

398. Although Houghton made sure that he would not be asked for an opinion on the situation, he did find proof that there was dissatisfaction in the regiment and that Ibbotson had been absent without leave from church parade. More had to be deduced from a mass of evidence. "You Sir", Gascoigne later told the Governor General, "never in all your life saw such a mass of discreditable matter brought to light: discreditable to all concerned, but specially so to Col. Strathy in the matter of a gross want of gentlemanlike tact and consideration for the feelings of those under him."⁸²⁵ On the basis of the surviving exhibits, this judgement seems harsh and even unfair but it was the view that Gascoigne was to continue to take. Another view would be that Strathy was simply taking his military role much more seriously than most of his other officers and that he had the wealth and leisure to do so. Certain of his subordinates appear to have had a rooted aversion to obeying orders. The surviving evidence, however, may be very unhelpful in explaining a situation in which personality obviously had a central part to play.

399. Lieutenant Colonel Houghton and his court reported in August. By this time, Gascoigne had joined Borden in being cautious over the affair. Since the regulations limiting tenure of command had come into effect, Strathy would be obliged to vacate his command in March. Ibbotson would then take over. If matters could be held over until then, the problem might solve itself. Strathy, who was also an aide de camp to the Governor General, would be safely deposited in the Reserve of Officers, Ibbotson would be commanding officer and the 5th Royal Scots could go on in peace. It was not to be. The newspapers began demanding that a decision

be announced. Courts and commissions of enquiry only delay solutions, they do not provide them. Articles which Gascoigne suspected of being inspired by Strathy appeared in Montreal newspapers accusing him and his Minister of weakness in failing to deal with mutinous officers. Finally even Borden admitted that he regretted that he had not adopted Gascoigne's original draconian intentions. Unfortunately the findings of the Court of Enquiry were simply too weak to warrant such a punishment now. Finally, he authorized Gascoigne to assemble Strathy and Ibbotson in Montreal and, in the presence of the District Officer Commanding, to deliver them a stern reprimand.⁸²⁶ This, Gascoigne did, fully believing, as he explained to the Governor General, that the two officers would accept such a slight punishment with a good grace. Gascoigne was also authorized to deliver a statement to the press so that the official version would be clear. This was unfortunate. As he emerged after an hour and a half session with the two officers, warm with indignation from delivering his reprimand, Gascoigne was surrounded by reporters. Strathy, he announced, had been reprimanded for want of tact and lack of consideration of his junior officers and Ibbotson for oversensitiveness. The major would take over the battalion the following March but if either of them made any more trouble, they would be summarily dismissed. Then, expanding on his theme: 'The General added that the whole trouble was simply one such as might have arisen from a squabble of two washerwomen over a washtub, but if it had occurred in the Imperial service, drastic measures would have been taken long ago to put an end to it.'⁸²⁷ This was excellent copy and the reporters raced away. When he read the full report of the interview in the Montreal Star, Strathy replied in kind and with even greater acerbity.

400. Gascoigne was furious that Strathy should have reacted by attacking him. He ordered that he should have his name struck from the Militia List and that he should turn over the arms and equipment of his regiment to Major Ibbotson. Borden supported him but then there were second thoughts and the notification of the dismissal was not immediately placed in the Gazette. An additional complication was that Strathy was on the Governor General's staff and if he were removed from the Militia, he could hardly remain an aide-de-camp. Lord Aberdeen promptly solved the problem by backing Gascoigne, informing him that even if Strathy had remained on the aide-de-camp in the circumstances.⁸²⁸ Then he, too, seems to have had second thoughts. On 6 December 1897, the Governor General wrote to Gascoigne to ask whether the fact that Ibbotson was taking over the arms and equipment meant in any way that he would also be taking over command of the regiment.⁸²⁹ Gascoigne promptly replied that it did. After their session on 18 November, Strathy had made trouble but Ibbotson had kept his peace. That part of the undertaking remained and the major would not be punished because his rival had misbehaved.⁸³⁰ In another letter to the Governor General, Gascoigne revealed his own wish to reach an accommodation. He was aware that he was in an awkward position and that by making war on Strathy, he had drawn down powerful enemies. He may also have felt guilty about the newspaper reports of his press interview. He sent Colonel Macpherson, the Director of Stores and an old friend of Strathy, to Montreal as an emissary. Working through another mutual friend, Lieutenant Colonel George Starko, he was to tell Strathy that if he would make sure that he was at least restored to the Reserve of Officers. They even promised that Strathy could retain his position in the vice-regal household. Strathy avoided his

callers as persistently as he could and when they finally tracked him down, he refused the offer.⁸³¹ This was the situation which Gascoigne explained to the Governor General on 7 December 1897, without telling him of his own personal efforts to persuade Strathy to relent. He was still afraid of being accused of leniency but he had held the matter over. If only Strathy would ask to be placed on the Reserve and Aberdeen would approve of it, he would be almost certain that it could still be done.⁸³²

401. Strathy, meanwhile, had also been in contact with the Governor General through members of his staff, W.T.S. Howett, the private secretary and David Erskine, the comptroller of the household. He also set out to get a statement of the charges against him for which he had been dismissed. On 16 December 1897, Gascoigne wrote a memorandum to the Adjutant-General, obviously intended for Strathy, which recalled that Houghton had obtained from the Colonel on 27 November an acknowledgement that the article in the Montreal Star of 20 November had been an accurate report of his statement. This was the basis for Strathy's initial suspension. Gascoigne had then waited a week, in expectation of an apology, and when none had been forthcoming, he had submitted the matter to the Governor in Council.⁸³³ When Strathy received a copy of this explanatory memorandum, he promptly replied to the District Officer Commanding (now Lieutenant Colonel Gordon,) expressing his regret at the disciplinary error he had fallen into through annoyance at strictures published about him in the press and asked whether Gascoigne had also acknowledged his own remarks in the Montreal Star of 18 November. Once these remarks were officially repudiated, he would immediately express his own regret both personally and publicly.⁸³⁴ Strathy followed up

this approach with a letter to Erskine in which he explained the damage that the General's insults had done him. As managing director of a trust company, and hence the guardian of the affairs of widows and orphans, it was a serious matter to be accused of being without tact or consideration. His directors, including men of the prominence of Senator Forget, Lord Strathcona, Frank Ross and Mayor Wilson Smith, were collectively incensed at the General and would not tolerate his actions.⁸³⁵ He was determined to appeal to the Governor General in his role of commander in chief of the Militia.

402. When he had decided that Strathy was not going to apologize, Gascoigne did not give up. He discovered that there was a Retired List as well as a Reserve of Officers and that it might solve the difficulty if Strathy would only apply for that. He need not even apologize.⁸³⁶ There was no reaction to this modification and so Gascoigne began to harden again. Two days after he had offered to put Strathy on the Retired List, he again wrote to Aberdeen to state that definite action would have to be taken to gazette Strathy's removal from the Militia List. He did not wish to appear vindictive but he hoped that the Governor General would not even express thanks for Strathy's services.

I venture to think that Your Excellency, and I will take the liberty of including myself also in this; that both of us occasionally are at a disadvantage in dealing with those who aren't brought up to view matters in quite the same spirit of gentlemanlike conduct as is the rule at home.⁸³⁷

Any expression of sympathy would be used as evidence of viceregal support and Gascoigne knew that delay in publishing Strathy's dismissal was being attributed to the Governor General's defence of his aide-de-camp.

403. There was a further delay while approval was sought for the gazetting from the Cabinet. Borden was away in England but Gascoigne had the support of Sir Louis Davies, the acting Minister. After a week's delay, Gascoigne pressed the point, explaining that he had acted throughout with the knowledge and concurrence of his Minister and that he felt entitled to the cabinet's support.⁸³⁸ On the last day of the year, Gascoigne was informed that Laurier had consented⁸³⁹ and the first General Order for 1898 announced that the services of Lieutenant Colonel Strathy had been dispensed with.⁸⁴⁰

404. This was far from being the end of the affair. The Governor General had officially backed the General but he also received Strathy on 19 January 1898 and, with members of his staff, gave him assistance and encouragement in the preparation of his appeal.⁸⁴¹ Meanwhile Gascoigne remained the target for attacks by Strathy's powerful friends in Montreal.

405. A further concern of Gascoigne's was his salary. When it had been originally set at \$4,000, it was on the understanding that the British officer holding the post would continue to draw his half pay. Otherwise, the sum was rather lower than a British colonel would earn on full pay. During Luard's term, the British half pay had been cut off by Royal warrant. At the same time, the appointment was an expensive one. British officers found the cost of living in Ottawa high and they believed that they had a substantial social position to maintain. Although they were reimbursed for their travelling expenses, the payments allowed did not fully cover the costs. Generals with very limited private incomes like Luard and Middleton found that they were living far

beyond their means while still unable to compete satisfactorily in the round of Ottawa social life. While General Herbert had had considerable personal wealth, General Gascoigne was not as well off. The difficulty in raising the question with the Canadian Government was that all civil service salaries were low. The Deputy Minister of the Department was paid only \$3,200 per annum and there were hardly half a dozen public employees who were paid as much or more than the General Officer Commanding.⁸⁴² As a result, Gascoigne's first appeal was made to the War Office. He explained to ~~Lord~~⁸⁴³ Aberdeen in November, 1897, that if the reply was not satisfactory, he would probably resign.

406. Gascoigne was also anxious to give Colonel Lake a chance to become his successor. The Quartermaster-General had been remarkably successful in Canada and had become one of the most popular of the British officers ever to serve the Canadian Government. Gascoigne was convinced that he would be a popular General Officer Commanding. Lake's term in Canada came to an end in 1898. Before then, an opportunity came for him to extend his service. During the war scare of 1896, it had been made apparent to Gascoigne that there was no mobilization plan. It had become equally evident to Lieutenant General Montgomery Moore at Halifax that there was also no scheme to use the troops who were mobilized. The Jervois Report was out of date and the fortifications which it had proposed had never been built. In the event of war, it had come to be understood that the command of the forces in British North America would fall to the General Officer Commanding Her Majesty's Forces in Canada, in other words, the British general commanding the garrison at Halifax and at Esquimalt. From time to time, Montgomery Moore had been asked to submit a scheme for the defence of Montreal but he

found this difficult when there was no over-all plan. In a visit to Ottawa in the fall of 1897, he drew this lack to the attention of Dr. Borden who in turn invited him to bring the problem to the attention of the Cabinet. Moore did as he was bade and in a letter to Laurier of 3 November 1897 sought to convince the Prime Minister of the growing possibility of a war with the United States and of the helplessness and confusion which would ensue without a defence plan prepared in peacetime. A solid argument was that the formulation of the scheme need involve no additional expense. It would simply be a plan for the best use of available resources. To get the scheme under way, he suggested that Colonel Lake be given the assistance of a trained British staff officer for a period of three months to work out the framework while details could be filled in later.⁸⁴⁴ He sent a copy of his letter to the Governor General with the further suggestion that representatives from the Royal Navy at Halifax and from his own staff would be willing to co-operate.⁸⁴⁵

407. The possibility of retaining Lake in Canada at first appeared small since the War Office applied for him for a post which would involve a promotion. However the prospect of formulating a defence scheme for Canada proved popular with the Canadian Government and with the British authorities. Montgomery Moore's original suggestion of the loan of a staff officer for three months developed into a full fledged commission of three officers under Major General E.P. Leach V.C. of the Royal Engineers, with Colonel Lake as one of the members.⁸⁴⁶

408. In the meantime, Gascoigne had resigned. The exact reasons seem obscure since he did not state any on his letter of resignation.⁸⁴⁷ A variety of causes may have con-

tributed to his decision, among them the failure to resolve the salary problem and the series of irritations with his Minister and with the failure to reach decisions on disciplinary matters as in the Strathy Case. At the same time, the Government made no effort to restrain him. Gascoigne seemed to them to be pompous, old fashioned and unimpressive. He had also been an embarrassment in the Strathy affair and they were also prepared to let him bear the blame publicly for the Hamilton case as well.

409. The British Government's support for a Commission to work out a Canadian defence scheme indicated a growing desire to take a hand in Canadian defence matters generally. At the Colonial Conference of 1897, Joseph Chamberlain had personally and intensively involved himself in questions of defence. He also felt that the appointment of General Officer Commanding the Canadian Militia was too important to go by default. The failure of the indolent and bumbling Gascoigne had been even more evident in London than it had been in Ottawa. To get a better officer, however, would need a higher salary. The Canadian rate was less than even Australian colonies like Queensland and New South Wales were prepared to pay while Victoria paid about \$7,000. A colonel on the staff in Britain was paid over \$5,000 per annum.⁸⁴⁸ To go to Canada was a sacrifice and at the end of February, 1898, Chamberlain began to put pressure on the Canadian Government.⁸⁴⁹ Lord Aberdeen added his personal influence with Laurier⁸⁵⁰ and the Cabinet was eventually persuaded to add \$2,000 as an allowance to the basic pay of \$4,000. Since the salary was established by statute, the change had to be authorized by Parliament.

410. The debate provided the Opposition and Sir Charles Tupper in particular the opportunity of a violent attack on Gascoigne, who had remained in Canada pending the appointment of his successor. As a result of the Strathy affair, a civil action had been brought against the General which had subsequently been withdrawn. Tupper declared that Gascoigne had purchased its withdrawal with his resignation. He went on to declare that the unfortunate General had repeatedly disgraced his position and that he would cheerfully support the resolution in the assurance that not a penny of the increase would ever go to Gascoigne. The Prime Minister, Dr. Borden and even the Conservative Sam Hughes rose to the defence of Gascoigne, admitting that he was not perfect, but pointing to the advances which had been made in the Militia during his time. When Borden described his attack as unfair and unjust, Tupper was moved to even greater violence of language:

I have no respect for a cad because a red coat is on his back, not the slightest. I respect every man who is engaged, whether in Canada or in any other part of the Empire, in defence of the country, and no man will be more ready to sustain that important branch of the service than I, here and everywhere. But to say that because a man wears a red coat we must bow down like a Chinese before him and hold his person as too sacred to allow us to speak of him is an opinion I do not entertain.

Winding up his attack, he declared that "... tried by everything that involves manly, straight forward, independent, able discharge of public duties, General Gascoigne has been the most signal failure ever sent to this country to occupy so high a position."⁸⁵¹

411. Other members also favoured the increase although for different reasons in most cases. The only difference of opinion was reserved to the Conservative caucus, in which Nathaniel Wallace demanded that the appointment be given

to Canadians in future while his fellow Orangeman, Sam Hughes insisted that, for the present, it should continue to be reserved for British officers.

412. Gascoigne was furious at the attack made on him in the House by Tupper. At first he judged from the press reports that it was purely vituperation but when he at least read the allegation about the libel suit and his resignation, he set about trying to obtain redress. Tupper left for England not long after his speech. Gascoigne was afraid of the efforts of the vindictive old man among English statesman and he sought the Governor General's backing.⁸⁵² He also sought the Governor General's advice on getting redress for Tupper's speech. Aberdeen warned him that Borden would not dare to make a contradiction but that he would do what he could.⁸⁵³ Gascoigne then wrote a long letter of rebuttal to the Prime Minister. By this time, Tupper had left the country and Laurier had to overcome his reluctance to read it into the record of the House of Commons in his opponent's absence. On 30 May 1898, doing some violence to the Rules of Order,⁶⁵⁴ he finally did so.⁸⁵⁵

413. Three weeks later, when the arrangements for a successor had been completed, Gascoigne resubmitted his resignation.⁶⁵⁶ It was promptly accepted⁶⁵⁷ to take effect from 31 June 1898. Since his replacement did not plan to arrive until the beginning of September, the command devolved in the meantime on the Quartermaster-General, who was still Colonel Lake. Gascoigne left some bits of unfinished business. He made a special appeal to the Prime Minister that his aide-de-camp, Captain MacLean, should be allowed to remain in that position until the new General arrived. He recalled the opposition ~~he had~~ aroused when he selected an officer whose

father was a well known Liberal. "Whether now with the wicked experience which Canada has taught me I should so fly in the face of Tupperian Providence had I to do it over again, is doubtful, but I did do it, and I have had no reason to regret doing it."⁸⁵⁸ He also passed on a final letter from Colonel Hamilton of the Queen's Own Rifles:

As I understand that the inevitable has come to pass even earlier than I anticipated and that you are to leave this country shortly, I think it only fair to inform you that I propose pushing to a conclusion the charges which I propose making at the proper time and place against yourself and others for aiding and abetting insubordination and conspiracy. ⁸⁵⁹

Since he had only acted in full consultation with his Ministers in both Governments and they had agreed with him, he could only leave the matter in the Prime Minister's hands. ⁸⁶⁰ Laurier replied that he knew nothing about the matter but since he had repeatedly told Hamilton that the case would not be reopened, Gascoigne could go with an easy conscience. ⁸⁶¹

414. The turbulence which Gascoigne had created in Canada did not long survive his departure. In November, he was appointed to the command of the troops in Hong Kong. In the course of time, he was awarded his K.C.M.G. and retired, still a major general.

THE YUKON FIELD FORCE

415. The discovery of gold in the Yukon in August 1896 led a rush to the territory which had become a flood by 1898. A Northwest Mounted Police detachment of 24 was increased until it was over 180 but the extent of the territory and the lawlessness inevitably associated with such developments led to a demand for stronger forces of order. In addition, the United States claim along the Alaska boundary was being pressed with considerable vigour and an

American military garrison of four companies of infantry was located along the pan-handle. In the circumstances, the Canadian Government reached the decision to send a small military force to the Yukon. In addition to a military force being some answer to an American military force in the vicinity, it was cheaper to send troops since their pay was rather lower than that of the Mounted Police.⁸⁶²

416. The force was organized on the authority of an order in council of 21 March 1898. It consisted 12 officers and 191 other ranks drawn from the permanent corps and chiefly from the Royal Regiment of Canadian Infantry. The commander of the Yukon Field Force, as it was christened, was Lieutenant Colonel T.D.B. Evans, Royal Canadian Dragoons, at 38 one of the youngest and the most junior of the permanent corps colonels. His officers included some of the ablest of the permanent corps, including Major T.D.R. Hemming, Captain H.E. Burstall and Captain P.E. Thacker. Others of his staff, such as his paymaster, Major Talbot and his Supply Officer, Major Bliss, were less valuable and owed their positions to considerable political influence.⁸⁶³ After a hectic period of organization in which supplies, winter clothing and equipment were collected, the force left Ottawa on 6 May 1898 and reached Vancouver five days later. From Vancouver to Wrangell in the Alaska Panhandle, the force travelled by steamer, transhipping their supplies and equipment to two stern-wheelers at Wrangell for the voyage up the Stickine River. Permission had been obtained for the men to travel through American territory. From Glenora, which was as far up the Stickine as the little steamers could take them, the force split, a party of fifty leaving on 1 June to build log barracks at Fort Selkirk, the prospective headquarters. The main party followed on 9 June, travelling to Telegraph Creek

and thence, with the aid of mule trains, to Lake Teslin. From there, the journey could be made by water in boats and scows. This was not easy as the water was often fast, unknown and dangerous and the men were not skilled boatmen. On 11 September, the main body reached Fort Selkirk, bringing with them the greater part of the supplies and equipment with which they had started out, including two Maxim guns.

417. Once safely arrived, the duties of the troops became routine. A detachment of 2 officers and 50 other ranks was sent to Dawson. The men were used as guards and escorts and, on at least one occasion, to fight fire. In September, 1899, the Force was cut in half and the whole of the remainder was moved to Dawson. The command was assumed by Major Hemming of the Royal Canadian Regiment. The reduced force itself was removed after one more winter, leaving the North-west Mounted Police to watch over the remnants of the Gold Rush.

418. The Yukon Field Force cost \$675,298. Its services were never seriously needed. Nonetheless, its presence helped to put a stake on Canadian territory and the exertion involved in placing it there was a reminder of the Red River expeditions a generation before.

GENERAL HUTTON COMES TO CANADA

419. The new General Officer Commanding was selected with particular care. Colonel E.T.H. Hutton was a young fifty when he came to Canada, an officer of the King's Royal Rifle Corps, who had already seen a career of considerable distinction. Wolseley had picked him as an aide de camp in Egypt in 1882 and he had had a series of staff appointments in important places. During campaigns in South Africa and Canada as well. In 1896, Lord Lansdowne had pressed his name as a Commissioner for the Northwest Mounted Police and he had been appointed to the post.

420. Before Hutton came to Canada, he had extensive interviews with the War Office authorities and with the Colonial Secretary. His friend Lord Minto was to be the new Governor General in succession to Lord Aberdeen and Chamberlain intended them to work as a team in reminding the Canadian Government of its obligations. To Minto, Hutton wrote on the eve of his departure for Canada: "Both Lord Lansdowne & Mr. Chamberlain are full of anxiety that the Canadian Military house shd be set in order - & both particularly mentioned the fact of your well known soldierly qualities being of the greatest value."⁸⁶⁸ Hutton was also informed of the work of the Defence Committee which had already begun its work in Canada under General Leach.

421. On his arrival at Quebec, he was met by the Prime Minister and several other cabinet ministers who happened to be there. His first impression was that he was not welcome.⁸⁶⁹ His spirits recovered when he reached Ottawa, however, and he wrote to Minto that he was pleased with his officers and hopeful that, with a free hand from the Government and the Governor General's help, much might be done. No one in the circle he entered believed in any entente cordiale with the United States. "I never quite realized before how strong the feeling of animosity to the U.S. is in Canada!"⁸⁷⁰ He also rented Bayscliffe, Sir John A. Macdonald's old house, on the terms that he could cut down the trees and open the place out.*

422. From the first, Hutton set out with two qualities common among reformers, boundless energy and a thorough

* In a letter to Wolseley shortly after his arrival, he explained that he had refused to meet Gascoigne in order that he could form his own independent impressions. Gascoigne's failure, he feared, would make his own work more difficult.

contempt for all that had been achieved before him. Within two weeks of arriving in Canada, he had begun his travels by inspecting the Nova Scotia Militia battalions at Aldershot. He was not impressed. The standard, he later reported, was even lower than that in other parts of the Empire.⁸⁷¹ At the end of the month, he met his Minister for the first time at Quebec. Promptly, in the manner which he apparently felt to be successful with colonial statesman, Hutton made his position clear. No party or political influence would be allowed to interfere with the Militia. The story of his career in New South Wales was repeated. The fact that the voters had upheld his contention in a general election was a lesson which he wished the Minister to absorb. To judge from the Canadian newspapers, Hutton added, Canadians felt the same way. Borden's reply was that no one was more determined to eliminate politics from the Militia than he but that the changes would have to be made gradually. Hutton accepted this but sternly warned that in promotions, appointments and discipline, his principle would be inflexibly applied.⁸⁷²

423. It seems evident almost from the first that Borden and Hutton had quite different understandings of what was meant by political interference. To the Minister, it meant

* Captain Clive Bell, Hutton's Aide-de-camp, may have reflected his General's opinions when he wrote to his brother soon after reaching Ottawa:

At present there is perfect chaos. Billy Gascoigne could have done nothing at all except let things drift. Clerks, politicians and civilians seem to do everything without the knowledge of anybody. For instance, half the drill yard has been sold to a pork factory without the General knowing a word about it or being consulted at all.

He also reported that the military stores contained boarding pikes and "the funniest old guns". The cavalry was "beyond all contempt", and was commanded by "the most weird looking people, you ever saw."

open partisanship and a policy of ensuring that only members of the Liberal Party should have any advantages. This was a state of affairs he was willing to resist to some extent but the previous government had made it such an absolute rule in the conduct of Militia affairs that many of Borden's fellow Liberals were loth to abandon the convention when at last it could work in their favour. Both Borden and Laurier had resisted considerable pressure in the Hamilton Case although the Minister had not been strong enough to come to an absolute decision. Another problem which is somewhat difficult to define was that the vast majority of Militia officers were Conservatives. Some of them might be alienated by Conservative policies on the Militia, as Gascoigne had believed in 1886, but they remained Conservatives. In the House of Commons, of nine Militia colonels, all but two were Conservatives and one of the Liberals, James Domville, was a Tory defector. This meant that the bulk of Militia officers were far more aware of the problem of political influence in the force than they may have been a few years before. As for Hutton, his conception was that interference by a politician or on any political grounds was to be prevented. This meant that in the large area which he defined as his concern, he insisted on making the decisions. The Minister retained authority in the realm of policy but even there Hutton set out with a campaign of public speeches to ensure that his own policies would acquire public support. The Minister was not to meddle in military affairs but the General felt few inhibitions in mixing in at least military aspects of politics.

424. Hutton did not waste time waiting to get to know the local situation. Within the first month of his arrival in Canada, he had embarked on a programme of speaking to all the Militia officers who could be gathered. Everywhere, his

message was the same. He began by talking about a Canadian Army whose purpose would not merely be the defence of Canada but participation in the defence of the rest of the Empire as well. Then he went on to describe the pathetic condition of the "Army" as he found it. Then he insisted on the need for a firm but co-operative discipline. Finally, in the part of the speech which he most enjoyed himself, he attacked politics in the Militia, an evil which he continually described as "the Upas tree" which he would uproot. The same speech with embroidery was delivered to the assembled officers of all the military districts, to the Military Institute in Toronto, at the camps and anywhere that officers could be collected to hear it. Hutton had a vigorous and positive personality, he knew how to be informal and approachable and he evoked considerable enthusiasm from his audiences. He also made himself accessible to the press. After a certain initial caution, they came out generally in his favour. The Toronto Globe, at the end of October, described him as "a practical soldier who is also a man of ideas, a man with a large point of view, and a man who is likely to try to get his ideas realized."⁸⁷³ The November issue of the Canadian Magazine asked its readers:

Is it possible that somebody who is greater than Canadian public opinion will force the Canadian Government to divorce the militia and politics? Has Downing Street ordered that that there shall be no more political appointments to the permanent force? If our citizens who desire to become majors and lieutenant colonels cannot become so in a few months, how disappointing it will be!⁸⁷⁴

There was even attention in French Canada. At St. Jean, the reporter of the Canadien Francais interviewed Hutton who replied "in a very pure French". It was the General's turn to ask questions and he demanded to know whether the French Canadians who had interested themselves in the Militia had

been given too little prominence. That, the reporter replied, was exactly the case, but the General's question gave them to hope that something would be done in the future.⁸⁷⁵

425. The first target for reform was Militia Headquarters itself. Lake's term as Quartermaster General had ended in August and Hutton had brought his own replacement, Colonel Hubert Foster of the Royal Engineers, a competent but somewhat uninspired officer of 43, whose basic rank was major.⁸⁷⁶ Foster was by no means the equal of Colonel Lake in getting along with the Canadians and he was thoroughly overshadowed by his superior. Hutton's grievance was not with his military staff, although he quickly developed a dislike and contempt for Aylmer. The main problem was the division of military and civil authority. "It is not too much to say," he told Borden, "that the present condition of the administration as carried out in the Head-quarter by our existing Head-Quarter system is, from a Military point of view, chaotic and pregnant with friction in peace, and disaster in war or national emergency!"⁸⁷⁶ The solution was for Hutton's position under the Militia Act to be made identical with that of the British Commander in Chief as of the Queen's Regulations of 1895 in which the specific duties had been carefully listed.

426. The next assault was on the artillery. The last major reform in the artillery had been the establishment of special camps for firing practice for the garrison and field artillery. Hutton was more concerned about what was taught. Canadian gunners lacked scientific knowledge and this could only be supplied through the establishment of a School of

⁸⁷⁵ British officers serving in the Canadian Militia were normally given a militia rank, higher than their regular rank.

Gunnery on modern lines. Hutton proposed to use the buildings at the Citadel in Quebec. He also recommended the building of a practice battery nearby at Beaumont. The old range on the Isle d'Orleans was now dangerous.⁸⁷⁷ There was also no one in the artillery qualified as an inspector or assistant inspector of Ordnance and permission was obtained to sent two officers and four non-commissioned officers to England on the necessary courses.⁸⁷⁸ Since the garrison artillery at Esquimalt had profitted greatly from the instruction of the Royal Marine Artillery stationed there, Hutton also made arrangements for the Militia gunners at Halifax, to take an equal advantage of the British garrison.⁸⁷⁹

427. An area of serious friction was the control of stores. Although these were under Lieutenant Colonel D.A. Macdonald of the Civil Branch of the Department, Borden asked Hutton to visit them. He did not like what he found. The buildings were unsuitable in many cases and in some instances they were in an advanced state of dilapidation. The officials in charge of them knew little about the stores they were supposed to tend and there were few regulations and little system to make them do better. Much of the material which took up storage space was obsolete even for the Canadian Militia and in such bad condition that it might have been disposed of long before.⁸⁸⁰ Hutton's criticisms, however, were only part of the story. While the stores Department was a major concentration point for patronage both in the contracts and the employees, its failings were not entirely the fault of Colonel Macdonald and his men. His own appeals for better buildings were long ignored while it was only in 1898 that he could report any response to a long-standing request that only men with some military experience should be appointed.

He also maintained that the responsibility for inspection while in store was entirely vested in the military authorities and if they failed to carry out their duties, that was their fault. As for the stock on hand, it was entirely due to the Stores Department that there was anything at all for they had never been furnished with a list of requirements from the Military Branch. Moreover, Macdonald had not been informed about stores which had been ordered in Canada or in England and his first notification of their existence was to take delivery.⁸⁸¹ While such a situation betrays a serious lack of enterprise on both sides, the result was an absolute bar to any efficient management. As a result, Hutton turned to his own Quartermaster-General for a report on the amount of camp equipment which would be required for an infantry division camp. He also wanted estimates on the costs of stores buildings at Toronto and London. He was also to look into the procurement of medical equipment and ambulances and to draft a note recommending the purchase of twelve mess tents.⁸⁸² None of this was passed to Macdonald.

428. Lord Minto reached Canada early in November and took up his appointment officially on 12 November 1898. In a welcoming letter, Hutton advised him that the news was already abroad that the new Governor General had been sent out to press military reform and suggested that he make no remark to confirm the rumour until they had had a chance to confer.⁸⁸³ From 15 - 18 November, Hutton presided over a meeting of staff officers and the District Officers Commanding from Eastern Canada, the first such conference ever to have been held. It was another opportunity for Hutton to get his views across. After the meeting, he sent Minto copies of all the papers and speeches he had written:

If Canada will only determine upon looking on its present Militia Force as its 'National Army' the remodelling & the reconstruction necessary for enabling a defence force thus designated to perform its role will become comparatively easy - moreover the political interference, and the petty log-rolling, which hitherto have crushed⁸⁸⁴ the very life out of the Canadian Troops will cease."

THE CANADIAN DEFENCE COMMITTEE

429. The Canadian Defence Committee began its work in the summer of 1898. It was headed by Major General Leach who had already had some experience in 1896 of reporting on the defences which would be required for Montreal.⁸⁸⁵ It was the fatuity of such a study when there was no larger plan that had persuaded Montgomery Moore to press so hard for the formulation of a Canadian defence scheme. The other members were Colonel James Dalton of the Royal Artillery, Captain M. White of the Royal Navy and Colonel Lake. By the end of November, they had completed their work.

430. The report of the Committee was in three volumes. The first embodied a defence plan which was based on existing resources. It was largely based on the scheme which Captain Arthur Lee had worked out in great haste for Gascoigne in 1896 and it was, to say the least, ambitious in the demands which it would make on the Canadian Militia. The second volume dealt with the necessary reforms which would be essential for the Canadian Militia if it was to have any hope of making the Defence Scheme work. The third part of the report was submitted only to the British Government, as a commentary on the other two.

431. The Committee's recommendations were, in most cases, moderate and, in many areas, militarily conservative. Proposals to base the defence of Montreal on elaborate fixed fortification reflected a rather traditionalist view of

military affairs while nine inch muzzle loaders for Quebec were cheap but also highly inefficient. Otherwise, many of the suggestions were of long standing. Department corps - supply, transport, medical and ordnance - must be created. The permanent force must be increased to 1400 men and its training and security should be improved. The officers should eventually have pensions while the men should be able to look forward to minor government jobs. The establishment of the cavalry and the field artillery should be increased. The four infantry schools should also have their strength increased to their old establishment and two new schools, at Kingston and Aldershot, Nova Scotia, should be opened. The Active Militia should train for 16 days. The men should be furnished with boots and with a more serviceable and cheaper uniform. Militiamen should at least look forward to a clean pair of pants on joining. The city corps should spent a few days in camp each year. Stores and equipment should be held at central battalion stores and the company commanders should be compensated with a contingency allowance. The three year term of Militia service should be enforced. In the field of arms and equipment, the Committee urged that a few modern heavy and medium guns be purchased - the Dominion had none - and the other half of the field artillery should be armed with breech loading guns. There was also a lack of rifles. Present reserves would only allow the strength of the Militia to be increased by a tenth. There should be arms and ammunition for 50,000 extra men. There should also be enough equipment and clothing for them as well as spare harness and saddlery. On the other hand, useless stores and guns should be disposed of to make room for new acquisitions. A naval member had been included on the Committee to give particular attention to the Great Lakes.

The development of a naval militia in the United States had caused considerable alarm. The committee proposed that Canada should have a corresponding force of 2,000 men. Fisheries Protection vessels should be built in future with an eye to service on the Lakes and their crews should be made more permanent and trained in gunnery. Guns and ammunition should be stored for an emergency. The final recommendation of the Committee was for the construction of the Georgian Bay Canal, a water way which would connect the Ottawa River with Lake Huron and thus avoid the exposed lower lakes.

432. The third part of the report explained the hypothetical basis of the first part and the modest nature of the proposals in the second. The situation, the Committee reported, was not hopeless. There was excellent material, especially in Ontario, although they anticipated that it would be very difficult to get recruits among the French Canadians. In 1861, they had crossed the border in large numbers, not from sympathy with the United States but, the report said, in apprehension lest the Militia ballot be enforced. There would be some volunteers from the cities and from areas where there was mingling with the English. However there would be few volunteers from either group merely for garrison duty. The Committee felt that a militia of 50,000 could be organized without difficulty and with that additional strength, their Defence Scheme would have included garrisons for Saint John, New Brunswick and Sault Ste. Marie (important as a potential terminus for their Georgian Bay Canal.)

433. The proposals in the second part had been carefully weighed with what the Government might be expected to perform. In the 1896 crisis, they were satisfied that if the

Government had asked for a loan of \$5,000,000 instead of \$3,000,000, 'it would have obtained it without difficulty. They had grouped the requirements for equipment, clothing, arms and ammunition and had recommended that they be considered as capital expenditure. The Canadians was asked them to lay down an order of relative importance between the various items but they had declined, suggesting that any such order of priorities should be suggested by the Colonial Defence Committee in London.

434. Imperial Federation was brought up as a likely prospect, particularly since the members of the Committee believed that Laurier had been a leading advocate of such a union at the Colonial Conference of 1897. At that time, the greatest emphasis had been on the possibility of exchanging permanent force units from Canada with equivalents from the United Kingdom. At the moment, apart from a field battery, this was unfeasible but if Imperial Federation came about, the problem would be solved by the stationing of British troops in peacetime. Aware that such a proposal might be regarded as retrograde in London, they insisted that it had been made necessary by the failure of the Canadians to provide for their own defence. According to the report, the Militia Act was a dead letter, particularly in the sections dealing with terms of service and the creation of a Reserve and the only way to revive military spirit would be through the presence of picked British battalions. It would also establish bonds of respect between Canadians and British soldiers and, in event of war, there would then be British officers in Canada to act as commanders and staff. They also recalled the opinions of many older militia officers who had received their first training with British battalions prior

to 1870 and who insisted that no comparable training had since
been available in Canada. ⁸⁸⁸

435. The report of the Committee was examined in Ottawa and London. Hutton, who had been in close contact with the Committee during its work in Canada, was largely in agreement with its recommendations. The Defence Scheme, however, he regarded as an absurdity, however respectfully he felt compelled to treat its principles. In recommending the offensive defence, it also declared that there were no means for anything but a passive defence. And a passive defence of Canada against the United States could only result in disaster. The Committee had also based its organizational plans on existing Militia units which were over-officered and under-manned. Hutton also pointed out the obsolete ideas in the recommendations about the defence of Montreal and Quebec. He emphatically agreed that there was a serious lack of staff officers and that many of the senior positions would have to be filled from England but, at the same time, he doubted that ⁸⁸⁹ officers would be forthcoming in the event of war.

436. In London, the third part of the Report was examined closely. There was little that could be done about the first two parts until the Canadian Government had shown some signs of action. The War Office was pleased to discover the Committee's view that the Canadian Government was willing to live up to its responsibilities but it was certainly not prepared to send battalions to Canada in peacetime. One change recommended by the Report was put into effect before it had even been received. Captain Arthur Lee, who had been accompanying the American forces in Cuba, was appointed Military Attaché in Washington. For the first time, the British would have professional intelligence about the American Army in ⁸⁹⁰ peacetime.

HUTTON'S FIRST REPORT

437. After four months in Canada and with the advantage of the Defence Committee's work, Hutton felt able to deliver his programme for reform in his first report on 1 January 1899. He felt that there was much to be done, five years was none too long, and there was no time to be lost! The report was edited in three sections. The first was an account of the year's events. The second was a set of proposals which could be completed in 1899 and the third was a more general report, dealing with broader and more long term recommendations.

438. The first section was a routine narrative but it carefully highlighted the changes which Hutton had wrought since his arrival. The Halifax Militia had been mobilized with the fortress garrison on 26 and 27 October 1898. Six officers and men from the artillery had already left for England. A company of garrison artillery had been exchanged with a company from the Halifax garrison. A number of 5" howitzers would shortly be arriving from England, the first modern guns that the bulk of the garrison artillery would have seen. The permanent units and the schools had been placed under their respective District Officers Commanding as a form of decentralization. Lee Enfield rifles had been issued to the permanent troops and the city corps; the Oliver equipment, 30,000 sets of which had finally been ordered on 2 April 1898, would shortly be ready. One institution which was praised unreservedly was the Royal Military College. Its new commandant, Lieutenant Colonel Kitson, was on excellent terms with the new General.

439. Hutton's first recommendation for the coming year was that the whole of the Militia should be trained and that it should be concentrated in central camps in the brigades and divisions in which it would be organized in

an emergency. The best officers available would be appointed to the command and staff positions. Two years hence he hoped that the period of training would be extended to sixteen days. The permanent force infantry should be concentrated at Ottawa for training, at a time when they could also be useful in helping with the annual Dominion Rifle Association meeting. 'B' Squadron of the Royal Canadian Dragoons should be brought from Winnipeg, where it had only two squadrons of Militia cavalry to instruct, to Kingston, and eventually to Montreal when barracks had been constructed. A General Staff was a primary condition for the creation of his Canadian Army and the Minister had already approved the holding of a special staff course under Kitson at the Royal Military College. Fourteen officers would attend the first course. Another addition to the staff should be an officer of the Royal Artillery to provide the modern technical knowledge which Hutton had found to be lacking. After three years of his guidance, the Canadian artillery officers would be able to carry on.

440. Attention was given to a number of aspects of administration. Hitherto, the men had been responsible for cooking their own rations, usually on a company or smaller basis. Hutton recommended that battalion messing tents should be issued and that attention be given to improving the cooking. He also wanted contracts for supplies to be left entirely to the District Officers Commanding. In rural corps, a serge jacket had been substituted for the cloth tunic. He suggested that the men be allowed two, one new and one part worn. He also suggested, for the first time, that a Canadian emblem or some Canadian characteristic should form part of the uniform. The problem of boots had not yet been tackled and

and it was proposed again that the Government should sell boots to the men who needed them at cost. The whole regulations for the issue of clothing should be reformed, he insisted, for the system of distribution was spasmodic and haphazard. Hutton added himself to the long list of those who sought regimental storage for arms and equipment. Each regiment should hold the arms and the new Oliver equipment for the whole strength and the clothing for the additional men necessary to bring it up to war strength. Company commanders might continue to hold the uniforms and perhaps the belts and kithags for the men on the lower peace strength.

441. In the area of new equipment, Hutton noted that the British were adopting new quick firing guns and that Canada should convert her order from the now obsolescent 12 pounder to the new equipment for the nine batteries which were still armed with muzzle loaders. Although there were plenty of tents and blankets, Hutton found that none of the other varieties of camp equipment were held and he suggested that sufficient for two divisions and a cavalry brigade should be ordered. For the Army Medical Service which he was pushing, there should be the equipment for four bearer companies.

442. A quarter of the permanent force was in the Yukon and Hutton wanted it back or, if it was necessary to keep it there, there should be a corresponding increase in the establishment. The need for pensions for the officers of the staff and the permanent force he pressed as urgent. While Canadian junior officers were paid as well as their British equivalents, senior officers earned somewhat less and their lack of a pension put them in a still worse position. Finally, he asked for a little extra money to provide a qualified band-master for the band of the Royal Canadian Artillery and some instruments for the musicians. Such a band, he explained,

would be the foundation of a Military School of Music and it
⁸⁹²
would also be available on state and public occasions.

443. Part III of the report was the most important. It began by explaining in detail just how far below the standards of an army the Canadian Militia fell. It was: "but a collection of military units without cohesion, without staff, and without those military departments by which an army is moved, fed, or ministered to in sickness." There was no reserve of clothing, arms or ammunition and the military stores were in the hands of civilians. The services which were required could not be organized in haste at the outset of an emergency. The standard of efficiency achieved by the Militia was too low. More could not be accomplished in the nine days each year which were left when Sundays and travelling days were subtracted. Lack of range accommodation at the camps had prevented anything but the most sketchy training in musketry. The report continued by listing the two roles which Hutton envisaged for his Canadian Army - the defence of Canadian soil and the power to participate in the defence of the British Empire. For the former, field and garrison troops were needed as well as a naval brigade to defend the Great Lakes. To achieve the desirable condition, the first requirement was to give the General Officer Commanding much more authority and to restrict the Deputy Minister and the Civil Branch to finance, contracts, land management and the running of the cartridge factory. Next would come the creation of a Militia Army, by which he meant the establishment of the services and departments which the Militia had always lacked to make it capable of independent action in the field. Hutton drew attention to the Swiss system where officers in the departments were, in civil life, involved with corresponding services and undertakings. Those in the Transport Service would be connected with railways or shipping while those in the