

*THE
GENERAL
SIR WILLIAM OTTER
PAPERS*

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THE STATE AND
DEVELOPMENT OF THE
EUROPEAN SECURITY AND
DEFENCE POLICY (ESDP)

By Dr. Julian Lindley-French



THE GEN SIR WILLIAM OTTER PAPERS

Commissioned as a Military Officer in Toronto in the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, Lieutenant Colonel William Otter was the founding President of the Royal Canadian Military Institute.

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Designed by David S. McDonough

THE STATE AND DEVELOPMENT OF ESDP

By Dr. Julian Lindley-French

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Introduction

Director, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen – good morning. It is indeed an honour for me to be here at the Royal Canadian Military Institute in Toronto to address the challenging subject of the European Union (EU) and the state and development of its European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).

It is also appropriate. The One Hundred Days, Ypres, Vimy Ridge, Paschendael, Dieppe, El Alamein, Monte Cassino, the Normandy Beaches, the Falaise Gap, the liberation of Belgium and the Netherlands some sixty years ago as I speak – the battle honours of Canada's superb fighting men (and increasingly women) are proud testimony of your past contributions to Europe's defence. Thus, one of my central themes today concerns you and your possible contribution to Europe's slowly emerging, novel role in creating a more stable and a safer world.

Now is the time. The enlargement of both the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) represent the end of the grand US, post-war European project – the final full stop on the Marshall Plan and the true end of World War Two. This is a strategic moment.

Things are also happening. First, Operation Althea started in Bosnia in December 2004. That represented a step change in the EU's responsibilities and those of its member states. Second, the year 2004 marks the end of a defence planning cycle that started with the end of the Cold War. Only now are many Europeans really beginning to think about 21st century forces for the 21st century. And, I would wager, so are Canadians. It is about time.

Thus, my mission today is one of mild provocation – that is, after all, the preserve of the independent academic. First, I will give you a sitrep on the military state of European Security and Defence Policy, recognising that ESDP also possesses a vital civilian security component. Second, I will consider the impact of ESDP upon NATO. Finally, I will briefly look at the implications for Canada before concluding with my view as to the future.

Let me first set ESDP within the context of the transatlantic relationship. We need a Euro-Atlantic community that can engage complexity in whatever format generates greatest political and security effect, whether it is NATO, the EU, NATO-EU,

or coalitions of the willing and able. That is why European Defence is so important and why, I believe, Canadians must join us on the journey of European defence. Like it or not, in security and defence, you are in some respects more European than American. You will add value, not by providing a small additional adjunct to what the US already does so well, but by doing what you do best and doing it better. What you do best, is what Europeans do best – the making and keeping of peace.

However, to achieve such mutually supportive flexibility requires Americans really accepting Europeans (and Canadians) as partners rather than followers, and Europeans (and Canadians) generating the relevant capabilities and security will to be worthy of such a partnership. Resolve that conundrum and all the institutional friction (we might call it something else in Yorkshire, where I come from) will fade away.

Thus, my two central themes – the enigma that is ESDP and the potential that resides therein. To some extent, it is an enigma that can be explained by the strategic political context and the uncertain response of many Europeans to it:

1. For all its understandable imprecision, the European Security Strategy of December 2003 marked the first time in a generation that Europeans as a whole have made a truly autonomous assessment of, and a commitment to, strategic engagement in the security environment beyond Europe.
2. What Europeans saw beyond the EU parapet was not radically different from that which North Americans see. We are all facing conflict that – with its merging of extreme belief systems, mass destruction technologies and the organising power of radical and failing states – could come to resemble a latter day Thirty Years War. Strategic stabilisation is our mission, robust humanitarian intervention our method and, if needs be, credible coercion. This is particularly relevant for Canadians.
3. ESDP is the means to operationalise the European Security Strategy. Indeed, ESDP is a vital part of the re-establishment of European strategic self-confidence.

4. The big European powers (at least) recognise that they have global responsibilities. However, the US must not take its leadership for granted. Moreover, whilst America has not ceased to be a European power, we are witnessing an extra-European re-orientation of American grand strategy. The US has not decided what it wants Europeans (or Canadians) to be – a strong Europe or a tame Europe. It cannot have both.

From Helsinki to Brussels

Now I want to take a moment to give you a sitrep on ESDP because it is important for my specific proposal as to Canada's involvement.

You will recall the Headline Goal that was agreed as part of the Helsinki Declaration of December 1999 and grew out of the Anglo-French St Malo Declaration of 1998. It set as its original target July 2003 for the creation of a European Rapid Reaction Force capable of deploying 60,000 troops, at 60 days and sustainable for a year to take on operations, and I quote, "in and around Europe" within the framework of the Petersberg Tasks "at their most robust."

Whilst the Petersberg tasks were expanded in the EU Constitutional Treaty to include *inter alia* counter-terrorism, it is clear that neither the devoted resources nor the number of deployable forces have increased in line with ambitions. Thus by definition, the ESDP suffers from exactly the same problem as NATO, particularly for high-end operations – not enough usable troops. You know the figures – they vary from place to place, but the message is essentially the same. My recent report, "A European Defence Strategy," estimates that out of 1.7 million uniforms, there are 170,000 or so soldiers of which 40-50,000 could be deployed at any one time. This is clearly a work in progress. In October 2003, Javier Solana effectively admitted that the Headline Goal would not be realised until 2010 and thus we now have Headline Goal 2010.

That said, ESDP is helping to create the climate for European military transformation – this can be seen in a number of ways. First, the UK, France and Germany agreed at Naples in November 2003 to develop the following:

- a new force packaging concept;
- an EU cell to be embedded at SHAPE to improve preparation for EU operations using NATO assets through Berlin plus, thereby emphasising transparent liaison between the EU Military Staff (EUMS) and NATO;
- a civil-military cell to be created within the EU Military Staff to enhance early-warning, situation assessment and strategic planning; and;

- an implicit division of labour with NATO whereby EUMS would take on operational planning responsibility with particular emphasis on operations in Africa.

Second, in February 2004, the UK, France and Germany presented the Battle Group concept to improve the capacity of the EU for rapid reaction. At 1500 strong, plus support elements, they are also known also as 'tactical groups;' a fully deployed Battle Group would be some 2500 strong with logistics and combat support components. A Battle Group would be deployable within 15 days from the Activation Order and designed to stand alone or act as initial entry force for larger operations. They are specifically, but not exclusively, designed to act in response to UN requests.

Third, a meeting in Brussels in November 2004 confirmed 2-3 high readiness Battle Groups by 2005, and 13 high readiness Battle Groups by 2007.

Short-Term Developments of ESDP

So, where next? The short-term development of ESDP, it seems to me, will be founded upon several components implicit in the European Security Strategy:

1. A balance between civilian and military instruments.
2. An ongoing definition of the Solidarity Clause and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) within the EU Constitutional Treaty.
3. The development of structured co-operation by which those states wishing to move ahead faster in the field of security and defence can so do.
4. To what extent important new ESDP initiatives prove effective, such as the Civilian/Military Unit and the nucleus of an EU Operational Centre, which might (controversially) in time evolve into an EU Strategic Headquarters.
5. What variety of tiger the European Defence Agency turns out to be – the aggressive kind or the paper version.
6. The development of a European security and defence culture, the fostering of which a European Security and Defence College has been created.

Longer-Term Development of ESDP

Let me now turn to the longer-term development of ESDP. The future development of ESDP will necessarily be organised

around two levels of transformation – the grand strategic and the security-operational.

Transformation 1: the search for a European strategic concept that harmonises the understanding of European leaders on how to 'do' security. Europe must re-learn grand strategy.

Transformation 2: the European provision of sustained security effect.

It will also necessarily be focused on five key elements:

1. Europe's role and responsibility for its own security and defence in a new age;
2. The role of legitimate coercion in a European strategic concept and by extension, European foreign and security policy;
3. The nature and scope of European defence transformation;
4. The affordability of security effect; and
5. The relevance and effectiveness of downstream structures and agencies:

Specifically that means:

1. Elaboration of a European strategic concept (i.e. the what, when, why and how of engagement), of which the European Security Strategy is a part.
2. Elaborated defence roles and missions that flow from such a concept.
3. The re-creation of a European command hub led (but not exclusively so) by Britain, France and Germany.
4. Force structure built around a broad force posture for the big 3 (plus Italy, Spain and Poland) if they so choose.
5. Specialisation and niche roles for smaller states.
6. A progressive military task-list that over time expands in both the scope and intensity of operations.
7. Security investment decisions driven by the strategic concept, defence roles and missions and the military tasklist.

In terms of timeframe, it will take at least one defence planning cycle of ten to fifteen years. So, here is my central thrust. Security investment decisions taken within the next two to three years will also show whether we are merely talking strategy or really walking it.

Why the EU? Because it consumes so much of the political energy of its member-states.

What role for NATO?

A key question, I think you may ask, is what role for NATO? I flatly reject the "NATO is dead" argument. To me the central role of the Alliance will remain for the foreseeable future founded on what I believe should be NATO's Ten Points:

1. To preserve transatlantic co-operability and interoperability when the partners choose to act together.
2. To reach out to new regional partners the world over who can join us in our collective strategic stabilisation mission.
3. To ensure and assure American leadership of high-intensity missions. No Europeans question that, so long as Washington concedes European political influence over such operations.
4. To generate, command, project, sustain and protect European coalitions involved in global projection, through Berlin-plus.
5. To ensure planning and command transparency and escalation dominance.
6. To help prevent security and defence re-nationalisation. Article 5 still matters.
7. To act as the focus for security sector reform the world over.
8. To demonstrate our solidarity as we move towards the new deterrence as part of a multi-layered, balanced non-proliferation, counter-proliferation package.
9. To keep a formal American presence in the Greater Europe.
10. To ensure emerging autonomous European capabilities and structures are grounded in Alliance planning and command concepts and doctrine.

European Defence and Canada

This brings me to Canada's role. I said at the outset that Canada should join Europe on its security journey. I suggested that you do one thing very well and do well what you do best. I recognise the additional C\$10 billion pumped into the armed forces since 1999 and the further C\$1.6 billion called for in the 2004 budget, as well as the determination of the government in the Defence Policy Review to balance Canada's continental and foreign responsibilities. The famous '3D' approach is an example to us all, while the Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) concept is to be particularly commended. The news that Canada's armed forces will get 5000 extra Regular personnel with 3000 more reserves is excellent and your Joint Task Force 2 (JTF2) Special Forces are superb. Moreover, nor is your effort mere theory. The determination of Canada to take over a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Kandahar and to move to Stage 3 is another fine example of that well-known Canadian tendency to get on with it.

But with respect I put this to you – your global defence budget is too small to do everything you want to do to effect. The result is that cuts are made in equipment budgets, which in turn place too great a burden on the ability of your superb men and women to make do in dangerous places.

Make no mistake, your neighbours will do continental security whether you invest in it or not. The Americans never rely upon others for their own security. What we Europeans want from Canada recalls your past – a cutting edge advanced expeditionary force equipped for the future that is founded on the strong tradition of your history. In other words, a truly Canadian Rapid Reaction Force, with a navy configured to get it there and an air force designed to protect and sustain it. Only such a force will buy you cost-effective political and security influence in Washington and Europe, and that is what you need. Remember those battle honours? Politics can be a heartless business and it is in your interests to engage more effectively with European defence. NATO will remain the centre of gravity of your defence and ours for the foreseeable future. But do not under-estimate the importance of the bumbings in Brussels. You need to be involved.

My proposal for the here and now is this – Canada should offer a Battle Group to the EU. Such a proposal would not only demonstrate Canada's interest in ESDP but also open up further options for Canada's security engagement.

The State and Development of European Defence

My penultimate message is this: The EU and NATO are strategic security enablers that furnish us with a powerful ability to engage in security development, project security coercion if

needs be and defend us from catastrophic security penetration.

The EU and NATO are integral parts of the Euro-Atlantic Community's armoury of projection and protection and a fundamental element in Europe's transnational Homeland Defence.

My final message is this: However we organise our security and defence, whatever the centres of gravity – NATO-EU, civil-military – it is up to political leaders to stiffen the backbone of our peoples in the undoubted struggle ahead. That will take political courage, particularly in Europe and Canada, because our citizens will have to be told that the strategic vacation is over. We must prepare to pay and pay to prepare. Otherwise we are simply preparing to fail.

It is called leadership.

Thank you. ■

The views expressed are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Institute or its members.

Dr. Julian Lindley-French was born in Sheffield in 1958. After graduating from Oxford University in 1980 he spent several years working for the British Government and undertaking project management for the United Nations in Geneva and New York, as well as for the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne. He received a Master's Degree in International Relations (with distinction) from UEA in 1992 and a doctorate in political science from the European University Institute in Florence in 1996.

He was formally a lecturer at the Department of War Studies, King's College London, Deputy Director of the International Centre for Security Analysis and Senior Research Fellow at the EU Institute for Security Studies in Paris. He has also acted as a consultant to NATO in Brussels. His main areas of interest are US foreign and security policy and strategic developments in European security and defence structures.



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