice. It's mandate will be to provide an initial CF presence to work with security partners to stabilize a given situation or crisis and to facilitate the deployment of larger, follow-on forces should circumstances warrant. As currently envisioned, this high readiness task force will be sea-based (or at a minimum its equipment will be sea-based), self-contained, and have and established strength of 2800 CF personnel of which 500 to 600 would be a land force element. It will also be relatively light and capable of conducting operations in the littoral regions of the world. A key characteristic of the SCTF is that it will also provide a land or sea-based command element capable of leading a brigade-size multinational contingent for a period of up to six months. The aim is that it would be capable of deploying on operations for up to six months before it needs to hand over its operations to a follow on force from Canada or elsewhere and come back home to regenerate. This would provide Canada with a critically important ‘first-in’ capability that few nations possess.

The second group of forces available for domestic or overseas missions will be those of the Special Operations Group (SOG). The SOG will be based on the current counter-terrorism unit, a dedicated aviation squadron, a nuclear, biological and chemical decontamination company as well as an additional special operations unit to be stood up in 2006. This latter unit, called the Joint Action Task Force, will be based on a light infantry building block, optimized for operations in complex terrain and complex environments and capable of supporting Canadian or allied special operations forces. The main mission of these SOG forces will be to respond to terrorism threats within and outside Canada. Again this force will continually be at high readiness and be capable of working alone or with other Joint force structures.
The third type of force grouping to be employed by the Commander CEFCOM or Commander Canada COM are the Mission Specific Task Forces (MSTF). Again, as described in the Canadian Defence Policy statement, the concept is that these task forces will be deployed on a ‘as required’ basis. Drawn from forces maintained at different states of readiness, they will be structured for longer deployments, tailored for the specific theatre or mission, and capable of carrying out combat and peace support operations. They will be made up of maritime, land, air and special operations elements, and could be deployed as follow-on forces to the special operations forces, the SCTF or as stand-alone contributions to other operations.\(^{35}\) Ordinarily, these task forces will consist of 700 to 1200 CF members and they will be stood up for six months according to a synchronized, managed readiness plan. Each will contain a headquarters, and at a minimum, three sub-units (company size elements). As explained by the current Chief of Land Staff, “depending on the mission, a MSTF will be built using the best mix of command, sub-units and other capabilities… and with whatever support the army gets from air and maritime forces.”\(^{36}\) It is expected that the CF can sustain indefinitely four of these MSTFs per year as well as generating an additional one on a one-time basis for an unforeseen requirement like the Rwanda genocide crisis of 1994.\(^{37}\) Again the standard period of deployment for this surge capacity would be for six months. It is hoped that this initial six-month period would allow the international community to generate whatever follow-on forces will be required.

Finally, the Commander CEFCOM will also have available the Disaster Assistance Response Team or more commonly known as the DART. This unit is capable of providing basic medical care and taking measures to prevent the spread of disease. It is capable of providing safe drinking water, repairing infrastructure, fixing power and water supplies, building roads and bridges, and setting up refugee camps.\(^{38}\) This capability, which already exists within the CF, will continue to provide humanitarian support and disaster relief to overseas missions, as it did during the Tsunami of 2004 or the recent earthquake in Pakistan. Key to its success is having the capability to deploy quickly following a major disaster.

From a capability stand point, several new capabilities will be added to address some of General Hillier’s concerns about the changing nature of warfare experienced by coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as the increased focus on defending the North American continent against the new threat. One of these is the requirement, as identified during Canada’s recent experience in Afghanistan, strategic and in-theatre airlift as well as the ability to observe over the horizon.\(^{39}\) In response, plans are on the books for the Air Force to acquire a strategic lift capacity, medium lift helicopters\(^{40}\) as well as a satellite-guided air-to-ground weapons.
The air force will also acquire unmanned aerial vehicles as well as pursue the use of satellites to support domestic and international operations. The Navy for its part has plans to acquire joint support ships for sealift, replenishment and offshore command and control as well as an amphibious ship capable of transporting onboard the land component of the SCTF.

As for the land forces, they have been at the forefront of this Canadian Forces' transformation for the past few years. Specifically, their initiatives as well as their recent Force Employment Concept all aim at delivering combat forces that can achieve success in operations across the spectrum. As explained by Lieutenant-General Caron, Chief of the Land Staff, “the vision of the CDS for Canada’s future military clearly validates the process of Army Transformation that is now well under way.” In fact, as early as 2002 the Army had a roadmap to achieve greater strategic relevance in the form of a forward-looking strategy document. In this document the Army recognized that while retaining its capacity to undertake combat missions was still valid, it needed to become more agile, lethal and survivable. In achieving this goal, the Army was going to veer away from heavy forces to focus on medium weight forces that would use leading edge technologies, realistic training, task tailoring and a command centric approach to operations to achieve tactical decisiveness on the battlefield. In particular, this resulted in the decision to get rid of the tank in favor of a new concept of direct fire capability which calls for the regrouping of all mounted anti-armour capabilities on a wheel chassis and under one unit. The Land Forces will also greatly enhance the capability of its light forces by providing them with improved communications, mobility, firepower and support capabilities so that they can, as mentioned earlier, be better integrated with the Special Forces or more effectively contribute to the SCTF or MSTF. In particular, these light forces will be optimized for complex terrain and strategically deployable by air, sea and land while still being tactically mobile within the operational theatre by either tactical air, aviation assets or by integral wheeled vehicles or by foot. Canada’s Army will also modernize its indirect fire capability by acquiring digitized guns and precision munitions. To quote the Director General Land Capability Development, “the Army will seek greater speed and mobility for the guns, the so-called ‘shoot and scoot’ capability.” Finally, the CF are seriously working on the concept of Networked-Enabled Operations (NEOps), a more human friendly version of the American concept of Network Centric Warfare (NCW). Although this venture is not without risk or challenges, Canada’s approach to developing human as well as technological networks appears promising for the future to increase real-time situational awareness, better synchronization of activities, a faster decision cycle as well as increased lethality, survivability and responsiveness.
III – What are the Expected Future Roles and Missions for the CF?

The real measure of success of Canadian Forces’ transformation initiatives will lie in how well the new force posture resulting from these initiatives better predisposes the CF to effectively accomplish the assigned and implied future missions and tasks in the future security environment. In this process, the impact of the security environment cannot be overstated. Conflict will continue to exist and it will continue to be chaotic, unpredictable and bloody. As Major-General Abigail of the Australian Armed forces explains, “the notion of clinical, antiseptic conflicts driven by all-powerful technologies is a fantasy.”

When it comes to predicting the future security environment it is often more a guessing game than a science. Although there are no safe bets on what the future holds, there are a number of trends that have emerged and on which there is some agreement. From these, Canada’s strategic assessment is that the nature of the threat has changed and that the probabilities of an inter-state war between great powers remain unlikely. As a corollary, it evaluates that the greatest contemporary threats to Canadians and to global peace reside in the large numbers of fragile and poorly governed states. Other futurists like Thomas Barnett agree. He has concluded that most of the future conflicts in which our forces will have to get involved will arise in the developing or non-functioning part of the world and will mostly take the form of civil wars, revolutionary insurgencies and/or internal rebellion. Western armies, including Canada’s, will get involved in these conflicts for many diverse reasons, however it has been advanced that the “main impulse is likely to come from the ‘moral imperative’” to do so. In many of these conflicts, the ensuing violence will be anything but conventional. As explained by Colonel Hammes of the U.S. Marines, in this type of warfare (which he calls Fourth Generation Warfare), the enemy forces, mostly insurgents, revolutionaries and terrorists will not attempt to win by defeating one’s military forces but rather by indirectly attacking one country’s political will through unconventional methods. It has also been stipulated that this type of asymmetric warfare will see the adversary avoid direct engagements while focusing often on non-military targets and that operations will increasingly take place in urban areas and therefore increasingly involve closer contact between our soldiers and the civilian populations. Therefore, whilst it is impossible to assume with perfect certainty what the future security will look like, if the trends described above are even remotely accurate, future warfare won’t be that much different from what can be seen today in Afghanistan and Iraq. So if done right, CF transformation could be beneficial not only to address the immediate shortcomings as identified by General Hillier in the opening quote but also for the mid and long term.
A recent RAND study on possible alternative futures seems to agree with the above assessments on the importance of increased number of failed and failing states, on the growing influence of non-state actors, and the prominence of identity-based conflict. Of their six possible 2025 scenarios, two involved failed or failing states. In fact the one considered the ‘worst-case’ world was the one where possibly some of the several dozen of weak states might regress into the failed or collapsed category. In this scenario, the *Chaos/Anarchy* world, the nation-state will have broken down in many regions of the world and warlords, radical religious fundamentalists, and guerrilla groups will have assumed political leadership. In this world, proliferation of WMD, especially chemical and biological weaponry, is increasing because of the porosity of borders. In the second scenario, the *Transnational Web* world, the traditional nation-state will have lost substantial amounts of power to transnational actors. In this world, transnational actors such as multinational corporations, transnational criminal organizations and terrorists networks will use the Internet to coordinate their actions more rapidly than national government bureaucracy and thus cause major security issues. It is important to note that these future conflicts as described by RAND are not unlike those in the previously discussed *Fourth Generation Warfare* of Colonel Hammes.

What does this future environment mean for Canada’s military forces and especially the Canadian land forces? For Colonel Hammes, the key to success in *Fourth Generation Warfare* will be the ability to operate as an interagency network. As history as shown, defeating counterinsurgencies requires a whole of government, networked approach. Others have argued that to be effective in these future circumstances, armed intervention will increasingly demand coalition, either traditional alliances, ad hoc or regional ones, rather than unilateral military action. This is especially the case for a small country like Canada which may not have all the required capabilities to act on its own like the ability to establish and maintain air superiority, combat service support logistics or troops to cover huge cities like Baghdad or Kabul. Trends also indicate the growing importance of light, more mobile forces as well as an increased need for Special Forces and the capability to operate effectively in urban areas. Canadian concept developers have also argued that the highly uncertain and fluid battleground of the future will require more than ever timely intelligence and sensing capabilities. Lessons learned in Iraq have proven that hypothesis to be amongst the truest of them all, especially the requirement for a robust Human Intelligence (HUMINT) capability. Finally there is also common agreement that the future environment will require combat units that are more capable, lighter, leaner and more lethal.
What about the missions specifically assigned to the CF? Do they dictate any other type of capabilities for the transformed CF? As was briefly alluded to earlier, Canadian politicians want the CF to focus on the defence of the North American continent first. While domestically the traditional tasks of Search and Rescue, support to other government departments like Fisheries and Oceans Canada and support to civil authorities in times of natural disasters will remain unchanged, the events of 9/11 have modified the rules of the game for the other domestic scenarios. Although NORAD will remain a pillar in our territorial defence, the changing nature of the threat will imply an increased role for the CF in the monitoring of our territorial and maritime approaches and on consequence management in case of a terrorist attack. This implies that the CF must work on building more formal relationships and networks with other government departments and local authorities and include these agencies within their integrated command structures. It must also establish a construct for quickly assigning forces to domestic tasks with appropriate command and control arrangements as well as having the means to quickly move these forces across what is a huge landmass. This is especially true for critical capabilities such as its CBRND capability located in central Canada. The only capability of its kind in the country, the CF must be able to transport it within hours to major urban centers thousands of mile away like Vancouver for example should a dirty terrorist attack take place there. Again, as per the disaster assistance scenario already discussed, possessing a national strategic lift capability has become more crucial now that the U.S. is engaged in a war and not able to provide its allies the same level of support as in previous times.

Internationally, for a number of reasons already discussed, Canada’s International Policy Statement calls for the CF to be mostly involved in failed or failing states. This said, predicting where Canada might intervene once its current commitment to Afghanistan is over is not an easy task. According to Robert Rotberg, even if today only a handful of the world’s 191 nation-states can be categorized as failed or collapsed, “several dozen more, however, are weak and serious candidates for failure.” The location and conditions under which the CF may be called to intervene either alone or with like-minded nations will dictate some of the required capabilities of transformed CF. Given that Canada’s Forces are all based in country, some force projection capability becomes even more important. Again, one only has to consider the inaccessibility of regions like Afghanistan or Darfur to understand the importance for Canada to have some integral strategic lift capability. If rapid deployment was important in response to natural disasters, it is also crucial in the case of failing states. It is clear that Canada wants to be able to, preferably with the help of other international community members, react quickly in areas where “devastating events have already begun to unfold.” This criterion of rapid intervention is
judged key because Canada believes that intervening in failed or failing states is easier done early before state breakdown occurs. Early arrival can allow the force to stabilize the situation on the ground and restore security for the local population. One only has to remember the circumstances in Rwanda in 1994 to understand the value that a SCTF could bring following the outbreak of genocidal violence.

To complicate things further, the conditions in which Canada’s forces may have to intervene could be very different from what we have experienced in Afghanistan. For example, CF may have to participate in ‘forced entry’ operations that would be immediately followed by major combat operations as could yet happen in Darfur. In fact, just this past May, in the face of a severe humanitarian crisis in Darfur, Canada offered and appeared willing to send some troops to Darfur to protect the innocent victims despite the unwillingness of Sudan’s ruling elite to have non-African troops on their soil. Had this come true, CF personnel might have had to force their way to the Darfur region. As stated in the Defence Policy Statement, “Canadians are compassionate people, and even when our own interests may not be directly at stake, we believe in helping those less fortunate than ourselves… and this includes using lethal force if necessary.” In the grand scheme of things, focusing on failed and failing states does not equate to developing a constabulary, lightly equipped, force capable of operations in benign or permissive environments only. In other words, there is a need to retain a combat capability within the CF.

Retaining combat capability for peace support operations in failed or failing states is important for a few more reasons. First, as General Hillier likes to explain based on his personal experience as Commander of the International Stabilization Force in Afghanistan, forces may no longer have to deal with the Soviet bear but they now have to deal with a ball of snakes. His analogy of a ball of snake refers to the warlords, insurgent leaders and organized crime leaders that exert influence in these failed states, all of which can be very dangerous and fatal foes. For him, maintaining the ability to conduct combat missions is essential because when dealing with these snakes, more often than not, “you have to deal with them from a position of strength.” Second, one must leave the door open for other eventualities other than peace support operations. In fact, had the Security Council given its approval for the U.S./U.K. intervention in Iraq in 2003, Canada would, in all likelihood, have taken part in the coalition since it had been *engaged in prudent military-to-military discussions with the U.S. in order to be prepared, if necessary.* It would therefore not be prudent to assume that in the future, the Canadian government will not ask the CF to participate in a high end, high intensity conflict.
Putting this high risk, low probability option aside, operating in a failed state is not only about fighting the insurgents. It is also about winning the hearts and minds, establishing law and order and establishing better living conditions for the local residents. To use the term first coined by General Charles Krulak, former Commandant of the United States Marine Corps, intervention in failed or failing states also means that the CF must be able to fight and win the ‘three-block war’. Conceptually this means that on the first city block, forces will deliver humanitarian aid or assist others in doing that. On the second city block, forces will conduct stabilization or peace support operations. On the third city block, they will be engaged in a high-intensity fight. The key element of this concept is that all three tasks may have to be done simultaneously and very close to one another. Again this implies that forces must be able to operate in large urban centers and complex terrain as well as be able to conduct some nation building missions. These missions require different capabilities than those required for combat operations. For a small force like the Canadian Forces, the option of creating a Leviathan-like force for the major combat operations and a SysAdmin force for nation building operations as proposed by Thomas Barnett is not an option. Rather, it implies that the CF, and especially the Land Forces, must be capable of operating throughout the spectrum of conflict. Nation building tasks in particular will imply, as it did for intervention in the domestic scenario, that deployed forces be capable of networking with other key partners to include allied and indigenous military forces, local government and Canadian as well as non-governmental and international agencies. As explained by Ian Beckett from University College in Northhampton, UK, one of the keys to stabilizing a country is to be able to “increase the solidarity of the regime” in place. It also means recognizing the interdependence of economic, political, psychological and military factors. Therefore it is important for the Armed Forces to learn how to work with the interagency.

It has also been argued that this task of nation building will also require increased capability with respect to Intelligence, Engineers, Civil Affairs and Information Operations because they have particular utility in this environment. According to Anthony Cordesman from the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the recent U.S. experience in both Afghanistan and Iraq demonstrated that the integration of all these capabilities, and in particular HUMINT and civil affairs with an effective information campaign are critical to achieving success in the stabilization phase of operations. More precisely, the capability to gather up-to-the-minute local intelligence is key to dealing with any possible counterinsurgency that might spring up and seriously disrupt reconstruction/nation building efforts by all members of the interagency. As for the enhanced engineering capability, it is required to make sure that
construction projects are synchronized to include those to be undertaken by civilian contractors.91

IV – Will the Transformed CF be More Capable vs its Future Tasks?

Having surveyed the major transformation initiatives as well as the expected requirement with respect to future CF capabilities, time has come to pass judgement. Will this transformation succeed in providing the CF with the required capabilities to allow it to operate in that “high intensity operations across the spectrum”92 as characterized by the previously discussed 4th Generation Warfare in failed or failing states or end up simply as a repackaging exercise? Recapping from the previous discussion, to be effective, a transformed CF would require five key and new capabilities to meet that standard. First, it requires the ability to work joint and interagency. Second, it must have sufficient strategic lift to allow for a global projection of its task forces to the most remote places in the world quickly. Third, it must enhance its Special Forces capabilities and especially HUMINT capability. Fourth, it must acquire the ability to conduct combat operations in complex terrain and finally, it must possess sufficient nation-building capability to help in the winning the hearts and minds campaign.

A cross analysis of the capabilities to be delivered by Canadian Forces’ transformation and those to be required in the future security environment shows that General Hillier’s plan is not that far off the mark in addressing these five requirements. Beginning with the first requirement, there is no doubt that institutionally, the new command structure will significantly improve the ability to deploy joint and integrated forces therefore making the CF more effective. This construct will also better position the CF for unilateral operations should its political leadership ever desire Canada to take a leading role in a small contingency operation where the deployment of a truly joint force package like the SCTF would become necessary.

Domestically, the Canada COM and its fully joint and integrated headquarters will again allow for better unity of command, unity of effort, and therefore a quicker, more effective response.

As for the second requirement, if the transformation matures as planned, the CF will definitely be more responsive thanks to a much-enhanced global projection capability. This will be achieved in several steps. First, there will be the acquisition of up to 12 strategic lift aircraft to augment Canada’s aging fleet of Hercules CC 130 aircraft. Second, there is a plan to purchase medium capability helicopters, and finally, the Canadian Navy will acquire sufficient sealift capability to carry afloat the Standing Contingency Task Force, allowing Canada to respond in a much shorter timeframe than if commercial shipping was used.
With respect to the third requirement, CF transformation will also have moved the yardstick a considerable distance by adding much needed depth to its current SOF forces. In addition to the creation of a new Joint Action Task Force capable of supporting the existing SOF forces, the SOF forces will be greatly enhanced by the addition of an integral aviation capability as well as a nuclear, biological and chemical decontamination capability.

CF transformation will address the fourth requirement by being able to call on force packages that can be tailored for specific missions and capable of fighting in complex environments. Both the Standing Contingency Task Force and the Mission Specific Task Forces will be provided with the capabilities they require to be successful in their particular environment. They can be tailored for combat missions or put together with the capabilities better suited for peace support operations. This being said, a few critical gaps stand out.

If the transformed CF will be much more capable of conducting integrated and joint operations, it is not clearly visible in General Hillier’s transformation initiatives on how the rest of this first requirement (increased need for working with the interagency) will be addressed. While Canada is already working the interagency with the deployment of its Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan,\(^93\) generation of this capability remains an ad hoc process. Nothing in the transformation literature analyzed indicates how this capability will be institutionalized. This is a key shortcoming. The American experience in Iraq should provide guidance on this issue\(^94\) and has pointed out earlier, without an interagency capability, success in defeating a 4th generation warfare adversary is unlikely. While fully understanding that the CF does not control the rest of the interagency, at a minimum, a clear statement from the CDS on how he expects this to happen is required. In fact the current experience in Afghanistan should make this transition much easier. It is therefore recommended that this capability be integrated in the command structure permanently by designating positions to be filled by the interagency at all three of the Command headquarters as well as the integrated and joint regional headquarters once they are fully established.

Although the SOF capabilities will be significantly enhanced, in order to fully meet this requirement there is a need to put more effort in the development of a robust HUMINT capability. As discussed earlier, a key to success in the 4th generation warfare is the ability to collect human intelligence. Unfortunately, nothing in the CF transformation plan leads to believe that the CF will be significantly better in this domain than they are now. This capability is currently generated on an ad hoc basis and mostly from the reserves. It is therefore recommended that this key capability be enhanced further. It is also recommended that contrary to the current situation, that this capability also be incorporated, at least partly, in the
regular forces. This capability should be sufficiently robust to allow to be deployed with every task force deployed by CEFCOM.

Finally, despite all the great capabilities to be added to the CF via this transformation, it is felt that little of these will contribute on the fifth essential requirement. As discussed in the last section, Engineers, Civil Affairs, Information Operations and Intelligence are key in conducting nation-building and heart-winning operations. In addition to the already addressed deficiency in HUMINT, this transformation does not appear to provide any enhance capabilities with respect to Engineers, Civil Affairs or Information Operations. Currently the CF does not have any Civil Affairs capability to speak of and its Engineers are stretched to the limit. Yet these two capabilities are key enablers when dealing with failed states. It is therefore recommended that the CF consider dedicating a significant portion of its increase in personnel in creating a Civil Affairs capability and augmenting its current Engineer capability.

V – Conclusion

Early on, the question was raised whether or not the transformation initiatives championed by General Rick Hillier would be prophetic or simply a Pie in the Sky? The analysis of those initiatives in comparison to the future missions and tasks expected of the CF as well as the future security environment leads the author to conclude that they will be prophetic to a large extent. If fully achieved, the transformed CF will definitely be more effective, relevant and responsive. It will clearly address most (4 out of 5) of the key capability requirements. Although limited in quantity, the CF will possess the required capabilities to contribute to all phases of any coalition operation, including, as stated in the opening quote, “the three-year high intensity operations across the spectrum (of operations)” seen in Baghdad since the fall of Saddam Hussein. However since the transformation process is still in its early stages, some course adjustments should be made to make this transformation even more meaningful with respect to preparing the CF to deal with the new tasks and new nature of conflict. In particular, the interagency and nation building capabilities should be institutionalized and enhanced.

Endnotes


3 John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard University School Press, 1996), 4-16. According to Kotter, the eight mistakes that prevent big organizations from transforming are: (1) allowing too much complacency; (2) failing to create a sufficiently powerful guiding coalition; (3) underestimating the power of vision; (4) under-communicating the vision by a factor of 10; (5) permitting obstacles to block the new vision; (6) failing to create short-term wins; (7) declaring victory too soon; (8) neglecting to anchor changes firmly in the corporate culture.

4 By 25 February, General Hillier had set up four Action Teams to study the various aspects of transformation and the impact of the soon to be published Defence Policy Statement. The first team’s mandate was to study the required Command and Control arrangements required by the CF. The second team’s mandate was to look at the Force Development and Force generation models and make recommendations to optimally integrate them to meet the operational needs of the new defence policy and CF vision. The third team’s mandate was to conduct a mission look at two future organizational constructs; that of Standing contingency Task Force and Mission Specific Task Force. The fourth group’s mandate was to look at the ‘whole of Defence’ approach to meeting the CF vision. By 10 March 2005, he had issued these four groups specific planning guidance that required all groups to provide the outcomes of their study by end-June 2005.


7 Department of National Defence, *Defence Policy Statement; Setting Our Course*, (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2005).


11 International Policy Statement, 12. Canada’s New Foreign Policy supports that vision by stating that for Canada “one truth is undeniable: security in the 21st century is a common interest, and a shared responsibility.”
Securing an Open Society, 50-51.

Joseph R. Nunez, “Canada’s Global Role: A Strategic Assessment of its Military Power,” Parameters (Autumn 2004): 75 and 89. “Formerly an important player on the world stage, its (Canada’s) influence is now greatly diminished. Critics are quick to point out that Canada spends little on its military, less than $265 per capita, making it the last among major NATO members. On a Gross national Product (GNP) basis, Canada spends 1.1 percent on defence, putting it on par with Liechtenstein.” “And the truth is that today Canada has little hard power. A country that cannot muster and deploy even one self-sustaining brigade to global hot spots is not going to be taken very seriously, and is certainly not a middle power by military measure.” Ralph Peters, “The Future War”, in Hillary Claggett, ed., The 21st Century, (New York: H.W. Wilson Company, 1999), 102. Joel J. Sokolsky, “Realism Canadian Style: National Security Policy and the Chrétien Legacy,” Policy Matters, 5, (June 2004): 9. “But worse than being criticized, Canada was ignored. And this, according to the critics, was just the latest and saddest chapter in a pattern of behavior that had reduced Canada, under the Chrétien, to international irrelevance…”


Ibid.


Government of Canada, Delivering on Commitments; Meeting Our Responsibilities, (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 13 February 2005), 5-6, available from http://www.fin.gc.ca/budget05/pdf/paresque.pdf; Internet: accessed on 3 December 2005. The Canadian government, in its February 2005 budget, announced that it would spend an additional Cdn $12.8 billion over the next five years. This money was to “allow National Defence to better meet the increasingly complex international challenges.” The increase will be spread on the following initiatives; Cdn $3 billion to expand the Canadian Forces by 5000 regular and 3000 reserves troops; Cdn $3.2 to strengthen military operations by improving training and operational readiness, enhancing military medical care, addressing critical supplies and repair shortages and by repair infrastructure; Cdn $2.7 billion for medium-capability helicopters, trucks, utility aircraft and special facilities for Canada’s elite anti-terrorism unit; and Cdn $3.8 for further projects to support the objectives established for Canada’s military in the upcoming International Policy Statement. Allison Dunfield, “Liberals Defend $4.6-billion Aircraft purchase”; Globe and Mail, (22 November 2005); available from http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20051122.wmilit1122/BN/Print; Internet: accessed on 27 November 2005. An additional Cdn $4.6 billion was recently announced for the purchase of new military transport aircraft.

The Right Honorable Paul Martin, Canadian Prime Minister, “Address by Prime Minister Paul Martin at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown,” CFB Gagetown, New Brunswick, 14 April 2004, 1; available from http://pm.gc.ca/eng/news.asp?id=172; Internet; accessed 12 January 2006. Lieutenant-General Hillier had built himself a reputation of a leader capable of making the tough decision to achieve transformation. He was the one that took the decision, has then Chief
of the Land Staff, to remove the Leopard tank from service in favor of the Mobile Gun System. In a speech given on 14 April 2004, Prime Minister Martin cited this example of the replacement of the tanks by the Mobile Gun System as a good example of the transformation that needed to take place.


24 International Policy Statement, 11.


26 Lieutenant-General Lucas, Crew Brief, 3 (Ottawa; Chief of the Air Staff); available from http://www.airforce.gc.ca/news/crew/12-05-02_e.asp; Internet: accessed on 16 January 2006.


29 Defence Policy Statement, 13.


31 Ibid.

32 Lieutenant-Colonel Dave Galea, “A Light Force Capability for the Army,” in Canadian Army Journal, 8, (Kingston, ON, Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, Summer 2005), 13.

33 Defence Policy Statement,12.

34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.

36 Army Transformation Home Page; available from http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/ll/English/5_1_2.asp; Internet; accessed 11 October 2005, 1.

37 Granatstein, 75.

38 Department of National Defence, Backgrounder – Canadian Forces Disaster Assistance Response Team, January 10, 2005; available from http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/Newsroom/view_news_e.asp?id=301; Internet; accessed on 9 December 2005.


45 Director Land Army Doctrine, Purpose Defined: The Force Employment Concept for the Army, (Kingston: Department of National Defence, 2004), 4-5.

46 Canadian Army Transformation Home Page.


48 Ibid., 12-13 and 31-32.

49 Dianne DeMille and Stephen Priestley.

50 Canadian American Strategic Review, 3.

51 Galea, 12.

52 Canadian Army Transformation Home Page.

54 Major-General Peter Abigail, “Preparing the Australian Army for the 21st-century Conflict,” in Michael Evans, Russell Parkin and Alan Ryan, Future Armies Futures Challenges; Land Warfare in the Information Age, eds (Crows Nest, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 2005), 239.

55 Director Land Strategic Concepts (DLSC), Future Force: Concepts for Future Army Capabilities, (Kingston, ON: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, September 2003), 2-12. These future trends are: increasing globalization, rapid scientific and technological innovations, shifting power balances, demographic shifts, increased resources scarcity, increased number of failed and failing states, growing influence of non-state actors, and the prominence of identity-based conflict.

56 Department of National Defence, Strategic Assessment 2004, (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, September 2004), 15.


60 DLSC, 17-18.

61 Brian Nichporuk, Alternative Futures and Army Force Planning; Implications for the Future Force Era (Santa Monica, RAND Corporation, 2005), 69.


64 DLSC, 19.

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.


International Policy Statement, 13-14. These interventions, whether alone or more probably with allies, will aim at building a more secure world by: countering global terrorism and organized crime, stabilizing failed and fragile states, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and contributing to human security. More precisely, interventions in such failed states can significantly reduce the lawlessness characteristic of such states and thereby contribute to the elimination of the safe havens used by terrorists and organized crime to conduct their global activities. Such interventions can also contribute to Canada’s security by reducing the regional instability that these cause and consequently the potential flash points that hold out the potential to erupt into major regional wars, possibly involving the use of WMD. The Honorable Bill Graham, Canadian Minister of Defence, “The Canadian Forces Mission in Afghanistan – Canadian Policy and Values in Action,” Ottawa, 29 September 2005, 3; available from http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/newsroom/view_news_e.asp?id1770; Internet; accessed 11 November 2005, 2. It could also be argued that Canada wishes to focus on this area because it not only does such a policy supports Canada’s unique ‘Human Security’ agenda, but it is an area where Canada has had great successes recently such as in Afghanistan. The Honorable Bill Graham, Canadian Minister of Defence, “The Canadian Forces Mission in Afghanistan – Canadian Policy and Values in Action,” Ottawa, 29 September 2005, 3; available from http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/newsroom/view_news_e.asp?id1770; Internet; accessed 11 November 2005, 2. “The troubled country of Afghanistan, where the Canadian Forces has been deployed consistently since 2002 in varying numbers and missions, is a quintessential example of where we can effectively bring these assets to bear.”


Ibid.

Ibid.


Hillier’s, “Setting Our Course,” speech, 4.
80 Ibid., 3.


83 United States Army War College, Joint Force Land Component Commander Handbook, Coordination Draft, Carlisle Barracks, June 2005, 10-9. Suggested tasks include: (1) Establishing Order, (2) Protecting people and vital infrastructure as well as restoring vital human services, (3) supporting the establishment of civil administration, (4) establishing and restoring communications and information services, (5) establishing, restoring and protecting transportation and distribution networks, (6) protecting energy sources, (7) promoting and protecting commerce, and promoting good governance.

84 Barnett, 320 – 324. Barnett’s idea of a Leviathan force is one that can project force menacingly. It is event-focused and capable of destroying rogue regimes by wielding immense lethality. This force is characterized by speed of command and maneuverability above all. It takes preemptive action when possible and always stays on the offensive. It possesses high-tech capabilities. The SysAdmin force on the contrary will focus on nation-building capabilities. It will be characterized by non-lethal technologies appropriate for policing systems. It will seek preventive cures that emphasize making networks more robust. It will be tailored for post-conflict operations. It will focus on civilian and interagency partnership. It will be capable of long-duration deployments.

85 DLSC, 62. The Canadian spectrum of conflict identifies four types of military operations on a spectrum from peace to full out war. They are; Non-Combat Operations, Operations other than War, Combat operations; and Warfighting.

86 Beckett, 23.

87 Ibid., 27.

88 Metz and Millen, 31.


92 Hillier’s, “Setting Our Course,” speech.


95 Hillier’s, “Setting Our Course,” speech.