

Canada and the Libya Coalition

Katie Domansky, Rebecca Jensen, Rachael Bryson

Introduction

Canada played a key role during the 2011 international intervention in Libya. Contributing air and naval assets, associated personnel, and the commander of the overall NATO mission, Canada eventually carried a burden that ranked fourth amongst all contributing nations. This commitment is significant, not only for the scale of Canadian involvement, but also for the questions it raises about Canadian defence policy, particularly the role of military alliances and coalitions. To what overall strategic end did the Canadian government contribute to the Libya intervention? Was the decision simply a reaction to commitments already made by others, or was participation consistent with Canadian defence policy as it has developed over time?

Publically framed within Canada as a humanitarian mission, the Libya intervention certainly reflected concern for humanitarian issues on the part of the Canadian government. However, many issues beyond the desire to protect human rights certainly factored into the government's decision to participate, from the opportunity for a Canadian to command the mission, to the chance to highlight the capabilities of the Canadian Forces (CF), particularly of its fighter aircraft, which were slated to be replaced in an expensive and controversial process. Perhaps the most important factors were Canada's obligations and ambitions as a NATO member and

ally of the United States (US). The importance of alliances and multilateralism to Canadian defence has long been recognized as Canada has consistently chosen – at least since the end of the Second World War – to contribute to coalition interventions alongside its American and other allies. The Libya mission certainly served as an opportunity for Canada to demonstrate its value and relevance as an ally and coalition member.

Highlighting the evolution of Canadian defence policy throughout the Cold War and post-Cold War period, particularly the role of multilateralism and alliance-tending, this paper analyses the issues that influenced Canada's decision to contribute to the Libya intervention within a coalition, as well as how the relationships between alliance and coalition members, Canadian politicians, and the general public inevitably affected Canada's role in that coalition and its success in Libya. It will provide strategic analysis that combines civilian academic approaches with open source material to answer the following questions: how does participation in the Libya coalition fit within overall Canadian defence policy? What does the experience in Libya tell us about the future of coalition warfare? What does it tell us about future Canadian capacity for participation in coalition interventions? The answers to these questions are complicated, but provide insight into Canada's current foreign and defence policy and may perhaps inform future decisions regarding participation in international coalitions.

Background: the Libya Intervention

Peaceful demonstrations began in Benghazi, Libya on 13 January 2011 to protest the 42-year rule of Colonel Moammar Gadhafi. These protests were a part of the larger "Arab Spring" movement that rocked the Arabic-speaking countries of North Africa and the Middle East throughout 2011. As the protests in Libya developed into armed rebellion, the government reacted with systematic attacks by air and ground forces, frequently against non-combatant civilians.¹ Gadhafi promised "no mercy or

¹For an interactive timeline of the "Arab Spring" protests see: "Arab spring: an interactive timeline of Middle East protests," *The Guardian*, accessed 22 March 2012, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/interactive/2011/mar/22/middle-east-protest-interactive-timeline>.

compassion” for those who fought against him, going so far as to publicly threaten the lives of residents of Benghazi on 15 March 2011.²

The coalition that intervened in Libya was formed in response to this state-sanctioned violence against civilians and the resulting resolutions passed by the United Nations Security Council, fully supported by the Arab League. The first of these resolutions, Resolution 1970 (2011), was passed on 26 February 2011; it froze the assets of individuals implicated in major violations of human rights and those close to the Gadhafi regime, while calling for an international arms embargo on Libya.³ The second, Resolution 1973 (2011), created on 17 March 2011, condemned the gross and systematic violations of human rights in the country and introduced active measures including a no-fly zone. It also authorized member states, acting nationally or through regional organizations, to use “all necessary measures” to protect Libyan civilians, excluding only a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory.⁴ By not precluding the possibility that international forces might destroy the current regime, however, both of these UN Resolutions left open the option of such action in the future.

On 19 March 2011, a coalition joint task force led by US Africa Command began launching air operations under Operation ODYSSEY DAWN. This was to enforce the no-fly zone described in Security Council Resolution 1973. Canada chose to join this joint task force the same day.⁵ *Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR* began on 22 March 2011 as a NATO-led maritime mission to enforce the UN-requested arms embargo. By 27 March, NATO assumed responsibility for both of these operations, creating the Combined Joint Task Force (JTF) Unified Protector. Lieutenant-General (LGen) Charles Bouchard of Canada received command of JTF Unified Protector on 31 March 2011.⁶ Under his command, NATO aircraft enforced the UN ban on all flights in Libyan

² David D. Kirkpatrick and Kareem Fahim, “Qaddafi Warns of Assault on Benghazi as U.N. Vote Nears,” *The New York Times* (17 March 2011), accessed 27 May 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/18/world/africa/18libya.html?_r=3.

³ United Nations, Security Council, S/RES/1970, 26 February 2011.

⁴ United Nations, Security Council, S/RES/1973, 17 March 2011.

⁵ US Department of Defence (DoD), “Coalition Launches ‘Operation Odyssey Dawn’,” last modified 19 March 2011, accessed 7 June 2012, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=63225>.

⁶ North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), “NATO Arms Embargo Against Libya, *Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR*,” Fact Sheet, last modified 25 March 2011, accessed 16 March 2012, http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_03/20110325_110325-unified-protector-factsheet.pdf.

airspace – except those for humanitarian and aid purposes – while ships stopped and searched any vessel they suspected of carrying arms or mercenaries to or from Libya. These measures were all meant to prevent continuing attacks on civilian populations. The overall mission was officially suspended on 31 October 2011, when NATO determined that the Libyan people were free of Gadhafi’s regime and were finally in a position to protect themselves.⁷

The Canadian contribution to this mission was substantial, with Canadian units playing a key role in all operations. LGen Bouchard – a Canadian – served as the commander of the NATO mission, while air and naval assets were assigned to *Operation MOBILE*, the Canadian Forces’ contribution to *Operation ODYSSEY DAWN* and later *Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR*. *Operation MOBILE* began on 25 February 2011 as a non-combatant mission to evacuate Canadians and other foreign nationals from Libya, but became a combat mission with air and maritime capabilities based in Italy in March 2011.⁸ By the end of the seven-month conflict in Libya, Canada had provided 635 personnel, 7 fighters, 2 patrol aircraft, 2 tankers, and 2 frigates. The sea component helped to enforce the arms embargo and escort supply ships and other vessels involved in NATO operations, while the air forces focused on enforcing the no-fly zone and carrying out sorties against the assets of Libyan government forces.⁹ By the end of the mission in Libya, the Canadian contribution came to rank fourth among contributing nations, behind only the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), and France.

To understand why Canada chose to make this relatively substantial contribution, it is important to understand where multilateral intervention and the Libya mission itself fit within overall Canadian defence policy. To what overall strategic end did Canada choose to contribute to the Libya intervention as part of a coalition?

⁷ NATO, “NATO and Libya – Operation Unified Protector,” last modified 13 January 2012, accessed 16 March 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-616EB013-53F0F97E/natolive/topics_71652.htm?selectedLocale=en.

⁸ Department of National Defence (DND), “Operation MOBILE,” National Defence and the Canadian Forces, last modified 21 February 2012, accessed 22 March 2012, <http://www.comfec-cefcom.forces.gc.ca/pa-ap/ops/mobile/index-eng.asp>.

⁹ Ibid.

Canadian Defence Policy: Multilateralism and Collective Security

The role of alliances and multilateralism within Canadian defence policy has certainly developed over time. Despite the number of different strategic contexts within which Canada has operated, however, Canadian defence objectives have been remarkably consistent since the end of the Second World War. The 1964 *White Paper on Defence* – the first official post-Second World War articulation of defence policy – recognized that most of the basic principles governing Canadian defence policy are constant, in that they are determined by static variables such as geography and history. Others, such as the nature and magnitude of threats to peace and security or the rate and scale of the development of weapons and weapons technology, change rapidly and drastically. Therefore “defence policy must adapt itself to such changes, while principles remain constant.”¹⁰

Five dominant ideas in particular have remained constant in the development of defence policy in Canada, influenced by a number of important perceptions regarding the needs and values of Canadian society. First, there exists no direct threat to Canadian territory that suggests an obvious need to maintain large standing forces. Second, the importance of Canadian defence to American interests is such that any threat or attack on Canada would necessarily invite an American response. Third, it is in Canada’s best interests to ensure that sufficient defence capabilities are maintained so that Canada does not become a haven for others intent on threatening the US. Fourth, because a free and stable Western Europe is essential to Canada’s national interests and any strong counter-balance to the overpowering influence of the US is desirable, membership in NATO is a necessary feature of Canadian defence and security policies. Finally, collective security operations and policies implemented by the UN must be supported to prevent instability and crisis in other parts of the world from threatening Canada or Canadian interests.¹¹

These relatively static variables have ensured that the objectives of Canadian defence have been pursued – to differing degrees at any given time – through four

¹⁰ DND, 1964 *White Paper on Defence* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1964), 5.

¹¹ Douglas Bland, *The Administration of Defence Policy in Canada, 1947 to 1985* (Kingston, ON: Ronald P. Frye & Company, Publishers, 1987).

parallel methods: collective measures for the maintenance of peace and security under the auspices of the UN; collective defence as embodied in NATO; partnership with the US in the defence of North America; and national measures for the security of Canada.¹² The order of priority given to these methods and the extent to which they have been pursued at any given time, is directly related to the particular strategic context within which Canadian defence is being formulated; they are directly influenced by those variables, such as the nature of threats, which change rapidly and drastically. Thus, collective security and NATO commitments were given higher priority in the 1964 *White Paper on Defence*, when deterrence was the order of the day, than they were in the 1971 *White Paper on Defence: Defence in the 70s*, when détente had apparently warmed East-West relations.¹³

One of the dominant features of Canadian defence policy, visible in each of the white papers on defence created since 1964, is the adherence to alliance commitments and the strategic desires of collective security partners when formulating defence policy. Many scholars have argued that the making of Canadian defence policy is highly constrained by external factors, especially those related to Canada's alliance obligations.¹⁴ In this view, Canada has had, and continues to have, few real choices when it comes to pursuing its own national security interests; it is a relatively small power within an international system dominated by economically and militarily larger powers.

To some extent, this analysis has considerable merit. Canadian foreign and defence policy decisions have always been greatly influenced by its relationships with other states, namely the UK, the US, and its alliance partners within NATO. Since the end of the Second World War, the use and deployment of Canadian forces has been greatly affected by the strategic desires of other more powerful states – particularly the US – that dominate NATO and NORAD. However, it must also be recognized that the “extent of Canada's contribution... and the manner in which its forces were to support

¹² These methods are consistently reflected in all Canadian white papers on defence created since the end of the Second World War. For access to all of these white papers see the Canadian Defence Policy Archives: http://www.forces.gc.ca/admpol/defence_policy_archives-eng.html.

¹³ DND, 1964 *White Paper on Defence*; and DND, *White Paper on Defence: Defence in the 70s* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1971).

¹⁴ Bland, *The Administration of Defence Policy in Canada*, pp. 180-186.

the British war effort," the defence of North America, or other alliance commitments, has always "remained the prerogative of the Ottawa government."¹⁵ Decisions regarding Canadian defence have been influenced by a number of internal as well as external factors and by the fundamental strategic decision to align with the West within the international system. These decisions have all been of Canada's own choosing, however, commensurate with its sovereignty and independence.

It is certainly clear that Canada has consistently chosen to contribute to coalition interventions within other states alongside its American and other NATO allies, and this is especially true since the end of the Cold War. Throughout the 1990s, Canada maintained its record of participation in almost all UN missions, including major operations in Haiti, Cambodia, and Somalia.¹⁶ It also supported operations undertaken by coalitions of liberal democracies, usually led by the US in conjunction with major powers in the European Union, which increasingly defined international peace and security in a more activist and robust fashion, going beyond traditional peacekeeping or humanitarian assistance to peace enforcement.¹⁷ Canada contributed to *Operation DESERT STORM* in Iraq, sent a sizeable contingent to the International Force (IFOR) in Bosnia, and participated in bombing runs supporting *Operation ALLIED FORCE* within the former Yugoslavia. Canada's major contribution to multilateral operations in the twenty-first century was its participation in the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan. Its most recent foray into military operations overseas was its participation in the enforcement of the embargo and no-fly zone in Libya.¹⁸

This consistent involvement in international military and peace operations reflects the trend within Canadian defence policy development towards three themes. First, a perception has developed that national territorial security can be restricted to predominantly symbolic roles of sovereignty protection (such as surveillance, presence, civil emergency, and search and rescue). This is due to an acceptance of the fact that a

¹⁵ D. W. Middlemiss and J. J. Sokolsky, *Canadian Defence, Decisions and Determinants* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Canada Inc., 1989), p. 11.

¹⁶ For more information see: <http://www.comfec-cefcom.forces.gc.ca/pa-ap/ops/pastops-eng.asp>.

¹⁷ Alexander Moens, "Revitalizing our Defence and Security Capacity," *Policy Options* (October 1999), p. 29.

¹⁸ For more information on past and present Canadian Forces' operations see: <http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/operations/index-eng.asp>.

large-standing military force will not deter the threats facing Canada. Further, it suggests that a primary goal of national defence is the demonstration of sovereignty and the ability to exercise some degree of independence from the US. As Henning Frantzen notes, the national tasks that Canada assigns to defence “are not so much related to military defence in the traditional sense of the concept.” Rather they refer more to symbolic presence, monitoring of territory, waters, and airspace, as well as domestic humanitarian or emergency operations.¹⁹ These ideas are evident in all Canadian policy documents, including the most recent *Canada First Defence Strategy*, which focuses on providing “surveillance of Canadian territory and air and maritime approaches; Maintain[ing] search and rescue response capabilities that are able to reach those in distress anywhere in Canada on a 24/7 basis; and assist[ing] civil authorities in responding to a wide range of threats – from natural disasters to terrorist attacks” – as the primary tasks of the CF in domestic defence.²⁰

The second theme reflects an acceptance of the fact that defence is a task to be undertaken with others, while the third evolves from the second, in that a belief has developed that multilateralism and peacekeeping are components of defence that facilitate the objectives of securing a voice in international affairs while preventing Canada from being dragged into war.²¹

Each of these themes demonstrates recognition by Canadian policy-makers that Canada’s defence will never be an entirely Canadian affair. The comparative value of Canadian material resources is such that the country simply cannot afford to take care of all of its defence objectives on its own. In addition, Canada has seen, over time, the value in collaborating with the Americans and with other regional and international organizations in terms of gaining a voice on the world stage – however large or small at any given time – and in making comparatively smaller resources count.

¹⁹ Henning A. Frantzen, *NATO and Peace Support Operations 1991-1999, Policies and Doctrines* (New York, NY: Frank Cass, 2005), p. 133.

²⁰ DND, *Canada First Defence Strategy*, “Roles of the Canadian Forces,” Government of Canada, 2008, accessed 4 August 2012, http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/pri/first-premier/June18_0910_CFDS_english_low-res.pdf.

²¹ Frantzen, *NATO and Peace Support Operations*, 120-124; Colin S. Gray, *Canadian Defence Priorities: A Question of Relevance* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Co, 1972).

Implicit in these three themes are two important assumptions: first, there are no direct threats to Canada; and second, even if there were any, any strategy created by Canadians to address them would necessarily require the involvement of our allies, especially the US. Thus, defence policy in Canada has had a decidedly “alliance-focused” character, developed largely from the strategic requirements defined within our alliances rather than from solely Canadian national interests. This is a direct consequence of Canada’s guaranteed homeland defence, in that there are no tangible threats to Canada that present a threat the Americans would not choose to confront for it. As Wilfrid Laurier recognized, “the Monroe Doctrine protects us from enemy aggression.”²² Canadian defence policy has relied on the fact that it is in the best interests of the US to maintain a free and secure Canada, thereby ensuring a free and secure North America. Subsequently, Canadian policy-makers have operated under the assumption that Canada can only come under threat by choosing to join in the quarrel’s of others and making them our own. As Joe Jockel and Joel Sokolsky recognize, it has not been Canadian policy to do either if they can be avoided, but guaranteed homeland defence has allowed Canadian politicians to join almost any peacekeeping mission or ‘coalition of the willing’ when and where it appeared worthwhile.²³ Consequently, the core of Canadian defence policy over the last sixty years has been contributions to allied efforts, essentially “to lend troops” when requested. Douglas Bland argues that within this framework, the size and capabilities of the contribution and the credibility in military terms of the force given are never too important. “Getting there is the strategic objective.”²⁴

Canada’s Strategic Interests in the Middle East

As with Canadian defence policy writ large, Canada’s policy toward the Middle East has consistently reflected the centrality of alliance membership and multilateral

²² Douglas Bland, “Everything Military Officers Need to Know About Defence Policy-Making in Canada,” in *Advance or Retreat? Canadian Defence in the 21st Century*, Eds. David Rudd, Jim Hanson, and Jessica Blitt (Toronto, ON: The Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 2000), p. 18.

²³ Joe Jockel and Joel Sokolsky, “Lloyd Axworthy’s Legacy, Human Security and the rescue of Canadian defence policy,” *International Journal* 56:1 (Winter 2000-2001), pp. 1-18.

²⁴ Bland, “Everything Military Officers Need to Know,” p. 18.

peacekeeping and military operations. During the Cold War era, Canada's Middle East policy was inextricable from its membership in NATO. Since the region was one of many potential flashpoints for indirect conflict between the superpowers, military intervention in the form of peacekeeping served Canada's needs as part of an alliance, and simultaneously advanced humanitarian goals more broadly.²⁵

The centrality of the American-Canadian alliance has also consistently reflected Canada's Middle East strategy, both during the Cold War and after. While Canada's positions on Israel/Palestine and its decision not to participate in *Operation IRAQI FREEDOM* have differed from those of the US, these differences reflect "differences in tactics and power, not strategy and values."²⁶ US and Canadian perspectives on Israel/Palestine are similar, with both countries seeking a two-state solution, but the US has the ability and resources to offer much more powerful incentives. Despite these different policy responses, shared values include support for a liberal world order, a preference for democracies over dictatorships, and an emphasis on human security as essential to national interests as well as to international stability. This has included intervention in intra-national, ethnic, and tribal conflict.²⁷

Canadian involvement in the Balkans and in *Operation DESERT STORM* indicated a shift in focus towards greater military involvement internationally for Canada, particularly in the comparatively smaller conflicts that characterized the post-Cold War world before 9/11. Emphasizing peacekeeping and membership in collective security oriented institutions, Canadian defence policy has adopted a more interventionist approach – sometimes referred to as peacebuilding or peace enforcement – as the medium for promoting human security.²⁸ In addition, the final years of the twentieth century saw the theoretical foundations laid for integrating

²⁵ Jockel and Sokolsky, "Lloyd Axworthy's Legacy," pp. 2-4.

²⁶ Michael Hart, *From Pride to Influence: Towards a New Canadian Foreign Policy* (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press 2008), p. 332.

²⁷ Tami Amanda Jacoby, *Canadian Peacebuilding in the Middle East: Case study of the Canada Fund in Israel/Palestine and Jordan* (Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development, 2000), p. 1.

²⁸ Robert W. Murray and John McCoy, "From Middle Power to Peacebuilder: The Use of the Canadian Forces in Modern Canadian Foreign Policy," *American Review of Canadian Studies* 40:2 (2010), p. 177.

military intervention with humanitarian concerns under the concept of the Responsibility To Protect (R2P), itself a Canadian creation.²⁹

9/11 was a watershed event, but its implications for Canadian strategy in the Middle East were not necessarily congruent. Canada's immediate response to the first implementation of NATO's Article 5, in which it agreed to contribute to a collective response if the attacks "were directed from abroad," signalled an affirmation of collective security in theory and in practice.³⁰ In contrast, opting out of Iraq suggested that Canadian strategy with respect to the Middle East was characterized by a reluctance to use force to neutralize a potential military threat, deviating from the Americans but analogous with most of its NATO allies.³¹ Under PM Paul Martin, Canada's participation in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan became reoriented towards the 3D approach.³² In the broader Middle East, Canada opted to prioritize collective security and human security over more traditional warfighting or peacekeeping.

UN and NATO membership became central to Canadian strategy following the Second World War, as both the forum for Canada's contribution to the challenge of the Cold War and as a check on the overwhelming influence of American priorities and actions. The Harper administration has shown a preference for NATO and its priorities over extensive participation with the UN in keeping with a reorientation towards roles requiring active combat in addition to humanitarian and development elements. This

²⁹ Jockel and Sokolsky, "Lloyd Axworthy's Legacy," p. 3.

³⁰ Edgar Buckley, NATO Assistant Secretary General for Defence Planning and Operations from 1999 to 2003, "Invoking Article 5," NATO Review (Summer 2006), accessed on 18 April 2012, <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2006/issue2/english/art2.html>.

³¹ Daniel Drache, *Friends at a Distance: Reframing Canada's Strategic Priorities after the Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy* (Toronto: Robarts Centre for Canadian Studies, York University, 2005), p. 3.

³² For more information on Canada's 3D approach in Afghanistan see: "Canada in Afghanistan, Assessing the 3D Approach," a conference report prepared by Julian Wright of the Institute for Research on Public Policy after a conference at the Centre for International Governance Innovation in Waterloo, Canada, 12-14 May 2005, accessed on 12 April 2012, http://www.irpp.org/miscpubs/archive/wright_cigi.pdf.

represents an expansion, rather than displacement, of the soft power positioning of the Martin and Chretien administrations.³³

While the rhetoric of the Harper government has certainly emphasized a more muscular military and accordingly a strategy more inclined to use that capability, there are more continuities than discontinuities with respect to the greater Middle East between Harper's terms of office and his predecessors'. The leadership role assumed by Canada in crucial Kandahar province dates back to Martin's leadership, and the move towards replacing the CF-18 as the star of the RCAF predates that.³⁴ While former minister Lloyd Axworthy agrees with the current government on very little, he also conceived of the CF of the twenty-first century as a force capable of stabilizing a region and enforcing a peace as part of R2P.

On the eve of the intervention in Libya, then, Canada's approach to the Middle East was characterized by several factors. The overarching priority for engagement in the region was to advance Canadian interests through two main channels: the enhancement of human security for its own good and also as a factor in building a more secure international community; and the demonstration of Canada's commitment and capability to play a meaningful role in direct military action within the context of the NATO alliance, and more particularly as a substantial, if not equal, partner with Washington.

The first of these major objectives can be broken down further into a strong desire to protect civilian populations around the world, for altruistic, international and domestic political factors, as well as a willingness to use force against potential perpetrators of crimes against humanity in addition to development and relief efforts. The second consideration suggests that Canada's approach to the Middle East is advanced by making carefully chosen contributions to those operations carried out under the NATO aegis, and to American missions that are broadly compatible with Canadian interests and values. While these elements of Canadian policy were

³³ Jack Granatstein, "Harper's foreign policies have made Canada a world player," *National Post* (30 January 2012), accessed on 18 April 2012, <http://fullcomment.nationalpost.com/2012/01/30/jack-granatstein-harpers-foreign-policies-have-made-canada-a-world-player/>.

³⁴ Andre Pratte, "Libya and Canada's "new" foreign policy," Canadian International Council (24 August 2011), accessed on 12 April 2012, <http://www.opencanada.org/features/blogs/roundtable/libya-and-canadas-new-foreign-policy/>.

articulated differently under different prime ministers, their general contours have been largely stable since the shock that ran through the international system in the wake of the fall of the USSR.

The Libya intervention is notable in that it harmonized these different considerations. Ensuring human security, strengthening international collective security, solidifying Canada's role as an American ally and NATO member, and demonstrating the need for a strong and responsive CF were mutually reinforcing considerations in the intervention, rather than any of them being in tension with the others. This is the framework within which Canada's involvement in Libya is now examined, with respect both to the planned role in the intervention and to its execution, particularly as they pertain to the domestic and foreign policy aspects of coalition warfare.

Domestic factors and coalition participation

Domestic and political considerations played a role in shaping Canada's participation in the Libya mission, as with all foreign policy interventions. Using an established framework for exploring the interconnections between domestic and foreign policy, this paper will consider both a theoretical treatment of the subject as well as examples of NATO states' participation in stability operations since 9/11 as influenced by their internal political landscapes. Canadian public opinion, partisan politics and foreign policy all intersected with CF military capabilities, international alliances, and the expectations of partners to shape the parameters of Canada's participation in Libya.

Canada's military has never been deployed on expeditionary action without operating as part of an alliance or coalition. Evaluating and understanding Canadian foreign and defence policy therefore requires some examination of how relationships are selected and cultivated, and how they evolve. One of the most useful models for doing this involves the two-level game theory developed by Robert Putnam in the mid 1980s. Putnam's major contention is that the two dominant modes for studying the foreign policies of states are profoundly flawed. State-centric analysis tends to ignore the very real disputes within polities about the definition of the national interest.

Second image analysis assigns far less weight to the interests of the state than to the inherent interests and predispositions of particular forms of government and domestic forces.³⁵ Both theories draw out important insights but are incapable of presenting a holistic view of any country's interests, actions or likely behaviours.

To simplify an extensive and well-developed argument, Putnam suggests that national level governments face challenges in domestic and international arenas that may be in tension with each other. Specifically, that explicit and tacit coalitions and consensus groups may align very differently over foreign policy issues than over domestic policy issues, and that developing effective policies in both realms presents a complexity that is substantially greater than the sum of its parts. Putnam's model includes not only the substance of international agreements but also the selection of partners and the decision to enter into alliances. It is therefore a useful tool for examining the dynamics surrounding the form and content of military alliances.³⁶ Putnam's theories consider dimensions of relationships beyond the economic and diplomatic.³⁷ The interaction of foreign policies and domestic pressures are particularly relevant in the twenty-first century with respect to human rights promotion overseas.³⁸

The longest running 'War on Terror' operation, with the most contributing states, is the intervention in Afghanistan. This is an engagement that has been controversial amongst and within all coalition members, with a measured exception for the US, so it is a useful way to explore the precedent for the relationship between public opinion and domestic politics, and how they influence alliance cohesion in NATO states. In other words, does negative public opinion increase the propensity for coalition members to withdraw or scale back their contributions ahead of schedule? Preliminary studies suggest that there is not a strong relationship between the two. Two major factors, which are interrelated, are suggested for this phenomenon. The first dynamic can be described as 'elite consensus,' in which the preponderance of authorities in the field

³⁵ Peter A. Hall, "Policy Paradigms, Social Learning, and the State: The Case of Economic Policymaking in Britain," *Comparative Politics* 25:3 (April 1993), pp. 275-296.

³⁶ Robert D. Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," *International Organization*, 42:3 (Summer 1988), pp. 427-460.

³⁷ William M. LeoGrande, "From Havana to Miami: U.S. Cuba Policy as a Two-Level Game," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, 40: 1 (Spring 1998), pp. 67-86.

³⁸ Laura Feliu, "A Two-Level Game: Spain and the Promotion of Democracy and Human Rights in Morocco," *Mediterranean Politics*, 8: 2-3 (2003), pp. 90-111.

share similar views on the viability or desirability of participation in alliance stability operations, without reference to the popularity of these opinions amongst the broader public. This is not without precedent either in defence and foreign policy or in other policy arenas; it is fairly common, particularly in domestic policy debates, to see a wide gulf between informed opinion among leaders, and popular opinion.³⁹

More challenging to explain is the relative lack of electoral consequences imposed by a public expressing low support for the intervention. Political parties are in the business of winning votes, and on the surface it should therefore follow that when opposition to any policy exceeds 50% of the population – as it has, or still does, in all coalition states except the US – there should be a corresponding movement to capture this vote on the part of a major party. And yet there has been very little divergence among the leadership of major parties in all coalition states.

One credible analysis argues that this is precisely because Afghanistan has been largely conceived and defended as a NATO operation. “Participating under the banner of NATO is as close to an ideal type iterated game as there is in security cooperation,” meaning that both the costs of opting out, or of defecting once having opted in, as well as the benefits of being perceived to be a reliable and meaningful partner, are long-lasting. Appraisal of the costs and benefits of participating in a coalition, therefore, trumps (in some cases) a similar appraisal of the coalition’s mission itself, leading to “the lack of an articulate, mainstream opposition to the stated government policy and in which the most important opposition leaders publicly support the government’s commitment.”⁴⁰

The evolution of domestic opinion on support for, and cooperation with, American foreign policy is also relevant here. One school of analysis holds that the foundation of Canada’s foreign policy strategy has been to achieve and maintain a balance between the two major powers with whom we have close connections, earlier

³⁹ S. Kreps, “Elite Consensus as a Determinant of Alliance Cohesion: Why Public Opinion Hardly Matters for NATO-led Operations in Afghanistan,” *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 6 (2010), pp. 191–215.

⁴⁰ John Zaller, “Elite Leadership of Mass Opinion: New Evidence from the Gulf War,” in *Taken by Storm: The Media, Public Opinion, and US Foreign Policy in the Gulf War*, eds. W. Lance Bennett and David Paletz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), pp. 195–6.

the Americans and British, today the Americans and Europe, loosely defined.⁴¹ Canada's involvement in Libya represents a careful balancing of this tension, in that it signals a rapprochement with the US in a manner and at a time that dovetails nicely with public opinion on both alliances.

In the run up to the 2008 US election, the Canadian public, like that of all NATO member states, expressed not only a preference that Obama win the presidency but also the belief that such an outcome would improve US relationships with the rest of the world, including their own country.⁴² Canadian and other NATO participation in Libya is a further sign that at least some of the reluctance to ally with Washington in stability operations stemmed from opposition to the George W. Bush presidency, and not explicitly opposition either to American-led coalitions or to the missions themselves.

It is worth noting here that Canadian public opinion on foreign and defence policy is far from monolithic. Also important to note is that the variation in position across the Canadian public with regard to military action and international alliances is less tied to regional and ethnic identification than is often supposed. Opinion polling of the Canadian public throughout the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries has shown a remarkably wide, and consistent, level of variation with respect to intervention and support for partners' operations.⁴³

Having said that, public opinion was not particularly in favour of Canada's role in Libya. Shortly after CF participation was announced, a national poll asked Canadians: "Do you think Canada, the US, Britain, and other countries are right or wrong to take military action in Libya?" Forty-one percent of respondents affirmed that Canada and its allies were right, 33 percent argued that they were wrong, and 26 percent were unsure. Several months in to the mission, support was similarly tepid. When asked: "Overall, do you think military action in Libya is going well or badly?"

⁴¹ J.L. Granatstein, "Can Canada Have a Grand Strategy?" Symposium paper presented at the Canadian Forces College, April 2011, for the CDFAI.

⁴² N. I. Dragojlovic, "Priming and the Obama Effect on Public Evaluations of the United States," *Political Psychology*, 32 (2010), pp. 989–1006.

⁴³ Pierre Martin and Michel Fortmann, "Canadian public opinion and peacekeeping in a turbulent world," *International Journal*, 50:2 (Spring 1995), pp. 370-400; Andrew Parkin, "Pro-Canadian, Anti-American, or Anti-War? Canadian Public Opinion on the Eve of War," *Policy Options* (April 2003), pp. 5-7.

Thirty-one percent chose 'well,' 29 percent chose 'unsure,' and 38 percent said 'badly' – this despite any Canadian casualties and minimal critical coverage of the mission.⁴⁴

The relatively low importance of public opinion versus elite opinion does not mean that political considerations don't influence how and when Canada chose to get involved. One clear example of domestic political considerations influencing Canadian decision-making around Libya involves the issue of casualties. While elite consensus is fairly impervious to casualties, public opinion is not.⁴⁵ The decision to participate as a coalition member gave Canada the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution that would carry some prestige with coalition partners, while minimizing the number of Canadian lives placed in jeopardy and dramatically reducing the likelihood of casualties, particularly when compared with the comparatively costly Afghanistan engagement.

The writ dropped in Canada on 26 March 2011 for an election held 2 May. Due to the turbulence of the political climate, however, the prospect of an election was perpetually in the air. While prior to 26 March there was no official campaign, the pressures of an impending election influenced the behaviour of all parties, even before the election was formally called.

While an impending and then realized election campaign can be expected to increase voter scrutiny of major political issues and party positions, it does not mean that the timing of the Libya intervention piqued Canadian public opinion on Libya or on other related policy issues. From the beginning of 2011, through the election, and continuing to summer 2012, voters never identified defence, foreign policy, national security, or Libya as among their top five priorities.⁴⁶ Examining opinion polls, news, and editorial coverage of the Canadian involvement in Libya shows no significant relationship between the announcement of Canada's mission and electoral intentions,

⁴⁴ Abacus Data, "Canadians Split Over Mission in Libya: Abacus Data National Poll," accessed 4 December 2012, <http://abacusdata.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Libya-June-2011.pdf>.

⁴⁵ Alexander Moens, "Afghanistan and the Revolution in Canadian Foreign Policy," *International Journal*, 63 (2007-2008), pp. 569-578.

⁴⁶ "Healthcare and jobs/economy remain tied as most important issue for Canadians," Nanos Research, 8 June 2012, accessed 12 July 2012, <http://www.nanosresearch.com/library/polls/2012-05-IssueE.pdf>.

or between actual events in Libya and their coverage in the Canadian media and electoral intentions.⁴⁷

While some analysts, both academic and in the media, argued that Canada's role in Libya would benefit the government of the day in the election, this does not mean that the decision was explicitly influenced by political considerations.⁴⁸ Nor did military action in Libya put the governing Conservative party at rhetorical odds during the run-up and actual campaign; the Liberals made few substantial criticisms and the NDP advocated diverting funding from a proposed new fighter to renewed shipbuilding, but stressed that this too would maintain the CF's capabilities.⁴⁹

Parliament sat for five days between the announcement of the deployment of CF-18s to Libya and the dissolution in preparation for the general election. The Minister of National Defence responded on 21 March to an NDP question with the following statement, which characterizes government comments on Libya in Hansard:

I can tell the hon. member that we are there to comply with the resolutions that have been passed by the United Nations Security Council. We are there primarily to protect civilians on the ground in Libya from their own administration. We have clearly seen evidence in the past number of days, if not weeks, that Gadhafi has wreaked havoc on the ground against his own civilians. We are there with an international partnership providing as much protection as we possibly can."⁵⁰

Questions posed in the House pertaining to Libya requested clarification of terms of engagement, projected duration of the commitment, expressions of support for the CF, and queries as to why further measures were not being taken to isolate Gadhafi and protect the Libyan people.⁵¹ Opposition discussion of Canada's role in Libya criticized two primary areas: Canada's failure to adopt non-military measures, such as freezing

⁴⁷ Survey of *Globe & Mail* and *National Post* newspaper archives January 2011 until May 2011; rolling opinion polling before and during the election from Ipsos-Reed and Nanos.

⁴⁸ Mark Iype, "Libya situation hands Harper an image boost, expert says; PM seen with world leaders as election nears," *The Ottawa Citizen* (21 Mar 2011), A.3.

⁴⁹ Kevin Libin, "NDP takes a hawkish turn; Pacifist party leans right on foreign policy," *National Post* (9 May 2011), A.1.

⁵⁰ 40th Parliament, 3rd Session, Edited Hansard, Number 145, 21 March 2011.

⁵¹ Hansard, 21 March 2011 to 25 March 2011.

funds and isolating senior regime members, and the absence of a clear “exit strategy”, but there were few substantive criticisms of the engagement itself or its nature.

In fact, much of the explicit political debate prior to the announcement of the Libya mission invoked international good citizenship and the need to emulate NATO allies, particularly with respect to the use of economic and diplomatic pressures to curtail the powers of the Gadhafi regime and its supporters. Canada’s participation in the NATO operation in Libya bears out the importance of coalition membership as a framework for justifying participation to the public, garnering the support of all major political players for fulfilling obligations, formal and informal, and setting parameters for participation that complement domestic political considerations.

Canada’s role in Libya reflects some important truths about Canadian participation in coalition operations and domestic considerations. First, public opinion about the desirability of alliances and partners plays a role in what is politically feasible and attractive for the government of the day. The changed tenor of the Ottawa-Washington relationship since 2009 made participation in Libya less costly in terms of public opinion than a similar endeavour might have been prior to 2008, or under a McCain presidency. Broader popular support for NATO membership means that emphasizing the international nature of interventions facilitates military involvement, on the domestic political stage.

Second, raw public opinion matters less than elite consensus. When the leadership of major parties and other stakeholder groups perceive the long term benefits of coalition membership to be sufficiently powerful, or the costs of defection or abstention to be sufficiently high, this consensus effectively insulates policy-makers from electoral consequences for bucking public opinion, even when disapproval approaches two thirds of the electorate.

Third, participation in a coalition allows Canada to make a meaningful contribution – both in the eyes of partners and of Canadians – within limitations that minimize domestic opposition to the involvement. In Libya, this meant choosing a form of participation that minimized the odds of casualties, limited financial and material costs of contributing to the mission, and reduced the likelihood of an open-ended involvement. Taken together, these points indicate that intervention as part of a

coalition serves to increase the options available to the government should it wish to use the CF to support its foreign policy and strategy.

Canada and the United States: Defence Relationship-building

In light of the domestic factors influencing the decision to join the coalition, and the strategic purpose behind Canadian participation, the timeline for Canada's involvement becomes particularly significant. It is important to note that *Operational MOBILE* became a combat mission under the aegis of *Operation ODYSSEY DAWN*, before the NATO mission had been fully formed or approved. In fact, Canada was participating in the air campaign a full eight days before it came under the mantle of the NATO mission. A Congressional Research Service report from April 2012 states "[some] analysts argued that Canada took part in the mission in order to demonstrate its continuing commitment to the North Atlantic alliance."⁵² The allusion to Canada's desire to demonstrate its commitment to NATO is accurate, but does not provide a complete picture of Canada's strategic interests.

One of Canada's primary strategic goals for participating in the Libya campaign was to demonstrate a rapprochement in its defence partnership with the US. This made manifest the relationship the Harper government has been fostering since taking office. Canada's willingness and ability to lead the NATO mission was also a benefit to a reluctant US, which was initially criticized for its hesitancy and "leading from behind" approach. In an article in *The New Yorker*, Ryan Lizza quoted senior Obama advisors as using the phrase "leading from behind" in relation to the US's approach to intervention in Libya. The phrase refers to a deliberate strategy that allows a strong actor to place allies in leadership roles in low risk situations without damaging its own reputation. In the Libya case, the US military was able to participate in an international conflict without taking the leadership role because the intervention was seen as low risk and no ground forces were committed.⁵³

⁵² Carl Ek & Ian F. Fergusson, "Canada-U.S. Relations," CSR Report for Congress (5 April 2012), 12.

⁵³ Ryan Lizza, "Leading from Behind," *The New Yorker* (2011), accessed 12 July 2012, <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/newsdesk/2011/04/leading-from-behind-obama-clinton.html#ixzz222fX0h6x>.

The use of the term by members of the Obama administration instantly drew a firestorm of criticism from the Republican Party, who jumped at the chance to criticize the government for a perceived loss of reputation and an implied deference to states of lesser military power.⁵⁴ However, Roger Cohen summarizes the reality of the US's position succinctly: "The United States, short on cash, bruised by Iraq and Afghanistan, did not want to head the charge into a third Muslim country."⁵⁵ In early 2011, in the midst of exorbitantly expensive wars, in the wake of a catastrophic market crash, and in anticipation of a grueling election year, the US was in the worst shape it had been in in decades:

Iraq and Afghanistan have exacted a toll on America – in lives, treasure and standing – that it will take a generation to work through. Globalization and the information technology revolution are sucking away jobs; the jobs that remain demand levels of education that the country is doing a poor job providing. Debt, national and personal, hangs like a giant cloud over the United States. Other nations are growing so fast that the U.S. share of global output fell to 19.1 percent in 2011 from 23.5 percent in 2000. The country is beset by paralyzing political division. Growing inequality has trampled on fairness to the point that Americans are taking to the streets. Right now America is neither morally compelling nor materially convincing.⁵⁶

Leading a military intervention with no specific end goal or apparent exit date, and no obvious strategic reason to get involved, was not in best interests of the US.⁵⁷ This reluctance to lead did not mean that the US was uninterested in abstaining from any military intervention, however. The US became one of the largest contributors to the mission by far: providing 67 percent of personnel, 49 percent of aircraft, and 31.5 percent of naval assets; conducting 16 percent of sorties⁵⁸ and taking out the Libyan air defence system; conducting 70 percent of all surveillance, intelligence, and

⁵⁴ David Remnick, "Behind the Curtain," *The New Yorker* (2011), accessed 12 June 2012, http://www.newyorker.com/talk/comment/2011/09/05/110905taco_talk_remnick.

⁵⁵ Roger Cohen, "Leading From Behind," *The New York Times* (31 October 2011), accessed 12 July 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/01/opinion/01iht-edcohen01.html>.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Derek Burney, "Libya: Why Are We Involved, A Policy Update Paper," Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute (CDFAI) (March 2011).

⁵⁸ Jorge Benitez, "National Composition of NATO Strike Sorties in Libya," Atlantic Council (2011), accessed 12 July 2012 <http://www.acus.org/natosource/national-composition-nato-strike-sorties-libya>.

reconnaissance; and undertaking 70 percent of all refueling missions.⁵⁹ The “leading from behind” strategy allowed the US to participate and to provide a proportionately heavy contribution to the mission in order to maintain a dominant voice at the proverbial planning table, while not bearing the burden of responsibility should the mission fail.

Immediately following the successful completion of the NATO mission, the approach to coalition formation in Libya was lauded as a rousing success. Some military experts suggested the approach might act as a model for future interventions, in which the US can avoid high costs by putting allies in the lead while remaining a driving force in action and decision making.⁶⁰ In light of more recent political failings in Libya, notably the attack on the US embassy in Benghazi that left four dead including the ambassador,⁶¹ and continued instability and loss of life, this may not prove to be a desirable format for future interventions. Despite these recent events, however, *Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR* represented a successful and casualty free achievement of immediate NATO goals. The intervention also provided Canada with the opportunity to strengthen its relationship with the US by taking the leadership role, demonstrating both the ability and willingness to take more responsibility and to act in a larger capacity within the Canada-US defence partnership.

Canada’s participation in *ODYSSEY DAWN* is seen as a sign of significant progress to the Canada-US defence relationship. As J.L. Granatstein notes, the Harper government put significant effort into improving the North American defence relationship and showing the US that Canada is a strong ally well before the Libya mission. Granatstein states that the Harper administration prudently recognized the US as the only defence partner on which it can truly rely. He writes: “The Germans won’t fight, the Dutch can’t, the British can no longer afford a military, and the French want to

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Max Boot & Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, “Did Libya Vindicate ‘Leading From Behind’?” Council on Foreign Relations (2011), accessed 12 July 2012, <http://www.cfr.org/africa/did-libya-vindicate-leading-behind/p25750>.

⁶¹ “US ambassador to Libya ‘killed in Behghazi attack’,” *BBC News* (2012), accessed 12 September 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-19567353>.

run everything.”⁶² It was not the NATO relationship that Canada was primarily tending to during the deployment to Libya, but its relationship with the US.

Cooperation between the two North American states took a prominent place at a joint press conference held between Minister Baird and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on 4 August 2011.⁶³ There is speculation that Canada may have additionally benefitted from its involvement by being offered the leadership role for the NATO mission. Mark Collins wrote soon after the announcement that LGen Bouchard would command the mission, despite the assumption among defence analysts that a British or French commander would lead in light of their initial call to action. This implies that the choice of a Canadian lead was a surprise one, possibly supported by the US.⁶⁴ Canada is the most interoperable with the Americans out of all NATO allies, and Canadian rather than European leadership would possibly allow a greater degree of American influence without appearing to lead the mission. It is evident that “alliance tending” was a motivational factor for Canada’s early involvement in *Operation ODYSSEY DAWN*.

NATO and the Canadian Contribution in Libya

Canada’s leadership in *UNIFIED PROTECTOR* also raised its profile within NATO. Canada demonstrated an ability to respond to international crises efficiently and with assets proportionate to those of other European NATO allies, and to operate in a capacity that advanced the mission mandate. This opportunity was important to Canada, as it had struggled in these areas during various other NATO and UN campaigns.

Throughout its mission in Libya, NATO sought to maintain a high operational tempo against legitimate targets until three goals had been achieved: all attacks and

⁶² J.L. Granatstein, “A Very Albertan Foreign Policy,” *The 3-Ds Blog: Diplomacy, Defence, Development* (19 September 2011), accessed 4 June 2012, <http://www.cdfai.org/the3dsblog/?p=490>.

⁶³ Luiza Ch Savage, “Transcript of Clinton-Baird press conference on Libya, Somalia and Keystone pipeline,” *Bilateralist* (5 August 2011), accessed 4 June 2012, <http://www.bilateralist.com/2011/08/05/transcript-clinton-baird/>.

⁶⁴ Mark Collins, “Look Who’s in Charge of NATO’s Libya Actions,” *The 3-Ds Blog: Diplomacy, Defence, Development* (25 March 2011), accessed 4 June 2012, <http://www.cdfai.org/the3dsblog/?p=156>.

threats of attacks against civilians had ended; the Gadhafi regime had withdrawn all military and paramilitary forces to their bases; and full humanitarian access was granted to the Libyan people. These three objectives informed all military action taken by NATO in Libya and served as the benchmarks by which the success of the overall mission was measured.⁶⁵

While conducting these military operations, NATO continually acknowledged that there must also eventually be a political solution in Libya to ensure the continued protection of the population against violence.⁶⁶ It firmly insisted that these political goals – including possible regime change – were not the job of the military and thus were not a part of the NATO mandate; NATO's stated military objectives certainly did not include mention of Gadhafi's removal from power as a condition of success. However, analysis of NATO statements and press releases issued by the alliance over the course of operations in Libya indicate that regime change became a fully implied, if not actually articulated, element of the NATO mission.⁶⁷ This implication is borne out by the provision of military support to the rebels.

Canada initially sent CF-18s (supported by CP-140 Aurora reconnaissance aircraft, HMCS Charlottetown, and two tankers) to enforce a no-fly zone, preventing the transport of arms and munitions into Libya and protecting the country's civilian population from its aggressive leader. However, the mission quickly changed as demonstrated by the outline of NATO statements and actions above. Retired Major-General Lewis Mackenzie noted in late March 2011 that "mission creep has already happened," referring to the French military's widening of its attacks beyond the UN's formal confines.⁶⁸ While regime change presents complexities both within the international community and for domestic politics, the feasibility of an intervention that

⁶⁵ Statement on Libya following the working lunch of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs with non-NATO contributors to Operation Unified Protector, Press Release (2011) 045, 14 April 2011.

⁶⁶ NATO Press briefings on Libya: 28 March 2011, 8 April 2011, 14 April 2011, 29 April 2011, 3 May 2011, 10 June 2011, 17 June 2011, 7 July 2011, 26 July 2011.

⁶⁷ Ibid, 25 April 2011.

⁶⁸ John Allemang and Daniel Leblanc, "As politicians hit hustings, Canada's Libya mission flies under the radar," *The Globe and Mail* (24 March 2011), last updated 25 March 2011, accessed on 12 March 2012, <http://m.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/as-politicians-hit-the-hustings-who-holds-the-reins-on-our-cf-18s/article1955970/?service=mobile>.

transforms institutions and relationships to the degree required for humanitarian concerns without also effecting political change is dubious.

Canada's deployment of CF-18s and supporting infrastructure demonstrated the importance of air power to expeditionary action, and further had the benefit of being low-risk with regards to Canadian casualties. The deployment of the Royal Canadian Navy had the same benefits, and highlighted the role of a blue water navy on the eve of a new ship building contract announcement. So soon after the end of Canada's fighting mission in Afghanistan, Canadians were wary of any more battle fatalities. Following years of difficult deployments, the Army was also experiencing organizational fatigue, and a mission not requiring "boots on the ground" was ideal for Canada.⁶⁹ While the decision to send the RCAF and RCN was congruent with the capabilities of the CF, the broad support of the Canadian public, and the political needs of the government of the day, these factors do not explain why Canada committed only seven jets and a single frigate.

This issue is especially pertinent in light of Canada's leadership role during Libya. Seven jets and a frigate have been referred to as purely symbolic contributions to the mission. When evaluated in the appropriate context, however, the Canadian contribution can be seen as proportionate to that of the other allies in light of its relative power position, and for the leadership role. Canadian jets flew 446 missions over Libya, 10 percent of the NATO total.⁷⁰ This was despite the fact that Canada contributed only 4.5 percent of personnel and 3.5 percent of aircraft to the mission.⁷¹ These figures can be contrasted with those of the United Kingdom and France, the two most outspoken states calling for action in Libya in early 2011.⁷² Comparatively, the UK committed 10

⁶⁹ DND, *Canada First Defence Strategy*, "Rebuilding the Canadian Forces," Government of Canada, 2008, accessed 24 March 2012, http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/pri/first-premier/June18_0910_CFDS_english_low-res.pdf.

⁷⁰ John Ibbitson and Daniel Leblanc, "Canada turns commitment into clout in Libya," *The Globe and Mail*, 21 October 2011, accessed 3 April 2012, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/canada-turns-commitment-into-clout-in-libya/article2210169/>.

⁷¹ Benitez, "National Composition of NATO Strike Sorties in Libya."

⁷² Steven Erlanger, "France and Britain Lead Military Push on Libya," *New York Times* (2011), accessed 5 December 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/19/world/africa/19europe.html?_r=0; Foreign & Commonwealth Office, "UK calls for UN action in Libya," *New York Times* (2011) accessed 5 December 2012, <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=News&id=555389382>.

percent of personnel and 9 percent of all aircraft while flying 10 percent of all sorties. France contributed only 6 percent of personnel and matched the UK's 9 percent of aircraft while managing to fly an impressive overall 33 percent of sorties. Canada matched the UK's flight rate and came close to meeting France's personnel contribution.⁷³ In this particular instance, the asset commitments Canada was able to make were meaningful contributions to the mission. This does not mean that these contributions will always suffice for future NATO action. Canada must continue to contribute proportionate capabilities to missions if they wish to retain an influential voice at the table.

Canada must consider its allies' ability to remain at the table as well. *Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR* may have revealed serious shortcomings within the NATO alliance. Several allies within the organization refused to participate in the Libya intervention, while those who did choose to contribute relied heavily on the US for key intelligence and logistics support. The Americans were responsible for destroying anti-aircraft defences, often resupplying the Europeans with weapons, and providing 80 percent of aerial refueling. Only 8 of the 28 member states in NATO even took part in bombing missions: France, Britain, Canada, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Italy, and the US.⁷⁴

The experiences of the UK and France in Libya also exemplified reliance on the US. For these two states multilateralism and alliances have come to be significant considerations for the formation of their foreign and defence policy.⁷⁵ As with Canada, defence has come to be understood as a task to be undertaken collectively. Under the combined aegis of NATO and the European Union, and with significant military budget reductions and procurement problems in recent years, these two states have increasingly gained value from collective security. Combined military efforts involving

⁷³ Benitez, "National Composition of NATO Strike Sorties in Libya."

⁷⁴ Doug Bandow, "NATO and Libya, its time to retire a fading alliance," *Forbes* (2 January 2012), accessed 18 April 2012, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/dougbandow/2012/01/02/nato-an-libya-its-time-to-retire-fading-alliance/>.

⁷⁵ Ministère de la défense, "Livre blanc sur la défense et le sécurité nationale 2008," Gouvernement de la République Française, 2008, accessed 5 December 2012, <http://www.defense.gouv.fr/portail-defense/enjeux2/politique-de-defense/livre-blanc-2008>; Ministry of Defence, "The Defence Vision: Defence in a Changing World," Government of the United Kingdom, 2012, accessed 5 December 2012, <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/Organisation/DefenceVision/TheDefenceVision.htm>.

the US have the added benefit for the UK and France of reinforcing a strong political relationship with the North American state. Like Canada, this relationship to the US was an inescapable consideration in committing to *UNIFIED PROTECTOR*.⁷⁶ The military assets of the US are still needed in order to realistically undertake an intervention on the scale seen in Libya. Thus, Britain and France are equally as compelled as Canada to maintain strong military and defence relations with the US.

The number of NATO states that opted out of participating in the campaign is also cause for concern. This lack of NATO enthusiasm, or support, for the Libya intervention suggests a waning interest in, or more recently the inability to spend money on, the military and defence in Europe. Since the end of the Cold War, defence spending by European NATO countries has fallen by almost 20 percent. In the early 1990s, defence expenditures in European countries represented almost 34 percent of NATO's total, with the US and Canada covering the remaining 66 percent. Since then, the share of NATO's security burden shouldered by European countries has fallen to just 21 percent.⁷⁷ While the Libya mission demonstrated that European states are currently still able to play a central role in complex military operations, their ability to maintain this capacity in the years ahead is questionable. Given the rising debt levels in Europe, the trend towards continually reducing defence expenditure, as well as the increasing levels of defence spending by other emerging powers, even NATO Secretary General Fogh Rasmussen questions whether NATO will be able to maintain its operational edge in five or ten years.⁷⁸ Canada must consider how this potential future might impact its strategic focus on multilateral expeditionary action alongside powerful allies.

⁷⁶ Erlanger, "France and Britain Lead Military Push on Libya."

⁷⁷ NATO Secretary General Fogh Rasmussen, "NATO after Libya, the Atlantic Alliance in Austere Times," Reprinted by permission of Foreign Affairs (July/August 2011), 29 June 2011, accessed 18 April 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_75836.htm.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

Conclusion: Lessons Learned

Alliance membership and multilateralism have become cornerstones of Canadian defence policy. Equally important is the maintenance of strong relations with the US. Participating in the Libya coalition advanced Canada's strategic interests on both the domestic and international levels. Domestically, *Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR* allowed Canada to demonstrate the viability of its military and the need for a strong CF. Internationally, the fact that Canada joined *Operation ODYSSEY DAWN* emphasized the Harper government's ambitions in regards to repairing and maintaining strong military relations with the US. Three key lessons can be drawn from the Libya experience in order for Canada to successfully advance its strategic interests in future military coalition operations.

First, the intervention in Libya suggests that coalition warfare and collective security will be an inescapable reality for members of NATO for the foreseeable future. Interventions on the scale of that in Libya are not realistic for states to undertake alone. Therefore, Canada must contribute to maintaining the viability of NATO. There was a noticeable lack of enthusiasm among NATO members for the Libya intervention. Canada continues to share common goals, values, and interests with NATO member states, something that cannot necessarily be said of many other emerging powers. Thus, Canada must encourage the maintenance of the NATO alliance by urging Europe to spend more on defence, and maintaining proportionate spending itself. As hard power continues to prove relevant to restoring and maintaining peace, NATO members must spend the time and money necessary in order to maintain a wide spectrum of military capabilities.

Equally true, however, is the fact that soft power will also continue to prove relevant. NATO is a military alliance in both structure and purpose, without any non-military avenues of international engagement, such as formal developmental or economic tools. Given the trend toward supporting human security, and increasing economic interdependence, Canada should introduce and support a plan for the expansion of NATO's mandate beyond strictly military action, possibly by involving NATO in stability and development dimensions after the active military phase of an intervention. This could provide a tangible way to continue the viability of the alliance in the changing international environment. In addition, an expansion of this nature

supports greater Canadian involvement in NATO given our propensity and success with these types of actions.

Second, the Libya campaign also demonstrated that the US will remain the dominant force in coalition formation and mission direction, at least for the near future. Canada must be prepared to act within the framework of NATO, but also in cooperation with the US outside of this framework should the need arise. This ability to act helps to maintain a strong, positive relationship with the US, and allows Canada to demonstrate its ability to act as a continental defence partner. Therefore, Canada must strive to maintain positive relations with the United States in future international interventions. From a Canadian perspective, one very successful aspect of the Libya intervention was the development of positive communication and cooperation in terms of resource sharing with the United States. Given the importance of American support to Canada's overall defence strategy, and to the growth of Canadian industry and trade, maintenance of this relationship structure for use in future joint expeditionary action is in Canada's best interests. This relationship could be further cemented, and future joint interventions facilitated, by preparing more explicitly for international coalition deployments, through exercises and simulations, as well as establishing roles and commitments for countries involved. The formal infrastructure for successful cooperation with the US, in the shape of NORAD and the Permanent Joint Board of Defence, should remain a priority.

Finally, Canada's role in Libya demonstrated that it is able to commit proportional assets to international missions. The Canadian contribution to the operation showed the world that Canada can be an equal member in NATO. Therefore, Canada must make proportional commitments to international operations.

If Canada is to take a leadership role in future interventions, it must provide contribute in proportion to that position of authority in order to benefit from the international prestige of such a role. In the event that the military capacity to carry a larger share of the burden is simply lacking, increased participation and commitment of resources in other avenues is crucial. Examples are financial and development aid, training of local police and military forces to assist countries in becoming stable and secure as rapidly as possible, and advising on post-conflict reintegration.