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OPERATIONAL-LEVEL DOCTRINE

SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT
IN CANADIAN PUBLIC OPINION AFTER THE COLD WAR

“SINK THE BASTARD!”:
FRIENDLY FIRE IN THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC

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NOTE TO READERS
As a bilingual journal, readers should take note that where citations in endnotes are translated from their original language, we will use the abbreviation ‘TOQ’ at the end of the note to indicate that readers can find the original citations in the other language version of the Journal.
NAVAL CAPABILITIES

I read with interest Commander Peter Haydon’s article, “What Naval Capabilities does Canada Need?” In fact, I read it twice. In my first run through I was looking for definitive answers to the question posed in the title. Not finding them, I read through the article again, looking for a hidden message. I didn’t find anything that time either.

I agree completely with most of his points, particularly that the Navy needs to sell itself better, and that politics is the ultimate decider on the direction policy will take. But I do not agree with his proposal that the best course of action is maintaining the status quo. His desire to retain a good workable little fleet is much the same as the multi-purpose, combat capable policy maintained by the CF. Can we really afford to do nothing different?

If we are to maintain any ability to play a part in influencing affairs outside our territorial waters, I would suggest that we need to decide exactly how we are going to accomplish this task. Having a good workable little fleet — as in the one we have right now — does not in my opinion contain the wherewithal to make any kind of significant impact. If we look at what our allies are concentrating on — the littorals — it becomes clear that, if anything, a good little fleet will be less useful in the near future than it was in the past. Force projection in the littorals would seem to be the way ahead, yet the CF as a whole has little ability to participate. In the end, it comes down to size.

As Commander Haydon asserts, the bottom line is how much the country is willing to pay. History shows us that, except in time of war, the answer is just enough to get by. Therefore, should we maintain the status quo, or put our money into more limited, yet more practical capabilities that will be of greater value?

Ian Hunt
Major
Canadian Forces Liaison Officer, US Marine Corps

LEADERSHIP AND MILITARY EDUCATION

Having read the excellent article by Dr. Ronald Haycock, “The Labours of Athena and the Muses”, in the Summer 2001 issue, I would like to add a personal comment on higher education in the Canadian Forces.

I joined the Forces under the Officer Training Plan in 1983, and I was posted under the UTPO plan to attain a BA in history at the University of Manitoba. I look on this time as being one of the most enlightening in my career. We should never dismiss the importance of civilian universities in any discussion of undergraduate — or graduate-level education for the CF. Their style, quality and influence of these institutions are fundamental aspects of what Lieutenant-General Morton prescribed as a solid grounding in political, economic, social, cultural impacts and trends that effect the security of Canada.

During the past 10 years, I attended the Canadian Forces Command and Staff College, gained an MA in War Studies from RMC, and then attended the yearlong US Air Force Air War College where I gained a second MA in International Studies. However, on completion of this education, I was dismayed to discover there was little reason to stay in the CF if I wanted to employ my new-found knowledge. As Dr. Haycock pointed out, there have been numerous studies that endorse education and which propose innovative ways of managing those who undertake higher education. But, in my experience, the personnel system simply has no idea of its value, as it appears neither to acknowledge those individuals that have graduate degrees nor to conceive of innovative and challenging ways to employ them.

One quickly finds, if you look elsewhere, that there are plenty of organizations and businesses around the globe that recognize the value of higher education. This inevitably gives rise to the retention problem discussed elsewhere in the Summer 2001 issue. Thus, the CF, and ultimately the nation, lose the skills and intellect they spent valuable time and resources to develop.

If the senior leadership of the CF do not heed Dr. Haycock’s message, there is little reason to believe the situation will change in the future. But, if the time has come for the CF to stop being only a tactical-level force and start leading at the strategic-level of war, as several senior officers have argued, I can think of no better place to start than with educational commitments and programmes that are realistically funded and which become central to the CF’s core values.

Ronald Blank
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