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TRANSPORTATION SUPPORT TO NATIONAL DEFENCE:  
A CIVIL-MILITARY PARTNERSHIP

by  
Lieutenant-Colonel J.W. Craig, CD  
Canadian Forces

1.0 Introduction

"In a tale of war, the reader's mind is filled with the fighting... nor does he care to look behind to where, along a thousand miles of rail, road and river, the convoys are crawling to the front in uninterrupted succession. Victory is the beautiful, bright-coloured flower. Transport is the stem without which it could never have blossomed."

Sir Winston Churchill, who wrote this truism in his classic, *The River War*, in 1899, lived to see the development of weapon systems undreamed of at that time. But to a considerable extent the principles of war have not changed; nor has the importance of transportation diminished in the planning of military operations.

At the conclusion of World War II, Douglas Abbott, Minister of National Defence in the King Government, considering the possible advent of atomic war, said that "... it becomes apparent that there is a need for the armed forces of a country to be immediately available... The keynote in our defence policy ... is preparedness.. We cannot forget the critical risks we have run by our previous lack of preparation..."(2:90). At least one member of the opposition, E.D. Fulton, agreed that it was wishful thinking, to believe"... that we shall again have an opportunity for liesurely preparation ... liesurely mobilization, liesurely assembling of our forces and liesurely direction of our forces to those places where we wish to send them..."(2:101).

Yet it takes more than mere expressions of Government approval to attain the necessary rapid military response to a sudden emergency. Not four years later in the summer of 1950, amid the public clamour for Canada to contribute more to the Korean conflict than three destroyers and an air transport squadron, the Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant-General Foulkes, admitted that "no ground forces of any significant size were ready"(4:36). The clamour continued, and finally on August 7, Prime Minister St. Laurent announced the recruitment of the Canadian Army Special Force (CASF)..." to be available for use in carrying out Canada's obligations under the United Nations Charter..."(1:4).

No plans existed either for the mobilization and training of such a force or for its transportation. Recruiting proceeded at a hectic pace, however, and by August 26 over 8000 men had been enrolled. Hasty arrangements were made for training to be conducted at three camps across the country; Valcartier Quebec, Petawawa Ontario and Wainwright Alberta. Such arrangements were not without problems! A nation-wide rail strike was called on August 22, and it was not until August 29 that Parliament finally met and ordered the railroad back to work. In the meantime hundreds of recruits were scattered across the country, stranded by the strike, and valuable training time was lost in the process of rounding them up.

The dearth of winter training facilities in Canada resulted in arrangements being made for CASF training in Fort Lewis, Washington. But how to move several thousand men and their equipment from the three camps in Canada to the west coast of the U.S. and ultimately to Korea?

The continental move was conducted by Canadian railroads. On November 11, the first train to Fort Lewis left Valcartier. The journey took five days. In the event, it took 22 trains and 12 days to move the CASF to Fort Lewis. The onward movement was even slower, and it was accomplished by U.S. troopships, not Canadian. The first unit to depart, the 2nd Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, sailed from Seattle on November 25, disembarking in Pusan, Korea, on December 18, 1950. The first Canadian ground troops thus arrived in Korea over four months after call-up.

The liesurely pace of mobilization had changed little from the two previous wars! There were no forces on standby, or even established, to respond quickly to the UN call. The initial deployment and subsequent sustainment of the CASF relied very heavily on commercial transportation resources, but from the outset of Canadian involvement, use of these resources was based on time-consuming ad-hoc arrangements. The aim of this paper is to outline the Canadian Forces' role as both an operator and user of transportation in peace and war, and to examine initiatives to quickly harness Canada's combined civil and military transportation resources in an emergency.

## 2.0 The Military Requirement

The situation today is somewhat different. The standing forces of this country are larger now than in 1950 and we have a variety of stand-by commitments to deploy forces in response to emergencies. The UN commitment has been retained; but our family of Defence Plans covers a much wider range of deployment options, including rapid reinforcement of Germany and North Norway in a NATO deterrence role, Canada/US defence arrangements and, of course, defence of Canada or sovereignty operations. The keynote of our defence policy today is indeed "preparedness" as espoused by Douglas Abbott in 1945, and we are striving to eliminate any "liesurely" elements in the assembly and deployment of forces.

During normal peacetime operations the transportation requirements of the Canadian Forces are met mainly by our own integral resources. These requirements are generally routine in nature and, with augmentation from the commercial transportation industry as required, are fulfilled without difficulty. Support provided by civil carriers is excellent and we have developed close working relationships with a cross-section of the industry. A recent example of close civil support for military movements was Exercise RENDEZVOUS 85. Over a two week period, 900 railcars were used to move 3000 vehicles from nine locations across Canada to Wainwright Alberta - and then to move them back.

The point to be made is that the Canadian Forces frequently employs commercial carriers in peacetime, both for routine administrative movements and for force deployment exercises, and that we bid for available civil transportation resources in competition with other users. Fortunately, availability of such resources is normally not a problem.

During periods of emergency the character of the overall national movement requirement - that is to say the sum of the economic as well as the military requirements - changes considerably. From a military point of view there will be very much more to move and, more significantly, more to move simultaneously over a very limited period of time. Our planning effort today is focused on NATO deterrence - to discourage the Warsaw Pact from starting a war, or in the event that hostilities do commence, to deter escalation to nuclear war. Notwithstanding the large number of troops currently in Europe, including over 6000 Canadians, the credibility of such a deterrence policy comes not so much from the presence of these standing forces in Europe, as from the perception by the Warsaw Pact that we have the capability and the resolve to quickly reinforce the standing forces in Europe, to fully sustain them in combat for as long as required, and to expand our forces through mobilization should it become necessary.

Commercially, normal trading patterns will be disrupted, the demand for commodities will be altered, and the distribution and availability of essential goods, services and resources may be regulated. It is certain that the altered nature of the overall national movement requirement will present a significant challenge to the combined Canadian civil and military transportation capability.

### 3.0 Canadian Strategic Transportation Resources

Canada has very limited strategic transportation resources for the rapid movement of large forces to Europe. In the context of this paper the term strategic refers to a capability for carriage of passengers and cargoes between theatres, i.e. between North America and Europe. Figure 1 reveals that with 75 passenger aircraft of the Boeing 747 to DC-8 type, transatlantic airlift of troops should not be a problem; with the caveat, of course, that civil resources are

made available to the Department of National Defence on a priority basis. On the other hand the combined civil-military cargo airlift capability, in particular the capability to lift large vehicles and equipments, is extremely limited. With only six DC-8s and two Boeing 747-combi aircraft, the commercial general cargo capability is little better than our own five Boeing 707s. The single commercial Hercules C130 aircraft in Canada offers virtually no relief to the vehicle airlift problem.

<u>CANADIAN STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES</u>		
<u>Airlift</u>		
Military	26	Hercules C130
	5	Boeing 707*
Civil	75	Passenger
	7	Cargo
	2	Combi**
* fully convertible passenger-cargo configuration		
** fixed passenger-cargo configuration		
<u>Sealift</u>		
Military	Nil	
Civil	1	Roll-on Roll-off
	22	Break-bulk

FIGURE 1

With respect to sealift, a similar dearth of resources exists. The single RO-RO vessel is suitable for large military vehicles but is capable of lifting only a very small portion of the total requirement. The break-bulk vessels are suitable for carriage of military bulk cargoes for sustainment but are not capable of rapid deployment of combat vehicles and equipment. It must be made perfectly clear, however, that this list includes only Canadian-flag vessels; we are well aware of the fact that there are many more highly productive RORO and other suitable vessels that are Canadian-owned but under foreign flag.

Any attempt to quantify a shortfall of strategic lift resources is, of course, scenario-dependent. Suffice it to say that the Canadian Forces has inadequate strategic transportation resources to fully meet our international commitments and must, therefore, look to the Canadian civil sector and even foreign sources to augment our capability.

The movement of a large force to Europe, such as we have committed to the northern flank of NATO, would once again require a combined civil-military effort. Unfortunately we no longer have the luxury of taking months to assemble and move the requisite thousands of personnel and pieces of equipment. To be of any value as a deterrent, our troops must be deployed as early in a period of rising tension, and as quickly, as possible.

Clearly, our capacity for defence, victory and perhaps even survival in another more serious emergency will depend heavily on the state of readiness, not only of our forces but also of our transportation system, to support national defence. The challenge for the Canadian Forces in the 1980s, and indeed for the nation, is to ensure that our commitments are backed by the preparations and resources necessary to fulfill those commitments rapidly and effectively on short notice.

#### 4.0 Current Planning Initiatives

The basis for civil emergency planning in the 1980s is the federal Emergency Planning Order. It charges various ministers with the responsibility, inter alia, for the development and maintenance of plans and arrangements for the provision of "... appropriate and timely support to the Canadian Forces ... in the conduct of military operations within Canada, at sea and abroad.."(3:2). The order also requires the Minister of Transport, for example, to establish a National Emergency Agency for Transportation (NEATRAN) for operation in time of emergency. NEATRAN's primary function will be to control, regulate and direct the operation of civil transportation. It is important to note that this Emergency Planning Order confers only a planning responsibility on Ministers, not the authority to implement the plans. Authority to provide priority transportation support to the military, for example, would have to be obtained from Parliament through appropriate legislation.

The government is committed to the development of new emergency legislation that recognizes the escalating nature of emergencies. It will provide the government with the power to draw on the resources and expertise of the whole nation and not just their own capabilities alone, and it provides that power very early in a crisis. Such powers must obviously be given carefully and must be in accordance with various statutes protecting the rights of individual Canadians, but are absolutely essential as a basis for emergency planning.

But clearly legislation alone will not be enough. Without the "... decision-making and planning mechanisms within the federal government, and structures for coordinating the efforts of government, industry, employees associations and others, in the national defence effort...", we cannot hope to achieve rapid military response to emergencies (5:46). The Director General Transportation in National Defence Headquarters is urgently seeking ways to involve other federal planners and the civil sector as

active and joint participants in transportation support strategies. Several initiatives are currently underway to implement this concept.

Various interdepartmental committees have been established with a view, firstly, to defining the deficiencies in the current transportation system. Notwithstanding the trend to intermodality, the system is now a loose grouping of diverse and specialized modes, competitive with one another and with themselves, with little propensity to accepting extensive integration or coordination. In the national interest in an emergency, the various modes must be joined to function as an integrated system.

To this end we have developed the first of perhaps several Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between Transport Canada and National Defence, and have begun working together to broaden the involvement of the transportation industry in our planning. This first MOU outlines a general agreement with respect to the operations of the Canadian Forces from Canada Ports Corporation and non-corporate ports. It will be supported with a set of Standing Operating Procedures for each of the ports to be used in an emergency, providing the Canadian Forces and all of the civil agencies involved - the port authority, railroads, stevedores - with detailed procedural guidance for executing the embarkation of military vehicles, equipment and materiel through the port in an emergency. The aim is to streamline the embarkation process to minimize ad-hoc arrangements and thereby speed up the process. Such procedures must be developed for the entire range of possibilities for civil/military interface in an emergency.

As a result of this increased emphasis on the joint civil/military nature of defence, we are also increasing the use of commercial transportation in exercises, particularly for deployments to Europe. For example, in the summer of 1986 a 4000-man force, together with vehicles, equipment and supplies, will be moved from eastern Canada to North Norway and return. The movement will involve more commercial vehicles, aircraft and vessels than ever before. This trend will continue.

There is also an important role for the Department of National Defence in the process of fostering a better public understanding of security issues. To this end we are in the process of establishing a National Defence Transportation Association in Canada, modelled after a U.S. organization of the same name. One of its principle objectives, in addition to sponsoring public debate on defence transportation issues, is to encourage the development of plans and programs to ensure the readiness of our transportation system to support military responses to emergencies. With the active support of the transportation industry, the academic community, the military and other government departments, we are confident that these vital objectives can and will be met.



## 5.0 Conclusion

These initiatives to establish the mechanisms for coordinating the national defence transportation effort, require foresight and a continued spirit of cooperation from all concerned in order to succeed. The Canadian Forces has a pivotal dependence on all transportation industries in both peace and war, with much of our capability coming from without, not within. Military ownership is extremely limited and thus the transportation support necessary for the deployment and sustainment of our forces falls quickly upon the nation's railroads, truck lines, shipping lines and air carriers. Indeed, mobilizing the military and commercial transportation resources of this nation must be viewed as a partnership in the common cause of national security.

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