Unmilitary People? Or Militarily Banal?: An Analysis of Political and News Media Depictions of the Canadian Forces

by

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ABSTRACT

UNMILITARY PEOPLE? OR MILITARILY BANAL?: AN ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL AND NEWS MEDIA DEPICTIONS OF THE CANADIAN FORCES

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This thesis is an investigation of the political and news media depictions of the Canadian Forces (CF) and their influence on the discursive construction of the Canadian nation. The Canadian nation and the CF are outlined as discursive constructions as represented in political and news media discourse. A critical discourse analysis is conducted on political discourse contained in House of Commons’ debates and news media discourse contained in The Globe and Mail and National Post from January 1999 to December 2002. It finds that banal reproductions of the CF as a peacekeeping force are present in national discourse and that they have negative implications for civil-military relations in Canada. It also suggest that a change in national discourse is required to more accurately reflect the values and interests of Canadians and the current state of civil-military relations by focusing on accurate depictions of the CF and not the banal reproduction of the CF as a peacekeeping force.
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Chapter 1 – Introduction
Introduction

“Canada is an unmilitary community. Warlike her people have often been forced to be; military they have never been”

- C.P. Stacey (1966)

Canadians are often described as an “unmilitary people” (Horn 2002a). Within the international climate of the 21st Century, one fraught with the threat of terrorism and issues of Canadian sovereignty, the way Canadians think about and utilize their military raises some important research questions. As such, my thesis will critically analyze the Canadian military within a nation building context by assessing how the news media and government produce national narratives of the Canadian Forces (CF) for public consumption and redistribution as part of a nation building agenda. For example, Canadians are known for valorizing the morally satisfying notion of being “good international citizens” (Cooper 2007; Sjolander and Trevenen 2010). Accordingly, conceptualizing the CF as peacekeepers is an ideal that is integral to the Canadian identity (Shazad 2011). It is therefore important for Canadians to recognize that how they define the purpose of their military may have consequences for current and future generations. Not all Canadians share the same views on what purpose their military should serve. Opinions range from dismantling the CF on one hand to war-making as a legitimate means to political ends on the other. Whatever purpose the CF is assigned, it is important that defence policy has the support of an informed Canadian public.

My research explores the ideological depictions that define the CF and how those depictions have been normalized in Canadian society. How the Canadian Government constructs a particular international incident has important implications for the CF’s future expeditionary operations. More importantly, how the Canadian government defines the purpose of its military can influence the employment of the CF. It is therefore important that Canadians understand the
sources of their knowledge and the motives behind particular message constructions as they relate to the Canadian military. My research will generate awareness of the hegemonic process whereby the government and news media create ideological characterizations of the CF and will create a starting point for future research on how and by what means the Canadian military is framed within news media and official discourse.

Historically, Canadian nation building relied heavily on the military to forge a uniquely Canadian geographical space and often provided civilian authorities a secure foundation upon which to create the Canadian state (Legault 2002). Offering not only a safe and secure environment, the military also provided technological and administrative expertise to help forge Canadian society (Legault 2002). Today, we see the CF on the front lines of “Arctic sovereignty” where the Canadian Government is establishing the Northern boundaries of the state and thus further defining the nation both geographically and politically. It seems only logical to include the Canadian military as part of the nation building narrative to better understand how the military is used by the government and media to shape the Canadian identity and the CF’s domestic and international role on behalf of Canadians.

A paucity of literature addressing the military’s role in Canadian society within mainstream sociology has inspired my choice of theory and substantive topic. Military sociology often focuses on various issues of the military institution as separate from the host society (Segal 2007). Often focussing on the American military, the literature examines military culture (Feaver and Kohn 2001), its composition (Dandeker and Segal 1996; Booth and Segal 2005), the effects of conscription (Malesic 2003), and its affect on local communities with bases (Booth et al. 2000). These efforts treat the military as an isolated entity stemming from the host society. My
research views a nation’s military as a nation building tool inseparable from the society that it created and continues to shape.

For the current purpose, a nation can be understood as an “imagined community” (Anderson 1991). More specifically:

...nations are produced centrally by cultural practices that encourage members to situate their own identities and self-understandings within a nation. Reading the same news, for example, not only provides people with common information, and common images of ‘us’ and ‘them’ but helps to reproduce a collective narrative in which the manifold different events and activities reported fit together like narrative threads in a novel and interweaves them all with the life of the reader. (Calhoun 2005, p.519-20)

Essentially, the Canadian nation, by means of its shared experience and cultural practices, instils a unique identity that is distinct from other nationalities and this includes the unique experience and employment of the CF. I deal with the complexity of nation building in more detail in chapter two.

Throughout my research I use the phrase “ideological depiction” to capture the various labels applied to the CF. Ideological depictions are representations or characterizations in words (or pictures) of a body of doctrine or a belief that guides a society: they convey complex meaning in simple compartmentalized messages. These depictions result often in myriad emotional reactions that are grounded in romanticised meanings with little empirical validity. Ideological depictions are not inherently malicious; however, when employed as part of a political agenda, and when they involve the manipulation of emotions and facts, they can have negative implications for policy making. Evidence for this is readily apparent when looking at the “peacekeeping myth” that was utilized by the media and the government during the Cold War era (Maloney 2002; Granatstein 2004; Granatstein 2007). The Trudeau Government shaped Canadian identity to embrace an anti-militarism stance while accepting the notion that Canadians were morally superior given our role as peacemakers rather than war fighters (Maloney 2002).
This myth enabled politicians to underfund the Canadian military for decades by defining it as a force ill-suited for combat (Granatstein 2004). Today, the Harper Government is attempting to restore the “warrior image” of the CF on the coattails of the war in Afghanistan (Granatstein 2011; McKay and Swift 2012). Both of these instances demonstrate the presence and influence of ideological depictions on defence policy.

My research seeks to explore the empirical relevance of Fabian Virchow’s (2005) concept of “banal militarism”. Virchow’s work stems from Billig’s (1995) theory of “banal nationalism” which offers a theoretical perspective on how a nation builds itself through everyday taken for granted reproductions of its identity. Virchow’s (2005) concept of banal militarism offers a starting point to explore how a nation’s military identity is reproduced in a banal manner, thereby inextricably connecting itself to how a nation and its military is shaped in public discourse. Like the commonly accepted notion of Canada being a nation-state in a world of nation-states, the myth of the Canadian military as a peacekeeping force becomes commonly accepted by virtue of its repetitive and taken for granted use in public discourse. Politicians who use the term “peacekeepers” in place of “soldiers” when describing members of the CF are, in essence, assuming the nature of the CF is commonly understood by Canadians within a peacekeeping framework. When public discourse fails to reflect critically on this use of terminology, its use is accepted as if it were natural. There is evidence to suggest this process of banal militarism occurs within Canada and my research seeks to explore its relevance.

Virchow (2005) outlines three specific areas in which banal militarism may be present: public discourse, media activities, and political events. I have chosen to explore two areas: media activities and political events because these two spheres are expected to generate enough data to meet the aim of my research. Specifically, my research will be limited to two Canadian national
newspapers (media events) and to the “official discourse” contained within the House of Commons’ debates (political events). In order to determine how the CF is portrayed in the media and within official discourse, I will conduct a discourse analysis of these sources over a four year period spanning from 1 January 1999 to 31 December 2002. The reason I have chosen this period of time is to investigate key differences in political and media depictions of the CF during major changes in CF policy due to the war in Kosovo and after the September 2001 terrorist attacks (9/11) on the United States (US).¹ I have limited my analysis to two national newspapers to ensure the project remains manageable.

My research questions have been created with two objectives in mind: 1) to explore the different ways the CF is depicted, and 2) to explore the extent to which these depictions reflect ideological commitments. Generally, I explore: how was the CF depicted within the news media and House of Commons’ debates between 1 January 1999 and 31 December 2002? More specifically: how was the CF depicted within House of Commons’ debates? How was the CF depicted in the news media? What ideologies are contained within the CF depictions? To what extent are the depictions of the CF expressed in the House of Commons and the news media reflections of the Canadian nation? Answers to these questions should offer insight into what ideologies are contained in the national narratives of the CF.

A Brief History of the Canadian Military Experience

I have situated my thesis within a specific four year timeframe in order to capture the potential change in national narratives regarding the CF. However, before I outline the context of my research I will briefly outline the history of civil-military relations as they pertain to nation

¹ Other studies have shown that 9/11 can be used as a defining moment when significant changes were made in political discourse, media reporting, and defence policy (Pieper 2011).
building narratives. As Renan ([1871]1990:11) cautions, “nationalist histories are matters of forgetting as well as remembering, including forgotten the ‘deeds of violence which took place at the origin of all political formations’” (as cited in Calhoun 2005:523). Thus, in order to better understand the military’s role in nation building we must first look at the how the relationship between society and military has developed over time. A brief look at the history of civil-military relations in Canada offers insight into the ways Canadian military has been used to forge the Canadian nation.

Throughout history, the military has been employed based on established national ideology. Three distinct ideological commitments can be identified to demonstrate this phenomenon: the militia myth, loyalty to the British Monarch, and the peacekeeping myth. Each commitment follows a similar pattern as it relates to how the government utilized ideology to frame military operations. In each instance a national narrative was created to frame the military in a way that ensured it represented the interests of the Canadian nation while employed to achieve defence policy objectives.

The militia myth was the belief that Canadian defence was best placed on the citizen soldier who could be called to arms in a time of need (Wood 2010). The militia myth was the cornerstone of Canadian military culture reaching back to the days of Upper Canada (Granatstein 2002). This myth was built on the experience of the major wars fought on North American soil (the Seven Years War, the War of American Independence, the War of 1812, and the American Civil War) which saw Canadians mobilized for these conflicts on a volunteer basis rather than via conscription (Wood 2010). Despite the ongoing pressure from the officers of the Canadian Permanent Force, the British Army, and a group of professionally minded militia officers to create a professional standing army, the Canadian government felt otherwise (Wood 2010). The
Canadian public’s general apathy towards military affairs fostered an ideological commitment to a myth that required no action on behalf of the public outside of a verbal commitment to bear arms only in the face of immediate danger.

Between 1900 and 1960, much of Canadian foreign policy can be explained by its loyalty and ties to the British Monarch (some have argued this was occurring as late as the 1980s, see Maloney 2002). At the outset of the Boer War, Canadian loyalists won the Canadian public’s support to send volunteer soldiers off to support British military operations in Africa (Horn 2002b). It has been argued that Canadian involvement in the Two World Wars was the result of “overwhelming domestic support for Britain in English-speaking Canada, the strongly perceived duty of the senior Dominion to support the Mother Country …” (McKercher 2002). In all three instances Canadian politicians maintained the status quo by remaining loyal to the British Monarch.

Another era heavily influenced by ideology was from the 1960’s to current day – the so-called peacekeeping era. When Lester Pearson won the Nobel Peace Prize for his role in creating the United Nations Emergency Force during the 1956 Suez Crises, “many Canadians believed their role in the world had at last been properly recognized” (Granatstein 2004:5). Even with a healthy and capable force ready to fight if needed during the Cold War, the CF was employed in a peacekeeping capacity for over a half-century with little debate over the validity or nature of military participation in United Nation’s (UN) peacekeeping missions (Granatstein 2004). As late as October 2005, according to a survey done by the Centre for Research and Information on Canada, 69% of Canadians believed that peacekeeping is “a definable characteristic of Canada” (Staples 2006). In other words, Canadians still saw their military’s role as peacekeeping.

**Defence Policy from 1990 to 2002**

8
The defence policy of the 1990’s through to 2002 is best explained in a framework that develops the dichotomy between an appreciation for a Canada-US defence agenda and the optimistic peacekeeping agenda that persists to this day. It is difficult to situate the context of Canadian defence policy during any specific timeframe, given the on-going struggle between rhetorical national narratives and the factual actions of the CF. For the purpose of this research, I focus on the literature that outlines Canadian defence policy in unison with US policy. All the while, I will acknowledge there is literature that suggests Canada continued peacekeeping throughout the 1990’s right through to Afghanistan where Canadians still attempt to separate US war-making from Canadian peacekeeping (Shazad 2011).

Much of Canada’s recent defence policy can be understood as “thoroughly integrated into the larger context of American defence” (Bercuson 2007b:17), although many Canadians would not like to recognize this fact. The peacetime commitment to a defence relationship between Canada and the US can be dated back to the February 1947 affirmation of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence Resolution No. 36 (Bercuson 2007b). The frank assessment for Canadian defence policy placed within this US led continental defence is best stated by Bercuson (2007b):

Thus the fundamental pattern of the Canada-US defence relationship was set from the very beginning of that relationship: the United States initiates, Canada responds (because it usually must), though generally reluctantly and often with great hesitation. The dynamic – as true today as in 1938 – is rooted in the reality that the United States harboured global interests and ambitions since the late nineteenth century, and Canada has not. (P.19)

This relationship can be observed during the late 1990s and early 2000s attributable, for some, to the lack of leadership and policy provided to Canadians from the Government (Granatstein 2004; Jones and Lagassé 2012).

The 1993 “Somalia Affair” that entailed the murder of a local teenager by members of the Canadian Airborne Regiment almost “killed the CF” (Granatstein 2004). At the conclusion of
the Somalia inquiry, the Canadian people turned away from their military to focus on the more important issue of budget deficit (Granatstein 2004; Jones and Lagassé 2012). In the years to follow, the 1994 defence white paper issued by the Chrétien Government would dictate the future of the CF. Notably, the white paper stated “multilateral security cooperation is the expression of Canadian values in the international sphere” (Granatstein 2004:167), thereby setting the stage for future operations to be placed in a coalition environment as seen in Kosovo in 1999 and Afghanistan in 2002.

Coalition operations are still of much importance to the CF and to Canadians. A military is designed to represent the core values of its host society and to represent these values at home and abroad. How does this principle hold true within a coalition setting that has an American element as the lead? The Kosovo crises had the Canadian air force bombing discriminately, and by definition, had the support of Canadian society insofar as they accepted ethically-sanctioned killing (Bercuson 2007a) as part of an American foreign policy. The clear line between Canadian and American national narratives becomes blurred in operational settings that represent two different societies with different values. This process is not inherently problematic if the host societies are in agreement about each other’s values and the purpose of their militaries. However, this has not been the case for Canadians and Americans as is evident in the war in Afghanistan.

The war in Afghanistan began for Canadians with a plea from the US to come to its defence as part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) agreement. Although the Chrétien Government resisted the US initiatives in Iraq in 2003, it waited for the UN Security Council to sanction the mission in Afghanistan before sending naval elements in 2001 and a ground element in 2002 in support of US led operations. It was clear to the US this was a war on terror; however, for Canadians the timeframe between 2001 and 2005 was a peacekeeping
endeavour in aid of the Afghanistan government (Strategic Counsel 2006; Sjolander and Trevenen 2010; Shazad 2011), thereby demonstrating a fundamental disconnect between the two nation’s national narratives even though it is an “expression of Canadian values” to participate in multilateral operations.

Government defence policy alone is ill-suited to explain how the military is utilized as an extension of the nation’s values and interests. As the examples above demonstrate, during times that lack an official policy to guide the decision making of the Canadian Government there is a process at work within Canadian society that allows the nation to carry on. My thesis seeks to explore this process by focusing on national discourse to understand how a nation’s identity is constructed and what role the military plays in this process.

**Summary of Chapters to Follow**

Chapter Two – Constructing a National Narrative of the Canadian Forces – focuses on the theoretical debates surrounding nationalism encompassing national identity and the theoretical process of nation building. Given my methodological focus on the news media and political debates, I demonstrate the fundamental role of both elements in the nation building process. This chapter will conclude with a focus on how the CF is fundamental to the nation building process and where its inclusion is required within the academic literature.

In Chapter Three – Locating the Canadian Forces within National Discourse, I outline my methodology of choice: critical discourse analysis. I outline the theory that informs this methodology and explain why it is the best choice for this type of research. The analytical framework that I use to conduct my research is also explained in-depth. I explain the process I used to conduct my research as well as how I utilized the qualitative research program, NVivo.
In Chapter Four – News Media Discourse, the results from my critical discourse analysis on newspaper articles gathered from *The Globe and Mail* and *National Post* are discussed. Likewise, Chapter Five – Official Discourse, outlines the results of my critical discourse analysis on House of Commons’ debates. In each chapter, I offer some preliminary conclusions based on my analysis as it relates to each element – i.e., how the news media framed the CF independently from how the government did during the same period of time.

Chapter Six – Unmilitary or Militarily Banal? is dedicated to merging the results from my discourse analyses in the previous chapters with an aim to outline the patterns found in national discourse from 1999 to 2002. The discussion outlines the civil-military relationship that exists in Canada and offers some insight into the effects of ideological depictions contained in news media and official discourse on this relationship. My analysis suggests that Canadians are militarily banal and that a change in national peacekeeping discourse is required to accurately reflect the nature of civil-military relations in Canada.

**Conclusion**

My research seeks to offer a starting point for future academic debate surrounding the fundamental role the CF plays in Canadian nation building. My research parts from other studies found in military sociology insofar as it adopts a non-traditional perspective by virtue of the theory and methodology employed (see Ouellet 2005). Some European researchers have begun to study the intimate relationship between host society and military insofar as national identity and policy implications are concerned; I seek to start the debate within a Canadian context.
Chapter 2 - Constructing a National Narrative of the Canadian Forces
A country’s military is deeply connected to state-formation and how citizens identify with one another as part of an “imaginary community” (Anderson 1991). The process whereby the Canadian identity is influenced by the military’s defined purpose is best articulated in the nation building literature. To date the term “nation” does not have a generally accepted definition (Calhoun 2005). The term nation and terms derived from it like nationalism and nationality are highly contested and perspectives differ in the academic literature. Regardless of one’s theoretical orientation, nationalism is an important factor in the nation building process. Nationalism “forms the horizon of international and domestic political discourse, and the natural framework for all political interaction, but it also structures our daily lives and the way we perceive and interpret the reality that surrounds us” (Ozkirimli 2010:2). In this sense, nationalism and nation building are important topics of inquiry for those seeking to interpret everyday reality.

In this chapter what a nation is and how it comes to be will be outlined. My theoretical orientation towards the nation and nation building is sociological and holds that nations are necessary entities which facilitate the creation and development of modern society (Calhoun 2005). My primary influences are modernist and banal nationalism theories. The nation is a discursive formation that is shaped through nationalism which creates, on the one hand, an internal contested vision of the world shaped along national lines; while on the other hand, a “principle of legitimation” where institutions are granted legitimacy by either representing the nation or by serving it (Mihelj 2011:3). One way nationalism accomplishes its aim is through national discourse which creates a shared historical record and knowledge-base by which the government and news media shape national identities. As Billig (1995) states, “the battle for hegemony, which accompanies the creation of states, is reflected in the power to define language” (p.32). Nations are formed through the hegemonic articulation of ideological
constructs that are liable to be redefined (Sutherland 2005). The connection between nationalism, discourse, and power is explored by outlining the role of the media and government in nation building. These institutions create symbolic discursive constructions through diverse social and political mechanisms which are responsible for providing a frame of reference that structures the reality that surrounds us (Mihelj 2011). The specific focus of this chapter is to explain how national narratives of the CF are created and conveyed to the nation and how these narratives shape national identity.

2.0 Nation Building

The nation is often assumed to be synonymous with society; thus, it is neglected as a subject of inquiry even though society remains “embedded within notions of nation-state, citizenship, and national society” (Urry 2000:6 as cited in Edensor 2002; see also James 1996). I place the nation and the shared cultural identity it creates at the forefront of my analysis by exploring the ways national-level discourse is used to create a common and shared experience for its members. This is a complex and fluid process that should be understood as an ongoing phenomenon within established states like Canada. I begin by outlining key assumptions that inform my understanding of what constitutes a nation; this is followed by an outline of theories that inform the nationalism literature. I review these theories and some of their short comings prior to demonstrating the particular advantages of the banal nationalism thesis proposed by Billig (1995).

Within the sociological literature, the definition and characteristics of the nation is understood with reference to three main theoretical approaches; these are primordialism, modernism, and ethno-symbolism. For primordialists, the nation is conceived as a fundamental
aspect of humankind that has existed as long as humanity (Ozkirimli 2010). By contrast, for modernists the nation is considered a relatively new phenomenon appearing around the end of the eighteenth-century as a product of the “modernisation” of societies (Smith 2009). Ethno-symbolists argue the nation stems from the ethnic routes and symbolic meanings found in a population’s cultural heritage (Smith 2009). Departing from traditional nationalism theories, my own approach derives from Calhoun’s (1997) understanding of the nation as a “discursive formation”. The term nation has been used historically as a reference to birthplace and culture; only recently has it developed political connotations (Ozkirimli 2010). Nations cannot be defined objectively. According to Calhoun (1997:5 as cited in Ozkirimli 2010):

...nations are constituted largely by claims themselves, by the way of talking and thinking and acting that relies on these sorts of claims to produce collective identity, to mobilize collective projects, and to evaluate people and practices. (P.188)

In this sense, “nations can only exist within the context of nationalism” and the “nation is a particular way of thinking about what it means to be a people” (Ozkirimli 2010:188). Despite its conceptualizations as a “social imaginary”, it is a mistake to interpret this as meaning that the nation is merely a figment of the imagination (Calhoun 2007). On the contrary, it means the nation lives on through discourse and collective representations regardless of their accuracy (Ozkirimli 2010).

Nation building is often explored within the nationalism literature as a project to be done with militaries in foreign lands or as a problem for new or unstable states; in other words, “hot” nationalism. My use of the term deviates from this understanding which focuses on resisting aggressive and threatening movements that stand in contradiction to established states (Billig 1995; Ozkirimli 2010). Focusing on extreme forms of nation building, or hot nationalism, places nationalism on the periphery of established nations, or on what is seen as being separate from
“us” (Billig 1995). On the contrary, nationalism and nation building are present and ongoing within established states and their manifest forms are influential especially because the process of nationalism is taken for granted. The aim of the nationalist agenda is to achieve a shared common sense (similar to the way a language spoken within a state becomes the official language) where national narratives become part of everyday reality and are thus inseparable from the institutions that represent the nation. In other words, nationalism structures the world it tries to describe and becomes entrenched in institutions whose practices and categories affect our everyday lives (Mihelj 2011). This process is fundamental to the nation building agenda and central to exploring collective identity formation.

My analysis thus far does not suggest the nation is a uniform imagined community, nor that every citizen is necessarily like-minded. As Mihelj (2011) states:

> Despite the porous nature of cultural boundaries, international migration and the ability of individuals to maintain multiple attachments to places and collectivities near and far, modern nation-states do manage to create and maintain complex webs of cultural traits, social formations and systems of symbolic exchange, and can therefore be treated as relatively stable and thick ‘culture areas.’ (P.15)

Nationalism at its core is a power struggle between opposing elites wishing to stake a claim as the representative of the political will and cultural make-up of the people. As such, the nation is fundamentally diverse and, at the same time, its boundaries are “finite, if elastic ... beyond which lie other nations” (Anderson 1991:7). Political elites, through the mass media, are able to draw the nation’s people together around common symbolic meaning and understanding. Some studies are concerned with the political focus of media institutions and view them as instruments of nation building (Mihelj 2011; see also Jarvie 1992; Price 1995; Maxwell 1995). On the other hand, some studies are concerned with the mediated cultural forms that reproduce nationalist discourse, myths, and symbols (Mihelj 2011 see also Bishop and Jaworski 2003; Chan 2005; Frosh and Wolfsfeld 2007). Regardless if one adopts a political or cultural focus of the nation,
what is important is that the imagined nature of it, brought to life by the government and media institutions, and that is capable of structuring our everyday lives (Mihelj 2011). The nation is embedded in our lives, acquiring “deep emotional legitimacy” while imposing restrictions on future national imagination and on individual attempts at identity construction (Mihelj 2011:15). Even if one does not wish to identify with a particular nation, one has little choice when forced to select the proper box under a questionnaire about nationality or when being discriminated against or physically attacked (e.g., Nazi Germany and the systematic discrimination against the Jewish race) (Mihelj 2011). In this sense, a national brand or a “grammar of nationhood” is established within nations so that all nations have a common point of reference and are able to distinguish between their nation and another (Mihelj 2011).

One product of nation building is the formation of a national identity from which the nation gathers a sense of self and, more distinctly, a sense of how the “other” is perceived (Billig 1995). National identity formation, through nationalism, should be understood as a fluid process that is constantly being remade and redefined and one that is inseparable from the identity of a given individual (Robins 2001; Edensor 2002). As an example, Canadians are known for fostering a cultural mosaic and it has been argued that, as such, no true national identity can exist (Thomson and Hynek 2006). This contention is disputed on the grounds that national discourse is focused in Canada around universal concepts as opposed to ethnic or cultural distinctions. Although national identity is “contested, dynamic, multiple, and fluid” (Edensor 2002: vi) this does not mean it is weak or lacking analytical relevance. Rather, it is of foremost importance because “this diversity, the multitudinous culture effects, and the flexible symbols of the nation produce an enormous cultural resource that is not a monolithic set of ideas adhered to by
everybody but a seething mass of cultural elements” (Edensor 2002: vi-vii). In this way, nationalism, through national discourse, influences the very fabric of the nation.

Returning to the three aforementioned main-stream theories of nationalism (primordial, modernism, and ethno-symbolism), each seeks to explain the legitimate source of nationality in terms of ancestry, modern politics, and ethnicity respectively. Other theories offer insight into various aspects of nationalism like the feminist approach (Yuval-Davis 2001), post colonial perspective (Chatterjee 2003), nationalism as a discursive formation (Calhoun 2007), and banal nationalism (Billig 1995). Although this is not an exhaustive list, I will restrict my overview to some of these contributions to the nationalism literature.

Primordialism argues nationality is a natural part of humanity and that nations have existed as long as humankind (Ozkirimli 2010). Shils (1957), for example, argues nationalism binds the nation in the same way as family members feel for one another due to their tie of blood. Particularly strong relationship characteristics which can only be described as primordial are not just a function of interaction but are attributable to the tie of blood (Shills 1957 as cited in Ozkirimli 2010). There are four distinctive foci within primordial theory: the nationalist (Kedourie 1971; Gellner 1983), sociobiological (van den Berghe 2001a; 2001b; 2005), culturalist (Shils 1957; Geertz 1993), and perennialist (Hastings 1997; Smith 2002). The underlying theme that binds all four categories is a prescription to the naturalness and historically rooted nature of nations. Several concerns arise from this theoretical perspective. Most notably, this view is undermined by recent studies that stress the social construction of ethnicity and national identity rather than a nation’s historical biological roots (Ozkirimli 2010).

Modernism is the response to primordialism’s claim that nations are a “natural and universal ... feature of human societies” (Ozkirimli 2010:72). Modernists locate nations in the
modern era, with nationalism emerging in the late eighteenth-century (Smith 2009). For modernists, nations are a product of specific modern processes like capitalism, mobility, democracy, and secular education (Smith 2009). These processes are responsible for creating and shaping the nation in unique ways and they do so to varying degrees. Modernism theories differ in that they place more importance on one modern process than another. The overall theme of modern theories is that nations and nationalism are features of the modern era (Smith 2003; Ichijo and Uzelac 2005; Gorski 2006; Ozkirimli 2010). Despite diverging emphasis, the general criticism for modernists is that these explanations are reductionist in their emphasis on one modern process over another (Madianou 2005).

Ethno-symbolism theories are the result of criticisms of the modernist tradition. For ethno-symbolists, like modernists, nations are conceived as dynamic, purposive communities of action. Nations are also seen as historical communities with specific historical and geo-political contexts (Smith 2009). According to Smith (2009:14-21), the modernists and ethno-symbolists part views in five ways: 1) Symbolic resources – modernists over-emphasize material factors and ethno-symbolists analyze communities, ideologies, and sense of identity in terms of their symbolic resources; 2) La longue durée (the long duration) – nations need to be understood within the context of their cultural and political pasts not just within the era of modernity; 3) Ethnicity – modernists marginalize ethnicity whereas ethno-symbolists argue it is possible to trace many ethnic communities that have transformed into nations; 4) Elitism – there is a strong top-down approach to modernist theories, ethno-symbolists are concerned with the “interplay between elites and different strata, and the ways in which their ideals and needs influence each other and help to shape national identities and ideology”; and 5) Conflict and reinterpretation – for modernists there is no conflict underlying the national community once the process of
modernization is underway whereas ethno-symbolists continue to emphasize conflict within the nation and internationally. The main critique of ethno-symbolism that is most relevant here is the underestimation of the difference between modern nations and earlier ethnic communities (Ozkirimli 2010). As Calhoun (1993) states, “while it is impossible to dissociate nationalism entirely from ethnicity, it is equally impossible to explain it simply as a continuation of ethnicity” (p.235).

Transcending these disputes and limitations, my perspective is that identity formation or nation building is deeply rooted in the institutionalized discourse and experience of nations as described in Billig’s work on banal nationalism. Billig (1995) explains how nationalist sentiments are reproduced daily by national institutions in mundane ways so that the nation’s identity and existence is routinely embedded into the nation such that the nation and its identity become taken for granted. Billig’s single greatest contribution has been to problematize the taken for granted nature of the nation in everyday life and within social theory (Skey 2009). Everyday life is what constitutes the foundation of social reality and it is quickly and unconsciously taken for granted (Chaney 2002). The nation-state exists within a world of nation-states and this assumption, like that of the language spoken by a nation, is naturalized and becomes common sense (Billig 1995). This process is so effective that this socially constructed world feels like the naturalized world (Berger and Luckmann 1966). Due to Billig’s work, recent literature on nation formation has moved away from understanding the process as unilateral, heading to an unavoidable conclusion of the nation-state (Mihelj 2011). Rather, the process of nation building is now understood as highly episodic, involving moments of hot and banal nationalism that does not necessarily result in a unified nation-state (Beissinger 2002; Hutchinson 2005; Mihelj 2011).
Nationalism is reproduced through hegemonic discourse within national institutions “because it is embedded in routines of life, which constantly remind or ‘flag’, nationhood” (Billig 1995:38). This macro-level embedding via discourse is done through the “principle of legitimation” (Mihelj 2011:17). This principle explains the relationship between discourse and a wider social context and is, as Bourdieu (1989) would say, “the subjective representations of the world held by various social agents, and the objective structures and relations of power which they help engender and in which they are, at the same time, embedded” (Mihelj 2011:17). This relational approach explains how a nation’s identity is expressed through competing forms of national narratives. These narratives are produced through any form of communication (words, pictures, etc.) and can take the form of socially constructed typologies which are subjected further to redistribution and refinement. Nations are distinguished “by the style in which they are imagined” (Anderson 1991:16). This unique style, or grammar of nationhood, is the result of social agents competing to define a nation’s identity achieving hegemony and reproduction within institutions. It is within the routines of institutions that the nation’s fluid identity is constantly reinforced in subtle yet potent ways.

It is impossible to separate ideology from knowledge, because knowledge is constituted by symbolic meaning and given legitimacy through expressive forms that are negotiated at the micro (i.e., one on one) and portrayed at the macro (i.e., national) levels in society. As these narratives evolve into typologies, their meaning is fluid from the moment of their conception until they are replaced by another national narrative. This process is hegemonie insofar as:

...the social world can be constructed or represented in several different ways, following different systems of classification and naming, which in turn give rise to different principles of identity- and group-formation. This multiplicity opens up opportunities for symbolic struggles over the perception of the social world, which are at the same time also struggles over the relative influence of different sets of objective structures and relations of power. (Mihelj 2011:17-18)
Social agents utilize symbolic language in national discourse to influence the knowledge base of a nation. These agents achieve hegemony when their world view is adopted as representing the nation thus resulting in changes to the objective structures and relations of power. An example of this in Canada is the experience of the aboriginal people, who hold vastly different beliefs on justice, yet are subject to the Canadian criminal justice system. Even if the nation’s shared understanding of justice may conceal very different worldviews that exist beneath the surface, the objective structures and power relations that result from this subjective struggle is at the heart of the banal reproduction of the national identity.

2.1 The Government’s Role

The government plays a fundamental role in the process of nation building as it seeks to capture the essence of the imaginary community it represents through ideological discourse. In this way, the government is able to produce and assign meaning to items that are meant for a national audience. This process translates into a shared experience by all members of the nation as the “official” discourse shapes the resulting negotiated meaning. The government’s vision is only one view that is in constant competition with others seeking hegemony over national discourse. Throughout this struggle for hegemony, the government remains the primary social agent responsible for “translating representations of the world and [the] classificatory systems they entail into objective structures and relations” (Mihelj 2011:19). Even In the instance of diverging subjective interpretations of the nation, national identity formation occurs within the objective social structures created by government, and as such, nations are constituted in relation to the dominant official discourse.
Norman (2006) outlines instances where nation building projects aim to construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct features of national identities for specific objectives. He distinguishes between the nation building tools used by governments of advanced and non-advanced modern states. I focus on the five nation building projects that political actors can use to target the national identity, to modify it in qualitative ways within advanced modern states where “majority and minority identities are already deeply entrenched” (Norman 2006:40). The non-exhaustive list includes: reprioritizing the national identity (an attempt to have an existing identity seem more appealing to people who prescribe to other identity groups); sentimentalizing the national identity (an attempt to intensify various sentiments of the national identity); desentimentalizing the national identity (an attempt to make the national identity less intense, to make citizens less inclined to use nationalist rhetoric); reconfiguring the national identity (an attempt to change the character or content of an existing identity); and remoralizing the national identity (an attempt to change the normative content of the national identity) (Norman 2006:40-42). It is via these nation building projects that the government shapes national identity.

These theoretical nation building projects can be located in what Calhoun (1997) has outlined as the ten distinguishing features of national rhetoric:

1) Boundaries, or territory and population or both;
2) Indivisibility;
3) Sovereignty, or the aspiration to sovereignty, usually through an autonomous and putatively self-sufficient state;
4) An ‘ascending’ notion of legitimacy, or the idea that government is just only when supported by popular will;
5) Popular participation in collective affairs;
6) Direct membership, where each individual is a part of the nation and categorically equivalent to other members;
7) Culture which involves some combination of language, shared beliefs and values;
8) Temporal depth, the idea of a nation extending from the past to the future;
9) Common descent or racial characteristics;
10) Special historical, sometimes sacred, relations to a particular territory. (Calhoun 1997:4-5 as cited in Ozkirimli 2010:187-8)
These ten discursive features of the nation are not finite but rather discursive realms where a national identity is produced, reproduced, and most importantly remembered; according to Billig (1995), the nation’s identity “is more than an inner psychological state or an individual self-definition: it is a form of life, which is daily lived in the world of nation-states” (p. 69). The national rhetoric becomes a grammar of nationhood that is shared by all members, and no one person can forget the entirety of the imagined community. In a similar light, not one version of this community will be remembered by all its members. In this way, national rhetoric, within official discourse, shapes the nation’s identity.

The realms of official discourse (i.e. discourse propagated by the government) and mass distribution of national rhetoric via the news media are where discourse is capable of rapidly shaping the current and future understanding of identity. In these instances, the process of identity formation is challenged, reiterated, or redefined instantaneously through mass consumption of ideologically based information that shapes how we understand who we are. It is important to note that a government’s ability to influence a free and democratic society is not as simple as making a statement (Norman 2006). As I outline below, the media play an important role in facilitating the government’s ability to shape the nation by creating a space for official discourse to reach the masses. One way for the government to communicate its discursive construction of the nation is through the news media.

2.2 The News Media’s Role

Madianou (2005) speaks succinctly to the absence of the media (and news media) in theories of nationalism and identity:

... there is a striking absence, even in the recent proliferation of writings on nationalism and identities, of analysis concerned with the role of the media. This is not surprising in the case of primordialists (or perennialists, or ethnosymbolists for that matter); if
identities are given by birth and the nations are rooted in an ancient past, what role can
the media possibly play? This absence is more conspicuous in the case of modernist
writers who, apart from a few notable exceptions, have failed to address the media as
possible actors in the processes of identity and nation building. (P.13)

The few nation building theories that address the media’s role fall into one of two categories:
strong media/weak identities or weak media/strong identities. The latter is found often in the
media literature, while the former is used normally in nation building theories. Both have been
criticised for being top-down approaches that provide an insufficient explanation for the complex
process of national identity formation, insofar as they focus on institutions rather than an
individual level of experience (Madianou 2005). Although a bottom-up approach combined with
a top-down approach would result in a more robust study of identity formation, a top-down study
remains a fruitful way to explore how the media plays a role in nation building. Banal
nationalism explores the media’s role within a top-down framework; however, this does not limit
its empirical validity as the media plays a fundamental role in the way people, as Dominguez
(1989) suggests, describe, re-describe, and argue who they are.

A few modern theorists have explored how the media is employed as a nation building
tool. Gellner (1983) emphasizes the importance of the media’s place within the nation as
opposed to the message content. For Gellner, particular messages are less significant than the
fact that the media is able to reach the masses. Anderson’s (1991) argument is similar in that he
saw the creation of print media as the “social ‘glue’ that made the nation possible” (Madianou
2005:15). Hobsbawm (1992) also recognizes that the media has played a significant role in the
shaping of nationalism and identity. In particular, “what the media achieved, apart from
disseminating and in some extreme cases exploiting political ideologies, is to link the public and
private worlds by making national symbols part of people’s everyday lives” (Madianou
2005:15). Thus, the media is central to informing the nation’s citizens.

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For Billig (1995), the media is responsible for identity maintenance through the national press which constantly reminds the nation who “we” and the “others” are. Through this everyday reproduction, nationalism becomes naturalized to the point of invisibility (Billig 1995). The news media, in particular, is recognized as a critical component in the continuation and perpetuation of the nation. It follows from these arguments that a national identity needs to be explored as a fluid entity that lacks a uniform expression, especially when analyzing the role of media (Madianou 2005). Although the media is not responsible for creating a nation’s identity, it does create a symbolic communicative space in the public sphere (Schlesinger 2000). In this space a nation’s identity is framed using biased language to create a discursive point of reference for micro-level discourse. It is also in this space that the government’s rhetoric is reproduced for a national audience. Banal nationalism does not deny the particularity or existence of this space, rather it proposes a method by which this space becomes informed. Within this space, discourse is using language that “flags” the nation in potent yet non-spectacular ways. As with all public spheres, the exposure of this communicative space may be more common for some than others (Madianou 2005).

The media does not determine the identity of the nation; on the contrary, it primes public opinion and sets the “permissible limits of public discourse” (Alboim 2012:48). This process of priming and setting limits, or as I argue shaping discourse, entails the news media framing their messages to appeal to what communications strategists call “opinion leaders.” About 70% of Canadians are relatively disconnected from matters pertaining to the nation (Alboim 2012:48). The other 30% (this number rises during election time), the opinion leaders, are regularly and actively engaged in social, political, and community matters and are targeted by the news media to go out and negotiate meaning and to persuade other Canadians (Alboim 2012:48). It is, in this
way, that the news media provide a small percentage of Canadians with national rhetoric and biased language with which they inform the remainder of the Canadian public. Obviously this process results in a range of subsequent discourse; however, the news media are none the less responsible for providing the biased language used to articulate future discourse (see Alboim 2012). This process of setting the permissible limits of public discourse is made more complex by the competing forms of current news media with studies showing that Canadians receive their news from a number of sources, including non-Canadian sources: the Internet (websites, blogs, online newspapers, twitter feeds, etc.), television news, radio news, magazines, bill boards, television commercials, etc. (Sauvageau 2012). Even amidst the non-Canadian sources, the Canadian nation lives on – this is particularly so in the highly complex communicative space that is created by the Internet (Mihelj 2011). Regardless of the news media being one information source of many, it remains an important factor for locating nationalist discourse. The news media capacity for shaping public discourse, is best captured by Sauvageau’s (2012) statement about the effects of technological changes “even though Canadian newspapers and other traditional media are a bit short of breath, they are by no means on their last legs” (p. 33).

Another important consideration is that the news media are a source of both education and entertainment when creating messages for the public. Although this duality exists, the news media are held to greater scrutiny than say a television programme designed for entertainment when framing issues and relaying information to the masses. This scrutiny results from an internal profession code of ethics adopted by journalists, although some have argued such an ethical code is not as pervasive as it once was (Alboim 2012). In particular, when governments generate a message for public consumption the media are forced to relay the discourse verbatim, or to relay an alternate reflection of it. The former trend tends to occur during times of crises
where the media is less likely to question existing policies and statements of government officials. This tendency has been observed by Pieper (2011), for example, in the American news media following 9/11. The latter emphasis on alternate or critical analysis of government discourse is what democratic nations expect of their news media. This ideal is rarely met, however, insofar as the media perpetuate systemic biases and “manufacture consent” for government policies through the use of propaganda in a non-overt manner (Herman and Chomsky 1988:306). A distinction between critically engaging government discourse and being systemically suspicious of government initiatives is required. Canadian news media have adopted an institutionalized practice of questioning official discourse due to general suspicion and distrust between the government and media (Alboim 2012). Systemic suspicion that seeks to demonize the government by “empowering the audience” is different from critically engaging official discourse on the merit of the message. An example of this is focusing on the number of soldiers the government is to send to a country of choice in support of peacekeeping operations rather than setting the limits of discourse around the participation of Canadian soldiers in UN missions in the first place. This non-critical bias is particularly relevant, as I outline below, when looking at how the CF is utilized as a nation building tool.

2.3 The Canadian Forces as a Nation Building Tool

Banal militarism is a concept created by Virchow (2005) to create a starting point for assessing how non-extreme forms of militarism are present within nation states. Like banal nationalism, it situates the reproduction of the military’s identity within a nation as a non-spectacular yet effective process (Virchow and Thomas 2007). Because this term succinctly
describes the situation that exists in Canada today, the remainder of this chapter will focus on developing a framework for examining the role of the CF.

Banal militarism, a term derived from banal nationalism, suggests an analogous mechanism to explain how “military [and]/or war-like behavior, attitudes [and] views are evoked, socialized or (re)produced” (Virchow and Thomas 2007:45), within society with little critical reflection. Accordingly, it describes the “wide range of public discourses, media activities, and political events that take the existence of the armed forces, its public manifestations, the spending of relevant sums of money for military purposes, and the acceptance of war as a matter of conflict resolution, (nearly) for granted” (Virchow 2005:54). Therefore, the military institution is reproduced routinely within a taken for granted national discourse that is fundamentally connected to how a nation views itself. It is, in this way, that a particular hegemonic discourse (or ideological depiction) of the CF takes the form of natural or common sense and this helps shape the national discourse of Canadian identity and subsequently informs how Canadians negotiate their identities.

Ideological depictions are central to this daily process because ideology is the premise from which all things that appear natural develop. Roland Barthes said “ideology speaks with ‘the Voice of Nature’” (as cited in Billig 1995:37). Ideology has also been said to comprise “the habits of behaviour and belief which combine to make any social world appear to those, who inhabit it as the natural world” (Billig 1995:37; see also McLellan 1986; Ricoeur 1986; Billig 1991; Eagleton 1991; Fairclough 1992). An example of this process at work is the ideological depiction of the CF as a peacekeeping organization. Culturally embedded images of the Canadian peacekeeper, as seen on the Canadian five dollar bill, remind Canadians they are a peacekeeping nation. Everyday monetary exchanges between Canadians serve as cultural
reminders; this routine acceptance through mundane cash transactions is just one way by which the national identity is reproduced without any cognitive reflection required. I am not suggesting that critical reflection is entirely absent or that it is more pervasive than critical reflection; however, such banal reproductions of ideology influence otherwise uninformed Canadians.

Ideological depictions are necessary to communicate complex ideas in a simple and complete form and are powerful in that an ideology’s success is measured by its acceptance as natural (Malesevic 2006). Shazad (2011) has argued how the banal reproduction of ideological narratives of the CF greatly influences public perception, and in the instance of the war on terror and peacekeeping, it can be misleading. In particular, Shazad (2011) found that university students who have grown up consuming the national narrative of Canada as a peacekeeping nation use this narrative as a “natural marker of Canadianness” (p.89). These students articulate the CF’s role in the war on terror in peacekeeping terms ignoring the current national preoccupation with the war in Afghanistan and terrorism (Shazad 2011). In this case, the ideological commitment to Canadians as good international citizens (or peacekeepers) has lead to a misrepresentation of the reality of the CF and its role in Afghanistan. This can be described in Foucauldian terms as a defence of society against itself (Shazad 2011). In other words, it is “an exercise of rationalized positivism, peacekeeping as the discourse is committed to an ontology of liberal individuals who see themselves as having the capacity to liberate others” (Harting and Kamboureli 2009 as cited in Shazad 2011:91). It is, in this way, that ideology forms the basis of institutionalized discourse that subjectively presents the role the Canadian military plays on the world stage within established objective social structures.

It is critical to note that how a “misleading narrative” is defined is a purely subjective process that depends greatly on how one interprets national discourse and the actions of the CF.
As I have outlined above, national identity is a fluid entity and the national discourse surrounding the identity formation of the CF is just as diverse and complex. Combining the two as I propose here, that is exploring national narratives of the CF within a nation building context, is a highly subjective and interpretative process. For example, contrasting the predominant liberation thesis, some observers (see Kramer and Michalowski 2005) argue that the 2003 US invasion of Iraq was a form of state crime. As this example suggests, the process of interpreting how a military is used as a nation building tool is fundamentally connected to the way the interpreter understands the world.

Conclusion

In summary, this chapter has highlighted the complexity of defining nation building from a sociological perspective. I have overviewed existing literature and theories with particular attention to developing a unique perspective informed by Billig’s theory of banal nationalism. This process is a top-down endeavour beginning with the political elites that shape the national identity through official discourse. These narratives are subsequently reproduced in the media that create a symbolic communicative space for their audience, namely the nation. By framing the CF within ideological discourse, it contributes to the shaping of Canadian identity through banal militarism. Chapter three will be devoted to a description of my study which is designed to shed light on how government and media discourse relating to the CF shapes Canadian identity.
Chapter 3 - Locating the Canadian Forces within National Discourse
Given the nation’s form as a discursive entity, the most appropriate way to investigate its nature and how the military plays a role in its formation is through a critical discourse analysis. There is an inherent hegemonic struggle in the construction of discourse and the formation of a nation. Critical discourse analysis collects “real-world language and uses a variety of analytic techniques to identify and critically challenge the ideological representations of dominant groups” (David and Sutton 2011:43). Nation building is a process of reproducing hegemonic representations of symbolic meaning: thus, one must look at a nation’s discourse from a critical perspective. I will outline my methodology of choice while focusing on the literature that has informed my research. To conclude, I will outline the analytical framework used to conduct a critical discourse analysis on two national newspapers and the transcripts of House of Commons’ debates using the qualitative analysis software package NVivo 10.

3.0 Critical Discourse Analysis

My methodological approach is qualitative as the analysis will centre “on the authentic every day communications in institutional, media, political, or other locations rather than on sample sentences or sample texts constructed in linguists’ minds” (Wodak et al. 1999:8). This approach views discourse as a form of social practice that assumes a “dialectical relationship between particular discursive acts and the situations, institutions, and social structures in which they are embedded ... in other words, discourse constitutes social practice and is at the same time constituted by it” (Wodak et al. 1999:8). My focus on ideological discourse as a form of social practice calls for a qualitative approach.

In order to determine meaning or demonstrate the presence of ideological depictions, I practice what Berg (2007) has labelled “deciphering text” -- ascertaining a narrative’s meaning
by virtue of the context and placement of words as some words mean the same thing, and words are not always used in the same manner (Berg 2007). Berg (2007) suggests that in order for a researcher to demonstrate that a meaningful pattern has evolved, three examples must be shown. I adopt this methodological approach to ensure meaning is demonstrated by more than a single representation (David and Sutton 2011). This method is employed to show how meaning is constructed within national discourse.

Depictions of the CF are linked inextricably to the institutional motives that create them. Often embedded in the discriminatory use of language is an ideological motive. The use of a critical discourse analysis seems natural for this kind of research insofar as:

The aim of Critical Discourse Analysis is to unmask ideological permeated and often obscured structures of power, political control, and dominance as well as strategies of discriminatory inclusion and exclusion in language use ... [it serves] to uncover manipulative manoeuvres in politics and the media, which aim at linguistic homogenisation or discriminatory exclusion of human beings, and to heighten the awareness of the rhetorical strategies which are used to impose certain political beliefs, values, and goals (Wodak et al. 1999:8-9).

The systematic reproduction of a particular depiction, like the primary role of the CF being peacekeeping, is an example of the discriminatory nature of language. Critical discourse analysis explores the employment of such depictions by situating its use as “manoeuvres” in politics and the media. These manoeuvres and, in particular, how they are concerned with linguistic homogenisation and rhetorical strategies are the focus of my research method. My objective is to examine the nuances of banal militarism within these obscure manoeuvres.

My methodology remains true to Foucault’s notion of discourse analysis in that it focuses on an object and maps “the surface where the object has emerged” (Grbich 2007:148). In particular, a four year time frame is selected to analyze the “surface” of news media and official discourse where depictions of the CF (the object) emerge in different contexts. Foucault’s work on power and dominance over the distribution of cultural knowledge informs my understanding.
of how the placement of the object within discourse necessitates that other opinions have been marginalized (Grbich 2007).

The critical discourse analysis I conduct, although true to a discourse rather than a content analysis agenda, contains elements of both to better organize and analyze the data. As Potter and Wetherell (1994) suggest, I use coding only to organize the large quantity of text data to make the task of analysis more manageable. My approach is semiotic insofar as it looks at an object’s meaning (ideological depictions of the CF) at a fixed moment in time (David and Sutton 2011). In order to facilitate this analysis, coding the newspaper articles and official discourse transcripts into specific categories is necessary. I discuss the categories in more depth in the following section of this chapter.

Virchow (2005) identifies three areas in the public sphere responsible for the reproduction of banal militarism: public discourses, media activities, and political events. True to my top-down theoretical approach, I focus on media activities and political events to determine the ideological depictions contained therein. I limit “media activities” to all the articles contained in two Canadian national newspapers (The Globe and Mail and the National Post) over four years. I limit “political events” to the transcripts of the House of Commons’ debates concerning national and foreign policy matters of the CF during the same time. I chose 1 January 1999 to 31 December 2002 as the time frame for my analysis because, during this time, the CF was employed in an air campaign in Kosovo and then had various elements deployed to Afghanistan. These events may offer insight into how the CF is utilized within national discourse as a nation building tool.

I have selected The Globe and Mail and the National Post because each paper targets a national audience and focuses on national and international issues. The national focus of these
papers is a unique characteristic when compared to more domestic-issue orientated newspapers, like the Toronto Sun and Star, which have dedicated and separate local, national, and international sections. Blending the local with national, as the papers I have selected do, uses language that distinguishes “us” and “them” more frequently providing a robust data set. Although there are several uses of the word “us” within newspaper discourse (e.g., “us” as media professional or as members of the local community), a paper that constructs the local news as national news should yield a greater amount of discourse constructing the nation as the assumed reference point for “them”. Each paper is searched using an electronic data base that will not discriminate between types of articles because they represent the diverse ways in which news media discourse is presented. A greater frequency of discourse containing nationalist rhetoric helps to demonstrate the pervasiveness and consistency of the news media’s shaping of public discourse as it pertains to the CF.

Other studies with a focus on official discourse, the media, and the military have used a similar methodology (Nikolaev and Porpora 2011; Pieper 2011). In particular, Pieper (2011) conducted a discourse analysis of American news media about the war on terror. He chose a distinct time frame to analyze media content that contained news about the war on terror and how its portrayal changed over three years. Pieper’s (2011) discourse analysis is relevant to my research insofar as it demonstrates how the object is defined and how that meaning changes over time. As for the added focus of my research on the power struggle for hegemonic discourse within nations, Wodak et al. (1998) has demonstrated that critical discourse analysis is the most effective means for exploring how discourse operates for the purpose of nation building.

3.1 Analytical Framework
I used the term “narratives” throughout my analysis to refer to newspaper articles and transcribed comments in official discourse. The term narrative was used to describe any or all parts of a newspaper article or a House of Commons’ transcript. These narratives were viewed as the constitutive elements of either news media discourse or official discourse depending, of course, on their source. Narratives were also viewed as representations of their respective discourse insofar as a collective of narratives offered insight into the subjective beliefs, objective structures, and relations of power engendered by the discourse of the analyzed institutions.

Data Collection

To collect the sample of articles from the newspapers, a simple key word search was conducted using the research data base ProQuest. I searched the following key terms to gather articles that pertained to the CF: "Canadian Forces, Canadian Armed Forces, Canadian military, Canadian soldiers, Canadian peacekeepers, Canadian army, and Canadian warriors.” This search yielded over three thousand five hundred articles between 1 January 1999 to 31 December 2002 from the Globe and Mail and National Post. This search did not discriminate between types of articles in the newspaper; thus, my data set contained various sections including news (local, national, and global) and editorials (letters to the editor and columns). The data collected were a non-exhaustive list; however, the number of articles collected sufficiently represented the discourse of these two newspapers. The non-exhaustive list allowed for a more thorough and concentrated study, thereby mitigating the risk of collecting an amorphous data set. After the data was collected from ProQuest, I organized the data into 100 articles per PDF file and input them into NVivo for data analysis.
For the collection of House of Commons transcripts, I accessed the Parliament of Canada’s website to search the House of Commons’ debates between 1999 and 2002. I utilized the “Hansard Index” which had previously organized all debates that involved the “Canadian Armed Forces” in each parliamentary session (36th Parliament 1st Session to 37th Parliament 2nd Session) that coincided with my selected timeframe. I collected forty separate transcripts over the four years. The data consisted of narratives by politicians that were focused on foreign or national affairs concerning the CF. I excluded narratives that focused squarely on vehicle/equipment procurement issues and other matters not overtly discussing the CF’s role as it related to the Canadian nation (e.g., “Namao air base, CFB Edmonton, conversion to army base”). The Hansard Index organized debates several ways; one method was by theme. The theme relevant to my research “Canadian Armed Forces” captured several sub-themes within each relevant Session of Parliament. I reviewed all sub-themes that framed the CF as a nation building tool (e.g., Kosovo conflict, peacekeeping troops, etc.). I treated comments by individual Members of Parliament to constitute an “official narrative”. Narratives were drawn from debates, questions, or statements in the House of Commons. After saving each of the forty transcripts collected as PDF files, they were imported into NVivo for data analysis.

**Data Analysis**

For both analyses, I used several codes to track the presence of material pertaining to the CF and they were separated into two overarching categories: manifest and latent codes. Manifest codes were obvious and readily identifiable based on a term located within the narratives. Latent codes required interpretation and were organized based on definitions of “aggressive”, “passive”, “neutral”, “banal”, and “critical” narratives. I created nodes in NVivo to reflect the manifest and
latent codes, and organized them based on which data set they were used for. For example, a node created to code a narrative within the official discourse analysis under “aggressive” was labelled “OD – Aggressive”. The corresponding node for the newspaper analysis was further separated by newspaper. An example of an aggressive node used to code a National Post narrative was labelled “NMD – NP – Aggressive”, the same code for the Globe and Mail was labelled “NMD – GM – Aggressive”. NVivo 10 was used only for organizing the collected/coded data and for tracking the frequency of codes. After using nodes within NVivo to organize all of the relevant narratives into them, I compared the nodes to explore how often they were coded and the frequency of being coded with each other. For example, how often was the “peacemaking” node coded and how often was it coded with other nodes like “aggressive” and “critical” within narratives? This comparison offered insight into the frequency of specific CF depictions and the frequency of corresponding latent meaning in news media and official discourse. Each newspaper article and official debate transcript selected during the data collection phase was read in its entirety and was coded (or discarded) based on the terms and definitions below. Codes, as a minimum, consisted of a sentence and as much as several paragraphs. Some articles (in the PDF file of 100) and irrelevant parts of the House of Commons transcripts were discarded (i.e., ignored) based on their irrelevance. Some narratives may have contained a key word from my search in ProQuest or were captured under a Hansard Index theme but did not discuss the CF within a nation building framework.

**Manifest Codes**

To locate the way the CF was presented within national discourse several manifest codes were used to capture potential ideological depictions, including: “Peacekeeping”, “International Police Force”, “Humanitarian Aid”, “Canadian Forces” (or “Canadian Armed Forces”),
“Peacemaking”, “Combat Force”, and “Warriors”. For the news media discourse, it was necessary to distinguish at times what the author was reporting and the conclusion one could draw about the way the article was framed. For example, the author of the article may be using a quotation of a politician who spoke about the CF in peacekeeping terms, yet the author is clearly framing the CF in terms of a combat capable force. I coded these narratives based on how the news media framed the narrative.

**Canadian Forces**

Narratives that used the term “Canadian Forces” or “Canadian Armed Forces” or “Canadian military” were coded here. Narratives that spoke generally about the military including any element reference (army, navy, or air force) or reference to member of a particular branch (soldier, sailor, or air man) were placed in this code. Narratives that referenced the CF’s participation in organizations like NATO or the UN without making reference to how the CF was employed (i.e., peacekeeping or peacemaking) were coded here. Such narratives were coded as *Canadian Forces* to guard against assumptions about the role of the CF based squarely on their employment within an organization rather than on actual operations.

**Warrior**

Narratives that made specific reference to the CF as an institution of warriors were coded here. Narratives describing the CF as a war mongering institution were also captured by this code. A distinction between narratives that made reference to the possibility of the CF going to war and the CF as a war-mongering institution was made. For example, narratives referencing the possibility of the CF going to war were placed in the *Canadian Forces* code and narratives with specific reference to a war-hungry military were coded here.

**Combat Force**
Narratives that made reference to the CF being sent into or operating within a combat operation were coded here. Narratives referencing the CF’s limited fighting capability were either discarded because the discussion was limited to equipment procurement; or placed in the *Canadian Forces* code because such narratives were discussing the CF’s constitution. Narratives needed to have discussed the combative nature of the CF, or have placed the CF’s operations in combative terms in order to be coded here.

*Peacemaking*

A narrative was coded as *peacemaking* if it made specific reference to the term or placed the CF within a peacemaking framework. References to the CF participating as part of known peacemaking institution, like NATO, were not sufficient as some narratives described NATO forces as “NATO peacekeepers”. In such instances, references to peacekeeping or to NATO forces without reference to peacemaking resulted in coding at *peacekeeping* and *Canadian Forces* respectively.

*Peacekeeping*

Narratives that labelled the CF or its employment in peacekeeping terms were coded as *peacekeeping*. This code includes narratives that referenced traditional peacekeeping roles such as an “unarmed observer”. Narratives that did not use clear peacekeeping terminology or that only made reference to the CF participating in UN operations without detailing peacekeeping operations were either discarded or coded into another appropriate category.

*International Police Force*

Narratives that described the employment of the CF in a security role that would traditionally be filled by a domestic police force were placed into this category. A distinction was made between security in the peacekeeping or peacemaking sense and the traditional role of
domestic police. Descriptions like providing security for a foreign embassy would be included into this code.

*Humanitarian Assistance*

Humanitarian assistance narratives included any reference to the CF providing aid domestically or internationally. This included reference to medical assistance, providing food and water, disaster relief/clean-up, etc. This code also included any reference to the CF Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) in terms of operational employment. References to funding or constitution of the DART were placed in the *Canadian Forces* category.

*Latent Codes*

As for latent codes, a narrative was determined to be “aggressive”, “neutral”, or “passive”. These codes were used to determine potential underlying messages that were masked by the use of biased terminology. For example, a narrative used the term peacekeeping while describing a combat scenario involving the CF. In this case, the narrative was concealing its message of an aggressive CF with the use of passive terminology. Peacekeeping by definition is not combat and germinates images of a passive force keeping the peace. Utilizing these three latent codes allowed for a more robust analysis by flushing out underlying meaning that at times was contradictory to the terminology used to describe the CF. As it will be demonstrated in chapters 4 and 5, these three codes were helpful in unmasking hidden messages within news media and official discourse.

*Aggressive*

The *aggressive* code was designed to capture the essence of narratives that framed the CF in a way that reflected a more aggressive institution. Narratives could have used inherently
aggressive language or could have made reference to the CF involved in an aggressive operation (e.g., combat) while using, otherwise, non-aggressive terminology.

Neutral

The *neutral* code was designed to capture narratives that made reference to the CF without a detectable underlying context. This code included narratives that discussed the constitution of the CF or the funding of the CF in straightforward terms. For example, “500 soldiers will be sent to the UN as part of OPERATION X”. As it can be seen from this example, narratives were coded here if they did not frame the CF in a passive or aggressive manner.

Passive

Narratives that referenced the CF in non-aggressive terms were coded here. Narratives that framed the CF in a passive context, including CF operations that were framed in passive terms, were coded here. For example, a narrative was coded as *passive* if it labelled a force engaged in war-like activities as a peacekeeping force (e.g., the CF were labelled as peacekeepers during the Kosovo air campaign where the Canadian Air Force participated in NATO operations that bombed military targets in Kosovo).

Banal

Consistent with the banal nationalism framework, the *banal* code was designed to capture the “ideological habits which enable the established nations of the West to be reproduced” (Billig 1995:6). In other words, narratives that reproduced the ideological habits of the nation thereby further affirming the legitimacy of the nation and its institutions were coded here. For example, a narrative was coded as *banal* if it would frame the CF in a peacekeeping context throughout rather than only when soldiers were involved in peacekeeping operations exclusively. Similarly, a narrative was coded as *banal* when it described the CF in assumed terms. Narratives that
assumed the “existence of the armed forces, its public manifestations, the spending of relevant
sums of money for military purposes, and the acceptance of war as a matter of conflict
resolution” (Virchow 2005:54) were coded as banal.

Critical

The critical code was defined as distinct from traditional types of narratives in that “they
do not take the world as they find it” (Beier and Wylie 2010:xi). A critical narrative would
examine the “status quo as a set of dominant assumptions that may endure as much because they
are uncritically accepted as for any other reason” (Beier and Wylie 2010:vii). Thus, a narrative
was coded critical if it did not frame the CF in a taken for granted way. These narratives
challenged the traditional perspective and spoke about the CF, its members, and its employment
on operations in a manner that challenged the “‘common-sense’ understandings of the world that
might themselves be little more than habits” (Beier and Wyle 2010:x).

Limitations

How I convey the results of my analysis of newspaper articles and House of Commons’
debates is fraught with important ethical considerations or what Tracy (2010) has termed
“exiting ethics” (p. 847). Exiting ethics refers to the ethical concerns researchers have as they
consider the possible implications of their work insofar as it receives the intended response from
readers (Tracy 2010). How I interpret the House of Commons’ debates and newspaper articles
lends itself to the possibility of being taken out of context as I am not privy to the body language,
private conversations, or the intent of the statement when analyzing the primary sources.
Similarly, how the readers of my research understand my analysis may also be misinterpreted. I
am attentive to potential limitations of this nature and will address them as much as possible in the results section of my findings.

As Denzin (2004:449) states, “moving from the field to the text to the reader is a complex, reflexive process.” Due to the subjective process of interpreting data, my analysis could lead to a potential misrepresentation of the politician’s/author’s intent (Borland 2004; Denzin 2004; Bott 2010). There is no real objective way in which to approach a discourse analysis other than to be aware of one’s own bias throughout the process and to even “confess” one’s social position or biases to the reader (Harding 2004).

I am cognizant of the fact that “research projects do not unfold in apolitical vacuums that insulate and separate researchers from power dynamics” (Blee 2011:407). My awareness of this conflict and reflexive attention to my own ideological biases will be made explicit when required in my analysis. To guard against such biases, my emphasis will be squarely on the collective framing of ideological depictions, rather than supporting a potential agenda concerning the CF.

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to link the theoretical understanding of the nation as a discursive formation with the most appropriate method of investigation. The methodology of choice and theoretical orientation of my research are intimately linked via the primary focus on discourse as the source for understanding and construction of the nation and national identity. To explore how the CF plays a principle role in Canadian nation building, a discourse analysis of CF depictions in the media and official discourse is one method. Although discourse analysis is a complex and highly subjective process, an analysis of this sort will offer insight into how the nation generates meaning and understanding within the realm of national narratives from a top-down perspective.
The following chapters will address the manner in which the data were coded with some discussion about the results.
Chapter 4 – News Media Discourse
This chapter outlines the critical discourse analysis that was conducted on two Canadian newspapers from 1 January 1999 to 31 December 2002. In this chapter, “narratives” refers to a sentence or several paragraphs within a newspaper article. Results for each code are discussed and three examples are used to demonstrate the pattern of narratives coded. To conclude, the results of the news media discourse analysis are discussed exploring the media’s role in nation building while outlining some notable limitations.

4.0 Results

Although there were over three thousand articles collected, several articles were removed from the analysis. For example, articles that made reference to specific members of the CF with no explicit reference to the military as a whole were discarded. Some discarded articles made reference to the CF insofar as a person’s resume and offered little analytical value about the CF and nation building. Articles that made a single reference to either a member of the CF, a former member of the CF, or parts of the institution were also discarded; indeed, such narratives referenced only branches or trades within the CF responsible for certain tasks (e.g., calls for new types of cyber security, with a passing reference to a branch in the CF that monitors cyber communications). In these instances, there were no substantive nation building contexts involving the CF, nor was it apparent that inferences could be drawn from such hollow statements. A connection between a reference to the CF and a wider discourse about nation building needed to be made in order for an article to be included as substantive data.

Articles regarding technical data or specific equipment issues within the CF were also discarded. Articles that focused more broadly on equipment procurement or issues with specific types of equipment were mostly discarded unless the topic involved the CF and its role for the
nation. For example, an article describing a crashed air force pilot that focused solely on the incident and equipment failure was discarded. However, an article that spoke about the aging fleet of helicopters as a potential reason for the crash was included because the article described the composition of the CF (either in a banal or critical way), whereas the former referred specifically to an isolated incident and thus offered little analytical value.

**Manifest Codes**

The three most frequent codes within the newspaper narratives were the *Canadian Forces*, peacekeeping, and combat force codes. The *Canadian Forces* code was the most frequent manifest code. Three *Canadian Forces* code examples include:

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is making plans to send up to 30,000 troops into Kosovo, ... *Canada has offered to provide up to 800 troops for the NATO force*, government and diplomatic sources say. No final decision has been made, the sources said, but if the talks succeed, *Canada's commitment would be in the range of 600 to 800 ground troops*. *The Canadian army is spread thin, and it is unclear where the 600 to 800 would come from.* Defence Minister Arthur Eggleton said yesterday it was too soon to speculate about the size of the Canadian contingent... (The Globe and Mail 1999a:A23, emphasis added).

We need the capability and we want to try to get it at the best possible deal for Canadian taxpayers." *Sharing aircraft might raise sovereignty issues and these questions will have to be looked at carefully before a final decision*, Mr. Eggleton said. *But strategic airlift capability is a high priority*, he said. "*One of my goals is rapid deployment. I think that's a requirement in today's military operations to get into peacekeeping and peacemaking operations just as quickly as we can.*" (Sallot 2000:A2, emphasis added)

The *Canadian Forces are woefully ill-equipped to meet our peacekeeping and wartime responsibilities*. A complete overhaul is necessary, and soon, says military adviser. *The recent announcement by the Canadian Forces to mothball nearly 50 per cent of its air fleet raises serious questions about its ability to fulfill its wartime or peacekeeping roles.* (Ram 2001:A13, emphasis added)

These three examples capture the variety of narratives that were coded as *Canadian Forces*. In all three examples, the CF was framed in a way that does not compartmentalize its identity. In other words, the CF was not described as a force with only one role; rather, it was framed as a versatile force capable of various types of operations. An analysis of the *Canadian Forces* code
revealed that narratives coded here reported on the CF in generic terms. The Canadian Forces code was the most frequent code within narratives that described current military affairs as well as future operations. Often the Canadian Forces code was applied when there was no clear assignment or mission forthcoming. This pattern was also true in matters relating to defence policy, as there was no apparent ideological terminology present. The Canadian Forces code was most frequently coded with the neutral and banal codes indicating that news media discourse reported on the CF within mostly a fact-based and banal framework between 1999 and 2002.

The peacekeeping code was the second most frequent manifest code. Three examples of the peacekeeping code include:

*Trained for war, but responsible for making peace, these militia men and women are doing every job but the one they know best. Like a boxer told to referee, they are combat troops employed to prevent combat.* (McLaren 2000:R1, emphasis added)

Mr. Chretien expressed Canada's constant willingness to contribute to UN forces. "They know if they want us to send troops, we will always send troops," he said in answer to questions about Canada's possible participation in the UN's peacekeeping effort in Sierra Leone. Canada subsequently dispatched about 30 non-combat soldiers to the West African country to help load and unload supply planes. (Edwards 2000:A12, emphasis added)

A little more than a month ago, Ottawa made a great show of committing ground troops to the war in Afghanistan. The government placed Edmonton's crack infantry unit, the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, on 48-hours notice to ship out. Then the Cabinet shivered. The "hot" war persisted a few days longer than anticipated and Jean Chretien, the Prime Minister, confessed: "We don't want to have a big fight over there. We want to bring peace and happiness." The Patricia's readiness was downgraded to seven- days notice. Canada would not send troops into battle, the Cabinet explained, just happiness-enforcement. (National Post 2001:A17, emphasis added)

In the peacekeeping code examples above, a number of assumptions about the CF were obvious. Like many narratives coded as peacekeeping, the CF was placed within a framework that assumed peacekeeping was an inherent part of the CF’s role. Other assumptions, like responsibility for making/bringing peace in the first and last examples, or Canada’s inherent
willingness to support all UN forces in the second example, were not directly relevant to this code. However, these assumptions alluded to the objective structures that underlie the subjective representations of the CF within news media and official discourse (i.e., how reporters and politicians framed the military’s composition and capabilities revealed how they viewed the CF’s inherent role and composition). An analysis of the peacekeeping code revealed the term peacekeeper was often (although not always) applied to non-peacekeeping related operations. The most obvious examples were narratives describing the NATO force involved in the bombings of Kosovo in 1999 as “NATO peacekeepers”. The peacekeeping code was most frequently coded with the neutral and banal codes. Although the neutral code was more likely to be coded with peacekeeping, there was a greater frequency of the passive code with the peacekeeping code than any other manifest code. My analysis revealed CF’s narratives coded as peacekeeping were almost as frequently coded with the passive code which suggested that ideological terminology was used to frame CF’s operations in a more palatable way for the Canadian nation.

The combat force code was the third most frequent manifest code. Three examples of the combat force code include:

And thus, the government will have to take a hard look at what it is being asked to provide for a NATO force in Kosovo. With a shrinking defence budget "sooner or later you run out of the resources to send on these missions," Mr. Eggleton said. He said he would not speculate about the possibility of moving the 1,300 Canadian combat troops now in nearby Bosnia to Kosovo. General Maurice Baril, the Chief of Defence Staff, said soldiers are already on 18 other foreign missions, but will go if ordered. (Sallot and Freeman 1999:A18, emphasis added)

Eggleton pledges military support even if Bush targets other countries. The Liberal government is offering the unqualified support of the Canadian Forces for U.S. military efforts to strike at terrorists and their supporters in Afghanistan and elsewhere, Defence Minister Art Eggleton said yesterday. Today, Parliament is due to debate Canada's first non-peacekeeping military action since the 1991 Persian Gulf war and key questions still exist regarding the extent of that involvement if the United States targets other countries as it has threatened. (McCarthy 2001:A1, emphasis added)
Disillusionment with the UN "among those well-meaning, but not always very intelligent, men-on-the-street who believed that the high sounding words of the Charter had simply, by the application of ink to paper, produced peace in our time and if not cake, at least an adequate slice of bread for everyone." In the end, Pearson accepted that Canadian policy in the UN would rest on a "realist" base. Canada had to "accept that the UN and NATO have complementary roles to play." The UN would be used where NATO could not, and vice versa. We have tried everything to limit Slobodan Milosevic's aggression in the region since 1991. It is now time for peace-making, or, to use that old-fashioned word, war. Yet the same people who advocated all of the failed means now are upset when we have been forced to move to the logical next step to ensure security in the NATO area. Their stance is inconsistent with Canadian strategic tradition. (Maloney 1999:A18, emphasis added)

The combat force code examples above demonstrate the variety of narratives that framed the CF overtly as combat capable (see the first example above), or in relation to peacekeeping operations (see the second and third examples above). Although the primary role of the CF was combat, the CF was often framed as a combat force juxtaposed with a peacekeeping framework. Rather than framing an operation as peacemaking/war-fighting, for example, the operation was described as non-peacekeeping. My analysis of the combat force code revealed that narratives coded here most often referenced on-going rather than future military operations. The combat force code was most often coded with the aggressive and critical codes. This suggested that narratives coded as combat force were more likely to be framed in an aggressive context and within a critical framework that challenged the taken for granted roles of the CF (e.g., war-fighting and peacekeeping). As the first example above demonstrates, this trend was not always the case as the combat force code was also coded with the neutral and banal codes in instances where reference to combat was made without other latent meaning present.

**Latent Codes**

**Aggressive**

The aggressive code was the second most frequent code in relation to the neutral and passive latent codes. Three examples of the aggressive code include:
Canada and its allies must continue the air campaign against Yugoslavia even though more people may die, maybe even NATO pilots, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien said yesterday. Although he played down the possibility that NATO would send combat troops into Kosovo to protect ethnic Albanians from Serb attacks, Mr. Chrétien appeared to be preparing Canadians for a long air war of attrition that is not without risks for the pilots. (Sallot 1999a:A1, emphasis added)

As our soldiers leave their families behind to join the U.S.-led fight against terrorists in Afghanistan, we honour their efforts as an expression of our collective will to defend this country's core values. (The Globe and Mail 2001:A20, emphasis added)

When Canadian troops face a significant risk of being killed or (worse, apparently) of having to kill others, the Cabinet balks. The UN has designated Afghanistan a Chapter-7 mission, meaning international troops will have greater latitude to engage in battle than during a more common deployment of the Chapter-6 variety. There can be little doubt that Ottawa's reluctance to join is heightened by the increased potential for war making, and not just peacekeeping, to be done. (National Post 2001:A17, emphasis added)

As the aggressive code examples above suggest, this code captured narratives that framed the CF in war fighting contexts. As the first and last examples demonstrate, the most frequent narratives coded here discussed the killing and the death of both Canadian soldiers and their enemies. As the second example suggests, narratives were also coded here if they made specific reference to the CF as an aggressive institution designed to fight. My analysis of the aggressive code revealed that narratives were more likely to frame on-going CF’s operations (e.g., Kosovo and Afghanistan) in an aggressive context. Also, unique to this code was the terminology used to describe the CF’s operational environment in that a war-fighting framework was often present.

In contrast to what one might expect, whenever the phrase “war on terrorism” (or references thereof as shown in the second example above) was present the narratives often excluded a direct relationship between the CF and the on-going “war”. Rather, the narratives more frequently focused on hypothetical operational scenarios or, as was shown in the second example above, on other effects of the war on the CF. As demonstrated in the third example above, a reason for this may have been the reluctance on behalf of politicians and the news media to communicate undesirable facts within discourse. The aggressive code was most frequently coded with the
combat force and critical codes. This suggested narratives coded as aggressive most often framed the CF as a combat capable force and in a way that challenged the taken for granted role(s) of the CF.

Neutral

The neutral code was the most frequent code in relation to the aggressive and passive latent codes. Three examples of the neutral code were:

Canada's contribution to any U.S.-led armed conflict would be mostly symbolic, military watchers say, despite the hawkish words of some of its politicians. "I think there's a lot of politicians who are not aware how limited the capabilities of the Forces are right now," said David Charters, director of the University of New Brunswick's Centre for Conflict Studies. Canada's total infantry would just fill a "community hockey stadium"; most of its military equipment "is in the shop window," and it doesn't have "strategic lift," the ability to transport supplies, ships, artillery and troops quickly to overseas bases, he said. (Foss and Sallot 2001:A7, emphasis added)

Rather like Cyrano de Bergerac, Canada repeatedly does honourable things for honourable motives, but instead of being thanked for it, it remains something of a figure of fun. It is the Canadian way, for which Canadians should be proud, yet such honour comes at a high cost. This week, four more grieving Canadian families knew that cost all too tragically well. (Meyers 2002:A1, emphasis added)

Budget cutbacks, those in the military privately acknowledge, have meant Canada has lost much of its combat capability. Among the examples the military and defence analysts give: - The country's 20,000-member army is not large enough to absorb the casualties that would come in a sustained war. It would also have difficulty providing the necessary trained replacements. The small size of the Canadian Forces has meant its 60,000 members are overworked on various foreign missions, prompting large numbers of pilots, doctors, and highly trained officers to leave the military. Spending on some equipment essential to protect Canadian military personnel is only done at the last minute and only in a crisis. (Pugliese 1999:A8, emphasis added)

The neutral code was the most diverse and frequent and it captured various narratives. As the examples above demonstrate, the neutral code was used to capture narratives that framed the CF in terms that did not suggest an otherwise passive or aggressive context. As seen in the first and last example, some narratives coded as neutral discussed the CF’s current state of affairs. In these instances a straightforward context was used to describe the CF’s current resource status or operational environment. As it is shown in the second example above, the neutral code was
also used to capture narratives commenting on operations and the consequences of engaging in military conflicts. My analysis of the neutral code revealed that the frequency of this code may be explained by the news medias’ primary focus on providing fact based information regarding the CF to its readers. To code narratives properly, at times it was required to separate the context of the news media article with, for example, the content of a politician’s comment. The reason for this separation was to focus my analysis on the news media’s discourse rather than on the official discourse relayed via the news media. There were many instances, however, where the media simply relayed information from public officials to the public with little or no context added, often resulting in the official discourse being the unit of analysis. The neutral code was most frequently coded with the Canadian Forces and banal codes. This pattern suggested that news media discourse most frequently reports on the CF in neutral, fact-based terms that perpetuate the common understandings of the military institution.

Passive

The passive code was the least frequent code in relation to the aggressive and neutral latent codes. Three examples of the passive code were:

*Canada will send as many as 1,000 ground troops to Afghanistan to help secure areas abandoned by fleeing Taliban forces and get humanitarian aid to the starving people of the war-ravaged country...*Mr. Mylyk said the troops would create a "beachhead" to secure the areas won over by the Northern Alliance and clear the way for aid to flow. He also said that sending the troops now does not preclude the possibility of peacekeepers or other involvement in the future. The soldiers will also help deliver food and shelter to people who are facing winter after three years of drought and nearly six weeks of U.S. bombing. The Edmonton-based troops are part of the Immediate Reaction Force (land), which is part of Canada’s NATO commitment, said Krista Hannivan, a civilian spokeswoman for Land Force Western Area headquarters in Edmonton. (Laghi and Cox 2001:A1, emphasis added)

A little more than a month ago, Ottawa made a great show of committing ground troops to the war in Afghanistan. The government placed Edmonton's crack infantry unit, the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, on 48-hours notice to ship out. Then the Cabinet shivered. The "hot" war persisted a few days longer than anticipated and Jean Chretien, the Prime Minister, confessed: "We don’t want to have a big fight over there. We want to bring peace and happiness." The Patricia's readiness was downgraded to
seven-days notice. Canada would not send troops into battle, the Cabinet explained, just happiness-enforcement. (National Post 2001:A17, emphasis added)

Mr. Eggleton said the only troops preparing for a deployment are the 600 soldiers who have been training in Alberta to serve as part of a Kosovo peacekeeping force if and when a peace agreement is reached. But because no such agreement is in sight the soldiers will stay put (in Alberta), Mr. Eggleton said. Asked if the massing of troops in Albania was a step closer to a ground war, Mr. Eggleton replied, "No. I think we're going to be taking a good hard look at what to do with respect to that." The air campaign is our focus, and we're going to continue with that air campaign," he said. Mr. Eggleton said he is sorry that civilians in a train crossing a bridge were killed Monday in a NATO bombing attack in Yugoslavia. "Let me say that every effort is made to not have civilian casualties," he told reporters. (Sallot and Fraser 1999:A4, emphasis added)

As the examples above demonstrate, the passive code captured various narratives that framed the CF using non-aggressive terminology. These types of narratives required one to make the appropriate conclusions from the information provided. In the first example above, the CF was tasked with providing an immediate reaction force that needed to secure a “beachhead”. The term may not inspire the immediate inference of a violent situation like that of Juno Beach in Normandy, France on D-Day during World War Two; however, to “secure” an unstable area requires a force capable of a monopoly on violence. Further, in the same example there was reference to future operations involving peacekeeping or “other.” In both instances, the narrative undermines the very real likelihood of combat. The passive code was most frequently coded in narratives reporting on the war in Afghanistan and the Kosovo air campaign (see example two and three above respectively) that framed the operations as peacekeeping rather than as combat.

My analysis of the passive code revealed that narratives used passive terminology to describe violent situations by utilizing a peacekeeping framework. The passive code was most frequently coded with the peacekeeping and banal codes. Although it would not suffice to conclude that news media discourse frequently framed the CF in passive terms, there was a pattern within the news media discourse analyzed that suggested a tendency at times to use passive terminology to describe the CF’s involvement in violent operations. It should also be noted, some narratives that
contained passive terminology were used appropriately given the non-aggressive nature of some CF operations.

Banal

The banal code was the most frequent code in relation to the critical latent code. Three examples of the banal code include:

*Canada's Armed Forces are approaching a critical shortage of doctors that could jeopardize the country's role as an international peacekeeper.* (Spears 1999:A4, emphasis added)

*Defence Minister Art Eggleton says explosive devices known as claymore mines are not mines and do not violate the Ottawa treaty to ban land mines. But Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy said yesterday that use of the devices by Canadian peacekeepers raises questions about whether Canada is complying with the spirit of the ban. He has asked Canada's ambassador on land mines action to look into the matter. Claymore mines are hidden on the ground and detonated by a soldier using an electronic trigger.* (The Globe and Mail 2000:A8, emphasis added)

*Hundreds of Canadian peacekeepers who went to Croatia healthy and came home sick have been treated disgracefully by their government, a military board of inquiry says. "We were appalled to hear of the frustrations and humiliating treatment experienced by injured soldiers," the board said in a report released yesterday on the illnesses reported by about 300 soldiers who served in Croatia from 1993 to 1995. Inquiry head Colonel Joe Sharpe said, "We don't take as good care of our soldiers as our airplanes." Digestive disorders, headaches, joint pain, blurred vision, sleeplessness, jaundice, rashes and other symptoms, often related to stress, were too easily dismissed by government officials when deciding whether soldiers qualified for disability and pension benefits, the report says.* (Sallot 1999b:A1, emphasis added)

As the examples above demonstrate, the banal code captured narratives that framed the CF using taken for granted terminology. The first example above assumed that the CF’s role was as an international peacekeeping institution. Narratives that assumed or portrayed peacekeeping as a primary function of the CF were the most frequent to be coded as banal. In the second example above, the claymore mine was cited as a weapon used by Canadian peacekeepers. In this instance, the term peacekeeper was referring to Canadian soldiers. Whether or not the CF was complying with the spirit of the ban, the narrative assumed that “Canadian peacekeepers” is synonymous with Canadian soldiers. Finally, in the third example there was an obvious
transition from the author using the phrase Canadian peacekeepers to using and citing sources that used the phrase Canadian soldiers. All Canadian soldiers are not peacekeepers, and not all Canadian peacekeepers are soldiers. To transition from one to the other as the third narrative did, blends the two terms together as if they were synonyms. Many narratives coded as banal used a similar logic which led the reader to assume that the CF was primarily (or at least equally) a peacekeeping institution. My analysis of the banal code revealed that a key distinguishing characteristic of banal narratives was the absence of critical discourse about the CF’s composition and its raison d’être. The banal code was most frequently coded with the neutral and Canadian Forces codes. This pattern suggested that news media discourse most frequently reported on the CF using a fact based approach while framing the CF in a way that assumed a shared understanding of its composition and the function it was to serve for the Canadian public.

 Critical

 The critical code was the least frequent code in relation to the banal latent code. Three examples of the critical code include:

 When Canadian troops face a significant risk of being killed or (worse, apparently) of having to kill others, the Cabinet balks. The UN has designated Afghanistan a Chapter-7 mission, meaning international troops will have greater latitude to engage in battle than during a more common deployment of the Chapter-6 variety. There can be little doubt that Ottawa’s reluctance to join is heightened by the increased potential for war-making, and not just peacekeeping, to be done. (National Post 2001:A17, emphasis added)

 As a supporter of the military I was pained to learn that -- yet again -- plans are under way to reduce the overall strength of the Canadian Forces. I challenge the source that says 55,000 is enough to maintain the integrity of this government’s defence policy as reflected in the 1994 White Paper. Even at higher sizes in the late eighties, Canada's military could assist its allies only symbolically. Now I fear our ability to maintain our own sovereignty, too, is merely symbolic. Regrettably, it seems the Forces' admirable efforts in disaster assistance over the last few years and Canada's laudable success at international peacekeeping have doomed a once proud and respected institution. If the government simply wants well-equipped peacemakers and disaster-relief forces, it should divide the defence budget and remaining personnel between the RCMP and Emergency Preparedness Canada. At least then the men and women of the Canadian Forces can stop pretending. (Groome 1999:A8, emphasis added)
Paradoxically, it reminds us never to relax or appease; freedom demands vigilance in the new century, as it did in the old. Remembrance Day calls this country to its true nature. *Canada cannot be straitjacketed as a "peacekeeping nation," as some would have it; it is a country that has regularly gone to war.* (The Globe and Mail. 2001:A20, emphasis added)

As each of the above examples demonstrate, the *critical* code captured narratives that critically engaged various elements of the CF. In the first example, the narrative challenged the Government’s hesitation to commit soldiers to Afghanistan on the grounds that the mission did not match the traditional employment of the CF. The narrative challenged indecision on the Government’s part which stemmed from the CF being mobilized for a “war-making, and not just peacekeeping” mission. Such a challenge suggested that the primary (and taken for granted) role of the CF was peacekeeping vice war fighting. In the second example, the narrative challenged the composition of the CF as well as its primary function. The narrative’s main critique, as was the case with other narratives coded as *critical*, was that the CF could no longer fulfill its role as the defender of the Canadian nation. In this example, the narrative suggested that if the government so wished the CF should be dismantled and reorganized into departments of the Federal Government that have the appropriate training in “peacemaking and disaster relief”. In the final example, the narrative challenged the foreign policy trend of peacekeeping and was advocating for Canada to return to its true nature as a country that vigilantly defended its freedom. Again the narrative challenged the common assumption that the CF was designed for peacekeeping purposes and that it needed to “return” to a war fighting agenda. My analysis of the *critical* code revealed that *critical* narratives were most often juxtaposed to a peacekeeping framework. This trend suggested that a likely bias within news media discourse existed to frame the CF as a peacekeeping institution and that in order to contrast this ideal it was necessary to use it as a reference point. The *critical* code was most often coded with the *combat force* and *aggressive* codes. This suggested that narratives coded as *critical* were more likely to be framed
in an aggressive context and within narratives that made reference to the CF as a combat capable force.

4.1 Discussion

The process whereby Canadian identity and the CF are shaped by the news media was discussed in chapter two. Key concepts to recall for the discussion here are the concepts of banal nationalism and banal militarism. Billig (1995) argued the media is responsible for the maintenance of national identity. In this view, the media is continually reminding a nation’s citizens of who they are, so much so that “this reminding [becomes] so familiar, so continual, that it is not consciously registered as reminding” (Billig 1995:8). Similarly, Virchow (2005) outlined how a nation’s military is also reproduced in a banal manner. He states:

The level of acceptance and agreement with regard to the acceptance to the existence and general task of the military, as well as the normalization of the use of violence by the military, is established, to a substantial extent, by the multiple forms of everyday media communication about the military as an institution and the dissemination of military attitudes, values, and patterns of behaviour. (Virchow 2005:53)

In this section I will discuss these theoretical ideas in relation to the empirical evidence collected via my critical discourse analysis. I will also suggest some limitations to my research.

Throughout my research several codes were used to capture potential ideological depictions of the CF and to determine the manner in which these depictions are reproduced within the news media. Throughout my analysis, it was evident that ideological depictions of the CF were present and these depictions were most often reproduced in a banal manner. Although not all of the discourse contained within these two newspapers followed this pattern, the majority of articles analyzed demonstrated the relevance of both Billig and Virchow’s theories.
Discourse within these newspapers often presented the CF within a framework that was consistent with how Canadians like to be viewed internationally as “good international citizens” (Cooper 2007; Sjolander and Trevenen 2010). As some of the examples provided above demonstrate, the news media perpetuated the understanding of the CF as a primarily peacekeeping institution within foreign policy related discourse. This was consistent with Billig’s and Virchow’s findings insofar as the Globe and Post often spoke in taken for granted terms relaying an already popular notion of the CF’s identity. In this context, the media was reiterating to the nation an ideological understanding of the CF, thereby further strengthening the Canadian national identity. This pattern suggested a relationship between the media and nation as one that Madianou (2005) describes as a powerful media and a weak identity. This connection was established insofar as the media was perpetuating an established understanding of the CF rather than routinely challenging the government’s perpetual peacekeeping framework used to advance foreign policy endeavours. My analysis also suggested that the Globe and Post routinely consented with government initiatives by setting the limits of discourse within a neutral and banal framework that did not overtly challenge the underlying reasons for government discourse relayed to the public. This was particularly obvious when discussions for mobilizing the CF were confined to peacekeeping or international assistance rather than war fighting especially when discussions of a war fighting CF were most appropriate.

An important point to consider is how the Globe and Post informed the nation about the CF. A study in 2009 showed that 35% of Canadians between the age of 18-34 read newspapers in comparison to 43% between the ages of 35-49, and 58% over the age of 50 (Sauvageau 2012). Sauvageau (2012) suggests Canadians go elsewhere for their news using, for example, the Internet or social media networks like Facebook and Twitter. This is important because
Canadians “take the news, shape it, comment on it, and exchange it with their ‘friends’” (Sauvageau 2012:32-3). Both of the newspapers I analyzed are available on the Internet, suggesting that a wider audience is plausible than the numbers provided for the “old fashion” paper format. This suggests that newspapers on the Internet and in paper are a significant source of information for youth and adults alike providing Canadians with the hegemonic discourse from which they articulate their own understanding of the world and their military. Shazad (2011) demonstrates the ongoing difficulty for educators when it comes to counteracting the uniquely Canadian peacekeeping framework routinely reproduced within news media and public discourse. This also suggests that the news media are responsible for reproducing the hegemonic power relations between political/news media elites and the general public. As such, the news media, as represented by the two national newspapers analyzed here, are fundamentally connected to how Canadians make informed opinions about their military and how they further develop their national identity.

A notable limitation of this analysis is the top-down approach to investigating how a nation’s media informs Canadians about the CF. A reasonable critique would assert that discourse in the media does not automatically-result in the shaping of individual discourse. Not everyone reads the same news source and, thus, resulting discussions cannot be traced back to a single narrative contained in the news media. This is a valid assertion and the only way to ascertain the immediate influence of a news media narrative is via a bottom-up approach which links individual experiences with the media discourse. This does not, however, negate the relatively powerful connection between commonly held assumptions of the CF as it relates to Canadian identity and discourse within the media (as it has been demonstrated by various researchers, see Granatstein 2002; 2004; 2007; 2011; Sjolander and Trevenen 2010; Shazad
2011; Jones and Lagassé 2012; McKay and Swift 2012). Using two newspapers as I have in my research only confirms the systemic presence of ideological depictions of the CF in news media and offers a fruitful starting point for researching how Canadians establish their grammar of nationhood and how their armed forces influences this process. My analysis only advocates for further research to be done on the news media and the CF within the realm of Canadian nation building studies.

Although it is clear that ideological depictions of the CF are inherent in news media discourse, one cannot assume that all discourse about the CF fits this model. As I state above, the most frequent codes to appear between 1999 and 2002 were Canadian Forces, neutral, and banal suggesting that a fact-based news approach is most frequent. The multifaceted use of words describing military operations in instances where they are contextually explainable, as well as in instances where they are not, demonstrates the complexity of discerning the true intent of discourse. It is an unwarranted conclusion to suppose the use of all terminology stems from a preconceived agenda to influence national discourse. Rather, I would assert a more plausible explanation for the presence of certain terminology is the general lack of knowledge surrounding military affairs and the unclear nature of complex military operations.

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to outline the critical discourse analysis conducted on The Globe and Mail and National Post. I have outlined the results for the three most frequent manifest codes and for all the latent codes used in my research. Three examples for each code were shown to demonstrate the “meaningful patterns” that emerged from the discourse (as outlined by Berg 2007). The discussion that followed outlined key conclusions drawn from the analysis; namely
how the news media depicts the CF using ideological depictions and that the presence of a peacekeeping framework was most often present within a banal discourse. A notable limitation of this analysis was its top-down nature; however, the strong connection between common assumptions of the CF and the media discourse lends itself to future research with a bottom-up approach. The next chapter will outline a similar analysis of the House of Commons’ debates occurring over the same four year time frame.
Chapter 5 – Official Discourse
This chapter outlines the critical discourse analysis that was conducted on the transcripts of House of Commons’ debates from 1 January 1999 to 31 December 2002. The format of this chapter is similar to chapter four in that the results for each code are discussed and three examples are used to demonstrate the pattern of narratives coded. In this chapter, “narratives” refers to a sentence or several paragraphs within a transcript. To conclude, the results of the official discourse analysis are discussed exploring the government’s role in nation building while outlining some notable limitations.

5.0 Results

Although forty transcripts were collected from the Hansard Index, not all parts of each transcript were used. As with chapter four, in order to be part of my analysis a narrative had to be focused squarely upon the CF as an institution or discuss national defence/foreign affairs issues in relation to the CF. Specifically, narratives that made reference to members of the CF with no explicit reference to the military as a whole were discarded. Some discarded narratives made reference to the CF insofar as a person’s resume and offered little analytical value about the CF and nation building. Narratives that made a single reference to either a member of the CF, a former member of the CF, or parts of the institution were also discarded; indeed such narratives referenced only branches or trades within the CF responsible for certain tasks (e.g., calls for new types of cyber security, with a passing reference to a branch in the CF that monitors cyber communications). A connection between a reference to the CF and a wider discourse about nation building needed to be made in order for a narrative to be included as substantive data. A unique problem when analyzing official discourse was the length and complexity of some
narratives that portrayed the CF in multiple and sometimes contradictory ways. Narratives were coded as many times as necessary to capture the true intent of the narrator.

Another unique aspect of the official discourse analysis was the predictability of narratives based on the speaker’s political appointment and affiliations. A pattern regarding the frequency of particular latent and manifest codes emerged based on the speaker’s political affiliation and procedural position. A speaker’s political predisposition towards the CF’s role became obvious through the repeated use of specific terminology by party members. More importantly, a pattern emerged regarding the frequency of banal or critical discourse depending on the role of the speaker. For example, the Minister of National Defence was more likely to speak of the CF in a banal manner when compared to his counterparts, the National Defence Critics.

**Manifest Codes**

The three most frequent manifest codes were *Canadian Forces, peacekeeping, and combat force*. The *Canadian Forces* code was the most frequent manifest code. Three examples of the *Canadian Forces* code include:

The creation of a powerful NATO force is the appropriate answer to the concerns about risk. *Canadians can be confident that a military operation with our closest allies will be successful. The NATO force will be robust and very able to provide for its own protection. The Canadian forces are ready to participate. They would join a Kosovo bound force with a wealth of experience in Bosnia behind them. If they go to Kosovo let this House and all Canadians give them the support and gratitude they deserve.* (Eggleton 1999a:12041, emphasis added)

*Mr. Speaker, the defence minister has said that Canadian troops will be on the frontlines of a NATO attack against terrorists, but last month he sent 200 troops from one NATO commitment in Bosnia to another NATO commitment in Macedonia. That is like paying off one credit card with another credit card.* (Benoit 2001:5294, emphasis added)

*It is embarrassing to think that with all the benefits we have in Canada, the great resources, the great spirit of Canadians, the support that we gave this world in the first and second world wars, that our military is dwindling like this. To see that we are*
spending less than half of what our NATO partners spend on defence, is shameful. The
government should be embarrassed, but it is not doing anything about it so I can only
assume that it is not. (Reynolds 2002:10510, emphasis added)

The Canadian Forces code captured narratives that referenced the CF in generic terms or spoke
about military participation with the UN and NATO without explicit reference to any
peacekeeping or combat tasks. In the first and second example above, the CF was being
mobilized for potential NATO operations. This type of narrative was typical for the Canadian
Forces code in that narratives did not mention specific operational tasks assigned to the CF as
part of a coalition force. The third example captured the ambiguous nature of narratives that
discussed the CF, and in this particular example, the CF’s funding. An analysis of the Canadian
Forces code revealed that official discourse most frequently used ambiguous language to portray
the CF. As represented in these three examples, narratives coded here often lacked definitive
information regarding military and national defence matters. The Canadian Forces code was
most frequently coded with the neutral and banal codes indicating that official discourse
portrayed the CF most often using generic terms and commonly understood depictions between

The peacekeeping code was the second most frequent manifest code. Three examples of
the peacekeeping code include:

Madam Speaker, today we are taking note of possible peacekeeping activities in Kosovo
and in the Central African Republic. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has just explained to
the House the context for Canadian participation in an extension of the commitment to
the Central African Republic and our potential contribution to a NATO led peace
monitoring force in Kosovo. I am in complete agreement with the arguments that he gives
for Canadian participation in both. (Eggleton 1999a:12040, emphasis added)

The nature of our role in peacekeeping and peacemaking is changing. We must prepare
ourselves and the men and women of the forces to be able to meet these new challenges.
Ironically, all of these changes have occurred during a period when defence spending has
been declining, and yet since the end of the cold war the number of Canadian operations
has increased dramatically. (Eggleton 1999c:1385, emphasis added)
A senator who went over to Kosovo said that when he saw our peacekeepers he could not believe it when he looked at their uniforms. He could not believe the lack of resources that they had. Our armed forces have repeatedly shown their selfless desire to complete their duties without hesitation. (Wayne 2001:5308, emphasis added)

The *peacekeeping* code captured narratives that discussed the CF’s involvement in peacekeeping operations as well as narratives that described the CF as a peacekeeping organization. The first and second examples were the most frequent types of narratives to be coded here. These narratives made specific reference to peacekeeping operations and referenced peacekeeping as an inherent function of the CF. The third example was another frequent type of narrative coded as *peacekeeping*. These narratives labelled CF’s members on operations as peacekeepers regardless of the CF’s assigned operational tasks. As shown in the third example, NATO forces were framed in peacekeeping terms rather than more empirically accurate peacemaking terms. An analysis of the *peacekeeping* code revealed that within official discourse peacekeeping was used as a way of linguistic homogenisation insofar as the CF was concerned. Frequently, *peacekeeping* narratives did not discriminate between military operations that involved combat with operations that were absent of it. Using the term peacekeeping to describe vastly different operations suggested that it was a rhetorical strategy used to achieve certain political goals. The *peacekeeping* code was most frequently coded with *neutral* and *banal* which suggested that this pattern was not the most predominate and that most official discourse utilized a peacekeeping framework in an empirically accurate manner.

The *combat force* code was the third most frequent manifest code. Three examples of the *combat force* code include:

Let me also give one other illustration of where we have improved and we have made it more efficient and more effective. We played a major front line role in the Kosovo air campaign. No one likes to talk about bombing and about the need to attack, but when it came to putting our resources and our people on the line, we were able to do that. We could not even do it to that extent in the gulf war because we did not have the equipment that was necessary to play that kind of a front line role. However, we did it in the Kosovo
air campaign. I think that quite clearly indicates, as the chief of defence staff has clearly indicated, we are more combat capable. Our troops are more combat capable today than they were in the early nineties. (Eggleton 1999c:1387, emphasis added)

Mr. Speaker, I support the motion. However I believe that it is an academic discussion. Ex-military people like General Mackenzie have said that we are unable to provide any direct contribution in terms of a combat role should that happen. Another ex-military person said that all we can do is to put three frigates in with the American fleet. We do not have the capacity to get involved in a combat role. In that sense the debate is academic. (Fitzpatrick 2001:5567, emphasis added)

Our Canadian military led a night time mission across a heavily mined desert near Kandahar in their high tech armoured vehicles. The six troopers from the Lord Strathcona's Horse regiment of Edmonton, using their night time vision equipment, located and rescued the Americans. The rescue mission by our Canadian soldiers is proof of the expertise of our military personnel and the capabilities of their equipment. I am sure that members of the opposition will join us in sending our best wishes to our Canadian troops who are doing an excellent job in their mission in Afghanistan. This kind of mission proves once again that the Canadian armed forces have never been more combat ready. (Bertrand 2002:9191, emphasis added)

The three examples above demonstrate the variety of narratives coded as combat force. In the first and third example, the CF was described as a force capable of combat and that it demonstrated this capability in Kosovo and in Afghanistan respectively. Narratives that stated the CF’s combat capability with an example of previous combat were the most frequent to be coded as combat force. In the second example above, the narrative questioned the CF’s ability to perform combat operations. Narratives like this met the criteria to be coded here as the primary focus was on the CF as a combat force (capable or not) and not on a lack of equipment. An analysis of the combat force code revealed that narratives coded here most frequently referenced previous or current combat operations. Narratives coded here less frequently spoke about the CF as combat capable when future operations were discussed. Of the narratives that contained mention of the CF’s combat capability for future operations most of them referenced the CF’s limited ability to participate (as demonstrated in the second example). The combat force code was most frequently coded with the aggressive and critical codes. This suggested narratives
containing mention of a combat capable force were most likely placed in an aggressive and critical framework that challenged preconceived notions of the CF’s role.

**Latent Codes**

**Aggressive**

The *aggressive* code was the second most frequent code in relation to the *neutral* and *passive* latent codes. Three examples of the *aggressive* code include:

*Our traditional military role in peacekeeping operations has changed dramatically. Peacekeeping no longer simply involves patrolling ceasefire zones. It means becoming involved in what are really combat zones, combat zones such as Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor.* (Eggleton 1999c:1385, emphasis added)

... we all know that the Canadian forces have been starved for funds for years. *Now we are at war. In fact we have been at war for a month now. Will the government assure the House that the costs of the war in Kosovo will not have to be absorbed by the already inadequate defence budget?* (Mills 1999:14221, emphasis added)

*The vicious terrorist attack on the United States is being felt personally and deeply in Canada. Canada will support the U.S.A. and our NATO allies in the important campaign to bring these criminals to Justice.* (O’Brien 2001:5285, emphasis added)

As demonstrated in the three examples above, the *aggressive* code captured narratives that discussed military matters in an aggressive context. In the first example, peacekeeping operations involving the CF were likened to combat zones. In the second example there was a clear departure from common terminology used to describe the CF’s participation in Kosovo. Narratives often referenced military operations in Kosovo as a conflict or campaign, in this example Kosovo was described as a war. In the third example, the narrative was advocating for an aggressive campaign to bring the perpetrators of 9/11 to justice. No explicit reference to war was made but an inference can be drawn from the contextual reference of Canadians feeling the effects of the vicious terrorist attacks thus warranting an aggressive response. An analysis of the *aggressive* code revealed that aggressive discourse was most frequent in narratives that discussed
current military operations or when discussing previous operations. As it is demonstrated by the third example, this pattern was not always the case as some narratives discussed future military operations in war fighting contexts. The *aggressive* code was most frequently coded with the *combat force* and *critical* codes. This suggested official discourse with an aggressive context was most likely to contain reference to a combat capable CF and within a framework that challenged the CF’s taken for granted role(s).

Neutral

The *neutral* code was the most frequent code in relation to the *aggressive* and *passive* latent codes. Three examples of the *neutral* code include:

*We need strong Canadian forces. History teaches us that we cannot hope to maintain peace and security without the ability to back up our commitments, if necessary with military strength. It is vital that we strike the right balance as a country between the soft power initiatives needed to advance human security and the hard military capabilities needed to back up this commitment, with action when necessary. It is not a question of either/or; Canada must have both.* (Eggleton 1999c:1384, emphasis added)

*Our budget is just a little over $10 billion. Our troop numbers are still being cut down. There is still talk about mothballing equipment. There is still talk about disbanding our reserve units that live and work among us, in our cities and in our towns, the most visible part of the military. That should not happen. The funding should be at a level that keeps the reserves active within the community. Unfortunately, so much that the military does goes unnoticed. I find that very unfortunate because we have a proud military history that we should all be teaching our children, if only they knew.* (Hanger 2000:5231, emphasis added)

*As we confront the war against terrorism, the Canadian Forces face a crisis in capability. Decades of neglect have created a situation in which resources are inadequate to meet commitments and defend the security of Canadians. For nearly nine months, the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence has heard from witness after witness about glaring deficiencies in military capability. While the men and women of the Canadian Forces have been doing a fantastic job with scarce resources, they have had inadequate support from both Government and Parliament.* (Reynolds 2002:10506, emphasis added)

As the three examples demonstrate, the *neutral* code captured narratives discussing matters of the CF as an institution as well as narratives that focused squarely upon the CF’s role as the nation’s armed forces without any other obvious latent meaning present. In the first example, the
CF’s role as the nation’s institution with a monopoly on violence was discussed. Narratives that discussed the generic role(s) of the CF were the most frequent to be coded as neutral. In the second example, the CF’s visibility within the Canadian nation was discussed and it advocated for a more active presence of the CF within Canadian communities. In the third example, the CF’s capability to meet the needs of Canadian foreign policy was discussed. Such narratives were coded as neutral given the non-suggestive contexts that lacked an alternative (i.e., aggressive or passive) agenda. In other words, the CF’s role was to defend Canadians with no mention of combat, peacekeeping, or other. An analysis of the neutral code suggested that official discourse was most likely to frame the CF in neutral context between 1999 and 2002. As all the examples demonstrated, the discourse remained balanced in terms of how the CF was depicted. The neutral code was most frequently coded with the Canadian Forces and banal codes. This pattern suggested that official discourse most frequently discussed the CF within a framework that perpetuated the commonsense understanding of the institution.

**Passive**

The passive code was the least frequent code in relation to the aggressive and neutral latent codes. Three examples of the passive code include:

*Mr. Speaker, our Canadian forces do have the right equipment and will have the right equipment to use in this air campaign and in any other involvement they have with respect to Yugoslavia, including our peacekeepers who are being prepared for a peacekeeping mission when that time should come.* (Eggleton 1999b:14221, emphasis added)

*Our Canadian forces personnel are doing a terrific job. They have the supplies that are necessary. The government is providing the funds that are necessary to make sure we do the job that needs to be done to try to give the people of Kosovo back their homeland.* (Eggleton 1999b:14221, emphasis added)

*Deliberate acts of terror directed against innocent civilians cannot be permitted to go unchallenged. That being said, let us heed the intentions of our former prime minister and use global organizations such as NATO to support peace and not to wage war.* (Steckle 2001:5286, emphasis added)
As the three examples above demonstrate, narratives coded as *passive* contained latent meaning. Narratives coded as *passive* were often fraught with deceptive terminology that presented the CF within a context that was empirically difficult to justify. In the first two examples, the Minister of National Defence was speaking about the air campaign in Kosovo while framing the war in a peacekeeping context. This was deceiving and potentially disguised the true nature of the war in Kosovo where civilians and combatants alike were bombed by NATO. In the third example, war was placed within a peaceful framework much like the wording of chapter seven of the UN charter. Rather than waging war, NATO would support peace by making it. One could argue waging war to stop an aggressive combatant was supporting peace; however, to conclude that peacemaking was somehow distinct from war remains empirically difficult to justify. An analysis of the *passive* code revealed that official discourse was least likely to frame the CF within a passive context. The *passive* code was most frequently coded with the *peacekeeping* and *banal* codes. This pattern suggested that at times official discourse used the common depiction of a peacekeeping CF as a reference point for all varieties of military operations regardless of actual events.

**Banal**

The *banal* code was the most frequent code in relation to the *critical* latent code. Three examples of the *banal* code include:

*The Speech from the Throne also reaffirms Canada’s position in the world as a nation committed to enhancing human security, and no arm of government makes a greater contribution to advancing those goals than the Canadian forces.* (Eggleton 1999c:1384, emphasis added)

*Canadians can be very proud of the men and women of the Canadian armed forces who are serving in extremely dangerous and very difficult conditions to protect Canadians and to defend our values.* (Carroll 2002:8748, emphasis added)

*We have made no decision. NATO has made no decision with respect to ground troops. We are sticking to the course on the air campaign. We are staying with that course. We*
are ultimately preparing when there is a ceasefire, when there is peace in Kosovo, to be able to move peacekeepers into that area. (Eggleton 1999b:14221, emphasis added)

As the examples above demonstrate, the banal code captured narratives that discussed the CF in taken for granted terms. In the first example, the CF’s role in a world of nations was outlined. The narrative assumed an inherent role of the CF was enhancing human security and that Canada was a nation amongst nations. Banal narratives frequently used a similar style of discussion insofar as particular ideas (e.g., an inherent role the CF was enhancing human security) were stated as assumed facts. In the second example, the CF was assumed to be protecting Canadians and defending their values while employed on operations in Afghanistan. This type of narrative assumed that any operation involving the CF was directly responsible for protecting Canadians and defending their values. Aside from the inherent difficulty of assuming all Canadians share the same values, the concept of the CF defending Canadians on military operations was often applied as an assumed fact rather than an empirical reality. In these instances narratives assumed that all Canadians shared the same interests and that the CF defended Canadians everywhere. In the third example, the narratives assumed that an inherent function of the CF was peacekeeping. Rather than sending in soldiers or Canadian forces, the Government was preparing to send in peacekeepers. An analysis of the banal code revealed that official discourse most frequently depicted the CF in assumed terms when discussing financing, constitution, employment, and its role as the “defender of Canadian values” on operations. The banal code was most frequently coded with the neutral and Canadian Forces codes. This pattern suggested that official discourse most frequently discussed the CF in neutral terms within a banal framework.

Critical

The critical code was the least frequent code in relation to the banal latent code. Three examples of the critical code include:
It is difficult, if not impossible, for us to predict what our military needs will be in the coming months. All we know for certain is that our armed forces and our country as a whole must be prepared for the worst. It is no longer acceptable for us to assume that the United States will protect us just as it is no longer possible for us to take comfort in the fact that the cold war has ended. (Wayne 2001:5308, emphasis added)

In the crisis that we now face, we simply cannot tolerate unjustified political interference in the military which is gradually lowering our combat effectiveness. Indeed, one of the principal reasons that we now have an inadequate ability to respond rapidly and effectively to emerging threats is that crass politics resulted in the disbanding of the airborne regiment in 1995. The committee has responded by recommending substantial enhancements in the capability of JTF2. The political conditions that led to the loss of this capability are ignored in the majority report. If they are not addressed, politicalization of the armed forces will remain a problem and our forces may well be unable to rebuild their cohesion and effectiveness. (Reynolds 2002:10508, emphasis added)

Mr. Speaker, the decision by the Liberal government to even question the national identity of our armed forces as Canadian has shocked patriotic Canadians and angered our veterans. No wonder the confusion by the Minister of National Defence when he saw a newspaper picture of Canadian soldiers that he mistook for Americans. (Gallant 2002:8711, emphasis added)

As the above examples demonstrate, narratives coded as critical questioned or challenged the CF’s financing, constitution, employment, and raison d’être to name only a few. In the first example, the narrative was challenging the Government’s tendency to approach defence spending with the understanding that the US would protect Canadians. In this case, the narrative was asserting that the CF needed to become self-sufficient and that US protection could no longer be assumed. In the second example, the politicalization of the CF was challenged as it was argued to be a detriment to the CF’s capability to function as the institution responsible for defending Canadians from “emerging threats”. In the third example, the narrative was critical of the Government’s supposed undermining of the CF’s national identity. Aside from the obvious leveraging of patriotism for political gain, the narrative was arguing for the CF’s identity to be situated within a national context. An evaluation of the critical code revealed that official discourse was most frequently absent of narratives that challenged underlying assumptions about the CF. The critical code was most often coded with the combat force and aggressive codes
which suggested that narratives coded as *critical* were more likely to be framed in an aggressive context and within narratives that made reference to the CF as a combat capable force.

**Discussion**

Recall from chapter two the discussion referring to the government’s role in the nation building agenda; in particular the role of political actors who shape national identity qualitatively “by addressing the values and beliefs that characterize the national identity in question as well as sentiments that bring it to life” (Norman 2006:33). Recall also that it has been widely acknowledged that Canadians believe themselves to be a morally superior nation with the military’s primary role being peacekeeping as opposed to war fighting (Maloney 2002). In this section I explore the results of my discourse analysis as it pertains to the role of political actors to continuously shape the nation using ideological depictions. My analysis demonstrates empirical evidence for Billig and Virchow’s concepts of the banal reproduction of the military and nation. I also discuss some limitations of my methodology when assessing how political actors shape national identity.

Throughout my discourse analysis it is evident that ideological depictions of the CF are utilized to communicate a shared understanding of the nation’s military to Canadians. These narratives were more frequently constructed in a banal manner and empirically validate Billig and Virchow’s theories. Although not all discourse concerning the CF can be placed within this framework, the majority of House of Commons’ debates analyzed support this conclusion.

Maloney (2002) asserts that the Trudeau Government was responsible for what Norman (2006) claims is the “reconfiguring of national identity” whereby the government established a new role for Canadians as a peacekeeping nation. Following this style of argument, my analysis
suggests that the Chrétien Government was responsible for “sentimentalizing the national identity” (Norman 2006) from 1999 to 2002 in matters relating to the CF and national defence. Throughout my analysis, the CF was depicted using ideologically loaded discourse that was already established within national discourse. Accordingly, political actors were reproducing widely accepted notions of the CF by framing it using specific ideological depictions. Two major expeditionary operations occurred in this timeframe, namely Kosovo and Afghanistan, and a similar pattern in discourse emerged in both instances. Narratives constructing the international issue began in a peacekeeping framework reassuring Canadians the CF’s participation would be consistent with the nation’s values. This was followed by discourse that framed a more aggressive and violent scenario that either required the CF’s removal or was used to justify more funding. Even more interesting was the persistence of sentimentalizing discourse following combat operations in Kosovo that seriously undermined the empirical relevance of the peacekeeping ideological depiction (e.g., framing the Kosovo air campaign as a peacekeeping operation). This sentimentalizing effect was present for Afghanistan as well, Shazad (2011) found that Canadians continued to frame combat operations in Afghanistan within a peacekeeping rather than war fighting framework.

The hegemonic power political actors wield to sentimentalize Canada’s national identity through ideological depictions cannot be overstated. The reflexive nature of official discourse makes its influence on the discursive formation of the nation notably potent. In this case, I am referring to the ability of political actors, like discourse, to simultaneously create and represent the nation. Ideological depictions, like the peacekeeping code, contained within official discourse are reiterated to the nation via multiple media platforms in a unidirectional manner. All the while, Members of Parliament stake a strong claim in representing their constituents. The end
result being a discursive formation that represents the hegemonic power political actors have over the individuals that make up the nation. It is, in this way, official discourse shapes “national identities through subtle and not-so-subtle attempts to instil, eliminate, modify, strengthen, or weaken the beliefs, sentiments, and values that make up individuals’ sense of national identity” (Norman 2006:34).

It is important to note that although the Canadian nation is a representation of this hegemonic relationship, political actors are held accountable for their representation through the democratic process. As such it is possible to remove governments or individual Members of Parliament that fail to maintain a reflexive relationship with their constituents. It is also important to remember that the fluid nature of national identity allows for misrepresentations of the CF to go unnoticed by the majority of the nation.

A notable limitation of this discourse analysis is its limited empirical evidence from below. In order to determine the influence of official discourse, a bottom-up methodology would be most appropriate. An analysis of the day-to-day interactions between Canadians in relation to recently publicised official discourse concerning the CF would provide insight into the efficacy of political actors to shape the Canadian identity. It would be incorrect to assume that because political actors represent Canadians that this automatically presupposes any discourse in the political realm resonates with the nation. As it was outlined in chapter two, the only reasonable deduction is that official discourse shapes the nation by setting the limits of discourse and establishes the Canadian grammar of nationhood. This limitation does not however, diminish the empirical connection between what other studies have determined to be widely held Canadians ideals and the banal discourse that reproduces these ideals found here. A more robust study
would incorporate a top-down analysis with a bottom-up approach to include micro-level phenomena.

A number of examples provided in this analysis are portions of narratives and as such are possible misinterpretations of the orator’s intent. There is also the possibility of mistakes in the transcription of the narratives as the source I am reviewing is a primary source that is once removed from the originator (the political actor speaking in Parliament). To guard against my own ideological biases throughout, I have diligently sought to understand the true intent of the orator in terms of both latent and manifest themes and present them in this analysis as accurately and true to the originator as possible.

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to outline the critical discourse analysis conducted on official discourse consisting of transcripts of House of Commons’ debates. Definitions for analytical categories used here were outlined in chapter three. Three examples for each code were shown to demonstrate the “meaningful patterns” that emerged from the discourse (Berg 2007). The discussion that followed outlined key conclusions drawn from the analysis; namely that official discourse contained ideological depictions of the CF and that the CF was portrayed most frequently within a banal framework. Similarly to chapter four, a notable limitation of this analysis is its top-down nature. In the next chapter I analyze the results of chapters four and five together and offer some evidence to suggest that Canada is militarily banal.
Chapter 6 – Unmilitary or Militarily Banal?
In this chapter, I discuss the patterns in discourse that emerge from analyzing the results of chapters four and five together. The discussion here outlines the civil-military relationship that exists in Canada and offers some insight into the effects of ideological depictions contained in news media and official discourse on this relationship. My analysis suggests that Canadians are militarily banal and that a change in national peacekeeping discourse is required to accurately reflect the nature of civil-military relations in Canada. This chapter concludes with notable limitations of my research and suggestions for future research.

6.0 Discussion

Results from Chapters Four and Five

News media and political actors are involved in the discursive construction of the Canadian nation. As Billig (1995) states, “if banal nationalism were only to be found in the words of politicians, it would hardly be embedded in the everyday lives of those millions of people who treat the genus of politicians with cynical disdain. The flagging has other locations, as the mass media daily bring the flags home to the citizenry” (p.94). As discussed in chapter two, the news media and government have distinct roles in the nation building process and, as such, the results of the discourse analyses are unique to the role of the institution. Accordingly, the primary function of official discourse is to capture and convey the essence of the nation and this is distinct from the news media’s function of identity maintenance. Thus, the results in chapter four are a product of the news media’s role in maintaining the nation’s identity. Likewise, the results in chapter five are a product of the government’s role in capturing and conveying the essence of the nation’s identity. These two national institutions operate concurrently and their discourse can be analyzed as separate as well as in relation to one another.
In this non-mutually exclusive framework, I assess the depictions of the CF in news media and official discourse during 1999-2002.

Two distinct patterns emerged from my analysis of the results from chapters four and five. The first was an identical pattern in the frequency of codes. In both analyses, the orders of frequency for both manifest and latent codes were identical. For manifest codes, the Canadian Forces, peacekeeping, and combat force codes were the most frequent codes (in order of most to least frequent). Similarly, the latent codes neutral, aggressive, and passive as well as banal and critical were coded in the same orders of frequency. These codes also appeared together in the same orders of frequency in both discourses. This pattern suggested that news media and official discourse portrayed the CF using similar frameworks during the four years analyzed.

Other studies have observed a cyclical pattern in news media reporting as it relates to official discourse. This pattern consists of “normal” and “crises” reporting periods. Normal periods are the mundane day-to-day reports absent of an urgent crises or excitement. Crises periods consist of highly emotional episodes during the times of war or celebration. During normal reporting periods news media discourse is said to be divergent with official discourse (Mihelj 2011; Pieper 2011). Alternatively, during crises reporting periods, news media discourse is said to be more convergent with official discourse (Mihelj 2011; Pieper 2011). My analysis suggests discourse concerning the CF followed a different pattern in that the news media framed the CF in similar ways as official discourse regardless of the type of reporting (routine or crisis). There were two significant international crises during 1999 and 2002: Kosovo and Afghanistan. Discourse preceding the CF’s involvement in Kosovo and Afghanistan was most frequently coded as banal and contained the Canadian Forces and neutral codes. The frequencies of these codes were similar in news media and official discourse suggesting the media reported on the CF
using the same framing strategies as the government. Discourse that described on-going or past operations of the CF in Kosovo or Afghanistan was more frequently coded as *critical, combat force,* and *aggressive.* Again, the shift in code frequencies was consistent in news media and official discourse implying the shift in CF depictions was occurring within both discourses. Accordingly, discursive constructions of the CF did not necessarily follow the normal reporting patterns of other types of national discourse.

The second pattern to emerge was the banal reproduction of ideological depictions of the CF within both discourses. The most frequent depiction used was the peacekeeping depiction suggesting a peacekeeping discourse was the most frequent alternative to fact-based discursive constructions of the CF. Peacekeeping narratives framed the CF as a passive military force (i.e., that used weapons only in the need for self defence) (Whitworth 2004; Williams 2009). This imagery is what Staples (2006) refers to as the “Pearson model” of peacekeeping which is “harking back to the missions where lightly armed international troops patrolled a buffer zone between previously warring parties while a ceasefire agreement could be turned into a permanent peace agreement” (p.15). Peacekeeping discourse in my analysis was most likely to fit the Pearson model of peacekeeping. Staples (2006) argues for a shift in the understanding of peacekeeping missions, one that recognizes the highly complex and, if necessary, aggressive nature of today’s peacekeeping operations:

> Peacekeeping has evolved greatly since the early days of ‘Pearsonian’ peacekeeping. Today, most peacekeeping missions contain ‘enforcement’ elements because they are authorized under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which allows for the use of force where necessary to implement the UN mandate. These ‘robust’ missions stand in stark contrast to the more traditional form of lightly armed peacekeepers, which were authorized under Chapter VI of the UN Charter. (P.15)

Staples’ example above demonstrates the inherent complexity and confusion surrounding the definition of peacekeeping operations. Some narratives in my analyses did reference aggressive
military operations within a peacekeeping framework. An example of this was the “NATO peacekeepers” that participated in the bombing of Kosovo. The dialectic nature of peacekeeping discourse made the banal use of the peacekeeping depiction in news media and official discourse highly problematic as the term inspired a Pearsonian model understanding (see National Post 2001:A17), yet as Staples (2006) suggests, peacekeeping now includes what is best described as “peacemaking”.

Civil-Military Relations in Canada

Before discussing the importance of peacekeeping to the Canadian nation, a brief and selective review of the military’s position in society is required. Auguste Comte theorized that the military is as old as Homo sapiens. Specifically, he observed:

Humans’ first tools are weapons and the first authority established in the group is that of the military chief; cooperation between humans is imposed as a necessity and a social value, especially for the needs of war...The human species thus converts the impulse that in many animals remains limited to the destructive act of fighting into a means of civilization. (Caforio 2002:8)

Comte comes to the natural conclusion (as society evolves into the modern age) that militaries necessarily become distinct institutions within society and they become elitist by virtue of the military spirit existing only within the military (esprit de corps) (Caforio 2002). For Comte, the elites, including military leaders in society who have a greater awareness of war, are tasked with ridding society of the phenomenon (Caforio 2002). Writing around the same time as Comte, Alexis de Tocqueville parts from the Enlightenment outlook of Comte and argues the sociopolitical emergence of nations moves society away from war and towards a less relevant military (Caforio 2002). de Tocqueville argues the internal democratization of society, rather than the industrialization of national societies, is the key to the reduction in military force; however, “equality of living standards, and the institutions that derive from them, do not exempt a democratic people from the obligation of maintaining armies” (Caforio 2002:9).
de Tocqueville is the first to affirm the concept of the armed forces being an expression of the country from which it was created (Caforio 2002:10). He also ascribes the remedy for a potential divergence between society and the military is the democratic education of citizens so that “... the general spirit of the nation, penetrating in the particular spirit of the army, will temper the desires and the opinions that the military condition brings into being, will compress them through the powerful pressure of public opinion” (Caforio 2002:10). Morris Janowitz (1960) argues for a similar relationship between military and host society insofar as the military must change with the changing conditions of society (Caforio 2002). Janowitz’s work is the first sociological analysis of civil-military relations, one that argues for the military to be comprised of citizen-soldiers (conscripts or reservists) in order to be truly obedient to the host society (Rukavishnikov and Pugh 2002). Although Janowitz’s ideal citizen-soldier military is an extreme, if not optimistic, form of civil-military relations, it offers a starting point to assess the appropriate civil-military relationship found in Western militaries.

Janowitz predicted that modern military forces would adopt the concept of a “constabulary force” that is designed to use minimum violence and be on permanent standby (much like a domestic police force) (Nuciari 2002). Social integration of this force is seen as necessary to properly fulfill its military tasks and to maintain civilian control of the armed forces. After the cold war, in order to justify their institutional existence and budgetary demands many militaries were forced to accept new roles, akin to the constabulary force concept, which were loosely connected to the traditional defence of the nation against an external threat (Kucera 2012). Although this concept is not entirely applicable to the CF during the cold war and post-cold war timeframe, many transformations of the CF mimic this trend towards a “postmodern military” or the constabulary force outline by Janowitz. In particular, the postmodern military is
characterized by “increasing structural and cultural interpenetrability of civilian and military spheres” (Kucera 2012:56). These social transformations lead to two demands on militaries. First, is the need to develop flexible expeditionary capabilities and the second is develop the skills to perform tasks usually associated with civilians (i.e., police forces) (Kucera 2012). The professionalization of the CF during the cold war and post-cold war era is consistent with the postmodern trend in armed forces around the world.

There is little disagreement that militaries must change with the transformations in society and that this is achievable with an all volunteer force. Canada (among other nations) has shown that a volunteer force is neither mercenary nor praetorian and this experience has resulted in other modern democratic nations questioning the needs for a conscript army (Rukavishnikov and Pugh 2002). The natural progression from conscript to volunteer force is the professionalization of the military. The professionalization of the military is seen as a way to create a more skilful force capable of complex tasks; however, with this process comes the risk of estrangement from the host society (Kucera 2012). This raises some civil-military cultural issues and it has been noted in “American studies” that a widening gap between the military and civilian culture has been observed (Rukavishnikov and Pugh 2002). Ricks (1997) argues there are three sources for the widening gap between the professional military and civilian society: “civilian ignorance of the military arising from the absence of widespread military experience in the postconscription era; politicization of the military accompanied by a growing estrangement from civilian values; and the post-Cold War security environment” (as cited in Rukavishnikov and Pugh 2002:144). Although this civil-military pattern has been observed in the American military, this has not been the case in the Canadian experience as is evident by key fundamental
Canadian values: a long-standing national tradition of a volunteer-based armed force and the acceptance of peacekeeping to achieve national goals.

The key distinguishing feature of any military is the nation from which it stems. The CF is no exception and as the historical relationship between Canada and the CF demonstrates, Canadians have consistently relied on the taken for granted notion that the CF is fully integrated with the nation’s ideals. Since preconfederation, Canada has remained a loosely tied state bound together by nationalism “due to the lack of an underlying creed ... and the continued struggle to accommodate a variety of ethnicities and related differences” (Thomsen and Hynek 2006:851). The argument remains today whether Canada should be considered a nation of predominately Anglophone and Francophone decedents or considered a matter of three founding peoples which includes the Aboriginal population (Thomsen and Hynek 2006). As I have argued in chapter two, the primordial (i.e., ethnic) roots of a nation matter little as a nation is a discursive construction (including definitions of ethnicity). What is of importance here is the primary sociopolitical preoccupation with the survival of the Canadian nation as a unified entity. The highly fractured beginning gives rise to the militia myth that was the start of the Canadian civil-military relations. Prime Minister Sir John A. MacDonald’s national policy was to rely on a Canadian citizen-militia and British regulars to protect the nation. He believed that “regulars were useful only for hunting, drinking, and chasing women and that they possessed no useful skills” (English 2004:87). This official discourse resulted in a Canadian nation apathetic towards a full-time conscripted military, a value that remains true today (with two notable exceptions in Canadian history both labelled as a “conscription crisis” in 1917 and 1944, see Francis, Jones, and Smith 2010). Accordingly, the volunteer military ideal stems from the cultural mosaic that is Canada and it is a source of bonding for the nation.
Importance of Peacekeeping to the Canadian Nation

Similar to the acceptance of a volunteer army bringing the nation together, a recent ideal is that of peacekeeping. Thomsen and Hynek (2006) argue the vehicle that brings together an otherwise divided nation, is Canadian foreign policy. In particular, peacekeeping is the “social glue” of the Canadian nation:

Very little seems to unite Canadians and create unity desired by Canadian nationalists ... [Canadian foreign policy] – and more precisely peacekeeping – does, however... A carefully conducted and mediated foreign policy is the perfect vehicle for constructing and conveying [shared] values and ideals internally as well as externally – not least because foreign policy by definition constructs relational others, which the imagined national “self” must react to or interact with, often stressing differences in outlook. Peacekeeping, like war – arguably in a more agreeable fashion – creates the ‘others’ so crucial in the construction of self. In such circumstances, opposition is created between Canada and “failed states.” Creating a Canadian self as opposed to an American other also serves that purpose. (P.852-853)

For Thomsen and Hynek, peacekeeping is a defining characteristic in the development of the Canadian “self”. The CF plays a central role in Canadian foreign policy and, in particular, it does so through peacekeeping. In this way, the CF is responsible for binding the Canadian nation together and participates in the process of defining the Canadian “self”.

For the CF to play such a central role in Canadian identity formation, it is necessary for the CF to represent the fundamental values of the Canadian nation. Since 1956 when Canadians felt their role as peacekeepers in the world had been recognized (Granatstein 2004), peacekeeping became a nationally acceptable foreign policy endeavour. The peacekeeping ideal is so deeply engrained into the nation that it has become naturalized as an inherent role of the CF (see chapters four and five). Canada’s role as an international peacekeeper seems a natural fit as the adaptability to peacekeeping operations depends on a nation’s national security history and military ethos (Dandeker 1999). It has been argued, “Canadians are great at keeping the peace because they have been practicing peacekeeping at home since 1867” (Thomsen and Hynek 90).
2006:852). As for military ethos, Canada has been labelled a “[society] equipped with a moderate war-fighting/national defence centered ethos” (Whitestone and Segal 2007:11). Accordingly, Canadians are an ideal nation for peacekeeping operations. Likewise the CF, stemming from a nation that idolizes peacekeeping, becomes a peacekeeping force and over the years the CF’s employment on peacekeeping operations becomes naturalized to the point of being taken for granted. It is, in this way, the CF is deeply integrated with the nation via the peacekeeping ideal.

The importance of peacekeeping to the Canadian nation, to this point, has been discussed as a positive element that brings the nation together via its universal acceptance. Peacekeeping, however, is not as unproblematic as it may seem and harbours an elitist world view, as well as the potential demise of the CF’s role as the nation’s defender. Peacekeeping, for Canadians, stems from the foreign policy ideal to be good international citizens (Montgomery 2006; Cooper 2007; Sjolander and Trevenen 2010; Ozguc 2011). This ideal, as far as Canadians are concerned, has been shown to be elitist (Ozguc 2011) and creates an identity of a racially superior nation “burdened with the fantasized responsibility to uplift implicitly inferior spaces, nations and peoples elsewhere on the planet” (Montgomery 2006:19). Throughout my analyses, and in chapters four and five in particular, the peacekeeping discourse reflected this elitist agenda. Often the CF was framed as responsible for bringing peace to another nation (e.g., Kosovo or Afghanistan) incapable of helping itself. This romanticized vision enforces the liberal ideal of a peaceful Canadian nation and ignores the internal colonization from which the Canadian nation began (Francis 1997; Razack 2004; Smith 2004; Ozguc 2011).

Granatstein (2004) argues the peacekeeping ideal has been responsible for the CF’s demise. As my analysis shows, peacekeeping depictions of the CF diminish the intended role of
the CF as a war-fighting institution. The major issue with this banal reproduction is the lack of empirical evidence to support discourse which frames war-fighting operations (e.g., the air campaign in Kosovo) as peacekeeping related. A very liberal interpretation applied to one of the most serious chapter seven articles of the UN charter cannot justify the killing of innocent civilians as necessary to “maintain or restore international peace and security” (United Nations 2013). The perpetual framing of the CF as a peacekeeping organization may help explain why Canadians have been described as an unmilitary people (Stacey 1966; Horn 2002a).

A Militarily Banal Canada

As the discussion has sought to outline, the Canadian nation is not unmilitary, rather it is militarily banal. The use of the peacekeeping ideological depiction serves as a marker of Canadianess and the CF serves its foreign policy purpose by reinforcing this ideal. The use of ideological depictions as it was outlined in chapter two, provide an efficient means to communicate highly complex and symbolic messages in quick and easily understood terms. This ideal has been reinforced throughout Canadian history so much so that it is “seen as a natural continuum in Canadian history” (Ozguc 2011:48). Depictions of the CF peacekeeper appear to be an amalgamation of Canadian values with foreign policy. Canadians, through foreign affairs, wish to be seen as good international citizens. As a political means to achieve this aim, the CF is employed on operations using identical terminology. The effect of this synthesis is the constant reproduction of the CF within a peacekeeping framework, distorting the empirical role of the nation’s military. In the end, political and news media elites shape the Canadian nation to believe that their military is designed for peacekeeping purposes and that most military operations can be understood in such terms. This in turn shapes the Canadian experience reinforcing ideals that lead to misinterpretations of military events. The most recent and obvious implications of this
process is evident in Shazad (2011) where Canadians separate the actions of the CF from US military forces in Afghanistan. In actuality, however, the role of the CF was arguably identical to that of the US military in that they were both engaged in a war on terror.

The banal militarism framework I propose is similar to the patterns of nationalism in that it is not a unilateral process that culminates to final accomplishment (e.g., the goal of a nation-state for nationalism that removes all differing national sentiments) (Mihelj 2011). On the contrary, as recent literature suggests, nationalism is an on-going, uneven and highly episodic process that is comprised of periods of hot and banal nationalism (Beissinger 2002; Hutchinson 2005; Mihelj 2011). Similarly, militarism does not necessarily culminate into a totalitarian militaristic society (a military-state or to a lesser extent a military industrial complex). Rather, a more liberal interpretation of militarism is necessary to incorporate the Canadian preoccupation with peacekeeping. None-the-less, banal militarism was frequently present within news media and official discourse during 1999-2002. Two periods of ‘hot militarism’ occurred with the arrival of the Kosovo and Afghanistan conflicts on the international stage. The shift in discourse was captured by the change in frequency of the banal and critical codes. There was a discernible increase in critical narratives during the opening months of the Kosovo conflict that tapered off to normal frequencies. The same pattern was observed in national discourse following the 9/11 attacks in the US. These patterns suggested the episodic nature of militarism was similar to that of nationalism in that in moments of hot nationalism the CF was also framed within hot militarism discourse.

The civil-military framework I outline seemingly predicts a bleak future for the CF. If the CF and Canadian society are to achieve the harmony prescribed by Janowitz insofar as the military must change with the transformations in the host society, then a constabulary Canadian
force is in order. Moskos and Burk (1994) propose the “postmodern military” is the future of the world’s armed forces. Specifically they argue, “we are in a period of transition away from the ‘modern’ mass army, characteristic of the age of nationalism, to a ‘postmodern’ military, adapted to a newly forming world-system in which nationalism is constrained by the rise of global social organizations” (as cited in Battistelli 1997:467). At first glance, Moskos and Burk seem to argue that significant changes in CF and Canadian nation are on the horizon. However, the need for a constabulary Canadian force or the immediate demise of Canadian nationalism is necessarily required. As I have argued in chapter two, rather than nationalism taking a back seat in international relations, it is becoming ever more important because it structures the world of nations and becomes entrenched in the institutional categories and practices that affect our everyday lives (Mihelj 2011). Further, the CF, as I have argued throughout, plays a predominate role in the Canada nation and discussion about its future role as the defender of Canadian values needs to remain on the forefront of social and political agendas. This does not, in my opinion, equate to a restructuring of the CF to reflect this postmodern military ideal. Rather, I prescribe a change is needed in news media and official discourse that accurately reflects the intended role of the CF and how it represents the Canadian nation.

Specifically, a change in Canadian peacekeeping discourse is required. Despite the evolving and ambiguous nature of peacekeeping operations (Segal and Gavino 1985; Whitestone and Segal 2007), a move away from the traditional peacekeeping framework (i.e., the Pearson Model) in national discourse is required. Peacekeeping missions today have shifted from the traditional understanding where peacekeepers are positioned between two parties trying to solve a conflict to “second generation peacekeeping” (Whitestone and Segal 2007). Second generation peacekeeping is a mixture of multi-purpose and peace enforcement type missions (Mackinlay
and Chopra 1993). Dandeker and Gow (1997) label second generation missions as “strategic peacekeeping” and define them as “operations in which an international force is inserted into a continuing conflict to assist in creating conditions for conflict termination, but without taking sides in the conflict” (p.329). The distinguishing features of strategic peacekeeping are found at the strategic level; namely the consent of the conflicting parties and the use of force (Whitestone and Segal 2007). The evolving nature of peacekeeping operations is important because participation in said operations remains a political decision based on national security policy (Whitestone and Segal 2007). The discourse during 1999-2002, as outlined above, was reminiscent of the Pearson model of peacekeeping and misrepresents conflicts like Kosovo and Afghanistan. Without discussing the merits of labelling the CF’s participation in these conflicts as a peacekeeping endeavour (strategic or traditional), national discourse must clearly outline the definition of peacekeeping to eliminate the potential for manipulation. Bercuson (2006) argues that the Canadian public was “sold” the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Kabul, Afghanistan as another form of peacekeeping. However, “the soldiers who went there knew full well that it was not. Nonetheless, the pretence of peacekeeping was possible because the intent of the mission was essentially defensive. We were there to win hearts and minds and to keep the Taliban from killing Karzai.” This example demonstrates the potential confusion stemming from a non-realistic peacekeeping discourse and as such it should be removed from national discourse or at least changed to reflect the reality of military operations and not a Pearsonian ideal.

To further amplify the requirement to change national discourse, one need to look no further than how public opinion is shaped by the use of ideological depictions in news media and official discourse. Anker (2005) analyzed public opinion polls from 1999-2005 and discovered a
conceptual “gap” exists between “public perceptions and current realities of what Canada’s military does overseas” (p. 24). In particular, four trends emerge from Anker’s analysis:

Canadians display a high level of support for the CF (DND/CF baseline survey 2002 as cited in Anker 2005:27), Canadians know very little of the reality of military operations (Ipsos-Reid/Dominion Institute/Globe and Mail poll conducted June, 2003 as cited in Anker 2005:27), Canadians believe supporting world peace is a top foreign policy objective (Environics Research Group Limited, Focus Canada reports in 2002 as cited in Anker 2005:27), and Canadians prefer a traditional peacekeeping role for the CF (Ekos-conducted Canadian Attitudes Toward the CF study 2005 as cited in Anker 2005:27). These studies offer insight into the symbolic struggle inherent within the Canadian nation that ultimately determines the objective structures of civil-military relations. On the one hand, Canadians support their military and promoting world peace, while on the other they are supporting military operations that are not directly linked to traditional peacekeeping. In particular, the fourth study demonstrates that the banal representations of the CF as a traditional peacekeeping force in news media and official discourse during 1999-2002 indeed shaped public opinion. The result is a Canadian identity quagmire that has news media and government elites shaping the discursive construction of the nation by reproducing misconceived notions of the nation’s foreign policy and military endeavours.

A possible explanation for persistence of the peacekeeping discourse within Canada is the reluctance on behalf of news media and government elites to portray the CF as a war-fighting institution given its unfavourable acceptance by the Canadian public. A meeting held in 2001 by the Department of National Defence discussed the affects of the peacekeeping myth on the CF, which consisted of 65 defence experts, had one particular comment of relevance here, “including
phrases such as ‘war-fighting’ in public communications results in reduced support from the public for such operations, even if the label is more accurate” (Department of National Defence 2001:4). The problem, as this comment suggests, is not as simple as using different terminology. If framing the CF as a war-fighting intuition in national discourse results in reduced support from the nation, then one of two outcomes is necessary. The first is a remoralizing of the national identity to rebrand the CF (see Norman 2006). The second is restructuring the CF to fit the Janowitzian concept of a constabulary force. I argue the remoralizing of Canadian identity is necessary as the problem lies in the grammar of nationhood and not within the structuring of CF to fit Canadian ideals.

Recall from chapter two that the grammar of nationhood is the national brand or “standardized system of categorizing and organizing difference on a global scale” (Mihelj 2011:30). The Canadian grammar of nationhood, or national brand, entails the good international citizen with the moral responsibility to help other nations. Currently the national brand for the CF is reproduced to fit the traditional peacekeeping role. As the Canadian experience with operations like Kosovo and Afghanistan has shown, operations like these are consistent with Canadian values (insofar as helping other nations is concerned), yet remain inconsistent with the peacekeeping label. A removal of the banal Pearsonian style peacekeeping discourse from news media and official discourse will aid in the restructuring of the Canadian grammar of nationhood to include the acceptance of varying kinds of necessary military operations in the name of Canadian values and interests. In particular, a change in national discourse from banal reproductions of the military to a discourse that reflects the “why” of military operations (Anker 2005) will enable the ideal relationship between the CF and Canadian nation to be reflected in the nation’s and CF’s discursive constructions.
The intricate and ideal relationship between the CF and the Canadian nation is described by Bercuson (2007a) who articulates the need for leaders of a nation’s military to be intimately in tune with the values of the nations from which they spring:

Today’s military leaders must have a comprehensive understanding about the human condition and the underlying sanctity of life and the lives they may be called upon to destroy. There is a parallel here to the practise in the Jewish religion of ritual slaughter to obtain kosher meat. The man whom the community designates as the ritual slaughterer is not simply trained in the technical points how to kill quickly and painlessly. He must also know the basic texts of oral and written Jewish law and discourse. His education in the basic sources of Judaism is second only to that of the Rabbi. He must know and truly understand the ethical relationships that are at the heart of Judaism. He learns why he must sanctify his life with holiness in order to become a humane killer. (P.9)

Canadians expect their military to be intimately familiar with the values and ideals that constitute the Canadian identity in order to defend the nation. In this regard, the CF is employed with the understanding that military leaders (the community designated ritual slaughterers) are inextricably linked to their political masters (the Rabbi) who employ them based on a fundamental understanding that the CF represents Canadian values (Judaism) at home and abroad. A restructuring of the Canadian grammar of nationhood would show that this ideal relationship has been and will continue to be the relationship between the nation and military.

The discussion here does not suggest that Canadians are militarily obsessed and should seek to generate a military industrial complex that mimics that of the US military. On the contrary, my research has sought to outline the fragile discursive construction of the CF as one that is misrepresented in news media and official discourse and yet reflects the host nation’s desire to employ its military in support of peace and security. This dichotomy is perpetuated by a peacekeeping discourse that, at times, misrepresents the designed purpose of the CF and misleads Canadians to participate in operations that have little empirical connection to their values insofar as traditional peacekeeping operations are concerned. Matters’ concerning the CF’s employment on expeditionary operations requires more frequent critical reflection on
behalf of the news media and political actors to ensure the CF is representing the Canadian nation as it is designed to. I am not suggesting critical reflection is entirely absent, as I have demonstrated in chapters four and five, critical analysis does occur. I am, however, advocating for more diligent political actors who avoid nationalist rhetoric at times when the nation is vulnerable to manipulation, specifically during times of hot nationalism. An already complex civil-military relationship is further complicated when the news media continue to perpetuate the banal reproductions of the CF found in official discourse.

The application of my research is limited to the time frame of 1 January 1999 to 31 December 2002. It is also limited to the discourse concerning the CF in the National Post and The Globe and Mail as representatives of news media and to the Members of Parliament (representatives of official discourse) during this time period. My interpretation of the discourse in these areas is limited by my own ideological predispositions and these predispositions cannot be separated from either my analyses or my conclusions. I am also open to the possibility of misrepresenting the intentions of the authors and political actors analyzed throughout this study. These limitations do not negate the general applicability of my study to Canadian defence policy during this four year time frame or its contribution to the nation building literature. My analysis has sought to place the CF as a primary element of analysis in understanding the shaping of the Canadian nation as a discursive formation as it is depicted through the news media and official discourse.

6.1 Future Directions

I have outlined the ability of the news media and official discourse to shape the discursive constructions of the CF and Canadian nation. My research has explored the CF in this
role within a nation building context from a top-down perspective. In order to assess the on-going influence of national discourse containing banal ideological depictions of the CF on the grammar of nationhood one must take this research a step further and explore discourse at the individual level of analysis. Anker’s (2005) analysis does suggest that public opinion of the CF is shaped by national discourse and that this is likely to continue. As it has been outlined, national identities exists because of the “beliefs, convictions, sentiments, and attitudes of individual people” (Norman 2006:34) and my research has sought to explore how such elements are created. The result is a call for more research exploring how hegemonic discourse containing banal ideological depictions of the CF influences the everyday communications of Canadians and how it influences the way Canadians support the employment of their military in international operations. A project of this nature would conduct a bottom-up approach to explore the relationship between the banal hegemonic productions of discourse outlined here and to what extent Canadians reproduce this discourse amongst one another.

My research has sought to continue what Ouellet (2005) calls for as a “new direction” in military sociology which employs “new” methodologies in exploring military matters. In particular adopting an interpretative lens concerned with understanding the “world as it is” that is “how our preconceived ideas and perceptions shape social life” (Ouellet 2005:16) and focusing this lens on military related matters to incorporate the CF into mainstream sociology. Traditionally the military has been researched within a functionalist paradigm often removing the military “as an object of research from the societal environment” (Janowitz 1975:15 as cited in Ouellet 2005:8). Future research in military sociology should adopt a similar perspective as the one adopted here that explores the military as fundamentally connected to its host nation and that it cannot be exhumed as a separate or distinct entity. In this perspective, the military institution
needs to be explored from the forces that shape its existence in the first place to understand its future disposition (Ouellet 2005). Only then can sociologists engage one another in critical debate on the emerging forms of social organization (Ouellet 2005).

6.2 Conclusion

Throughout my thesis I have explored how ideological depictions of the CF have been used to shape the Canadian national identity. I have outlined the theoretical boundaries of the discursive construction of the Canadian nation and how the CF is employed as a nation building tool through hegemonic discourse practices (i.e., the banal reproduction of ideological depictions). I conducted a discourse analysis of the National Post and The Globe and Mail along with House of Commons’ debates. My analysis found that banal ideological depictions of the CF are present within national discourse and that these depictions serve as a misconceived representation of Canadian values and ideals. I have argued the use of such depictions within official discourse is a means for political actors to reinvigorate particular sentiments within the Canadian nation, particularly their role as good international citizens and that a change in the Canadian grammar of nationhood is required. I have also argued that the news media’s compliance in the reproduction of this banal discourse further complicates the civil-military relationship. I have outlined the main limitations to my analysis, primarily the possible misinterpretation of news media and official narratives. My analysis ends with the potential areas for similar research to begin that focuses on a more interpretive analysis of military matters incorporating it into mainstream sociology.

I began my thesis outlining what has traditionally been understood as the unmilitary Canadian nation. My research suggests that Canadians are not unmilitary so much as they are
militarily banal. Uncritical consumption of the national rhetoric of political actors through news media discourse will ensure the continuation of banal reproductions of the CF. Canadians have traditionally stood behind justifiable military efforts in instances that require a combat capable force, why is this not represented more frequently in national discourse? The insistence on behalf of Canadians to critically engage their news sources and political actors will ensure the CF continues to represent the values and interests of Canadians thus arming their military leaders of tomorrow with the correct tools to succeed. Such an effort will ensure that Canadians remain as military as they choose to be and not become a mere reflection of the wills of their political masters.
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