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**Geography Course -  
An analysis of the geographical  
strategic depth of Canada,  
the United Kingdom and Singapore  
and their respective  
national means to maintain it**

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The views expressed in this academic research paper are those of the authors and do not reflect the official policy or position of their respective Governments or Defense Establishments.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Machiavelli notoriously mentioned that foes must be either conciliated or destroyed. In more contemporary terms, we could say that countries may secure strategic depth by raw power, but where it is not possible, or simply more desirable, they should seek to reduce threats by peaceful means. That requires negotiating with adversaries who exercise power on or near their borders (Kinzer, 2016). Geographical strategic depth from a military perspective broadly conjures the distances from a front line to the heart of the combatants' center of gravity. In the dimensions of time and space, having strategic depth will help states buffer threats and buy time to allow force build up.

There is not a better group of countries to analyze than that of Canada, the United Kingdom, and Singapore, when we want to consider a myriad of national security considerations which are potentially affecting a nation's strategic depth. The geographical characteristics and resources availability, which ultimately provide the means to develop and strengthen strategic depth, are very different between these three countries.

## **CANADA**

### **Geographically blessed with strategic depth**

As the world's second largest country, Canada's geography changes significantly depending on which part you are in, however the constant is certainly the vastness and abundance of open spaces. Canada has a land mass of 9,970,610 square kilometers and from East to West, this nation encompasses six time zones. Its borders and coasts also sets it apart from any

other nations; Canada has coastlines in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic Oceans, giving it the longest coastline of any country, and its southern boundary, the longest undefended border in the world, is an 8,892 kilometer border with the United States (U.S.) (Your Canada, 2018). Given that shared border, relations between Canada and the U.S. historically have been broad and ever-growing due to undisputable cultural and economic connections, making them one of the world's most stable and mutually beneficial international relationship. Representing also the world's largest trading neighbors, for both countries, the level of trade with the other is at the top of the annual combined import-export total. As such, with its geographical separation from the other continents and its proximity to a superpower with cultural ties and economical interdependencies, Canada is blessed with an enviable strategic depth, and is essentially spared from any existential threat.

In addition to a favorable geography physically isolating Canada from a potential foe, and to its strong trade with the U.S. which represents an important motivator for both nations in maintaining a high level of cooperation, Canada benefits clearly from a defense guarantee unrivalled by most other states; this is also referred to as the "involuntary American security guarantee" (Pickford and Collins, 2018, p.11). The US-Canadian defense alliance, was anchored through a series of agreements and exchanges of letters that began in 1940 with the Ogdensburg Declaration, and was cemented in 1958 with the establishment of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). This alliance is also strengthened through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), through which both nations share mutual security commitments. The Canadian military, like other forces of NATO, fought

shoulder-to-shoulder with the U.S in most major conflicts since World War II, including the Korean War, the Gulf War, the Kosovo War, the War in Afghanistan, and most recently, the U.S.-led Coalition in the fight to eradicate the DAESH threat, from Iraq and Syria. Moreover, interoperability with the U.S. has been a guiding principle of the Canadian Armed Forces structuring and doctrine since the end of the Cold War. Overall, U.S.-Canada defense arrangements are more extensive than with any other country. This military cooperation between the two countries has allowed successive Canadian governments to rely on a great power security guarantee to keep defense costs low, the economy healthy, and the quality of life for its citizens relatively high. In this context, geography and having the U.S. as a neighbor and ally again contributes greatly to Canada's strategic depth. However, this favorable state of affairs is not without its challenges.

Although both its security and sovereignty are well assured by its geography, and a friendly neighbor to the South, Canada must still face challenges of various nature from both allies like the U.S. or other nations, especially on its northern coast. In addition, due to its limited military resources, and lack of hard power means to fend off a potential, but still unlikely, U.S. or Russia aggression, Canada must retain diplomacy as the principal mean to strengthen its strategic depth. This is especially true in the Arctic, which represents Canada's untapped wealth and rich potential to fuel its future economic strength.

## **Another Arctic perspective**

The Arctic represents the untouched natural potential of Canada, and most importantly for this portion of the collaborative paper, the weak link in Canada's strategic depth, if it is not given sufficient resources. With the impact of climate change and the associated opening of the normally icebound Arctic seaways, this vast region is now garnering national and international attention which is not without ongoing frictions or potential conflicts. In order to understand the potential challenges in this region, and what represents a point of failure to Canada's strategic depth, we must take a different view of the global map, as represented in figure 1 (Anderson, 2009, p.11). With this uncommon view of the Arctic, we can see the first particularity of this geographic perspective; an isolated ocean, with 8.7 million square kilometers, making it the smallest ocean on the planet, but one of the least accessible. When it is not immobilized by winter ice, the Arctic Ocean is accessible through the most challenging straits to navigate into, the Beiring and Fram Straits. The only other passage allowing access to this ocean, runs through a maze formed the islands and canals of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago.



Figure 1 – A different perspective of the globe, Source : Alun M. Anderson, After the ice : life, death, and geopolitics in the new Arctic.

The second characteristic visible from this view of the Arctic, is represented by the extended continental shelves, which cover almost half of the Arctic Ocean's depths. As they used to be a simple geographical fact, the extended continental shelves are now in the middle of the international politics and diplomatic arenas. The most important, the Lomonosov Ridge, is connecting Russia to Canada. These two countries are as such busy using diplomatic and scientific means to demonstrate that this ridge is a natural extension of their respective continental shelves. The successful demonstration of this extension would allow them to claim exploitation rights to the resources found on the ridge (Christensen, 2005, p.30). The last geographic particularity to be covered by this paper, is without a doubt the Russian's domination of the

Arctic region. With an Arctic coast of 6500km, spanning across 11 time-zones, the Russians not only possess the largest Arctic area, but also have the most extensive human presence in the Arctic. Due to the Tsars' desire to develop an access to the Arctic Ocean in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and to the gulags and internal exiles of the following two centuries, Russia succeeded in establishing important urban and industrial centers in an environment that remains un-habited in the other Arctic nations, including Canada. The two largest Arctic cities, Murmansk and Norilsk, both in Russia, saw extensive expansions under the Tsars, then Stalin, who invested massively in financial, material, and human resources in order to develop both the forestry and mining industries in their portion of the Arctic (Anderson, 2009, p.14). Even today, no other nation can ensure a presence and capacity in the Arctic matching the Russians'.

This unusual perspective of the globe, placing the Arctic Ocean at its center, allows a better appreciation of this region's complexity. It also highlights Canada's challenges in facing a strong competition from both its closest friend and ally in the U.S., but also from Russia, by far the most capable Arctic Nations. While other Arctic Nations are also competing for resources in this region, this portion of the collaborative paper will intentionally omit to analyze them for the sake of brevity, and will focus on the Arctic cooperation that Canada must foster with both the U.S. and Russia, in order to maintain its advantageous strategic depth.

### **Strategic depth through diplomacy and science**

The 9/11 terrorist attack in New York in 2001 was the turning point for Canada in considering its strategic depth, on all its borders, and as such, the

creation of a northern security perimeter around the North American continent, including the Arctic (Byers, 2007, p.31). This new idea consisted in viewing the Canadian Arctic as a theatre of operation, of a strategic importance, encouraging the Canadian government to include it in its future Defense Policies. Starting in 2006, after years of academic studies and media coverage, prompting government deliberations, the Arctic finally took an important place in the political arena and the Harper Government started initiatives aimed at restructuring governmental departments and agencies, and building Canadian Arctic capabilities (Huebert, 2010, p.8). Under this Arctic strategy, the government announced the establishment of new rules governing foreign ships sailing of the North-West Maritime Passage (NWMP) which crosses the Arctic ocean, above the Arctic Circle, and connects the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, inside the Canadian Maritime Economic Zone, to name but a few. This ruling quickly became a point of friction between Canada and the US as the later nation considers the NWMP as an international strait that should be ruled under international maritime regulations, potentially depriving Canada of substantial economic benefits when navigation through the passage will become a frequent international practice due to the gradual melting of the Arctic ice shelf (Shelagh, 2010, p.450). Canada claims that the NWMP waters constitute internal historic waters, which, if recognized internationally, would allow Canada to exercise full sovereignty rights, including regulation and control of foreign ships using the NWMP. While this dispute has been on the table for decades, the new security environment post 9/11 has influenced the US in reviewing their approach which would favorably see a greater level of control and surveillance in the Arctic, something that would be allowed more efficiently by the Canadian position to



recognize the NWMP as within its historic internal waters. Such a recognition would allow Canada to apply its more stringent domestic laws to this area, and would encourage the Canadian Government to dedicate more resources to affect proper surveillance. A situation that would positively impact both the US and Canadian security. As such, a strong Canadian Arctic policy would prove a solid tool in the mediation of this tension between the two allied nations, and as such would protect Canada's strategic depth through maintaining good relations with the U.S.

Surprisingly enough, Canada is facing more challenges from its closest ally in the Arctic than it is from Russia, the most capable Arctic Nation. This dispute relates to the determination of the extended continental shelves, and it is peculiar due to the fact that a scientific method is being used by the concerned Arctic Nations in order to solve this competition for Arctic resources. Since 2007, political and media attention covering this dispute has been extensive (Lasserre, 2010, p.68). Arctic Nations with coastal regions were seeking, as permitted under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Laws of the Sea (UNCLOS), an enlargement of their respective exclusivity zones beyond the 200 nautical miles, in order to gain exclusive economic access to the maritime resources. As such, Canada engaged to date, approximately \$80 million CAD in order to map its extended continental shelf. Other Arctic Nations, and especially Russia, fully participates in the scientific process of the UNCLOS and a strong cooperation exists between the two nations. As an example, Canada is working closely with Russia in sharing data collected as both countries continue their exploration of the Lomonosov Ridge, a submerged mountain chain which connects both nations through their respective extended

continental shelves. This cooperation between the two nations in the scientific sphere represents another mean for Canada in maintaining its strategic depth as it is facing a much more powerful and resourceful nation in Russia, when it comes to Arctic capabilities.

### **Strategic depth through developing an operational theatre**

It is in 2008 that the Harper Administration published a detailed defense policy called "Canada First". This new policy set the Arctic as a top priority in National Security by exposing the government's concerns and challenges brought by an increasingly accessible Arctic, and by clearly stating that the Canadian Armed Forces and other Agencies with resources adapted to the North would play a prevalent role in securing our northern borders. The second step taken by the Harper government was to publish in 2009 a strategy entirely dedicated to securing the North; "Our North, our heritage, our future". More robust, by dedicating resources to protect its national security and economic interests in the Arctic, this approach ensures Canada's strategic depth on its northern border through heavily investing in infrastructures, new ships and surveillance equipment, but also by making the Canadian Arctic a new operational theater where governmental resources would be integrated. Those investments include the construction of six Arctic Patrol Ships, the establishment of a Military Training Base in Resolute Bay, the construction of a deep sea port in Nanisivik, and the purchase of a Heavy Ice Breaker Ship to conduct Arctic patrolling and researching operations (Government of Canada, 2009, p.11). Finally, the Canadian Space Agency has developed the Polar Epsilon Program, and launched in 2009 the Radarsat II satellite, providing

constant surveillance over the Canadian Arctic (Huebert, 2010, p.9).

However the best example of the governmental resources' integration rests at the Operational Level, where Canada has integrated various departments and agencies in a series of annual Arctic exercises called Operations Nunakput, and Nanook. Taking place respectively in the sea of Beaufort for Op Nanukput, and in the North-East Arctic for Op Nanook, those two annual exercises allow for the integration of municipal, territorial, provincial, and federal resources, which conduct operations aimed at solving crisis related to criminal activities, epidemics in northern communities, disasters caused by human activities, natural disasters, and search and rescue.

As described, the Canadian Arctic Strategy is a multi-pronged approach which will ultimately ensure that Canada's strategic depth on its northern border will remain strong. By developing the Canadian Arctic as an operational theatre where resources will be brought and integrated, while at the same time fostering cooperation through the use of diplomacy and science in solving Canada's disputes with other Arctic nations, the Canadian Government will certainly succeed in protecting Canada's northern vast natural resources, its economic interest and national security, and as such ensuring a continued favorable strategic depth on all its borders and coasts.

## **THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND**

### **Overview**

The United Kingdom is a sovereign state located off the north-western coast of continental Europe between the North Atlantic and the North Sea

(Fig.2). With a total area of approximately 248,532 square kilometers, the UK occupies the major part of the British Isles archipelago and includes the island of Great Britain, the north-eastern one-sixth of the island of Ireland and many smaller surrounding islands. It also comes within 35 kilometers of the north-west coast of France, from which it has surface separation by the English Channel, albeit the channel tunnel bored (in 1994) beneath it now links the UK with France. It also shares a 499 kilometers international land boundary with the Republic of Ireland. For the purposes of this paper, the British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies will not be considered.

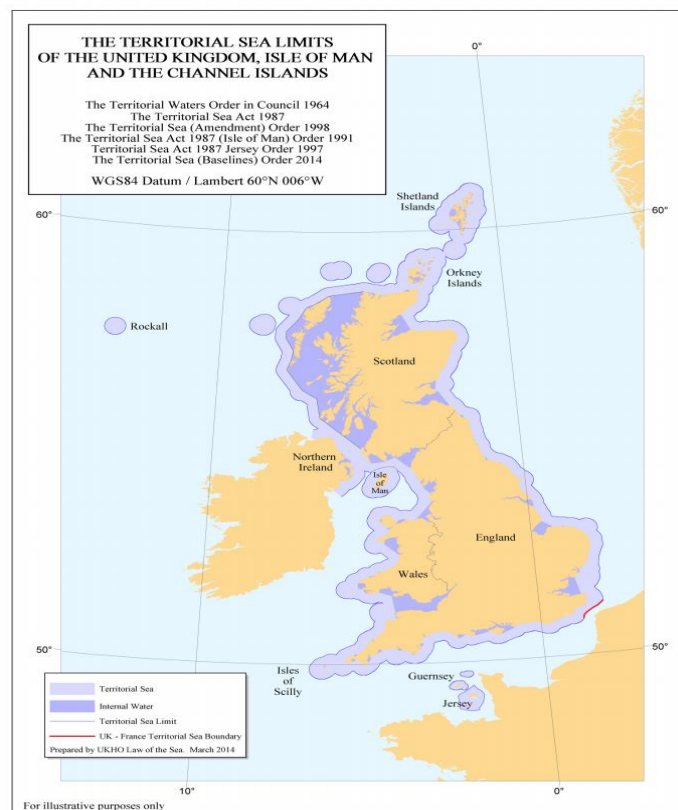


Figure 2 – UK Territorial Waters, Source: Darren Stevenson, Free Movement: the immigration rules covering foreign citizens in the UK fishing fleet.

## **Geographical Relevance to National Security**

Britain's geography has always been the country's biggest advantage and is still a significant factor in the 21st century. It means that there will always be a need to gain air and sea superiority before movement of any assault can take place. The requirements for carrying out a successful invasion are pretty substantial, which makes the list of realistic threats to Britain quite small. The bigger military powers are an obvious contender to begin with; the USA and Russia have certainly got the manpower and capability to carry it out but China, for example, doesn't yet have a global reach and couldn't support enough troops and aircraft that far from home to make it viable without support.

Nevertheless, the UK's national security depends on its economic security (Rawnsley, 2018, p.35), and vice versa. Ergo its strategy has always been to ensure that its economy is, and remains, strong. Indeed, as a trading nation with the world's fifth biggest economy, the UK depends on stability and order in the world. With 5 million British nationals also living overseas, engagement is fundamental to its success. In short, it needs the sea lanes to stay open and the arteries of global commerce to remain free flowing. This is vital at a time when the threats to the UK are growing.

Fortunately, there is (currently) no immediate direct military threat to the UK mainland. The last planned invasion of the UK was by Germany in 1940, during World War II, known as Operation Sea Lion. Prior to that it was the (1803–1809) planned but never executed Napoleonic invasion of Britain, which

was constantly thwarted by the Royal Navy. Nevertheless, the UK's priorities are to deter potential attacks; defend its airspace, territorial waters and cyber space; counter terrorism at home and abroad; support the UK civil authorities in strengthening resilience; and protect the population. The majority of these actions take place around the coastal waters and at geographical reach from the UK.

At the heart of the UK's strategic defence is a nuclear deterrent, in the form of a continuous at sea submarine presence (Prime Minister by Command of Her Majesty, 2015, p.13). It means that potential aggressors know that any benefits they may seek to gain by attacking the UK will be outweighed by the consequences for them. The UK also employs a full spectrum of national capabilities – armed force, diplomacy, law enforcement, economic policies, offensive cyber, and covert means – to deter and deny adversaries.

The Royal Air Force protects the UK's airspace and is ready at all times to intercept rogue aircraft. Historically it was based along the eastern spine of the UK, as a result of the need to defend against invasion from the Axis powers. More lately, combat air power has been concentrated in Scotland to provide a quick reaction force to counter Russian aggression in the northern air space. The Royal Navy protects the UK's waters, and deters terrorist and criminal activity. Similarly though, with increasing frequency, the responses are tested by Russian maritime activity near its territorial waters.

Illegal migration continues to be a threat to the UK, despite the geographical separation from mainland Europe. Intentionally, the UK is not part of the EU's Schengen open borders agreement, and so it has been able to set

its own approach to the migration crisis caused by instability in the Middle East and Africa by taking refugees directly. This helps maintain the borders as a critical line of defence, at which it can and does identify and disrupt threats to its security, including from terrorism and serious and organized crime.

### **Strategic Depth through NATO**

The framework of strategic depth is also enhanced through the UK's commitment to collective defence and security as a NATO partner. Crucially, NATO Allies provide the UK with early warning of approaching ships and aircraft, or deal with them before they reach the UK's territory or airspace.

There has been a residual threat to the UK from ballistic missiles, since the Second World War. But states outside the Euro-Atlantic area and non-state actors are now acquiring ballistic missile technology and the threat is clearly evolving. As a result, the UK continues to commit significant funds to the NATO Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) network and has increased its investment in ground-based BMD radar and through the purchase of new Type 45 Destroyers to operate in a BMD role.

As part of the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review (Prime Minister by Command of Her Majesty, 2010, p.14), the recovery of over 10,000 military personnel from Germany, a legacy of the Cold War, has seen the majority of the British Army based in the UK for the first time in over 200 years. The policy was in line with how, for nearly 20-years, the UK and NATO European partners had based their force structuring on the premise that they would not use force in Europe and would not use military power for political ends. They were also based on having Russia as a partner in that agreement.

Of concern is that Russia has now overturned this understanding, having sanctioned the use of force to destabilize neighboring countries and to change borders. Consequently, UK strategic plans are being reviewed; a residual presence is being retained in Germany and greater use of very high readiness UK expeditionary forces as part of a wider NATO capability are being developed. This will also ensure that strategic depth is enhanced.

## **SINGAPORE**

### **An Overview**

Singapore is a small Southeast Asian City state with an area of 648 square kilometers and a population of almost five and half million. Given its size and obvious lack of geographical strategic depth, there is near complete reliance on overseas sources for basic needs, food, fuel and a significant portion of its water supply from neighboring Malaysia. To this end, even a large proportion of Singapore's Military training is conducted overseas as well. Notwithstanding of its size, Singapore's location at the geographical center of Southeast Asia astride important trade routes have conferred it distinct economic advantages. Singapore has been ranked as the top maritime capital of the world, since 2015. Currently one of the world's busiest port in terms of total shipping tonnage, it also trans-ships a fifth of the world's shipping containers, half of the world's annual supply of crude oil, and is the world's busiest trans-shipment port. Thousands of ships drop anchor in the harbor, connecting the port to over 600 other ports in 123 countries and spread over six continents (According to Wikipedia). Any disruption or denial of access to the high seas on which Singapore depends for most of its trade and import of



its existential needs threatens not just Singapore's economic wellbeing, but its very survival. Singapore was under no illusions of its world standing given its size, it understood that diplomatic ties alone were necessary but insufficient. Singapore had to build up its capabilities, which consisted of forming a credible military as a deterrence to mitigate its lack of strategic depth. Despite Singapore's immutable challenges in geography and its implication to national security, the island state has been able to secure itself and enhance its geographical strategic depth through other means such as diplomacy and militarily.

### **In the midst of a rough Neighborhood – The Little Red Dot**

Singapore is surrounded by two Muslim-majority countries, Malaysia and Indonesia, and they collectively present Singapore with various security threat challenges. Perhaps the comments made by Ex Indonesian Habibie best described how Singapore was depicted on many maps of the world and of Asia. President Habibie described Singapore a "Little Red Dot" in an article published in the Asian Work Street Journal criticizing Singapore. Due to obvious geographical reasons, relations with Malaysia and Indonesia are most important. Singapore has had its fair share of dispute with its close neighbors, including the traumatic separation from Malaysia, and Konfrontasi with Indonesia. While relationship with Indonesia has been on an even keel over the years, there was an increase in tension with Malaysia lately. Singapore has several long-standing disputes with Malaysia over a number of issues. Despite a binding international treaty which guarantees the sale of water by Malaysia to Singapore under the conditions for separation, Malaysia and Singapore have

clashed over the delivery of fresh water to Singapore. Using water as a leverage, Malaysia has on multiple occasions, threatened to stop providing water whenever disputes arose over trade and border negotiations. Singapore has had to stand firmly during the border disputes with Malaysia since separation. After the 2008 International Court of Justice (ICJ) decision to award Singapore the ownership of an islet at the eastern entrance of the Singapore Straits in 2008 (after both countries agreed to referred their dispute to ICJ for mediation), Malaysia initiated a legal review of the ICJ's decision on 2017 but subsequently withdrew it on 2018. More recently (Fig 3) tensions have escalated in the maritime and airspace domains. Firstly, there were disputes over Malaysia's move to extend the limits of a port in Johor state that encroaches into Singapore Territorial waters. Both countries have accused each other of incursions into their respective territorial waters. Secondly, Malaysia has informed Singapore of its intention to retake control of the airspace over the Southern state of Johor from end 2019. This despite an agreement in 1974 giving Singapore the rights to provide air traffic services in the airspace over southern Johor (Channel NewsAsia 2018).

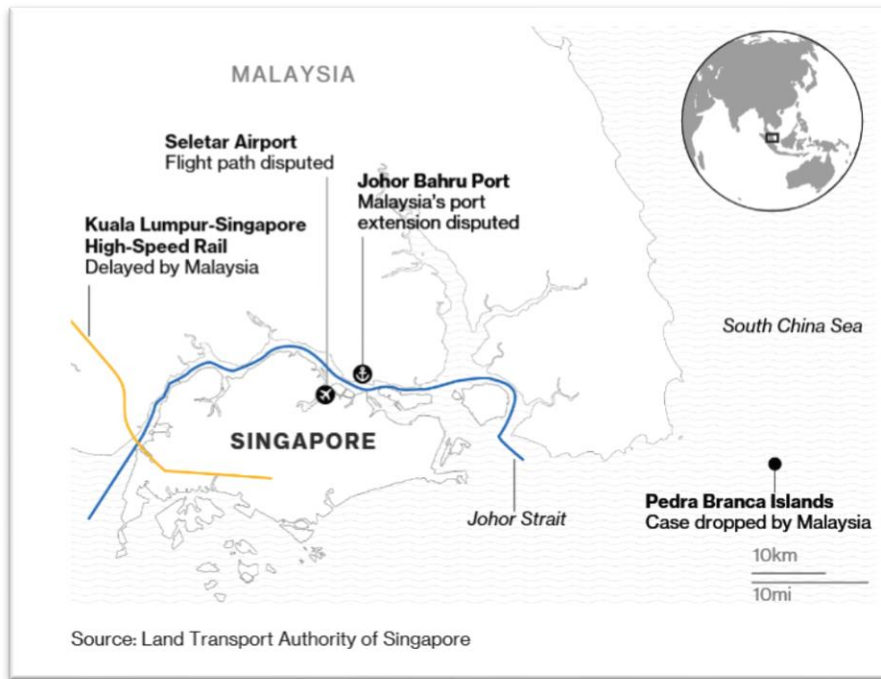


Figure 3 – Summary of Border Disputes with Malaysia

### Enhancing Strategic Depth – Diplomacy, Military and Innovation

Ironically, Singapore’s inherent sense of insecurity stems primarily from its geographical location while it has provided distinct economic benefits, Singapore is still a “Little Red Dot” in the Sea of Green. Singapore’s lack of geographical strategic depth strongly influences its national security strategy. Immediately after independence, Singapore’s national security strategy focused on the building up of a strong defence capability, premised on the twin pillars of Diplomacy and Military. Singapore developed good relations with other nations through multiple collaborations, such as economic ties, regional and international alliances and movements, as well as defence relations. Because of its lack of strategic depth, it has forced the government to be develop diversified strategies to enhance Singapore’s geographical strategic depth

through diplomacy and militarily. Singapore also needed to be innovative to overcome its lack of natural resources and in particular reliance on Malaysia for water.

## **Diplomacy**

Singapore's foreign policy was shaped by our first foreign minister S. Rajaratnam. He envisioned the world being Singapore's hinterland – He envisaged the integration into the world economy would mitigate Singapore's inherent lack of natural resources. Within our region, Singapore's policy is aimed at maintaining friendly relations with all countries, especially Malaysia, Indonesia, and ASEAN, and ensuring that its actions do not exacerbate its neighbors' insecurities. Rajaratnam also believed that maintaining a balance of power, rather than hegemony by a single super power state, he said that this will provide Singapore with freedom to pursue an independent foreign policy despite its relative size in the international arena. Singapore has consistently supported a strong US military presence in the Asia-Pacific region. The interest by the super powers in Singapore would also deter the interference of regional powers. As an example, Singapore has made available its military facilities to fighter planes and aircraft carriers from the United States for deployments or visits at its air and naval bases. Additionally, Singapore also maintains close ties with China and India with collaborations economically and on the military front (Lam, 2017).

## **Military**

Without a strong and credible military, Singapore will not be able to stand its ground during disputes with its neighbors. The Singapore Armed Forces

(SAF) was established in 1965 after independence to protect the interests, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Singapore from external threats. Deterrence and diplomacy have been the fundamental tenets of Singapore's military defence policy (Tim Huxely, 2000). Through defence diplomacy, Singapore is also part of the Five Power Defence Arrangements, whose other members include the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia. Designed to replace the former defence role of the British in Singapore and Malaysia, the arrangement obliges members to consult in the event of external threats against Malaysia and Singapore. Because of the scarcity of open land on the main island, training involving activities such as live firing and amphibious warfare is often carried out on smaller islands. The challenge for Singapore is to train and maintain a credible and strong military by overcoming airspace and land constraints. This calls for the SAF to maintain a large overseas footprint for training in bases such as Australia, the United States and France. To maintain its standing as a responsible international partner in the fight against terrorism, Singapore has also been actively sending troops to Afghanistan and Iraq as part of the coalition force.

## **Innovation**

For Singapore, Water security is an important aspect of national security. Similar to Israel, Singapore is surrounded by neighbors that have access to water, but are not necessarily willing to share this resource with them. The provision of water is often a source of political tension between Singapore and Malaysia. Singapore needed to reduce the country's dependence on water imported from neighboring Malaysia. Through innovation, Singapore's

Integrated water management approaches such as the reuse of reclaimed water, the establishment of protected areas in urban rainwater catchments and the use of estuaries as freshwater reservoirs have been introduced along with seawater desalination. This is greatly increased Singapore water source, in the long run, Singapore aimed to achieve self-sufficiency in water supply in spite of high start-up costs and technical challenges. Singapore has built a number of underground infrastructures, such as railroad lines, shops, pedestrian pathways, up to five lane highways to cooling pipes, and even the gas stations.

The issue of rising population and scarcity of land have also forced urban planners to “think out of the box”, one of them is the underground city mega project plan. After the concept of building up to overcome space constrains, Singapore uncovered a plan called the 2019 underground Master Plan that will see underground cities developed.

## **CONCLUSION**

The examples from Canada, The United Kingdom and Singapore have shown the means to develop and strengthen strategic depth, are very different between these three countries. Canada’s landmass is isolated from any other potential foes by three oceans and is neighbor to an important allied and world’s superpower in the United States. However, while Canada possesses substantial economic and diplomatic means, it remains limited in military resources, and faces additional challenges due to the Arctic environment and the growing competition for the opportunities it represents. While the United Kingdom has a much smaller landmass than Canada, it has a population three times as large, the fifth largest GDP in the world, and possesses greater military

capabilities. In addition, although it is an island with no common border to another country, its strategic depth is challenged due to it being surrounded by many other nations with potentially competing interests. On the other hand, although Singapore is also an island, with obvious geographic advantages to provide for strategic depth, its size, both in landmass, population and resources, and the complexity of its geopolitical environment, places this nation in a challenging situation when it comes to maintaining its strategic depth. Common to all, Diplomacy and Military continues to be the key enablers for states to enhance their strategic depth.

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