Studies in Canadian Military History
Series editor: Dean F. Oliver, Canadian War Museum

The Canadian War Museum, Canada’s national museum of military history, has a threefold mandate: to remember, to preserve, and to educate. Studies in Canadian Military History, published by UBC Press in association with the Museum, extends this mandate by presenting the best of contemporary scholarship to provide new insights into all aspects of Canadian military history, from earliest times to recent events. The work of a new generation of scholars is especially encouraged, and the books employ a variety of approaches – cultural, social, intellectual, economic, political, and comparative – to investigate gaps in the existing historiography. The books in the series feed immediately into future exhibitions, programs, and outreach efforts by the Canadian War Museum. A list of the titles in the series appears at the end of the book.
Abbreviations

ABC  America-Britain-Canada
ABCA  America-Britain-Canada-Australia
ACE  Allied Command Europe
ADATS  Air Defence Anti-Tank System
ADTB  Army Doctrine and Tactics Board
AMF(L)  ACE Mobile Force (Land)
APC  armoured personnel carrier
ASW  anti-submarine warfare
ATGM  anti-tank guided missile
ATOB  Army Tactics and Organization Board
AVGP  Armoured Vehicle General Purpose (the wheeled Grizzly armoured personnel carrier and Cougar “tank trainer”)
BMP  Boyevaya Mashina Pekhoty (Infantry Fighting Vehicle) (Soviet)
CAMRA  Canadian Advanced Multi-Role Aircraft
CAORE  Canadian Army Operations Research Establishment
CAR  Canadian Army Airborne Regiment
CARBG  Canadian Army Airborne Regiment Battle Group
CAST  Canadian Air-Sea Transportable (Brigade Group)
CD  Combat Development
CDC  Combat Development Committee
CDS  Chief of the Defence Staff
CDTDC  Combat Development and Tactical Doctrine Committee
CENTAG  Central Army Group of NATO
CFDP  Canadian Forces Development Plan
CFE  Canadian Forces Europe
CFHQ  Canadian Forces Headquarters
CGS   Chief of the General Staff
CIBG  Canadian Infantry Brigade Group
CIFV  Canadian Infantry Fighting Vehicle
CJFS  Canadian Joint Force Somalia
CLDO  Chief Land Doctrine and Operations
CMB   Canadian Mechanized Brigade
CMBG  Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group
COTC  Canadian Officer Training Corps
DCD   Directorate of Combat Development
DCDS  Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff
DFSV  Direct Fire Support Vehicle
DGMPO Director General Military Plans and Operations
DMC   Defence Management Committee
DPMS  Defence Program Management System
DSR   Defence Structure Review
FSR   Field Service Regulations (British Army)
GBMC  Groupe-brigade mécanisé du Canada
GOC   General Officer Commanding
IFOR  Implementation Force (NATO)
KFOR  Kosovo Force
LANDCENT Allied Land Forces Central Europe
LdSH  Lord Strathcona’s Horse
MNF   Multi-National Force (Central Africa)
MRG   Management Review Group (Pennefather Committee)
NATO  North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCBW  nuclear/chemical/biological warfare
NCO   non-commissioned officer
NDHQ  National Defence Headquarters
NIS   National Investigation Service
NORAD North American Air Defense Command
NORTHAG Northern Army Group of NATO
ODB   Officer Development Board
PPCLI Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R²²R</td>
<td>Royal 22ᵉ Régiment</td>
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<tr>
<td>RBC</td>
<td>Régiment blindé du Canada</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCAF</td>
<td>Royal Canadian Air Force</td>
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<td>RCD</td>
<td>Royal Canadian Dragoons</td>
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<td>RCN</td>
<td>Royal Canadian Navy</td>
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<td>RMC</td>
<td>Royal Military College</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROAD</td>
<td>Reorganization Objectives Army Division (US Army)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAC</td>
<td>Strategic Air Command (US Air Force)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SACEUR</td>
<td>Supreme Allied Commander Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>SACLANT</td>
<td>Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCRR</td>
<td>Special Commission on the Restructuring of the Reserves</td>
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<tr>
<td>SFOR</td>
<td>Stabilization Force (NATO)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHAPE</td>
<td>Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSF</td>
<td>Special Service Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>STF</td>
<td>Stationed Task Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>STOL</td>
<td>short takeoff and landing</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOW</td>
<td>Tube-Launched, Optically-tracked, Wire command data link anti-tank missile</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNITAF</td>
<td>United Nations Task Force in Somalia</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNOSOM</td>
<td>United Nations Operation in Somalia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNPROFOR</td>
<td>United Nations Protection Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTTH</td>
<td>utility helicopter</td>
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<tr>
<td>VCDS</td>
<td>Vice Chief of the Defence Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>VCGS</td>
<td>Vice Chief of the General Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V/STOL</td>
<td>vertical/short takeoff and landing</td>
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On a clear, cold March afternoon in 1995, the Canadian Airborne Regiment’s twenty-seven-year history came to a close with a final march-past and the laying of its colours in the regimental museum at Canadian Forces Base Petawawa. The daylong ceremony had begun with a parachute jump by most of the regiment’s 665 members, and the afternoon had featured troops rappelling from helicopters before charging through smoke to the sound of artillery and machine-gun fire. Their commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Peter Kenward, told them, “You’re the best,” and stated: “I do not accept and will not accept that this regiment is disbanded in disgrace.” Yet according to press reports, Kenward’s head hung low and tears trickled down his face as he gave the final orders dismissing the regiment. It was “more a funeral than a parade.”

Not everyone in uniform would have agreed with Kenward’s assessment, and certainly the government did not. Defence Minister David Collenette had decided to disband the regiment after a series of incidents had publicly tarnished its reputation. The initial incidents during the regiment’s 1993 deployment to Somalia as a stabilization force were the most serious, involving the shooting death of a Somali national who had infiltrated Airborne lines as well as the death in custody of a second Somali. As the court martial and Forces inquiry proceeded, the Airborne’s reputation was further damaged when videotapes of its members making racist comments about Somalis and engaging in initiation rites that involved urine, vomit, and excrement became public. The press also reported that elements of the regiment sent to Rwanda on a second peacekeeping mission had shot up a convent they were supposed to be protecting from looters and that two soldiers had had to be repatriated because of self-inflicted cuts from a “blood brother ritual.” Faced with adverse international publicity, both Collenette and Prime Minister Jean Chrétien agreed on the unprecedented step of disbanding the regiment. The press concurred. The Ottawa Citizen editorialized that the Canadian Airborne Regiment, “publicly disgraced and politically insupportable, has been properly disbanded.”
The disbanding of the regiment was indeed a funeral – and not only for the Airborne. The inquiry ordered by the government into its deployment to Somalia illuminated both difficulties and deficiencies within the army, the Canadian Forces, and the Department of National Defence and created the conditions for significant change to institutional structures, army doctrine, and the military’s concept of professionalism, changes that would eventually lead to a renewed relationship with the country’s political leadership. The disbanding of the Canadian Airborne Regiment was therefore the beginning of the end of an army that had existed since the end of the Second World War. A new Canadian army would emerge that was more closely linked to political requirements and that would have broad popular support.

This book originated as an attempt to answer questions that had arisen in my mind during my career as the senior official in the Office of the Auditor General of Canada responsible for the audit of the Department of National Defence. Having become convinced of the centrality of doctrine to the success of a military force during my graduate education at Duke University, where many of my fellow students were serving US Army officers, I was perplexed by the relative unimportance of doctrine to the Canadian army. A frequently heard apocryphal story – sometimes attributed to a German officer during the Second World War and sometimes to a contemporary Soviet officer – was that while the Germans or Americans could be easily dealt with because they acted within a doctrinal framework, the Canadian army could not because it either had no doctrine or did not follow it, making its actions completely unpredictable. I was often struck by how many Canadian army officers believed that rank required visible privilege to be effective. Senior officers justified official residences on the basis that troops had to see that their commanding general was special. For their part, many junior officers were appalled that senior officers were compelled to use public transit in Ottawa and were not provided with staff cars – apparently vestiges of the Victorian social order still existed. The army, as well as the other services, also had a strong contingent within the officer corps that railed against “civilianization” and what they saw as the replacement of military values with “management.” It was never clear to me how a multi-billion-dollar enterprise could be run without management techniques. As a legislative auditor, I had a front-row seat to the Somalia debacle and associated scandals. Clearly, something had gone badly wrong, but what?

This book is about the Canadian army as an institution and about its place in the Canadian state. It is not a history of operations except as they affected the institution itself. For the most part, this was mainly through the “war without battles” that was the Cold War, which the Canadian army prepared for from the end of the Second World War to the early 1990s. With the dissolution of the
Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, stabilization operations in the Balkans, Africa, and elsewhere put new pressures on the army. It is not my intention to analyze these missions in operational terms but rather from the perspective of how they led to change within the army itself. Thus, this book focuses on four main themes: the army’s concepts of military professionalism and how they evolved during the last half of the twentieth century; the army’s role in shaping Canada’s national security policy; the army’s planning of its future development through doctrine and force structure; and, finally, the Militia and the relationship between the Regular and Reserve army.

An explanation is required about what is considered to be the “Canadian army.” The Canadian Army existed as an institution with a legislative mandate only before the three services were unified to form the Canadian Forces in 1968, four years after Defence Minister Paul Hellyer first integrated the armed services, creating a single chief of the defence staff and abolishing the individual service chiefs and the chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee. After integration, the land forces comprised several commands and national headquarters components under various titles. However, the failure to develop a truly unified force even after 1968 meant that the army continued to exist in everything but name. Service identities slowly reasserted themselves and “environmental commanders” emerged, heading a virtual navy, army, and air force. In this book, I consider all land forces, as well as the national headquarters staffs that set policy for or provided services to them, as part of “the Canadian army,” and I use this term in discussing the post-1968 era regardless of the official nomenclature of the day.

The Canadian Army was created as a component of a British Imperial force and inherited many of its traits and preferences from its metropolitan parent. The outward style of the Canadian Army prior to unification of the armed services was British. In the early postwar period, its senior ranks were dominated by officers who had been trained in British staff colleges, and it borrowed British Army doctrine into the 1960s. The army fought in Korea as part of a Commonwealth Division and succeeded in getting itself assigned to the British-led Northern Army Group of NATO forces. The culture of the Canadian Army consequently was strongly oriented towards choosing officers based on character rather than knowledge and expertise. The army persisted in attempting to recruit the “right sort” of individual and did not share the rest of Canadian society’s enthusiasm for university education during the postwar period. It also perpetuated a version of the British regimental system as a means of creating and preserving combat cohesion and morale. This book examines the effects of the Canadian army’s culture on the types of officers recruited and retained, and on the relationship of the senior officer corps with political leaders and senior public servants.
The early postwar army had little capacity to develop – or even participate in developing – national security policy. These functions had not been required in an Imperial force led by the parent country and service. The Canadian Army nevertheless had strong policy views. It wished to perpetuate its Second World War type of force, one that was relatively large, heavily equipped, and prepared to fight a Great Power war in Europe. Peacekeeping forces were regarded as a lesser included capability within a “warfighting” army. The army’s preferences would bring it into continuing conflict with Canada’s political leadership, and its lack of policy development capacity would limit its ability to make its case to its civilian masters. After the Soviet Union’s acquisition of strategic nuclear weapons, civilians became increasingly skeptical of the military value of any land force that the Canadian government could pay for in peacetime. The army that they preferred was generally one that reduced diplomatic pressure from allies to maintain forces in Europe and kept economic costs to a minimum. This book explores the interplay of military and civilian biases throughout the Cold War and its immediate aftermath.

Armies are complex organizations consisting of tens of thousands of individual members employing thousands of vehicles and a wide range of complex technology. In order to fulfill national objectives and work cohesively in the field, an army requires both a plan and an “operating manual” to provide soldiers with consistent information on how the various components are meant to work together. These publications are known as “doctrine.” The NATO glossary defines doctrine as the “fundamental principles by which the military forces guide their actions in support of objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgement in application.” The British Army put greater emphasis on the “judgement” than on the “authoritative” element of doctrine and relied upon the judgment of its senior commanders. Prior to and during the Second World War, its doctrinal development capability was weak. Once the Canadian army was on its own, it found that its ability to adapt to the challenge of tactical nuclear warfare was lacking. It eventually did build capacity and develop its own doctrine, only to have such capacity disrupted by unification of the armed services. After struggling for almost a decade, it managed to revive its doctrine and force development functions, but by the mid-1970s the atmosphere was so poisoned by the post-unification breakdown in civil-military relations and intra-service rivalries that the product was largely unusable. Tracing the development of doctrine is therefore essential for understanding what the army thought it was doing in building the type of force it sought, for understanding the level of institutional expertise it had attained, and for understanding civil-military relations.

The fourth theme explored throughout this book is the relationship between the Militia – the Reserve army – and the Regular Force. Prior to the Second
World War, the Permanent Force (that is, the Regulars) was envisaged as comprising a general staff and cadre force, with the main military muscle of the country coming from the Non-Permanent Active Militia. Relative to the demands of the war, however, neither force was sufficiently large or well trained. Well before the end of the war, senior army officials began planning for a large force supported by conscription, and they continued advocating such a force in the immediate postwar period. This policy was rejected by the civilian government, however, creating an impasse that endured for half a century. At no time did the government wish to pass legislation requiring, or even protecting, military service so as to permit the creation of a large reserve army. Nor did civilian governments wish to pay for the equipment and increased training that a large, effective reserve would require; they doubted the utility of even the Regular Force. For its part, the army produced one study after another documenting the poor state of readiness and training of the Militia, none of which resulted in material improvement. Solutions were either unacceptable to the politicians or would have led to a small reserve force, thereby undercutting the army’s ambitions to expand someday. By the end of the twentieth century, relations between the Regular and Reserve armies had become vitriolic, and although some healing was achieved, the fundamental issues remained unresolved.

A fifth theme runs through this book – namely, the role of civilians in managing military policy and maintaining civil-military relations. This is a history and not a work of political science. It does not set out to establish or critique a theory of civil-military relations. Yet it is scarcely possible to write about civil-military relations without considering theory. To attempt to do so can result in implicitly adopting a theory that subsequently colours judgments about whether the actors are behaving appropriately. For the most part, the army officer corps and many military historians have accepted the ideal set out by Samuel Huntington in his 1957 book *The Soldier and the State*. Huntington argued that the military had three major responsibilities: to represent the claims of military security within the state machinery and to keep authorities informed of the minimum military security requirements of the state; to advise and report on alternative courses of state action from a military point of view; and to implement state decisions even if they run counter to military advice and judgment. Huntington based his model on the American military, and further claimed that the military had the right to present its views to public bodies that apportion resources, both executive and legislative. This part of Huntington’s theory is largely non-problematic from a Canadian point of view, although Canadian officials (both civil and military) represent only their minister when testifying before legislative committees. More difficult to accept is Huntington’s claim that the civil-military relationship is best served by what he called “objective civilian
control.” By this he meant that the civilian government should not attempt to make the military adopt values that are the mirror image of civil society, but should instead install an ethos that both professionalizes the military and removes it from politics. Coincidentally, Huntington praised the military ethos and implied that it was superior to the grubby commercial liberalism of civilian America.

Huntington’s theory was no doubt very attractive to the military, including the Canadian army’s officer corps, but it presents two problems. First, in attempting to create a distinct military professional sphere, it delegitimizes political considerations in the formulation of national security policy. Although this is not what Huntington intended, his theory has promoted a belief that military appreciations trump domestic political concerns and that civilian politicians are automatically wrong if they make security decisions based on political considerations. Second, the suggestion of military moral superiority further delegitimizes direction from the political level and fosters a belief that the military is justified in pursuing its own agenda. Huntingtonian thinking dominated the Canadian army during the 1970s and 1980s and contributed to the breakdown in civil-military relations.

More recently, Peter Feaver has proposed an alternative theory of civil-military relations in his book *Armed Servants*. Drawing on economic “agency theory,” he argues that the relationship between the military and the state should be seen as one of principal and agent, where the political leadership is the principal and the military is its agent. According to Feaver, agents do what principals want when they are monitored (they “work”) but follow their own agendas when not controlled (they “shirk”). The problem is therefore how to devise the best system of controls. Central to Feaver’s approach is the premise that “in a democracy, civilians have the right to be wrong.” They can ask for things that are not conducive to good national security, and while the military can advise against them, it should not prevent those policies from being implemented. According to Feaver, shirking by the US military has usually taken three forms: (1) the military has attempted to determine the outcome of a policy debate by giving inflated estimates of what a military operation would cost; (2) the military has attempted to determine policy by making an end run through public protest, leaks, or appeals to other political actors; and (3) the military has attempted to undermine a policy through bureaucratic foot-dragging and “slow rolling” so that the desired policy is never implemented. This book leans towards Feaver’s theory. It is written from the perspective that civilians have the right to be wrong and is critical of the army when it is seen to be “shirking.”

That said, it should not be imagined that civilians are above criticism. Civilian direction to the army tended to be episodic, and grandiose when it was given.
Paul Hellyer’s “mobile force” and Perrin Beatty’s “Total Force army” are the two clearest examples of this. Neither Hellyer nor Beatty had adequate support in Cabinet to obtain funding for their plans, and both failed in implementation. Many ministers took inadequate steps to monitor and control the development of the army, allowing it to pursue its own agenda. Some actively colluded with the military to evade Cabinet direction. Just as the army lacked the capacity to contribute to the making of national security policy, so its civilian principals lacked knowledge of military capabilities and costs. What emerged was a relationship where neither the principal nor the agent played its role adequately.

This book is therefore a departure from most of the literature on the Canadian army. Over the years, a standard narrative of the army's history has developed. In this narrative, the army experienced a golden age between the end of the Korean War in 1953 and the beginning of Paul Hellyer's integration and unification of the armed services in 1964. Jack Granatstein calls this the period of “the professional army,” after which professionalism came “under siege.” Douglas Bland, writing about the governance structure of the armed services and National Defence, divides history into approximately the same periods: a “Command Era” from 1946 to 1964, followed by a “Management Era” thereafter. John English, in his *Lament for an Army*, takes a similar view. He argues that the post–Korean War Canadian Army suffered two blows from which it never fully recovered: emphasis on massive retaliation and air forces, which meant the end of the Militia as a mobilization force, and the 1964 *White Paper on Defence*, which placed top priority on peacekeeping and “ushered in a generation of professional decline.” In the standard narrative, the period that preceded integration and unification was vastly better than that which followed. The army was relatively well funded, fairly well equipped, and given its proper role in the development of national policy. Its British heritage and culture were intact. But beginning with Paul Hellyer’s tenure as defence minister, military values were replaced by civilian management concepts and the army’s British heritage was downplayed or discarded. Civilians determined missions and roles for the army but withheld appropriate resources. The Militia was ignored and allowed to deteriorate. The standard narrative places the onus for the Somalia incident on civilians. David Bercuson asks: “How and why did the Airborne get ‘totally out of control,’” and answers his own question:

[The answer] is rooted in the larger story of the crisis that [had] been developing in the Canadian army for at least a decade, and nobody in the press seems to care much about that. That crisis was caused initially by the deliberate bleeding of the defence establishment to death by successive, mostly Liberal, governments. It was made a great deal worse by unification and the imposition on the Canadian Forces
of a structure designed to ease political and bureaucratic burdens rather than promote military effectiveness ... With NDHQ safely ensconced at the top of the defence structure, it was not long before soldier-managers took control of the army and soldier-warriors were shunted aside. We now have an army in which war fighting is of secondary or even tertiary importance. Which is absurd.\(^6\)

This book challenges the standard narrative. The evidence presented here shows that the army’s British heritage was problematic in that it created institutional deficits in the army’s ability to contribute to national security policy and to develop military doctrine. Its cultural preferences for character over education and for regimental loyalty led to the army’s further separation from civilian society and limited its ability to relate to its parent society. This book argues that for much of the last half of the twentieth century, the army “shirked.” It followed its own agenda rather than that of the civilian government. The government responded by applying more controls through the Management Review Group (MRG) instituted by Defence Minister Donald Macdonald in 1972. The MRG reforms improved control but also increased resentment and reaction. The army pursued unrealizable plans and became increasingly insular. A final breakdown occurred during the stability operations of the post–Cold War period. The Somalia incident was the most notorious, but other incidents in the Balkans and elsewhere made it clear that the army required reorientation in terms of culture and doctrine.

Whereas the standard narrative accuses civilians of both starving and wrecking the army, this book asks readers to consider whether the army was not the author of its own decline. It asks readers to consider when the Canadian army became a national army implementing national policy rather than an Imperial or an alliance army. It also asks readers to evaluate whether the army’s response to civilian direction with which it did not agree was appropriate. How these questions are answered is important for understanding the army we have today and in shaping tools to manage civil-military relations.

In writing this book I have attempted to “let the documents speak.” That is not to say that I do not have a bias. I will, however, make my biases as explicit as possible and let the reader judge whether they are supported by the evidence presented.

This book was written from primary sources held in the archives at the Department of National Defence Directorate of History and Heritage and at Library and Archives Canada. Special attention was paid to the papers of Robert Lewis Raymont and Charles J. Gauthier, two officers who served in the central departmental secretariat from 1951 to 1989; besides maintaining an archive of policy documents, they also wrote unpublished histories of the central Defence
decision-making process. I also attempted to obtain as many post-exercise reports, post-operation reports, and significant war game studies as possible. Many of these documents were still classified and required numerous Access to Information requests. The papers of the Canadian Land Force Command and Staff College contained useful information. I also relied upon Cabinet minutes and the papers of prime ministers from Louis St-Laurent to Pierre Trudeau as well as those ministers and senior public servants who left papers. Finally, I supplemented documentary sources with interviews of selected participants.

Despite these efforts, I would not describe this as the final or definitive work on the Canadian army. Some will believe that I should have not excluded operations to the extent I have, or that I should have included topics such as the movement towards linguistic, gender, and gender-orientation inclusiveness as an essential part of an institutional history. Because many documents are still classified, I was selective in what I asked for and received under Access to Information. There are also likely many documents in the custody of Library and Archives Canada for the 1980s and subsequent decades that await complete archival assessment. For lack of search tools, it is probable that much material of significance escaped untouched. Nevertheless, I believe that this account represents a step forward in its use of many sources that had been previously unavailable.

Canada needs an army. This army must be able to meet the goals of domestic and foreign policy. It must be able to deal effectively with security threats. It has to be built and maintained within the budget and policy framework established by Parliament. The army required by Canada may not be the one envisaged by those in uniform or that preferred by civilian politicians. It is important, however, that the army that is required is the one that is actually maintained. This book is an attempt to discern how close – or how far away – this goal was to being achieved during the last half of the twentieth century.