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Paul Hellyer as Minister of National Defence.

HELLYER'S GHOSTS: UNIFICATION OF THE CANADIAN FORCES IS 40 YEARS OLD – PART TWO

by Major-General Daniel Gosselin, CMM, CD¹

Introduction²

This article, presented as the second of two consecutive parts, explores five fundamental unification themes that captured the core ideas that led Minister of National Defence (MND) Paul Hellyer to unify the Canadian Forces (CF) in 1968, and that underlined the integration and unification efforts of the 1960s. It also assesses the legacy of those core concepts in 2008. In Part One, two themes – the need for a single coherent defence policy for Canada and the creation of the office of the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) – were reviewed. This part discusses the three remaining themes, and then closes with a concluding segment.

Modern Warfare and Unified Functional Commands

The demands of modern warfare are such that commanders and staff down to the lowest level of operation and the support echelons must act together and in unison as the situation demands. That is why it is a fair conclusion to say that a single organization which works and thinks together with direct lines of communications and a single line of responsibility, substantially reduces the problems associated with the three service system of coordinating combined operations.

– Minister of Defence Paul Hellyer, February 1967³

Efforts to create a Canadian unified structure of command have existed since the late 1940s, but these efforts seldom amounted to important or lasting changes until Paul Hellyer arrived at Defence. He reinvigorated the concept with a major command reorganization in 1965, but it was not until General Rick Hillier's restructuring of February 2006 that, for the first time in Canada, a robust unified chain of command was established for the conduct of both domestic/continental and international operations.

The need to conduct studies and planning estimates for the Chiefs of Staff Committee on issues emerging from the creation of a North Atlantic alliance had led MND Brooke Claxton and the three service chiefs to create, in 1949, a permanent joint staff so that the Chiefs of Staff could give coherent policy direction to their representatives in London and Washington.⁴ In May 1951, the Joint Planning Committee, a joint sub-committee of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, reviewed the command organization for the operations of three services in the defence of Canada, and tabled a proposal recommending, "...a system of Canadian unified commands for the direction of planning and operations."⁵ Continental defence was seen as an emerging mission for Canada and the United States in the late 1940s as the Soviet Union and Western nations rapidly drifted apart. The creation of the North Atlantic

Treaty Organization (NATO) to defend against a possible Soviet invasion provided added impetus for a review of command organizations in Canada and the United States. However, the Korean War, developments that led to the creation of the North American Air Defence Command (NORAD), and strong negative service reactions suspended the adoption in the 1950s of any new operational command organization for the defence of Canada.⁶

Hellyer came to Defence convinced that the existing structure of command – with three separate service chains of command – was dated, and that new integrated commands were required. In the *White Paper on Defence*, Hellyer made much of the fact that the nature of war was changing rapidly, and it demanded new military organizational structures. General Charles Foulkes, who had been Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee through the 1950s, had proposed in a 1961 paper, which he shared with Hellyer in 1963, the disbandment of the three services and their field forces, and the establishment of task forces commanded by a commander-in-chief, with the task forces organized to meet the particular circumstances dictated by the nature and scope of any international contribution accepted by the Canadian government.⁷ Despite being retired, Foulkes was still highly regarded in government circles, and his ideas greatly influenced Hellyer, who gave the new integrated CFHQ defence staff the responsibility in 1964 for developing a field command structure suitable for the roles outlined for the CF in the new policy paper.⁸



General Charles Foulkes.

The original, main idea of this reorganization was that all forces devoted to a primary role would be grouped into a single command, with sufficient resources assigned to allow the commander of that command to discharge his assigned responsibilities.⁹ This new, integrated command structure was announced in June 1965, and it consisted of six functional commands in lieu of the 11 service subordinate commands. The six commands, in addition to Canadian formations garrisoned in Europe, which were not affected, included: Mobile Command (that encompassed the army and tactical air support); Maritime Command (that included naval air resources); Air Defence Command; Air Transport Command; Training Command; and Material Command (that integrated the support elements of the three services). The concept of integration that Hellyer sought was reflected to its fullest through the formation of Training Command and Material Command.¹⁰

The command field structure that Hellyer had pushed through between 1965 and 1966, and that was still being implemented, started to come apart soon after he left Defence in December 1967. Staff cutbacks imposed between 1968 and 1970 eventually forced a shift from a *functional* to a *functional/regional* command organization, with functional commanders taking control of all regional forces for the conduct of operations within their region.¹¹ Mobile Command (a joint land/air command) and Maritime Command (with joint sea/naval air resources) were intended to be true joint operational commands, but it did not take long for those commands to behave like the old army and navy respectively, and to become centres of influence for the land and sea elements of the CF.¹² The ‘disintegration’ of the unified field commands got its most significant boost with the creation in 1975 of Air Command, which grouped all air assets and air element personnel from across the CF into the largest command.¹³

Without a unified operational chain of command, operations continued to be generated and even commanded by the three service commanders, which created command and control confusion at times.¹⁴ In May 1997, when criticized by the Somalia Inquiry for the inadequate command arrangements of the deployed CF force, the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (DCDS), the senior CF operations officer at the time of the deployment in 1992, stated that there was no command structure or operational plan because the CF only had “...an administrative concept of organization and command and control.”¹⁵ The massive re-organization of the 1990s, the Management Command and Control Re-Engineering (MCCR) initiative, mandated to reduce resources consumed by headquarters, infrastructure, and wasteful business practices, and to transfer those savings to operational capabilities, resulted in a significant CF headquarters reduction and an important transfer of responsibilities between NDHQ and the field commands and formations, but few substantive changes to the CF chain of command for operations.¹⁶

Hillier's immediate focus after taking command of the CF in February 2005 was to improve CF operational effectiveness, leading him to push for the acquisition of new military capabilities and for the establishment of a more robust and more operationally focused CF command structure. In February 2006, the Strategic Joint Staff (SJS) and four new operational commands were established, reporting to the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS): Canada Command, Canada Expeditionary Command (CEFCOM), Canada Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM), and Canada Operational Support Command (CANOSCOM).¹⁷

An officer with extensive operational experience, Hillier wanted above all to strengthen the unified chain of command. A most important principle of the CDS in guiding the CF Transformation was to re-establish a command-centric imperative in the CF – that is, to have a distinct and unambiguous chain of command, with the key being the allocation of mission-specific capabilities to operational and tactical commands/formations to increase the ability to deploy rapidly. While a regional distribution of forces existed in Canada for decades, the new CDS reinforced its primacy with the concept of regional 'joint task forces' (JTF) under the new Canada Command, an integrated national operational command headquarters identified as the cornerstone of the CF Transformation.¹⁸

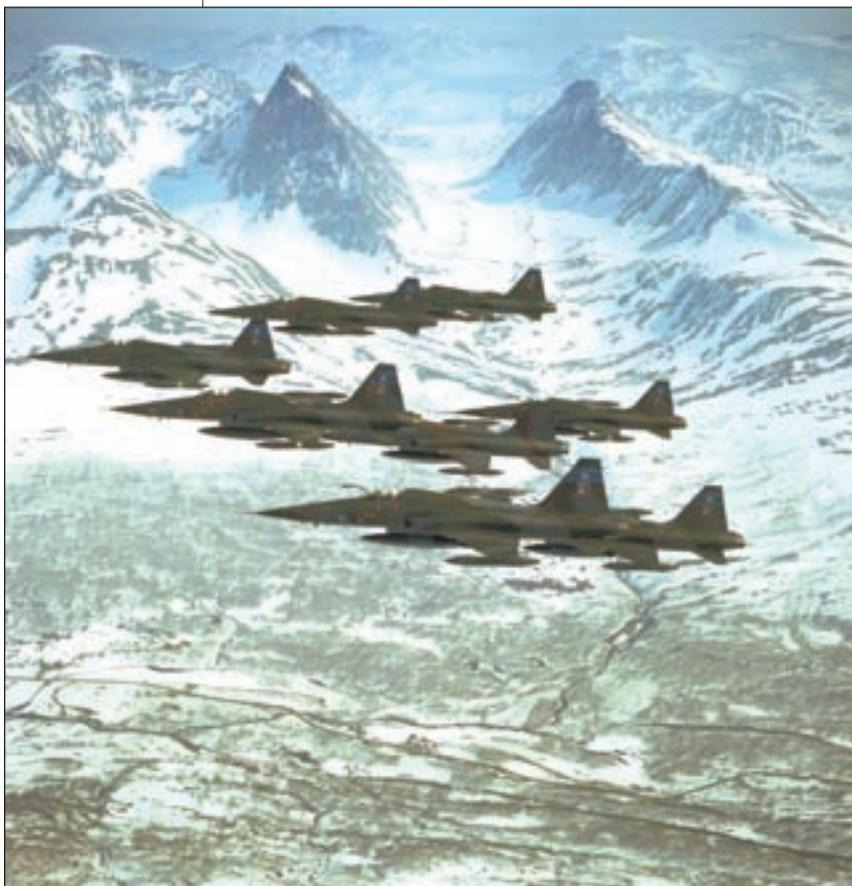
The creation of Canada Command means that, for the first time in Canada, one unified chain of command exists for routine and contingency domestic operations, with each regional JTF commander being responsible for the employment of all CF assets assigned within his or her region. This command structure is far from perfect, as commanders of JTFs are, in addition to their regional responsibilities, 'double-hatted' as commanders of a formation within their environment. For example, Commander Maritime Forces Atlantic (MARLANT) is also Commander Joint Task Force (JTF) Atlantic. But the command arrangements represent a necessary compromise between a service-oriented chain of command and a regional chain, driven by the realities of Canada's unique geography and limited CF resources. The key difference between this model and the pre-transformation command structure is that the JTF commanders are empowered, during an emergency or contingency operation, with the command authority over all CF assets

"...Hillier wanted above all to strengthen the unified chain of command."

within a given region, thereby increasing responsiveness.

In 2008, the Environment Chiefs of Staff (ECSs) continue to generate the forces employed by either the Commander Canada Command for domestic and continental operations, or by the Commander CEFCOM for international operations.¹⁹ This division of force generation/force employment responsibilities is very similar to that adopted by most of Canada's allies over the past decade. Such a construct acknowledges that the preparation and generation of combat forces is a distinct and uniquely specialized function that is best understood and achieved by experts of the army, navy, air force, and special forces respectively.

Hillier did not approach his command reorganization in a dogmatic manner. A few months into the CF Transformation, suggestions were made to the CDS to reduce the rank of the ECSs (from three-star status to two-star status), and to integrate all force generation activities under Canada Command, mostly to emphasize the primacy of force employment over force generation and of a unified force over a service-oriented CF. In the end, this bold and controversial proposal was not adopted, and the three ECSs remain at the lieutenant-general and



CF-5 Freedom Fighters from 434 Squadron in a Nordic setting, a legacy of the Hellyer era.

DND photo 918-IMG0050

vice-admiral rank, and they continue to be ‘dominant actors’ in NDHQ. Further, the CDS recognized the fundamental principle of central control and decentralized execution of air power, giving the Commander of the 1 Canadian Air Division operational command over all Canadian air assets and responsibility for air operations in Canada under the Commander of Canada Command.²⁰ Historically, the Canadian Air Force has always rejected the concept of regional organizations that would vest in an individual regional commander all the air forces in a given geographical area of Canada, regardless of function or service of origin, because it reduces flexibility substantially, and it is quite inefficient.²¹

Even though Hellyer had admitted in the *White Paper* that Canada did not expect to exercise any operational control for international operations, he nevertheless believed that command of the CF could best be accomplished by a single chain of command with new joint commands,²² perhaps envisaging the day when the CDS and NDHQ would take an active role in nationally commanding the military forces deployed around the world. Unfortunately, because Canada was not expected to engage independently in overseas military commitments, the CF never fully developed the command organizational structure necessary to ensure coordination with government policy, to provide strategic guidance and direction from a central defence authority, and to nationally command the deployed forces. Until recently, for the large majority of operations, Canada’s overseas forces have operated under NATO or the United Nations command arrangements, with these organizations being responsible for the operational planning of the forces under such command. Hillier’s vision, particularly the establishment of the SJS and CEFCOM, was to change this ‘colonial’ mindset and to establish a higher command organization that could think in strategic terms for Canada, and would be suited to the particular needs of the CF.

The 2009 CF command structure is, therefore, complex, perhaps confusing to some, but it recognizes the reality of a number of Canada’s invariants (i.e., a large country sharing a long border with the US, touching on three oceans, and possessing a small military force).²³ It is also adapted to today’s environment and it is responsive to CF operational needs. It consists of four environments (army, air force, navy, and special forces) that generate highly specialized capabilities and combat forces, one functional command that groups common national support functions and capabilities (CANOSCOM), two operational commands that employ CF assets for the conduct of operations (Canada Command and CEFCOM), and a unified chain of command with a dedicated unified joint staff at the military strategic-political-diplomatic interface that helps the CDS to command the CF, to

carry out his national command responsibilities, and to advise the government. Constructed from a blend of organizational concepts, this mature command structure is dramatically different from Hellyer’s command construct of 1965. It has transformed significantly since unification 40 years ago, and it is expected that it will continue to evolve in the future.

“Hellyer...believed that command of the CF could best be accomplished by a single chain of command with new joint commands...”

Modern Management Methods and Increased Efficiency

Hellyer had determined early on in his term that two problems at Defence – the management and control structure of the defence organization, and the reality of rising maintenance and operational costs – demanded special attention. The creation of the office of the CDS helped him to better control defence policy, and to address the management and control of the CF.

The minister was aware that defence budget increases were not projected under the new Liberal government, and only the adoption of modern management methods and the elimination of duplicate and triplicate functions and organizations would help him control costs and increase efficiency at Defence.²⁴ Hellyer wanted to increase the portion of the budget allotted to capital equipment acquisition, from 14 percent in 1963 to an aggressive target of 25 percent by 1970. To meet his goal, a 30 percent reduction of the manpower establishment was also required.²⁵ The basic purpose of the supporting reforms of unification was therefore to provide funds and create efficiencies that would increase the operational effectiveness of the CF. Unfortunately, even though the Minister had stated that, “...[the] *White Paper* of 1964 would not have recommended integration ... if we had not been certain of the improved capacity of a unified force to meet the demands of modern warfare,”²⁶ by late 1964, operational effectiveness no longer appeared to be the main concern of his defence restructuring.

The integration of common services had always been a dominant theme, even before the Hellyer era.²⁷ The 1960 Royal Commission on Government Reorganization (known as the Glassco Commission, after its chairman), focusing upon managerial efficiency in government, had recommended the consolidation of common military functions. Government was changing rapidly in Canada, and departmental autonomy was being challenged by central agencies with professional public administrators that exercised more control and demanded more rational management.²⁸ Hellyer relied greatly upon the observations and recommendations of the Glassco Commission to rationalize the integration of defence activities, and he was influenced by the initiatives of Robert S. McNamara, the strong-minded US Secretary of Defense, who was concurrently attempting to reform the American armed forces.²⁹

The government's objectives with unification were to create a single recruiting organization, a single basic training organization, a single basic trades organization, a single support organization, and to achieve full integration of headquarters and commands.³⁰ Integrating the three services helped to reduce overhead costs and achieve savings in the areas of planning, support, finance and administration. The minister also achieved considerable reduction in the duplication and triplication of facilities and services through the introduction of common administrative and base structures (the Canadian Forces Base concept), further reducing the strength of the armed forces.³¹ The work with respect to a common trade structure resulted in some 350 classifications in the three services being reduced to 97 in the new system, and a number of CF schools were formed in the late 1960s to train the newly merged and common CF trades.³² Finally, integration of the navy, army, and air force headquarters allowed the minister to institute an "Integrated Defence Program" to control all approved defence activities, and to introduce several other "modern management techniques," consisting mostly of computerized CF systems.³³ Through unification and the creation of NDHQ in 1972, the national defence command structure assumed several common administrative and logistical functions – such as in the areas of real property and infrastructure, communications and information systems, personnel management, as well as medical and dental branches – that are still in place today.

The focus upon efficiency that underlined several integration and unification initiatives was strongly reinforced by the implementation, in the early 1970s, of many recommendations of the influential Management Review Group study, the most notable being the merging of the CF and department headquarters into NDHQ.³⁴ During the 1980s and 1990s, faced with dwindling budgets, successive draconian cutbacks, and pressure from government central agencies, increasingly Defence adopted business practices, and accelerated the centralization of resources and the privatization of non-core defence functions to achieve more efficiency. As one expert on public administration observed, "[t]he political leadership virtually everywhere in the western world...concluded that management practices in the public sector should emulate the private sector or simply privatise the function."³⁵ The 'management era' reached its high-water mark in Defence with the 1997 MCCR initiative,



The Royal Commission on Government Reorganization

The introductory letter of the Glassco Report.

when private sector management practices (often called re-engineering in the public sector) tended to dominate most defence processes, and an obsession to 'do more with less' distorted defence decision-making.³⁶ As a result, operational effectiveness was often sacrificed to obtain the most from each defence dollar. Brigadier-General E.M.D. Leslie had rightly warned as early as winter 1972 that "...amidst great and sweeping changes" the CF was quickly drifting toward "too much management, too little command," a trend that continued for over three decades after unification.³⁷

Periods of defence budget restrictions always bring forward a demand for more joint initiatives, since duplication and triplication of effort are less tolerated, as was the case in the 1960s and the 1990s. With the CF and the department about to enter its fifth year of consecutive budget increases, while being heavily engaged in high-intensity operations in the Middle East and in Afghanistan, it should be expected that the environments would have a stronger voice on CF operational matters, and, consequently, would gain and exercise more autonomy. As a result, jointness, the *de facto* organizational principle for the CF in the 1990s, which contributed to the DCDS group becoming progressively more dominant in joint force development and generation over the years, lost its lustre in the CF soon after Hillier's ascendancy as CDS. Critics have often argued over the years that jointness in a CF context was often pursued as a means to compromise on controversial tri-service issues, often resulting in a loss of operational capability for the CF.

There is now recognition – and acceptance – of the unique, very specialized, and essential role that the four services perform to prepare CF members for operations. The high-intensity campaign in southern Afghanistan has highlighted the pressing need to improve the soldier's basic individual field skills, and the army has, for the most part, been fulfilling this training function for all elements of the CF. Each environment also runs a warfare centre, in addition to the CF Experimentation Centre, to assist in developing service and CF doctrine, to conduct experimentation, and to incorporate rapidly the lessons learned from operations. The operational role of each service *does* differ greatly, especially at the tactical level, and Hellyer's unification largely disregarded this fact for the sake of efficiency and cost savings.

“...increasingly, Defence adopted business practices, and accelerated the centralization of resources and the privatization of non-core defence functions to achieve more efficiency.”



DND photo SU2006-0319-017 by Sgt. Yvan Delisle

Warrior Chiefs – Representing the three operational commands at the CF Enrolment Day ceremony that took place at the Canadian War Museum, 3 June 2006. L to R, Lieutenant-General Lucas, Chief of the Air Staff, Vice-Admiral Robertson, Chief of the Maritime Staff, and Lieutenant-General Caron, Chief of the Land Staff.

The recent years have witnessed some ‘disintegration’ of the CF structure. For instance, some functions, such as common military schools that were under the command of one integrated CF formation, such as the Canadian Forces Support Training Group, have been recently transferred to one specific environment to be responsible for training the entire CF, as was the case in the pre-unification era. Further, with the dissolution of the DCDS Group in 2006, the generation of selected CF ‘joint’ capabilities is now a responsibility of the individual environments.³⁸

In 2009, the default organization for carrying out CF functions and for joint force generation activities is no longer necessarily going to be a joint/integrated organization or formation, as was the case in the 1990s and early 2000s, but it is more likely to be one of the four environments. While many of Hellyer’s non-operational CF formations and entities that were created with integration and unification have survived – such as recruiting group, common training schools, centralized pay system, the CFB concept, and so on – a greater priority assigned to operational issues in recent years, combined with important defence budget increases, have helped restore a better equilibrium between the need for efficiency and operational effectiveness.

Despite the increased focus upon operational effectiveness in recent years, improving administrative efficiency of departmental activities remains a most credible goal, even if “...there are no clear lines between achieving greater operational effectiveness and systematic managerial reforms,” as one author points out.³⁹ With over 135,000 individuals

employed in Defence, and with the department having the largest discretionary operating budget of the federal government, the pressure exerted by central agencies upon ministers and deputy ministers (DMs) to ‘do more with less’ will always exist.⁴⁰

At first blush, outsiders and bureaucrats from central agencies, who do not understand DND and the CF well, tend to see huge potential savings at Defence – like a low-hanging fruit ready to be harvested. As the Advisory Committee on Administrative Efficiency, initiated by MND John McCallum in 2003 to find \$200 million to reallocate within the Defence program, found out, however, “...there are few areas of the management and administration of Defence that have not been studied by others,” and obvious opportunities for improved efficiency have often already been pursued.⁴¹ In the end, the advisory committee made more recommendations with respect to governance and management enhancements than on administrative savings and efficiencies. As expected, CDSs will continue to focus primarily upon operational effectiveness, with DMs concentrating more upon effective management of the Department’s resources, on streamlining processes, and on reducing inefficiencies.

“One of Hellyer’s hopes with respect to reforming the military institution rested upon redirecting the loyalties of the officers away from their traditional service to the newly unified force.”



General Hillier aboard HMCS Athabaskan.

Attaining the Elusive Higher Loyalty to the CF

Canadian Forces identity – Our first loyalty is to Canada. Beyond this fundamental imperative, all service personnel must look past environment, component or unit affiliations to most closely identify with the CF. The greater good of Canada and the CF will, in every instance, take precedence over considerations of service, component or unit affiliation.

– CDS Transformation Principle One
General Rick Hillier, Chief of the Defence Staff⁴²

One of Hellyer's hopes with respect to reforming the military institution rested upon redirecting the loyalties of the officers away from their traditional service to the newly unified force. Recognizing that CF members would continue to have "intense loyalties to the fighting units and broader associations within it," he nevertheless strongly believed that loyalty to a CF could be achieved. "It is nonetheless important that a sense of purpose and a sense of belonging to a single Service, covering all aspects of defence and designed to tackle the complex defence problems of the future, be developed," argued Hellyer.⁴³

Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson had reminded Hellyer of the need to retain important elements of "...[the] service traditions and as much of the old distinctions between sea, land and air components."⁴⁴ Still, Hellyer dismissed this wise counsel, believing instead that having all CF personnel wear the same green uniform, within the same rank structure and the same ladder of promotion, and with the opportunity to be employed across all three services, would gradually have service members, particularly officers, identify themselves primarily with the CF, and, over time, it would change their values and loyalties.⁴⁵ It has not happened.

From the first days after the *Reorganization Act* was passed, service institutional interests and the motivations of generals and admirals inevitably acted against Hellyer's plan. Military parochialism, a member's traditional loyalty to service or military specialty over that for the armed forces as a whole, never disappeared in the new unified CF, and it has often been blamed as one of most serious obstacles preventing meaningful military reform over the last 40 years. One former DM complained that this unhealthy friction within the Canadian military is constantly a cause of turmoil, preventing military ideas from succeeding.⁴⁶ Douglas Bland remarked critically in 1995 that the decline of the intellectual and pragmatic values of unification since its introduction has been "... exaggerated by the ascent to high command of

officers promoted within their own services for advancing their service's interests and [which] has produced, predictably, an officer corps that for the most part still perceives its responsibilities in service terms."⁴⁷

For a variety of reasons, service loyalties remain important, and they cannot be suppressed entirely, or ignored, or dismissed. Military leaders have always carried the primary responsibility for providing a sense of purpose to members of their units, doing so by identifying and reinforcing shared values and identities, and by linking unit goals and tasks to these values and identities. Hellyer went one step too far in trying to implement his higher loyalty concept above single-service loyalty. As historian Jack Granatstein stated a few years ago in *Who Killed the Canadian Military?*, "...loyalty to the navy, army, and air force, to corps and regiments, ships, and squadrons was vital for sailors, soldiers and air-men and women whose job was to fight and risk their lives to serve their country's interests.... [I]t was heritage, tradition, and hard-earned distinctions to fighting men."⁴⁸ Unfortunately, Hellyer did not accept this distinction, and he implemented wholesale unification as the panacea for obtaining a unified defence policy.

The reality is that a service-centred culture is well ingrained into the existing CF culture. At the unit level of the institution, the three environments continue to play a strong role in fostering a warrior ethos and culture. The younger – and older – members of the CF are proud and dedicated to their military duties and responsibilities, and they clearly identify first with their unit, regiment, or service. Services have therefore an essential role to play in taking the newly recruited soldiers, airmen and airwomen, and sailors, and then turning them into combat-capable individuals, and into fighting units. This important aspect of military ethos is now finally recognized

in the CF. The cornerstone manual on the profession of arms in Canada, *Duty With Honour*, acknowledges, after almost 40 years of denial by the unification conformists, the importance of environmental and regimental identities to the armed forces.

The [military] ethos permits Environmental distinctiveness and allows for cultural adaptation.... These unique-to-Environment expressions of ethos derive from and reflect the distinct military functions associated with sea, land and air operations.... The unifying power inherent in the concept of the Canadian Forces must be balanced against the differentiation of the three Environments, which is essential for readiness, generating force, and sustaining a multi-purpose combat-capable force.⁴⁹

As one expert on Canadian military culture wisely advises, “[t]o avoid the potential dysfunctional effects of misplaced loyalties, the leadership of the CF must ensure that there is a healthy balance between small group loyalty and loyalty to the organization.”⁵⁰ In a military force, it is imperative that loyalty evolves gradually with rank and responsibility, with the senior non-commissioned members and officers progressively adjusting their loyalty to the nation, as embodied through the unified CF as they rise in rank. Joint organizations and a unified professional development system in the CF have much to contribute in promoting this healthy balance.

CF common training and education institutions – such as the Leadership and Recruit School, the Royal Military Colleges in Kingston and in Saint-Jean, the Canadian Forces College in Toronto, and the Non-Commissioned Member Professional Development Centre in St-Jean – contribute through the professional development of CF members to the promotion of a CF culture, as do the unified NDHQ staff and the newly established operational commands. Like Hellyer, Hillier’s vision has been to foster this CF identity as well, not through the wearing of a common uniform, but primarily through an operational prism.⁵¹ The participation and achievements of CF members in operations, and highly-deserved recognition by the Canadian public, have helped greatly to inculcate a strong sense of pride and higher purpose to the CF institution, unseen in this country in living memory. It took 40 years for the CF institution to articulate properly in *Duty with Honour* what the three service chiefs of staff could not get Hellyer to understand during the mid-1960s.

Conclusion – Searching for an Organizational Concept for the CF

The present structure of the CF and DND is lost among the various concepts of integration, unification, of command, of management, and of the three operationally distinct services. This confusion of concepts leaves open to the demands of the moment questions about who shall decide defence policies, how defence functions should

be organized and how policy will be put into action. The result is a structure without conceptual foundation and a policy process captured by bureaucratic politics.

– Douglas Bland, 1990⁵²

Unification and Minister Hellyer have been blamed frequently since 1968 for subsequent failings of defence policy, and for the poor condition of the armed forces over the years. This is unfair, as there were positive effects of unification. With the creation of the office of the CDS and the integrated headquarters, Hellyer wanted a unified defence policy instead of three uncoordinated service policies. Hillier has proven these past years that, given the right circumstances and with strong government support, the development of a defence policy centred upon Canadian national interests is entirely achievable.

With integration and unification, redundancies were eliminated through the creation of a common and integrated administrative, training, and support structure for the CF, several tri-service committees were abolished, and considerable reduction of facilities, services and personnel was achieved as well. One of the key ideas of unification was also to improve centralized control and administration of Defence and civil control of the military, and the office of the CDS, now supported by a stronger unified staff, certainly meets this requirement in 2008. While there has been some CF ‘disintegration’ over the years, for the most part Hellyer’s idea of an integrated CF has survived.

Notwithstanding its benefits, unification has also generated many negative effects, and these have naturally tended to attract more interest over the years. Unification of the three services, complete with across-the-board and top-to-bottom integration of all functions, headquarters and activities represented an idealistic – and unproven – organizational concept for the CF. A unified CF is the antithesis of three strong independent and nearly autonomous services, with little synergies and no integration of their day-to-day functions and command structures. Hellyer thought that unification of the three services into one Canadian Armed Forces would solve the problems of defence in Canada. It has not done so, and it will not do so. Unification did not significantly lessen the competition among the three services. The reality is that the unique operating environments of the three services make them look at their capabilities and contributions through a different lens, and differing strategic perspectives and doctrines between the services almost guarantee that there will be service competition and disputes with respect to operational roles and missions.

The young Liberal minister arrived at Defence in 1963 armed with several innovative ideas, but as he faced opposition and resistance to his concepts, he became inflexible and more determined to impose his idealistic vision of a future CF. Hellyer’s initiative was an audacious effort to leapfrog to unification, and fully integrate, in one massive reorganizational change, all functions of the CF,

including its command structure. In the end, the scheme did not succeed, mainly because Hellyer failed to realize when and where to stop with unification as he continued to push uncompromisingly with complete integration of the three services at all levels of the organization. As General Allard, CDS between 1966 and 1969, conceded in his memoirs in 1988, those “...who had initiated the [unification] reform... had not given sufficient consideration to its overall implications.”⁵³

Hellyer’s most controversial unification experiment included the wearing of a single uniform for all CF members, and the establishment of a common rank structure. Had Hellyer not tried to impose a green uniform, he might have been remembered as one of the greatest Defence ministers in Canadian history, as Jack Granatstein stated some years ago.⁵⁴ But the uniform issue eventually became, in 1967, the galvanizing ‘lightning rod’ for the discontent of the services with unification, as it highlighted Hellyer’s disregard for the unique role and critical functions that the individual services were performing.⁵⁵ Hellyer’s unification simply had no room for a meaningful role for the three services in his new CF. Sadly, at the same time, the service chiefs never managed to get across to Hellyer the justification for the independence of the army, air force, and navy, and the long-term operational and institutional consequences of eliminating the services.

Efficiency in defence spending may not have been Hellyer’s fundamental aim of unification, but once he started to face stiff opposition to his unification idea, his emphasis for the reorganization of the CF shifted to reducing the duplication and triplication of services, upon increasing efficiency, and upon strengthening civil control.⁵⁶ As historian David Bercuson has indicated, “[t]he creation of a truly effective fighting force did not figure in the government’s agenda.”⁵⁷ Unification was both justifiable and necessary from an administrative and management standpoint, but it did not correspond to a true operational

need. The focus upon efficiency that dominated the last three decades contributed to increased civilianization and bureaucratization at Defence, reliance upon management and business methods, a progressive loss of operational focus, and a corresponding erosion of military ethos. A number of defence analysts and historians have argued over the years that those important second-order consequences played an important part in the events leading to the Somalia incident in the mid-1990s, which I believe is a fair assessment.⁵⁸

Unification has been a “traumatic experience” for the CF, as General Thériault reminded us in 1993, and, as Hellyer lamented in 1990, “...perhaps it was inevitable that there would be some regression in the twenty years since unification became law.”⁵⁹ The broader perspectives sought by Hellyer associated with the idealistic and progressive concept of unification never fully took root, and the strong-service idea has continued to exercise a powerful influence over all defence issues. Unification proved to be too one-dimensional and overly constraining as an organizational model for a complex institution such as the Canadian military.

Accordingly, since 1968, the CF has been drifting from the spirit of unification, searching for a better concept to organize itself and to guide decision-making and command, overshadowed largely by “...an administrative concept of organization and command,” as one former DCDS declared at the peak of the Somalia Inquiry.⁶⁰ In the 1990s and early 2000s, jointness was adopted as the remedy, but it has faded in recent years. Decisions to reorganize and to restructure the CF over the years have been examined frequently against the unification experience, conditioning ministers, generals, and admirals into a way of thinking about how the CF should, or should not, be organized. The ‘ghosts’ of the unification ideals were certainly part of Hellyer’s legacy.

As Janice Gross Stein and Eugene Lang, the two authors of the award-winning book *The Unexpected War*, observed, Hillier’s appointment as CDS in 2005 fundamentally changed the philosophy, the strategy, the organization, and the culture of the Canadian Forces.⁶¹ With his CF vision and the subsequent transformation, he brought several new ideas to the CF, much like Hellyer. While a number of those ideas were contentious, with strong government support in 2005, they nevertheless served to articulate a new operational paradigm for the CF, which, in turn, contributed to the shaping of a new organizational construct for the institution. In contrast to Hellyer’s unification, however, Hillier’s model placed operational primacy at the centre of his vision, of his reorganization, and of decision-making in the CF. The *Standing Contingency Task Force* concept was Hillier’s vision to implant a true CF joint operational capability, but it has since been shelved for a few years. Perhaps, in the end, this bold operational vision was ‘a bridge too far’ for Canada’s military.



Mobile Command Headquarters St. Hubert, Quebec.

DND photo 756-IMG0068

Despite this setback, Hillier nonetheless reinforced the unified operational chain of command through a command-centric imperative, especially with the creation of a more robust unified staff at NDHQ and the formation of new operational commands focused exclusively upon the conduct of operations. At the same time, Hillier's model has acknowledged the critical role of the environments in generating combat-ready military forces, and in promoting and cultivating a warrior culture in the CF – and the army, navy, air force and special forces have taken a more dominant role in force generation. Equally important, a better balance between achieving efficiency in defence activities and operational effectiveness has been restored, reversing a 40-year frame of mind that had commenced in the 1960s.

Events and activities since 1968 have always pitted the two powerful concepts of unification and the 'strong-service' idea against each other. This is unlikely to disappear in the future, and the two concepts will continue to exert pressure upon the institution. Through his leadership as CDS, General Hillier has helped restore pride in the CF, has brought new confidence to the Canadian military, has re-connected Canadians to its armed forces, and, in doing so, he has exorcised both the ghosts of Somalia and of Hellyer's unification.

Colonel R.L. Raymont, an executive assistant to the CDS between 1955 and 1968, stated in an extensive report on integration and unification that he authored in 1983 that "...whether or not you agree with it, Paul Hellyer was either a saint or the devil. While it is true that the integration of CFHQ and ultimately the unification of the services was finally achieved and became a reality through the leadership and vigorous efforts of Paul Hellyer, the general concept did not originate with him, nor the implementation end with him."⁶² After 40 tumultuous years, it is time to finally bury the long shadow of unification and to stop blaming Paul Hellyer for any future ills of defence. The CF institution is today what it is because it was built that way by a succession of ministers, CDSs, DMs, generals and admirals. When the institution – or parts of it – outlives its usefulness or fails, it will be our responsibility to take it apart and rebuild it. The CF will continue to transform, adapt, and evolve to meet government priorities, changes in the nature of warfare, and new security challenges. It must.



Maritime Command Headquarters, Halifax, Nova Scotia.



NOTES

1. Major-General Daniel Gosselin is the Commander of the Canadian Defence Academy. He is a part-time PhD candidate in the Department of History at Queen's University, working on his dissertation analyzing Canada's national command. His latest article, "Spirited Imperialism: The Formation and Command of the First Canadian Expeditionary Force in South Africa," was recently published in the Summer 2008 edition of *Canadian Military History*.
2. The author thanks several serving and retired general officers and Dr. Douglas Bland of Queen's University for their constructive comments in the preparation of this article.
3. Paul Hellyer, *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, Standing Committee on National Defence, 7 February 1967, p. 440. Hellyer employed the term 'combined' for what is commonly referred to as 'joint' today.
4. R.L. Raymont, "The Organization of Higher Control and Coordination in the Formulation of Defence Policy, 1945-1964," (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 1978) pp. 65-66. Members of the Chiefs of Staff Committee were, collectively, the government's professional military advisors. A permanent Chairman Chiefs of Staff was appointed on 1 February 1951. See discussion pp. 60-76.
5. Report by the Joint Planning Committee to the Chiefs of Staff Committee, "A Proposed Canadian System of Unified Operational Commands" (CSC 5-11-22 (JPC)), 4 May 1951, DHH 2002/17, Box 77, File 24. My appreciation to Richard Goette for sharing this key document.
6. Later renamed the North American Aerospace Defence Command.
7. General Charles Foulkes, "The Case for One Service," July 1961, Hellyer Papers, Library and Archives Canada, MG32-B33, Vol. 82. Also, R.L. Raymont, "Report on Integration and Unification 1964-1968," (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 1982), pp. 7-10, and Paul Hellyer, *Damn the Torpedoes: My Fight to Unify the Canadian Forces* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1990), pp. 39-40.
8. Paul Hellyer, House of Commons *Debates* (thereafter *Debates*), 7 December 1966, p. 10823.
9. Allan English, *Command and Control of Canadian Aerospace Forces: Conceptual Foundations* (Trenton, Canadian Forces Aerospace Warfare Centre, 2008), p. 51.
10. For a discussion on the formation of the commands, see Vernon J. Kronenberg, *All Together Now: The Organization of the Department of National Defence in Canada 1964-1972* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1973), and R.L. Raymont, "Report on Integration and Unification," pp. 70-101.
11. Kronenberg, pp. 89-92.
12. English, *Ibid.*, p. 60.
13. For a discussion on the impact of unification and the air elements in the CF, between 1968 and 1975, see English, *Ibid.*, pp. 55-57.
14. For the problems that this created during the First Gulf War in 1990-1991, see Jean Morin and Richard H. Gimblett, *Operation Friction: The Canadian Forces in the Persian Gulf*

- (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1997), pp. 97-126. Except for domestic operations, there was no intent for Mobile Command and Maritime Command to conduct international operations, but only to generate those joint forces for employment by NATO or the UN.
15. Lieutenant-General Paul Addy, "Affidavit – Written Submissions," before *The Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces to Somalia*, May 1997, quoted in Douglas Bland, "Canada's Officer Corps: New Times, New Ideas," presentation to the CDA Institute 15th Annual Seminar (Ottawa, 1999), at <<http://www.cda-cdai.ca/seminars/1999/99bland.htm>>, accessed 15 August 2008.
 16. See Michael Rostek, "A Framework for Fundamental Change? The Management Command and Control Re-Engineering Initiative," *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (Winter 2004-2005), pp. 65-72; and G.E. (Joe) Sharpe and Allan English, *Principles for Change in the Post-Cold War Command and Control of the Canadian Forces* (Kingston, ON: CF Leadership Institute, 2002), p. 22-33.
 17. Terry Pedwell, "Hillier orders restructuring of military command: army, navy, air force to be integrated regionally," in *The Kingston Whig-Standard*, 6 June 2005; and Kristina Davis, "CF Operational Commands take charge of domestic, special and international operations," in *The Maple Leaf*, Vol. 9, No. 6 (8 February 2006), p. 2.
 18. *The Maple Leaf*, "CF Transformation: From Mission to Vision," 19 October 2005, Vol. 8, No. 36, p. 7; and DND backgrounder, "Canada Command," BG 05.017, 28 June 2005, available at <http://www.dnd.ca/site/Newsroom/view_news_e.asp?id=1692>, accessed 15 August 2008.
 19. NORAD operations represent a particular case, with the Commander 1 Canadian Air Division in Winnipeg reporting to both Commander NORAD and the CDS for continental air sovereignty missions.
 20. Lieutenant-General Steve Lucas, Commentary, *NATO's Nations and Partners for Peace*, Issue 3 (Bonn: Mönch Publishing Group, 2005), p. 64. The Combined Forces Air Component Commander Forward represents the needs of Commander 1 Canadian Air Division in Ottawa with the respective Commanders of Canada Command, CANSOFCOM, and, as required, CANSOFCOM.
 21. See discussion in Raymont, "Report on Integration and Unification," pp. 73-79.
 22. See *White Paper*, in Douglas Bland, *Canada's National Defence Volume 1 Defence Policy* (Kingston, ON: Queen's University School of Policy Studies, 1997), pp. 91-92.
 23. For a discussion on Canada's defence invariants, see R.J. Sutherland, "Canada's Long-Term Strategic Situation," *International Journal* 17 (Winter 1961-1962), pp. 199-233, and Jeff Tasserou, "Facts and Invariants: The Changing Context of Canadian Defence Policy," *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Summer 2003), pp. 19-30.
 24. Paul Hellyer, "Canadian Defence Policy," in *Air University Review*, Vol. 19, No. 1, (November/December 1967), p. 3. For a better understanding of the environment in 1964, see Ross Fetterly, "The Influence of the Environment on the 1964 Defence White Paper," *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (Winter 2004-2005), pp. 47-54.
 25. Hellyer, *Debates*, 8 May 1964, p. 3067, and Raymont, "Report on Integration and Unification," pp. 66-76.
 26. Hellyer, "Canadian Defence Policy," p. 6.
 27. Raymond, "Report on Integration and Unification," pp. 1-10.
 28. Douglas Bland, *Chiefs of Defence: Government and the Unified Command of the Canadian Armed Forces* (Toronto: The Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 1995), pp. 57-58; and Donald Savoie, *Governing from the Centre* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), pp. 19-46.
 29. On the Glasco Commission, Hellyer, *Damn the Torpedoes*, pp. 36-38. Hellyer had several opportunities to share his frustrations with McNamara with respect to the implementation of unification and to learn lessons from the American experience. *Ibid.*, pp. 223-224.
 30. Jack Granatstein, "Unification: The Politics of the Armed Forces," in *Canada 1957-1967: The Years of Uncertainty and Innovation* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), p. 227.
 31. Kronenberg, *All Together Now*, Figure 18, p. 111.
 32. Granatstein, "Unification," p. 229. Schools included the School of Administration and Logistics (CFSAL) and the School of Military Intelligence (CFSMI), while others were reorganized to better address pan-CF needs, such as the School of Military Engineering (CFSME), and the School of Communications and Electronics (CFSCE). The CF Recruits School later renamed the CF Leadership and Recruits School, and the CF Management Development School to improve management methods, were also formed in 1968.
 33. These included computerized program control, pay system, logistic system, management information system, and personnel records. See Air Marshal Sharp presentation to the Standing Committee on National Defence, 7 February 1967, pp. 452-453, and Raymont, "Report on Integration and Unification," pp. 105-110.
 34. The MRG had been created in 1971 by Minister Donald Macdonald to advise him on how to better manage defence policy. See Douglas Bland, *The Administration of Defence Policy in Canada in Canada, 1947-1985* (Kingston, ON: R.P. Frye, 1987), pp. 62-85.
 35. Donald J. Savoie, *Globalization and Governance* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1993), p. 1.
 36. The 'management era' term was coined by Douglas Bland, in *The Administration of Defence Policy in Canada: 1947 to 1985* (Kingston, ON: Ronald P. Frye & Company, 1987), pp. 1-11. Also Rostek, "A Framework for Fundamental Change?" E.M.D. Leslie, "Too Much Management, Too Little Command," *Canadian Defence Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (Winter 1972/73), pp. 30-32.
 38. For example, the CF School of Military Engineering and the CF School of Communications and Electronics, which train both air force and army personnel, are under command of CLS. The Joint Nuclear Biological and Chemical (NBCD) Defence Company, which was formerly part of the Joint Operations Group (disbanded in 2006), now belongs to CANSOFCOM, and was renamed the Canadian Joint Incident Response Unit. See CANSOFCOM website, at <http://www.cansofcom.forces.gc.ca/en/cjiru_e.asp>, accessed 15 August 2008.
 39. Rostek, "A Framework for Fundamental Change?" p. 71.
 40. As of September 2008, the number is closer to 137,000, with nearly 29,000 civil servants, almost 65,000 regular force members, and 43,000 reservists (Classes A, B, and C).
 41. Canada, *Achieving Administrative Efficiency*, Report to the Minister of National Defence by the Advisory Committee on Administrative Efficiency (Ottawa, 2003), p. iii.
 42. *The Maple Leaf*, "CF Transformation: From Mission to Vision," 19 October 2005, Vol. 8, No. 36, p. 7.
 43. Hellyer, as quoted in Bland, *Canada's National Defence Volume 2*, p. 132-133.
 44. Lester B. Pearson, as quoted in Granatstein, "Unification," p. 236.
 45. Granatstein, *Ibid.*, p. 238.
 46. In Bland, *Chiefs of Defence*, p. 170.
 47. *Ibid.*, pp. 288-289.
 48. Jack Granatstein, *Who Killed The Canadian Military?*, p. 82.
 49. Canada, *Duty With Honour* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2003), pp. 25, 74. Peter Kasurak, writing in 1982 on the issue of civilianization of the CF from the context of military personnel adopting civilian norms and standards, recommended the establishment of a formal military ethos. It took 22 years for a manual on the profession of arms to be published. Kasurak, p. 128. For a discussion on the importance of the regiment, see David J. Bercuson, *The Fighting Canadians: Our Regimental History from New France to Afghanistan* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 2008).
 50. Allan English, *Understanding Military Culture: A Canadian Perspective* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), p. 104.
 51. *The Maple Leaf*, "CF Transformation," *Ibid.*, p. 7.
 52. Douglas Bland, "A Defence White Paper for Canada," *Canadian Defence Quarterly* (December 1990), p. 28.
 53. Jean V. Allard, *The Memoirs of General Jean V. Allard*, with Serge Bernier (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1988), p. 253.
 54. Granatstein, "Unification," pp. 241-242.
 55. Granatstein, *Who Killed the Canadian Military?*, p. 82.
 56. Bland, *Chiefs of Defence*, p. 88, and Hellyer, *Debates*, 8 May 1964, pp. 3065-3069.
 57. David Bercuson, *Significant Incident* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1996), p. 72.
 58. The events and contributing factors leading to the Somalia incident are described in David Bercuson, *Dishonoured Legacy: Canada's Army, The Airborne, and the Murder in Somalia* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1996). On assigning some degree of responsibility for the Somalia incident to Hellyer's unification, see Bercuson, *Significant Incident*, pp. 72-75; Jack Granatstein, *Who Killed the Canadian Military?*, p. 69; and Bland, "Canada's Officer Corps." See also the discussion in Canada, Commission of Inquiry, "The Military in Canadian Society," *Dishonoured Legacy: The Lessons of the Somalia Affair*, Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces to Somalia (Ottawa, ON: Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1997).
 59. General G.C.E. Thériault, "Reflections on Canadian Defence Policy and its Underlying Structural Problems," *Canadian Defence Quarterly* (July 1993), p. 3; and Hellyer, *Damn the Torpedoes*, p. x.
 60. Addy, "Affidavit," *Ibid.*
 61. Janice Gross Stein and Eugene Lang, *The Unexpected War: Canada in Kandahar* (Toronto: Penguin, 2007), p. 151.
 62. Raymont, "Report on Integration and Unification," p. 1. Colonel R.L. Raymont was executive assistant to the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff, then to the CDS, for over 13 years, including the critical period 1963-1968. He also wrote several other key reports between 1978 and 1983.