



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CANADA

**STATE OF READINESS OF THE  
CANADIAN FORCES:  
RESPONSE TO THE TERRORIST THREAT**

**Interim Report of the Standing Committee on  
National Defence and Veterans Affairs**

**David Pratt, M.P.  
Chair**

**November 2001**

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# **THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENCE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS**

has the honour to present its

## **THIRD REPORT**

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), your Committee reviewed the state of readiness of the Canadian Forces.

Your Committee heard evidence on this matter, the result of which is contained in this interim report, which the Committee is tabling as its response to the terrorist threat.





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# **STATE OF READINESS OF THE CANADIAN FORCES: RESPONSE TO THE TERRORIST THREAT**

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With the demise of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, we in the West became complacent about our security. The United States was the only remaining super power and, while there were regional conflicts that needed tending, our homeland security seemed guaranteed. Who could challenge us? Who could make us worry? Who could match our collective might?

Peacekeeping was the immediate military challenge and, at least for Canadians, the principles of human security became the rubric under which we were to engage the international community. Although some warning signs were in evidence, peace dividends were cashed in — more than once by some — and any significant long-term combat commitments seemed far off. We would help to stabilize and rebuild the former Yugoslavia and engage in peacekeeping operations when required. Even if there were to be another Iraq style war, we would be safe.

September 11th changed all that. It brought an end to the optimism we all shared with the fall of the Berlin Wall. The latter symbolized the hopes of the post-Cold War period, while September 11th has made us rethink the complacency to which we had all so easily fallen prey. If there is one thing we now share above all else, it is a sense of vulnerability.

The context in which we now formulate our foreign and defence policies is fundamentally different from that of only a short while ago. There is no more talk of “war without casualties,” rather, there is a renewed understanding that a conflict over basic values is more fundamental than one over strategic interests. What was under attack in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania was not merely a symbol of modern day America’s financial and military strength — under attack was the very basis upon which Western democratic societies are based.

The attack was aimed at our belief in secular rationalism, at the fact that we encourage pluralism and the belief that a people in concert with their fellow citizens can mold their own destiny. It is our belief in progress and equality that has come under siege and the fact that we are a society built on inclusion rather than exclusion.

We promote the separation of church and state in order to ensure the freedom of worship. At the same time, we understand, if only intuitively, that moral choices are, above all, about what is good in itself, objectively and for all people. There are moral rights and duties that obtain independently of race or culture, tradition or form of government. These rights and duties, in terms of practice and action, define us as human beings, not as citizens of this or that society. No domain — not even religion — justifies

practices that undermine human rights and no domain — not even religious institutions — can be left unaccountable for their actions.

While the tragedy of September 11th was an attack on American soil, it was really an attack on us all. Canadians and nationals of other countries died that day, but Americans suffered the most.

The matter confronting us as legislators is “how do we respond,” not only today, but, over the long term? How do we organize and prepare ourselves against the possibility of further attacks? What should we expect of the public and the members of our armed forces? Needless to say, we cannot offer definitive answers. But it is imperative that we act and, in doing so, that we not remain hostage to outworn principles of strategic thinking, military doctrine or political correctness.

A government's number one responsibility is the security of its citizens. Our citizens are increasingly concerned about their personal security and are looking to government as the ultimate guarantor of their physical well-being. As well, they fully understand that a disproportionate share of the burden for ensuring their well-being will fall to the men and women of the Canadian Forces and first responders.

Our Committee has been engaged in an extensive study on the operational readiness of the Canadian Forces. Given the importance of what has happened, and the possible need for further commitments on the part of our military personnel, we believed it important to table an interim report. The issue had been part of our initial study, but its significance did not bear the import it now does.

Finally, the most important reason for submitting a report at this time is to have our recommendations taken into account by the Government in the current budgetary process. If we are to provide the CF with what they need for the challenges confronting them, then we need to begin the planning process now. We cannot wait for the luxury of better economic times, nor can we fall back on the naïve hope that once Al-Qaeda and the Talibans have been dealt with, the terrorist threat against us will disappear.

In the past, we have argued for the need to have an expeditionary capability consisting of well-trained troops that are fully interoperable with our allies. We have called for more resources, new equipment, adequate troop levels and an effort to realize the potential of the Reserves. While we cannot claim omniscience, as a Committee, we feel that our past reports and recommendations were very constructive contributions to our defence capabilities. The post-September 11th security environment has added a level of unimagined urgency to some of our previous comments.

Some progress has been made by the infusion of funds into quality of life initiatives, with the Clothe the Soldier program and the purchase of new armored personnel and reconnaissance vehicles. But, more will be needed.

The military played its part in deficit reduction. However, while the CF closed bases, cut personnel, reduced training and made do with old equipment, more and more was being asked of our soldiers by their political masters. The high level of operational tempo, combined with strained resources has placed a good deal of pressure on military institutions, individual members and their families, and their communities.

However, despite the cutbacks, Canadians still want to make a contribution to international efforts. They want to be seen front and center. And, the members of the CF are more than willing to put us there.

Despite this, we have also shown a certain ambivalence when it comes to our commitments. We want to be seen, we want to “count” so to speak. But, we have also developed a reputation of not wanting to pay for the associated prestige or for the privilege of offering counsel. We cannot have it both ways.

These tendencies were clearly displayed in the aftermath of President Bush’s address to the American people. The front pages of our major newspapers agonized over why Canada was not mentioned. On phone-in shows, Canadians expressed their disappointment over the fact that the slight may have been intentional. No one really knew the reason for the omission, but virtually all drew the same conclusion. We were finally being told to ante-up. Many, both inside and outside the country, believed that Canada had not been carrying its weight with respect to our bilateral commitments in the defence of North America nor with regard to our international defence commitments as a member of NATO.

In the end, our military response to the U.S. request for assistance was substantive. We have sent five ships: the destroyer *Iroquois*, the frigates, *Halifax*, *Charlottetown* and *Vancouver* and the supply ship *Preserver*. Another frigate is slated to be deployed soon. It is worth mentioning that these frigates, the pride of the Canadian Navy, are among the best in the world today. Our air force commitment includes three Hercules transport aircraft, two CP-140 Auroras for surveillance and one Airbus. With these, we also sent a small contingent from JTF2, our anti-terrorism specialists. In total, 2,000 personnel are being deployed making Canada the third largest contributor at the time of writing.

The question we might, however, put to ourselves is: “Despite the robust nature of this commitment, does it point to certain weaknesses in our force structure?” That is, what if the call had come to the army? Would we have been able to quickly deploy and sustain a full battalion or brigade for an extended period? The likely answer, especially given our overseas commitments already in place, would have been no.

The committee has repeatedly heard testimony that today’s army could not mount a full brigade. Indeed, some have argued that even if all Canadian troops serving abroad were brought home, Canada would still be unable to meet the commitments set out in the 1994 Defence White Paper. While we are not in a position to draw definitive conclusions

at this time about the latter point, suffice it to say that if we are able to meet these commitments, we only just scrape by. And, in doing so, we put tremendous strains on our personnel.

We also heard testimony about the lack of effective training afforded our Land Forces. It has been noted that there has not been a brigade level exercise in over nine years. This has serious implications for both combat effectiveness and leadership. Our commanders need the experience of leading troops at this basic level of military organization. For our troops to be effective in the field, they must know one another, train together and be able to build the requisite levels of trust and familiarity that are essential for battlefield survival.

If our forces are to be interoperable with our allies we need to be able to train with them on a regular basis. The brigade is the critical mass required for effective joint training. It is also important to note that while our forces need to be interoperable, they must also be able to operate under independent Canadian command. The brigade offers the minimum force necessary to ensure such independence of command.

We would advise that the practice of patching together units for various operations be done very carefully. Task-tailored groups with specially trained personnel for a specialized national or international operation can be very effective. Canada's experience with the Netherlands in the United Nations Mission to Ethiopia-Eritrea (UNMEE) was very successful and led to increased interoperability with an important NATO ally. However, putting a small number of Canadian troops into a less benign environment under foreign command and without the benefit of previous joint training could be a recipe for serious problems.

With regard to the matter of interoperability, our Navy and Air Force have been somewhat more fortunate than the land element. These two services have, through standing international agreements, been required to formally participate in regular training activities with our closest allies. The Army, since leaving North West Europe, has not had the same focus and associated pressures to maintain training standards and equipment as have the Navy and Air Force. For the Air Force this is provided through our participation in NORAD and other multinational operations, while the Navy has a regular commitment through its participation in NATO's Standing Naval Force Atlantic.

Presently, official policy states that the CF be able to deploy vanguard units to a theatre of operation within 21 days and a larger contingent force within 90 days. Current realities suggest this is no longer sufficient. The United States is positioning itself to deploy light brigade sized strike forces without heavy armour and artillery in 96 hours. Our forces must become deployable at much shorter notice and be sustainable for significant periods of time. If we fail in this regard, then continued talk of real interoperability with our most important ally will remain just that.

Allowing oneself the luxury of relatively long lead times to assemble, train, and dispatch selected sized forces to a theatre of possible operations may actually erode the very real need for maintaining core elements at higher standards of readiness. It is such elements, along with the requisite equipment, training and delivery mechanisms that are necessary to deal with short-notice complex operations. The new strategic environment is one in which rapid response is an essential aspect of military planning and doctrine.

The debate over whether or not asymmetric threats are real is over. The issue is how do we deal with them and how do we structure and equip our forces to respond. Answers will not be obvious, but there are certain basics we must assure. These will likely prove expensive.

What is encouraging about our efforts to meet the new challenges before us is the determination of official opinion. The Minister of National Defence has stated that “it is clear that we have to assess in detail what is required in terms of activities and capabilities.” He added that “additional resources may be required to do the job.” The Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade was quick to argue that “Canada will unambiguously join the U.S. military action in striking back at terrorism even if Canadian lives are lost.” Mr. Manley, on September 16th, went on to argue that “Canada is at war against terrorism” and that “the world changed in some very real ways as a result of those events and that it is going to force us to look at all aspects of what we do.” In these efforts, he concluded, “Canada will stand shoulder to shoulder with the United States.”

In addition, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Trade also suggested that the Government is willing to reconsider its level of defence spending. “As we assess the world we live in,” Mr. Manley noted, “we may well find that we’re going to have to increase the amounts that we allocate to national defence as well as to our security forces...”

There can be little doubt that the world is a different place than it was in 1994. We have new challenges to face and new commitments to consider which will require more resources. The Committee believes that both the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade clearly understand this. Thus, in light of the changed international environment and the need to structure our Canadian Forces in a manner that will allow them to effectively serve our national interests, we recommend:

- 1. That the Government increase the budget for the Department of National Defence.**

To argue that the Canadian Forces are in need of additional funding is to utter a truism. Between 1993 and 1998, the defence budget fell by 23% and the Department’s real purchasing power fell by more than 30%. In 1998 the Auditor General (AG) argued that an additional \$5 to \$6 billion was required over the next five to ten years to replace worn out equipment. In 2000, the AG pegged annual shortfalls for the Department at \$750 million. Over the three year period 1998-2001, the Government added \$1.7 billion to

the defence budget. However, the Conference of Defence Associations, in its recent study, *Caught in the Middle: An Assessment of the Operational Readiness of the Canadian Forces*, concluded that annual shortfalls for DND were still \$1 billion. The shortfalls identified applied principally to operations and maintenance costs.

Our Committee has heard nothing in the way of testimony that would lead us to quarrel with the foregoing figures and the conclusion that the CF may well be in the midst of a crisis. It is imperative that we provide the Canadian Forces with the capabilities they need to meet their commitments. It is important that increases be added to the annual base budget and monies for unforeseen taskings should be separate allocations as needed. The Department cannot continue to operate along the path of trying to re-allocate funds within its already insufficient base budget to meet unforeseen needs. We can no longer continue the practice of “robbing Peter to pay Paul” in the attempt to keep our defence structure afloat.

We therefore recommend:

- 2. That when considering additional funding the Government do so, not only with a view to covering operational costs related to the counterterrorism effort, but also with a view toward addressing problems related to program integrity.**
- 3. In addition, our Committee recommends that the current personnel strength of both the Regular and Reserve forces be reviewed.**

We believe it necessary at this point to go beyond the 60,000 regular force personnel specified in the White Paper. Urgent efforts must be made to ensure that the effective strength of the Reserves is increased significantly. While many of the underlying assumptions of the 1994 Defence White Paper remain valid, the current international situation requires a thorough review of our defence policy. Because defence policy is determined to a large extent by Canada’s international relations, a re-examination of our foreign policy is necessary. Consequently, we recommend:

- 4. That the Government immediately initiate a major review of our foreign and defence policies in light of the situation since September 11th.**

And, we further recommend:

- 5. That Parliament play a significant role in both review processes.**

This is not the time for “in-house” reviews. Any review of our foreign and defence policies must be broad based, and encourage both public and Parliamentary participation. Most importantly, however, a review of defence and foreign policies should not serve as an excuse to delay desperately needed funding increases.



In the fight against terrorism, intelligence will play an especially important role. Accurate military intelligence is absolutely vital for the success of a deployed unit overseas. It is therefore important that we continue to cooperate with our allies — especially the United States — in this regard. We also need to have an accurate reading of what is taking place within our own borders if we are to track and deter potential terrorist threats. In this regard, it is important that our own intelligence agencies do more to enhance their effectiveness by increasing cooperation amongst themselves.

We have gained much in our relationship with the United States in the area of Signals Intelligence. The Communications Security Establishment (CSE) has a good reputation and good relations with its counterparts in the U.S. and other countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia. We applaud the Government's announcements concerning more resources for the CSE. The recent increases granted the agency were a welcome sign. However, we encourage the Government to devote adequate resources to this area in order that we can hold up our end of the bargain and make a valuable contribution.

We are also encouraged by the creation of the Cabinet Committee on Public Security and Counterterrorism. Our battle against terrorism will, by all accounts, be a lengthy one and it is important to maintain an ongoing focus at the highest decision levels. We therefore recommend:

- 6. That the Cabinet Committee on Public Security and Counterterrorism be made a permanent standing committee of Cabinet and that it be allocated the necessary staff resources to carry out its mandate.**

However, there is one gap that has been identified with respect to our ability to gather and analyze intelligence. Currently, Canada does not have a dedicated foreign intelligence gathering arm. It has been suggested that Signals Intelligence is most effective when complemented by "human intelligence" — information gleaned from sources on the ground. While we are not in a position to make a formal recommendation in this regard, we do believe that it may be opportune for the Government to consider the potential establishment of a Canadian foreign intelligence gathering capability.

Canadians are no longer under the illusion that distance from tumultuous regions of the world protect us from attacks, but the grim reality is that Canadian and international security is endangered by a terrorist threat which can take many forms. There has been growing concern over the years that states or groups unwilling to respect the world's quest for peace and unable to directly confront technologically advanced armed forces like those of the United States will increasingly resort to terrorist attacks against the civilian population of peaceful countries to further their ends. These so-called asymmetrical threats prompted many experts to worry about the vulnerability of the critical infrastructure of highly developed countries like the U.S. and Canada which are more and more dependent on information technologies. Experts also raised serious concerns about the increased likelihood of the use by terrorists of nuclear, biological, and chemical

weapons, also called weapons of mass destruction, to kill hundreds if not thousands of civilians and provoke fear among the survivors.

The fact that the terrorists used hijacked airliners to carry out their evil deeds on September 11th instead of cyberattacks or chemical or biological weapons surprised terrorism experts as well as ordinary civilians. However, this by no means allows us to be complacent about the threat faced by Canada's critical infrastructure and the possibility that our citizens will be the targets, at some future date, of attacks utilizing weapons of mass destruction. Indeed, the attacks of September demonstrated the total disregard these terrorists have for human life and the high level of readiness we must maintain to counter the threat in all its forms. They also illustrated how the effects of the attacks can be felt far beyond the limits of the city or region where they occur. Attacks on Canada's power grids, communications systems, or nuclear power plants, whether they are carried out through the airspace or cyberspace, could have a domino effect throughout much of the Canadian economy while affecting the well-being of countless citizens. Attacks utilizing weapons of mass destruction, whether by themselves or in conjunction with other outrages, could not only make numerous victims, but also create a climate of fear among citizens out of all proportions to the quantity of nuclear, biological, or chemical material used. The anthrax scare of recent weeks in North America and elsewhere is a sample of the destabilizing potential of such terrorist acts. In short, terrorist attacks against the critical infrastructure as well as those utilizing weapons of mass destruction threaten not only people and property, but also the political and social stability we cherish.

Many of the elements Canada needs to counter these threats are already in place, but have to be strengthened. They are not all military in nature, although some of the key ones are found within the Department of National Defence. For example, the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness (OC�PEP) was established in February 2001. While taking over the capabilities of Emergency Preparedness Canada, already part of the Department, to respond to the consequences of natural and other disasters, OC�PEP also plays a key role in ensuring the protection of Canada's critical infrastructure, especially against cyberattacks. The Communications Security Establishment (CSE), another agency within the Department of National Defence, also contributes to the protection of government computer systems through its information technology security section. However, compared to what has been done in the United States in recent years, Canada has been slow to take coordinated actions to protect its critical infrastructure.

In the past, the threat to Canada was perhaps not considered as great as what the U.S. faced, but so much of the critical infrastructure of the two countries, including pipelines and power grids, is so intertwined that the security situation in one country affects that of the other. When the attacks occurred in September, OC�PEP was a young organization still in the process of drawing up an inventory of the major elements of Canada's critical infrastructure and developing its ties with the various federal, provincial, and private sector organizations that operate them. Indeed, the federal government is not the only player involved in protecting the critical infrastructure, so OC�PEP has the crucial task of cementing cooperation between the different levels of government and between

the public and the private sectors. There would be little point in increasing the number of armed guards at power stations, pipelines and other physical elements of the critical infrastructure if their operations were very vulnerable to disruptions because of cyberattacks against their computer networks. At the same time, the existence of an agency, which has a complete picture of the national infrastructure and its vulnerabilities, is an important asset in the fight against terrorism. We therefore recommend:

- 7. That the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness (OCIPEP) accelerate the production of a detailed inventory of Canada's critical infrastructure and the development of cooperative arrangements with public and private sector operators of the infrastructure.**

And furthermore:

- 8. That the budget of OCIPEP be increased to ensure adequate funding of measures designed to improve the protection of computer networks and other elements of the critical infrastructure, including closer cooperation with similar agencies in the United States.**

The capacity to deal with the consequences of a disaster, whether it is the result of a natural event or terrorism, is just as important as protecting the critical infrastructure from attacks. Quick and effective reaction when a natural disaster occurs can limit the number of people affected by it and isolates its effects to the immediate region. The same is true if terrorists cause the disaster, especially if they use nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons. In both cases, first responders such as firefighters, police, and medical personnel determine the extent of the disaster and the resources required to mitigate the consequences. As demonstrated in September, it is not always immediately clear if a situation is caused by terrorists, but there must be little delay in dealing with the consequences of that situation. The emergency response side of OCIPEP has already contributed to some extent to the expertise of the first responders by providing or funding training programs. However, the greater the scope of a disaster, the more significant will be the federal government's and especially OCIPEP's involvement in disaster relief. OCIPEP knows the personnel and resources available across Canada which can make the most appropriate contribution to the mitigation of the consequences of the disaster. It can facilitate their deployment to the city or region in distress, as demonstrated by its coordination of the shipments on September 11th of blankets and other supplies by military transport aircraft to various airports across Canada to which U.S. and foreign airliners had been diverted. Indeed, the sudden need to house and feed thousands of air travellers in a matter of hours illustrates how we have to be ready for all types of eventualities, even those which no one ever dreamed possible.

Thus, no matter how appropriate OCIPEP's contribution to disaster relief was in the past, its capacity to help municipal and provincial authorities to deal with the consequences of a disaster must be strengthened. We must build upon the existing

disaster relief capacity at the federal level so that major floods, oil spills, and other incidents, whether they are caused by natural phenomena or terrorist acts, can be dealt with appropriately. Besides, chemical and especially biological attacks by terrorists could affect so many people and their communities, overwhelm local medical and other authorities so rapidly that they would have to be considered major disasters in their own right. Thus, we must ensure that our disaster relief capability is more than adequate to meet the challenges presented by both natural disasters like earthquakes and calamities caused by terrorists. We therefore recommend:

- 9. That the budget for the emergency preparedness element of OCIEP be increased to significantly bolster the national capacity to provide disaster relief anywhere within Canada to assist municipal and provincial governments whenever disasters caused by nature or terrorists occur.**

As demonstrated on September 11th, OCIEP, especially its emergency preparedness arm, relies heavily on Canadian Forces transport aircraft to ship supplies, rescue experts, medical personnel, and even heavy equipment to regions of Canada grappling with a major disaster. Indeed, on that day, few other aircraft were flying within Canadian airspace when all civil aviation traffic was grounded. As the events of that day also underlined, we cannot afford to assume that disasters will not occur simultaneously in different parts of the country. In an emergency, the demands placed on our fleet of military transport aircraft could be quite high at a time when many of these aircraft like the Hercules transports are already heavily committed to their regular duties such as search and rescue and the resupply of Canadian peacekeepers and other units overseas. Much has been said recently about the limited capabilities and the age of some of our military transport aircraft. The importance of these aircraft to our capacity to deal with the consequences of disasters, whether caused by nature or terrorists, is more evident than ever. We therefore recommend:

- 10. That Canada acquire additional heavy transport aircraft and replace older models to ensure the strategic and tactical airlift capacity required for the rapid and efficient deployment of personnel and relief supplies to areas within Canada dealing with natural disasters and major terrorist attacks as well as for the transport of troops and military supplies to overseas operations.**

There will also be times when our forces will have to be sent abroad for either peacekeeping or combat operations. We therefore recommend:

- 11. That the Government place a higher priority on providing the Canadian Forces with additional sealift capability.**

Indeed, Canada's military has a long and proud history of transporting relief supplies to people in need within Canada and around the world. The Forces made another important contribution to international relief efforts a few years ago by

establishing the Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) which can be deployed anywhere in the world to complement the efforts of national and international organizations involved in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Thus, in addition to supplies, Canada can send some 200 personnel drawn from numerous units of the Forces such as medical and security staff as well as headquarters and logistics personnel who can operate for up to 40 days even in remote locations. While it has been available for internal emergencies, DART's focus has been mainly on disasters outside Canada's borders and it is organized to operate in areas of the world where there is little infrastructure and sometimes a fragile security environment.

The pre-positioning of equipment at CFB Trenton makes rapid deployment possible, although it takes time to assemble all the personnel involved. However, in the present context, more emphasis should perhaps be placed on DART's contribution to the federal government's capacity to deal with the consequences of disasters and terrorist attacks within Canada. This can surely be done without undermining DART's ability to help foreign countries. DART could spearhead the federal government's response to a disaster or major terrorist attack anywhere in Canada once local authorities determine that they do not have adequate resources to deal with a situation. However, because rapid deployment is crucial and other resources are available within Canada, it might not be necessary to deploy a DART team within this country with as many members as a team sent to a developing country. A core unit of medical and other personnel could be available for rapid deployment within Canada. We therefore recommend:

- 12. That the Government allocate sufficient resources to bolster the ability of the Disaster Assistance Response Team of the Canadian Forces to respond to emergency situations within Canada while maintaining its capacity to assist humanitarian aid and disaster relief efforts around the world.**
- 13. That the Department of National Defence examine various options including the creation of a core unit of medical and other personnel within DART which could be deployed on very short notice within Canada when disasters or major terrorist incidents occur.**

The need to respond quickly to a request for assistance anywhere in Canada is especially important in the case of terrorist incidents involving nuclear, biological, or chemical (NBC) weapons. As in the case of disaster relief, the military is only one of many contributors to the resources available to mitigate the consequences of NBC attacks. The departments of the Solicitor General and Health Canada as well as municipal and provincial first responders all have a role to play, especially when such attacks reach proportions which seriously threaten national security. In addition to the body of research carried out at the Defence Research Establishment Suffield, and other establishments, on defensive measures to deal with NBC warfare, the military has a Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Response Team (NBCRT) based at Camp Borden which can provide expertise and assistance to deal with NBC incidents. However, the Response Team is very small and has its hands full just helping military personnel on the battlefield and elsewhere to

deal with NBC attacks if and when they occur. The Team could be deployed to one or two incidents to support the work of first responders, but it would be quickly overwhelmed if many NBC attacks happened simultaneously throughout Canada. Even an expanded Response Team would not be able to deal by itself with a major NBC attack.

However, it could make a valuable contribution to the efforts of civilian first responders, who remain our first line of defence. Indeed, the Forces can help the first responders by deploying members of the Response Team to support their efforts while the Department, through OCIEP, can help to improve the capabilities of responders by providing or funding additional training. As in the U.S., programs were already underway to increase the level of training of first responders to deal with NBC attacks, but there is clearly a need for more efforts in this area. Even with extra training, first responders might still need the expertise of the Force's Response Team, so measures should be taken to ensure that it can be deployed very quickly. This could be done by positioning the Response Team closer to transportation resources. For example, the Team could be moved from Camp Borden to CFB Trenton to avoid delays and might become part of DART. However, as noted by the Chief of the Defence Staff, NBC response teams could be established at a number of military bases across Canada, thereby reducing delays in deploying military experts to the site of NBC attacks. We therefore recommend:

- 14. That additional resources be allocated to OCIEP in order to increase funding for training programs for municipal, provincial, and private sector first responders on techniques to mitigate the consequences of nuclear, biological and chemical terrorist attacks.**
- 15. That the Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Response Team of the Canadian Forces be expanded by increasing the number of personnel and by dispersing detachments to various locations across Canada in order to increase the military's ability to rapidly assist first responders in the wake of terrorist attacks with weapons of mass destruction.**

The need to protect personnel on the battlefield in the eventuality of attacks with NBC weapons has long been a preoccupation of armed forces, so some NBC training has been provided to Canadian Forces personnel. The growing concern about NBC warfare was evident in announcements earlier in 2001 concerning the acquisition of new protective clothing and special sensors for specialized units. However, given the terrorist threat, there is now an increased possibility that such weapons might be used in our cities and regions. Since Canadian Forces personnel could be deployed within Canada to assist civil authorities by providing security as well as assisting first responders, as they did during the Red River floods and the Ice Storm, more training should be provided to help them deal with NBC incidents. In some circumstances, a number of the military personnel involved must be Reservists.

Indeed, Reserve units within or close to the cities or regions grappling with a natural disaster or a terrorist incident can supply the first military personnel to arrive on the site. Reservists have participated in the past in many local disaster relief efforts across the country as well as in operations overseas. They can contribute to counterterrorism efforts by guarding various elements of the critical infrastructure and helping local authorities prepare plans for responses to emergency situations. When terrorist attacks occur, Reservists can assist in stabilizing the situation by providing crowd control and, with increased NBC training, they could provide valuable assistance to first responders. The active participation of Reservists in relief and security efforts in the wake of a terrorist incident can not only provide valuable experience to the personnel involved, but also encourage other young Canadians to join the Reserves, thereby strengthening the Force.

In the present context, we cannot afford to neglect the important role the Reserves can play in counterterrorism efforts. Indeed, the Reserves are an important element of Canada's military capabilities and we intend to study their roles and requirements in greater detail while pursuing our study of the state of readiness of the Canadian Forces. In the meantime, given the importance to act quickly in some matters in response to the terrorist threat, we recommend:

- 16. That more training be provided to Reserve as well as Regular Force personnel on the detection of, and on measures to deal with, the consequences of nuclear, biological, and chemical attacks so that they can operate safely and effectively if they are deployed to assist civilian authorities in the wake of such attacks.**
- 17. That the previously announced acquisition of protective clothing and sensors for military personnel dealing with nuclear, biological and chemical incidents be accelerated as much as possible and that the evaluation of the requirements for additional equipment of this type be given a high priority.**
- 18. That the Department of National Defence bolster the ability of the Reserves to contribute to disaster relief and to the military's response to terrorist attacks within Canada.**

In the end, the struggle against terrorism will be fought both at home and abroad. It is therefore imperative that the Forces be able to deploy quickly both within Canada and around the world. The speed with which the events of September 11th took place highlighted the need for very quick response, indeed in a matter of hours if not minutes. Canada already has a rapid military response capability to terrorist incidents in the form of the Joint Task Force 2 (JTF2) based near Ottawa which is primarily designed to deal with hostage taking and similar terrorist actions within Canada. In the face of the terrorist threat, it is clear that not only should this unit maintain its level of training, but also that its personnel strength should be significantly increased. This would allow JTF2 to increase its ability to deal with incidents within Canada while increasing its capacity to be deployed

overseas and contribute to international efforts to blunt the ability of terrorists to carry out attacks. In the long run, JTF2 could also serve as the basis for a special operations force which could broaden the ability of the Canadian Forces to contribute to national and international security. This is a matter which will require careful thought. In the meantime, actions must be taken quickly to build upon the expertise and capabilities which exist now within JTF2. We therefore recommend:

- 19. That the number of personnel of Joint Task Force 2 be increased significantly, possibly to over 1,000 members, to improve its capacity to respond to hostage taking and other terrorist attacks within Canada, to maintain its interoperability with similar allied forces when deploying outside the country, and to contribute meaningfully to international efforts against terrorism.**

Finally, this interim report has focussed primarily on the need of the Canadian Forces for additional resources to help them deal with the terrorist threat which became evident on September 11th. However, the best argument for providing more funds and capabilities to the Canadian Forces and the Department of National Defence has been provided by their significant efforts to protect Canada and contribute to the maintenance of international peace since the terrorist attacks. Military transport aircraft carried supplies to various locations in Canada which suddenly had to provide hospitality to thousands of air travellers while CF-18s and the personnel who fly, maintain, and guide them participate in NORAD's surveillance of North American airspace. Meanwhile, the crews onboard a number of Canadian naval ships and other personnel have been deployed to support multinational efforts to curb terrorism at its source. Canadian peacekeepers in Bosnia and elsewhere around the world are also actively engaged in helping to preserve international peace. Canada had many military commitments before September 11th and the burden carried by the Canadian Forces and the Department of National Defence is now by no means lighter. **Therefore, it is essential to ensure that Canada's military has enough resources not only to maintain its current capabilities, but also to develop the new ones it requires to counter the terrorist threat.**



## **LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

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- 1. That the Government increase the budget for the Department of National Defence.**
- 2. That when considering additional funding the Government do so, not only with a view to covering operational costs related to the counterterrorism effort, but also with a view toward addressing problems related to program integrity.**
- 3. In addition, our Committee recommends that the current personnel strength of both the Regular and Reserve forces be reviewed.**
- 4. That the Government immediately initiate a major review of our foreign and defence policies in light of the situation since September 11th.**
- 5. That Parliament play a significant role in both review processes.**
- 6. That the Cabinet Committee on Public Security and Counterterrorism be made a permanent standing committee of Cabinet and that it be allocated the necessary staff resources to carry out its mandate.**
- 7. That the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness (OC�PEP) accelerate the production of a detailed inventory of Canada's critical infrastructure and the development of cooperative arrangements with public and private sector operators of the infrastructure.**
- 8. That the budget of OC�PEP be increased to ensure adequate funding of measures designed to improve the protection of computer networks and other elements of the critical infrastructure, including closer cooperation with similar agencies in the United States.**
- 9. That the budget for the emergency preparedness element of OC�PEP be increased to significantly bolster the national capacity to provide disaster relief anywhere within Canada to assist municipal and provincial governments whenever disasters caused by nature or terrorists occur.**
- 10. That Canada acquire additional heavy transport aircraft and replace older models to ensure the strategic and tactical airlift**

capacity required for the rapid and efficient deployment of personnel and relief supplies to areas within Canada dealing with natural disasters and major terrorist attacks as well as for the transport of troops and military supplies to overseas operations.

11. That the Government place a higher priority on providing the Canadian Forces with additional sealift capability.
12. That the Government allocate sufficient resources to bolster the ability of the Disaster Assistance Response Team of the Canadian Forces to respond to emergency situations within Canada while maintaining its capacity to assist humanitarian aid and disaster relief efforts around the world.
13. That the Department of National Defence examine various options including the creation of a core unit of medical and other personnel within DART which could be deployed on very short notice within Canada when disasters or major terrorist incidents occur.
14. That additional resources be allocated to OCIEP in order to increase funding for training programs for municipal, provincial, and private sector first responders on techniques to mitigate the consequences of nuclear, biological and chemical terrorist attacks.
15. That the Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Response Team of the Canadian Forces be expanded by increasing the number of personnel and by dispersing detachments to various locations across Canada in order to increase the military's ability to rapidly assist first responders in the wake of terrorist attacks with weapons of mass destruction.
16. That more training be provided to Reserve as well as Regular Force personnel on the detection of, and on measures to deal with, the consequences of nuclear, biological, and chemical attacks so that they can operate safely and effectively if they are deployed to assist civilian authorities in the wake of such attacks.
17. That the previously announced acquisition of protective clothing and sensors for military personnel dealing with nuclear, biological and chemical incidents be accelerated as much as possible and that the evaluation of the requirements for additional equipment of this type be given a high priority.

- 18. That the Department of National Defence bolster the ability of the Reserves to contribute to disaster relief and to the military's response to terrorist attacks within Canada.**
- 19. That the number of personnel of Joint Task Force 2 be increased significantly, possibly to over 1,000 members, to improve its capacity to respond to hostage taking and other terrorist attacks within Canada, to maintain its interoperability with similar allied forces when deploying outside the country, and to contribute meaningfully to international efforts against terrorism.**



## **REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE**

Notwithstanding Standing Order 109, the Committee requests that the Government provide a comprehensive response to the interim report within 90 days.

A copy of the relevant Minutes of Proceedings of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs (*Meetings Nos 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31 which includes this report*) is tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

David Pratt, M.P.  
*Chair*



# **STATE OF READINESS OF THE CANADIAN FORCES: RESPONSE TO THE TERRORISTS THREAT**

## **CANADIAN ALLIANCE MINORITY REPORT**

**Released by Leon Benoit, MP  
Official Opposition Senior Critic for National Defence**

As we confront the war against terrorism, the Canadian Forces face a crisis in capability. Decades of neglect have created a situation in which resources are inadequate to meet commitments and defend the security of Canadians.

For nearly nine months, the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence has heard from witness after witness about glaring deficiencies in military capability. While the men and women of the Canadian Forces have been doing a fantastic job with scarce resources, they have had inadequate support from both Government and Parliament. As the recent report of the Conference of Defence Associations stated:

*All members of the Canadian Forces may at any time and at no notice, be placed in harm's way and as a result forfeit their lives or suffer incapacitating injury or illness. ... The unlimited liability of the soldier, sailor or airman must ... be matched by an unlimited responsibility on the part of the government to ensure that members of the CF, if placed in harms way, can achieve their mission at as low a risk possible. This demands the right tools in terms of modern equipment and high levels of training to carry out justifiable missions directed by the Canadian political authorities.*

It is clear that over the past several decades we have badly let down our serving soldiers. It is good that the Majority Report generally acknowledges this failure. Nevertheless, there are at least three aspects of the Report and its drafting with which we must take issue:

### **1. The Treatment of Parliament:**

The report was drafted in secret by a committee of officials working under the direction of the Chairman. The first opposition members learned of the report's existence was when a Committee meeting was called for November 5 to discuss a report none of them had even heard was being drafted. Committee members were not permitted to see the report until 7 pm on the evening of November 5. They were then given less than an hour to read the report and agree or disagree with specific clauses and recommendations. No consultations were permitted with respective Caucuses and members of the Committee were told that whether they supported the recommendations or not, the report would be immediately adopted and referred to the

House of Commons Finance Committee. It was simply impossible for the Official Opposition to unreservedly endorse the Majority Report in the time that we were given.

The defence policy of Canada exists to protect the security of all Canadians. The greatest possible effort must be made to ensure that defence policy reflects a consensus of parties in the House of Commons. This must include adequate consultation between all political parties as well as opportunity for real discussion and debate. Only in this way can we ensure that consistent and credible policies will be adopted which reflect a real and long-term national consensus. **Using Parliament simply to rubber stamp decisions that have already been made should not be acceptable in this time of crisis.**

## **2. A Clear and Specific Commitment on Increased Defence Spending:**

The Majority Report makes important references to the serious under funding of the Canadian Forces. This reflects what witnesses repeatedly told us about the steady erosion of capability due to consistently scarce resources.

Even so, the Majority Report makes no specific recommendations with regard to increased defence spending. Instead, it alludes to the \$750 million to \$1.2 billion annual shortfall in the operations and maintenance (O&M) budget described by several witnesses, and an additional \$5 to 6 billion deficit in the equipment budget noted by the Auditor General — but without actually recommending any specific increase in spending.

Unless the necessary resources are provided, the Canadian military commitment to the war against terrorism will not be sustainable — it may not be anyway beyond the next rotation.

Since the shortfalls in both the O&M as well as the equipment budgets have been clearly spelled out, the need for a minimum and immediate \$2 billion increase in the budget base of the Department of National Defence should have been made clear. Indeed, even this modest increase may now be inadequate since representatives of the Conference of Defence Associations have informed the Committee that at least \$1 billion in additional money should be added to the defence budget base in each of the next five years.

The crisis confronting the Canadian Forces is now so serious, that we can no longer expect that half-measures will suffice.



### 3. Addressing the Issue of “Demilitarization”:

On May 8, 2001, one of Canada’s foremost soldiers, General Lewis MacKenzie, told the Standing Committee that:

*“... if I were an enemy force commander, I would much prefer to fight the Canadian army of today than the Canadian army of 10 years ago ... I have no doubt that the individual soldiers are up to the task in spite of declining standards in physical fitness and discipline at the alter of individual rights and political correctness. ... If [the Gulf War] happened today we couldn’t send a brigade. It doesn’t exist. ... You can’t just throw a few bits and pieces of new high-tech equipment together and say ‘We’re more operationally capable’. Fighting, as outlined in your own direction for this Committee, at the combat level requires more than just a day’s worth of equipment. There has to be some sustainability”.*

This is a scathing indictment of the consequences of political interference in the Canadian Forces. The Committee has heard from numerous witnesses who have addressed the steady erosion of training standards and the resulting collapse in esprit de corps and morale in the Canadian Forces. Some have referred to this as the “demilitarization” of the Canadian Forces from within. Yet, apart from one vague reference to political correctness, this issue is not seriously addressed in the Majority Report. **In the crisis that we now face, we can simply not tolerate unjustified political interference in the military, which is gradually lowering combat effectiveness.**

Indeed, one of the principal reasons that we now have an inadequate ability to respond rapidly and effectively to emerging threats, is that **crass politics resulted in the disbanding of the Airborne Regiment in 1995**. While the Committee has responded by recommending a substantial enhancement in the capability of Joint Task Force (JTF) 2, the political conditions that led to the loss of this capability are ignored in the Majority Report. If they are not addressed, the politicization of the Armed Forces will remain a problem and the Forces may well be unable to rebuild their cohesion and effectiveness.

#### **Conclusion:**

The present crisis demands a resolute and united response from Parliament. The Majority Report represents a step in the right direction, but if we are to effectively rebuild our national defence, we must be prepared to go still further. This requires both open and honest discussion as well as forthrightly addressing all relevant issues no matter how politically painful they might be.

The Canadian Alliance will be seeking to do just that as we work toward a full Operational Readiness Report early in the new year. We know that the Canadian people will demand no less.



# MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Monday, November 5, 2001  
(Meeting No. 31)

The Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs met *in camera* at 19:30 p.m. this day, in Room 112-N, Centre Block, the Chair, David Pratt (*presiding*).

*Members of the Committee present:* Rob Anders, Claude Bachand, Leon Benoit, Stan Dromisky, Cheryl Gallant, John O'Reilly, Janko Perić, David Pratt, David Price, Peter Stoffer, Elsie Wayne, Bryon Wilfert, Bob Wood.

*In attendance: From the Library of Parliament:* Wolf Koerner and Michel Rossignol, Research Officers; Barry Hamilton, Consultant.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), study on the state of readiness of the Canadian Forces.

The Committee proceeded to consideration of a draft report.

It was agreed, — That the Draft Interim Report (as amended) be concurred in as the Third Report of the Committee and that the Chair be authorized to present it to the House at the earliest possibility.

It was agreed, — That, notwithstanding Standing Order 109, the Committee request that the Government table a comprehensive response to this report within ninety (90) days.

It was agreed, — That the Chair be authorized to make such typographical and editorial changes as may be necessary without changing the substance of the Report to the House.

It was agreed, — That the Chair be authorized to issue a press release and to hold a press conference.

It was agreed, — That the Committee authorize the printing of dissenting opinions as an appendix to this report, immediately following the signature of the Chair.

It was agreed, — That any dissenting opinions be limited to not more than five (5) pages.

It was agreed, — That any dissenting opinions be received by the Clerk, in both official

languages, no later than 12:00 p.m. (noon) on Tuesday, November 6, 2001.

At 10:05 p.m., the Committee adjourned to the call of the Chair.

Diane Deschamps  
*Clerk of the Committee*