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CANADA AND THE RUSSIAN CRISIS OF 1878: A PROPOSED CONTINGENT FOR IMPERIAL DEFENCE

THE RE-OPENING of the Central Asian question in the 1860s and early 1870s had made imminent for the British the possibility of a major continental, perhaps global, war against Russia over the defence of India. At the same time, the German and Italian wars of unification had closed the traditional sources of foreign mercenary troops upon which Britain had chiefly relied to supplement her own meagre manpower in the earlier coalition war against Russia in the Crimea. A small but insistent demand for increased colonial military co-operation for overseas imperial purposes had sprung up, and to many arch-imperialists and defence experts who frequented the Royal Colonial Institute and Royal United Service Institution there seemed no reason why Canada, along with India and Ireland, could not become a third great recruiting ground from which backwoodsmen, voyageurs and mariners would provide troops admirably suited for the irregular kinds of warfare that would play so large a part in any war policy against Russia. Indeed, Disraeli himself responded to the Russian crisis by ignoring the implications of Confederation, modifying Cardwell's withdrawal policy, and inaugurating a subtle but determined programme designed to reassert and retain real British control over Canadian military affairs for possible overseas imperial service in a major war. Viewed from the peculiar angle of vision of Whitehall, General MacDougall's proposal to raise a Canadian Contingent was one important element in this programme.[1]

This kind of thinking tended to ignore the fact that geographically and strategically Canada constituted a dangerously vulnerable military liability. It was potentially the region for a serious distractive threat in any war against Russia. Canada's extensive coastlines were unprotected against marauding Russian cruisers. On the west coast, there was no naval base or defended war anchorage closer than the Falkland Islands with which to confront the growing Russian naval power centred on Vladivostok and Petropaulauski—the easternmost points of Russia's North-Pacific frontier. There were no communica-

tions by road, rail, or telegraph except through American territory, and the close Russo-American relations, as manifested in the Crimean and Civil Wars, meant that Canada was always susceptible to Russian-incited Fenian invasions at indiscriminate points along her southern border.[2]

Most important of all, however, the British soldier-imperialists failed to appreciate the significance of Confederation, and the great practical, social, and constitutional issues that were inherent in the very process of nation-building. Financial and constitutional considerations outweighed those of strategy and imperial defence, and obscured the need to provide an effective substitute for Cardwell's withdrawn garrisons, let alone earmark a Canadian contingent for overseas imperial service. When the Russians conquered Khiva in 1873, generating a war scare that was to sustain the colonial and Indian defence movements for the next forty years, Canada possessed no professional standing army, no senior officers experienced in the planning of continental strategy or the handling of large formations in war, in fact no organized military means to make an effective contribution to an Imperial coalition. But with the critical deterioration of the Eastern Question, following the Russian-inspired Serbian invasion of Turkey in August, 1875, the nature and degree of Canada's military contribution in the event of a Russian war became a matter of considerable consequence in imperial military calculations.[3]

By mid-October, 1876, Russia's intentions to wage war sooner rather than later against the Ottoman Empire—with all that they implied for the defence of India and the Mediterranean sea-communications to it—had become sufficiently clear for Disraeli to take more positive steps than had hitherto been possible in implementing a defensive military policy. Although no comprehensive Cabinet war policy had been agreed upon, a Military Mission under Colonel Robert Home was secretly dispatched to design and possibly prepare fortifications at Gallipoli and Bujuk-Checkmedji for the defence of the Turkish capital; the Inspector-General of Fortifications, Sir Lintorn Simmons, was appointed Commander-in-Chief designate of any expeditionary force that might subsequently be sent to occupy those positions; Major-General Sir Garnet Wolseley was seconded to the India Office as Military Member of the Home Council to advise on Indian military policy and strategy; and the Viceroy, Lord Lytton, was warned that since war might be declared within three weeks he should be prepared "to strike a rapid and decisive blow at the heart of the Russian power in Central Asia . . . and raise the populations against her". The formulation of a concrete and realistic imperial military policy resulting from these manoeuvres, largely suspended during the Constantinople Confer-

ence by the hope for pacific settlement that it engendered, was revived in April, 1877, with the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish War, the rapid collapse of Turkish military power in Armenia, and fresh Russian expeditions towards India in Central Asia. But the failure to obtain Austrian military assistance, the absence of an effective Reserve, and the untested novelty of the Mobilization Scheme once again strikingly emphasized Britain's military impotence to influence the course of European affairs, and the need for colonial military co-operation in the event of a major European war.[4]

The idea of raising colonial contingents for imperial service was not new. It had long been mooted in the Royal Colonial Institute and Royal United Service Institution, and it was now given fresh impetus by the applications of militia colonels for commissions in the British Army. Early in 1877, a Canadian Militia officer, Colonel Thomas Scoble, had proposed the raising of four battalions in Canada for Imperial service.[5] The fullest exposition of the question, however, was delivered in a special lecture, "A Volunteer Force, British and Colonial, in the Event of War", at the Royal United Service Institution on May 28, barely one month after the Russian declaration of war, by Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Charles Fletcher, of the Scots Fusilier Guards and late Military Secretary to the Governor-General, Lord Dufferin.[6]

Fletcher had already served many distinguished years in the defence of Canada. As an ardent supporter of the Volunteer movement, he had visited the Union Armies during the Civil War and later published a three-volume *History of the American War*. He had been actively associated with Wolseley and MacDougall in the reconstruction of the Canadian military system, and for "his papers and reports, as well as by lectures, and personal influence" in promoting that cause he was to be awarded the C.M.G. In 1872, Fletcher became Dufferin's private and unofficial military secretary, and—as the Dufferin-Carnarvon correspondence discloses—his influence in that capacity was far-reaching and paramount. Finally, he had provided the chief initiative in establishing in Canada the first military academy in the self-governing Dominions and one that gave its graduates unique preparation for civil rather than military employment. To this extent, therefore, Fletcher's views could be said to represent the demi-official attitudes of the British authorities in Canada.[7]

Fletcher began by adverting to the fact that Canadians possessed in a marked degree the qualities required to make excellent soldiers. They were enthusiastically loyal. They were "hardy, industrious, accustomed to rough work and handy in dealing with the many exigencies of colonial life". They

were "easily subjected to discipline" and willing, in the interests of military efficiency, to submit to the authority of competent and tested commanders such as Denison and Wolseley. Should war break out, Fletcher felt confident that the Canadian Government would respond to any call for contingents. But in accepting their services, he cautioned, "Canada should be treated as an equal, the force ought to be taken with its own officers, and if sufficiently advanced, the New Military School at Kingston should be utilised, to furnish a portion at least of the necessary staff. Possibly some regular Officers, known in Canada, might be appointed to the Command, but the Colony should be encouraged to organise, equip and officer its own troops". Once on board ship, they would come under the Mutiny Act, and they would be paid and their equipment and arms completed by England. But, Fletcher emphasized, "the political as well as the material benefit accruing from such a force, would, in a great measure, depend on its organisation being Colonial, i.e., that it should not consist merely of soldiers recruited and paid for" by England, but that "it should be a force placed at her disposal by a great colony". England would therefore benefit directly "by the addition of an excellent body of troops to her army", while Canada "would derive an advantage similar to that which Sardinia gained by sending her small but well equipped army to the Crimea."

Objections can always be raised against innovations of this kind, and Fletcher was prepared for most of them. It would be impossible, for instance, to estimate beforehand the numbers and types of men that could or would be raised, since this depended upon a host of such extraneous factors as the degree of popular enthusiasm for the war, local economic or security conditions, and the ability of the recruiting agents. There would, moreover, be serious if not insuperable tactical difficulties in integrating, training, and commanding mixed units of volunteers and regulars whose motives for service, standards of training, and concepts of discipline were often conflicting and always different. Finally, on the politico-strategic level, and especially in a prolonged war, there would be delicate questions of cost, command, and control. Fletcher suggested that the force might consist of four infantry regiments (two from Ontario and one each from Quebec and the Maritimes), two batteries of artillery, and three squadrons of cavalry mounted on Canadian horses. In concluding, however, he stressed the fact that his object in delivering this special lecture was simply to propound and direct attention to a scheme for increased imperial military co-operation, leaving it "to abler men to criticise, to alter, and, in fact, to lick it into shape."

We cannot tell what influence this lecture had upon Cabinet or War

Office thinking. Certainly, Fletcher's audience at the R.U.S.I. warmly sympathized with his views.[8] But before Plevna brought unimagined relief to the tension of the Eastern war-crisis, the Cabinet had become engrossed in acrimonious and inconclusive wrangling over the nature of the simultaneous threats to Merv and Constantinople rather than in devising a practicable and offensive imperial war policy and making the necessary bona fide preparations to support and sustain it. It cannot be forgotten, however, that Fletcher was a close friend of Wolseley, lately Inspector-General of Auxiliary Forces and soon to be appointed Chief-of-Staff designate of the British Expeditionary Force under Lord Napier. Wolseley had already contributed a decade of service in the defence of Canada. His unofficial visit to the Confederate Headquarters, his command of the Camps of Observation and Instruction at La-Prairie and Thorold during the Fenian scares of 1865-9, and his organization and conduct of the bloodless Red River Expedition of 1870 had given him much useful experience with and a high regard for volunteer militia armies. Fletcher was also a colleague of MacDougall, who was on the point of returning to Canada to command the Halifax garrison.

Even before the outbreak of the Crimean War, MacDougall had spent ten years in various Eastern Canadian garrisons. As Superintendent of Studies at Sandhurst in 1856 he had published *Theory of War,* described by one critic as "a work too slight, incomplete and unfinished", but nevertheless designed to provide a corrective manual for the mismanagement and abused generalship of the late Russian campaign. This work earned for him the first Commandantship of the Staff College in 1858. During the American Civil War, MacDougall produced various memoranda on the defence of Canada as well as other theoretical studies of modern warfare. As Adjutant-General of the Canadian Militia during the Fenian scares from 1865 to 1869, MacDougall was responsible for reorganizing the Canadian military system much along the lines he later applied to the British Army as President of the Localization Committee in Cardwell's administration, and in 1873 he was appointed nominal Director of the newly-established Intelligence Department. While MacDougall could justly claim to be "the founder of modern British military thought", his unaccountable predilection for obscure Canadian educational, service, and administrative commands made him slightly suspect, and Chesney was probably quite correct when he asserted that MacDougall had "failed to keep well with the reform party in the Army and the anti-reformers at the top of the military world at the same time. He could not conciliate both and probably both saw what he was doing". MacDougall's influence in matters

of policy was therefore not likely to be dramatic or even significant. But it is perhaps more than a coincidence that, with the revival of the Russian crisis following the fall of Plevna and the imposition of the Treaty of San Stefano, those two officers—Wolseley and MacDougall—should officially advocate the raising of a Canadian Contingent for imperial service against Russia.[9]

On March 27, 1878, the same day that Disraeli called out the Reserves, Fletcher delivered a second lecture to the R.U.S.I., in which he alluded in hypothetical terms to the employment of 10,000 Canadian troops acting in conjunction with Imperial armies in the Levant.[10] Three days later, on March 30, in a detailed and comprehensive memorandum on British war policy and grand strategy,[11] Wolseley urged "the propriety of raising a division of infantry and some field batteries of artillery and companies of engineers in Canada". More forcibly still, he recommended that MacDougall "should, as soon as possible, furnish a scheme for carrying this out". This MacDougall did on April 24, 1878.[12]

MacDougall doubted that under ordinary circumstances the employment of 10,000 additional troops would have much material effect upon the fortunes of a great war. But morally and politically the provision of a contingent from Canada simultaneously with one from India would have a "supremely important" effect and a "peculiar and appropriate significance" as "inaugurating a Bond for the defence of the Empire . . . against those Pan-Slavistic or Teutonic ambitions by which this country is sometimes supposed to be threatened". MacDougall envisaged a contingent of seven infantry battalions, one cavalry regiment, three field batteries and minor auxiliary services totalling 8,566 troops "recruited indifferently over the whole of Canada". The first brigade, styled the Royal Regiment of Ontario, would comprise three battalions formed at Kingston. The second brigade, drawing two battalions from the Royal Regiment of Quebec and one from the Royal Regiment of New Brunswick, would be formed at Halifax, as would the Divisional Battalion drawn from the Royal Regiment of Nova Scotia. The Royal Canadian Hussars would concentrate at Quebec and the Royal Canadian Artillery and Royal Canadian Engineers at Halifax. Recruiting agencies would be established at London, Hamilton, Toronto, Kingston, Ottawa, Montreal, Quebec, Fredericton, Saint John, and Halifax, and it was hoped to procure 250 recruits per week per station, or 2500 in the aggregate. Inducements and terms of service were to be placarded at all railway stations, schoolhouses, and places of worship. Recruits would enlist for six months beyond the duration, thereby obviating "the painful necessity" of peremptorily "turning adrift" upon a re-

constructed economy many thousands of unemployed soldiers. Pay, allowances, and pensions were to conform to those of British line regiments. The command of regiments was to be divided equally between Canadian Militia and British regular officers.

This plan was favourably endorsed by the Adjutant-General, Sir Charles Ellice, and by the Commander-in-Chief, the Duke of Cambridge.[13] The next step, as suggested by the Under-Secretary of State for War, Sir Ralph Thompson, was to sound out the Governor-General as to the likelihood of its acceptance by the Canadian Government. In his letter to Dufferin on May 9, the Colonial Secretary, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, declared that the Government was "fully sensible to the high and patriotic spirit" which had moved many individuals to offer their services to the Crown and "to identify themselves with the fortunes of the British Empire". In case of need, moreover, the Government would "highly appreciate the assistance . . . of a force recruited from the Queen's subjects in Canada". MacDougall's plan was therefore forwarded so that, should it be found applicable to Canadian conditions and should the Canadian Government desire to co-operate, "such preliminary arrangements may now be made as will admit of the system being brought into practical operation, if necessary, on the receipt of instructions by telegraph". Dufferin was asked not to publish this letter but "only to show it confidentially to his Ministers and to the Military Authorities."[14]

Dufferin's response, as could be expected, was enthusiastic and unreserved. He did not doubt that "we could furnish a strong brigade to the British Army a considerable portion being recruits from our own Militia and consequently instructed in the rudiments of military discipline". One would have to guard against the danger of drawing off the cream of Canadian manhood, leaving the country unprotected against Fenians or Communists. But labour riots had at last convinced the Government of the need for organizing "some permanent well-disciplined force—military or otherwise—for the maintenance of order in our large cities", and Dufferin hoped that "advantage might be taken of recent events to introduce some new military arrangements by which a small embodied force might be maintained in this country, and at the same time a permanent connection formed between the Military organisation of Canada and that of the mother country, capable of indefinite expansion in time of war". MacDougall's proposal presented an admirable beginning for working out the concept of an imperial reserve dormant in peace but readily available for overseas service in war, and Dufferin laboured hereafter unremittingly to bring it about.[15]

The Committee of the Privy Council which convened on May 30 to consider MacDougall's plan was surprisingly warm in its response to the British Government's appeal for organized military co-operation in the event of war. In their report, they declared that the Canadian Government would "in every way cordially facilitate the formation of a Canadian force under any plan which the Imperial authorities may after full consideration deem the best". They felt bound to point out that with the outbreak of war there was "a strong probability of trouble arising on the Canadian Frontier by invasion by Fenians incited by Russian emissaries" and that this would tend to detract from the available number of volunteers. Nevertheless there was "little doubt that if fair inducements were offered a considerable recruitment could be made from the general population", and the Minister of Militia and Defence had been directed to report more fully upon the feasibility of MacDougall's plan.[16]

Curiously enough, the chief objections raised against the idea of a Canadian Contingent came from the G.O.C. of the Canadian Militia, Major-General Sir Edward Selby Smyth.[17] The project, Smyth admitted, commended itself "at once to the loyal feelings of all British subjects". MacDougall had "carefully considered and matured" it, and "at first sight" it appeared "both practical and possible". The memorandum was clearly based upon the experience that MacDougall "undoubtedly possesses of Canada in days gone by and which he has probably maintained through correspondence and intercourse with Canadians up to the present time". Any plan, therefore, "arising from Sir P. MacDougall's knowledge, combined with clear judgement and military requirements deserves much attention, and full consideration". There was therefore no quarrel with the author or his special eminence and qualifications. Smyth even went on to suggest that 100,000 "able and manly soldiers could be in a wonderfully short space of time" recruited in Canada:

> "With many years of active military experience in all parts of the world, I know of no better material for soldiers than Canada can produce, and there is a keen military spirit among classes generally. I can imagine no finer troops than could be raised from backwoodsmen, who can earn a livelihood in our forests, their hardy and hazardous life in the woods, and in navigating the mighty rivers and lakes of this Country enures them to danger, and accustoms them to discipline and organisation: while their life of mutual dependence on each other for support binds them together in a spirit of manly brotherhood, equal to that prevailing in the ranks of veteran regiments and troops serving in the field."

While agreeing with the principle of a definite Canadian military commit-

ment, however, Smyth felt compelled "to look around and consider every side of the question."

His position as G.O.C. carried the obligation "to look to the defence of Canada along a 3000-mile frontier from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and to bear in mind that except the little Garrison of Royal Troops at Halifax the whole protection of this enormous Dominion territorially as large as the whole of Europe, depends upon the Militia Force of the Country". In the event of emergencies, moreover, the available Militia Force might well be further attenuated by having to provide "internal protection in aid of the Civil Power", a practice that "to all appearances may have to be considerably resorted to in the future". Smyth was therefore convinced that MacDougall's plan, if implemented, would dangerously undermine the efficacy of the Canadian Militia as the only legitimate force available for national defence. Since it would be virtually impossible, because of the "local and lucrative occupations" of their members, for Militia Regiments en bloc to volunteer for inclusion within the proposed Canadian Contingent, officers and men would nevertheless offer themselves individually "in thousands perhaps tens of thousands, dazzled by the prospect of Military Service in the field against an enemy of the 'Old Country' they love so well". The recently reconstructed Militia organization would thus "to a large extent . . . be broken up and disorganised" and rendered extremely unwieldly precisely at a time when it might be called upon to respond swiftly and effectively to its legitimate functions. For "the real and perhaps most cogent point for consideration" was this: Great Britain at war in Europe meant coincidentally Canada at war in North America. Russia's extemporised squadrons—those in San Francisco Harbour, and those currently being negotiated for by Semetchkin's Mission at South West Harbour, Maine—would be "let loose to sail our thousands of miles of partially protected sea-board". Canada would, in fact, be "actually the very first to feel the effect of the enemy's assault". In all probability during the approaching summer, Canada would be invaded "by men of communistic, or as may be termed Fenian proclivities who are, and have been, for many months back drilling and organizing in bands, numbering in the alleged aggregate tens of thousands in every populous city in New England and the bordering States". The Canadian Government had already adopted certain precautions against that eventuality. It had directed that all arms be removed from the Armouries along the Frontier. Instructions had been issued to place "at four assigned ports on the Great Lakes guns with carriages adapted for ship decks to arm steamers in the event of Communistic invasion on our lakes and frontier rivers."

The British General therefore hoped to do more than oppose a Russian-inspired Fenian invasion with the traditional bluff courage of the Canadian militiaman. His analysis of the probable effects of a promiscuous call to arms upon the Militia system was to some degree borne out by events in 1914. In any event, in 1878, neither MacDougall's proposals nor Smyth's apprehensions were put to the proof. The Treaty of Berlin had temporarily extinguished the combustible Balkan side to the Eastern Question, but for the next thirty years the "defence of India" question distinctly emerged and remained the central politico-strategic problem confronting British soldiers, statesmen, and strategists, incidentally providing the *raison d'être* for the peripheral but wider-ranging colonial defence movement, in which Canada was to play an important part. In the short space of four years, from 1878 to 1882, the occupation of Cyprus and Egypt, the early disasters of the Zulu, Afghan, and Boer Wars, and the angry debates that raged throughout the great departments of State about the contemplated annexations of Armenia, Afghanistan, and the Sudan convincingly and alarmingly revealed one of the great weaknesses of Cardwell's reforms: that until short-service had provided an effective reserve, the British military establishment, especially in the event of successive or simultaneous frontier wars, would be dangerously and perhaps fatally over-extended. Moreover, the provision of garrisons for Britain's increased commitments and the risks of war they entailed had for the most part destroyed the linked-battalion principle upon which the creation of a Reserve largely depended. This critical state of affairs moved the Secretary of State for War, Colonel Fred Stanley, to institute in May, 1879, the most powerful committee he could devise, consisting of Lord Napier, Norman, Wolseley, Armstrong, Simmons, Lysons, Alison, and MacDougall, under the presidency of Lord Airey, "to report on the effects of Short Service on the preparedness for War of the Army" and on the basis of their findings to make recommendations concerning changes in army organisation.[18] Three solutions were possible: first, to admit that the short-service innovation had failed and to return to a modified form of long-service (this, as Roberts advocated, would satisfy the special requirements of Indian warfare); second, to adhere rigidly to the short-service system, accompanied by a large increase in establishment, commensurate with Britain's increased military commitments, thereby correcting the balance between linked battalions and providing fertile conditions for the growth of the Reserve; third, to develop the concept of an Imperial Reserve, not merely as an extemporized stop-gap until such time as the home Reserve was built up, but more especially

as a permanent regular supplementary force susceptible, in Dufferin's words, to indefinite expansion in the event of a major war.

As it happened, none of these approaches was considered to be fully practicable or completely satisfactory in solving Britain's problems of extending, policing, and defending her Empire, and for almost exactly twenty years Britain was reduced to a state of sustained military impotence, living off diplomatic credit that had no military capital, with inevitable consequences as the Boer disasters attest. Nevertheless, it was as clear then as it is to us now that in a war without allies against Russia, Britain would be compelled to draw heavily upon voluntary colonial military contributions. Of the alternatives posed, therefore, that of the Imperial Reserve offered greatest possibilities. Thus the movement to create a Canadian Reserve in peace was a logical outgrowth of the attempt to provide a Canadian Contingent in war.

Although the "idea of organising a Colonial Naval Reserve" had been advanced by Thomas Brassey in a lecture before the R.U.S.I. as early as May 17, 1878,[19] it was not until May 2, 1879, that Lieutenant-Colonel T. B. Strange, Dominion Inspector of Artillery, first publicly aired the suggestion of an imperial military reserve permanently located in the colonies. In his paper, "The Military Aspect of Canada", before the same Institution, Strange envisaged the Canadian component consisting of "two small battalions of 500 men each", capable of "expansion into an army division for war service on their own frontiers, in Europe or Asia" and "being paid by Great Britain when serving out of Canada".[20] Throughout 1879 and 1880, various versions of this proposal continued to receive support in certain quarters in Canada. In the autumn of 1879, the new Governor-General, the Marquis of Lorne, was asked to determine "how far such a scheme would meet with the approbation of the Canadian Authorities". Both MacDougall and Selby Smyth deemed it practicable and set about constructing proposals of their own.[21]

In his "Annual Report on the State of the Militia for 1879", submitted to the Minister of Militia and Defence on January 1, 1880,[22] Selby Smyth discussed at length a scheme for an Imperial Reserve that, excepting a few differences in detail, had been submitted to the Canadian Privy Council by MacDougall on October 21 of that year. In the earlier portion of his report, Smyth had referred to his perennial demand for a small professional short-service army complete with auxiliary services and bureaucratic organization as the only way of countering the pernicious dry-rot effect that the withdrawal of the British regulars was continuing to have upon Canadian military efficiency and enterprise. It was also the only method of creating an effective Reserve

independent of the Active Militia for overseas imperial service. He advanced the novel suggestion that part of this force might periodically rotate with British line regiments, to be paid and trained at British expense for three years and be liable for future imperial service. Far from supplanting or superseding the Militia in the public eye, as many anxious Militia Colonels feared, such a standing army and consequent Reserves would have quite the opposite effect in inducing a suitable professional spirit befitting the dignity of sovereignty and Canada's role as an emerging great power. But it would be folly to attempt to raise and organize such a Reserve at the beginning of an imperial crisis when it might well be overtaken by confusion and disaster. It was manifestly more sensible and profitable to arrange for an Imperial Reserve in peace.

> An Imperial reserve would make a solid commencement in banding together the component parts of the empire for organized and mutual support. Canada is leading the way and setting an example to other sister dependencies of the Crown in military affairs. . . . It follows that Canada should improve her lead as an example to her sister colonies and a great addition to her own strength by forming an Imperial reserve. The experiment would prove the country to be in earnest, would probably be followed by Australia and other colonies, and produce an independent moral, as well as material effect upon foreign nations. . . .
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> Suppose for instance this reserve be raised in proportion, by companies, in Ontario, Quebec and [the] Maritime Provinces, about 56 companies or seven battalions, to be trained for a month each year with drill pay, in addition to 6d. a day per annum; enrolment for six years; to serve anywhere, and provision for families during war; a gratuity on discharge after war service and on joining reserve; six months' notice to quit, and permission to change residence or penalty in default; age 20 to 35, respectability of character, and must be British subjects. The reserve force would add upwards of 4,000 trained and disciplined men, with their proportion of officers, to the military strength of the Dominion, outside and in excess of the present active militia, paid and clothed . . . by the Imperial Government.

In Smyth's eyes, the highly professional complexion of the Indian military system, the reforms that Lytton and the Simla Commission were attempting to implement, and the expeditions that it had always provided in the Imperial interest had set an example and standard of military co-operation that should be aspired to and copied by all other dominions. He reiterated Fletcher's argument that the organization of the Canadian army and its role in Imperial defence was "of as great importance, and should be as closely scanned

and carefully supported as that of the British militia"—which, too, had an undefined imperial function.

The concept of an imperial reserve, so strongly advocated by British military imperialists in Canada, received scant sympathy from the newly-elected Canadian and British governments. When the Duke of Cambridge discussed the question with the Canadian Prime Minister in England in August, 1879, Sir John A. Macdonald, while admitting the principle, felt it "inopportune".[23] In his evidence before the Colonial Defence Commission a year later,[24] he emphasized his conviction that "it would be extremely unwise in time of peace, when there is no immediate danger of war, to attempt any negociations for the purpose of arranging for a contingent of military or naval force to be furnished by the Dominion in aid" of an imperial war, such as against Russia, the causes of which were "not likely to arise from anything in which Canada has any interest". He deprecated "anything like a discussion of particular covenants to be entered into" between Canada and Great Britain, "or any attempt to define very closely the division of military responsibility between the two countries". The Parliamentary Opposition would be unalterably hostile to any formal obligation "to send so many of our people away to a quarter in which we had no direct interest—to India, or Africa, or elsewhere" and an Imperial Reserve, paid and trained by Britain, would undoubtedly carry this implication. Canada therefore would be committed to a war "in which we are not interested, and about which we have not been consulted". To raise premature antagonisms might prejudice the chances of an Imperial Reserve when its creation in time of war was most possible and necessary. Even if such a force were created in peace, Macdonald was doubtful that it would respond very effectively or promptly, especially for expeditions "a great distance off, or in unhealthy climates."

To the new Liberal Government, which had been returned after a violent anti-annexationist campaign and was disentangling itself with unblushing haste from the coils of the Armenian Convention and the Zulu and Afghan Wars, the proposals for an Imperial Reserve amounted to no more than a return to the pre-Cardwell garrison system, which in the circumstances was unthinkable. No policy short of political suicide could consistently argue precipitate military withdrawal with the simultaneous creation of imperial expeditionary forces. Moreover, "economy" had been the chief of Cardwell's incentives, and Gladstone's reforming ministry could ill afford to tolerate or endure any suggestion that an Imperial Reserve be maintained at British expense. It raised "a question of primary importance" with implications not

only for Canada but for "all H.M.'s possessions beyond the Seas". "That question", minuted Childers on Lorne's memorandum, "is whether it is expedient that H.M. Government should defray the cost, and, as a consequence, undertake the control of any local forces, whether in the nature of a standing Army, or of Militia or of Reserves, raised and serving in a Colony, especially in a Colony enjoying Responsible Government". Such an "important question" deeply concerned "the future organisation of the Military Power of the Empire", and this fundamental problem would have to be tackled before any individual colonial proposals could be constructively entertained.[25] Thus the matter was adroitly shelved.

NOTES

1. Major-General Sir Henry Rawlinson, *England and Russia in the East,* London, Murray, 1875; B. H. Summer, *Russia and the Balkans, 1870-1880,* Oxford, Clarendon, 1937; H. T. Cheshire, "The Expansion of Imperial Russia to the Indian Border", *Slavonic Review,* XIII, 1934-5; A. P. Thornton, "The Reopening of the Central Asian Question, 1864-9", *History,* XLI, 1956.
2. Capt. J. C. R. Colomb, "Russian Development and our Naval and Military Position in the North Pacific", *Royal United Service Institution Journal,* vol. 27, 1877, pp. 659-707; Admiral Algernon de Horsey (Commander-in-Chief, Pacific) to W. H. Smith, confdl, 29 June 1878, 'Official Correspondence: Admiralty', *Hambleden Papers, PS6/119;* E. A. Adamov, "Russia and the United States at the time of the Civil War", *Journal of Modern History,* II, 1930; F. A. Golder, "The Russian Fleet and the Civil War", *American Historical Review,* XX, 1915, pp. 801-12.
3. A. W. Preston, *British Military Policy and the Defence of India: A Study of British Military Policy, Plans and Preparations during the Russian Crisis, 1875-1881* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis), University of London, 1966.
4. *Ibid.*
5. R. A. Preston, *Canada and "Imperial Defence",* Duke University Press, 1967, pp. 10-50.
6. H. C. Fletcher, "A Volunteer Force, British and Colonial, in the Event of War", *Royal United Service Institution Journal,* vol. 21, 1877, pp. 633-58.
7. Dufferin to Carnarvon, pte, 2 and 16 April, 25 June and 10 July 1875, C. W. de Kiewiet and F. H. Underhill (eds.), *Dufferin-Carnarvon Correspondence 1874-1878,* Toronto, Champlain Society, 1955, xvii, pp. 141-2, 146-7, 151-2; A. W. Preston, "The Founding of R.M.C.: Gleanings from the Royal Archives", *Queen's Quarterly,* LXXIV, no. 3, Autumn 1967, pp. 398-413.
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