

5 Canada and collective action in Afghanistan

Theory meets practice

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Introduction¹

Why, and how much, did Canada contribute to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan? What are the motives that explain Canada's contribution to NATO's ISAF? And what form of operational adaptation, if any, was made during those deployments? These were the three main questions that the authors of this volume were tasked to examine in order to better allow an understanding as to why Canada either underperformed or overperformed in the ISAF mission.

While the search for answers as to why Canada continuously contributed to ISAF may be found in the particular (geopolitical) discourse that prevailed in the aftermath of 9/11, the probably more interesting question is how much of the collective ISAF burden Ottawa shouldered and what intervening variables and factors, if any, led to a change of Ottawa's burden sharing behaviour? To be sure, this chapter concentrates only on the military commitments of the operation as the non-military or civilian burden sharing indicators are convoluted with imprecise and competing independent variables and data sets. The Canadian case is a particularly interesting one in this regard for at least two reasons. First, collective action theorists remind us that, while alliances are conceived as institutions that provide a common public good (collective defence) (Olson 1965; Olson and Zeckhauser 1966), the benefits of that public good are expected to be non-rival and non-excludable.² The logical insight that results from this is that the more powerful states shoulder a disproportionately higher contribution to the collective good than their less powerful allies.³ Another second insight was that, because of the imbalance of power in an alliance, there is a tendency among second- and third-tier states (or middle powers) to contribute less to the collective benefit of the public good than they receive from it. This is most commonly referred to as free-riding whereby the non-payers of the public good continue to enjoy the good despite their lack of payments.⁴ The second reason why the Canadian case is interesting is that juxtaposed to this notion of free-riding, it is surprising then that Canada has since its redeployment to Afghanistan in 2003 consistently ranked among the top NATO force contributors. It thus shouldered an unexpectedly larger portion of the collective burden than allies of comparable size.

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1 Against this backdrop, I argue that the model the editors of this volume
 2 propose in Figure I.3 explains some important aspects of the behaviour of
 3 member states in ISAF. However, when using this model to test the Canadian
 4 case, the model can only partially explain the Canadian behaviour. Specifically,
 5 I suggest that it does not include the situation where states like Canada can have
 6 a strong commitment posture at the beginning of an operation but face a non-
 7 dependence on the alliance.

8 The chapter starts with a review of the most pertinent conceptual remarks put
 9 forward by the editors in the introductory chapter of this volume and with a
 10 focus on Canada. I then move on to a discussion of the historical trajectory of
 11 Canada's alliance relationships. This will allow us to better understand Canada's
 12 alliance behaviour from a historical perspective and to acquire a first insight as
 13 to why Canada possibly behaved in the way it did in NATO after 9/11. What
 14 follows is a discussion of the share of the collective burden that Canada should-
 15 dered in NATO's current ISAF mission. The focus of that discussion, as
 16 requested by the editors, rests on the period between 2006 and 2011. Finally, I
 17 will highlight a few intervening factors that compelled the Canadian government
 18 to adjust the strategic objectives of the mission and move towards a process of
 19 adaptation.

20 21 Conceptual remarks

22 While the editors have introduced in their opening chapter the theoretical frame-
 23 work of this volume that was inspired by the works of Bennett, Leggold and
 24 Unger (Bennett *et al.* 1994), it is worthwhile to elucidate a bit further on the
 25 theoretical underpinnings of alliance behaviour in order to deduce accurate con-
 26 clusions as to why and how extensive Canada's contribution to NATO's Afghan
 27 mission was between 2006 and 2011. This is necessary because the Canadian
 28 case is not so clear cut as to correspond neatly to the baseline assumptions
 29 informing this framework. As I will demonstrate below, Canada does not entirely
 30 fit into the analytical clusters in the matrix in Figure I.1 outlined by the editors.

31 We should start by recalling two of their hypotheses of why states contribute
 32 to international alliances and thus international cost sharing. The first one is the
 33 balance of threat hypothesis. Based on Stephen Walt's balance of threat theory
 34 (Walt 1987), it assumes that states run against potential threats and hostile
 35 powers that could negatively affect their continued existence. More precisely,
 36 states distance themselves from potential aggressors when they detect evidence
 37 of hostile intentions or offensive (military) behaviour and force postures against
 38 them. Taken together, this affects how states *perceive* threats that are potentially
 39 directed towards them, and determines the level and degree of their responses
 40 (Jervis 1976; Sears *et al.* 2003).

41 In our case, Afghanistan – supported by potent financial donors in the Middle
 42 East – was determined to pose a significant threat to the security of the NATO
 43 alliance as it evidently hosted and trained the ringleaders that carried out the
 44 terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001 (Buckley and Fawn 2003; National
 45

Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States *et al.* 2004; Schmidt 2007; Government of Afghanistan and United Nations Development Programme 2005; NATO 2001). Inspired by collective action theories, the balance of threat hypothesis assumes that those states that face the greatest threats will pay the highest share of the burden (see, for example, Keohane 1984: Chapter 10).⁵ Those shares could be either financial or military in nature. In our case it is undoubtedly the United States that perceived threats of radical Islamism originating from Afghanistan. The case of Canada, however, is slightly more complex. It was not physically threatened directly by this new wave of terrorism that started on 9/11. However, the political and military consequences of these activities affected Ottawa's inextricably close bilateral relationship with the United States. While America was hurt, Canada felt the pain. Its initial reaction was to stand by its close friend and take responsibility for not becoming a strategic liability to its closest ally and thus endanger its special relationship with America.

The second central hypothesis put forward by Bennett *et al.* (1994) is that conditions of alliance dependence can compel states to contribute to an alliance. Thereby a degree of pressure from one ally or a group of allies is levied upon a state to behave in a certain way. Members of an alliance naturally face two intractably linked challenges: they risk being either abandoned or entrapped. A situation of abandonment is likely when a particular state either fails to contribute to addressing hostile aggressors, or when it decides to align itself with that aggressor and thus acts contrary to the alliance's collective will. Risks of entrapment endure when one particular state becomes – in one way or another – a constituent of a conflict that is of great significance to the leading ally. The state thereby hopes that 'preserving the alliance will outweigh the risks and costs of future war' (Bennett *et al.* 1994: 44). The nature of the dependent relationship could be either economic or military in nature. In our case in Afghanistan, the leading ally would be the United States. Canada would run the risk of entrapment if it were to become involved, voluntarily or involuntarily, in a conflict that touches upon America's vital national interests. To put it simply, the alliance dependency hypothesis assumes that the more an ally is dependent on the United States, the more that country will contribute to the collective cause of NATO's Afghanistan operation (see, for example, Kupchan 1988; Snyder 1984). In turn, if a state fears the risk of being entrapped, it is expected to commit to non-military assistance rather than military forces (Bennett *et al.* 1994: 44).

From alliance to alliance⁶ – a brief historical review of Canada and NATO

This section will discuss this trajectory briefly, because it can be seen as a basis to explain Canada's alliance behaviour after 9/11. It thus provides an early indication as to which hypothesis – alliance dependence or threat balancing – might be at work in ISAF.

1 Canada has shown a history of allying itself with the dominant power. Back
2 in 1867 until the end of the First World War, Canada was closely allied with the
3 British Empire. Being a dominion in the British Empire meant that the govern-
4 ing authority of Canada's national security policy rested with Westminster rather
5 than Ottawa. The government held no constitutional rights in its external rela-
6 tions; it did what it was told by the British. Thus, it was hardly surprising that
7 when Britain declared war on Imperial Germany in 1914, Canada entered the
8 war alongside the UK. Yet, the decision of the extent of its contribution rested
9 with the Canadian government rather than the empire (Sokolsky 1989). Against
10 the high sacrifices in blood and treasure it had endured during the war, Canada
11 incrementally demanded more autonomy from the British Empire after the war
12 and became a sovereign signatory of the Versailles Treaty. Full constitutional
13 independence was obtained from Britain in 1931 with the Statute of Westminster
14 (Wheare 1953).

15 This new autonomy also allowed government officials to define their relations
16 with the United States, which was in the process of replacing the status previ-
17 ously held by Britain. During an honorary degree ceremony at Queen's Univer-
18 sity in 1938, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Canadian Prime Minister
19 McKenzie King exchanged declarations by which the United States would not
20 stand 'idly by if domination of Canadian soil is threatened by another empire'
21 (quoted in Eayrs 1965: 183). The Prime Minister replied in kind, assuring
22 America that Canada would make itself immune to an attack as much as possible
23 (Eayrs 1965: 183). In other words, Canada restored confidence in its neighbour
24 that at no point in time it would become a strategic liability to the United States.⁷
25 These declarations then marked the basis of the Ogdensburg Agreement in 1940,
26 which was a bilateral Canada–United States defence agreement and created the
27 Permanent Joint Board of Defence (PJBD). Since then the PJBD has been a key
28 organization that provided governance for the security of the North American
29 continent (Keenleyside 1960; Holsti and Levy 1974; Haglund *et al.* 1989;
30 Pearson 1946).

31 Being fully sovereign after the Second World War and physically unharmed
32 by the war, the government accepted the new international responsibilities that
33 came with full independence and helped to create, manage and govern a number
34 of international institutions.⁸ Most notably in this respect are the United Nations
35 (UN), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (Chapnick 2005), and the
36 North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD). The latter two organ-
37 izations, in particular, have formed the most central alliance relationships that
38 Canada has ever engaged in since the end of the Second World War.⁹ As NATO
39 was a Euro-centric organization built to 'to keep the Russians out, the Germans
40 down and the Americans in',¹⁰ Europe became Canada's front line of defence.
41 As part of its commitment to keep the peace and prevent a Russian invasion into
42 Western Europe, policy makers in Ottawa decided to forwardly deploy forces in
43 Germany for the next four decades – c.7,000 troops, 44 fighter aircraft, and 77
44 tanks in Germany (Sokolsky 1989: 13) – which symbolized Canada's commit-
45 ment to NATO (Zyla 2007).

By holding international institutions and thus the practice of multilateralism high, these values set the normative precondition against which Canadian internationalism would be practised. Most chiefly among those normative values are world order, political liberty, the rule of law and the willingness to accept international responsibilities (Chapnick 2007; Michaud 2007).¹¹ Indeed, multilateralism and commitment to international institutions became Canada's foremost foreign policy doctrine (Stairs 1982: 667).

In light of an increasing Cold War vulnerability of Canada and the United States as a result of improving Soviet missile capabilities and long-range bombers, the bilateral security relationship between Ottawa and Washington became a second constant reality in Canadian foreign policy that is still applicable today. For itself, Canada soberly recognized that it was unable to defend itself against such acts of Soviet aggression, which led to negotiations with the Americans about the stationing of a series of radar lines in the north and the birth of NORAD in 1957, which functioned as an institutional control mechanism for the North American airspace (see, for example, Jockel 2007; Simpson 2001).

The effect of this cooperative yet imbalanced power relationship was that Canada's threat perceptions became influenced by those of its southern neighbour. It sided with the United States during the Cold War and, like America, perceived the Soviet Union as the most pivotal threat to its national security (see, for example, de Chastelain 1992: 8; Jockel and Sokolsky 2009: 318, 320; Leyton-Brown 1991: 20). This makes Canadian security interests closely tied to those of the United States which had the effect, as one analyst noted, that Canada views global threats through the 'prism' of the United States (Doran 1984: 139).

This historically derived bilateral security relationship with the United States is the chief reason that explains why Canada is the only US ally that directly participates in the defence of the North American homeland. No naval force other than that of Canada is so closely integrated with the US Navy. Similarly, Ottawa is the only ally that holds formal defence production agreements with American defence industries that provides privileged access for Canadian defence businesses in the American defence market. America trusts Canadian security institutions and officials like no other country.

The end of the Cold War brought new international responsibilities for Canada in international organizations like the UN and NATO. In spite of a short period of defence curtailment that brought an end to Canada's forwardly deployed forces in Germany in 1994 (Bland and Maloney 2004; Rempel 1992: 165; Simpson 2000), Canada continued to make major contributions to its alliances in the 1990s, especially to NATO in the Balkans. While this may seem surprising, given the cutbacks in Canadian defence spending in the 1990s, it should not be. As in the Cold War, Canada continued to perceive threats to international security and peace overseas rather than at home. Three factors facilitated these deployments to NATO's peace support operations in the Balkans. The first of these is that, because of the closure of the two bases in Germany in 1994, the government found itself with excess capabilities on its hands to support international stability operations. Second, Canada (as well as the United

1 States) had such expeditionary capabilities to project power abroad precisely
2 because its forces were postured in such a way since the early years of the Cold
3 War. Third, the government could count on strong domestic support for these
4 deployments. Against this background, it is hardly surprising that Ottawa availed
5 itself for NATO's ISAF mission.

6 The events on 9/11 brought the threat of terrorism closer to home. The gov-
7 ernment's threat perception allowed Canada to upkeep its international commit-
8 ments, and to make forces available for the American-led Operation Enduring
9 Freedom.¹² Canada's expeditionary capabilities were, once again, the primary
10 means by which the country availed itself to yet another peace operation. To
11 some, it was probably the most dangerous that Canada had ever engaged in
12 (Gimblett 2002: 14–16; Welsh 2004). The initial deployment included six naval
13 vessels, multiple aircraft and 2,000 troops (see House of Commons, Canada
14 2008a, 2008b, 2008c; Lang and Stein 2007). Indeed, the Afghan mission became
15 Canada's most salient dimension of its unrelenting dedication to NATO. Some
16 analysts have argued that this enthusiasm for the success of NATO was stronger
17 than NATO's collective commitment to itself (Zyla 2010a, 2010b).

18 By the end of 2011, Canada's Afghanistan mission will have been a top priori-
19 ty for Canada's foreign and defence policy for nearly a decade. As the mission
20 is scheduled to undergo significant changes in summer 2011 (see, for example,
21 Austen 2010; Yaffe 2010), it is worth revisiting the extent of the burden that
22 Canada shouldered throughout that decade as well as considering the intervening
23 factor(s), if any, that affected the mission along the way.

24 **Canada's share of the burden in Afghanistan**¹³

25 It is a widely known part of the foreign policy discourse that Canada first
26 deployed troops to Afghanistan in January 2002 for two reasons.¹⁴ First, it
27 wanted to assist its American ally in a time of need (Lang and Stein 2007). To
28 be sure, this reasoning was consistent with its historical trajectory from alliance
29 to alliance. The second reason was that it wanted to support UN Resolution
30 1363¹⁵ (Report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and
31 Defence 2008). However, these troops returned home to Canada in July 2002.

32 In August 2003 Prime Minister Jean Chrétien decided to increase Canada's
33 contingent to NATO's UN-sanctioned¹⁶ International Stabilization Assistance
34 Force (ISAF) in an attempt to divert US pressure to commit forces to Iraq (Lang
35 and Stein 2007). Prior to this, NATO had taken over full command responsibil-
36 ities from the UN and expanded its area of operations to the entire country of
37 Afghanistan. On 17 March he had told the House of Commons that Canada was
38 not going to participate in Iraq.¹⁷ This came as a surprise to officials in Washing-
39 ton who had been led to believe that Canada was with them in the event of an
40 attack on Iraq.¹⁸ To be sure, while Chrétien's decision-making style may be sur-
41 prising to some, it should not be. Starting in the early 1990s, national security
42 issues were consistently decided behind closed doors at 'the centre': the Prime
43 Minister's Office and the Privy Council Office. All other federal departments
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with a foreign policy portfolio were held at a distance and away from any real influence.

The Prime Minister's successor, Paul Martin, chose to redeploy Canadian troops from Kabul to Kandahar where Canada assumed command of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) from US forces.¹⁹ The PRT's objective was to foster local reconstruction efforts and to promote redevelopment. An additional 1,000 troops were moved into theatre, and Canada's General David Fraser became the commanding officer for the multinational brigade of Regional Command-South in ISAF in February 2006.²⁰ This was also the time when Canadian troops actively began to frequently face situations of combat, mostly in the province of Kandahar.²¹ Unlike most other NATO allies, Canada was (and still is) one of the few countries that did not attach operational restrictions (or caveats) to its forces.

While there was no extensive debate in the House of Commons on the nature and extent of this mission,²² there appears to be ample evidence that there was no widespread opposition among the public to these deployments. Nonetheless, Canada was under some tense bilateral pressures to prove its military commitments to Uncle Sam (Lang and Stein 2007: 261–2), and to satisfy American demands for a greater Canadian share of the burden to fight international terrorism.

Table 5.1²³ shows the extent of the contribution to ISAF of the top four NATO member states between 2007 and 2010 in *absolute terms*. It is evident that the United States shouldered by far the largest burden of all allies. It furnished a total of 139,876 troops or 54.3 per cent of the entire ISAF force and thus superseded those of all other NATO allies combined. This makes America, in the language of collective action theorists, a net contributor. To be sure, the extent of the US burden is not the result of the troop surge announced by President Obama in early 2010. The second highest force contribution to ISAF was made by the United Kingdom, which shouldered nearly 30 per cent of the total ISAF forces (32,953 troops in total).

Canada, on the other hand, is probably the most surprising case in Table 5.1. While conventionally conceived as a middle power (Chapnick 1999; Cooper *et al.* 1993; Holbraad 1984; Holmes 1976) and thus running the tendency to free-ride rather than contribute to a collective action,²⁴ it became one of the top shareholders of ISAF. In *absolute terms*, Canadians not only stepped up to the plate when the call from NATO arrived in Ottawa; they also shouldered an exceedingly high share of the collective burden (4.1 per cent) that was beyond and above their relative ability.²⁵ Canada certainly punched above its weight and outperformed conventional major powers like Germany, France or Italy.

When seeing Canadian contributions to ISAF in *relative terms*, the extent of the Canadian share becomes even more distinct. Specifically, Table 5.2 shows the ISAF contributions of selected NATO member states calculated as a share of their total active military duty personnel. In other words, it determines the share of military personnel deployed to Afghanistan as a percentage of the size of the armed forces that is currently employed by the member state.

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Table 5.1 Canada's ISAF troop deployments, 2007–2010

Country/year (on average)	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total 2007–2010	% of total	% of change 2007–2010	Rank
USA	15,150	19,406	27,830	77,490	139,876	54.3	411.5	1
UK	6,539	8,326	8,587	9,500	32,952	12.8	45.3	2
Germany	3,031	3,400	3,664	4,401	14,496	5.6	45.2	3
Canada	2,363	2,536	2,826	2,867	10,592	4.1	21.3	4
Total NATO ISAF forces	37,985	46,860	58,711	114,199	257,756	100.0	2,267.6	
Average	1,461	1,802	2,097	4,079	9,206	3.6	81.0	

Source: North Atlantic Treaty Organization, ISAF Placemats, 2007–2010, available at www.isaf.nato.int/troop-numbers-and-contributions/index.php (accessed 24 November 2010). All calculations made by author.

Table 5.2 ISAF contributions as a share of active military duty personnel, 2007–2010

Country/year	% of total available national force	Rank
Canada	4.36	1
UK	4.35	2
Netherlands	3.29	3
Denmark	3.18	4
Estonia	3.11	5
USA	2.49	6
Lithuania	2.33	7
Norway	2.31	8
Latvia	2.22	9
Albania	1.79	10
Croatia	1.76	11
Czech Republic	1.61	12
Germany	1.45	13
Italy	1.36	14
Hungary	1.35	15
Bulgaria	1.32	16
Poland	1.28	17
Romania	1.24	18
Belgium	1.13	19
Slovak Republic	1.01	20
Slovenia	0.99	21
Luxembourg	0.91	22
France	0.76	23
Spain	0.71	24
Portugal	0.30	25
Turkey	0.22	26
Greece	0.09	27
Iceland	0.00	28

Source: Calculations by author.

While Germany, for example, deployed a total of 14,496 soldiers of the Bundeswehr to NATO's ISAF mission, its relative force share currently deployed in Afghanistan is only 1.45 per cent. For a country in the heart of Europe that employs more than 250,000 active military personnel (International Institute for Strategic Studies 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010), this is a rather low share. Most surprising in Table 5.2, however, is that conventional middle powers like Canada, the Netherlands and Denmark are top-tier shareholders rather than free-riders. They thus contributed more to the public good than they received from it.

In returning to the two hypotheses posed by Bennett *et al.* it can be noted that, while Canada undoubtedly felt the pressures of alliance abandonment in the early 1990s because of its unilateral decision to close the two forward operating bases in Germany in 1994 (see, for example, Zyla and Sokolsky 2010: 236; Zyla 2009: 346), no such sources of stress could be detected in the ongoing ISAF mission in Afghanistan. Put differently, in the case of NATO's Afghanistan mission, there is little empirical evidence to suggest that Canada ran the risk of

1 alliance abandonment. Canada's return to Afghanistan in 2003, after small and
 2 short stints in Operation Enduring Freedom in 2001–2002, comes closest to what
 3 one might call alliance dependence. In light of the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the
 4 United States levied significant political pressure upon Canada to join the
 5 American-led coalition of the willing. While this sounds like an alliance entrap-
 6 ment of some sort, one must caution to see this as a clear indication for such an
 7 allegiance for two reasons. First, it is unclear at this point in time – and for as
 8 long as confidential cabinet documents are not publically released – how exten-
 9 sive and targeted this political pressure really was. Thus, it is difficult to speak of
 10 Canada being entrapped in the alliance. More so, there is no indication as of yet
 11 that at any point in time Canada's political leadership had deliberations of not
 12 joining in the support of the alliance after 9/11. Second, even if it was the case
 13 that America attempted to bully Canada into a war in Iraq, Canada's role as a
 14 non-permanent member of the UN Security Council strongly suggested that
 15 Ottawa was on the record as being in favour of sending additional weapons
 16 inspectors rather than combat forces (Heinbecker 2010; Blix 2004). While it is
 17 alleged that Prime Minister Chrétien redeployed CF personnel to Afghanistan in
 18 order to avoid sending forces to Iraq, objectively verifiable evidence for such
 19 claim remains to be seen.²⁶

20 The balance of threat hypothesis is even less convincing as there appears to
 21 be no indication that the pockets of Islamic terrorism originating from Afghanis-
 22 tan directly threatened Canada. Such threats against Canada were not voiced
 23 until 2009 (ITAC 2009) and noted that al-Qa'ida (AQ) 'has specifically identi-
 24 fied Canada as a target on several occasions'. Moreover, 'homegrown Islamist
 25 extremists remain a threat to Canada'. Even if this was the case, it is hardly con-
 26 vincing to argue that the *Überproportion* of Canada's share of the burden in
 27 ISAF is the result of violently expressed physical threats against Canada. Even if
 28 we assume that there could be such a relationship (see the introductory chapter),
 29 there is also no direct causality between the level and extent of heroin trade in
 30 the Canadian case. While addressing the problems of poppy cultivation and the
 31 opium trade may be one of the side effects of the mission, public discourse does
 32 not allow us to easily verify this direct 'cause' and 'effect' relationship (causal-
 33 ity) as the editors suggest. Certainly in the Canadian case, it is far more
 34 complicated.

36 Intervening factors

37 The purpose of this section is to follow what the editors called the 'factors that
 38 makes coalitions s/tick'. To be sure, the list presented below is only a prelimi-
 39 nary one and does not claim to be exhaustive or complete.²⁷

40 The first one relates to what the editors cluster as 'public support' for the
 41 ISAF mission among the general public. While Canada has become increasingly
 42 drawn into a counterinsurgency operation in Kandahar since 2006, the number
 43 of casualties continuously rose from two in 2003 to 138 in 2009. In 2010 alone,
 44 ISAF witnessed a 70 per cent increase in insurgent attacks (Canada 2010b: 3).
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This hardened the public perception that the government ‘muddled through’ rather than coherently addressed the mission’s challenges and progress against objectively verifiable and established benchmarks. It prompted a heated debate in the House of Commons on Canada’s overall role and future in that mission. One aspect of this discussion, of course, was the huge financial commitment. On top of the \$2.1 billion of development money and foreign aid that Canada sent to Afghanistan, its military spent an estimated additional \$9 billion (2001–2011).²⁸ Another hotly debated issue was whether or not Canada should maintain its combat forces in theatre and thus ‘civilianize’ the operation, or whether the entire mission should be withdrawn.

Against this backdrop, opinion surveys show a decline in the confidence that the public has in the process of Canada’s mission in Afghanistan (see, for example, Moens 2008: 577, 580). When was the time that troops should come home? Polls suggested that the majority of them would like to see their troops return home. For example, an Angus Reid as well as an Environics poll of September 2008 suggests that 59 per cent (56 per cent respectively) disapprove of Canada contributing forces and resources beyond 2009.²⁹ This is so notwithstanding the US troop surge, which allowed Canadian forces personnel to engage less in combat-oriented missions. Despite this wide public disagreement with the military mission, the civilian component of Canada’s engagement, according to some, could report some success (Holland 2010). In short, Canadians and some of their elected officials alike became increasingly divided about the utility and sacrifices that the deployments brought about (Canada 2010a: 2).

Currently, no political party supports an extension of the combat role in Kandahar. Only the Liberal Party most recently indicated that it was in favour of maintaining forces in the country beyond the 2011 deadline for the purpose of training Afghan security forces. Faced with political pressure from the opposition parties, as well as Washington, to extend Canada’s mission in Afghanistan beyond 2011, the Harper government caved in and decided to leave a yet to be determined number of troops in Afghanistan. Those forces are presumed to operate ‘inside the wire’ and train Afghan security forces. All combat operations, however, are scheduled to stop some time over the summer of 2011.

The second factor or variable that can affect an existing alliance is ‘executive strength’. This refers to the ability of government leaders to maintain a coherent policy on Afghanistan without risking fragmentation or being outflanked by the opposition. This is a particularly viable factor in Canada as Prime Minister Harper has governed with a minority government since February 2006. Put differently, while Afghanistan has been a particularly contentious topic of partisan politics in Ottawa, it had the potential on a number of occasions to bring down the government (for example, the confidence motion in the House of Commons after the publication of the Manley report).

In an attempt to address growing concerns about the nature, scope and extent of the mission, as well as to answer the question of when the troops would return home, Prime Minister Harper called upon an independent panel under the chairmanship of former Minister of Foreign Affairs, John Manley, in October 2007 to

1 study these questions. It was established to review, analyse and advise the gov-
2 ernment on Canada's civilian and military engagements in Afghanistan. At the
3 same time, the government expressed its desire to extend the mission until 2011
4 and that decisions on future deployments be subject to a new vote in the House
5 of Commons.³⁰ Among its findings, the Manley report suggested that Canada
6 should remain in Afghanistan beyond 2009 if an additional battle group was
7 deployed to Kandahar by the NATO allies, and if government officials could
8 guarantee more lift-helicopters as well as unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) for
9 the purpose of collecting intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. It also
10 suggested increasing Canada's reconstruction efforts and the training of Afghan
11 security forces. The panel concluded that if those two conditions cannot be met,
12 'the Government should give appropriate notice to the Afghan and allied gov-
13 ernments of its intention to transfer responsibility for security in Afghanistan'
14 (Independent Panel 2008: 35). Shortly after the Manley report was published,
15 the House of Commons voted in favour of a confidence motion that extends
16 Canada's Afghanistan mission until 2011. While a showdown over this issue
17 was evident in the days leading to this vote, the Liberal Party agreed to a com-
18 promise that allowed the motion to pass on 13 March 2008.

19 This new motion asked the government to place more emphasis on the civil-
20 ian aspects of the mission, including a boost for the training of Afghan security
21 forces that would allow them to increasingly take responsibility for their own
22 security, as well as more aid and reconstruction. The military mission was made
23 contingent on the 'redeployment of Canadian troops out of Kandahar and their
24 replacement by Afghan forces [...] as soon as possible'. However, the motion
25 did not address the situation where no Afghan forces are ready to assume such
26 responsibilities. It also named an official representative of Canada to Kandahar
27 Province along with a departmental task force for coordinating Canada's whole-
28 of-government efforts.

29 At home, a special committee on Canada's Afghanistan mission was called
30 upon to bolster the transparency and accountability of the mission.³¹ Among
31 other things, it became deeply involved in the issue of detainee abuses. Canadi-
32 ans were allegedly turning a blind eye to the situation of Afghan prisons where
33 abuse and torture were allegedly widespread. The 2008 motion calls for Cana-
34 dian forces personnel to apply diligence in protecting the human rights of detain-
35 ees, increase transparency of the issue and report abuses.

36 The decision in the United States for a new strategy in Afghanistan can be
37 counted as an external intervening force. Starting in 2009, President Obama
38 announced the deployment of additional forces as well as a fuller integration of
39 America's civilian and military commitments and an increased foreign aid
40 budget (Canada 2009: 3).³² In 2009 alone, the number of American troops
41 deployed to the southern provinces rose from 5,900 to about 20,000 by the end
42 of the summer.³³ The arrival of additional US troops to the province of Kandahar
43 also changed the scope and area of operation of the CF personnel. American
44 forces took responsibility for Kandahar city while CF personnel concentrated on
45 the Dand and Paniwayi districts (Canada 2010b: 4).

In sum, these few examples indicate that a weak Canadian executive, because of its minority status, had a particular effect on the mission in Afghanistan. More specifically, the government installed an independent panel to review Canada's military and civilian operation that put forward recommendations on how to improve the mission. A confidence vote in the House of Commons underlines the insecurity of the government handling this file. The report, as well as the motion in the House, led to significant operational changes. While public support remained split, measuring the impact of these public opinions on the actual Afghanistan policy of the government is an incredibly difficult task to undertake. It warrants a far more extensive explanatory analysis to clearly show this causality. Nonetheless, as I have suggested above, public opinion – in one way or another – led to the implementation of the Manley report and consistently questioned Canada's political elite on the scope, nature and extent of the mission.

In returning to the editors' hypothesis of what makes coalitions stick together as they outlined in the introductory chapter, the analysis of the Canadian case cannot entirely support their model as shown in Figure I.3. While Canada's commitment posture in Afghanistan, as the previous section suggested, was undeniably high at the beginning, the analysis could not confirm a high degree of alliance dependence. Unfortunately, Figure I.3 does not hold the possibility of a high commitment posture and a low alliance dependence. Thus, one may conclude, the Canadian case fits best somewhere between Option 2 and 3, and calls for an amendment of the model.

Conclusion and theoretical implications

Canada has been a good ally in NATO's current ISAF mission in Afghanistan. To speak with the language of collective action theorists, it was not a free-rider but an ally that contributed more to the public good than it received by way of benefit from it. This is especially so when one considers its military contributions in relative terms – that is, its weight against its ability to contribute to a collective cause. I have suggested that measuring Canada's absolute military deployments as a share of the size of the armed forces is one way to determine this relative force share. Above all, a member state can only deploy as many troops on multinational operations as it has soldiers available in its national armed forces.

To follow the extension of the model that was introduced by the editors in Figure I.3 based on the works of Bennett *et al.*, I argued that while Canada's initial commitment posture was high, the case for alliance dependence could not be verified. Moreover, the Canadian case is not as clearly cut to determine whether or not a strong or weak form of executive power was in government during the time of investigation. Above all, since its first deployments to Afghanistan in 2002, Canada has been governed by three different Prime Ministers – all of whom had different domestic agendas on their mind. I therefore close by concluding that, while the model outlined in Figure I.3. explains a number of foreign policy behaviours, it does not fully explain Canada's alliance behaviour precisely

1 because the model does not provide space for a country with high commitment
 2 postures, a weak executive, *and* a low or medium alliance dependence. As it cur-
 3 rently stands, the model shows that a country with a high commitment posture
 4 can only experience a variation of degree with regard to the condition of the
 5 executive. This empirical testing of the Canadian case then suggests that allies
 6 could also choose a behavioural option that is at the intersection of Option 2 and
 7 Option 3.
 8

9 Notes

- 11 1 I would like to acknowledge the assistance of the Social Sciences and Humanities
 12 Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and the Centre for International Relations at
 13 Queen's University, Canada with conducting research for this chapter; Gregory
 14 Liedtke provided comments on earlier drafts. The usual disclaimers apply.
- 15 2 A public good is considered non-rival when a unit of that public good can be con-
 16 sumed by one member state without diminishing the benefits for all other members.
 17 The benefits of a public good are non-excludable 'if they cannot be withheld at an
 18 affordable cost by the good's provider' (Sandler and Hartley 1999: 29).
- 19 3 This is also known as the 'exploitation hypothesis' (See Sandler and Hartley 1995:
 20 Chapter 2).
- 21 4 Domestic politics could also be a factor that may lead states to engage in free-riding
 22 despite being an integral part and thus dependent on the alliance for delivering a
 23 public good (See Bennett *et al.* 1994; 1997: 70).
- 24 5 For a greater discussion of whether states balance against those threats or bandwagon
 25 toward their source see Jervis and Snyder (1991).
- 26 6 This term is borrowed from Sokolsky (1989: 15).
- 27 7 This was often referred to as the 'defence against help' paradigm in Canadian foreign
 28 policy (Orvik 1981, 1983a, 1983b). For a discussion of this strategy see Barry and
 29 Bratt (2008); Lagassé (2010b).
- 30 8 Secretary of State for External Affairs, Louis St. Laurent, was the first leader among
 31 Western democracies to call for a transatlantic pact (MacKay 1971: 97; Chapnick
 32 2006, 2007).
- 33 9 For a greater discussion see, for example, Jockel (2007); Sokolsky (1990).
- 34 10 One might also add 'the French happy'. Lord Ismay was the first Secretary General of
 35 NATO between 1949 and 1957.
- 36 11 Those normative principles of Canadian foreign policy are based on the 'Gray
 37 Lecture' by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Louis St. Laurent, in 1947. See St.
 38 Laurent (1947).
- 39 12 For a detailed discussion of this operation see US Congress (2002); Center of Military
 40 History (2004); Tripp and Project Air Force (US) (2004). For a historical discussion
 41 of Canada and Operation Enduring Freedom see, for example, Pigott (2007); Stein
 42 and Lang (2007); Warnock (2008); Maloney (2009).
- 43 13 This section focuses on the time period from 2006 to 2011 and assumes that readers
 44 are familiar with the earlier history of Canadian involvement in Afghanistan up to
 45 2006. This section is partially based on Zyla and Sokolsky (2010).
- 14 For a discussion of additional reasons see Mariano and Zyla (2006).
- 15 UN Security Council Resolution 1368 (12 September 2001) recognized the inherent
 right of individual or collective self-defence, called on all states to work together
 urgently to bring to justice the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of these terrorist
 attacks and stressed that those responsible for aiding, supporting or harbouring the
 perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of these acts would be held accountable, and
 expressed its readiness to take all necessary steps to respond to the terrorist attacks of

- 11 September 2001 and to combat all forms of terrorism, in accordance with its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations.
- 16 For the importance of bringing the UN on board after 9/11 see Tardy (2004).
- 17 I have argued elsewhere that Canada indirectly supported the US operation in Iraq by sending 31 exchange officers to serve there alongside American forces, and having its naval ships help to enforce UN sanctions against Iraq. See Zyla and Sokolsky (2010).
- 18 Paul Cellucci, the US Ambassador to Canada at the time, noted in his memoirs that '[d]espite the obvious hesitations about the prospects of an invasion, we believed that Canada would be with us even without a second UN resolution on Iraq' (Cellucci 2005: 135).
- 19 For a greater discussion, see Holland (2010).
- 20 For a detailed account of Canada's Afghan mission, see Cox (2007).
- 21 Between 2006 and 2008 the government extended Canada's commitments to Afghanistan several times up to the most recent level of 2,830 personnel.
- 22 A general argument about the lack of the House of Commons being involved in Canadian foreign and defence policy can be found in, for example, Bland and Rempel (2004); Lagassé (2010a); Rempel (2002).
- 23 It should be noted that the numbers provided in Table 5.1 are rounded. They also provide the average troop deployments per year. NATO evaluates troop contributions every two to three months. For example, in early 2010 the US government announced an increase in American troop deployments to Afghanistan by 30,000 until December 2010. These additional forces are not yet fully reflected in the statistics.
- 24 This is also known as the 'exploitation hypothesis'. See Sandler and Hartley (1995, 1999).
- 25 One way of determining the relative ability of states to contribute to multinational peace operations is to look at their gross domestic product (GDP). Here, Canada has the sixth largest economy based on current prices (IMF 2010).
- 26 One exception is the work by Lang and Stein (2007). However, their reluctance to reference their sources and information makes their work difficult to verify.
- 27 Indeed, space limitations and the conceptual framework outlined in the introduction of this volume will not allow me to engage in a comprehensive discussion here, but rather to provide a preliminary list.
- 28 See Government of Canada (2010c). For an excellent discussion see Perry (2008).
- 29 For a detailed discussion see Boucher (2010).
- 30 See Canada, Governor General (2007)
- 31 Those priorities were first listed in Canada (2008).
- 32 The deployment of those troops occurred in small steps. In total, more than 65,000 additional troops arrived in Afghanistan under President Obama in 2010, up to a total number of 90,000 troops currently deployed.
- 33 See ISAF placemats for various years at www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/placemat.html (accessed 25 January 2011).

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