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Canada's approach to Pacific security

In the absence of a plan, a modest proposal

Eric Lerhe

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Executive Summary

espite public proclamations of being a Pacific nation, successive Canadian governments have committed few resources to Pacific security and have found their ability to gain access to important Indo-Pacific security forums curtailed as a result. Yet the need for a robust strategy and coordinated action has steadily increased – something that Canada has recently painfully experienced when China held Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor hostage for more than 1000 days and Ottawa seemed incapable of mounting an adequate response.

While the ordeal caused by China's hostage diplomacy may be over, Canada faces a range of possible hotspots across the Pacific that could result in Canadian military action. A good example is the situation in Hong Kong. If it deteriorates further, Canada may have to evacuate its 300,000 citizens there, but will be unable to do so without allies' assistance. If Canada wants support for such contingencies, it needs to start demonstrating its commitment to the region.

History shows that Canadian leaders have repeatedly claimed zero interest in Pacific deployments in the face of mounting crises, only to reverse their position after diplomatic, political, and public pressure forced them to do so. As a result, sudden forced deployments in Hong Kong in 1941, Korea in 1950, and East Timor in 1999 lacked adequate planning and were costly, late to need, and marked by last-minute re-tasking toward more dangerous missions.

The hot spots in the Indo-Pacific today include North Korea, the Himalayas, Hong Kong, the Senkaku Islands, the South China Sea, and Taiwan. But Canada is still not prepared if trouble flares up. Military assets devoted to the Pacific are meagre; the RCN's one glaring shortfall, the lack of a supply ship, has not been addressed; Canada has no standalone strategy for the region. Yet the odds are strong that Canada will yet again be forced into a rushed engagement in the Pacific with all the attendant problems of last-minute tasking changes and inadequate training and equipment.

Diplomatically, the current government appears to have little interest in confronting an increasingly assertive China. Ottawa is the least committed of the

Five Eyes on banning Huawei from 5G networks. It missed a good opportunity to work with allies in 2016 in supporting international law when the Permanent Court or Arbitration found no legal basis for China's "nine-dash line" claims in the South China Sea – a decision promptly lauded by Australia, the US, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia. While Canada undertakes presence patrols in the South China Sea and in the Taiwan Strait, the government minimizes public attention to these deployments.

A policy reorientation towards the Indo-Pacific is long overdue. Before advancing necessary changes in the Canadian military, Canada's overall policy with regard to China will need significant revision. The paper offers several recommendations for Canadian policy-makers:

- Respond to the increasing aggressiveness of China by identifying our capacity and our potential shortfalls in a Pacific crisis and quietly prepare for US-led coalition efforts.
- Adopt legislation similar to Australia's *Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme*, which would provide a clear signal that Canada's approach has changed.
- Enhance relations with Japan a critical ally that will be needed if Canada hopes to respond to further aggression in Korea, mount an evacuation of Canadian citizens from Hong Kong, or protect Taiwan from invasion.
- Increase engagement through military exercises with the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, an informal arrangement between the US, Australia, Japan, and India.
- Assist the US effort to build a real-time understanding of air and maritime activities – a common maritime operating picture – for the South China Sea.
- Push for Taiwan's inclusion in the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), while looking for any opportunity to expand security links with the democratic island-nation.
- Permanently assign a frigate to critical Pacific tasks and fund this deployment.

Canada also needs a new defence policy that will direct a larger effort within the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) toward multi-domain operations with our allies; such operations would involve units that would be able to engage targets in all domains (land, sea, air) and not be reliant on other services for self-defence. Here the priorities should be improved lift, connectivity, and greater cross-domain missile capability for the army and the air force. Investing in new CAF capabilities is not just for the Pacific theatre. Rather, these suggested investments are likely to be useful anywhere there's trouble around the world.

Sommaire

Algré les déclarations publiques quant au fait que le Canada est une nation du Pacifique, les différents gouvernements se sont succédé en mobilisant peu de ressources pour la sécurité du Pacifique, de sorte qu'ils se sont retrouvés devant moins de moyens d'accéder aux importants forums sur la sécurité indopacifique. Pourtant, la nécessité d'une stratégie solide et d'une action concertée n'a cessé de croître – et s'est douloureusement manifestée lorsque les otages Michael Kovrig et Michael Spavor ont été retenus en Chine pendant plus de 1 000 jours alors qu'Ottawa a semblé incapable d'organiser une riposte adéquate.

Bien que l'épreuve infligée par la diplomatie des otages pratiquée par la Chine est peut-être terminée, le Canada pourrait être confronté dans le Pacifique à une série de points chauds susceptibles de nécessiter une action militaire. À titre d'exemple, si la situation à Hong Kong se détériorait davantage, le Canada pourrait se voir forcé d'évacuer ses 300 000 ressortissants, une tâche impossible sans l'aide de ses alliés. Si le Canada souhaite obtenir un soutien pour de telles éventualités, il doit commencer à démontrer son engagement envers la région.

Par le passé, les dirigeants canadiens ont à maintes reprises affirmé ne pas être disposés à intervenir dans le Pacifique face à la montée des crises, pour ensuite revenir sur leur position après que des pressions diplomatiques, politiques et publiques les y aient contraints. Les déploiements forcés réalisés avec précipitation à Hong Kong en 1941, en Corée en 1950 et au Timor oriental en 1999 n'ont pas fait l'objet d'une planification adéquate et ont donc été coûteux, tardifs par rapport aux besoins et marqués par une réaffectation de dernière minute à des missions plus dangereuses.

Les points chauds dans l'Indo-Pacifique sont aujourd'hui la Corée du Nord, les Himalayas, Hong Kong, les îles Senkaku, la mer de Chine méridionale et Taïwan. Toutefois, le Canada n'est toujours pas préparé aux difficultés qui pourraient apparaître. Les ressources militaires consacrées au Pacifique sont

maigres; le manque de navires de ravitaillement – une lacune évidente de la marine royale canadienne – n'a pas été comblé; le Canada ne dispose pas de stratégie autonome pour la région. Pourtant, le Canada risque encore une fois d'être contraint à s'engager rapidement dans le Pacifique et de devoir composer avec tous les problèmes que cela comporte : changements de fonctions à la dernière minute et inadéquation de la formation et de l'équipement.

Sur le plan diplomatique, le gouvernement actuel semble avoir peu d'intérêt à confronter une Chine de plus en plus affirmée. Le Canada est le moins convaincu des pays membres du « Groupe des cinq » (Five Eyes) à l'idée de bannir Huawei de ses réseaux 5G. Contrairement à ses alliés, Ottawa a manqué une bonne occasion d'appuyer l'application du droit international en 2016, lorsque la Cour permanente d'arbitrage a estimé qu'il n'y avait aucun fondement juridique à la revendication chinoise sur une zone en mer de Chine méridionale représentée géographiquement par une ligne discontinue de neuf traits (nine-dash line) – une décision promptement saluée par l'Australie, les États-Unis, le Japon, la Malaisie, les Philippines et l'Indonésie. Bien que le Canada effectue des patrouilles de présence dans la mer de Chine méridionale et dans le détroit de Taïwan, le gouvernement minimise l'attention du public sur ces déploiements.

Une réorientation de la politique envers l'Indo-Pacifique s'impose depuis longtemps. Avant de procéder aux adaptations nécessaires dans l'armée canadienne, la politique globale du Canada à l'égard de la Chine devra être révisée en profondeur. Le présent document propose plusieurs recommandations aux décideurs canadiens, dont celles que voici :

- Répondre à l'agressivité croissante de la Chine en recensant nos capacités et nos lacunes potentielles dans une crise du Pacifique et se préparer tranquillement à participer aux efforts de la coalition dirigée par les États-Unis.
- Adopter une législation similaire à la Loi sur le régime de transparence des influences étrangères de l'Australie (*Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act* [FITS]), ce qui démontrerait clairement que l'approche du Canada a changé.
- Améliorer les relations avec le Japon un allié essentiel dont le Canada aura besoin s'il espère répondre à une nouvelle agression en Corée, organiser l'évacuation des citoyens canadiens de Hong Kong ou protéger Taïwan d'une invasion.
- Accroître l'engagement en faveur d'exercices militaires dans le cadre du Dialogue quadrilatéral pour la sécurité (*Quadrilateral* Security Dialogue), un arrangement informel entre les États-Unis, l'Australie, le Japon et l'Inde.
- Soutenir les efforts déployés par les États-Unis pour acquérir une compréhension du déroulement des activités aériennes et mari-

- times en temps réel une image commune des opérations maritimes – dans la mer de Chine méridionale.
- Faire pression pour l'inclusion de Taïwan dans l'Accord de Partenariat transpacifique global et progressif (PTPGP), tout en recherchant toutes les occasions possibles de faciliter le développement des liens de sécurité avec cette nation insulaire démocratique.
- Affecter en permanence une frégate aux missions critiques dans le Pacifique et financer ce déploiement.

Le Canada a également besoin d'une nouvelle politique de défense qui mobilisera de plus importants efforts au sein des Forces armées canadiennes (FAC) pour les opérations dispersées et appuyées sur des réseaux avec nos alliés; ces opérations feraient appel à des unités capables d'engager des cibles dans tous les domaines (terre, mer, air) en évitant de dépendre d'autres services pour assurer leur propre défense. Dans ce cas, les priorités devraient cibler l'amélioration du transport, de la connectivité et de la capacité en missiles « *cross-domain* » pour l'armée de terre et l'armée de l'air. L'investissement dans de nouvelles capacités pour les FAC n'est pas uniquement destiné au théâtre du Pacifique. Au contraire, cet investissement est susceptible d'être utile dans toutes les régions touchées par des conflits à travers le monde.

Introduction

espite Canada's regular claims about being a Pacific nation, very few government assets are devoted to the region and no strategy guides them. Yet the need for coordinated action and guidance has steadily increased. For the last eight years, Canada has sought access to the most important Indo-Pacific security arenas and been told quite bluntly it needs to first show a sustained Canadian presence in the region. Meanwhile, the United States has moved beyond a policy of unrestricted engagement with China to one that now views Beijing as a strategic competitor. The US has also been increasing its forces in the Indo-Pacific region and seeking firmer support from allies; yet Canada has not responded. Indeed, throughout the terrible ordeal faced by Canadians Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, Canada seemed incapable of mounting a response to China's flagrant kidnapping and hostage diplomacy.

Today, Canada has no plan to attract allies, respond to the US, or increase its presence in the region. As Part one of the paper shows, however, that is very much in keeping with a long Canadian trend – in which Canada has largely ignored the region and then experienced significant problems deploying forces there during emergencies. Next, Part two will seek to determine why we put such little focus on Pacific security and examine the resulting diminished Canadian security presence there. The current security situation and risks in the Pacific are discussed in Part three. Part four concludes by examining the doubtful viability of Canada's current approach to managing these risks, and then offers elements of a potential Canadian Pacific security strategy.

Part one: Canada's history in the Pacific

The aim of this review of past Canadian military operations in the Pacific is to extract and identify the factors in play behind various governments' decision to deploy. Not surprisingly, the evidence will show few of those decisions followed a strategic plan. Moreover, most were reluctantly agreed to because of a range of suddenly arriving pressures.

In 1929, when the Mackenzie King government opened the Canadian Legation in Tokyo, there seemed to be hope for a more sustained Canadian interest in the Pacific.² At that moment, Canada only had legations in Washington, DC, and Paris, and the addition of Tokyo was to be part of a new "era of Pacific promise" and a "diplomatic coming of age" (Meehan 2004, 197-198). The legation was established primarily to encourage Canada's already significant exports to Japan and to discourage immigration from it, with no intended security component other than Japan being seen as a valuable ally in World War I.³

By 1931, close trading relations with Japan became an issue in light of the latter's aggression in Manchuria and then China. In 1933, the Bennett government refused to join a British arms embargo to help constrain Japan (Wilford 2011, 22). Yet, despite the deteriorating security situation and rising public opposition to our exports, Canadian trade with Japan continued and, in many areas, increased.⁴ More than a very profitable trade surplus with Japan guided Canada's passivity here. Mackenzie King feared embargoes could provoke Japanese aggression and potentially embroil Canada – an unacceptable result given that his Parliamentary majority relied on 59 seats from an isolationist Québec. That, and the potential for a repeat of the 1917–18 conscription crisis, called for the greatest caution (Stacey 1970, 5).

At the 1937 Imperial Conference, Mackenzie King also vetoed the efforts of Australia and New Zealand to create an imperial defence plan that would protect them from Japan. C. P. Stacey (1981, 207) reports that King reviewed

the draft conference declaration "word by word" and "insisted on eliminating every phrase that might suggest a commitment." "[S]eeing imperial intrigues at every turn," King and his closest advisers were also convinced British manoeuvring would entangle Canada in military adventures of sole benefit to Britain's imperial holdings (Meehan 2004, 169). It was also clear Britain was too weak militarily to contain Japan and that the United States, in the firm grip of the isolationists, would not assist.⁵

Mackenzie King then directed a ruthless policy of "no commitments." In addition to rejecting every British request for military cooperation, he ensured the Canadian military engaged in no prewar planning with allies at all (Stacey 1981, 207-208). Sir Maurice Hankey, the British secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence, concluded, "It would be clearly disastrous if we laid our plans on the assumption that we could count on Canada" (Granatstein 1990, 3). The King government also kept defence expenditures low and tightly focused on the defence of Canada and particularly its Pacific coast (Stacey 1970, 4, 6). The latter emphasis was likely in direct response to President Roosevelt's stated concerns over our lack of Pacific defences in 1939. The Atlantic coast received even less attention until war with Germany became more likely. When larger defence expenditures became unavoidable, King also continued to keep them focused on home defence.

Mackenzie King's caution worked. When Germany attacked Poland in September 1939, King was able to lead a united Canada to war. Defence spending was further increased and, partly due to public pressure, a Canadian Army division was funded for deployment to Europe with another division assigned to home and, later, hemispheric defence. A year later, a second army division left for England. In addition, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) received permission to expand to 18 regular and 12 auxiliary squadrons, and the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) to some 21 warships, most assigned to the Atlantic. As Japan had not committed its forces to operations against the West until December 1941, a limited number of older, often obsolete Canadian ships and aircraft were sent to the Pacific, joined by one militia division for home defence. From 1939 onward, most Canadian military expenditures and effort were directed toward Europe.

Hong Kong 1941

Surprisingly, the Mackenzie King government acceded in late September 1941 to a request to reinforce the British garrison in Hong Kong with "one or two" Canadian infantry battalions 10 days after receiving it (Vincent 1981, 29). The year before, Churchill had rejected an earlier effort to reinforce Hong Kong with British forces, noting, "If Japan goes to war with us, there is not the slightest chance of holding Hong Kong or relieving it" (ibid., 11). By September 1941, nothing had changed, but now Britain argued Canadian battal-

ions would "have a great moral effect" and demonstrate that Britain "really intended to fight it out at Hong Kong" (ibid., 27, 29). 10 Further, it was hoped their dispatch would reinforce a similar last-minute American effort to send forces to the Philippines. Finally, General Harry Crerar, the Canadian chief of the general staff, had assessed there was "no military risk" to deploying the requested Canadian battalions for "garrison duty," although Stacey (1981) points out Canada had no national intelligence capacity to determine the level of risk and relied entirely on British data (see also Greenfield 2010, 13).

These assumptions were quickly joined with equally broad rationales for participating. Mackenzie King agreed quickly to this request in part due to pressure from English-speaking politicians who wanted to see Canadian troops in action after the successful Australian and New Zealand deployments in North Africa and Crete in 1941 (Greenfield 2010, 13; Vincent 1981, 20, 33). James Ralston, the defence minister, argued "it was Canada's turn to help" (Vincent 1981, 33), while acting defence minister, C. G. Powers, added that supporting the UK in Hong Kong was "the only thing to do," and General Crerar indicated Canada had "a political and moral obligation" to assist (Copp 2011, 4). If Canada had refused such a request, as Carl Vincent and Jack Granatstein (2015, 3) note, "the political explosion would be fierce." Finally, Canadian Army recruiting was apparently suffering for that same reason – there were no signs of Canada getting into combat (Copp 2011, 5). Up to this point, Canada would not release its divisions in England for operations until they were deployed en masse, and this would not occur until the invasion of Sicily in 1943 (Blaxland 2006, 80).

The two battalions selected for Hong Kong were from the Defence Department's third tier (e.g., "not recommended for operational consideration at present"), likely because they had received only company-level training (Vincent 1981, 44-45, 57-78, 87). Their equipment was limited to small arms, two- and three-inch mortars, and 212 trucks (Canada 1946, 12-13), which were loaded on a converted ocean liner in late October 1941, with the trucks proceeding much later on a chartered freighter. With the battalions arriving just five weeks prior to the Japanese attack on December 5, 1941, there was insufficient time to conduct combined training with the British forces. Rather than garrison duties, they were now destined for the active defence of the colony. Further, the expectation of receiving mortar ammunition from the UK garrison was dashed, as the latter had insufficient stock (Copp 2001, 5-6). By December 12, seven days after the Japanese attack on Hong Kong, the freighter carrying the vehicles had gotten no further than the Philippines; given the impossibility of it now reaching embattled Hong Kong safely, the Canadian government agreed to transfer the trucks to the US garrison in the Philippines (Canada 1946, 12).

On December 25, Churchill's earlier view that Hong Kong could never be successfully defended or reinforced proved accurate. The Commonwealth forces

surrendered to Japan after 19 days of heavy fighting. Of the 1975 Canadians engaged in fighting, 290 were killed, 493 wounded, with a further 267 perishing while prisoners of war. They fought bravely, though Japanese forces outnumbered the defenders 55,000 to 15,000.¹¹

The defeat certainly contributed to follow-on Canadian strategic planning. According to John Holmes (1979a, 22-23), Canada, which continued to send significant forces to England, was therefore loath to split its forces again, especially for another "token contribution" to the Pacific. Indeed, several Australian requests for Canadian units in 1942 were rejected on the grounds of them being "token forces" (Blaxland 2006, 82-84). Holmes also asserts Canadians saw Europe as the "major threat," and the two Canadian Army divisions in Europe were joined by three more by 1944 (Blaxland 2006, 77). In addition, the RCAF now operated 41 squadrons in England with thousands more Canadians serving in British units, and Canada had taken control over convoy movements for the western North Atlantic with up to 111 escorts in service.

Even after the defeat of Germany in 1945, the King government sought to limit its Pacific commitments.

The Pacific was not entirely forgotten. Canadian bombers based in Alaska joined Canadian fighter aircraft, two naval escorts, and an infantry brigade in the successful US-led effort to drive Japanese forces from the Aleutian Islands in 1942–43. In addition, the RCAF also sent smaller forces to Southeast Asia, including a reconnaissance squadron to Ceylon and two transport squadrons to Burma to maintain the air bridge to send critical supplies to China. Another 400 signals intelligence and radar specialists were sent to Australia, and a Canadian cruiser joined the British Pacific Fleet. 13

Even after the defeat of Germany in 1945, the King government sought to limit its Pacific commitments. Importantly, there was little popular or political pressure to join a Pacific effort. According to J. W. Pickersgill and D. F. Forster (1960, 1:630, 2:9), "the war against Japan had never really caught the imagination of Canadians" and government plans for the Pacific "had no political pressure behind them" (Holmes 1979a, 125). A European focus, on the other hand, matched Canada's historical immigration flows, trading patterns, and close government-to-government ties with England.

According to Mark Williams (2008, 174), to counteract the weak attraction of the Pacific, Mackenzie King always linked any mention of Japan with Germany

and Italy in an attempt "to blur the distinction between Europe, where Canadian identity was strong, and the Pacific, where the identity of Canada was much weaker." The government did, however, recognize Canada would have to contribute to the final, potentially bloody US-led invasion of Japan, in part because Canada's credibility in the postwar era and its economy would rely on continuing American goodwill (Holmes 1979a, 22). For this reason, a combined army, navy, and air force contribution of some 80,000 was considered for "operational theatres of direct interest to Canada," such as the North or Central Pacific, but the rapid surrender of Japan in August 1945 removed that requirement (Stacey 1970, 58-62).

Only 10,000 Canadians had served in the Far East by the end of the war, compared with over 494,000 stationed in the UK alone. This imbalance has resulted, perhaps unfairly, in a tendency to dismiss the Pacific commitment entirely. "The non-involvement in the Pacific war encouraged a Canadian disposition to leave the Pacific and the Far East to the Americans," notes John Holmes (1979a, 23), "a situation which for some time after the war notably differentiated Canadian attitudes towards Asia from Canadian attitudes towards Europe."

With the end of the war against Japan, Ottawa drastically cut its defence budget following the Mackenzie King directive to "get back to the old Liberal principles of economy, reduction of taxation and anti-militarism" (Stacey 1981, 397). The RCAF was reduced from 260,000 to 11,804 personnel and the RCN from 115,000 to 6621 (Eayrs 1972, 96). The army suffered most, going from to 730,000 to 14,185. Operating under the assumption that Canada would have a "ten-year safe period" where the chance of a major war was remote and two years of warning if one was coming, the army was told to focus its single brigade on homeland defence with the remainder serving as a training establishment to support full national mobilization, if ever required (Wood 1966, 18, 40).

Korea 1950

North Korea's invasion of South Korea in 1950 signalled the full arrival of the Cold War and the need for Canadian rearmament. Two years prior, Mackenzie King, driven by what Denis Stairs (1974, 9-13) has called his "long-standing isolationism" and "characteristic hostility towards any Canadian involvement in the affairs of the Far East," sought to keep Canada well away from Korea. ¹⁵ Mackenzie King even fought against Canada's participation in the UN Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK), but in vain, as Louis St. Laurent – his soon-to-be replacement – and others emphasized Canada's obligation to support the UN. ¹⁶

After North Korea's successful invasion of the South in June 1950, Prime Minister St. Laurent was initially hesitant to commit substantial forces, with John

Holmes arguing the government's first intent "was to get away with gestures that would not leave them open to much embarrassment at the United Nations and from the opposition at home" (1979b, 145). The St. Laurent government then offered "two or three destroyers" and, later, 10 transport aircraft. The need for greater contributions would only increase. Within a month, the North Koreans had seized most of South Korea except for a small pocket at its southern tip, and the US was rushing five hastily assembled army divisions to the fight. Both Australia and New Zealand also considered joining a potential British Army brigade that might be sent from its Hong Kong garrison.

This activity caused considerable internal dismay in Canada, which had only one brigade in the postwar Canadian Army, and the military was unwilling to send all its trained infantry to Korea. If the government chose to join the Commonwealth force, the army argued it should enlist from scratch and then train the additional troops needed (Wood 1966, 22). Meanwhile, there was a "storm of editorial protest" from the Canadian press over the lack of action.¹⁷ External Affairs thought a failure to do enough would "probably cut short a rising career for Canada in the UN" (Holmes 1979b, 147-148).

By 1953, the Canadian force in Europe was building up and the Korean conflict was winding down.

Spurred on by a warning that the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand would soon declare their army contributions, Canada announced on August 7, 1950, the intention to recruit a brigade-sized Canadian Army Special Service Force for Korea (Wood 1966, 24-25). Public pressure and the deteriorating situation in Korea now called for recruiting, training, and dispatching forces quickly. Fortunately, over 50 percent of the potential recruits and all the key officers had invaluable World War II experience (ibid., 32, 37). The United States also offered a training area, support, and vehicles, radios, and larger weapons. However, integrating all this within a Commonwealth division was time-consuming and complicated by the fact that, unlike the United States and Britain, Canada had no support base in the area and its force was using a mixture of Canadian, American, and British equipment (ibid., 39).

Respite, of a sort, arrived after General MacArthur's successful landings behind the North Korean lines and his successful eviction of the North Korean army from the South. MacArthur confidently predicted the Canadian contribution would now probably serve in occupation rather than combat duties

and only one battalion, of the three being prepared, was now required (Millet 2015, 16). Canada adjusted its plans accordingly and identified the second battalion as the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Unit (PPCLI). Meanwhile, the Australian and British components of the Commonwealth brigade had arrived in theatre. Yet, when PPCLI was still undergoing training, China responded with an attack in support of North Korea and quickly drove back UN forces. Fully committed, the US Army then requested the PPCLI join the action immediately on its arrival in Korea, effectively eliminating its in-theatre training period (Millet 2015, 19). With the memories of the 1941 Hong Kong defeat still fresh, the Canadian commander in theatre refused the US request and conducted six weeks in-theatre training prior to the battalion joining the fight in central Korea (Wood 1966, 62).

A further complication arose with NATO's intention to create an integrated force in Europe. In January 1951, Canada agreed to contribute, and first hoped that the remainder of the brigade initially intended for Korea could be repurposed as Canada's NATO contribution (Stairs 1974, 195; Wood 1966, 96). In announcing that this partial brigade could now go to Europe, Defence Minister Claxton declared, "The vital centre of our global defence is in Western Europe" (Stairs 1974). Why the centre was not in Korea, where Canada was engaged in combat, was not explained. A month later, the government reversed itself after the United Nations Command in Korea requested the full Canadian brigade following the Chinese attack, and Canada made plans to redirect the remainder of the brigade back to Korea. It also began preparing the budget and the forces needed for a new army brigade, plus 12 air squadrons for European employment in NATO and an expanded Canadian navy in the Atlantic.

By 1953, the Canadian force in Europe was building up and the Korean conflict was winding down. At the end of active fighting, over 25,000 Canadians had served in Korea in the army brigade, a series of eight destroyers, and RCAF squadrons. Canada had also suffered 516 killed. All three services fought well, although the significant initial logistic difficulties were only overcome with the setting up of support camps in Korea and Japan (Millet 2015, 41-43; Wood 1966, 38-43). With an armistice signed, but not a full peace treaty, the Canadian forces then began their gradual withdrawal from Korea, leaving destroyers off the Korean coast until 1955 and a peace support formation on land that served until 1957. Afterwards, Canada was represented by one officer and one non-commissioned officer (NCO) on the staff of the UN Command in Korea.

In Europe, on the other hand, Canada soon had over 7000 soldiers permanently assigned to a mechanized brigade and another 6000 airmen in four fighter wings flying 300 of NATO's most capable fighter aircraft (Frandsen 2015, 127). The Royal Canadian Navy concentrated its fleet in Halifax and was delegated command of the western North Atlantic by NATO. This involved

investing in over 20 new ships supported by a massive naval research and development effort. This Europe-first, NATO-oriented dominance enjoyed considerable political and public support (Thordarson 1972, 33-45). Pierre Trudeau provided the sole, fleeting exception with his 1969 comment that Canada had "no foreign policy of any importance except that which flowed from NATO" and that this was a "false perspective for any country" (ibid., 140). He was, however, never able to re-adjust the NATO domination of our security policy, although he started the gradual drawdown of our forces in Germany.

Trudeau's military refocus was not directed to Asia, where the Canadian footprint did not grow beyond the two soldiers serving in Korea's UN Command staff, except for periods when scores of officers would be temporarily assigned to the UN International Commission of Supervision and Control (ICSC) efforts in Indochina or the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP; Canada 2019a, 2019b).²¹ Canada refused participation in and support to the US effort to protect the Taiwanese islands of Quemoy and Matsu, and stood well back from the Vietnam War, save as a supplier of munitions (Holmes 1979b, 196). There was certainly no public support for the Vietnam War, but instead, a significant Canadian opposition to it.

The Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) was formed without Canada. SEATO was not missed in Canada in part because it fell far short of the multilateral ideal of a community of nominally equal democracies such as NATO provided.²² Instead, the US "hub and spoke" system became dominant in the Pacific. John Ikenberry (2004, 358, 364) argues this system of bilateral security ties provided prosperity and security for Asian allies at the cost of American hegemony and relatively unrestrained US freedom of action. Unsurprisingly, Greg Donaghy (2019, 139), a historian with Foreign Affairs Canada, adds that the Pacific was seen as "a US region with little room for Canadian initiative."

As Canada was distant from any Asian threat, the "hub and spoke" arrangement imposed no commitments and granted a certain independence; it was not unattractive, as a result. For example, we were able to avoid military involvement in Vietnam but did support four very well-received but brief humanitarian assistance missions in the Pacific and a range of modest military training activities.²³ Until very recently, we established no formal bilateral security arrangements with any of the Asian states; instead, Canada focused primarily on expanding trade with them, particularly in the 1960–70s.²⁴ Normally, the only regular large-scale Canadian military presence in the region was provided by the annual deployments of RCN vessels from Maritime Command Pacific (MARPAC), which some commentators have called the "the most important" contributor to a Canadian presence in the region (Dewitt et al. 2018, 7).

East Timor 1999

The only significant operational deployment of the Canadian Army to the region in recent times was in 1999 to East Timor, where Canada would repeat many of the earlier lessons learned from Korea and Hong Kong. Again, economics dominated Canada's security concerns. Canadian firms, especially mining consortia, had invested heavily in Indonesia, and Canada was its fourth largest investor in 1971 (Donaghy 2019, 148-149). Moreover, Canada enjoyed a rapidly growing trading relationship to Indonesia, becoming its largest export market in Southeast Asia by 1994 (Grunau 2003, 3). Canada was also a regular supplier of military goods to Indonesia over the 1975–99 period (Webster 2017).

This all became problematic in 1974, when Portugal left its former colony in East Timor and Indonesia invaded the following year. Despite the illegality of this act, the Indonesian offensive reportedly found a "sympathetic audience among Canadian policymakers" while opposition backbencher protests were ignored, with Canada eventually extending *de facto* recognition of Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor (Donaghy 2019, 149; Grunau 2003, 3).

However, the citizens of East Timor continued to push for independence, and, aided by a UN negotiation effort, Indonesia agreed to allow a plebiscite on independence in 1999. Despite brutal Indonesian army and militia efforts to intimidate the voters, the East Timorese overwhelmingly chose independence, which provoked further Indonesian military rampages (Girouard 2007, 42).²⁷ Half of the East Timor population was displaced and up to 80 percent of the infrastructure destroyed in the Indonesian-led scorched-earth effort. Canada, however, was loath to impose economic sanctions or suspend military exports, unlike the US and other Western states (Grunau 2003, 5-6). One analyst has argued assisting East Timor "was not worth risking relations with Indonesia," given the latter's importance to Canadian strategic and trade interests (ibid., 16). This is very similar to Canada's hesitancy in applying sanctions or supporting an embargo against Japanese aggression in China in the 1930s because of trade concerns.

However, there was now considerable support for East Timor in Canada, spurred on by multiple Canadian non-governmental organizations and the New Democratic Party (Webster 2019; Canada 1998, rec. 0945-0955). In addition, Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy played a major role in convincing Indonesia to accept an international peacekeeping force and then in arguing for its rapid deployment (Grunau, 2003, 5,6). International pressure and the interruption of International Monetary Fund and World Bank bailout payments, totalling US\$43 billion, convinced Indonesia to accept the Australian-led International Force for East Timor (INTERFET) peacekeeping force (ibid.). At the same time, Canada was receiving "strong requests" from Austra-

lia and then New Zealand for a military contribution, later backed up by calls from the UN (Girouard 2007, 42, 44).

Regrettably, much as we saw in Korea, Canada had few soldiers available. A series of defence cuts in the 1990s reduced the armed forces from 74,000 to 60,000, set against rapidly increasing defence contributions to peacekeeping in the Balkans.²⁸ Canada already had 1200 troops in Bosnia and had to find a further 1300 for the conflict in Kosovo and Macedonia. As a result, a small force – less than 250 soldiers – was assigned to East Timor, backed up by HMCS Protecteur and two C-130 Hercules transport aircraft. Despite the foreign minister's calls for a "rapid deployment," Canada's contribution was one of the last to arrive, entering East Timor 39 days after Australia, in another repeat of late-to-need Canadian deployments.²⁹ On arrival, the land force was not sent to security duties in the East Timor capital of Dili, as per the original plan. Rather, it was re-tasked to the more dangerous western border of that province to deter the Indonesian army and its problematic militias (Girouard 2007, 45). This is, again, a repeat of earlier Canadian Pacific deployments where planned lower-danger initial taskings were suddenly dropped to take up more dangerous ones. This reorientation was ordered by the Australian force commander to put nations with more robust rules of engagement in critical sectors.30



Canada's contribution was one of the last to arrive, entering East Timor 39 days after Australia.

Similar to past Pacific deployments, the Canadian East Timor commander described supply challenges as the "most vulnerable aspect" of his deployment (Girouard 2007, 58). Factors include the long distances from Canada, inadequate sealift and airlift, no in-theatre Canadian support bases, poor to non-existent local infrastructure, and an already stretched coalition force commander with little to spare. Purchases of commercial all-terrain vehicles and flown-in temporary accommodation structures in Australia overcame some of these problems (Girouard 2007, 55). However, to meet the needs of future Pacific deployments, the Canadian force commander argued strongly for a semi-amphibious ship capability, as HMCS *Protecteur* was not optimized for ashore support, in addition to being frequently called away to refuel other at-sea units (Girouard 2007, 57).³¹ His recommendation was supported by other close observers of this operation (Blaxland 2006, 210-211).

Nevertheless, the Canadian naval, air, and army components to INTERFET all performed well, with expectations of their inclusion in the follow-on UN Transitional Administration for East Timor (UNTAET). As in Korea, however, the government declined due to the in-theatre sustainment challenges and, more seriously, the need to maintain the forces elsewhere, in this case Canada's 2500-personnel peacekeeping effort in the Balkans (Grunau, 11-12). Ultimately, only three Canadian military staff officers were left in UNTAET, although a small number of RCMP and Canadian aid agencies also continued to serve (Girouard 2007, 61; Grunau, 11-12).

This competition between the needs of NATO and the needs of this deployment followed precisely the Canadian experience in Korea decades prior. The East Timor deployment also matched the prior Korean and Hong Kong missions where the Canadian government had initially expressed no interest until diplomatic, political, and public pressure forced a rethink. The last-minute nature of this sort of decision-making necessarily led to the uniformly hasty preparation, rushed departures, and late-to-need arrivals in theatre. As seen in the two prior conflicts, the East Timor one also brought a last-minute re-tasking toward a more dangerous mission than the one planned.

Part two: Factors explaining the lack of a Pacific security focus

he greater priority assigned to NATO missions compared to the Pacific relied on a range of factors, including the Canadian inclination to identify closely with European security concerns. Equally important were our country's origins and close connections with the British Empire. Immigration from Europe also provided over 67 percent of our foreign-born citizens up until 1981, while Asia provided only 14 percent – and that represented a significant gain over the even lower historical levels (Edmonston 2016, 103). Trade with the US, and then Europe, dominated in comparison to what some analysts called our "miniscule" trade with the People's Republic of China (PRC) prior to 1961 (Ho and Huenemann 1972, 125-126).

NATO was another major factor in focusing Canadian security on Europe. A range of NATO elements kept and continue to keep the Canadian government's attention focused on Europe and the Atlantic. When a crisis like the Balkan Wars occurs, NATO is able to collect, assess, and disseminate the intelligence – assisted by its 1500-member Brussels headquarters staff – and channel it through each of its 30 member nations' delegations quickly.³² Officials in those delegations are senior, with the Canadian one led by a full ambassador and a three-star admiral or general officer supported with 20 Canadian staff. More detailed national fact-checking is also assisted by the delegation's ability to informally canvass over 400 Canadian military members permanently posted to Europe (Canada n.d. "Canadian..."). The Canadian delegation is thus capable of assessing the data, adding context, and reporting what is relevant to Canada. As a result, its reports to Canada on evolving NATO issues also have weight. None of this happens in the Pacific.

As the crisis develops, NATO will move into an almost continuous cycle of engagement and discussion with national representatives and the capitals themselves – from daily, if not more frequent, North Atlantic Council and Military Committee meetings to NATO twice-annual forums to the biennial

NATO summit attended by heads of government. NATO nations are consulted at least weekly via their delegations on options, plans, and, eventually, tentative force contributions. Once a final decision is taken to commit to a NATO plan, members will have had had plenty of opportunities to call for changes, protest, or withdraw, though the last option is rarely taken given the monumental efforts to ensure unanimous agreement. At that point, NATO will by necessity be able to present a united front to the world and have this backed up by military contributions.

The success of the NATO approach does not end with crisis management. NATO was formed to lead the West's containment strategy against the Soviet military threat to Europe. It still performs the strategy-setting task and issued a Strategic Concept in 2010 that reaffirmed its traditional roles of collective defence and set the broad parameters for engaging in out-of-area operations and counter-terrorism (NATO 2010b). A replacement Strategic Concept is under development. While unlikely to consider the rising challenges in the Pacific, greater efforts are being made to involve "operational partners" and "partners of values," such as Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and South Korea (NATO 2010a, 29-30). Australia recently cross-accredited its ambassador to Belgium and Luxembourg to NATO and assigned an air vice-marshal as its NATO military representative.



The success of the NATO approach does not end with crisis management.

NATO has backed up its strategies with agreements that have set a national defence budget goal of 2 percent of GDP for all its members, and established a readiness plan that marshals potential national military commitments for future crises.³³ Under the "Four 30s" plan, NATO seeks 30 air squadrons, 30 ships, and 30 battalions that are ready to move within 30 days' notice. To this Canada had contributed two frigates, one submarine, six to 12 fighter aircraft, a mechanized infantry battalion, one maritime patrol aircraft, a mobile hospital, and a chemical, biological, and nuclear defence platoon, in addition to any forces it has deployed to ongoing NATO operations (Canada 2020a; Sevunts 2019). Canada has assigned no contributions to any Pacific structure.

NATO has also promulgated over 1300 standardization agreements that provide detailed interoperability instructions on everything from communications to logistics. Units can communicate with each other over the most sophisticated networks, share common ammunition types, and refuel from

each other's supply ships, fuel trucks, and depots because of these standards.³⁴ This advanced interoperability and NATO's sustained operations in the Balkans and Afghanistan have profoundly shaped how Western militaries operate. Canadian movement to these theatres and their logistic sustainment was massively assisted through a series of US–German–Italian NATO bases at Köln–Bonn, Ramstein, and Naples. The first was also designated as Canada's operational support hub for Europe with the specific goal of speeding our ability to launch and sustain global operations.³⁵ Our aircraft flying over the former Yugoslavia and Kosovo could operate safely from large and secure airbases such as at Aviano in Italy and enjoyed virtually unchallenged in-theatre air superiority. Communications between forces were assisted by the complete control of the radio waves, thanks to the primitive nature of opposition jamming efforts. This was the "NATO way of war."

Canada's participation in NATO also had a significant impact on Canadian force design, with Dan Middlemiss and Joel Sokolsky (1989, 20) pointing out that:

Without NATO, it would have been difficult at best to justify the maintenance of modern conventional armed forces, equipped with tanks, artillery, fighter aircraft, and a wide range of anti-submarine warfare (ASW) forces.

However, NATO's dominance was also a limitation; for example, there was little examination whether an initially ASW-focused fleet concentrated in Halifax suited our needs in the Pacific.³⁶ In a similar manner, the RCAF concentrated on the air superiority and deep strike tasks at the expense of close air support to land or naval forces. Canada's army, due to its long commitment to operations in Afghanistan, assigned a higher priority to counterinsurgency capabilities at the expense of conventional state-on-state warfare (Udesen 2018, 41, 48-49). These trends also contributed to Canadian naval forces exercising regularly with larger allied naval formations, and air force units with larger coalition air force groupings. This all came at the cost of Canada's three services exercising jointly with each other. Able to operate within NATO's European logistics system, Canada also had no incentive to invest heavily in strategic sealift or airlift.³⁷

Certainly, the lack of a NATO-like structure also contributed to Canada's relative indifference to Pacific security problems. There was no agreed Western strategy to meet the security challenges in the Pacific posed by Communism and certainly no consensus on defence budget goals or a NATO-like readiness plan for possible allies. As a result, there was nothing like the detailed guidance NATO provides to nations on force design. Under the US "hub and spoke" arrangement, Canada was free to devise whatever forces it found suitable and was often left to ascertain what would be most useful to its Pacific allies. Indeed, NATO priorities dominated broad force structure decisions in Canada.

There were no preparations made to move Canadian Army or air forces to the Western Pacific, and the navy, which did prepare, initially assigned fewer and often less capable ships to the Pacific. Even when there was a naval readiness to rebalance assets to the West by moving one of its seven modern frigates in Halifax to join the five in BC, one federal minister representing Nova Scotia was able to intervene and block the attempt (Fisher 2014).

There was, of course, no Pacific equivalent to our NATO ambassador, our NATO senior military representative, our NATO delegation, and the 400 Canadian forces members in NATO who represented Canada and provided steady feedback to it. As a result, Canadian crisis management in the Pacific was ad hoc. However, Canada has now assigned 14 officers and senior NCOs to the US Indo-Pacific Command headquarters in Hawaii and boosted its original two officers to 15 at the United Nations Command Korea (Brewster 2018). The latter's primary task is quite focused and would centre on marshalling force contributions during a major crisis approaching war in Korea with a secondary role of monitoring the current armistice (UN Command

Canada has nothing available in the Pacific to match NATO's logistic and transportation infrastructure.

n.d.).³⁸ In Japan, Canada can give and receive logistic support, including ammunition and fuel, thanks to the recently signed Canada–Japan Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (Canada 2018b). Canada has similar arrangements with Australia and New Zealand and once sought out Singapore as the location for its Pacific operational support hub. Nothing appears to have come of this very worthwhile initiative. While Canada had established support hubs in Europe, the Middle East, and the Caribbean, none exists in the Pacific despite the great distances and our military history repeatedly demonstrating the need. As a result, Canada has nothing available in the Pacific to match NATO's logistic and transportation infrastructure. Moreover, Ottawa does not seem to have grasped this lack of support facilities and the great distances involved in deployments. There is also nothing like the biannual NATO meetings of foreign and defence ministers and, as a result, no sustained ability to convince the political leadership of the need for defence investments to overcome these problems in the Indo-Pacific.

Moreover, Canada has been lackadaisical in sending its senior officials to what few regional security forums exist. Kim Nossal (2018, 368) notes the "unwillingness" of Canadian cabinet ministers to commit time to Asia-Pacific

forums resulted in our "self-marginalization." Others agree, pointing out that our ministers have only "occasionally" attended the Shangri-la Dialogues in contrast to the consistent cabinet-level attendance of other states (Dewitt et al. 2018, 25). They also argue Canada often tends to send lower level officials to the ASEAN Regional Forum (ibid., 24). This is repeated at the Western Pacific Naval Symposium for heads of navies, to which Canada often sent a deputy three rank levels beneath the requirement, although there are claims our attendance has recently been upgraded. Nossal (2018, 368) also argues this weak attendance feeds a circular effect, with no local impetus to invite Canada to the region's highest level security forums like the East Asian Summit (EAS) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), despite the Canadian government's repeated public declarations of interest.³⁹ The ASEAN secretary general publicly reminded Canada in 2012 that it should not expect to join its forums without providing a sustained presence in the region (Clark 2012).⁴⁰ We still ask to join, and we are still shut out.

Certainly, the Canadian government's interest in being invited to the higher level Asian discussions represents a welcome recognition of recent trends, including the dramatic rise in immigration from Asia, now the largest source of our immigrants (47 percent in 2011), with 4.3 million Canadians having Asia-Pacific as their origin (Edmonston 2016, 103; Nossal 2018, 366). Inward foreign direct investment from Asia increased by a factor of 100 over the 1980 levels to reach \$74.8 billion in 2016 (Nossal 2018, 366). Trade with China alone has increased 40-fold from 1990 to 2017, reaching \$90 billion; after the US, China is our second largest trading partner (Pittman 2018). Asian-based trade has also been particularly valued by the Canadian government, as prior to 2012 the largest percentage of Canada's exports were going to the older established economies that, with the exception of the US, have slow or negative growth (Weston 2012). Only 8 percent of our exports were going to the regions with the fastest growth, including Asia.

Since 2012, Canadian efforts to expand trade in Asia accelerated, but not without mishap. Canada signed a free trade agreement with South Korea in 2015, but failed to achieve one with China in 2017.⁴¹ Getting into the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement was also initially problematic. Former Canadian ambassador to China David Mulroney argued in 2015 that Canada had a particularly difficult time gaining entry to the TPP agreement because we were no longer considered a "player" in the region (Mulroney 2015, 157). Our position improved by 2017, but our bizarre approach to the TPP discussions at Da Nang that year risked that modest gain. After Canada's minister for international trade, François-Philippe Champagne, had attended the initial TPP discussions, he indicated Canada "was on board" the night before the final signing, according to former Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, an attendee (Walsh 2020). However, the next day Prime Minister Justin Trudeau elected not to sign the deal or attend the heads' of state meeting. Japan, which was leading the effort, was reported as disap-

pointed, while Australian officials were quoted as being "gobsmacked," "frustrated," and "screwed." 42

This meeting also provided some clear lessons on how not to pursue our parallel search for the coveted membership in the East Asia Summit. A week after the prime minister's sudden TTP walkout, Canada's EAS membership application was again discussed and then rejected by the ASEAN membership at Da Nang, likely to no one's surprise. The prime minister, undeterred, attempted to secure invitations to the EAS and ADMM-Plus the next year in Singapore at the ASEAN Summit, again to no avail (Canada 2018c). In 2018, however, Canada did successfully join the TPP, now known as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

There was no similar effort to provide an expanded Canadian security presence in the region. An ideal moment came with President Obama's 2011–12 attempt to both engage and counter the PRC via a Pacific "pivot," later renamed "rebalance," that would expand dialogue opportunities while also rebalancing the US military by moving 60 percent of its forces to the Pacific, one half of these being forward deployed. Shortly after, Canada began what was termed a "mini pivot" or an "economic pivot," but the Canadian effort was based entirely on trade (Mulroney 2015, 157; Hampson and Burney 2013). There was no security component, although Canada continued with its traditional annual naval deployments to the Pacific.



Canada's overall military presence remains sporadic and often lacking in focus.

This effort may have been more constrained in the absence of a Canadian supply ship and the need to regularly support the war on terror in the Persian Gulf (Dewitt et al. 2018, 7). Irrespective, Canada's overall military presence remains sporadic and often lacking in focus.⁴³ Our Department of National Defence (DND) training outreach in the Pacific is also unfocused, and key states, such as Japan and South Korea, are only being visited every other year, given that our Pacific Fleet reaches out to 12-plus states, with some of only modest security importance, such as Brunei (Dewitt et al. 2018, 15-16, 19-23). More aggressive engagement plans in the Pacific were briefly started, then discontinued, as the government's attention shifted elsewhere.⁴⁴ The RCN's performance, however, has far exceeded that of any other Canadian service, with some saying, "It seemed as if the Asia-Pacific had been completely delegated to MARPAC" (Dewitt et al. 2018, 26).⁴⁵

By 2018, the RCN increased its presence, significantly assisted by the arrival of leased supply vessel Asterix and the six-month deployment of the Canadian submarine HMCS Chicoutimi to Japan and Guam (Common 2018). Frigates, the submarine, and a Japan-based Canadian CP-140 maritime patrol aircraft were also regularly tasked with monitoring the North Korean sanctions effort. In 2019, MARPAC maintained an 11-month presence in the region, relying on the MV Asterix, frigates, and CP-140 aircraft (Pugliese 2019). While not conducting US Navy-style freedom of navigation operations (FON-OPS), Canada was recognized – with Australia, Japan, France, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom – as part of a group that were demonstrating the "international community's willingness to push back" against excessive Chinese claims in the South China Sea, in the view of the US Navy (Werner 2019). However, this pace could not be kept up after the transfer of the Asterix, the navy's only replenishment ship, to the Atlantic in 2019 and COVID-19 pandemic-induced maintenance delays that reduced submarine availability. As a result, only one frigate deployed to the Pacific in 2020.

Other changes to our Pacific security posture took place during this period. The Japanese-based stationing of *Chicoutimi* and CP-140 patrol aircraft reinforced a critical Canadian ally and, together with expanded ship deployments, provided for the first time a sustained, 11-month presence in the region.⁴⁶ Equally important, the steady employment of all Canadian units on critical tasks such as the support of North Korean sanctions and maintaining freedom of navigation signalled an enhanced Canadian readiness to help address the region's security problems.⁴⁷ However, without additional resources, most critically a permanently available MARPAC supply ship, it is highly likely our results will return to the sporadic, siloed, and unfocused efforts that fell short of the sustained presence ASEAN and others demanded.

Little evidence suggests more resources are coming any time soon. The long-awaited joint support ships will likely only involve one hull for the Pacific, and it will likely not reach full operational capability until 2026, and even that date is marked with "under review" by the government (Canada 2018d). Further, that single supply ship in Esquimalt will be unavailable every third or fourth year due to refits. This all reflects the low priority that successive Canadian governments have assigned to Pacific security. Dave Perry (2014) has pointed out increasing our Pacific presence was never an objective of the Harper government.⁴⁸ Similarly, the Liberal government has shown no inclination to prioritize the Pacific in either its ministerial mandate letters or its defence policy (Dewitt et al. 2018, 78). 49 Despite initially asserting Canada's role as "a Pacific nation," and requesting membership in the EAS and ADMM-Plus, the government's defence policy only noted that "Canada is committed to being a reliable player in the region, through consistent engagement and strong partnerships," with no sense of the region being a priority or of additional resources being allocated to that task. There is nothing in the policy's Pacific section that equals the more direct commitments extended to NATO under its "Four 30s" readiness plan.

In more concrete, if unsettling terms, General Jonathan Vance reaffirmed in 2017 Canada would continue its siloed approach: "The navy would for the foreseeable future be Canada's lead military force in the Indo-Pacific, while the army and air force concentrated on other parts of the world," though no dedicated funds flowed through to MARPAC (Fisher 2017). The effort required to provide a sustained presence will be considerable, given David Mulroney's (2015, 157) experienced view that the states of the region are "scornful of Canada's lack of staying power." ⁵⁰

Part three: Current Pacific security challenges

anada's security posture remains focused on Europe. Certainly, the decision to deploy a permanent Canadian battle group to the Baltics and a 200-person training group to Ukraine made sense in view of Russia's aggression in Crimea and Ukraine.⁵¹ However, these deployments must also be seen as part of a recent Canadian foreign policy push that regularly challenges Russia's actions but consistently ignores similar Chinese activities. In 2018, Foreign Minister Freeland took Russia to task for its "illegal occupation and annexation of Ukrainian territory," stating this was not "something we can accept or ignore" (Canada 2018a). Yet China got a free pass, with no mention of its illegal island building and marine area seizures in the South China Sea. This year, the chief of the defence staff (CDS) took a slightly harsher tone with China, but most of the planned deterrence efforts involved Russia and the Arctic (Vance 2020). Last December, Canada also increased its contribution to NATO's "Four 30s" high-readiness force by a further six CF-18s, added to the original six to 12, and an additional frigate. While a seemingly modest increase, the readiness implications were dramatic given that maintaining a single high-readiness unit normally requires one other to be in training and another in deep maintenance. This increase will thus involve nine frigates and 36 to 54 fighters, despite having only seven frigates on the Atlantic Coast and 60 available operational CF-18 Canada-wide.

According to some observers, this continued Canadian focus on NATO was necessary to counter former President Trump's frequent critiques of the alliance and the limited contributions of its members (Leuprecht, Sokolsky, and Derow 2019, 163). Yet such a claim seems a stretch and it is more likely the result of our history, the influence of the immense NATO headquarters, and the Canadian military's traditional inclinations. Certainly, this continued NATO-first approach ignores the increasing dominance of our Pacific trade and immigration. Our European focus also allows Canada to avoid any serious consideration of several of dangerous security challenges in the Pacific.

North Korea

North Korea's security threat continues to attract the most concrete Canadian action. Over 14 Canadian staff are stationed at the UN Command's headquarters, backed up by a Canadian frigate and CP-140 maritime patrol aircraft deployments under *Operation Neon* to maintain sanctions on North Korea. This was reinforced with Canadian representation in the multinational enforcement coordination cell on board the US Seventh Fleet flagship that directs the North Korean sanctions effort (Lubold and Talley 2018). Here, they are joined by officers from the US, UK, France, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and South Korea.

These sanctions were imposed by the UN Security Council to force North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons project. However, the sanctions and President Trump's negotiations with North Korea's leader did not bear fruit. Pyongyang maintains its nuclear posture, tested a nuclear weapon in 2017, continues to enrich uranium, and conducted a series of missile tests with 25 missile firings in 2019, including submarine-launched ballistic missiles (Murphy 2020; Nichols 2020).⁵² North Korea now claims it is no longer bound to a commitment to cease nuclear and missile testing as a result of "brutal and inhumane sanctions" and a lack of US flexibility. In addition, as reported by the UN, China is assisting North Korea in evading sanctions, with 2.8 million metric tons of North Korean coal being shipped through China in 2019 (Nichols 2020).

South Korea may, in turn, be seriously re-examining the need for nuclear weapons itself, much as it has done when US security guarantees have been called into question. A secret, intermittent project to build the bomb began in the 1970s after President Nixon withdrew a US division from Korea (Oswald 2018). Concerns were raised again in 2019 when President Trump demanded a fivefold increase in South Korea's annual US\$870 million payment to support US forces in Korea, which the *Diplomat* has been termed "a blatant shakedown" (Sukjoon 2020). The two sides finally settled on an 8.2 percent increase, but even this settlement must have been galling to the South Korean government. After all, Seoul was also threatened with US trade action and a demand to contribute US\$1 billion annually to the operating costs of the US Theater High Altitude Air Defense (THAAD) system stationed in the country (CBS 2017), despite having already contributed the land and facilities for THAAD and bearing the brunt of costly Chinese economic sanctions as a result. Equally worrisome has been North Korea's continued nuclear intransigence and Trump's own earlier musing on the possible need for both South Korea and Japan to arm themselves with nuclear weapons. Indeed, some assume South Korea has a potential two- to three-year nuclear weapon breakout period.⁵³

There are also regular opportunities for conflict beneath the nuclear threshold. Due to ill-defined maritime boundaries between the two Koreas, regular and bloody naval clashes take place between them. The last involved a North

Korean submarine torpedoing the South Korean navy corvette *Cheosan* in 2010, with 46 sailors killed. Prior to that, South Korea triumphed in two sea battles in the same area, resulting in 30 North Koreans dead. These clashes were eventually contained, although there was (and still is) an obvious danger of conflict escalation.⁵⁴ Should that occur, Canada benefits from its large contribution to the headquarters of the UN Command and would likely be able to draw detailed and accurate data on any incident. Similarly, Canadian defence officials would be familiar with the contingency plans in place. At the same time, however, Canada is not obligated to commit forces to the UN Command, as the final decision rests entirely in Ottawa.

Himalayas

India and China have had a longstanding conflict in the Himalayas, with open warfare in 1962 followed by skirmishes in 1967, 1987, and 2017. The June 2020 crisis at Ladakh was likely the second bloodiest of this series, with over 20 Indian soldiers killed and an unknown number of Chinese casualties. While India and China held talks to de-escalate, both sides have since significantly reinforced their large garrisons in the area. China strengthened their existing forces in the region, which have grown from 180,000 to 300,000 troops, and India's single army corps was reinforced by a further 35,000 troops (SCMP 2020).

In response to the Ladakh incident, the Indian government also banned 59 Chinese computer applications, cancelled multiple telecom contracts with China, and, after being initially silent, raised concerns over the new security law China imposed on Hong Kong (Yang 2020). It is also gingerly increasing diplomatic support to Taiwan, with some officials arguing for a trade agreement with Taipei (Chaudhary and Horton 2020). India also asked Russia to speed up delivery of its order of several S-400 Triumf long-range air defence batteries (Yang 2020).

In what may be the most effective, if provocative, move, India sent almost all of its fleet to sea during the crisis and publicly stated its goal was to be able to block the Malacca Strait against China (Pandit 2020). Given that India's army is weaker than China's and also triple-tasked in the Himalayas, with responsibility to monitor both Jammu/Kashmir and Pakistan, its sea-based response plays to its greater relative strength in the Indian Ocean. As Admiral Arun Prakash (Ret'd), former head of the Indian navy, has stated, "A show of force at sea can send a message to China that you are vulnerable, that we can interfere with your shipping and with Chinese energy supplies" (Trofimov 2020).

India's sea-based response placed significant pressure on the People's Liberation Army's Navy (PLAN), which was probably incapable of responding adequately as a result of increased US naval pressure in the South and East China Seas. The extent to which this move was coordinated with the US is

unknown, and India has long guarded its non-aligned status. Yet India is now far more open to having allies, and this incident has provided the impetus. In essence, India has sought to isolate China on the issue of border disputes, aligning itself with 21 other countries that are victims of Beijing's harassment (Yang 2020.)

Much of the Indian government's efforts have centred on the informal Quad alliance, which Japan initiated in 2007 with Australia, the United States, and India. Increasing tension with China coupled with the rise of more conservative leaders in India, Australia, and the US had reportedly given the Quad "new and potentially pivotal strength" from what has been accurately described as an "on-again, off-again" alliance (Heydarian 2020). Backing this up, India also invited Australia to join the US and Japan in the annual Malabar naval exercise. Earlier, the Indian navy had exercised with the US Nimitz Carrier Strike Group off the Nicobar and Andaman Islands at the approaches to the Malacca Strait. After the Ladakh incident, India also signed a military logistics agreement with Japan after it had achieved earlier agreements with the US, France, South Korea, and Australia (Trofimov 2020). It has also a data exchange agreement with the US Navy and is using the US's CENTRIXS secure data exchange system.

Canada has traditionally not involved its military in the China–India disputes except as UN military observers in Jammu and Kashmir. This mission ended in 1995, and today it would seem Canada is assessing the extent it should engage in this region and, later still, the Quad (Canada n.d. "United...").

South China Sea

Much like the Himalayan region, the South China Sea has seen regular conflict, ranging from small disputes over rocks to full naval battles, such as the 1974 fighting over the Paracel Islands where four PLAN warships sank a South Vietnamese corvette and killed 53 sailors in the process of taking Yagong Island. The Chinese victory is celebrated in the poster depicted in Figure 1, which gives some indication of the scope and intensity of the fighting. In 1988, China and Vietnam again fought at sea over the Johnston Reef in the Spratly Islands, with Vietnam again the loser. It lost two naval transports and 64 dead against a three-frigate PLAN force. Other states were also in conflict in the area; for example, Taiwan and Vietnam scrapped in 1995, and Vietnam fired on the Philippines' fishing vessels in 1998. However, China is the dominant combatant in the South China Sea, being involved in 13 out of 15 naval confrontations in the 1974-2011 period (Global Security, n.d.).

Conflict is perhaps not surprising in this area, given the presence of rich fishing stocks, undersea oil and gas, and multiple, overlapping exclusive economic zones (EEZs). As Figure 2 shows, these EEZs extend 200 miles off the coast of all the coastal states in the South China Sea save China. Rather than

FIGURE 1: BATTLE HYMN OF THE XISHA (PARACEL) ISLANDS



Source: Renmin meishu chubanshe (人民美术出版社), Landsberger collection, chineseposters.net.

FIGURE 2: CHINA'S NINE-DASH LINE OVERLAPPING THE EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONES OF OTHER STATES



Adapted from: Burgess et al 2017. 74.

FIGURE 3: OFFSHORE OIL OPEN BLOCKS IN WATERS UNDER CHINA'S JURISDICTION



Adapted from: PCA 2016, 89

using the unambiguous 200-mile limit from the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) for its offshore claims, China relied on loosely defined claims of "indisputable sovereignty over the South China Sea Islands and the adjacent waters" based on "historic rights" within its ill-defined "nine-dash line" (China 2009a, 2009b).⁵⁵ That line extends 900 miles off its coastline in places, encloses 90 percent of the South China Sea, and overlaps with the conventional EEZ claims of its neighbours (Yanmei 2016). This is not an empty mapping exercise by China. Figure 3, produced by China's state-owned oil firm CNOOC, shows its oil blocks solidly within its nine-dash line claim while omitting any mention that they fall within Vietnam's EEZ. This aggressive approach has contributed to China's central role in most of the recent conflicts in the South China Sea.

The 2012 Scarborough Shoal crisis flowed from China's excessive claims. While the shoal is 130 miles west of the Philippines, it is over 400 miles from China and thus within the former's EEZ. It was, however, also situated within China's nine-dash line. Fishing disputes were common and attended by the increasing involvement of the two nations' government vessels. After the United States negotiated an agreement with both players, requiring a mutual withdrawal of government vessels, only the Philippines withdrew; China instead maintained its coast guard presence and continued to turn away Philippine fishers. However, according to the former deputy minister of Singapore, Bilahari Kausikan (2019), the US committed a "grievous error" when it "did nothing when China broke the deal. Philippines government filed a statement and notification of claim with the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague.

China's offshore activities were not confined to Scarborough Shoal. China also interfered with Philippine fishing and sea-bed exploration ships and set up fortifications on Mischief Reef – all within the Philippines' EEZ. In addition, China disabled the cables of two Vietnamese exploration ships operating off the latter's coast. Similarly, when a Chinese oil rig entered disputed waters between Vietnam and China in 2014, China withdrew only after enraged Vietnam mobs looted several Chinese-owned factories, an incident during which six Chinese citizens were killed (Green et al. 2017b). Both states sent scores of coast guard vessels to the area, and there were over 500 rammings. China had also begun a massive program of land reclamation on low-level features in the Paracel and Spratly Islands and then added airfields and surveillance systems.

The PCA released its unanimous final decision in 2016, which was described as a "major defeat" for China and a "virtual clean sweep" for the Philippines (Rosenfeld 2016; Welch 2016). It also benefitted the maritime rights of the Philippines' neighbours. The report garnered wide praise outside of China, with one observer arguing it was "breathtaking in scope and ambition, far surpassing the expectations of the law of the sea community" (Kardon 2018, 32). It found the Chinese nine-dash line had "no legal basis" off the Philippines, or, in fact, anywhere in the South China Sea and that none of the many reefs and islets held by China qualified for an economic exclusion zone. As a result, Lynn Kuok (2018) argues, "The findings make clear that coastal states in the South China Sea are entitled to full 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zones unencumbered by any Chinese claims."

The significantly diminished size of China's legal offshore waters as a result of the PCA decision is shown in Figure 4 and should be compared to their nine-dash line claim in Figure 2. The PCA also declared the PRC's island-building effort was a breach of its obligations to protect the marine environment, as required by UNCLOS, and found it had "unlawfully prevented" Philippine fishing at Scarborough Shoal.⁵⁹ In addition, the 1300-acre artificial island and

FIGURE 4: THE ARBITRATION OUTCOME AND CHINA'S LEGAL OFFSHORE WATERS



Adapted from: Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative 2016.

airbase that the PRC had constructed on the once largely underwater Mischief Reef was judged to be solidly within the Philippines' EEZ.⁶⁰ To remove any doubt, the PCA (2016, para 1038) added, "The Tribunal considers China's violation of its obligations to be manifest."

China refused to participate in the PCA process and declared the final decision "null and void" and without "binding force" (China 2016a). Yet its post-decision legal activities remain confusing and often opaque. It refers to the nine-dash line less often but seems to be seeking new justifications for its continued activities in other nations' EEZs. Immediately after the PCA decision, it seemed to claim sea mounts as a basis for an expanded Chinese area, although UNCLOS does not allow underwater features to be "appropriated" by any state (Nguyen 2020; Huang 2020; China 2016b). At the same time, it repeated elements of earlier claims within a post-PCA 2016 white paper, claiming sovereignty over the Spratly Islands, the Pratas, the Paracels and Scarborough Shoal, and Macclesfield Bank, with large surrounding sea areas that could equal or exceed the rejected claims of its nine-dash line (China

FIGURE 5: "FOUR SHA" - BEIJING'S NEW SOUTH CHINA SEA CLAIM



Adapted from: Gertz 2017.

2016c, paras 39-40). In so doing, China claimed historic rights and attempted to treat these island groupings as singular units via a loose claiming of "its archipelagoes and islands" offshore (ibid., para 39). This was problematic, as the Spratly Islands group also involves multiple islands held by other states. Furthermore, UNCLOS denies the archipelagic argument, as China meets none of the criteria for establishing an archipelagic sea, and the PCA had already made this clear in its 2016 decision (paras 573-575). Nevertheless, China repeated its claim to large archipelagic maritime areas in 2017 via a "Four Sha" (or Four Sands) argument, which uses the language of UNCLOS but is as legally dubious as its previous claims. Figure 5 shows the expansive nature of the Four Sha claim. Unsurprisingly, as noted by Adam MacDonald (2017, 2), the Chinese post-decision claims are still seen as "excessive and illegitimate."

After a brief lull in activity in 2017, it is now clear none of these legal setbacks have caused China to alter its behaviour in the South China Sea, save it has ceased to build new islands. However, China is now in the process of establishing a full range of radars on the islands to provide effective air and surface coverage of most of the South China Sea. Peter Layton (2016), writing for the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, argues that this extends Chinese air-power dominance over its neighbours as far south as Borneo. China has also

installed surface-to-air and anti-ship cruise missiles on three Spratly Islands despite an earlier promise not to do so (Xinhua 2015).⁶⁵ In addition, these island bases may also be supporting a Chinese "underwater great wall" effort to create an ASW surveillance system for the South China Sea (Levick 2018). Finally, China shows no sign of leaving or dismantling its illegal facilities on Mischief Reef, and the Duterte government in Manila has chosen not to force this issue (Regencia 2021). Some argue President Duterte may have traded the possibility of future Chinese investment for a quieter Philippine response (BBC 2016). Many of China's other neighbours face a similar dilemma.

The PCA decision has specifically not altered China's abusive approach toward its neighbours. According to former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd (2020), while the Chinese government "embarked on a political and economic charm offensive" following the PCA decision, it sustained its activities in the disputed areas nevertheless. These are not universally held views. Bill Hayton (2018), of the UK's Chatham House, has noted some "small" improvements after the 2016 PCA decision, but ultimately concludes: "It is also clear that China's behaviour in the South China Sea has not fundamentally changed. It is, in effect, using military force to try to extort concessions from its neighbours."

This is frequently done via "joint development" proposals in other countries' areas, even though China's demands are "illegitimate" because China has no legal right to demand participation in resource development in another state's EEZ (MacDonald 2017, 2). Koh (2019) agrees, arguing the PCA decision "has had no impact on Beijing's calculations" and that it "neither recognizes nor adheres to the PCA ruling." Adam MacDonald concludes: "The ruling has done little to dissuade China from continuing its activities in the region."

As an example, China threatened Vietnam with military force in 2017 if it did not stop offshore drilling, even though that drilling was within the legal limits of the Vietnamese EEZ (Kuok 2018). Vietnam stopped, then recommenced drilling, and was threatened again. This was repeated in 2019 and 2020 as Chinese Coast Guard (CCG) ships "harassed" both Malaysian and Vietnamese oil and gas exploration activities in the Luconia Shoal and the Vanguard Bank areas, although these activities were well within their respective EEZs and over 590 miles from China (Dutton and Grady 2020).

Initially, both the Vietnamese and Malaysian media were silent on this interference, with the former government imposing a news blackout as they sought to manage the issue quietly. Only Western sources and particularly the Asian Maritime Transparency Initiative (AMTI) were reporting these incidents. This silence ended in 2020 as the Malaysian auditor general reported 89 violations by PLAN and CCG vessels in its waters, with most focusing on the Luconia Shoal (Focus Malaysia 2020; Malay Mail 2020).

China's actions effectively shut down the entirely legal Malaysian and Vietnamese operations within their EEZs. The AMTI also stated:

No matter how these incidents develop, China's actions off both the Malaysian and Vietnamese coasts since May [2019] show that Beijing is increasingly willing to employ coercion and the threat of force to block oil and gas operations by its neighbors, even while pursuing its own energy exploration in disputed waters. (CSIS 2019b)⁶⁸

For example, the CCG also protected a Chinese survey ship operating in Vietnam's EEZ against that nation's coast guard's efforts to intercept it. That survey ship was resupplied at the Chinese base at Fiery Cross Reef; the Chinese-created island bases have been used repeatedly as fuelling and resupply bases for the CCG as it confronted China's neighbours.⁶⁹

The CCG also reportedly joined its own fishing vessels as they engaged "in constant intimidation of other claimants' fishermen, conducting illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing, stealing catch or engaging in violence" (Suorsa 2020). This came to a head in December 2019 when the CCG escorted a fleet of its fishing vessels into Indonesia's EEZ and provoked a major naval and military response from the Indonesian military, which deployed six naval ships and F-16 aircraft (Quirk 2020; McBeth 2020; Seidel 2020). Again, the CCG vessels had resupplied at its new base in Fiery Cross Reef. This time, however, the Chinese vessel withdrew beyond Indonesia's EEZ after the latter's robust response.

By late 2019 and early 2020, most of China's neighbours in the South China Sea were demonstrating a new readiness to confront China diplomatically and, occasionally, militarily. Many of the diplomatic efforts also made full use of the 2016 PCA decision to support their case. In December 2019, Malaysia submitted its plan to extend its continental shelf area to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS), provoking an immediate Beijing protest (Septiari 2020). In delineating the limits of its extended continental shelf, Malaysia encompassed parts of the now very dubious Chinese claims of continental shelves or EEZ for their Spratly and Paracel Island features, while its foreign minister also stated China's claim to the whole of the South China Sea was "ridiculous" (Regencia 2019).⁷⁰ In July 2020, Malaysia reinforced this by specifically rejecting China's claimed historic rights within its nine-dash line (Sukumaran and Jaipragas 2020).⁷¹

In early 2020, the Philippines and Vietnam also submitted letters of protest to the UN, rejecting China's claims, with the Vietnamese note verbale protesting the PRC use of extended and illegal baselines to claim waters around the Paracel and Spratly Islands (Vo 2020). In June 2020, Indonesia joined its neighbours in publicly contesting Beijing's claims in another letter to the UN secretary general. Indonesia also cited the 2016 PCA ruling and argued the

Chinese claim had no international legal basis (Septiari 2020).⁷² Japan reinforced this with its own note verbale arguing against excessive Chinese claims and protesting China's efforts to restrict Japanese overflight in the South China Sea (Japan 2021). Finally, at the ASEAN summit in June 2020, Vietnam and the Philippines accused China of advancing its territorial claims under cover of the COVID-19 pandemic (Reuters 2020b).

In addition to a more vigorous diplomatic response, Malaysia and the Philippines were more ready in 2020 to resort to military options, much as Indonesia had done in 2019. In July 2020, the Malaysian navy had reportedly driven away multiple incursions into its waters by Chinese vessels (Focus Malaysia 2020). This effort came to a head when two Malaysian naval vessels were involved in a standoff with a CCG vessel that had "harassed" a drilling rig and its supply vessels less than 45 miles off Malaysian territory (FMT 2020). The Malaysian efforts were successful, with the CCG ship departing and not returning to the site. After the "harassment" of their fishermen by Chinese PLAN and CCG forces and the continued presence of two Chinese survey ships in the Reed Bank 85 miles off their coast, the Philippine navy responded by preparing 200 boat-mounted militiamen to police the area (Hodge 2020; Tabalong 2002).

In 2020, the Vietnamese government did not respond militarily despite being faced with the CCG sinking of one of its fishing boats off the disputed Paracel Islands and the return of a Chinese survey ship that had earlier harassed drilling in its EEZ. Instead, it stuck to its "cooperation and struggle" policy with China, favouring the "cooperation" component (Grossman 2020). However, a recent RAND study also noted that Vietnam's most recent defence white paper opened the door to potential "defense and military relations with other countries" (ibid.). Vietnam's unprecedented welcome of two US carrier port visits and its servicing of US naval logistics ships at Cam Ranh Bay suggests the direction where that option may lead (Sharman 2020; Thayer 2020; SCMP 2014).

The US has been blunt in supporting the PCA decision and in calling the current Chinese ocean claims "unlawful" (Kuo 2020). The US has also made clear it is ready to assist South China Sea states and has done so most recently off Malaysia in 2019, when three of its naval ships joined by one Australian shadowed CCG vessels circling the Malaysian-chartered drillship *West Capella* (Herzinger 2020). The US has also started to undo the reputational damage caused by its 2012 decision to withhold support to the Philippines after China reneged on the US-brokered agreement to withdraw forces from Scarborough Shoal. This "bungling," in the words of one US expert, was dramatically reversed in 2020 when the US Secretary of State Pompeo made it clear the United States-Philippine Mutual Defense Treaty would be invoked for any attack on Philippine aircraft, soldiers, or vessels (ibid.; Hodge 2020). The Biden administration reaffirmed that commitment in April 2021 (Al Jazeera 2021b).

After the *West Capella* incident, the US Commander Seventh Fleet also made clear that non-treaty allies such as Malaysia and Vietnam would enjoy its support as well: "The US supports the efforts of our allies and partners in the lawful pursuit of their economic interests" (Werner 2020). That effort is assisted by American efforts to support the South China Sea states in building a common maritime operating picture shared across the region; this would entail building a "real-time understanding of air and sea activities," which seems particularly important given that the South China Sea remains an "opaque, low information environment" (Rapp et al. 2016, 3). It has also proposed a multinational maritime surveillance centre in Indonesia and provided significant support to its maritime surveillance effort.

Many of China's South China Sea neighbours are also rearming in response to these challenges. Soon after the Chinese Coast Guard's 2019 entry into its EEZ, the Indonesian defence minister announced he would be seeking 48 new fighters, four new Scorpene submarines, and two Gowind corvettes from France (Navy Recognition 2020). This was followed that same year by efforts to purchase ex-Austrian Typhoon fighters, MV-22 Osprey tilt rotor aircraft from the US, and Russian Flanker Su-35 fighter aircraft (Defense World 2020). Malaysia is building the first six of 12 Gowind corvettes, with over 30 additional smaller patrol vessels being considered (Lundquist 2019). The basis of this modernization is probably tied to their foreign minister's view that "Malaysia could issue protest notes if a major power were to encroach on its territory but the lack of naval and maritime enforcement assets left it at a disadvantage in the event of a conflict" (MarineLink 2019). In 2020, Japan also supplied Malaysia with ex-Japanese Coast Guard patrol craft (Kobara 2020).

In addition, Vietnam has been on a major naval build-up, relying heavily on Russian naval systems including six *Kilo*-class submarines, four *Gepard*-class frigates, and eight *Tarantul*-class corvettes, the latter armed with S-N-25 antiship cruise missiles (Chang 2020). In 2019, a further two corvettes and two frigates were being negotiated. Vietnam has also spent heavily on coastal antiship cruise missiles and, when China constructed military facilities in the Spratly Islands, followed suit by adding rocket launchers to its islands. According to Trung Nguyen, "Vietnam realized that they had to modernize their Navy to cope with the harassment from the Chinese Coast Guard" (Jennings 2019). India is also playing a major role in training Vietnamese submariners on their new *Kilo*-class submarines, while the US has supplied Vietnam with six patrol craft. Japan, in turn, has transferred Beechcraft patrol aircraft and extensive helicopter spares to the Philippines (Kelly and Kubo 2017).

The sum of all Malaysian, Vietnamese, Indonesian, and Philippine naval acquisitions will not upset the strategic advantage held by the large and continuously growing PLAN and CCG. But they do provide an important signal to China about the increased risk of operating in other states' EEZs. That risk appreciation was certainly reflected in the fact that China provides a strong es-

cort of four large CCG ships to its survey vessels operating off an increasingly well-defended Vietnam but sees no need to do the same vis-a-vis the weaker Philippines (Chang 2020). Moreover, the smaller states' heavy investment in submarines, the ultimate sea denial platform, suggests to China that if any of these encounters escalate to open conflict, the results will be costly for all.

While China's public response to this regional rearming effort has been muted, it has made crystal clear its full opposition to any US activities in the South China Sea. China vigorously opposes each and every US Navy FONOP, which have been steadily increasing, going from two in 2015 to nine in 2019 (Rudd 2020). Equally concerning to Beijing, France, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and Canada have joined the United States in supporting FONOPs, although these states generally focus their efforts on free passage through the South China Sea, rather than the more robust US challenging of the claimed territorial seas of some Chinese-held islets (Werner 2019).

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The US is pushing far more vigorously diplomatically, and in June 2020, it issued a note to the UN and China arguing against Chinese maritime claims in the South China Sea, citing both UNCLOS and the 2016 PCA decision, while adding most of the Chinese claims were "unlawful" (United States 2020a). Australia (2020) followed in July 2020 using a similar pattern. France, United Kingdom, and Germany (2020) also filed a group note verbale to the UN, supporting freedom of navigation in the South China Sea, specifically noting the PCA decision and highlighting specific Chinese claims they view as unacceptable (Heydarian 2020b). These three were joined by the previously described notes verbales submitted by Australia, the United States, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Japan. After a collective period of restraint in calling out China, they have now argued publicly and in detail that China has not abided by the PCA rulings.⁷⁵

This US alliance-building effort seems to be the greatest concern for Beijing, particularly when it involves China's neighbours. Unsurprisingly, China's 2017 white paper on Asia-Pacific security cooperation argued the region's "small and medium-sized countries need not and should not take sides among big countries." This outlook suits China, which can only claim Pakistan and North Korea as allies, though former Canadian diplomat Charles Burton (2019) describes them as "being more of an unstable hindrance than help."

In the long-drawn-out process of developing a code of conduct with ASEAN that would limit dangerous at-sea encounters, China proposed language that would exclude the US from the maritime region and called for restrictions on its neighbours participating in US naval exercises or those of its allies (Koh 2019). There is no sign of the US agreeing and most of the other states continue to hold exercises with the US. Vietnam's navy actually operates with both the US Navy and the PLAN.

All other indicators point to increasing tension and danger in the South China Sea. China has pointedly and repeatedly ignored the PCA's 2016 findings and continues its harassing activities deep into the EEZs of its neighbours. Yet, as result of the court's ruling, China's neighbours are far more confident in their rights and are responding more vigorously with diplomatic and now military action and taking steps to rearm their navies and coast guards. US offers of assistance in protecting their rights probably help, although few states in the region publicly acknowledge that support. India, however, has partially departed from its non-aligned status and is increasingly working with the US Navy against China. So too are Japan and Australia. There is also virtually no progress on any code of conduct agreement for the South China Sea that would restrain anyone. Not surprisingly, the Council on Foreign Relations included the South China Sea in the "top conflicts to watch" list in 2020 (Stares 2019; Seidel 2020).

Canada has not been a major player in the South China Sea except in supporting the international legal regime via its naval transits through the region and diplomatic action. For example, the Canadian government was rightly commended by the AMTI for its rapid support of the PCA decision (Poling 2020; CSIS 2020). The government's statement initially focused on the requirement of the two parties - China and the Philippines - to comply with its provisions. That strong start was then weakened when it called on "all the states in the region" to "avoid coercion" and not "jeopardize freedom of navigation and overflight." Yet there is little evidence of anyone other than China being involved in coercion (Canada 2016a). Canada has said little for the next four years, leading Adam MacDonald (2017) to declare that Canada is without "a coherent position on the South China Sea disputes." In Charles Burton's view, our silence was tied to our effort to gain entry to the China-run Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB; see Smith 2016). There has been nothing from our government like the categorical denouncing of China's excessive maritime claims and its failure to heed the 2016 PCA decision contained in the notes verbales from many of our allies. A good opportunity to work with them in supporting international law was missed, although this was finally corrected in 2021 when Canada specifically outlined China's lawbreaking in the South China Sea.⁷⁶

The same inconsistencies surround Canada's FONOP patrols. While the head of the US Indo-Pacific Command has thanked Canada, along with five other

states, for its "strong support," Canada's support is actually heavily qualified. Aside from the US, few countries conduct full-scale FONOPs in China's claimed territorial waters. Canada seems to group its efforts under "presence patrols" instead of FONOPs and a Global Affairs Canada (GAC) briefing note states, "Canada does not conduct Freedom of Navigation Operations" (Canada 2020c).

More worrying yet, an access to information document recently released to the Globe and Mail points out that in granting the RCN permission to transit the South China Sea and Taiwan Straits (where China also attempts to restrict passage), GAC recommended that the "communication strategy be passive" and that "no media or academics be onboard" during the Taiwan Strait leg of the voyage – the portion of the ship's passage that appeared to raise the most concern (Berthiaume 2020).⁷⁷ Essentially, this would have told the RCN to announce nothing and avoid media interaction.⁷⁸ The reporting on this government document also strongly suggests similar restrictions and the "keep it quiet" policy are in place for naval transits of the South China Sea. Yet even this cautious approach fell afoul of China's hypersensitivity on this topic. When the Canadian Senate passed a motion in 2018 to "note with concern the escalating and hostile behaviour exhibited by the People's Republic of China in the South China Sea" and urge modest Canadian action, this proved too much for China's media and particularly the Global Times. It considered Canada "a country irrelevant to the South China Sea" and urged the "scandal-ridden" Senate to learn more about the world before voting (Su 2018).

Hong Kong

China was equally sensitive about any outsider involvement in its activities in Hong Kong. External criticism heightened that sensitivity, and much of this centred on accusations that the PRC was not abiding by the 1984 turnover agreement with the United Kingdom and the embedded Chinese promise that the former colony would be administered under the "one country, two systems" model after China assumed sovereignty. According to this agreement and the Basic Law that stemmed from it, even after Hong Kong's sovereignty passed to China, its citizens would enjoy freedom of assembly, freedom of the press, and freedom of speech, a unique local system of government and an independent judiciary for 50 years (BBC 2019b).

The first clear threat to this model came in early 2019, when the Hong Kong government introduced amendments to the extradition laws that would allow them to send some Hong Kong suspects to China for trial. This was perceived as a major violation of the agreement and led to widespread mass protests, which eventually forced the head of the Hong Kong government in September that year to offer to withdraw the offending legislation. However, now emboldened, the protesters demanded more, including greater democracy. In a quite vivid demonstration of the need, the following district council elections had pro-democracy opposition candidates enjoying an overwhelm-

ing victory at the polls, but as only half the seats in the legislature were open to the popular vote, the pro-Beijing parties remained in control of the government nevertheless (AP 2020).

The cycle of protests and police suppression in late 2019 and early 2020 led the PRC to pass a National Security Law in June 2020 to tackle what it considered a combined threat of terrorism, secession, and foreign interference. That law was "dangerously vague and broad," according to Amnesty International (2020), and was used to initially arrest over 100 protesters in subsequent months (Arranz 2020). Regrettably, the new law was effective, allowing for the arrest of protesters for the simple act of "possessing flags, stickers and banners with political slogans," among other violations. That, and the self-protective measures induced by the oncoming COVID-19 pandemic, dramatically reduced the incidence of large protests (Davidson 2020). Stephen Nagy (2021b) also reports that one year after the passage of the law, Hong Kong's press freedom ranking dropped from 18th to 80th.

However, the new security law also provoked international sanctions. The US began the process of eliminating Hong Kong special status, halting defence exports, restricting some technology transfers, and sanctioning selected Chinese officials. Taiwan also indicated it would assist those seeking to emigrate from Hong Kong. In July, Canada's government stated the imposition of the National Security Law "demonstrated disregard for Hong Kong's Basic Law" and the "one country, two systems" framework (Canada 2020d). Canada then banned sensitive military exports to Hong Kong and cancelled its extradition treaty with it.

Canada also examined methods to ease the entry of Hong Kong citizens to Canada. Prior to this, two protesters had been allowed entry to Canada and 60 MPs called for Canada to offer a broader safe harbour program (Fife and Chase 2020a). In October, this provoked China's ambassador to Canada to call the democracy protesters "violent criminals," while suggesting Canada's actions might affect the "health and safety" of 300,000 Canadian passport holders in Hong Kong (ibid.). Those in attendance of his brief immediately asked if his words were a threat, and his only response was "that is your interpretation." According to former Canadian ambassador to China, Guy Saint-Jacques, "It was at minimum an implicit threat" (Fife and Chase 2020b).

The new security law also encouraged some 7000 British passport holders to seek visas to emigrate to the UK (Al Jazeera 2021a). There had already been a doubling of British National Overseas (BNO) passport requests by 2019 (Zen 2020). This trend would accelerate. In 2020, the British foreign minister, after declaring the imposition of the National Security Law "a clear and serious breach" of the 1997 agreement, offered refuge to some three million Hong Kong citizens (Al Jazeera 2021a). Prior to this, BNO passport holders had only enjoyed a very limited, six-month, right to return to the

UK, but under this new proposal, they could remain for five years and gain citizenship soon after.

The PRC was reportedly furious with the British initiative, and some of its citizens called for retaliation and the removal of the right of abode for those with foreign nationality (Aljazeera 2021a; Ivison 2021a). The situation was further complicated when the Chinese authorities made use of the National Security Law to arrest democracy activists in late 2020 in what was seen as an attempt to suppress dissent. Canada, in a joint statement with the United States, Britain, and Australia, condemned the arrests (Guardian 2021a).

In January 2021, Beijing responded to this statement by declaring its own citizenship law would apply to Hong Kong, which makes it clear the PRC will not recognize dual nationality for any of its citizens (China 1980). This was seen as a method to discourage dual citizenship; Hong Kong citizens would only be entitled to consular protection if they chose that foreign nationality (Ivison 2021a). That, in turn, would deny them Chinese nationality and, potentially, the right to abode in Hong Kong (ibid.). Margaret McCuaig-Johnston has expressed concern that dual citizens might be prevented from leaving. But, for the moment, China's ambassador in Ottawa, Cong Peiwu, has indicated Canadian passport holders could still leave. There is some disconnect here; under the new law, dual citizenship would not exist and current Canadian passport holders would have had to renounce their Chinese citizenship, and potentially their right to live in Hong Kong.

A further attack on dual citizenship in Hong Kong occurred in February 2021, when the Hong Kong government declared that residents of Chinese descent born in the city were now "regarded as Chinese nationals" no matter what passports they held (Cheung and Lam 2021).⁷⁹ This would deny them consular protection, and the right to renounce Chinese citizenship to, perhaps, get around this required government permission. The problem further worsened in April 2021 with the passage of a new immigration law that apparently gave "unfettered power" to the city's immigration officials to bar people from boarding aircraft to and from Hong Kong (Guardian 2021b). The tenuous state of dual nationality citizens, and the possibility of China introducing exit controls later, led the director of Toronto's Chinese and Southeast Asian legal clinic to ask for a Canadian evacuation plan "just in case" (Ivison 2021a).

When Ambassador Cong's statement on the health and safety of the 300,000 Canadian citizens in Hong Kong is added to these recent developments, the need for some evacuation planning is indeed clear. However, the extent to which Canada has engaged with its allies in a potential evacuation plan is not known, and for very good reasons, this effort, if begun, is likely highly classified. Yet, unlike the deteriorating situation in the Himalayas, North Korea, or the South China Sea, Hong Kong – with its 300,000 Canadian citizens – represents an issue Canada cannot dodge.

Senkakus

Unlike Hong Kong, the low-visibility Sino-Japanese confrontation over the uninhabited Senkaku Islands might appear to be an issue the Canadian government could potentially sidestep. That, however, would require ignoring the increasing linkages between that dispute and the area's larger security problems.

Up until very recently, Japanese ownership of the islands had not been challenged. They were considered part of the Ryukyu Island chain returned to Japan in 1972 by the US, which had been their occupying power from 1945-72. China and Taiwan had raised no issue with the US arrangement prior to 1971, and some suggest the oil and gas reserves discovered nearby in 1968 and 1969 provoked the recent claims of earlier ownership (Lee 2002). Even then, the PRC had been relatively quiet until the Japanese government began efforts to purchase the islands from their civilian owners in 2012. Apparently, Japan was motivated to do so out of fear that several Japanese organizations interested in acquiring their ownership were doing so to embarrass the government over its seeming failure to forcefully assert Japanese sovereignty there (Green et al. 2017c). In an effort to contain the dispute, Japan has not permitted the islands to be developed and bars Japanese civilians from visiting them. The AMTI argues China also sought to de-escalate tensions over the islands beginning in 2013 (ibid.).

This calm did not last. While Taiwan and even Hong Kong citizens have challenged the Japanese ownership, the only strong opposition recently came from China. Throughout 2020 and now into 2021, China has been dispatching aircraft and coast guard ships to demonstrate its claimed sovereignty to the point where it maintained CCG vessels off the islands for 333 days in 2020 (Johnson 2021). Their vessels were also more aggressive, and this February, four CCG vessels gave chase to several Japanese fishing vessels operating in the territorial waters off the islands (Japan News 2021). A Japanese coast guard ship had to intervene to protect them, and this prompted calls to examine the possibility of sending Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force ships in support. This was reportedly rejected for its potential to spur similar activity by the PLAN. As a result, however, the Japanese Coast Guard was under considerable pressure due to having up to 50 percent of its ships deployed around the Senkakus (Burke et al. 2018, 23).

Japan is increasingly concerned China is attempting to demonstrate its effective administrative control of the islands (ibid., 9; Nagy 2021b, 3). China's motives may go well beyond the relatively minor resource benefits that might accrue from their seizure of the islands. The potential fishing catch does not seem to merit the very heavy CCG response. While the potential offshore oil and gas reserves may appear attractive, it is unlikely these uninhabited islands will ever qualify as a Chinese exclusive economic zone.⁸⁰ Non-government

FIGURE 6: AIR DEFENCE IDENTIFICATION ZONES (ADIZ) IN THE EAST CHINA SEA



Adapted from: Yonhap News Agency 2013.

sources in Japan have assessed the Chinese interest is likely driven by broader calculations. Koichi Sato (2019) argues this can include Chinese grouping the Senkakus within a historical China-versus-Japan narrative – one that is also tied to efforts to bolster Chinese nationalism and integration.⁸¹

China's interest in the Senkakus may also be a continuation of its aggressive claims in the South China Sea. As noted earlier, Japan has complained about Chinese efforts to restrict its right of overflight in the South China Sea. Closer to home, in 2013, China also created an Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) in the East China Sea that included the Senkakus and overlapped Japan's own ADIZ (see Figure 6). The islands of Japan's Ryukyu chain (or Nansei Island chain) are vulnerable with the southern-most island only 50 miles from Taiwan and 750 miles from the Japanese mainland.

Adding to Tokyo's concerns are China's stated intent of bringing Taiwan under its control. PRC intimidation efforts in support of this goal have involved the PLA Air Forces' (PLAAF) self-described "Island Encirclement Patrols" around Taiwan, and these regularly pass over Japan's Ryukyu chain. Former Japanese Self-Defense Force (JSDF) personnel have also admitted that Japan reinforces the Ryukyu chain during any Taiwan contingency (Japan News 2020). Other

FIGURE 7: THE FIRST AND SECOND ISLAND CHAIN IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC



Adapted from: Cavas 2016.

retired senior Japanese military officers also believe China will follow a path of eventually taking Scarborough Shoal from the Philippines and then Taiwan prior to invading the Ryukyu chain up to or including Okinawa (Burke and Ichihashi 2019). Bapan would also risk having its supply lines cut in a punishing replay of successful US Navy shipping interdiction tactics in World War II if China gained a foothold in any of these sea areas.

Toshi Yoshihara believes Chinese interest in the Senkaku Islands can be explained as part of an effort to counter the US: "Chinese leaders have concluded that if they can gain effective control of the East China Sea, they will be able to stymie US military operations" (quoted in Feng 2021). Yoshihara does not

FIGURE 8: AIR SDF BASES ON NANSEI ISLANDS



Adapted from: Hara 2020.

discuss what those US military operation might be, but one can safely assume the US will attempt to counter moves by the PLAN to control both the South China and the East China Seas. In the South China Sea, Chinese efforts to achieve sea control were significantly assisted by the radars and missiles it has installed in the Spratly and Paracel Islands. As the US Navy will probably enjoy dominance to the east of those seas beyond the first island chain (see Figure 7), any Chinese push near the Senkakus would probably be aimed at seizing island bases to assist a breakout from the East China Sea into the Pacific.

In the interim, Japan has not sought to compete directly with the much larger CCG and its significantly more robust ships, some of which now are in the 10,000-ton range. Japan must also exercise considerable caution as it faces the CCG, which was reorganized in 2013 and in 2018 shifted away from law enforcement toward a military-type structure that now reports to the PRC Central Military Commission (Sakamoto 2021). Even more worrisome, China's 2021 Coast Guard Law allows its coast guard vessels to use force against both civilian vessels and "foreign military ships" in enforcing Chinese domestic law in the unspecified "sea areas under the jurisdiction of the People's Republic of China."83 As a result, there is a strong suspicion the PRC expects the CCG to take action in such disputed areas as the South China Sea and Senkakus where China claims jurisdiction, despite almost total international opposition to the former and considerable doubt on the latter (Okada 2021; Sakamoto 2021). By also allowing the CCG to apply force against foreign warships in support of domestic law enforcement, despite the fact that UNCLOS grants warships immunity in these zones, the Coast Guard Law undoubtedly "escalates the

chances for kinetic conflict," as the Japan-based scholar Stephen Nagy (2021c) has made clear.

Japan, instead of challenging the CCG directly, appears to be offsetting China's at-sea advantages by expanding its ability to monitor the southern Ryukyus and surrounding sea areas by establishing bases on islands south and north of Okinawa (see Figure 8; Reuters 2016). In fact, prior to 2016, their only coastal radar in the Ryukyu chain was in Okinawa, but these now extend as far as Yonaguni at the western end of the Ryukyus. In 2019 and 2020, several of those sites received surface-to-air and anti-ship cruise missiles and these missiles are already being upgraded. The JSDF has also increased the forces dedicated to the defence of the island chain by 20 percent to 10,000 personnel, and in 2018 funded a new "Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade" to "land, recapture and secure without delay any remote islands that might be invaded," according to the Japanese government (Hornung 2020, 24; Reuters 2016; Johnston 2021). These new units will join a total force of 140,000 JSDF personnel in 2021 in the largest Japanese military exercise in 35 years. Significantly, the exercise's scenario is based on responding to a crisis in the Ryukyu chain, with the Japan News (2020) musing this "location [was] undoubtedly selected with China in mind." Not surprisingly, the Japanese fortification of those islands, if sufficiently robust, will assist the entry of any US forces reinforcing Japan and complicate any PLAN plans to break out of the first island chain (Hornung 2020, 30).

With the majority of the 56,000 US military in Japan based in Okinawa, the US is also very directly involved in the defence of the Ryukyu Islands. Further, the 1960 Japan-US Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security obligates Washington to Japan's defence and the Biden administration has confirmed that includes the Senkakus (Kyodo News 2020; Olsen 2021). In addition, Lieutenant General Kevin Schneider, the commander of US forces in Japan, stated in July 2020 that "the United States is 100% absolutely steadfast in its commitment to help the government of Japan with the situation" in the Senkakus (Abe 2020).

While Canada has recently signed a military cross-servicing agreement with the Japanese, it has no responsibilities for the defence of Japan – and there is no indication of any change in the government's direction. However, it is also clear Canada will not be able to consider this issue as solely one involving a few uninhabited, southern Japanese islands. The defence of the Senkaku Islands is now linked directly to the defence of Japan proper, and that, in turn, will bring full US military engagement. Further, there are increasing ties being drawn between China's aggressive actions in the South China Sea and its activities off the Senkakus. Finally, those islands are also very close to Taiwan and the links between the Senkakus and the defence of Japanese territory in the Ryukyus have already been drawn. There is a strong possibility for escalation and, with that, the increasing likelihood the US or Japan will call on Canada's help.

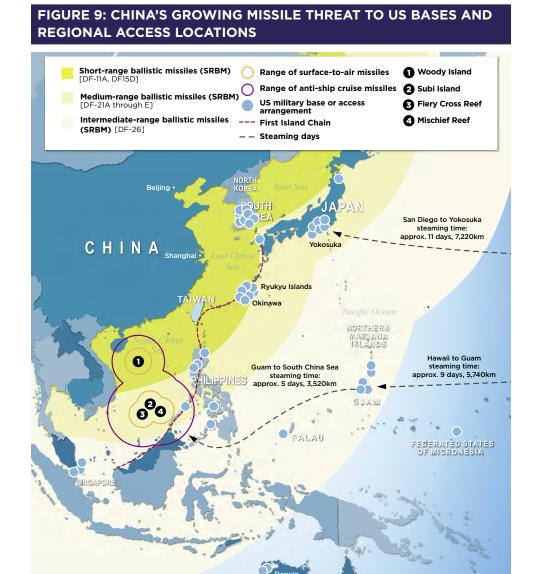
Taiwan

Canada's inclination to stand back from Asian issues is well entrenched, and nowhere is this more pronounced than over Taiwan. *Maclean's* provided a small but telling example in May 2020 in citing Canada's foreign affairs minister going to "absurd lengths to avoid being tricked into saying the word 'Taiwan' after the country-that-shan't-be-named donated some much-needed Covid-19 kit Canada's way" (MacDougall 2020). This extreme sensitivity over Taiwan is longstanding, and it should be no surprise that Canada has zero links with Taiwan in the security, defence, and intelligence areas.

At the same time, Taiwan is under sustained military pressure from China and urgently needs allies and support. Based on a very dubious interpretation of history, China claims Taiwan as a breakaway province that must be reunited with the mainland.⁸⁴ While China would prefer peaceful unification under the "one country, two systems" model, it has not ruled out using military force to achieve it. The PRC's 2005 Anti-Secession Law specifically endorsed "non-peaceful" intervention in the case of Taiwan's "secession," "major incidents entailing secession," or the very loosely defined "exhaustion of possibilities for peaceful reunification" (Donnelly and Serchuk 2005). Moreover, with the recent imposition of China's National Security Law and follow-on efforts to hobble the opposition and limit press freedom in Hong Kong, Kevin Rudd (2021) argues the promise of peaceful reunification in Taiwan under the same model has "evaporated."85 Taiwan's President Tsai and the opposition leader have both since rejected the model as a basis for reunification (BBC 2019a; Blanchard and Lee 2021). Further, some 90 percent of Taiwan's citizens self-identify as Taiwanese rather than Chinese (Rudd 2021).

Senior elements in China have come to recognize the declining likelihood of peaceful unification, and at least one retired PLA general officer has predicted, "There will very likely be military conflict" (Gries and Wang 2019). China certainly has no advertised timeline for reunification, but that task remains "an inevitable requirement for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese people," according to President Xi (BBC 2021a). That goal is supported by its military modernization, funded by steady 6.6 percent to 8.1 percent annual defence budget increases since 2016, much of it devoted to scenarios around a potential Taiwanese invasion (Funaiole, Hart, and Glaser 2020). The PLAN now approaches the size of the US Navy, although it lacks a comparable aircraft carrier fleet. This is partially offset by its ability to deploy over 55 quiet diesel electric submarines in the East and South China Seas.

Yet the centrepiece of China's new capabilities has been the deployment of over 2500 ballistic and cruise missiles that would cover Taiwan and the US bases and fleet operating areas stretching from the South China Sea to Japan and Guam (see Figure 9). Of note are its DF-21 and DF-26 ballistic missiles, which have earned the label "carrier killer" for their ability to precisely target



Adapted from: Townshend, Thomas-Noone and Steward 2019, 19.

such ships. In parallel, China has invested in information dominance and the ability to "blind and deafen the enemy" via cyber warfare and space attacks that can target the US's heavy reliance on satellite defence networks (Work and Grant 2019, 8). China has also dramatically increased its amphibious forces to over 100,000 personnel and stationed much of the needed equipment in the two Chinese provinces facing Taiwan, a bare 130 kilometres away (ANI 2020; NZ Herald 2020).

AUSTRALIA

There is also concern that China's motives go beyond reunification and "national rejuvenation." Andrew Erickson argues that Taiwan is seen as the key "for China to conclusively break out of the confines of the first island chain

once and for all" (see Cavas 2016).⁸⁷ The US ability to counter this is now increasingly doubtful, as China now has a credible anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) capability that endangers the US Navy and particularly its carriers. Former Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work, along with co-author Greg Grant (2019, 15), highlight that US wargames have recently demonstrated the US now faces the possibility of defeat in a war with China (see also Ochmanek 2018).⁸⁸ China, on the other hand, would have a difficult task taking a well-defended Taiwan with its rugged eastern coastline and few adequate entry points for invasion (Ellis 2020). It is also argued that a defeat here could spell the end for President Xi's CCP regime (Haass and Sacks 2020). An all-out Chinese invasion of Taiwan also brings the very real possibility of escalation to superpower conflict and, potentially, nuclear war.

All this may deter China in the short-term, but close observers argue the failure of the West to counter Chinese actions in Hong Kong or President Putin's successful land grab in Crimea may suggest the possibility of a low-cost victory (Gries and Wang 2019). Alternately, those conditions may provide an opening for action that will be below the US response threshold or be completed before it can respond. This could involve the seizure of one or more of Taiwan's offshore islands, a blockade of Taiwan itself, or, if conditions are unusually promising, an airborne decapitation attack on the Taiwan capital (Ellis 2020; Everington 2020). In fact, pages from a PLA website backed up by commercial satellite images show an elaborate full-size mock-up of downtown Taipei has been built in Inner Mongolia for military drills (Lee 2015). Others predict a more cautious PRC approach involving a blockade strategy that would eventually force Taiwan to terms (Leitch 2021). Today China maintains a steady

FIGURE 10: PLA EXERCISE FOR AN INVASION OF TAIWAN



Source: Everington 2020.

pressure of intimidation on Taiwan often using elements of these strategies. For example, the PRC has not taken any efforts to conceal its practicing of a decapitation attack or of its exercises for an invasion of southern Taiwan (see Figure 10; Everington 2020). These are backed up by its airborne "encirclement patrols" that can involve up to 39 PLAAF fighter and bomber aircraft flying around Taiwan, highlighting its ability to enforce a blockade (Global Times 2021).⁸⁹ The Taiwanese Air Force was scrambled 3000 times in 2020 to meet these incursions.

Taiwan has armed itself well, but it is outspent 25-1 by China (Ellis 2020). Further, it can only rely on the US and, occasionally, France for its arms purchases. While the US Congress approved the sale of eight submarines to Taiwan in 2001, the project faltered as a result of the US government's wavering, the unwillingness of some in the US to embark upon non-nuclear submarines work, and an initial failure to reach a cost-sharing arrangement. Ultimately, Taiwan was forced to turn to the expensive option of designing and building these vessels itself (Kan 2014). Similarly, Taiwan had difficulty with its French designed *Lafayette*-class frigates, as the supplier, likely under pressure from China, refused to provide them with their full armament, forcing a retrofit of inferior, short-range systems (Naval News 2021).

Taiwan has normally been able to rely on US sales of its military equipment, thanks to the 1979 *Taiwan Relations Act*. The act required the US to protect Taiwan's independence and provide arms for Taipei to maintain sufficient self-defence capabilities. It has enjoyed sustained support in Congress. During the eight years of the Obama administration, over US\$14 billion in arms were sold to Taiwan, and the Trump administration followed with over US\$14.37 billion in sales. Initially, sales provided more complex systems such as F-16 fighters, which could be used to briefly challenge China for air and sea dominance during an invasion, as as the island held out until the US arrived to reinforce it. Reportedly, this focus may be changing to now supplying hundreds of less exotic systems such as truck-mounted Harpoon missiles and sea mines under a "Porcupine Strategy" of raising China's immediate invasion costs to unacceptable levels (Kaushal 2020). The side benefit, it would seem, also reduced Taiwanese vulnerability to PRC missile attacks aimed at the limited number of its more expensive weapons systems.

There have also been subtle changes within what has been termed the US's "strategic ambiguity" policy for Taiwan's defence. While the *Taiwan Relations Act* required the US to provide Taiwan with the means to defend itself, whether the US was required to intervene militarily was never made clear. Thus, the US usually has not made an unambiguous public commitment to come to Taiwan's defence but attempted to show sufficient support, it was hoped, to deter China. Today, however, there is an increasing concern that China is not being deterred anywhere, whether in the South China Sea or Himalayas and, possibly, Taiwan (Hille, Sevastopulo, and Manson 2020). 92

Moreover, the rapid growth of China's military capability in both quantity and quality now makes Taiwan's military deterrence capability, which once held a decided qualitative advantage, doubtful indeed. Richard Haass and David Sacks (2020) argue strategic clarity is now urgently needed to restore deterrence and reduce the chance of a Chinese miscalculation over Taiwan. This could involve an executive statement that made clear the US would respond to any Chinese use of force against Taiwan, but it would not alter the US "one China policy" or call for Taiwan's independence. They point out this new direction links back to the 1979 *Taiwan Relations Act*, which itself stated there was "the expectation that the future of Taiwan will be determined by peaceful means."

The US may have inched toward "strategic clarity" in the last year of the Trump administration. In August 2020, the US declassified the six security assurances it had given to Taiwan in 1982. These spelled out that while the US would not take a decision on Taiwanese sovereignty or encourage independence, it will not alter the Taiwan Relations Act's pledge to assist Taiwan in defending via arms supplies nor would it consult with China on those Taiwanese arms sales (Hille et al. 2020; Brunnstrom and Pamuk 2020). In announcing the release of these assurances, a US State Department official cited the "increasing threat" from China. They went on to say, "We no longer have the luxury of assuming that Beijing will live up to its commitment to peacefully resolve its differences with Taipei." The US further clarified its intent with the release on January 5, 2021, of the 2018 US Strategic Framework for the Indo-Pacific, which was until then Secret NOFORN (No Foreign Eyes). This document made clear the US would deter China via plans to "devise and implement a strategy of, amongst other, defending the first-island-chain nations including Taiwan" (United States 2021a, 7). The US framework also makes clear it plans to contest the South China Sea and dominate the area outside it.

Last July, the US demonstrated in a convincing away it was ready to achieve elements of the strategy with its current systems. In response to large-scale PLAN amphibious exercises in the South China Sea, which were potentially aimed at an actual seizure of Taiwan's Prata Island, the Taiwanese military replaced the 200 coast guard troops on the island with marines (WDN 2020). Of note, the US also sent two carrier strike groups to the South China Sea in close proximity to the PLAN forces, with possibly a third carrier nearby. Given that the US Navy only has between five and seven carriers available for operations worldwide (out of a total of 11), this was a significant demonstration and would only have been taken if the threat was serious, given the effect on long-term carrier maintenance schedules would have been extreme (Bonji 2020). Fortuitously or by design, the US Navy's two-carrier deployment that July also coincided with India's attempt to put pressure on the Chinese navy via its Indian Ocean naval deployments.

No matter the effectiveness of such carrier demonstrations, there is also a broad recognition that the current 11 nuclear aircraft carriers, each 100,000 tons, are expensive and vulnerable. As a result, studies are currently underway in the US looking at a fleet mix with potentially eight to 11 large nuclear carriers joined by six light carriers (Eckstein 2020). Certainly the US Marine Corps (USMC) is calling for light carrier protection for its small units sent ashore in the region.⁹³ The light carriers join a US Department of Defense funding request for over 350 ships to match PRC expected growth to 425 ships in 2030. The US total will also include unmanned vessels for "delivering lethal fires, and laying mines, to conducting resupply or surveilling the enemy" (Mehta and Larter 2020).



The US strategy to counter China focuses on deterrence by denial.

These changes are part of a larger US response to both Chinese and Russian A2/AD strategies, which are particularly problematic in their very skillful targeting of the US and NATO traditional way of war (Townshend, Thomas-Noone, and Steward 2019). In addition to attacking in-place forces, China's anti-access operations in the Pacific will counter the West's attempts to move its forces in-theatre via previously safe air and sea routes. Area denial will strike the staging areas of those forces that do make it to the theatre's ports and airfields. Traditional assumptions of continuous Western air superiority and perfect communications interconnectedness will be untenable, given the PLA's investment in long-range missiles and advanced air defence, anti-satellite, cyber warfare, and communications jamming systems. The threat is deadly serious. For instance, the recent USMC wargames against a simulated peer competitor resulted in the destruction of brigade or regimental headquarters in the opening 80 percent of matches for one team over two years of gaming (Lambert and Quinn 2020).

The US response is broadly outlined within the unclassified summary of their 2018 *National Defense Strategy*. It makes clear the US military's focus is competition with Russia and China and it assesses that the latter has a short-term goal of a regional hegemony and the long-term goal to replace the US in global pre-eminence (United States 2018a, 2). The Biden administration is maintaining that focus. The administration's 2021 defence budget request "prioritises the need to counter the threat from China as the [Defense] Department's top challenge," according to the White House summary of that proposal (Fromer 2021).

The US strategy to counter China focuses on deterrence by denial. It argues that the US will not wait for enemy aggression and particularly a fait accompli attack that will require overwhelming military force to counter. Instead, it postulates preparing a deterrence via denial posture that will make it too expensive for the foe to use force in the first place. This strategy involves a new warfighting approach also outlined in the National Defense Strategy that will be "transitioning from large, centralized and hardened infrastructure to smaller, dispersed, resilient and adaptive basing" in which units have embedded air defence and, more importantly, long-range weapons or "fires" (United States 2018a). Recognizing the Chinese and Russian counter-communications effort, the US will also seek hardened networks that allow individual firing units to access every US surveillance system, including constellations of low-Earth orbit satellites, for targeting data and use artificial intelligence to cut the time from sensing a target to firing from days to a single hour or less (United States 2021b). In the view of the chief of the US Air Force, this will be the US's "asymmetric advantage" over peer competitors (Freedberg 2018). Under the rubric of multi-domain operations (MDO), all units will be on that network and be expected to engage targets in all domains, be it land, sea, or air, and be sufficiently resilient individually to not rely on other services for self-defence.94 Rather than attempting a potentially doomed search for continuous air superiority or sea control, the aim is for dispersed units to combine their firepower in all domains at precise moments to counter the threat as it presents itself. The commander of the US Air Force describes this well:

A J-20 [a PRC stealth fighter] is never going to see an F-35 by itself. It's going to see an F-35 connected to low earth orbiting satellites in several constellations. It's going to see it connected to penetrating ISR, stand-off ISR, to smart weapons technology, to a light maneuver brigade, to an Aegis cruiser, to our allies and partners. (Freedberg 2018)⁹⁵

Action is already underway, and the US armed services are implementing the strategy. To eliminate the range advantage held by today's PLA systems, and provide the offensive punch for their units, the USMC and the US Army are also seeking maritime Tomahawk missiles with 1600-kilometre ranges and the Naval Strike Missile capable of 800-kilometre ranges, while the Air Force is developing the 200-kilometre Long Range Anti-Ship Missile.

The commander of Indo-Pacific Command has submitted his 2022–27 budget plan to Congress and much of it is focused on dispersing US forces, adding new airfields and ports, and establishing the ability to send small USMC units into the first island chain with those long-range anti-ship missiles and their own air defence systems (McLeary 2021). An Australian study argued this new US focus on precision strike from multiple island points provides an "allied version of China's own counter intervention network in the region" (Townshend et al. 2019, 54). *The Economist* (2021, 35) termed it giving "China a taste of its own medicine." A separate plan to purchase 30 small amphibious

ships will allow these USMC units to move every three days to defy PLA targeting. Guam will be given an Aegis Ashore ballistic missile defence (BMD) system to help protect it against the PRC's long-range missiles. The US has also introduced a heightened interest in theatre ASW around the first island chain within a larger allied effort that would ensure that "large-scale, coordinated and networked ASW campaigns remain a critical area of asymmetric advantage for coalition forces in the Indo Pacific" (Townshend et al. 2019, 64; Heydarian 2020b). Finally, allies will be connected via several data fusion centres in the region, which will provide for shared air and maritime surveillance. 96

The Biden administration continues these defence initiatives and appears ready to challenge China over Taiwan. Immediately after Biden's inauguration, the US State Department declared the administration's commitment to Taiwan was "rock solid." It also made clear that:

The United States maintains its longstanding commitments as outlined in the Three Communiqués, the Taiwan Relations Act, and the Six Assurances. We will continue to assist Taiwan in maintaining a sufficient self-defense capability. (United States 2021d)

This appears to be a return to long-standing US policy and would suggest the Biden administration is not going to follow Trump's inching toward "strategic clarity."

Japan is even more circumspect, but it is preparing itself. This reflects the fact that it is a close US treaty ally, and that some in Japan consider Taiwan its "first line of defence." It must reinforce its southern island chain in the event of any Taiwan contingency, and even its retired military are vocal in the need for a clear policy to defend Taiwan (Glosserman 2021; Newsham 2019). 97 As noted earlier, Japan has moved missiles into its southern islands off Taiwan in what can justifiably be termed a self-defence posture given the PRC's claim to the Senkakus. It is also developing long-range anti-ship missiles, including hyper-velocity gliding projectile variants, and started upgrading two of its ships to light carrier status for the embarking F-35 aircraft (Hornung 2020, 66-67). Japan has also resurrected its dormant long-range surveillance towed-array program to join in the reinvigorated US regional ASW efforts, and one official admitted it was aimed at the Chinese submarines (Asahi Shimbun 2020). Like Australia, Japan is building more submarines, growing its undersea fleet from 16 to 22 (Japan Times 2020). These will join 47 destroyers and frigates and a surprising 73 very capable long-range anti-submarine warfare aircraft (Hornung 2020, 46-47). Once focused on the Soviet threat, the JSDF is now preparing to counter China (ibid., 11, 47).98

Japan has also long recognized the danger to Taiwan, and in 1978, the head of Japan's Defense Agency told his US counterpart that the defence of Taiwan was vital to the defence of Japan (Dreyer 2018). Soon after China's an-

nouncement of intent for its 2005 Anti-Session Law, the US and Japan issued a joint statement indicating that one of their common strategic objectives was to "encourage the peaceful resolution of issues concerning the Taiwan Strait through dialogue" (Kan 2014, 49). This statement sparked "a wave of government inspired protests" in China and was quickly interpreted elsewhere as a signal that Taiwan now fell within the scope of US-Japanese alliance and Japan would join the US if Taiwan was attacked (Hagström 2008, 225; Manthorpe 2002, 255). None of this was ever officially confirmed. However, in March 2021, the US secretary of defense and the Japanese defense minister reportedly agreed to closely cooperate in the event of military clashes between China and Taiwan, while in June, Japan's deputy defence minister stated: "We have to protect Taiwan as a democratic country" (Yamasaki 2021; Varga 2021).

As the US's Seventh Fleet is based in Japan, there is no question it would be implicated in any major Taiwanese contingency. Moreover, in 2014, the Abe government reinterpreted some of the restrictive elements of Japan's constitution that had earlier limited the country to self-defence within very strict bonds (Japan 2016). This legislative reinterpretation broadened Japan's ability to use force beyond self-defence to allow its military to assist another country through the exercise of collective self-defence, even if Japan had not been attacked. Other modifications reinterpreted Japan's constitution to allow the use of force, again in self-defence, beyond the boundaries of Japan (Japan n.d.; Hornung 2020, 96-101).



There would be no legal limit to Japanese involvement in a Taiwan contingency.

Jeffery W. Hornung, in his detailed study of these changes to Japan's security legislation, makes clear that any employment of Japanese forces in collective self-defence or beyond Japan's territory would be controlled tightly by the Japanese government (Hornung 2020, 99-101). These changes do, however, suggest there would be no legal limit to Japanese involvement in a Taiwan contingency. Such an effort may also be supported by Japan's *sub rosa* links to Taiwan's defence establishment as well as its more overt Track II exchanges between former officials and parliamentarians (Glosserman 2021; Ihara 2018).

Canada has nothing like Japan's unofficial defence links with Taiwan, nor has it discussed the island's security with the US or any other Taiwanese ally. Even when it was of obvious direct benefit to Canada, the government has not sought to exchange intelligence material, including on cyber defence, despite

the fact that Taiwan has massive expertise in this area and Canada's intelligence services have declared China a significant cyber threat (Lerhe 2018, 19, 27). There is no evidence of any cooperation with the United States on Taiwan contingencies, and Canada did not join potential Taiwanese-Japanese initiatives to establish a more formal intelligence-sharing agreement (Ihara 2018). Without these links, there is little detailed Canadian insight into the threat posed to Taiwan and no Canadian preparations to assist it or any of its allies in any security scenario. Canada has, instead, chosen to limit its official ties to Taiwan to the economic, cultural, education, and tourist areas. 100

This lack of interest has not been explained. It may stem from a mistaken belief that our 1970 "one China" policy precludes defence cooperation with Taiwan. That policy recognizes there is but one China, but only "notes" without endorsing the PRC view that China includes Taiwan. Canada has historically enforced the policy with unusual vigour and narrowness, with the "chief casualty" being Taiwan (Evans 1991, 12). Attempts by Canada to cooperate with Taiwan in any area are also met with regular protests from a Chinese government increasingly able to threaten economic sanctions (Lerhe, 2018, 16-17).

A limited understanding of the Canadian "one China" policy may also encourage self-censorship and a zero-risk approach to Taiwan (ibid., 19). Some officials have even falsely argued that our policy proscribes Canadian federal officials from attending international conferences if Taiwan also sends representatives. The government has also refused to allow Canadian ministers to visit Taiwan when many allies only apply that restriction to their defence and foreign ministers. The "one China" policy certainly seems to be the motivation behind our refusal to consider any aspect of defence. Yet the policy says nothing about defending Taiwan or not. The US, for instance, has chosen to reinforce its "one China" policy by declaring any unification with the mainland must be peaceful and vigorously backs this up with arms sales and defence preparations. However, Canadian arms manufacturers report immense difficulties in getting export clearance to Taiwan for the sales of purely defensive systems. Description of the sales of purely defensive systems.

Canada has also stated on at least two occasions that it wants any reunification with Taiwan to be peaceful. This began with Prime Minster Paul Martin's trade visit to Beijing in 2005, scheduled shortly after China signalled its intent to enact an Anti-Secession Law. During the visit, Canada and China (2005) released a joint statement that stated that Canada, alone, "is opposed to any unilateral action by any party aimed at changing Taiwan's status." This was not mentioned in the prime minister's speech in Beijing and it provoked no interest from the Canadian media. One report, however, suggested Canadian concerns raised with regard to human rights in China appeared to be "formulaic" (Laghi 2005). One suspects the stated Canadian desire for a peaceful unification with Taiwan was similarly formulaic. In 2020, GAC's response to questioning whether it was concerned over the prospect of the PLA invad-

ing Taiwan indicated, "Canada urges both sides to refrain from actions that undermine peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, and to avoid moves that unilaterally alter the status quo" (Fife and Chase 2020c). The response was similar to the earlier noted Canadian statement on the South China Sea that called on "all parties" to exercise restraint, when there is only one state engaged in coercion.

There was also no Canadian follow-up that might indicate what steps Canada would take in the face of a unilateral effort to unify Taiwan with China. This is quite unlike the US, which signalled their intent to go beyond strategic ambiguity when conditions deteriorated. In response to the PRC forcing down a US aircraft, President George W. Bush stated in 2001 the US would do "whatever it took" to aid the defence of Taiwan, including the commitment of US forces if China invaded Taiwan (Manthorpe 2002, 232).

Canada, however, missed several opportunities to reinforce its opposition to a unilateral attempt to unify Taiwan with China by not joining any of the widely reported US-Japan joint declarations calling for a peaceful reunification. In fact, caution continues to mark every aspect of Canada's security relationship with Taiwan. When our warships do transit the Taiwan Strait, they do so under the government's direction that these transits have "no correspondents and no academics" onboard, thus eliminating the possibility of public reports on these transits.

As Canada continues its cautionary approach to Taiwan, the situation continues to deteriorate. Speaking before the US Senate Armed Services Committee, Admiral Phil Davidson, commander of the US Indo-Pacific Command, expressed his concern that China appeared to be accelerating its plan to supplant the US as the world's leader by 2050. He added:

I'm worried about them moving that target closer. Taiwan is clearly one of their ambitions before then. And I think the threat is manifest during this decade, in fact in the next six years. (Shelbourne 2021)

A Council on Foreign Relations report recently agreed with the admiral's bleak outlook and called Taiwan the most likely spark for a US-China war (Blackwill and Zelikow 2021).

Part four: Developing a Canadian response

anada is unlikely to join any allied response to these developing crises in the near term in part because Chinese aggression has probably not reached the stage requiring Western military action. Yet events could move quite quickly, especially in any scenario involving Taiwan. In addition, almost any response will be US-led, and until very recently, the US management of its alliances screamed caution. Michael Fuchs (2020) has lamented President Trump's efforts to turn alliances into "protection rackets," a charge fully justified in light of his attempts to extort more financial support for US basing in Korea and Japan.

Fortunately, the Biden administration seems to have employed a more skillful alliance policy. ¹⁰³ Biden's national security advisor has stated that the Quad was "fundamental" and "a foundation upon which to build substantial American policy in the Indo-Pacific" (Power 2021). Significantly, President Biden's secretary of state visited South Korea and Japan just prior to meeting the PRC delegation in Alaska in February 2021. Alongside early attempts to engage with the Quad, this seemed to indicate allied concerns would be taken into consideration.

This type of dialogue will be critical for some US military preparations to deter China, such as inserting missile units into the first island chain, will be seen as provocative, despite only countering China's own missile buildup. Allies will necessarily seek a strong voice in their forces' employment prior to contributing. While there has been an effort to firm up the very loose arrangements surrounding the Quad and open informal discussion with allies prior to important decisions being made, there is no visible sign the US is ready to abandon its "hub and spoke" alliance structure in the Pacific.

Nevertheless, there are calls for Canada to do more militarily in the Pacific. Robert Luttwak (2017), one of the West's foremost strategists, has called on

Canada to take note of Australian "exceptional activism" in the Pacific and to redirect our strategic attention there. Yet the implications of such a shift are considerable. Currently, Canada's military structure adequately supports NATO Europe but is assessed as weak in the Pacific and less than adequate in the Arctic. Canada had faced little threat in the Arctic, but there are worries now over Russia acquiring new capabilities there and Canada's deputy minister of national defence recently raised security concerns over Chinese activities in that region (Pugliese 2021). Given Russian incursions in Ukraine and Crimea and the extent to which NATO dominates our defence policy, this is not the time to significantly reduce our modest transatlantic commitments either. It is thus difficult to imagine a major defence budget increase that would provide for a greater Pacific commitment while also allowing for Canada to maintain its NATO contributions and increase its security commitment in the Arctic.

At the same time, our government should avoid discarding consideration of the US's Indo-Pacific plans completely. Successive Canadian governments have repeatedly claimed zero interest in Pacific deployments, then reversed themselves after diplomatic, political, and public pressure forced them to do so. As a result, these sudden forced deployments were often costly, late to need, and marked by last-minute reversals in mission type, usually toward more dangerous tasks. Without preplanning, deployed Canadian units were usually poorly equipped and supported. This was at its worst during the 1941 Hong Kong debacle, but late arrivals and sudden task changes marked our Korean and East Timor deployments too.

It is also difficult to imagine the US involved in a major conflict with China and Canada not assisting in some manner. Yes, Canada resolutely declined to contribute forces to the US's war in Vietnam, but Canadian political and especially public pressure was overwhelmingly against our involvement in that case. Canadian opinion on Pacific military engagement is untested at this moment. In any case, doing anything that might prepare us for Pacific deployments seems unlikely to happen anytime soon.

While Canada's weak military capabilities in the Pacific are an issue, the current government has shown little interest in confronting an assertive China. We are the least committed of the Five Eyes on banning Huawei from 5G networks. Unlike Australia, Canada did not support the US, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia back in 2016, when each specifically identified and then called on China to abide by the PCA decision; it was only in 2021 when we decided to do so. 104 Canada undertakes presence patrols in the South China Sea and in the Taiwan Strait, but the government minimizes public attention to these deployments. When Australia called for actions to investigate China's initial response to the COVID-19 outbreak, Canada refrained from supporting its ally. Our faintheartedness with regard to Taiwan needs no further elaboration, leaving only the US and Japan engaged in its security.

Despite this serial timidity, the current government was at least resolute in continuing Meng Wanzhou's extradition despite considerable pressure from China and some members of the Canadian elite (Tasker and MacDonald 2020). China's hostage-taking of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor also caused Canada to seek out allies, despite our own lukewarm support to allies elsewhere. Eschewing more hard-line responses to China's actions, Canada appears to have been left with no other option. The results were mixed. Access to information documents revealed the Canadian search for allies was an all-consuming GAC effort involving over 1000 diplomatic meetings (Canada 2020e). We received verbal support from the UK, the EU states, and the US, the latter of which was notable in very publicly calling for the two hostages' release (Glavin 2021a). Finally, there should be no doubt that the decision by the Biden administration to offer Madame Meng deferred prosecution agreement was the key to allowing China to release the two Canadians (Glavin 2021b). Up to then, former Canadian ambassador to China Guy Saint-Jacques harshly but accurately noted Canada had "zero" actual results from its own diplomatic efforts (Glavin 2021a; Gilmore 2021).

Yet there is also little cause to blame the bureaucracy and especially our diplomats. Recently, the director of the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS) stated that China "presents a direct threat to our national security and sovereignty" (Ivison 2021b). The former CDS, General Vance, in a retirement interview with the *Globe and Mail*, declared:

There is no way you can look at the global landscape and see [anything] other than increased indicators of danger and threats... The level of real and actual danger will depend on how it is that nations around the world hold China to account and the same can be said for Russia. (Fife 2021)

Unsurprisingly, a recently attained GAC briefing note argued that Canada needed to shift from a "lens of economic opportunity" to one that recognizes the "long-term strategic challenge to Canadian interests" from China and the need to work "in close partnership with like-minded allies and coalitions" (Globe and Mail 2020). The briefing note also recommended pivoting away from China (Ivison 2020b). However, the Liberal government was then accused of rejecting this GAC brief, and it continues to evade opposition calls for a robust China strategy (Ivison 2020b; Nuttall 2020).

It is difficult to comprehend Canada's unwillingness to contemplate stronger action in support of the two Canadians or its failure to consistently reinforce its allies in confronting China on other issues. While a fear of China retaliating against Kovrig and Spavor might have justified an initial caution, this excuse was running thin after some 1000 days of illegal detention. Many point to Canada's fixation on economic opportunity over security in dealing with China. According to Paul Evans (2014, 97), this has resulted in Canada being seen as a "marginal, one-dimensional, and declining influence in a region

where economics and security are closely intertwined." In David Mulroney's view, this is "diplomacy on auto-pilot" (Ivison 2020a), while Matthew Fisher (2020a) has claimed, "Ottawa remains more reluctant to do or say anything to upset China than most of its Asian and European allies." Erin O'Toole, the leader of the Opposition, called for Canada "to take [a] stronger more principled approach" to China and to "grow a spine" (Fisher 2020a; Jones and Kapelos 2020; Young 2020). A *Globe and Mail* (2020) editorial even described the government as suffering from China "delusions" and asked if its view of China was "as naive as it appears."



Many point to Canada's fixation on economic opportunity over security in dealing with China.

Even with the opposition, mainstream media, GAC, CSIS, and a former CDS making the case for a stronger response, nothing has happened. One possible reason is that, while Canada's trade and investments in China are relatively modest, some involve important components of the Canadian elite (see Manthorpe 2019, 7). The role of Canada's Power Corporation is central, having long recognized the potential of the Chinese economy and reportedly with "deep Chinese business interests" (Vanderklippe 2019). For example, Power Corporation and its subsidiary Mackenzie Investments own 27.8 percent of China Asset Management Corporation, China's "premier asset management firm" with over 40 million Chinese customers and the equivalent of \$232 billion in assets (Insider Tracking 2017). The company has strong ties with Canada's political leadership, employing three recent prime ministers (Pierre Trudeau, Paul Martin, and Brian Mulroney) and its owners' family having married into the family of a fourth, Jean Chrétien. According to John Manthorpe (2019, 126-128), this influence has allowed the Power Corporation to become the "premier gatekeeper" of Canada's formal relations with China, with his convincing additional anecdotal evidence suggesting it is "where Canada's China policy was made."

A more sinister source motivating our continued benevolent approach to China may be direct Chinese political interference. Canada's National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians has reported that China and Russia "seek to corrupt the political process, manipulate the media and pose a significant threat to the rights and freedoms of Canadians" (Ivison 2020a; Parton 2020). This is commonly done by the process of "elite capture," which describes "the practice of offering ex-ministers and former senior public ser-

vants 'life-changing amounts of money' to work for companies or entities that benefit foreign powers" (Ivison 2020a). 106 According to John Ivison (2020a), anecdotal evidence suggests this likely occurs here, with former Canadian Ambassador to China David Mulroney (2019) stating, "We need to take it seriously and we haven't been." As he argues, there is no mechanism to force those offering advice to government to declare their conflict of interest and be "transparent about whose interests they represent." He supports the view that Canada should adopt legislation similar to Australia's *Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018*, which requires citizens who act on behalf of a foreign principal to register and identify that relationship (see also Ivison 2020a). For Canada, such legislation would ensure that "you can't be both a distinguished adviser to Her Majesty's Canadian government and someone who is paid to influence that government on behalf of a foreign principal," according to Mulroney.

Nothing has been done. Yet there may be recent glimmers of progress in other areas. In January 2021, Canada worked with Australia, the United Kingdom, and the US in condemning the arrest of 50 democracy activists in Hong Kong (Guardian 2021a). In July 2021, Canada joined the US and Japan in finally calling out China's non-compliance with the 2016 PCA decision on the South China Sea (Canada 2021b). As noted, GAC had recommended working with allies in confronting China, and the Five Eyes group had also recognized the need to better coordinate their efforts against China's aggression and interference. The Five Eyes had also been exchanging data and holding consultations with Germany, Japan, and, occasionally, France on these issues. The potential of the group may well be gauged by China's violent reaction to it. In 2019, China's Global Times newspaper noted a requirement to focus on the Five Eyes group and "especially Australia, New Zealand, and Canada" and the "need to select counter-targets and make those countries be beaten very painfully."107 Chinese pressure may have contributed to New Zealand's foreign minister's very public declaration two years later that they would cease using the Five Eyes alliance to express their concerns over China's activities (Guardian 2021c).

In Canada, however, the Department of National Defence in late 2020 and early 2021 continued its South China Sea and Taiwan Strait transits and participated in a Japanese-hosted submarine warfare exercise in the East China Sea (Fisher 2020b). However, GAC did object to DND's cancellation of cross training events with the PLA in 2019. While DND argued this was part of a Five Eyes response and linked this to Spavor and Kovrig's hostage-taking, access to information documents clearly express the diplomats' worry such actions could be seen by China as retaliatory. What is not comprehensible is GAC's attendant concern those cancellations could "damage Canada's long-term defence and security relations with China," as these have never been strong, nor was there any argument provided explaining why they should be continued.

Under the more alliance-focused Biden administration, one could reasonably expect an even greater effort to better coordinate Five Eyes actions. For example, the US's fulsome response to Spavor and Kovrig's hostage-taking might well have been related to Canada's subsequent imposition of sanctions against Chinese officials involved in the repression of the Uyghurs several weeks later – surely the most direct response Canada has ever mounted. This is not to suggest Canada's sanctions were a *quid pro quo*. Rather, it may suggest a growing recognition in Ottawa and Washington that, if there is to be a coalition of democracies responding to China, it will not be successful if there are free riders. A coalition that delivers benefits will also bring responsibilities, and a greater alliance effort by the Biden administration may also mean elements in the US will pay more attention to burden-sharing. As a result, Canada would be wise to look in advance at those scenarios where we might choose to contribute and quietly prepare.

Proposed Canadian Response

Planning a Canadian response to any of these regional security challenges would logically begin by referring to one's foreign and defence policy or consulting the nation's security strategy for the region. Unfortunately, Canada's last foreign policy review was in 2003 and its 2017 defence policy skimmed over Asia-Pacific security issues with no details of commitments, plans, or resources (Le Couteur 2021). There is also no standalone Canadian strategy for the Pacific. As recently as October 16, 2021, GAC affirmed it was still working on its Indo-Pacific strategy – two years after a team had been set up to prepare it (Nuttall 2021). Nevertheless, J. Berkshire Miller (2021) has argued such a strategy could demonstrate Canada's commitment to the region and identify deliverables to achieve that strategy.

In developing such a strategy, this section will follow the simplest chain of strategic planning by briefly examining scenarios, extracting likely government aims, postulating what actions are required to achieve them, and examining what resources are available to respond. This will focus on the six crises presented in the previous section. The government's aims for these are extracted from its official statements, where possible. It is also assumed the Canadian government's intent will be to de-escalate, with any military action done in the company of allies. Most frequently, this will involve US-led coalitions, but it is not assumed Canada would join them automatically. Peace-keeping opportunities would also be grasped if they presented themselves. It will also assume that nothing beyond our current or immediately planned forces can be used.

It is also likely, and is a sound practice, that the internal Canadian-only planning begin before joining allies in this effort, although any advanced planning will be a major departure for Canada. It must also be stressed that what is provided below is an abbreviated form of the contingency planning normally

done before tensions increase or, worse, hostilities begin. NATO staffs do this regularly. The aim here is to outline how Canada might respond as a means of identifying our capacity and our potential shortfalls in a Pacific crisis. Certainly, when events escalate to the point that requires a response, a more detailed set of political, legal, and military criteria would be applied. Then, of course, it will be normally too late to provide for any capability you lack – *ergo* the need for contingency planning beforehand.

North Korea

A North Korean crisis could involve Pyongyang's active interference with the UN sanctions or its imposition of an air and sea blockade of South Korea, potentially then escalating to a full invasion. While the Canadian government has committed Canadian staff to UN Command headquarters in Korea and the US Seventh Fleet, we are not obligated to contribute further forces to South Korea's defence. However, given our sustained support to those efforts, many in Canada and overseas would expect a contribution. In addition, a recent GAC notification condemning North Korea's 2019 short-range ballistic missile launches stated: "Canada supports efforts, at both the international and regional level, to restrain North Korea's dangerous actions and reinforce security in the Asia-Pacific region," suggesting a more recent, if very general, support for action (Canada 2019e). Canada would have some confidence its forces would be well-managed because of our long-standing involvement with those headquarters' staffs.

Such a contribution would likely involve sending additional frigates and CP-140 Aurora aircraft to reinforce the current single frigate and single CP-140 sanctions effort. If direct threats to those forces emerged or North Korea imposed a blockade on South Korea, six to 12 CF-18 and a submarine could also likely be considered, though the latter will take over 25 days to arrive. An invasion of the South would force the government to consider the reinforcements of its forces there plus the deployment of a Canadian 1000-person army battle group. That formation and its sustainment supplies would, however, likely exceed our airlift capacity and force the use of commercial sealift, as the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) have none. We would also likely have to recreate our military's Korean War support infrastructure in Japan to sustain those units.

In 1952, we also expanded the army contribution to include a full brigade, and this was very much needed when the People's Republic of China joined the battle. Thankfully, at that time, China had no ability at sea and very little in the air to intercept allied reinforcements. Today, however, all Western activities would be held at risk if China chose to actively support North Korea militarily in these scenarios. Given that, the Canadian government should also plan for a worst-case scenario of a region-wide conflict while also having the ability to speedily extract its forces on the ground. A worst-case scenario should be included in the last scenario to assess Canada's likely response.

Himalayas

It is difficult to imagine an Indo-Chinese conflict in the Himalayas drawing in Canada, and there is no evidence of any Canadian government interest in doing anything substantive. Further, we would have none of the familiarity or access to long-established headquarters' staffs that we enjoy in Korea. Based on recent history, one also suspects that India will not ask for our support, although a later UN request for ceasefire monitors or even peacekeepers is a possibility. These options also make sense in that past conflicts frequently involved incursions over an ill-defined border and that situation appears suited to a process of disengagement and negotiation that would slowly establish more precise borders.

If these actions are not viable, an initial low-profile effort to support India could have Canadian units join Indian naval exercises, especially if they occur when our units are in transit through the Indian Ocean. Equally we might consider supporting India's ongoing efforts to create a multinational maritime domain awareness centre covering the Indian Ocean. We should certainly report in and contribute to this when in the area. Canada should also remain current in such systems as CENTRIXS to ensure it can join up with Indian networks. If India requests more direct support, a viable but risky option for Canada may be to join India's successful naval offsetting strategy in the Andaman Sea. This should only be done in the company of other states such as the US, Japan, and Australia within an overarching coalition structure that ensures escalation control and an adequate voice for Canada. This effort would assist in putting sufficient pressure on China to the point where it must consider weakening its forces in the East and South China Sea to respond.

Canada would also have to assess the extent that those Canadian contributions might be called elsewhere in the Pacific at the same time to meet any of the other scenarios about to be described.

South China Sea

Our current contribution of one or two ships annually to presence patrols in the South China Sea, operating independently or in company with our allies, is an adequate response to the current level of PRC harassment. Canada could enhance this at modest cost by assisting the US effort to build a common maritime operating picture in the South China Sea (Nagy 2021a). This is needed, as it exposes unwanted incursions, enhances regional cooperation, and is low key. One way to do this is to provide financial support and a small Canadian staff to assist in the efforts to create an international maritime surveillance centre in Indonesia.

If the situation deteriorates and China seizes further Philippine islands, and here Scarborough Shoal is the most enticing, or attacks the ships of its neighbours' coast guards, the US Seventh Fleet will likely respond vigorously and promptly. It is unlikely Canadian ships would arrive in sufficient time to be useful to any immediate escalation in the South China Sea. However, a basis for action can be found in our most recent statement on the PCA decision: "Canada is committed to defending and revitalizing an effective rules-based international order, including for the oceans and seas, and to the peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law" (Canada 2021b). However, no additional detail was provided as to our actions for *defending* that international order. Canada would, however, provide strong evidence of a willingness to protect that order if it duplicated its NATO practice of assigning a permanent frigate to this task.

If China escalates and interferes with commercial traffic in the area, which it has not done to date but which is possible given its expansive claims, a counter response will likely take longer to develop. Here, Canada should expect calls from the United States or Japan to assist. Tokyo would likely be exceedingly concerned, as its trade relies heavily on the safe passage of goods through that sea. In this scenario, the most likely Western response will be to convoy and escort merchant ships, and this is one of those areas where Canada could and should assist with ships and maritime patrol aircraft. Given the potential for warfare escalation, Canada would have to also prepare for a regional conflict scenario, and, as noted, this should be studied in the final scenario. Given China has chosen to disregard all elements of the PCA decision on the South China Sea, there appears little room for negotiation or peacekeeping.

Hong Kong

China's ambassador to Canada has implicitly threatened the "health and safety" of Canada's 300,000 citizens in Hong Kong, and at least one prominent Chinese-Canadian citizen has called for an evacuation plan for them (Fife and Chase 2020a; Ivison 2021a). The need to prepare is manifest especially when one also considers China's worrisome recent efforts to restrict the use of dual citizenship in Hong Kong and the possibility of its further hindering departures via their new immigration bill. Finally, any large-scale evacuation will be complex and difficult, making a coordinated plan critical to success.

The first and best option is to use civilian airliners as long as airport facilities are available and the host nation is cooperative. Yet these benign conditions are not always in place, especially if a purely air extraction option is selected. In 2011, the government was accused of having "bungled" the air extraction of Canadians from Libya after its two chartered aircraft departed empty when Libyan airport authorities proved uncooperative (CTV 2011a). Many Canadians then departed Libya via other nations' flights and a US-flagged ferry. Several months later, Canadians were urged to evacuate from Syria via commercial flights because the government was finding it "increasingly difficult to make

air travel arrangements as the security situation continues to deteriorate" (CTV 2011b). Ultimately, there was time for an orderly evacuation by road and air.

If airports are damaged and aircraft operations are threatened, the next option is chartered vessels, especially if large numbers of people have yet to escape. In 2006, Canada faced this situation when Israel responded to Hezbollah attacks by striking targets in Lebanon, including Beirut International Airport. Canada then leased seven ships to evacuate up to 50,000 Canadian citizens with the intent of ferrying them to Cyprus and Turkey for onward air passage (Canada 2018e). This was successful with 15,000 evacuated in large measure due to Israeli and Lebanese government cooperation. If the security situation deteriorates and the local authorities are uncooperative, military vessels and especially escorted amphibious ships with abundant helicopters are the final option. In the Western Pacific, only the US Seventh Fleet with its Marine Expeditionary Force and the Japanese navy are sufficiently equipped in this regard. Moreover, evacuees from Hong Kong will also have to be landed relatively soon in a safe location, with Taiwan and then Japan being the better options. With only a single leased naval support ship in the Canadian navy that is often in the Atlantic, Canada is not well placed to contribute to this effort. If one was to be made available, the sailing of a full naval task group would provide for a modest level of self-defence.

Senkakus

Should China attempt to blockade or seize the Senkakus or any other of Japan's southern islands, its forces would likely be met by a rapid and robust response from the Japanese forces stationed there, the rest of the Japanese navy, and finally from large US formations in Japan, including the Seventh Fleet. As noted, the US has publicly stated those islands fall under the terms of the Japanese-US mutual security treaty (Kyodo News 2021).

Given the very limited economic value of the islands, Chinese actions here are frequently perceived to be part of a larger effort to ensure a safe exit from the first island chain and, given these islands' proximity to Taiwan, a possible precursor to its invasion. As a result, the US would – alongside Japan – take steps to deter both actions. Initially, this might involve the US preparing to move US Army and Marine Corps anti-ship missiles into shore locations, an internal movement of forces in Japan from the north to south, and the establishment of a large area ASW effort both in and outside the first island chain.

Canada has not taken a stand on the Senkaku issue and would probably choose to delay any response to an initial Chinese escalation, awaiting the opening moves of Japan and then the US. If, however, it received a request from Japan or the United States to assist, multiple non-escalatory options exist. It could, for example, send CF-18 aircraft to backfill US or Japanese aircraft withdrawn from northern Japan to the south. It could also send ships, a sub-

marine, and CP-140 aircraft to assist in the US-led regional ASW effort to east of the Senkakus. This large-scale, coordinated, and networked ASW effort is considered one of the West's key asymmetric advantages, but it requires regular coalition contributions (Townshend et al. 2019, 64; Heydarian 2020b).

There may even be options for peacekeeping, as neither Japan nor China have longstanding claims and neither have any permanent settlements on the islands. In addition, both states initially were conscious of the need to de-escalate. Whatever the scenario, Canada would probably be carefully watching the situation for any escalation veering toward Taiwan.

Taiwan

Likely scenarios could involve the PRC seizing Taiwan's offshore islands, establishing an air and sea blockade around Taiwan, and potentially escalating to a decapitation attack prior to full invasion. While the Canadian government insists it "is opposed to any unilateral action by any party aimed at changing Taiwan's status," Canada has no links with Taiwan or its allies on how this view might be enforced (Canada and China 2005).

There is certainly public support for Taiwan, with former Canadian ambassador to Taipei and then Beijing David Mulroney arguing that "[s]heltering and supporting Taiwan will almost certainly be an increasing challenge, but it is a challenge worth facing" for Canada. He also adds that the US would welcome Canadian support (Mulroney 2015, 245). In the interim, he argues: "The most important thing we can do is show solidarity and step up our engagement with Taiwan." He also supported recent efforts by the Royal Canadian Navy to ensure the freedom of navigation by sending the frigate HMCS Ottawa through the sensitive Taiwan Strait (Ivison 2020a). Matthew Fisher (2020b) says Ottawa has been "paralyzed" as a result of the "two Michaels" and Meng controversy as the security situation in Asia deteriorated as a result of Chinese actions in the South China Sea, Xinjiang, the Himalayas, the Senkakus. He believes it is possible the CAF "will be compelled to become a modest part of a robust plan for allies to defend Taiwan." André Laliberté and Scott Simon (2020) argue that Canada can "best support Taiwan as part of our security commitments for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific by strengthening our military relations with Japan, Australia, India, the US, and other allies."

To reinforce those relations today, the government has the option of assigning a permanent frigate to the Western Pacific, much like we currently do for NATO in the Atlantic. CP-140 and submarine deployments to the area could also be increased in frequency or upgraded to longer, two-year deployments to bases in Japan or Guam. However, should Canada elect to respond directly to specific PRC acts against Taiwan, such as blockades or island seizures, it must exercise extreme caution to ensure its own actions do not contribute to escalation. As a first step, Canadian actions must be coordinated with the US and Japan.

If adequate temporary coalition consultations with the US and Japan were established, Canada could commit a naval task group of three frigates, a submarine, and a supply ship alongside a CP-140 to a counter-blockade effort. This would be an extremely valuable contribution that brings slightly lower escalatory risks than other scenarios involving Taiwan. Contributions will be needed, as the PRC is likely to use the PLAN, the CCG, and its "grey fleet" of hundreds of auxiliary force fishing vessels in this effort, and a Western effort to escort vessels will require a large number of frigates and destroyers kept on station via regular at-sea refuelling (Leitch 2021).

Canada does not have the amphibious forces needed to retake seized Taiwanese islands, noting that scenario will entail a grave risk of escalation to regional war. At that point, ad hoc coalition management will no longer be adequate, and more formal arrangements will be required to manage what will likely involve a wider Western coalition in a regional conflict.

That coalition response could be led by a Five Eyes-plus arrangement that includes Japan or an enlarged Quad. New Zealand's recent withdrawal from counter-China messaging suggests that the Five Eyes grouping has significant limitations when it steps too far beyond its historical and highly effective task of intelligence exchange.

The extent to which the recently announced Australia, UK, and US (AUKUS) partnership took shape without a hesitant New Zealand may reflect that. Equally, the pact excluded Canada, at a time when the Biden administration was noticing Canada's less than fulsome readiness to confront China (National Post 2021). While the new partnership focuses heavily on its well-advertised aim of providing Australia with the US and British nuclear submarine technology, there are doubts. Retired Canadian Admiral Maddison has argued that AUKUS "establishes a new inner circle of trust among the [Five]-Eyes nations, which purposely leaves New Zealand and Canada on the outside looking in" (Packham 2021). This would suggest that Canada would suffer a significant intelligence loss if AUKUS supplanted the Five Eyes intelligence sharing grouping. Yet caution is required, and it may well be that the AUKUS agreement "is a deal for nuclear submarines," as Prime Minister Trudeau has claimed. The agreement does cover very advanced technology (artificial intelligence, quantum computing, cyber capabilities, and undersea warfare were mentioned) and is associated with elements of an expanded US military presence in Australia (Fife and Chase 2021b; Hille 2021).

Australia's vice chief of the defence staff recently travelled to a worried Malaysian government to assure them the AUKUS was "not about a military alliance but a collaboration for nuclear-powered submarine technology" (Barrett 2021). Moreover, the AUKUS arrangement, if it is more than a submarine cooperative venture, and indeed a Pacific security pact, has serious limitations. It does not include Japan or India, both critical partners need-

ed in any effort to confront China. The exclusion of France, which has a sustained Indo-Pacific presence, has already seriously affected its relations with the AUKUS partners (Willsher and Hurst 2021). The current Quad, on the other hand, may offer Canada a better option under some scenarios, with AUKUS only being useful to Canada if it ultimately chose to procure nuclear submarines, noting it will provide a superb ongoing example on the cost of acquiring that capability.

President Biden's recent effort to reinvigorate America's alliances and revitalize and, perhaps, expand the Quad has led to suggestions that Canada should join well before a crisis develops (Fife and Chase 2021a). The international view on this is mixed. US Rear Admiral Girrier (Ret'd) from the Honolulu-based Pacific Forum states that Canada's inclusion would "be absolutely appropriate and actually a very good thing." Commentators from India and Australia, however, argue that Canada's entry now would be too early, with India's Rear Admiral Sudarshan Shrikhande (Ret'd) arguing Canada should instead focus on the Arctic. 110 Vice Admiral Mark Norman (Ret'd), former head of the Canadian navy, has countered by noting Canada should be able to simultaneously increase its security posture in the Arctic while also assisting its Quad allies in the Pacific. In his view, however, we should only join the Quad if Canada is ready to provide a "meaningful contribution" (Fife and Chase 2021a).

Canada would suffer a significant intelligence loss if AUKUS supplanted the Five Eyes.

Today, the Quad security arrangement and its related maritime exercises and agreements are logical responses for Australia, Japan, the United States, and India. These four countries all operate frequently in the area and face closer and more immediate challenges from China; the same cannot be said for Canada, and we should probably decline membership until we are better prepared and until it is clear all the Quad members want us. However, our government should take up any opportunity in peacetime to send forces to its exercises to observe and gain experience working with its partners. ¹¹¹ If, on the other hand, events escalate beyond a PRC blockade of Taiwan, an expanded Quad will be critical for both its members and such outliers as France, Germany, and Canada to ensure a coordinated response to China. Canada and the others probably could not commit forces unless there was a high-level coalition arrangement that gave them a voice, and an expanded Quad may be the best vehicle for this.

If that was achieved, Canada could consider military contributions. However, any CAF commitments must be prepared for conflict and be capable of operating within the US concept of dispersed operations needed to counter China's roughly 2500 missiles covering the first island chain. As Canadian ships currently lack a BMD capability to protect them and others, the best government option would be to place our current frigates within the coalition theatre ASW effort likely to be set up outside the first island chain. A full naval task group would be required to allow sustained at-sea operations. Deployed Canadian submarines, however, would be ideal at or within that chain. CF-18 and CP-140 aircraft are also an option and could operate from defended bases in northern Japan. Canadian Army units would probably have time to develop the integral air defence and dispersed operations capabilities needed to join in an eventual retaking of Taiwan or a reinforcement of Japan.

Proposed Canadian Policy Posture

Prior to advancing changes in the Canadian military, Canada's overall policy with regard to China will need significant revision. Mulroney's claim that we are on "autopilot" in continuing a policy of unrestricted engagement with China is fully justified. Two years ago, the government seemed to promise a China policy more oriented to dealing with Beijing as a competitor but then abandoned the idea. That policy reorientation remains overdue. Certainly, if Canada were to begin to take action on many of the recommendations in this paper, all concerned would quickly realize our policy toward China has changed. Of these, the adoption of something like Australia's law requiring the registration of those who advise the Canadian government on policy while acting on behalf of foreign principal is the most central and the most likely to vigorously signal that Canada's approach has changed.

Canada must also upgrade its Pacific diplomacy, and a central effort here should be to enhance support to Japan. This is very much in Canada's interest. Japanese bases are critical to our UN sanctions effort off Korea today and will be more so for any successful Canadian response to meeting further aggression in Korea, mounting an evacuation of Canadian citizens from Hong Kong, and protecting Taiwan from invasion. Thankfully, Ottawa has signed an Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement (ACSA) with Tokyo in 2018 that will allow for easier exchange of such support, and the CAF are increasingly participating in Japanese-hosted exercises such as Kaedex and Keen Sword.

Rather than suddenly joining the Quad, a more immediately useful Canadian direction would be to significantly increase our security links with Japan. Japan – like Canada – is a high-income, democratic state committed to the liberal democratic order (Welch 2019, 446) while being cautious in its foreign policy actions and equally committed to a free and open Indo-Pacific. David Welch (2019, 450) as well as J. Berkshire Miller and Thomas S. Wilkins (2019) argue for a stepped approach to progress the relationship that moves from

the ACSA to information exchanges, officer exchanges, port visits, and shared training. Welch (2019, 450) argues this should lead to a formal alliance agreement, which, in his view, would provide a much needed rebalancing of our "anachronistically Atlanticist" alliance agreements. As he points out, these result in such nonsensical strategic outcomes as the fact that Canada has defence obligations to Montenegro but not Japan (ibid., 451). 113

Regrettably, a similar Canadian alliance agreement with Taiwan is out of the question today, largely because it would be extremely provocative and would only be effective if done in cooperation with allies. Still, there is much that Canada can do. According to Laliberté and Simon (2020), Canada needs to remind China a key element of our "one China" policy is that we "note" but do not agree with its claim to Taiwan and should inform China that "our policy of not challenging them depends on the maintenance of peace across the Taiwan Strait." This is very much the US approach and suggests opportunities for mutual reinforcement. In the interim, Canada should consider expanding its already excellent economic links with Taiwan by pushing for its inclusion in the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), while looking for any opportunity to expand security links. This could include regular exchanges on cyber protection, examining Chinese language training opportunities in Taiwan for government and military officials, and more consistent support for defence exports to the country.

Proposed Canadian Armed Forces Posture

In addition to the China policy shortfall, Canada's current defence posture has serious limits. Only five of the RCN's 12 frigates reside in the Pacific, and the only support ship – the leased MV *Asterix* – now seems consistently based in Halifax. Despite the immense Pacific distances, no additional funding is provided for ship deployments, 114 compared to the \$541 million in the 2021 budget for deployment support to NATO which will permit a continuous frigate presence in Europe (Massie and Raymond 2021). Given that our irregular Pacific frigate deployments perform multiple critical tasks, including North Korean sanction enforcement and challenging Chinese claims of ownership in the South China Sea and Taiwan Strait, we should be duplicating our NATO practice of permanently assigning a frigate to these tasks and funding this deployment. This will require that the two fleets be rebalanced equitably, and the default position for the leased support ship should be in Esquimalt in view of those greater distances and the paucity of allies with tankers.

Noting our ships sent to European waters also enjoy the support of NATO's extensive HQ system supported by over 400 Canadian staff in Europe, some modest increase in our presence in the Pacific staffs is needed. The need for a Canadian exchange officer on the US Seventh Fleet is the most pressing. In the view of one officer, "We are uniquely unengaged with this critical fleet headquarters, and as a result, have limited visibility into US initiatives

amongst their Asian allies, with whom they have an extensive network bi-lateral exercises and engagements."¹¹⁵

We invest quite heavily in military training in the Pacific, but it has been accurately criticized as unfocused, with peripheral states getting as much attention as key allies. Further, we should not be providing military training to the PLA. Exchange tours and training opportunities should focus on Japan, Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, and, eventually, Taiwan. Our exchanges with Australia are already satisfactory.

There is more to do than simply improving our Pacific presence. Other changes will be needed to the CAF force structure. The three services' current posture continues to assume the traditional "NATO way of war" is still viable and that they will have coalition air superiority, safe staging areas, and reliable communications (Udesen 2018, 37-38). Within DND, there is very limited effort to address the A2/AD threat presented by Russia or China or match the warfare developments of our principal ally in the area of multi-domain and dispersed operations that form its response to those threats.

RCN

The Navy is in the best position to respond to these new trends in the Pacific in part because ships intrinsically conduct dispersed operations. Moreover, the US Army's initial multi-domain doctrine argued that naval power "offers the most advantageous, and sometimes only, means of projecting power in the maritime, ground, or air domain" in some theatres, and the Pacific is one (United States 2017, 40).¹¹⁷ However, the RCN's one glaring shortfall, the lack of a supply ship, means it will have to hunt for scarce support in-theatre and will be unable to support other Canadian units with supplies or sealift. Otherwise, the current patrol frigates have competent air defence systems and Harpoon missiles that allow them to strike land and sea targets to distances of up to 100 kilometres. Their embarked helicopters are providing extremely capable long-range ASW search and attack, although these aircraft lack a surface-to-surface missile. The ships and helicopters also have robust data links that fall just short of the requirement to feed and receive instantaneous targeting data in the joint arena. The current frigates lack a BMD capability, however, and that forces them to operate outside the first island chain.

These frigates will be replaced in the late 2020s with the Canadian Surface Combatant (CSC), and almost all of these shortfalls will be addressed. That ship will have 1600-kilometre range Tomahawk missiles, 800-kilometre range Naval Strike Missiles, and a radar and missile launcher capable of BMD, should the government decide to purchase BMD interceptor missiles (see Figure 11; Canada n.d. "RCN..."; Brewster 2019). Data from the RCN indicate the future combatant will also be fitted with the links to access the most modern joint targeting data (Canada n.d. "RCN..."). It will thus meet all the multi-domain

FIGURE 11: THE CANADIAN SURFACE COMBATANT



Source: Royal Canadian Navy n.d.

operations (MDO) requirements of interoperability, integral self-defence, and resilience with its long-range, all-domain weapons. This will allow the ship to operate close to the first island chain and extend a reasonable defence umbrella over other Canadian units there.

Canada's *Victoria*-class submarines have the stealth to operate within the first island chain and the modern torpedoes to do so decisively. They are, however, old and will require replacements, and no monies have yet been allocated to that need. They will also require in-theatre maintenance, and it would be unwise to count on the availability of threatened US naval and Japanese facilities. A commercial vessel like the MV *Asterix*, lightly reconfigured as submarine depot ship, is required. That vessel could also rearm the frigates and CP-140 aircraft.

The surface fleet also requires an at-sea supply ship for fuel, specialty parts, and air maintenance facilities; yet the leased vessel MV *Asterix* is located on the East Coast and there are plans to replace it by the mid-2020s with two Joint Support Ships. Assuming the two ships will be divided equally between the Atlantic and the Pacific, normal refits will eliminate the supply ship capability on each coast for one year out of every four. To remedy this shortcoming, and to fulfill the increasing calls for sealift by the Canadian *Asterix* and an

in-theatre depot ship, plans should be made to renew the fully crewed lease of the *Asterix* for another five years for \$370 million, with an additional \$500 million spent on the conversion and activation of its sister ship *Obelix*. The *Asterix* and their leasing crewing agent, Federal Fleet Services, have proven themselves very competent.

RCAF

The RCAF has certainly captured elements of MDO in their 2016 *Future Air Operating Concept* document, which foresees engagement in "high intensity, A2/AD conflicts," where it correctly states continuous air, sea, and space superiority will not exist (Canada 2016b, 20). Further, it is also likely the RCAF will be able to respond to many of the needs of multi-domain and dispersed operations if the long-identified replacement Future Fighter Capability (FFC) project concludes successfully.

The CF-18's lack of stealth and long-range anti-surface missiles strongly argues for stationing them in protected bases in northern Japan, though these too are vulnerable to long-range PLA missiles. The CF-18, its data links, and especially excellent AIM-120 AMRAM missile, still provides a valuable interim air defence capability. If its replacement is the F-35, its designed-in advanced data links will allow its immediate entry into the most advanced joint targeting networks, according to one knowledgeable observer. In a detailed review of the technical requirements, William Richardson (2019, 138; 2020, 61-71) argues the F-35's competitors, the F-18E/F Super Hornet and the Gripen, do not have and will not get the advanced stealth communications needed. Both older aircraft can, however, deliver weapons or act as "bomb trucks" if a fifth-generation aircraft like the F-35 has paved the way by suppressing opposition air defence, finding the targets, and transmitting the coordinates.

However, the RCAF document also hopes for too much. It correctly foresees the RCAF being able to "create opportunities to surprise, saturate, and overwhelm air defences" (Canada 2016b, 20). This is almost a tailored role for aircraft like the F-35, but there is no data here or elsewhere on acquiring the long-range weapons needed to achieve this. The inclusion of something like the Naval Strike Missile will make it all-domain capable. There are other options, and both the US and potentially Australia are adding the 370-kilometre-range Long Range Anti-Ship Missile to their fighter and maritime patrol aircraft (Donald 2020).

In addition, that concept document also has the RCAF protecting our own forces, and this may be an unwise departure from the MDO principle which argues that each unit provide for its own defence. It will also be difficult to achieve the primary long-range counter air defence and deep strike task if our small number of fighters are drawn off to provide the navy or army with close in-air defence or air support (Udesen 2018, 25).¹¹⁹

The CP-140 and the RCAF air-to-air refuelling aircraft are also capable and should be deployed to Japanese bases, with the former also equipped with the Naval Strike Missile or its equivalent. Given the potential for intercept by Chinese land or sea-based fighters, upgrading their self-defence electronic countermeasures may be in order. Canada must also make plans to support and resupply all its aircraft in-theatre, and one could expect that high-tempo operations could then draw on all the RCAF's airlift fleet to achieve it. Certainly, the CF-18 regular deployments to austere Northern Canada airbases and the CP-140's regular international deployments have given them valuable experience. However, there is now probably a need to add an airfield defence and damage repair capability, noting the RCAF *Future Air Operating Concept* has already identified elements of these as a force development requirement (Canada 2016b, 23).

Canadian Army

The army has devoted considerable thought to the MDO doctrine with its *Close Engagement* document and has a well-trained, competent, professional force to achieve its standards (Canada 2019c; Cassie 2019). However, it is hard to discern any priority-setting in the army's plans that would allow it to meet multi-domain standards. Of these, the most critical is the "resilient" criteria, calling for the ability to provide cross-domain fires, as the army does not have and is not calling for a beyond visual range air defence system and, more critically, long-range missiles for land or sea targets. ¹²⁰ Not even medium-range systems like the US Multiple Launch Rocket System appear to be under consideration. In a detailed review of the multi-domain requirements, Canadian Army Major Udesen argues this is a result of the army's focus on counterinsurgency in Afghanistan and the ensuing elimination of those non-contributing capabilities:

The resulting organization was lean on combat functions, adapted to an intelligence centred counter-insurgency fight, and relying on key tactical level coalition capabilities, such as close air support, should any high-intensity combat occur. (2018, 38-39)

As the US calls for its own smaller units to be self-reliant in these areas, a coalition force will not likely have any in reserve or in higher formations to spare. Current army doctrine also seeks relief for this with its long-standing and now very doubtful assumption that other Canadian services will provide what it cannot (Canada 2019c, 47-50). Udesen (2018, 59) agrees and argues: "The Canadian Army has become dependent on the Royal Canadian Air Force to permit its manoeuvre, where instead it needs to be self-sufficient and integrated with all domains."

There are other issues. During the Korean War, the army was given the time to re-equip and train both at home and in theatre, despite allied calls for a

faster pace. However, today, the point is to deter Russia or China, and to do that, the MDO doctrine requires its forces to manoeuvre from North America in "days, not months," and be prepared to fight immediately upon entry into theatre and conduct semi-independent, cross-domain warfare (United States 2017). To a much greater extent than the RCN or RCAF, the Canadian Army will require significant sealift for any Western Pacific scenario; yet none is available today, and short-term leasing of commercial lift is a poor alternative (Arsenault 1992, 15-18). Our current airlift assets are small and would likely be used to support RCAF-deployed air units. They are utterly inadequate for any army deployment beyond a score of vehicles. Even with our more capable C-17 airlift, a 1992 assessment notes that 1100 C-130 Hercules flights provide the equivalent lift of one 50,000-ton roll-on/roll-off vessel (ibid., 14). This is what is needed to lift an army brigade. Needless to say, with that many flights, airlift is not necessarily faster when the distances are long as they are to the Pacific (ibid., 20). Our lack of lift assets, and specifically sealift to bring the army along, presents a serious problem if Canada ever hopes to provide a contribution that is MDO-compliant, as these inherently involve the three services plus space and special forces assets.

Our lack of lift assets, and specifically sealift to bring the army along, presents a serious problem.

One must also recognize that the army's response to the needs of MDO is evolving quickly. According to their *Close Engagement* document, they do seem ready to reorganize their formations to meet that need. For instance, the document has called for the creation of "Enhanced Combined Arms Teams" (ECAT) as their primary warfighting element, and these will be capable of containing the command, electronic warfare, surveillance, and longer-range fires MDO demands (Canada 2019c, 23-24). There is also a strong recognition that they must be prepared to operate independently. Moreover, the ECAT subunit elements appear to be platoon-sized, indicating the ECAT itself will be lethal, yet of a small enough size to be more rapidly transportable overseas. This concept is very much under development, but it is hoped they will share capabilities with the USMC's Littoral Strike Teams, or the UK Royal Marine Commando Littoral Response Groups (Eckstein 2021).

Multi-domain operations and the CAF

In reviewing the Canadian Army, Navy, and Air Force's response to the challenge of multi-domain operations, one is struck by the varying extent each

service is prioritizing the requirement to adapt. Based on the extensive missile fit and advanced command-and-control capability of the future CSC, the RCN is heavily prioritizing MDO, and this appears to be aimed at directly meeting the associated A2/AD missile threat. The navy is also assisted by its ability to focus advanced requirements on the globally deployable high-capability frigates and submarines and not on its at-home fleet, consisting of less capable, non-MDO compliant Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ships and Maritime Coastal Defence Vessels. The air force's future fighter aircraft, especially if it is the F-35, will also be well-placed to support multi-domain operations, be they in support of deployed operations or NORAD. Search and rescue aircraft will not need this, nor perhaps will airlift aircraft, but it is unclear whether deploying CP-140 and air-to-air refueling aircraft will be upgraded to the MDO standards. The MDO requirements appear to present the Canadian Army, on the other hand, with significant challenges. Their guidance document, Close Engagement, partially applies the MDO doctrine to its deployable forces but also lists the army's requirement to support several other roles including peacekeeping, foreign military training, stability operations, humanitarian assistance and disaster response, and domestic operations generally (Canada 2019c, 16, 21).

That the army has not focused on the multi-domain requirements is also not surprising, as Canada's current defence policy has not recognized the need. Unlike the US, which has aimed policy and defence dollars toward meeting the peer competitor challenge and provided a *National Defence Strategy* that prioritizes dispersed operations, Canada has only assigned "top priority" to "defending Canada and Canadians" in its *Strong, Secure and Engaged* defence policy statement (Canada 2017, 83). There are some seven other "core missions" beneath this priority, including the requirement to work within coalitions to "deter and defeat adversaries." However, that "core" list includes "international peace operations," overseas "capacity building," and aid to civil authorities (ibid., 82-87). These seven missions, including the overseas one directly related to MDO, are not prioritized.

Moreover, DND continues to operate on the capability-based construct that aims for the broadest possible use for a new piece of equipment. This approach is "particularly suited when threats are uncertain and multifaceted, and defence budgets are tight" (Borzillo et al. 2021, 2). As the Russian and Chinese threat is now becoming increasingly more certain, many Canadian allies are moving to a "threat informed" variant of capability-based planning, according to one study (ibid., 9). The inclusion a threat-based approach is now required, where the purchase of equipment responds to the greatest threat or the threat that will have the gravest consequence. Canada needs to issue a defence policy that makes responding to Russia and China the top priority and that establishes multi-domain operations with allies as the best deterrence option. Only then can the three services fully respond.

Conclusion

anada recently had to seek the support of its allies after the hostage-taking of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor. If the situation in Hong Kong deteriorates significantly, Canada will have to consider the evacuation of its 300,000 citizens and there is virtually no possibility of Canada being able to do that without allies. Yet Canada has historically committed little to Pacific security and does not have a reputation for being a significant ally there. If Canada wants support, now is a good time to start demonstrating its commitment to the region.

A good place to start would be for Canada to demonstrate an interest in any of the hot spots in the Indo-Pacific, be it North Korea, the Himalayas, Hong Kong, the Senkakus, or the South China Sea – but the most fraught is Taiwan. Nowhere else is the PRC's bellicosity so strident. Canada must now start thinking seriously about the defence of Taiwan.

Canada should do so primarily because a democratic nation of 23.5 million cannot be sacrificed without accepting that this signals a huge loss for the international rules-based order. Japan will almost certainly join the US in the defence of Taiwan to defend its own territory. Despite the US's apparent strategic ambiguity toward Taiwan, it recognizes its reputation and leadership in the region would be forfeit if Taiwan were abandoned. Deterrence by a wider array of capable democracies has the best chance of working. Taiwan's loss, or any perceived failure of the West to provide deterrence, will also signal to Japan and South Korea that they are potentially next – and both have short nuclear breakout times. Canada may continue to elude the call to join that deterrence effort, but history suggests there are very good odds it will be drawn into that conflict eventually.

That fact applies to all six scenarios. Mackenzie King had no interest in cooperating on any aspect of Pacific security, but ultimately he could not escape contributing to the defence of Hong Kong in 1941, as the Canadian public clamoured for its troops to get into action. Then, the St. Laurent government

attempted to focus on NATO alone and sidestep a meaningful contribution to Korea in 1950, until diplomatic, political, and public pressure forced a major commitment. In 1999, the Canadian government, protecting its strong economic ties to Indonesia, was uninterested in supporting peacekeeping in East Timor until forced to do so by political and public pressure. While the Canadian government today appears to show little interest in any Pacific security scenario, the odds are strong that we will be forced into a rushed engagement in the region with all the attendant problems of last-minute tasking changes and inadequate training and equipment.

Canada also needs a new defence policy that will direct a larger effort within the CAF toward multi-domain operations with our allies. Here the priorities should be improved lift, connectivity, and greater cross-domain missile capability for the army and, to a lesser extent, the air force. The naval aspect is well covered by the future CSC, as long as its capabilities are not reduced. The F-35 is also the best option for our future fighter, from the multi-domain operations perspective. The army's potentially more lethal Enhanced Combined Arms Teams – hopefully, with significant air defence and cross-domain weapons – are needed, along with the lift to get them in place quickly. The latter requirement should also address the urgent need for more naval support vessels. There is no need to convert that part of the CAF that does not deploy, except for selected frontline capabilities needed for the defence of Canada, such as submarines, fighters, and an air-deliverable army element.

Investing in new CAF capabilities is not just for the Pacific theatre. Rather, these suggested investments are likely to be useful in any theatre, recognizing that the NATO way of war is no longer viable against either Russia or China. Russia itself has established advanced A2/AD capabilities in Europe. Therefore, while this paper argues for a much stronger Pacific presence, it does not recommend a reduction in the forces we commit to NATO. We need to unambiguously support NATO, but there needs to be a balance with the Pacific that is not there now.

About the author



Commodore Eric Lerhe was commissioned in 1972 and from 1973 until 1983 served in the HMCS *Restigouche*, *Yukon*, *Fraser*, and *Annapolis*. He then went on to command HMCS *Nipigon* and *Saguenay* between 1987 and 1990. He then served as Director Maritime Force Development and Director NATO Policy in NDHQ. He earned his MA at Dalhousie in 1996 and was promoted to Commodore and appointed Commander Canadian Fleet Pacific in January 2001. In that role he was a

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Endnotes

- 1 The most recent claim states, "Canada is also a Pacific nation" (see Canada 2017a, 90). As far back as 1968, Pierre Trudeau asserted, "Canada is a Pacific country too" (see Donaghy 2019, 143).
- A "legation" rather than an "embassy" was chosen so as not to suggest Canada would challenge imperial foreign policy (Meehan 2004, 7). Note Canada has also had a high commission in London since 1880.
- Japan's navy even patrolled our coasts, taking over from the Royal Navy, which had withdrawn to home waters (Welch 2019, 447).
- For example, in one year, 1937, Canadian exports of nickel to Japan tripled and we were the dominant supplier (see Meehan 2004, 159). Meehan also outlines how broadly based that opposition was (157-62).
- 5 Given that, King also did not wish to be responsible for any action that might lead the UK or the US to war with Japan.
- 6 Stacey (1981) also outlines that in 1937, Canada's Joint Staff Committee were given "strict instructions" that they were to engage in nothing that would suggest a commitment. This included instructions that forbade them even discussing British plans to defend Newfoundland.
- See also Stacey (1970, 72), where, in describing prewar Canadian-British planning, he provides, "The absence of even the simplest planning for such coordination before September 1939 is an absurdity and an affront to military common sense."
- Astonishingly, exports to Japan continued until 1940, prompting Angus MacInnis, an opposition MP from Vancouver, to highlight that we were defending the Pacific "from a country we insist on arming" (Stacey 1970; Meehan 2004, 179).

- 9 Japan had joined the Axis Pact with Germany and Italy in September 1940 but confined its aggression to Manchuria, China, and Indochina until December 1941.
- 10 There was also a fleeting British belief in September 1941 that the Japanese position with regard to war with Britain was "weakening" and a show of resolve in places like Hong Kong might deter them.
- The Japanese forces were also extremely competent (despite earlier assessments), and held total air superiority after destroying all the British aircraft on the ground on the second day of fighting. There was, however, a later unsavoury effort by one of the British commanders to suggest the Canadians had contributed significantly to this defeat, much like similar British effort to blame the loss of Singapore on the Australian soldiers defending it. This first line of argument is countered well by Vincent (1981, 228-236) and Macri (2011).
- 12 The combined US-Canadian force massively overmatched the small 8000-man Japanese garrisons with 30,000 US troops, a battleship bombardment force, and enough aircraft to ensure total air superiority. A last-minute withdrawal of Japanese forces from the last island they held in the Aleutians helped. While the US/Canadian landing on Kiska met no opposition, on Attu the US met full-scale opposition including the biggest Banzai charge against the US during the War. Total US casualties were 3829.
- Admiral Ernest King, the head of the US Navy, was not enthusiastic about British participation in the Pacific and President Roosevelt had to override his objection to Commonwealth participation (Stacey 1970, 56-57, 59).
- 14 The "anti-militarism" view, as it applied to Canadian defence budgets, may be linked to the view of Tim Cook (2012, 203), who, in his review of Mackenzie King's wartime leadership, remarked he "had an instinctive loathing of military men."
- 15 There was also a strong possibility that an astute British-based spiritualist's warnings to the prime minister of the potential for war in the Far East added to his misgivings (Stairs 1974, 10).
- Mackenzie King was away and not consulted initially on Canadian participation. It was soon too late to withdraw Canada's offer, and this too confounded him.
- 17 The *Globe and Mail* described the current government's plan as "wretched," while calling for a response that would both "recognize Canada's obligation and give maximum support to the UN" (see Wood 1966, 22, 24, citing *Globe and Mail*, July 31, 1950).

- 18 The United States government welcomed the move, while suggesting the initial lack of a Canadian land contribution had had the potential to cause problems in their relations (Wood 1966, 28).
- 19 The British brigade arrived in August 1950, and the Australian battalion a month later.
- There was, however, some concern within Canada over MacArthur's successful pursuit of the enemy past the South Korean border northward toward China. These concerns followed earlier Canadian misgivings over the United States' apparent willingness to expand military operations beyond Korea and toward China (see Stairs 1974, 51-53, 95-100). Stairs also makes clear the US administration was, at times, also concerned with General MacArthur's readiness to widen the conflict.
- 21 The number of Canadians assigned to UN Command would grow from two in the 1950s to 14 by 2020.
- 22 SEATO was also significantly less robust than NATO, lacking an Article 5 equivalent. See its articles in SEATO (1954, 40-43), but expect browser issues at this site.
- The latter have been criticized by some Canadian analysts as "ad hoc and reactive" (see Dewitt et al. 2018, 18-23).
- Dewitt et al. (2018, 7-8) note that in addition to trade and investment, Canada also focused on immigration.
- 25 Canada also extended significant export credits, including \$200 million in 1975, and Indonesia was the second largest recipient of Canadian aid (see Donaghy 2019, 148-149).
- 26 See also Grunau (2003, 5-6), who points out these Canadian exports continued as the East Timor calamity unfolded and other states were imposing arms embargoes.
- 27 Rear-Admiral Girouard was the force commander of the Canadian contribution to *Operation Toucan*, the Canadian deployment to East Timor.
- A short-lived requirement to have 13,000 troops on standby to meet the potential chaos from a possible Y2K/2000 millennial computer disruption caused some initial concern, but the need passed quickly.
- 29 Much of this was due to the Canadian government's unwillingness to consider pre-commitment troop preparation, which added a 40-day inoculation phase to the deployment timeline. In-theatre training in

- Australia and a series of well-publicized aircraft breakdowns in hauling supplies to the theatre added to the delays.
- 30 Rear-Admiral Girouard (2007, 50) reported that one unit from the 20-nation coalition had arrived with an absolute restriction on the use of deadly force.
- 31 See also Blaxland (2006, 190), where Canadian, British, and American contributions are noted.
- 32 The 1500 figure combines the 1000 international staff (mostly civilian) with 500 international military staff (mostly uniformed military). A further 5000 NATO staff are distributed to its facilities and regional centres (NATO 2017, 2020).
- 33 The 2 percent target is currently being achieved by less than half its members, noting there is broad progress from all.
- This is not to suggest operations in the Pacific proceeded without interoperability standards. In the Pacific, the United States sets the standard but there is no uniform attempt by states to meet those standards. Countries which exercise regularly with the United States military, such as Canada, Japan, and Australia, have quite advanced levels of interoperability and data exchange. Outside of those states, there are multiple levels of compliance, or lack thereof, with US standards much as one would expect the "hub and spoke" method security organization would provide.
- 35 In addition, potential Canadian casualties could be airlifted to large US hospitals in Naples, Italy, and Landstuhl, Germany, and during the time Canada was in Kandahar, we reinforced the latter hospital with Canadian medical staff. Of note, recent announcements of US efforts to downsize its forces in Europe also suggest none of these major bases will be eliminated (see Reuters 2020a).
- 36 Starting in the 1980s, a sustained effort to better balance the East and West Coast fleets began with the transfer of DDH 280 destroyers and CH-124 Sea King helicopters. Later, the submarine force was better distributed between the coasts.
- 37 The 2007 introduction of five C-177 Globemaster III strategic airlift aircraft partially addressed the airlift shortfall.
- 38 Our participation in the UN Command also allowed access to US facilities in Japan when its peace constitution was rigidly adhered to.

- Dewitt et al. (2018, 26) agree, noting the ASEAN members "appear unconvinced of Canada's commitment to the region" despite our expressed desire to join the EAS and ADMM-Plus. The EAS is considered the highest "leader-led level" forum by Australia and the United States (2020b). Kim Nossal (2018, 368) also argues that not being invited to ADMM-Plus is "essentially shutting Canada out of regional defence discussions."
- Dewitt et al. (2018, 7) agree, assessing there is "a limited place for Canada in the more serious discussions on regional security across the Asia Pacific largely due to our failure to provide a sustained presence."
- Canada did sign foreign investment and protection agreements with the Philippines in 1996, Thailand in 1998, China in 2014, and Hong Kong in 2016.
- One close observer found the Japanese were "livid" rather than just disappointed. See also Tasker (2017) and Jennett (2017).
- Mulroney (2015, 158) provides, "Having a navy capable of operating with partners in Asia provides a compelling testimonial about Canada's interest, engagement and quiet competence as a regional player." He adds, "Being able to deploy ships to the Pacific is central to Canada's aspiration to play a more significant role in Asia" (ibid., 296). See also Dewitt et al. (2018, 7).
- 44 Interview, Captain (N) Allen, (Ret'd), 30 Sep. 2020.
- Dewitt et al. (2018, 28) also argue this "siloed" approach, while understandable, signals "fragmentation" to the ASEAN states assessing Canada's commitment.
- The *Chicoutimi* deployment was seen as a particularly powerful statement of commitment to the region, with both Japanese and US officials making repeated reference to it. A confidential source interview (23 Jun. 2021) also indicated JMSDF authorities have repeatedly indicated that they would welcome another Canadian submarine deployment.
- These deployments have been commented upon favourably in the region publicly. This is from Australia-based Grant Wyeth (2019): "Canada's recent regional naval activity seems to indicate a willingness to enhance its regional security engagements to reflect its increasing Indo-Pacific interests."
- David Perry (2014, 38-39) provides a particularly clear description of the Harper government's weak policy and financial support to Asia Pacific.

- 49 See also Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of National Defence Mandate Letters from December 13, 2019, Minister of National Defence Supplementary Mandate Letter from January 15, 2021, and Canada (2017, 90-92).
- 50 Similarly, Ambassador Burney and Fen Osler Hampson have argued our "carpetbag diplomacy simply won't cut it in this part of the world," absent Canada making an effort to be "a more reliable and engaged defence and security partner" (Hampson and Burney 2013, 1).
- Our support to the NATO training mission in Iraq, on the other hand, can probably be further reduced given its often inchoate goals.
- President Trump also downplayed aspects of North Korea's tests, leading Joseph Yun, who served as the State Department's North Korea envoy from 2016 to 2018, to comment: "You can't have the North Koreans, for example, do a submarine-launched [nuclear-capable] missile test and say it's okay, while your closest ally, Japan, is going batshit" (Friedman 2019).
- Whether that period would include the time to develop a nuclear weapon delivery system and command and control architecture is in doubt, noting, however, that South Korea has ballistic missile-capable submarines now and has indicated that its next submarines would be larger, potentially nuclear-powered, and would carry more ballistic missiles (Choi 2020). Reportedly, 60 percent of South Koreans favour developing nuclear weapons and former Korean Foreign Minister Song Min-soon admitted that "the Republic of Korea [is] taking its own measures to create a nuclear balance on the peninsula."
- 54 A list of recent Korean crises, including these, is contained in CSIS (2010).
- The extent to which the Chinese government has established claims while denying any legal detail to support them is well covered in Rosenfeld (2016).
- This is well covered in PCA (2016, paras 758-769). The negotiations are also covered by Green et al. (2017a).
- 57 See also Sevastopulo et al. (2016), where it is asserted the US was "hoodwinked" by the PRC.
- 58 See PCA (2016, para 278), which states, "China's claims to historic rights, or other sovereign rights or jurisdiction, with respect to...the 'nine-dash line' are contrary to the Convention and without lawful effect."

- As to the marine environment, see PCA (2016, paras 965-966, 983, 988). As to "unlawfully prevented," see PCA (2016, para 814).
- 60 See PCA (2016, para 1041), which states, "As a low-tide elevation within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone and continental shelf, the legal relevance of Mischief Reef is that it lies within an area in which sovereign rights are vested exclusively in the Philippines and where only the Philippines may construct or authorize artificial islands."
- 61 Welch and Logendrarajah (2019) argue the PRC no longer refers to the nine-dash line at all, while the CSIS AMTI claims they refer to it "less often." Kardon (2018, 39) notes the line enjoys "continued prominence" on PRC maps, while noting that the nine-dash line is no longer presented as the PRC's "central element" in its claims. Peter Dutton (2020) argues China did not abandon its nine-dash line claim.
- 42 Yanmei (2016) points out a Chinese archipelago around the Spratly Islands would also enclose 21 Vietnamese islands, as well as nine Philippine, five Malaysian, and one Taiwanese island, as well as the seven Chinese.
- 63 See further critiques of the PRC's attempt to claim archipelagic rights in CSIS (2019a). Kardon (2018, 39-40) also covers this. See also Kuok (2018, 2). Earlier, Indonesia had pointed out the inability of the Spratly Islands to generate archipelagic baselines (CSIS 2020). The US, the Philippines, and Vietnam objected as well. In 2012, China also attempted to draw straight baselines around the Japanese-held Senkakus and here again failed to meet UNCLOS criteria.
- 64 Quach (2020) describes the "Four Sha" as a "literal expression" of the offshore claims in its 2016 white paper. See also Vietnam Times (2020) and Gertz (2017).
- 65 See also United States (2015, annex 664), wherein President Xi stated, "Relevant construction activities that China is undertaking in the Nansha Islands do not target or impact any country, and China does not intend to pursue militarization." Also discussed and sourced in PCA (2016, para 1012 and fn. 1224, 404).
- Rudd's (2020) and Hayton's (2018) views are supported by the Asian Maritime Transparency Initiative (AMTI) finding that China is complying with only two of 11 findings of the arbitration tribunal's ruling, and that on a third finding, its position is insufficiently clear to assess. There are contrary views, and of these the most notable are Welch and Logendrarajah (2019) and Chubb (2016). The extent to which their views reflect China's initial restrained response to the PCA decision and not its latter rule-breaking is not clear, but it may explain their divergence from the majority view.

- 67 See also Kuok (2018), where she notes the PRC compliance with the PCA ruling was initially "fair," but after that "things went south."
- 68 It is also argued that with the ascendance of President Xi, China has become "much more bolder about using coercion to advance Chinese interests" (Green and Medeiros 2020).
- 69 The use of the South China Sea islands in this support role to the CCG is well covered in Suorsa (2020). Koh (2019) supports this view.
- 70 This article also points out that for "the last 10 years, China has been Malaysia's largest trading partner. In 2018, its trade was estimated to be at about \$76.6bn, representing 16.7 percent of Malaysia's total trade."
- 71 The Malaysian government's communication rejected "China's claims to historic rights, or other sovereign rights or jurisdiction, with respect to the maritime areas of the South China Sea encompassed by the relevant part of the 'nine-dash line.'"
- 72 The Indonesian government stated it would "never recognize China's nine dash line because it was contrary to UNCLOS in accordance with the 2016 tribunal ruling."
- 73 There is, by the way, no indication Malaysia invited the US support. One must note that there is significant low-profile military-to-military cooperation with the United States providing secure communications to its navy under its into Pacific Maritime Security Initiative. Hezinger (2020) discusses this thoroughly.
- 74 This is not all. Malaysia is also buying 18 Littoral Mission Ships, 18 patrol vessels, and three multirole supply vessels.
- Malaysia and Vietnam also submitted notes verbales against China's claims but cited UNCLOS and not the PCA ruling. The internationalizing of opposition to excessive Chinese maritime claims in the South China Sea is well covered in Nguyen (2021).
- These states had specifically identified China as the problem, unlike Canada, which stated in 2016 that "the parties should comply with it," suggesting that both the Philippines and China needed to obey international law. In 2021, Canada, in its fifth anniversary of the PCA decision statement, specifically highlighted that "Canada is particularly concerned by China's escalatory and destabilizing actions in the East and South China Seas." That statement also modified its earlier "all states" approach with "We call on all states, including China, to live up to previous commitments" (see Canada 2021b).

- 77 The two ATI documents were the "Briefing Note for the Minister of National Defence Canadian Armed Forces Maritime Activities in the Asia-Pacific Region in September 2019" (access file number a0638111_3-A- 2019-01212-00003) and "Foreign Policy Risk Assessment for DND Regarding Transits of the Taiwan Strait." The former more clearly shows the link between the South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait.
- Indeed, the National Defence news release for the HMCS *Ottawa* deployment mentions nothing of the South China Sea or Taiwan Strait transits, focusing, instead, on the ship's North Korean sanctions enforcement task (Canada 2019d). This is a bit curious as the secret DND briefing note cited above lauds the RCN's presence in the South China Sea, having "demonstrated Canadian support for our closest partners and allies, regional security and the rules-based international order." One has to wonder how one is going to demonstrate support while remaining silent.
- 79 Holders of British National Overseas Passports in Hong Kong are treated somewhat differently and enjoy the right to travel out of Hong Kong using their BNO passports but under significant limitations. Despite holding a BNO passport, they are still considered "Chinese nationals" (see China 1996).
- 80 Koichi Sato (2019) has examined Chinese motivations for their actions off the Senkakus in detail and found the potential gains in fish catch or offshore oil are likely to be quite small.
- He also covers incidents of Chinese incursions in the Senkakus driven by internal PRC feuds where hard-liners attempted to use the Senkakus as a way to hamper their more pacifist opponents.
- This also notes those who support and disagree with this view (see also Japan News 2020).
- 83 Wording from the revised Coast Guard Law of February 1, 2021, article 3 and 21 (China 2021). The January 21, 2021, draft version was even more ambiguous (see also Okada 2021).
- Much of the PRC's claim to Taiwan is based on its assertion that the island has belonged to it "since ancient times." In fact, the evidence shows China never controlled more than 33 to 45 percent of it the remainder being held by its independent indigenous population (Manthorpe 2002, 18-19). See also Lerhe (2018, 11) addressing other doubtful elements of the PRC claim to sovereignty.
- 85 J. Michael Cole (2020) agrees, stating the "Taiwanese will not be fooled" by this.

- 86 Robert O. Work and Greg Grant (2019, 5) argue that Chinese defence spending averaged 11 percent a year from 1996 to 2015. See also Haass and Sacks (2020).
- 87 The article also contains a pair of charts showing US and PRC's similar characterization of the island chains. Rory Metcalf (2020) supports this view.
- 88 All three qualify this prediction with "absent significant changes to DoD's planned capabilities and current warfighting concepts," while Ochmanek (2018) also includes Russia as being a potentially successful opponent.
- 89 Taiwan's Air Force scrambled 3000 times in 2020 in response to these patrols, with that costing it over \$1 billion in maintenance and fuel costs (Sands 2021; Axe 2021).
- 90 Sea mines are also being sought, according to Taiwan's representative in Washington (Blanchard and Brunnstrom 2020).
- 91 The *Taiwan Relations Act* states the US would "consider any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means, including by boycotts or embargoes, a threat to peace and security of the Western Pacific area of great concern to the United States." In addition to providing Taiwan with necessary defensive arms, it also requires that the US ensure it had the capacity to come to Taiwan's defence (United States 1979).
- The authors pointed at the US failures to deter China in Xinjiang, over industrial policy, and in Hong Kong.
- The light carrier envisaged was the "Lightning Carrier," which sends 16-20 F-35 fighters to a 45,000-ton amphibious assault ship (Woody 2020).
- It has also been described as "Multi-Domain Battle" or "Dispersed Operations." One of the most concise outlines is contained in United States (2019a, 17-34). The following documents present the four services' recent and in some cases tentative approach to multi-domain operations and dispersed operations. The approaches are similar but by no means uniform: (1) United States (2018b); (2) The US Navy covers this in United States (2020c); (3) The USAF covers elements of MDO in United States (2016); (4) The US Marine Corps outlines MDO in United States (2019b). For more detail on USMC approach to distributed operations, see United States (2021c).
- 95 "ISR" stands for Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance.

- 96 One has been established in Indonesia (United States n.d.).
- 97 These views would likely also enjoy the support of right-wing members of the ruling LDP party, who are more ready to confront China. See Mizorogi (2021).
- 98 Lintner (2020), on the other hand, argues Japanese defence spending had been focused on the North Korean nuclear threat. This is a minority view, however.
- 99 These are very well explained in Hornung (2020, 7-8, 12-13, 96-101).
- 100 There was certainly the occasional high point here; for example, Canada and New Zealand were among the first to publicly support Taiwanese attendance at the World Health Assembly.
- 101 The only exception occurred in 1998 with the visit of Industry Minister John Manley to Taipei.
- 102 Those clearances are occasionally granted, while at other times they are refused within a policy regime that provides no guidance, no transparency, no consistency, and no comprehensible schedule (confidential interviews, Sep. 2020).
- 103 The extent to which the Biden administration's reputation for strong alliance skills escapes the fallout from the chaos of the August 2021 Kabul withdrawal remains to be seen.
- 104 See earlier discussion on this and Canada (2021b).
- 105 Elements of the above were also outlined in the documents GAC supplied to the Special Committee on Canada-China relations in February 2020. See in particular the "concise diagnostic" for Canada-China relations contained as Annex Seven (Canada 2020e).
- 106 China is also very active in Australia in seeking to influence the political class (see Hamilton 2018, 134-47, 257-58, 266-67).
- 107 The Chinese language version of the *Global Times* quoted and translated in Tao (2019).
- 108 "Memorandum: Deputy Minister Level Guidance from GAC with respect to DND/CAF Engagements with the PLA." GAC, February 2019, received via ATI. Email author for a copy.

- 109 The author had no 'insider' knowledge of Canadian plans for any of these scenarios.
- 110 The right-wing India-based TFI Global took this one step further arguing, "Canada is compromised in favour of Communist China and it will become the arbitrator of China's interests within the organisation and turn the Quad dysfunctional" (Sisodia 2021).
- 111 Canada joined the Quad-oriented, if not so named, exercise *Sea Dragon* in Guam this year with CP-140 aircraft (Rej 2021). France, in particular, is energetically seeking interaction with the Quad (Japan Forward 2021).
- 112 One expert argues the optimum process may be to proceed from an ACSA to an Information Sharing Agreement, and then to a Reciprocal Access Agreement. Australia is following that process (email to author, 13 Jun. 2021; see also Paramonov 2020).
- 113 One Japan-based analyst has cautioned that this should be a long-term Canadian goal, as there will be immediate opposition from Japanese groups that consider the US–Japan treaty sacrosanct or those that view further alliance-forming as unacceptably militaristic (email to author, 13 Jun. 2021).
- 114 It is acknowledged MV *Asterix* could transfer to the other coast in less than 26 days.
- 115 Email to author, 19 Aug. 2021.
- 116 Of note, Udesen (2018) argues these shortcomings, plus an unhealthy reliance on the "support of coalition enablers," represent a Canadian Army weakness. As will be shown, these weakness apply to the Canadian Armed Forces as a whole.
- 117 Despite this document's draft status, it is consistent with the *US National Defense Strategy* and the more recent MDO doctrine of the US Army (United States 2018b).
- 118 Interview, Rear Admiral G. Couturier (Ret'd), Federal Fleet Services, 28 Aug. 2020.
- 119 Udesen (2018, 51) also states: "Air assets may be increasingly tasked to strike in the Deep Fires Area, requiring ground forces to manoeuvre without close air support."

120 Project definition of the army's Ground Based Air Defence system states: "The target threats are rocket, artillery and mortar (RAM) munitions, air to surface missiles (ASM) and bombs, and Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS)" (Canada 2020). Figure 2 in Adams (2019, 18) shows GBAD short-range aspect well. It also shows the reliance of the army on other Canadian Forces or coalition assets to address the medium- and long-range air threats.





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