

Sovereignty Suicide: Canada's March Into the American Empire

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Growth in the disparity between how Canadians view themselves and the way in which other countries view them will soon reach such dramatic proportions that it will be undeniable to all but the most obtuse observer. The disparity has its genesis in Canada's long history as a morally superior, exceptionally virtuous peacekeeper with very limited military needs. This utopian vision does not square with the current reality or the historic record any more than Jean Crétien's October 2003 statement that "we treat the military very well. They are very well equipped."¹

Canadian Political leaders subscribe to a special set of "Canadian values", and have continuously repeated those values to the public. These professed values are the underpinning of the portrayed view of Canada abroad. Canadian citizens have heard these values, and the resultant world image, repeated so many times that they now understand them as truth. This is not a new political tactic. One savvy politician once claimed:

that in a big lie there is always a certain force of credibility; because the broad masses of a nation are always more easily corrupted in the deeper strata of their emotional nature than consciously or voluntarily, and thus in the primitive simplicity of their minds they more readily fall victims to the big lie than the small lie, since they themselves often tell small lies in little matters but would be ashamed to resort to large-scale falsehoods."²

Our elected leaders seem to acknowledge this political perspicacity even though they are not following the national strategy of Adolph Hitler. As Dennis Stairs so aptly states: "there is increasing evidence that the government's comforting rhetoric is in danger of becoming far too successful, so that Canadians are internalizing it and taking it seriously at face value. In short they are coming to believe what they are told, and in the process losing their grip."³ Indeed, Canadians can believe what they wish, however, these beliefs become problematic when they become integral to decision-making process during the creation of Canada's foreign policy and defence structure.

In the past the Canadian government participated internationally (during World Wars I and II, Korea, Cuban Missile Crisis and UN Peacekeeping operations) in order to ensure that Canada's cultural, intellectual and academic activities and accomplishments were viewed on the world's stage, and, hence, to project Canadian values and culture

¹ Jean Chrétien, *Canada Without Armed Forces?* Douglas Bland, Ed. Kingston, Ont: Queen's University, 2003, p. 105.

² Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*. James Murphy, translator: London, New York, Melbourne: Hurst and Blackett Ltd, 1942. p 134.

³ Dennis Stairs, "Myths, Morlas, and Reality in Canadian Foreign Policy" *International Journal* Volume LVIII No. 2 Spring 2003, Canadian Institute of International Affairs. p 251.

internationally. It is only recently that we have deviated from these traditional Canadian diplomatic protocols.

No matter what beliefs the Canadian public may hold, the facts remain the same, and no amount of wishing other wise will prevent the collision of their beliefs with reality. Since the First World War Canada has bought its presence on the world stage with the commitments of the men and women of its military forces. Throughout the country's history some Canadian governments have recognized this, and others have not and with the ebb and flow of interest in our place in the world came the rise and fall of our economy; so strongly linked to foreign trade and the ability to nourish and protect our culture. There have been many recent comments on the state of the Canadian Forces (CF), all of which have failed to explain the ramifications to our sovereignty and our relationship with the United States (U.S.).

Adequate security and defence are not ends in themselves, but rather the requirement for a state to remain sovereign. Many in Canada and the U.S. have seen the Canadian Government chest pounding on cultural issues, and distancing itself from the U.S. over the "war in Iraq" or the "war on terror"—depending on one's perspective—and take this as proof that Canadians and Americans are diverging both culturally and politically. While there are indeed differences—as Chris Ragan put it: "you can be a social conservative in the U.S. without being a wacko: Not in Canada."⁴—Canadians do not as readily see in the media Canadian and U.S. military officers and government officials sitting down to discuss integrated continental defence. The questions this paper will examine revolve around the introduction of the modern sovereign state and the implications to Canada's status as a "middle" or "soft" power if it fails to maintain viable and credible defence forces. It will further discuss what implications declining defence capabilities might have on our sovereignty, our defence relationship with the U.S. and our position in the new world order relative to the apparently rising American empire.

THE STATE, SOVEREIGNTY AND CANADA

According to Gianfranco Poggi, the state:

is perhaps best seen as a complex set of institutional arrangements for rule operating through the continuous and regulated activities of individuals acting as occupants of offices. The state, as the sum total of such offices, reserves to itself the business of rule over territorially bounded society; it monopolizes in law and as far as possible in fact, all faculties and facilities pertaining to that business.⁵

⁴ Chris Ragan, "Canada's View on Social Issues Is Opening Rifts With the U.S." *The New York Times* (nytimes.com, December 2, 2003, accessed 2 December 2003).

⁵ Gianfranco Poggi, *The development of the modern state: A Sociological Introduction*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1978, p 1.

As for the function of the state perhaps the most pragmatic characterization is that of Max Weber who believed that the state “monopolizes legitimate violence”.⁶ It is agreed upon by most scholars that the state is a set of institutions, manned by state personnel with the most important institution being that which provides the means of violence and coercion, usually embodied by the military and police forces. Secondly, these institutions are geographically bound and are referred to as society.⁷ The belief is that the state looks inward concerning itself with its national society and outward to larger societies with which it must interact. Finally, the state will have a monopoly on the rule within its territory.⁸ In this sense the state becomes synonymous with government and a defined territory.

The territorial definition of society meant a close association with the social order within the boundaries of the state. Territorial defence has been a primary obligation of the state; an attack on territory meant a challenge to the state’s authority and order.⁹ This societal association with the state is revealed through history as being an effect of the way that people live and act within its boundaries.¹⁰ It provides the people within a state with a sense of state identity, which is a key component in the maintenance of the states’ sovereignty.

A state’s sovereignty, as defined by Cynthia Weber and Thomas Biersteker, is a political entity’s externally recognized right to exercise final authority over its affairs.¹¹ They argue that in order for a state to have its sovereignty recognized by other states there are a number of specific actions that it must carry out. These actions are designated to the state by sovereignty and include the maintenance of independence, national identity and internal supremacy.¹² In addition, if the state wants to remain a sovereign entity then it must demonstrate not only domestic political supremacy, but also actual independence of outside authority in foreign affairs.¹³ The sovereign state’s existence is defined, in part, by its external independence, and its geographical borders. This theory of state sovereignty is based on the idea that all sovereign states are equal, independent units in the world system, able to make their own choices based on their own self-interest. This independence leads to what realists term the anarchy of the world system.¹⁴

⁶ Max Weber, *Economy and society*. Vol. 2. Edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978, pp 904-905

⁷ John A. Hall and John G. Ikenberry, *The State*. Milton Keynes, UK: Open University Press, 1989, pp 1-2.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p 2.

⁹ Robert D. Sack, *Conceptions of Space in Social Thought: A Geographic Perspective*, London: MacMillan Press, 1980, p 181.

¹⁰ Timothy Mitchell, “The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches,” *American Political Science Review* 85: 1, 1991: pp 77–96.

¹¹ Cynthia Weber and Thomas Biersteker, ed. *State Sovereignty as Social Construct*, London, England: Cambridge Press, 1996, p 12.

¹² *Ibid.*, p 14.

¹³ Michael Fowler and Julie Bunck, *Law, Power and the Sovereign State*, University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State Press, 1996, p 48.

¹⁴ Hans J. Morganthau, "A Realist Theory of International Politics" in *Politics Among Nations*, Sixth ed. New York, NY: McGraw Hill, 1985, pp 3-17.

The concept of the nation state has become increasingly vitiated since the start of the twentieth century. There is no question that the traditional Waltzian logic of competing national interests continues to drive the interstate system.¹⁵ However the muted power struggles of the post cold war and bipolar world seem to be overshadowed by the private logic of the global economy. The image of states as the pre-eminent actors at the global level becomes harder to sustain as power and wealth are increasingly generated by transactions that take place across the borders of states rather than within them.¹⁶

There are two groups of theories about the state that make antipodal predictions about the effect of the changing international security environment on various aspects of state structure. The "State persistence" theories maintain that despite the end of the cold war and the significant changes in the international security environment, states will remain for the most part unchanged in scope and cohesion. "The nation-state," according to Michael Mann, is "not in any general decline, anywhere."¹⁷ Some accounts of this argument assert that states facilitate internal economic or other non-military tasks such as mobilizing for collective action or dealing with market failures that continuously justifying their existence despite international changes.¹⁸ Other accounts hold that states are constantly shaped by both internal and external factors such as transaction costs or ideas that could also continue to justify the state. Also, there are some that argue that the state is primarily a response to continuing external economic vulnerability.¹⁹

"State deformation" theories, on the other hand, maintain that the changed international security environment makes the continued broad scope, and in a few cases even the viability, of certain states extremely doubtful. According to this argument, threats are critical for bringing groups of individuals together and keeping them together. That is, insecure environments make for secure states. This argument is based on two assumptions: (1) expansion in state scope is justified primarily by war; and (2) some states are so deeply divided that without external threats to hold them together they would collapse. In short, the state deformation theorists would predict that the changed external military threat environment at the end of the cold war should have very dramatic effects on the scope and cohesion of a variety of different types of states. Some of these views of sovereignty and states are being eroded by other external and internal factors.

The conventional norms of sovereignty are being challenged by the Internet, CNN, monetary unions, non-governmental organizations and the degree to which economic gain can be pursued on an independent basis. Not long ago sovereignty was taken for granted in world politics, as J.D.P. Miller so eloquently expressed it: 'just as we

¹⁵ Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, Addison-Wesley, 1979, pp. 1-17.

¹⁶ Peter Evans, "The Eclipse of the State? Reflections on Stateness in an Era of Globalization" in *World Politics* No. 50, October, 1997. p 65.

¹⁷ Michael Mann, "Nation-states in Europe and Other Continents: Diversifying, Developing, Not Dying" in *Daedalus* Volume 122, No. 3, Summer, 1993. p 118.

¹⁸ Paul Hirst, and Grahame Thompson, "Globalization and the Future of the Nation-State", in *Economy and Society*, vol. 24, no. 3, August, 1995. p 408-442.

¹⁹ Eric Helleiner, "Explaining the Globalization of Financial Markets: Bringing States Back In", in *Review of International Political Economy*, Volume 2, no. 2, Spring, 1995. pp. 315-41.

know a camel or a chair when we see one, so we know a sovereign state. It is a political entity, which is treated as a sovereign state by other sovereign states'.²⁰ This simple summation stresses the importance of recognition. The weakening of norms relating to borders and secessions is creating new tensions in the broadening interpretation of threats to international peace and security. Challenges to traditional interpretations of state sovereignty have arisen because of the incapacity of certain states to effectively exercise authority over their territories and populations. In some cases, sovereignty is a legal fiction not matched by an actual political capacity.

Forty years ago, John Herz, in *The Rise and Demise of the Territorial State* argued that

for centuries the characteristics of the basic political unit, the nation-state, had been its "territoriality" that its being identified with an area which, surrounded by a "wall of defensibility," was relatively impermeable to outside penetration and thus capable of satisfying one fundamental urge of humans-protection. However, ... territoriality was bound to vanish, chiefly under the impact of developments in the means of destruction which render defense nugatory by making even the most powerful "permeable".²¹

The paradox of the contemporary world is that the form of the nation-state is becoming increasingly universal, concomitant with its traditional substance being radically transformed. The debate of the 'new interventionists' has changed from one that argued the between morality, human rights, liberty, and state sovereignty to one that determines the security threat to the western world, particularly our southern neighbour. U.S. security is directly dependant on Canada, as stated by Anthony Lake in 2000, an American nightmare has begun: "but in a world grown closer, the weakness of other nations can harm the lives of our citizens as much as, or more than, the military strength of potential foes."²²

North America and especially Canada must understand the importance of wielding power to protect its sovereignty, thus: "The U.S. and its allies, the states with the greatest interest in peace and the greatest power to preserve it, appear to be faltering in their willingness to pay the price in money and the risk of lives. Nothing could be more natural in a liberal republic, yet nothing could be more threatening to the peace they have recently achieved."²³

The concept of sovereignty is becoming understood more in terms of conferring responsibilities on government to assist and protect all persons residing in their territories, so much so that if governments fail to meet their obligations, they risk international scrutiny, admonition, and possibly condemnation and reprisals. According to Francis Deng, instead of being perceived as a means of insulating the state against

²⁰ J.D.B. Miller, *The World of States: Connected Essays*, New York, St. Martin's Press p 16.

²¹ John, Herz, "The Territorial State Revisited- Reflections on the Future of the Nation-State" in *The Nation State and the Crises of World Politics*, McCay: New York, 1976, pp. 226-227.

²² Anthony Lake, *6 Nightmares: Real Threats in a Dangerous World and How America Can Meet Them* Boston: Little Brown 2000. p. X.

²³ Donald Kagan, *On the Origins of War and the Preservation of Peace* New York, Doubleday, 1995. p 572.

external involvement or scrutiny, sovereignty is increasingly being postulated as a "normative concept of responsibility".²⁴ National sovereignty thus now requires a system of governance that is based on democratic popular citizen participation, constructive management of social diversities, respect for fundamental human rights, and equitable distribution of national wealth and opportunities for development.

For a state to claim sovereignty, it must establish legitimacy by meeting minimum standards of good governance or responsibility for the security and general welfare of its citizens, and indeed, all those under its jurisdiction. In the article 'What Ought to be done about the Condition of States?' Mervyn Frost raises the question of recognition. He argues that sovereign states in an international society "reciprocally constitute one another," by mutual recognition and by subjecting themselves to a common norm of state sovereignty and non-intervention.²⁵ "In order to be recognized as an autonomous state, the state must meet certain specific requirements.... An autonomous state is one in which the citizens experience the well-being of the state as fundamental to their own well-being."²⁶ Any truly sovereign state, for Frost, is a state whose citizens are substantially free and are not merely juridically independent in their external affairs while remaining more or less in servitude domestically, meaning that state laws are followed and there is societal order. In short, the reality is that security and sovereignty are not incompatible; they are symbiotic.

For Canada this means that the government must acknowledge and act upon the realization that a sovereign state must maintain an effective and credible military force. Canada is in dire need of having an improved capacity to deploy and sustain meaningful military assets overseas, even more so if it wishes to encourage multilateralism and continue to be an active player on the international scene. If a country demands multilateral action in a given situation, it will have minimal credibility, and hence influence, if it is unable to join the demanded multilateral action in a meaningful way. A Canadian initiated International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty reported in December of 2001 that: "a sovereign state has the responsibility to protect its own citizens from avoidable catastrophe."²⁷ The report further states that "any operation to protect in response to large scale humanitarian threat or emergency requires that the countries...involved be prepared to sustain the operation with the resources required. The level of resources committed sends a clear signal of resolve and intent to all concerned."²⁸ When measured against our own criteria, Canada falls short and sends different signals to our citizens than to our international allies. We may not yet be at the

²⁴ Francis Deng, "Reconciling Sovereignty with Responsibility: A Basis for International Humanitarian Action," in J. Harbeson and D. Rothchild eds. *Africa in World Politics* New York: Westview Press, 2000. p. 353.

²⁵ Mervyn Frost, "What Ought to be Done about the Condition of States?" in C. Navari ed. *The Condition of States* Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press, 1991. p. 183-196.

²⁶ Mervyn Frost, *Towards a Normative Theory of International Relations* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986. p. 179.

²⁷ International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty *The Responsibility to Protect* Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2001. p VIII.

²⁸ *Ibid*, p 60.

point where the Emperor has no clothes, but we are certainly more than a little threadbare.

There is a need to honour our Defence relationship with the U.S., the corner stone of which is the 1938 meeting where President Roosevelt promised to come to Canada's aid if it were threatened, and to which Prime Minister Mackenzie King responded by stating that "enemy forces should not be able to pursue their way either by land, sea or air to the United States across Canadian territory."²⁹ Shortly after this exchange came the signing of the Ogdensburg Agreement of 1940, which represented Canada's commitment to the idea that the defence of North America must be regarded as a single concern. This "good neighbour" policy is the foundation of the existing defence relationship between Canada and the U.S.³⁰ and acted as the catalyst for the establishment of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence (PJBD), the Military Cooperation Committee (MCC) and most importantly, the creation of the North American Air (later Aerospace) Defence command (NORAD).

The second element in the Canada-U.S. defence relationship dealt with the defence of Western Europe and the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). NATO indirectly served North American defence interests by allowing a standing military force in the European theatre that could prevent any hostile powers from gaining hegemony over Europe. By nature, NATO is a military oriented organization and from its formation allowed Canada not only to pursue a fundamental security interest, but also to be recognized as a significant player in international diplomacy.³¹ As stated by Joel Sokolsky, Canada's "roles in North American Defence and NATO became the *raison d'être* of the Canadian Forces and the essence of their military professionalism."³² Essentially, Canada's international recognition and prestige was once again gained through the use of its military forces, and it was also done on the cheap. When compared to other NATO countries, Canada was always below average for the percentage of GDP spent on defence and presently outranks only Luxembourg and Iceland whose defence expenditure is zero.³³

These international organizations have served a useful purpose for Canada; all have played a large role in the mutual defence of Canada and the U.S. and have allowed Canada to "punch above its weight" on the international stage and continue to be active in the defence preparation for North America.³⁴ Half a century ago the threat was from

²⁹ James Eayes, *In Defence of Canada*, Vol. II, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965. p 183.

³⁰ Stephane Roussel, "Fortress North America," *Fortress north America? What Continental Security Means for Canada*, ed. David Rudd, Toronto: The Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 2002. pp. 13-14.

³¹ Joel Sokolsky and Joseph Jockel, "The End of the Canada-U.S. Defense Relationship" Policy Papers on the America's, Volume VII Study 2, The Center for Strategic and International Studies, May, 1996. p 5.

³² Ibid.

³³ The U.S. Department of Defense calculates that Defense spending relative to GDP combines the most comprehensive indicator of defence effort (defence spending) with the most comprehensive indicator of ability to contribute (GDP).

³⁴ Sean Maloney, "Our Defended Borders: A Short History of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence and the Military Cooperation Committee, 1940 to Present" The 200th Meeting of the Canada-United States Permanent Joint Board on Defence. Ottawa: Canadian Section. PJBD, 1997. p 5.

Soviet bombers, submarines and Inter Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs). The Soviet conventional and nuclear threat has now been replaced with the asymmetrical threat of terrorism. Similarly the North American and NATO elements of the Canada-U.S. defence relationship have been replaced with the concerns of Canadian and U.S. continental security arrangements, coalitions and U.N. operations. When fortress North America was stormed for the first time in over 300 years on September 11, 2001 we found that there were gaps and deficiencies in our collective security arrangements.³⁵ It was clear that improvements in the Defence of North America were needed and that Canada ought to participate with a renewed vigour; to date this has not happened. The U.S. welcomed Canada's NATO participation from its beginnings, but would often fret about Canadian reductions in their standing NATO air and ground forces in Europe during the cold war, now that the security focus has shifted to that of homeland defence and operational support in the on-going war against terrorism it stands to reason that the U.S. will continue to fret about Canadian reductions in defence spending, and the decreasing capabilities and effectiveness of the CF.

It was hard enough to focus Canadian public attention on defence spending during the cold war. After the fall of the Berlin wall and the disappearance of the once large and menacing threat of the Soviet Bear, the maintenance of that focus became increasingly difficult. Even after the terrorist attacks on the U.S., Canadians have insisted on maintaining their misguided belief of their "divine right of invulnerability."³⁶ The problem for politicians, military planners and defence advocates is that the tactical military threat to Canada is indeed low—especially when compared to that of our closest neighbour- but as Michael Ignatieff has warned, it is still there:

We are a secular, liberal, democratic state in the North Atlantic region and we stand for everything that Al-Qaeda doesn't like. We are part of a particular civilization and tradition, which is in the gun sights of a small and determined group of people who, self-evidently, don't speak for Islam, but speak for a lot of angry people.³⁷

In response to the continued budget cuts, the CF, as a cost saving measure, made interoperability with the U.S. a high priority, with the Chief of Defence Staff stating that "maintaining interoperability remains the key to the future relevance of the CF."³⁸ The transition was clear: interoperability with the U.S. went from being a convenient bonus that could help the CF complete its missions, to an absolutely essential component for the CF attempting any mission.³⁹ The lack of Government policy continues to force the CF to

³⁵ Lt. Gen. George Macdonald, Vice Chief of Defence Staff, "Canada-U.S. Defence Relations, Asymmetric Threats and the U.S. Unified Command Plan," Statement to the Senate Standing Committee on National Security and Defence, 6 May, 2002, pp 4-5.

³⁶ Danford W. Middlemiss, *Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence – Issue 17 – Evidence* 12 May 2003, H.M. the Queen, Ottawa. p. 39.

³⁷ Michael Ignatieff, "Canada in the Age of Terror-Multilateralism Meets a Moment of Truth" *Policy Options* February, 2003. p 15.

³⁸ R.R. Henault, *At a Crossroads: Annual Report of the Chief of the Defence Staff 2001-2002* Ottawa: Department of National Defence, July 2002. p 26.

³⁹ Dwight N. Mason "The Future of Canadian-U.S. Defense Relations" *The American Review of Canadian Studies* Volume 33, Number 1, Spring, 2003. The Association for Canadian Studies in the United States: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. p 70.

integrate with the U.S. military, mainly with regards to transport. Canadian politicians are correct when they say that the CF continues to demonstrate that it is a highly effective force but more and more only when working with the U.S.⁴⁰

Recent examples are numerous; the difficulty of deploying a small group of CF members to East Timor, the necessity of having the U.S. provide the airlift requirements to and within Afghanistan, the Government's decision to withdraw the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry from Afghanistan due to insufficient equipment and troops, and the sobering reality of having to depend on American equipment and personnel for evacuating Canadian wounded.⁴¹ Canada has prospered domestically at the expense of our national defence; the money saved by cutting defence expenditures by close to 30% during the 1990s went elsewhere to pay for other, presumably higher, priorities. To cope, each branch of the CF made cost cutting decisions within their own organizations; the air force, for example, has cut its number of aircraft, to a current operational number of 350 down from 725 in 1991⁴² (not including the recent purchase of two executive class bombardier jets). When criticized, the government made claims that it was following the "soft power" theory of Joseph Nye that had dominated the Foreign Affairs office of Lloyd Axworthy. Unfortunately, our allies and others on the international stage are starting to see more "soft" than "power."

On the international scene, Canada's foreign policy is based upon "hard power" capabilities, with the embarrassing reality being that we have no "hard powers." The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade constantly reminds us of the "three pillars" that are central to the conduct of foreign policy: security, prosperity and values and culture.⁴³ It is a foreign policy that reflects the values of any liberal democratic government; individual freedoms, human rights, the rule of law, democracy and respect for minorities. This is a sermon that comes easily from the mouths of Canadians, because Canada is safe, rich and has a very strong big brother. Of course, Canadians care to some degree about helping those that are less fortunate than us. Canadian foreign assistance programs make Canadians "feel good inside" but the simple truth is obvious; Canadians like to help the impoverished, the diseased and the oppressed but not at the expense of our more cherished public services at home.⁴⁴

Canadian's have seen American military power do so much that now they have come to rely on it. The American military has become the solution to world problems, other nations are constantly asking the U.S. to do more than it is capable of doing. Part of the problem lies in the American attitude towards military power, they are truly a global military empire; the U.S. presides over an armed planetary force of a magnitude never before seen in history. The U.S. Army is 1.1 million soldiers, between all four military

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ David Pugliese "Canada Scaled Back War Effort" *Ottawa Citizen* 10 August, 2002.

⁴² *On the Cheap*,

⁴³ Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Canada in the World: Government Statement* Ottawa: Canada Communications Group, Publishing, Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1995. p 10-11.

⁴⁴ Dennis Stairs. p 251.

branches they have half a million troops stationed in over 395 bases worldwide, with hundreds of smaller installations in 35 foreign nations. Their nuclear forces include 8,000 strategic weapons and close to 22,000 tactical ones, the U.S. Navy has more tonnage and firepower than all other world navies combined, and as a country, their military spending is greater than that of all the other major powers combined.⁴⁵

It is easy to feel helpless and /or useless in the shadow of such enormous military might, but the task for Canada is to find its place and a role in the *Project for a New American Century*. There are realities in Canadian capabilities, and those realities are well understood by the U.S. The strategic challenge is leveraging those realities while satisfying the minimum U.S. requirements. Militarily, the U.S. understands that even if Canada were to arm every citizen and send them on patrol it would still be impossible to survey and protect our entire land mass and claimed sea territories. The U.S. knows that our two political democracies have more common themes than differences, they know that Canada is indeed their largest economical trader and exporter and finally they know that American culture is omnipresent throughout Canada, though it certainly takes on a Canadian twist, the Canada-U.S. relationship is highly valued by both sides and could prosper if Canadian policies began to be based on concrete realities rather than myths.

Older Canadians can remember how over the last 50 years the Americans have tried to force the “American way of life” on others. Dennis Stairs accurately describes how Canadians perceived this element of U.S. foreign policy as “arrogant, myopic, condescending of others and presumptuous; in short, imperialistic.”⁴⁶ Canadians felt that this was the very reason why Americans found themselves resented by other countries and cultures. Telling others how they ought to live their lives was not a part of the “Canadian way”.⁴⁷ Once again Dennis Stairs does a wonderful job of explaining how the tables have turned.

On the whole, Ottawa was inclined to eschew the temptation to sermonize abroad. Now, however, it seems to have become the most tiresome and irritating of preachers, and it wants to meddle in everyone else’s business. This might not be so bad if the government had the resources to make the meddling work. But if there is anything worse (from a diplomatic point of view) than the value imperialism of the strong, it is the value imperialism of the weak. It lacks political clout. Hence it is short on credibility. And that makes it undignified. The result, among other things, is that it can make Canadians seem too precious by half to their counter parts abroad. They are forever riding white horses in support of causes for whose effective prosecution they do not have to pay. And when such perceptions set in, Ottawa’s store of diplomatic credit runs swiftly down, not up.⁴⁸

Canadians may feel that Americans are ignorant when it comes to Canada, its people and its culture, but U.S. policy makers are incredibly cunning, and intellectually acute. Canadians should not fool themselves by thinking that they can complacently stand aside and listen to the rhetoric that comes from Ottawa without feeling the consequences

⁴⁵ Michael Parenti, “The Logic of U.S. Intervention” *Masters of War: Militarism and Blowback in the Era of American Empire* ed Carl Boggs, New York: Routledge, 2003. p 19.

⁴⁶ Dennis Stairs, p 252.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

elsewhere. American political analysts know all too well that “people may profess all sorts of intentions, but they are also capable of outrageous deception, including self-deception.”⁴⁹

Hugh Segal’s sagacious piece *A Grand Strategy For a Small Country* rightly observes that “our capacity to have leverage with countries important to Canada—in Europe, Asia or the Americas—is seriously diminished when we lack the ability to deploy meaningful forces—air and sea logistics—in support of allied goals and missions and tactical forces to ensure strategic linkage and inter-operational capacity going forward.”⁵⁰ He further stresses his point by insisting that the CF should be able to deploy quickly, at calibrated variable strengths and be able to deploy independently or in “close lock step” with Canadian allies.⁵¹ Even with a directed and concerted effort, a capability of this magnitude is only a small possibility in a very distant future. As stated by Martin Shadwick “Canadians and their government aspire to a global role but, unfortunately, are unwilling to pay for it.” As well, they do not seem to realize the speed with which Canadian military capabilities are atrophying or the time that will be required to regenerate them once they are lost, or severely degraded.⁵² After the fall of the Berlin Wall comments about military spending always seemed to include the buzzwords “peace dividend,” and how it was time to cut military budgets so we could realize this dividend.

After the terrorist attacks in the U.S. on 11 September 2001 Americans seemed to have realized it was time to start reinvesting their peace dividend. In Canada, the same realization was not, and maybe still has not been arrived at. What Canadians must be told is that if you overspend your peace dividend, there are limited ways to regain the lost capital. You will either pay it back with a loss of sovereignty, or the lost lives of your soldiers, sailors, and aviators in the battle space; or, in the worst case, both.

As Canada’s military loses its ability to act alone in operations, Canada will lose its ability to speak alone on the world stage. Once this happens, the Canadian ability to positively impact and leverage its trading relations will diminish. Since the Canadian economy is so highly reliant on trade, a diminution of these relationships will have a dramatic negative impact on the economy. With a declining economy comes declining tax revenues, and a loss of ability to pay for social programs like health care, and education that the public cherish so highly as part of Canadian identity. Freedom allows western democracies to carry a heavy burden for great distances, because the burden is of our choosing. Imposition makes even a light burden seem heavy. Canadians may see their defence force as a burden because they feel it has been imposed—either by previous generations, through international treaties and agreements, or, more recently, by the U.S. That perception has developed because Canada has failed to educate its citizens. The Canadian public fails to understand that a viable defence force allows participation in

⁴⁹ Michael Parenti, p 19.

⁵⁰ Hugh Segal, “A Grand Strategy For a Small Country” *Canadian Military Journal* Vol 4, No 3, Autumn, 2003. p 4.

⁵¹ Ibid, p 5.

⁵² Sharon Hobson, “Readiness at a Price” *Jane’s Defence Weekly* Vol. 40, Issue No. 11, 17 September 2003. p 22.

humanitarian missions, directly and indirectly, both foreign and domestic. The value of the CF in this regard has been consistently under rated during the last few decades. Canadians must let no one under rate the energies, the potentialities, and the abiding power for good that issues forth from the fountainhead of each individual member of the Canadian Forces, and hence the abiding power for good that the CF provides to the country and the world. Only by leveraging this abiding strategic power on the international stage, will we continue to have the tactical economic power domestically to maintain our health care, education, and cultural agencies in the medium and long term.

While Canada does seem to have a tactical divine right of invulnerability on the security front, the same does not apply in the strategic context. Canadians must, as a nation, reject the idea that, as proposed by some, the CF should be relegated to a tame and minor role in the life of the country. Nature—uncaring, in an uncaring universe—is certainly not concerned with the survival of Canada, let alone our culture or even the Canadian Forces. Canada’s destiny, therefore, remains in Canadian hands. With a suitable and well-supported defence structure, Canada can remain a country and a sovereign state, with out a viable defence structure we will be committing sovereignty suicide and that has the very real potential of leaving Canada as only a memory. Facing firmly towards the future, Canadians cannot distance themselves from the realities of their past. For in the past is the key to unlocking the future of the Canadian nation.

As former speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Tip O’Neil is famous for saying “all politics are local.” If this is so, talking about amorphous global threats to Canadians preoccupied with health care, education, and crumbling municipal infrastructure, will not likely capture public imagination, or interest. Even the feel good role of peacekeeping has lost the lustre it had in the early days—likely due to the shift to peacemaking operations, and recent deaths of Canadian soldiers in theatre. The challenge is to find a rational way to capture the attention of Canadians, and link the very real strategic threats to the things that daily, or at least weekly, occupy their minds.

The haemorrhaging of Canada’s military capabilities will lead directly to the bleeding out of our health care, education, and cultural support systems. This is the message that must be communicated to Canadians from sea to sea to sea. In a letter to John Taylor on 15 April 1812 John Adams wrote, "Remember, democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself. There never was a democracy yet that did not commit suicide."⁵³ To prevent Canada’s sovereignty suicide, Canadians must understand that without a vibrant, credible and viable defence capability, Canada will not have a vibrant, viable and admired culture or society. To preserve Canadian culture, Canadians must recognize that it is time to support our sovereignty by reinvesting our peace dividend.

⁵³ John Adams, Letter to John Taylor, April 15, 1814, *The Works of John Adams*, ed. Charles Francis Adams` Vol 6, 1851. p. 484.