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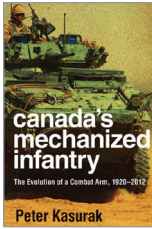
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In Canada's *Mechanized Infantry*, Peter Kasurak explores the complex evolution of mechanized infantry doctrine, organization, and vehicles through much of the past century. His argument has two facets. The first is that fundamental Canadian beliefs concerning the purpose of mechanized infantry took hold between the two world wars. The second is that, over the longer term, the traditional British Army concept of infantry as soldiers that fight primarily on foot, rather than mounted in vehicles, has largely informed Canadian mechanized infantry doctrine.

In simplest terms, mechanized infantry are defined as soldiers who are equipped either with armoured personnel carriers (APCs) or infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs). The type of vehicle employed dictates how soldiers will operate in battle. An APC can be any type of cross-country vehicle that offers some protection to its occupants, and serves mainly as a 'battlefield taxi'; that is, it carries soldiers only so far before they exit the vehicle and begin fighting on foot. An IFV, in contrast, is more heavily armed and protected than an APC, because it serves not merely as a taxi, but as a combat platform for the infantry, who can fight directly from inside the vehicle before finally exiting to close with the enemy, ostensibly at a point much further forward than an APC could safely reach.

Kasurak makes clear that Canadian mechanized infantry doctrine has leaned toward the APC school of thought. Although some Canadian theorists, such as Major-General Roger Rowley in the 1960s, argued in favour of the IVF model, Canadian senior commanders have tended to reject this approach, in part on the premise that it blurs the distinction between the infantry corps (which may use lightly armed and armoured vehicles for mobility, but not direct combat) and the armoured corps (which operates heavy tanks for mobility and direct combat).

The study underscores some key Canadian trends in military doctrine development and related procurement decisions. In terms of doctrine development, Kasurak shows that Canadian thinkers have often failed to answer basic questions about the purpose of mechanization before proceeding to write mechanized doctrine. And in terms of vehicle design and procurement, unresolved questions of doctrine have partly contributed to failed engineering projects, most notably the demise of the Canadian-designed Bobcat APC in the early 1960s.

Given the study's broad chronological scope, which encompasses the interwar period, Second World War operations, the entire Cold War, and the post-Cold War years (up to the end of Canada's combat role in Afghanistan), the book is rather on the lean side. This is due in part to the limited role that Canadian mechanized infantry played in the Second World War, and the difficulties involved in gathering relevant evidence from the post-1945 period, much of which is still restricted and not easily accessible. Still, there are some voices and sources that are missing here. For example, given the

innovative role that Canadian soldiers played in developing the Kangaroo APC during the later years of the Second World War, it is strange that Kasurak did not explore the ideas of Gordon Churchill, who commanded the Kangaroo carrier regiment in Northwest Europe. Churchill was elected to Parliament in June 1951 (PC, Winnipeg South Centre), and spoke at some length in the House of Commons about the organization and equipment of Canada's postwar army. Kasurak also notes that relatively few after-action reports on Cold War exercises survive, but perhaps there was further scope to interview former soldiers who had participated over the years. Given the technical nature of the study, it would have been useful to make much greater use of photographs and graphic materials.

While Kasurak's assessment of doctrine development during the Cold War period helps to fill a void in the literature, the study misses valuable opportunities to explore the material culture of Canadian soldiers during that period; the human element is often minimized in an analysis that focuses on organization and major

pieces of equipment. And yet, overarching doctrinal decisions influenced not only major equipment procurement schemes, but arguably also the clothing, personal equipment, and weapons of infantry soldiers. In the early 1960s, for example, the Army developed the 1964 pattern web, a new set of load-carrying equipment for ground forces. Unlike earlier designs, the 1964 pattern lacked provision for holding spare rifle magazines, and the field pack was not useful for carrying loads (on foot) over long distances. One assumes that these decisions were premised on the belief that APCs could carry necessary ammunition and supplies. But in practice, the 1964 pattern web saddled a generation of Canadian soldiers with inadequate capacity to carry vital supplies when they operated at a distance from their vehicles.

On balance, *Canada's Mechanized Infantry* makes an important contribution to Canadian military history. It explores questions that have not yet been widely considered, but leaves room for further inquiry into the experience of Canadian soldiering in the post-1945 world.

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