

BOOK REVIEW ESSAYS

[Editor's Note~ Now and then, a work emerges for review that is both time-sensitive and of special relevance to current and future Canadian Forces doctrine and operations. Accordingly, two different assessments of the same work are herewith presented by two different CF practitioners of the Comprehensive Approach.]

Security Operations in the 21st Century – Canadian Perspectives on the Comprehensive Approach

by Mike Rostek and Peter Gizewski (eds.)

Montreal & Kingston: Queen's Policy Study Series, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011

281 pages, \$ 39.95

ISBN: 978-1-55339-351-1

Reviewed by Brigid Dooley-Tremblay

Mike Rostek and Peter Gizewski have done an excellent job of compiling a series of essays that - collectively - chronicle the level and effectiveness of civil-military cooperation in Canadian domestic and foreign operations following ten years of war in Afghanistan. The volume should be of considerable interest to anyone following the current academic discussion on the comprehensive approach, the precise definition of which is a hotly debated subject addressed in several of the papers. To those unfamiliar with the topic, the comprehensive approach may be succinctly described as a cooperative approach to crisis management where "...diverse situationally-aware actors resolve complex issues through the purposeful coordination and deconfliction of their information, actions and effects."¹ Variants of the concept go by more familiar names, including: 'joint, interagency, multinational, private (JIMP),' 'whole-of-government,' and 'defence-diplomacy-development,' - the '3D' approach.

The term comprehensive approach most frequently implies cooperation among a wide variety of actors operating within the international community, including those representing governmental, inter-governmental (such as the United Nations and NATO) and non-governmental organizations. Rostek and Gizewski have included a captivating section that describes three separate instances where the concept has been applied to manage domestic security-related challenges, with varying degrees of success. This somewhat-unconventional addition enhances the uniquely Canadian flavour of the book, and extends its perspective to include situations and organizations that might otherwise escape examination.

Security Operations in the 21st Century is particularly intriguing because it so accurately depicts the attitudes, assumptions, perceptions, and misperceptions of the various players who have participated in Canadian security-related operations, as well as those of their academic observers. For example, some of the authors suggest that the tactical-level

units that perform civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) tasks on Provincial Reconstruction Teams and elsewhere represent the entirety of the Canadian Forces' contribution to the comprehensive approach. Others make it clear that this is not the case. In military parlance, the comprehensive approach is practiced at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels; and commanders, headquarters, and units throughout the chain of command work to contribute to it by fostering strong civil-military relations. Such activity does not fall within the sole purview of CIMIC units, despite their moniker and mandate. This is often misunderstood by organizations - such as non-governmental corporations and development agencies - in which individuals operate simultaneously at all three levels. Disparate views, different objectives and stereotypic opinions held on all sides can serve to frustrate the type of cooperation that is both *prescribed* by and *necessary* for the comprehensive approach to effectively function.

The book's content is solidly researched, written, and compiled. Although several essays touch upon similar topics, this is a strong asset rather than a liability. An impressively broad range of themes are examined from varying perspectives in the voices of the constituencies represented. Without exception, the contributors are very well-qualified to speak for the organizations and points of view they champion.

There has been much discussion in recent years about the importance of creating professional development courses aimed at fostering understanding and cooperation

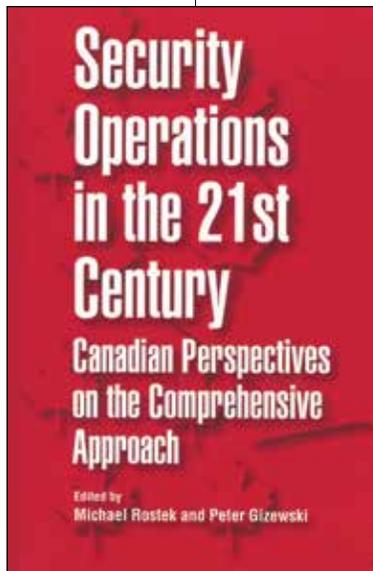
among governmental and other Canadian practitioners of the comprehensive approach. Were *Security Operations in the 21st Century* to be adopted as a text for such educational purposes, it could contribute substantially to furthering this objective and establishing the comprehensive approach as a Canadian norm that supports security and stability in the 21st Century. As the book perceptively concludes: "*The litmus test for the comprehensive approach is simple: The whole must be greater than the sum of its parts.*"²

NOTES

1. Chief Force Development, *The Comprehensive Approach Concept* (2010), as quoted on p. 236.
2. Christann Leuprecht, *Conclusion*, p. 247.

Reviewed by Derek Spencer

Since the end of the Cold War, NATO and various nations, including Canada, have undertaken a large number of stabilization missions, such as ISAF, with their military forces. Arguably, the single largest deduction from these operations is



that no single agency can achieve success by acting on its own. The result has been a focus upon even more than a 'whole of government approach,' but rather, a Comprehensive Approach (CA). NATO has, in fact, embraced this concept at the highest level, and considers it key to operational planning and execution. It is not a rarefied or esoteric concept, but one many in the Canadian Forces (CF) at all rank levels have experienced in many operations. Since the seminal paper on the topic by Leslie, Gizewski, and Rostek in the Canadian Military Journal in 2009, this has moved beyond a fad or a buzzword into a concept that is gaining theoretical rigour, and one that has been 'operationalized.' I myself have 'lived the CA' in operations in Afghanistan within Regional Command (South) Headquarters Reconstruction and Development (R&D) Branch, in support of the Integrated Security Unit (ISU) in preparation for the Vancouver Winter Olympics, and as a student on NATO's Comprehensive Operations Planning Course.

It is against this background that *Security Operations in the 21st Century* has been published. The book results from the fine editing of papers submitted to the Comprehensive Approach conference held in Kingston, Ontario, in April 2010 by two of the leading writers on the topic, Lieutenant-Colonel (ret'd) Michael Rostek, and Mr. Peter Gizewski. These editors have taken great efforts to put together a number of papers drawn from a very wide community of interest. The book represents an excellent effort to turn a loose field of government buzzwords into a solid theoretical foundation. Starting in Chapter 1, Gizewski offers what is likely the best definition available of the Comprehensive Approach, describing it as "... a means of achieving greater awareness and interaction with others agencies and organizations characterized by proactive engagement between actors, shared understanding, outcome based thinking and collaborative working." By bringing together such a wide range of authors, this subject gets an amazingly thorough treatment. It is organized into five major parts: (Re-) Discovering CA, Non-Government Perspectives, CA in International Operations, CA in Domestic Operations, and Making CA Work. As a list of sections, one can see that not much has been left unaddressed from the foundational, to the practical, to future development opportunities.

Part 1 provides a detailed theoretical foundation and historical treatment of the topic. It then proceeds with a review of various doctrinal efforts garnered from the UN, NATO, the US, and the UK. Part 2 provides a useful counterpoint by giving a clear voice to the other side of the CA: non-governmental organizations. It is perhaps paradoxical that the military has identified the value of the CA, produced doctrine, training, and organizational structures around it, and then proceeds into operations with an expectation that potential partner agencies will follow this militarily-dominated method. The value of NGOs in complex humanitarian spaces, and their impartiality in delivering critical resources without bureaucratic burden, is the very impediment to effective collaboration with the military, something for which CA argues. In practice, this has caused no end of frustration in R&D or Plans branches in NATO Headquarters. It is Nipa Banerjee in Chapter 5 who provides a very enlightening argument that Quick Impact Projects (QIP) may make matters worse, not better. And yet,

NATO Lessons Learned would say that perhaps the one valid type of action in an R&D line of operation is the delivery of QIPs. This does not mean that militaries should not do QIPs. It means we have to be very culturally sensitive when we do them and this may be very difficult to achieve when cooperation with NGOs has proven to be very difficult. To finalize this point, 'Medicines Sans Frontiers' members M. McHary and K. Coppock perhaps said it best in Chapter 6: "In the end, co-existence not cooperation is all we can achieve." In sum, Part 2 is a 'splash of cold water' that perhaps all us self-styled military 'experts in the CA need.

With the foundation established, and a new sense of wariness in place, Parts 3 and 4 stage well. They represent an excellent sampling of operations as case studies along the full spectrum of recent operations. Colonel Simm's description of the JIMP approach provides a further and practical deepening of how the CA works. That it differs from NATO's framework that uses PMESII should not hinder our use of the CA. They are frameworks to undertake meaningful planning that enables successful mission execution. The point in both is that military forces taking the CA must synchronize, coordinate, and co-exist with actors outside our control and influence, and yet, they are entities who nonetheless influence and impact upon us. Overall, the international case studies provide a number of valuable expeditionary examples that go beyond the often too narrow focus upon Afghanistan. Conversely, Bernard Brister's paper on the Vancouver Winter Olympics provides a great example for the CA in Domestic Operations. As I personally led a CA in the specialized field in support of the ISU, I found this objective and scholarly article interesting. In my opinion, our experiences and successes garnered from that process only reinforce his deductions. That ours worked so well was because the CF was formally requested by the Minister of Public Safety to aid the RCMP, was then subsequently tasked by the CDS and Canada Command, and was expected by the civilian agencies and departments (provincial and federal) to lead the effort. In short, it worked only because all sides wanted it to work; certainly rare in practice, based upon all the case studies.

At the end of this deliberate effort to establish a theoretical foundation and provide case studies, Part 5 takes it one step further. It is a bold attempt to turn a new theory into a practical process. Clearly, the challenge will be to partner with Federal Government departments and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) and then conduct joint training. The start of this is undertaking military pre-deployment exercises that have meaningful opportunities and space for organizations. Steve Moore outlines a framework to make the CA work using Key Leader Engagements (KLEs). This is an intriguing proposal in light of CF successes in Afghanistan in conducting these types of operations. The other articles point to education, or to training opportunities to build capacity. One weakness of this section, however, is a lack of discussion of measures of effectiveness. It is one thing to talk theory, process, and training, but it is really all for nothing if there is no framework for the objective evaluation of results.

It must be noted that even the Conclusion added value by challenging the value of the CA quite objectively. After more

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than 200 pages and 20 articles espousing the benefits of CA, Dr. Leuprecht of Canada's Royal Military College provides another good splash of cold water to dampen our enthusiasm, and he continues the challenge presented in the book to maintain open thinking on the issue.

Overall, this book is a good start to building up this field of endeavour. Each article is crisp and well-written. One can approach the topic from a number of angles with ease. For instance, those new to the CA would be well served just to read Part 1. Those with more knowledge could read some of Part 2 to get out of their purely-military viewpoint, and to widen their understanding of other government departments (OGDs).. Conversely, exercise planners would be well served by focusing upon Part 5, while those undertaking campaign planning should focus upon using Parts 3 and 4 as detailed narrative after-action reports.

This book is thus recommended to any involved in using the Comprehensive Approach within Canadian Forces opera-

tions. Increasingly however, this appears to apply to the entire Departmental organization.

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Wired for War: The Robotics Revolution and Conflict in the 21st Century

by P. W. Singer

London: Penguin Books, 2009

512 Pages, \$20.69 HC

ISBN: 978 1594 201 981

Reviewed by Scott Nicholas Romaniuk

If ever a single and concise literary work was able to achieve a productive exploration of technology, politics, economics, law, and war, P. W. Singer's *Wired for War: The Robotics Revolution and Conflict in the 21st Century* not only does so, it stands as the most current and compelling centerpiece of the current academic discourse that will surely be instrumental in propelling the concept of robotic warfare toward paradigmatic status.

In the last several years, a newer and fitter form of warfare and approach to orchestrating combat has emerged, promising to forever alter the fundamental principles of armed conflict and the composition of modern militaries. That is, the digital age in combination with the need and desire to *remove*, or at least *distance*, the human component from battle, has led to the production and deployment of more than 12,000 robotic systems fighting alongside their human counterparts in Iraq alone. The result is, as Singer states, one in which "... unmanned planes, robot guns and AI battle managers are turning [the] experience of war into something else altogether."

This book serves as a critical ontological tool in several fields of scholarly analysis, casting analytic light upon the contentious ground that the very practice of war is regulated so artificially as to ascribe allegedly and profoundly immoral and unethical advantages to those conducting it. Thus, "the

revolution in robotics," opines Singer, "is forcing us to reexamine what is possible, probable, and proper in war and politics." Although this is a determined and praiseworthy endeavor, Singer's work suffers from certain theoretical and substantive limitations, but not to an extent that its contribution to its fields of discourse might diminish considerably.

Singer brings his experience and expertise to bear on his book's 22 chapters, the pace and organization of which are all well traced and, developed, and are complementary of one another. As Director of the 21st Century Defense Initiative at the Brookings Institution, Singer has worked in the Pentagon, and has consulted for the Departments of Defense and State, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and Congress. He has also authored two previous books, *Corporate Warriors*, and *Children at War*, and has also written for publications such as *The New York Times* and *Foreign Affairs*.

The first nine chapters that comprise Part One immerse the reader within both a general overview of the prolific changes taking place in the fields of warfare in technological terms and the general impact that the robotics age has meant for those who practice war, and those who are the recipients of its violent means and aims. These chapters exemplify the fundamental shift in the manner in which we now view the great-war paradigm, its nuances, and critical effects upon all involved. The initial chapters introduce readers to the four fields of "warbot" application, including those of: land, sea, air, and space. The functionality and effectiveness of the various designs of these systems are described in detail, and, in each case, Singer reveals some of the restraints placed upon their capabilities simply by virtue of their artificial quality. Given their progress, and in spite of the progress that has yet to be made, Singer describes how these machines emerge from the United States (US) Army's \$340 billion Future Combat Systems (FCS) program.