



PAC-007988

Officers of the Strathcona Horse – South African War.

A ROLE TO PLAY: EXAMINING THE MILITIA CONUNDRUM

by Kurt Grant

“A country not worth defending is a country not worth preserving”¹

Introduction

“The time has come, to produce provincial regiments of armour, artillery, and infantry to fit the two-corps establishment. ...The great snag in this is that we run smack into the Regimental System and that there will be much heart breaking, gnashing of teeth, and political pressure. ...Better to endure an upheaval now and get the necessary reforms under way.”

*~ Major-General Christopher Vokes
September 1952²*

The question of what to do with the Canadian militia has troubled command staff since its very inception. Is it a source of trained troops to be placed at the disposal of the regular force planners? Or is it a stand-alone entity with tasks and roles all its own, capable of fielding fully formed units ready for battle? Should it be disbanded, or should it be fundamentally changed to take on new domestic roles? The questions as to what the militia actually *constitutes*, and how to utilize it most effectively have generated diffuse viewpoints within Canada’s armed forces. The problem,

however, is not one unique to Canada. One need only look as far as the United States, Britain, other NATO nations, and Australia to see that they are struggling similarly to find an answer.

In a military world that ‘went into overdrive’ during the 1990s, only to ‘kick into hyper-drive’ in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, the question of what to do with the militia and how to integrate it most effectively and specifically into Regular Force operations continues to generate intense debate and interest. Few in the Canadian Forces (CF) would deny that the 2001 attacks and their aftermath have had a profound impact upon how the CF views itself, both structurally and culturally. And few would deny that the term ‘homeland security’ has taken on increased significance in the North American consciousness. As armed forces around the world struggle to find more efficient and effective ways to meet their ever-expanding roles, the issue of what to do specifically with their respective militias continues to generate interest and attention from military planners. But just what are the issues, and why does militia utilization cause such consideration?

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Background

In Canada, the genesis of the term militia, and, by extension, the original intent of the organization itself, is imbedded in Canada's history. From their inception, the colonies of North America depended heavily upon the citizen soldier for defence. While the concept of the *levée en masse* obligated citizens to serve, who among us would not willingly take up arms to defend our families? Indeed, practically all the first settlers, with the exception of the clergy, were soldiers, and they were equipped to serve as such.³ Originally conceived for homeland – or, more accurately, *hometown* – defence, the militia was regarded as a local defence force. In this context, the early militia was the very embodiment of the Oxford Concise Dictionary's definition of the term, namely "...a military force raised from among civil population and supplementing regular army in times of emergency."⁴

Reliance upon the militia has waxed and waned over the years as threats, both real and perceived, appeared and disappeared. In 1664, for instance, the entire male population of Montreal capable of bearing arms was enrolled as volunteers in a precautionary move generated by perceived problems with the Indians.⁵ Over time, Canada settled into a bipolar approach to defence. In times of conflict, the role of the militia became more clearly delineated as its members stood shoulder-to-shoulder with units of the 'professional army.' Their contribution to homeland defence took the form of embedded troops augmenting the ranks of the regular army battalions, or as stand-alone formations on the battlefield. When fortunes changed and threats disappeared, the militia became perceived as unnecessary, and its members returned to their regular lives, while the professional troops – few though they were – remained at their posts.

In many respects, the defence of Canada continues in this vein, although now the militia has had a third dimension of service resurrected, namely constabulary duties. Historically, the 'army' was viewed as the saviour of Canada's residents in times of crisis, such as during the Winnipeg Riots of 1919. However, while such duties were once almost exclusively carried out by the militia, they have now been assigned largely to federal, provincial, and municipal police forces. And since acts of terrorism – such as the attacks upon the twin towers of the World Trade Center in downtown New York on 11 September 2001 – are, by Canadian law, considered a criminal act and therefore a

law-enforcement issue, any request for participation by the CF in the form of aid to the civil power must come to the military through government channels. The same holds true with respect to natural disasters. Acceptance of such a request for assistance by the military will only be made when it is deemed that the CF can offer 'unique services' that are not resident, or readily available, in the civilian environment – as embodied in *Operation Salon*, the Oka Quebec crisis of July-September 1990, and the 1998 ice storm. The conditions under which services are provided for this type of operation are strictly defined and limited, and, once delivered, the military presence is removed.

Since the Korean War, the Regular Force has evolved largely into a professional offshore force, while the militia has remained at home. The advent of nuclear weapons, coupled with a shift in emphasis away from a nationally mobilized force to a more highly trained, professional standing army prepared to fight a 'come as you are' war, left the militia feeling abandoned and searching for a meaningful way in which to contribute to the defence of Canada and support of the nation's foreign policies. This sense of abandonment was further exacerbated when it became clear, during the late 1950s, that the government intended, under the guise of a policy of National Survival, to re-role the militia as 'the cleanup crew' following a nuclear war, should one occur. Although no such re-tasking actually took place, successive governments enacted military reforms without consulting the militia, resulting in the force progressively and generally viewing change – any change – as a bad thing. The ensuing thirty-year period leading up to the end of the 1980s constituted some of the most troubling times in Canadian militia history, and it was a time during which the service only very narrowly escaped extinction. With no clear opportunity for 'real soldiering,' or to practise its trade abroad, such

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same course load as their Regular Force counterparts⁸ do not meet the Regular Force standard in all areas. In effect, a systemic ‘hobbling’ of the militia soldier had taken place. Now, as military planners scramble to meet the increasing demand for trained augmentees on operational tours, the CF has come to depend upon pre-deployment training to make up the difference between the two standards and to create unit cohesion within a hastily cobbled together task force. And lost along the way has been the recognition that a militia augmentee often brings more than just soldiering skills to the table.⁹ Further, a fully unified approach to training remains elusive, and it is more often than not caused by

as had occurred during the two global conflicts of the 20th Century, the militia experienced a sharp decline in membership and interest, accompanied by a corresponding degradation in the level of training and readiness.

lack of efficiency in the system, lack of money and/or equipment, and compounded by the realities of Canada’s geography, with the concomitant spreading of militia units across the land.

However, the implosion of the Soviet Union and the concomitant fall of the Iron Curtain changed all that, and years of government budget cuts, juxtaposed with a sudden jump in the number of overseas missions, forced the Regular Force to return to the militia to augment its ranks in order to meet operational demands. But years of neglect had taken their toll, and the Regular Force resorted to a very selective culling of the militia augmentees in order to find those best qualified to augment the regulars on any given operational tour.⁶

Today, it is only common for large numbers of Regular Force members and reservists to actively train together when preparing for a deployment. Otherwise, the Regular Force has fallen back upon its historical mandate of being advisors to the militia during the militia summer training cycle. While enormous

In the Aftermath of the Cold War

Recognition that there was a discrepancy in training between regular and militia soldiers has virtually never been in question. One could even argue that it has been the source of much animosity between the two forces. But how does one effectively address the difference on a systemic basis? Efforts to close the gap between the two forces have resulted in a plethora of initiatives – such as the two-year Army Reserve Establishment (ARE) testing dynamic – that, in the end, resulted in a refusal by militia leaders to *talk to* or to *work with* the Regular Force hierarchy.⁷

What was required, and what eventually transpired, was a complete revamping of past evaluation practices and an overhaul of the training syllabus. Central to this new approach was the acknowledgement that the militia, while trained using the same syllabus – but not the



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strides have been made over the past fifteen years to mitigate shortfalls and to synchronize training practices between the Regular Force and militia, there remains much to do to fully integrate these two forces. The areas of administration, pay, and health care are but some of the areas that create unnecessary administrative burdens and are in need of streamlining.

Canada's military history speaks to the changing role of the militia, and, by extension, that of the Canadian Forces. From homeland defence, to fighting Canada's wars, to augmenting peacekeeping operations, the role of the militia has been in constant flux. And yet, the generalized and outdated public image of the Canadian soldier as a peacekeeper fails to take into account the strategic nature of Canada's deployment of its troops abroad. The shift in the global paradigm 'post 9/11' has forced the CF to re-examine its role and how it is shaped, both with respect to the Regular Force and the militia, to meet Canada's foreign policy needs. The release in May 2005 of Canada's International Policy Statement, *A Role of Pride and Influence in the World*, while not replacing the 1994 White Paper on Defence, became a first critical step in this process, and it revealed the government's new vision for the CF, and the militia's role within that vision. Under the banner of Transformation, commencing in 2002, the CF has embarked upon a reorganization, the likes of which has not been seen since Unification occurred during the late 1960s.

Change Initiatives

However, Transformation has, as yet, had little corresponding structural effect upon the militia. This is not to say that change has not occurred. Indeed, the militia has faced the hard reality that two hundred years of well-entrenched patterns of behaviour needed to be re-evaluated, and that it must expand beyond its traditional view as the basis for mobilization if it is going to meet the expectations currently being placed upon its members. To its credit, the militia has worked hard to divest itself of the 'weekend warrior/club atmosphere' that has haunted its ranks since its inception. And it has begun to adopt a more professional approach to training in an effort to increase the credibility it requires to be effective. In short, the militia soldier increasingly has begun moving toward becoming a 'full-time soldier on a part-time basis.' The question remains, however, what more can the militia do in order for it to integrate more effectively with the Regular Force while making as meaningful a contribution to Canada's defence in the future as it has done in the past?

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In part, the response has been to embark upon an Army Reserve Establishment (ARE) review to determine if it has the right mix of soldiers and regiments to meet the needs of the CF in the *foreseeable* future. While the ARE process identified that the current militia mix is adequate for the *near* term, it also highlighted the need for longer-range planning if the force is to prepare itself properly for future requirements. The resultant extension of the Army Managed Readiness System (AMRS) forecast from two years to five years out has helped provide a 'snapshot' of those future requirements, so that the militia can begin more effectively the process of preparation.

However, also highlighted as part of the ARE discussions was the need for highly skilled technicians to serve in support roles. For example, it was soon acknowledged that to train a Class-A mechanic during just three hours per week and one weekend per month was functionally impossible. In reality, it proved easier to produce drivers than to produce technicians, just as it has proved easier to produce infanteers than to produce combat support staff (CSS). And despite the militia's willingness to subject itself to scrutiny, the foregoing discussions generated the implicit realization that the ARE process needs to be applied to the Regular Force if both the regulars and the militia are to reach maximum effectiveness in the future.¹⁰



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What to Do?

Combining the best elements of past experiences with the needs of the future is a never-ending and occasionally painful process, but one that is necessary in our changing world. The debate in Canada over what to do with the militia is long-standing, and one with deep-rooted, frequently entrenched positions. On the surface, the historically constant issues of recruiting, training, funding, and retention constitute the daily preoccupations of every militia regiment. For the sergeant on the armories floor charged with their implementation they can be very frustrating issues indeed. However, these frustrations are also shared by many of his superior officers in the militia chain of command.

Today, Canada's militia members have many tangible concerns, and those concerns have many faces. Concern, for instance, that their regiments will be stripped of their best soldiers and will be required, yet again, to rebuild, or concern that regiments will not receive sufficient funds to be able to recruit and train enough soldiers to remain viable. And then there is the ultimate fear that a regiment will cease to be a living, breathing entity, stricken instead from the Order of Battle and relegated to becoming merely a historical entity.

And yet, it is undeniably the role the militia continues to play in Canadian society. As an entity, it represents a living link to Canada's past and, from the

perspective of many civilians, it continues to represent, as do all men and women in CF uniform, the physical manifestation of the last line of our national anthem. Within the military community, the militia is one of the keepers of the keys for the customs and traditions that have been passed down throughout our national history. It represents tangible evidence of the military's footprint upon the nation, and, by its very nature, it represents a great opportunity to connect and interface with mainstream Canadians on a continuous basis. As Major-General (ret'd) Edward Fitch has observed: "The average Canadian, who occasionally sees a soldier on the street, is likely looking at a militiaman."¹¹ Nevertheless, despite its proud place in Canadian history, the militia is fraught with systemic problems that threaten its existence and stymie its ability to move forward. The issues of training, money, and structure have, for example, been the militia's constant companions. And although these issues are important, at the heart of the problem lies the fundamental question: What exactly is the militia? Does it revolve around its structure or footprint, or is it related to its people, the augmentees it provides to the Regular Force? This question has been the single unchanging conundrum that can be traced throughout Canadian military history. Not surprisingly, the Regular Force and the militia each have a different viewpoint. For the militia, that viewpoint rests with its structure, while for the Regular Force, it is about the people.

Over periods of time, the needs of the Canadian military have frequently changed. Up until the Korean War, for instance, there was an undeniable requirement for foot soldiers. During the Cold War, the pendulum tended to



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swing the other way when the nuclear threat largely drove defence policies. In the wake of the Cold War, the pendulum has swung back and there has evolved yet again a compelling need for infantry – ‘boots on the ground.’ But today, it is not enough simply to put troops in place as was the case in the past. Post-Cold-War Peace Support Operations have taught the military that in order for soldiers – all soldiers – to be effective, they must be situationally aware, technically proficient, and physically fit as their traditional roles are enhanced and new ones are developed and assimilated. As US Marine Corps General Krulak has stated, “...the inescapable lesson of Somalia and of other recent operations, whether humanitarian assistance, peace-keeping, or traditional war-fighting, is that their outcome may hinge on decisions made by small unit leaders, and by actions taken at the *lowest* level.”¹² In today’s full spectrum operational environment, where sections operate some considerable distance from their command elements, a bad decision by a ‘strategic corporal’ can have political ramifications all the way up to the Prime Minister’s office. It is here that the need for more highly trained troops becomes apparent. And it is here that we see significant examples of the differences that exist between the Regular Force and the militia.

That there exists a discrepancy in the training between Regular Force and militia soldiers is a well-known and accepted fact. To expect a soldier that parades three hours a week and one weekend a month to be on a par with a professional soldier is unrealistic. And yet, in this post 9/11 world in which the role of the soldier has expanded beyond the traditional role of ‘close with and destroy,’ we have come to expect our militia soldiers to be equal in all respects to their Regular Force counterparts. However, acknowledging this gap in capabilities, the militia has taken upon itself a need to train harder and longer, and this has resulted in a force, with respect to the combat arms trades, at least, better trained than at any time in its past, and one which is, at some levels, nearly as capable as its Regular Force counterpart. But this higher tempo of training constitutes somewhat of a bittersweet pill for the militia. On one hand, it is an opportunity to do ‘real soldiering,’ and it plays well to its historical self-image of real soldiers serving on a part-time basis – a role that had been denied them for most of the latter half of the last century. As the level of training escalates, so does the hope that the militia will continue to send ever larger bodies of formed troops on deployment. These hopes frequently culminate in a dream that ‘the regiment’ will again be mobilized, and that it will be afforded an opportunity to add to the list of battle honours and proudly displayed regimental colours.

These hopes are tempered however, by the acknowledgement that if the militia continues to invest in training to the same standard as the Regular Force, more direct militia-to-Regular Force transfers will occur, and the militia will bleed away its numbers by becoming a de facto training cadre for the Regular Force.

The structure of the militia speaks to the fact that every drill hall and every armoury, and thus, every militia regiment across the nation are actually de facto recruiting centres. In a sense, that structure – the armouries, uniforms, customs and traditions – is there to offer the recruit a choice between regiments. The structure also supports the notion of national mobilization. In the wake of the Korean conflict, this argument lost much of its purchase, but faced with the Cold War National Survival alternative, it was retained and worshiped by the militia much like the proverbial sacred cow. Nevertheless, with the release of the 2005 Policy Statement, the national mobilization issue has taken on a greater significance. And, in a post 9/11 world that does not recognize a ‘safe rear area,’ the idea of having a national footprint makes eminent sense. This idea has the potential to have even greater effectiveness by virtue of the addition of short-term regional mobilization in the event of national disasters.¹³ As well, the Canadian Forces mandate to ‘Connect with Canadians’ is something perfectly suited to the militia structure, because this function has remained a constant of militia activity since its inception. Again, it makes sense in today’s media-conscious world to have military installations present in population centres all across the nation. It can be said, therefore, that its existing structure is one of the militia’s greatest strengths.

Significant Problems

Yet, as an institution, the militia represents a source of troops that is inaccessible to the Regular Force for planning purposes. Two issues lie at the root of this situation. The first is embodied in the militiaman’s right to choose. The Regular Force notion that all soldiers are deployable does not take into account the circumstances under which some militiamen serve. Even though they may play a critical role within a given militia regiment, some of its members, for whatever reason, simply cannot deploy overseas, and this reality flies in the face of task force planners.

The second is the issue of job protection, which, ultimately, is, at present, ‘the showstopper.’ Since job protection legislation is a provincial and not a federal matter, getting all the provinces to pass either the same or similar job protection legislation is highly unlikely. Given the Statistics Canada figure that seventy-five percent

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of Canadians are employed by firms with fewer than fifty employees, one quickly realizes that there would be substantial resistance to the government having the ability to take people away from jobs that are pivotal to a small firm's livelihood. The militia recognizes this, and it knows – although it is reluctant to admit – that it will never be able to progress beyond the current individual augmentation role until some form of job protection is in place.

The Regular Force, therefore, looks at the militia and sees 17,300 troops that cannot be relied upon because no one can guarantee how many troops ultimately will be available for any given tasking. Partly due to this consideration, and partly because it remains uncertain as to the level of training each augmentee brings to the table, the Regular Force remains steadfast in its belief that the militia can provide nothing more than individual augmentees or perhaps formed sub-units (platoons or companies) for deployment, and then only if the unit undergoes twice the normal amount of training.¹⁴ However, recognizing its need for the militia to provide [mostly] trained augmentees to fill out its ranks during overseas deployments, the Regular Force has acquiesced to the notion of non-traditional units, such as CIMIC and PSYOPS assets, being staffed and/or commanded

by militiamen. The fundamental issue here is one of trust. Does the CF trust the 'part-timer' to do his job without Regular Force supervision? The answer is, generally speaking, that it does not, which explains the insistence upon blending regular and militia personnel in a unit. Resistance remains rooted in the same argument as it did in General Otter's day – namely that the militia is seen by the regulars as under-trained and unprofessional.

But some of this argument, I believe, is undoubtedly based upon a biased concern from Regular Force members that they might be forced to admit that the militia could be capable of providing augmentees or sub-units as well-trained as their own with less dedicated training time, and that this would be a 'slap in the face' to their years of full-time service. At this juncture, it is perhaps worth noting that Lieutenant-General Sir Arthur Currie, and Major-General Bert Hoffmeister, both militiamen,¹⁵ were arguably the best Canadian generals of the First World War and the Second World War respectively.

Clearly, the issue of training is a catalyst for concern in both camps. Both have demonstrated a propensity to overstate their cases, and both have



Two of Canada's most distinguished battlefield commanders, both Militia officers, General Sir Arthur Currie (left), and Major-General Bertram Hoffmeister.

overstated their criticism of the other camp, as one tends to do with respect to an emotive issue. And while it is true that *training* standards are getting closer, the *service* standards are not. Experience will always be a factor. But how much experience is required before a soldier gets good at his job? The First World War efforts of Sam Hughes proved that [substantial] training was required before men were launched into battle. The lessons of the Second World War, and, to a lesser extent, Korea, both support this notion. And yet, the higher training standard now resident in the militia has shortened the pre-deployment training times significantly, to months from years. Nonetheless, a significant lesson learned from the past century is that no matter how well-trained the body of troops, there will always be a need for pre-deployment training. An objective should be, however, to keep this training as short as possible.

Conclusion

Historically, the quest for a 'silver bullet' solution to the conundrum of what to do with the militia has proven futile. The mantras of 'one army, one standard' and 'total force concept,' for instance, have not addressed the entire issue. For right or for wrong, some militiamen believe that the Regular Force has repeatedly demonstrated insensitivity to and a certain lack of understanding of the workings of the militia world. The result has been an inherent distrust by the militia of any corrective action – no matter how good it may be – put forward by the Regular Force.

The good news is that both sides are now sitting at the table, and both sides sincerely want to find a solution. In spite of this willingness, however, neither side feels entirely comfortable in relenting

on issues that it holds sacred. If a universal solution is to be found to the conundrum of the role of the militia, it will require trust, as well as give and take, from both sides.

But trust takes time, and it will need to be accompanied by certain guarantees. For the Regular Force, that guarantee could be embodied in the form of solid, usable numbers of troops trained to a specific standard and available on a scheduled basis. For the militia, it could rest in a guarantee that its structure, and for that read the number of regiments, will not be fundamentally altered – at least, not without consultation. But the true test of trust may well come in the form of a question. If the regular force finds that it cannot recruit enough people to

uphold its eighteen-month rule¹⁶ on deployments and turns to the militia for help, only to find that again they fall short in supplying the required troops, has the militia failed? If the Chief of the Defence Staff and the Chief of the Land Staff answer in the affirmative, then clearly the situation has not resolved itself.

The fact that both sides are working together is a clear acknowledgement that the military is working hard to find a workable solution, lest other people or conditions end up dictating the terms.



CWM painting 1971061-0110 by Edgar M. Bundy

Militiamen of the First Canadian Division landing at Saint-Nazaire, France, 1915.

NOTES

1. Government of Canada, *1994 White Paper* (Ottawa: Canada Communication Group, 1994), p. 2.
2. Major-General Chris Vokes to Lieutenant-General Guy Simonds, September 1952, in DHist File 73/606.
3. Captain Ernest J. Chambers, *The Canadian Militia, A History of the Origin and Development of the Force*, (Montréal: L.M. Fresco, 1907), p. 11.
4. Definition for term "Militia," Oxford Concise Dictionary, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 641.
5. Chambers, p. 11.
6. See Kurt Grant, *All Tigers No Donkeys* (St. Catharines, ON: Vanwell Publishing, 2004), Part Two, "Getting Ready."
7. The Command Consultative Advisory Group (CCAG) had been formed by the Project Management Office, Land Force Reserve Restructuring program (PMO LFRR) However, the group had ceased to function following an explosive meeting in April 1999 over the Regular Force evaluation of the reserve establishment. In a move that paralleled the resistance encountered by the early GOCs attempting to reorganize the militia in the 1860s, the militia, in effect, mutinied somewhat, and relations remained 'strained' for some time thereafter. It was not until the release of the 2000 Fraser Report, *In Service of the Nation*, and the appointment of Lieutenant-General Michael Jeffery as Chief of the Land Staff (CLS) that things began to change. The new head of PMO LFRR, Major-General Edward Fitch (appointed in November 2001), worked hard to reduce tensions between the two groups and get the militia leaders on side by resurrecting the CCAG. This new group consisted of representatives from Reserves 2000 (a political lobby group), honorary colonels, the Army Council, the four area commanders and deputy commanders, and the Director General of Land Reserves. Their purpose was to discuss, in an open forum chaired by the CLS, General Jeffery, how the militia could fit into Canada's future army. From this group, a new Army Reserve Establishment (ARE) process was agreed upon and subsequently implemented.
8. As an example, a 'Reserve 6B' warrant officers course includes only the offensive and defensive components of the full course. The mechanized infantry component is taught only to the Regular Force soldier, despite the clear need for such training for all, as evidenced by operations in Afghanistan. The DP2A (IPSW) course components should include small arms, C6, 60 mm mortar and anti-tank weapons, notably *Eryx*. However, militia members are not issued the *Eryx* (but, rather, the 84 mm Carl Gustav), and it does not constitute part of the militia course syllabus.
9. Tours in Afghanistan and the former Yugoslavia have taught us that soft skills, such as sales and negotiation, as well as trades, such as carpentry, electrical work, and even project management, not normally resident in a combat arms platoon, can occasionally play a critical role in winning the hearts and minds of local citizens.
10. Remarks made by delegates at the Army Reserve Establishment Review Working Group Meeting, held 12 October 2005 at Cartier Square Drill Hall in Ottawa.
11. Statement by Major-General Fitch in the course of a personal interview with the author.
12. General Charles C. Krulak, "*The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War*," in *Marines Magazine*, January 1999.
13. Short-term call up would take the form of a Class B contract for a period of thirty days or less. Given that the area in question would be a national disaster area, businesses would be closed – as was the case during the 1998 ice storm in Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec – and militia soldiers would be free to assist. Since higher rank levels tend to be more established individuals within the community, the short-term nature of the employment would be more agreeable to businesses that re-establish themselves quickly following a disaster. Additionally, the employment could be seen as a way to help augment missed wages during business closures. Currently, only militia soldiers who are students, those willing to quit their jobs, and the unemployed volunteer for such service.
14. Charlie Company, Roto 13, *Operation Palladium* (in the former Yugoslavia) was entirely composed of militiamen and its members conducted an additional six months of *pre-pre-training* prior to joining battalion for pre-deployment training.
15. General Sir Arthur Currie was a key planner of the April 1917 Canadian Corps attack upon Vimy Ridge, and went on to command brilliantly the corps shortly thereafter until the end of the First World War. Major-General B.M. Hoffmeister commanded the Canadian 5th Armoured Corps from March 1944 until war's end. Once the war was over in Europe, Hoffmeister was appointed Officer Commanding of the 6th Division, the Canadian Army's Pacific Forces.
16. This is not a hard and fast rule supported by documentation. It is an informal policy within the army to allow soldiers sufficient time to recover and to retrain following a tour. It also allows a battalion time to rebuild. Unfortunately it is not being adhered to because the CF is under strength at present and cannot support such an initiative.

