

MASTER'S RESEARCH PAPER

**REACTING TO GLOBAL FORCES:
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND THE CASE OF THE F-35S**

Submitted by: Victoria Pijacki

Student Number: 4880819

Supervisor: Professor Philippe Lagassé

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Abstract

Global forces have had a direct impact on the autonomous ability of domestic political leaders to shape and develop policy—a growing process that is often referred to as a “hollowing” of the state. Using a descriptive approach, this paper provides an overview of some of those newly emerged actors with a specific a focus on the Canadian context. It then goes on to outline one of the Government of Canada’s key policy reactions to the hollowing-out process—the tool of information management and message control. Exploring the motivation as well as the implementation of this political tool is key to understanding the Government’s justification in its usage as well of its end goal of shaping public perceptions and achieving political support. Finally, the paper will provide readers with a timely case study to demonstrate some of the potential drawbacks of employing this type of policy tool. The Canadian acquisition process of new generation fighter jets, the F-35s, is a particularly opportune and compelling case which demonstrates how the Canadian Government has attempted to employ information management and message control to its own benefit. Ultimately, however, it can be seen that the usage of such policy tools does not always profit the Government, particularly when employed at a time when public confidence is low.

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Introduction

The Canadian centre of government has evolved a great deal during the past number of years as global powers and linkages have grown and evolved. Identifying the locus of power and decision-making has in turn become increasingly complex as new actors have emerged. It is logical, therefore, to begin the search at the top of the Canadian bureaucracy—with the Prime Minister. He chairs Cabinet meetings, establishes the consensus for Cabinet decisions, appoints and fires ministers and deputy ministers, articulates the government's strategic directions, has a direct hand in establishing the government's fiscal framework, represents government abroad, and has a number of other key responsibilities and powers. The power of the prime minister has captivated political scientists and journalists for a number of years. Increasingly and in the face of emerging authorities, prime ministers have sought to concentrate political power in their own hands or their own offices¹; former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien went to the heart of the matter when he wrote, "Politics is about wanting power, getting it, exercising it and keeping it²." There are few voices that would deny that Canadian prime ministers have been attempting to dominate the machinery of government, and critics have alleged that the powers of prime ministers in parliamentary systems have grown far beyond what they need to be or what they once were³. Indeed, it has been charged that they have attempted to fashion their position and their powers on the example of the American president—a process called "presidentialization"⁴.

The goal of this paper is to provide a brief overview of the newly emerging actors who are challenging the central decision-making powers of the prime minister in their unique ways.

¹ See, among others, Virginia Haufler, *A Public Role for the Private Sector* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2001).

² Savoie, Donald J. *Governing from the Centre: The Concentration of Power in Canadian Politics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

³ Courtney, John. "Has the Canadian Prime Minister Been Presidentialized." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 14.2 (1984): 238-241. Print. Pg. 238

⁴ *ibid*

Evidently, governments have been attempting to manage these actors' emerging political capital through leveraging a number of policy tools in order to maintain their historic capacities in developing, shaping, and implementing government policies. Under the current Conservative Government, one policy tool has been dominant—the management of public communication and messaging. After providing an overview of newly emerging actors and a description of the reasoning behind the frequent use of this policy approach, this paper will use the example of the Government's ongoing acquisition of new generation fighter jets to demonstrate a single example of when and how government has attempted to negotiate the new global linkages to achieve its policy intentions. While it may be logical for political parties to employ policy instruments such as information management and message control, it can be seen that in this case, government leaders' efforts resulted in a confused public and accusations of mismanagement. As such, the case of the fighter jets is a cogent example of why it is necessary for governments to balance message control with accountability and transparency in order to ensure that they maintain a balance between public trust and their desire of straightforward policy implementation.

Section I: Locating Power

Modern politics and political power was traditionally tied to nation-states and the ultimate recourse to military power and physical force. Currently however, whether in North America or Europe, power and responsibility flow effortlessly between governments, between departments within governments, and between the public and private sectors. Donald Savoie, despite disagreeing with the premise, explained that in light of such a wide dispersion of power and influence, some academics have lately pronounced that globalization will eventually spell the

end of the nation-state model due to looming challenges facing central governments, and that federations such as Canada are particularly vulnerable as they are faced with the continuing struggle to maintain national unity⁵.

Indeed, more than ever before, governments are dealing with new autonomous actors in order to realize their policy objectives, compounding on those actors who have already challenged central government authority of key matters, such as the provinces, courts, key political actors, and other key individuals. Much has already been written about the impact of such global changes on nation-states and the impact on governments' abilities in policy-development. One author explains that "sovereignty can be clearly divided among a plurality of agents without in any way detracting from finality of decision⁶", however it has become increasingly evident that the new global interconnectedness has deeply affected Canadians' traditional understanding of power, authority, legitimacy, and sovereignty.

It takes only a moment's reflection to develop an appreciation for the challenge in identifying the location of political power thanks to the rise of the global economy. There is evidence to suggest that national governments are re-evaluating and adjusting their systems of governance, policies, laws, and regulations because of these shifts and changes.

In the classic image of the role of politicians, their main task is that of goal setting and/or making final binding decisions. Traditionally, politicians set the goals which are ultimately elaborated and implemented by the bureaucracy⁷. However, the idea that the content is being fixed at the beginning of the decision making process does not conform to the extensive decision making process that is the reality of today's governance structure. Many authors have discussed

⁵ Savoie, Donald J.. *Power where is it?*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010. Print. Pg. 20

⁶ King, Preston. "Sovereignty." Pp. 492-494 in David Miller (ed.). *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought*. Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell.

⁷ Klijn, Erik-Hans. "Governing Networks In The Hollow State: Contracting Out, Process Management Or A Combination Of The Two?." *Public Management Review* 4.2 (2002): 149-165. Print.

the idea of the diffusion of power away from the core executive in Westminster governments, and refer to the concept as the “hollowing” of the state⁸. They indicate that the rise of the network society will make society more fluid, more horizontal, more plural in values and less likely to be governed from above by public actors. The following section aims to provide an overview of the newly emerged sources of influence that have challenged the central decision making powers of government.

Susan Strange, a prominent scholar in international political economy, writes that the exercise of power is no longer limited to officials of the state and, further, that institutions other than those of the state now wield considerable power. She argues that political power is increasingly exercised by both the market and transnational institutions⁹. Saskia Sassen elaborates on this work, explaining that the emergence of an interstate system such as one consisting of inter-governmental organizations, private companies, individuals, and other groups, constitutes a distinct “field that assembles bits of territory, authority and rights into new types of specialized and typically highly particularized structures¹⁰.” Indeed, authors find that such a fractioning of traditional sources of power has accorded for new, smaller sources to “acquire influence as brokers, facilitators, and suggestors” of decision making and allows for these institutions to penetrate the structures of government bureaucracies¹¹.

James Rosenau provides a name to these actors, referring to them as “spheres of authority (SOA)” and indicating that some of the SOA consist of broad-gauged advocacy networks; others are narrow, special interest organizations; some are transnational in scope with units in several

⁸See Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998; Clarence and Painter, 2001)

⁹ Strange, Susan. *The Retreat of the State: The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

¹⁰ Sassen, S. 2005 ‘When National Territory is Home to the Global: Old Borders to Novel Borderings’, *New Political Economy* 10(4):523-541. Pg. 533

¹¹ McGrew, Anthony G.. *Decision making: approaches and analysis : a reader*. Manchester [England: Manchester University Press, 1982. Print. Pg. 225

countries; some are informal networks of like-minded citizens, whereas others are formal and internationally recognized states; some are corporations and others are nongovernmental organizations (NGO)¹².

Viewed through the prism of authority relations, the enormous proliferation of SOA emphasizes the severe constraints on the ability of a government to independently and in a sovereign manner realize its policy goals in myriad situations because of a pervasive competition for the attention and loyalty of citizens¹³. Rosenau argues that all states have had their capacities to exercise monopolistic control diminish at a “rate comparable to the rapid acceleration of globalization”, because in combination the dynamics of SOAs weaken the ability of states to manage the flow of people, money, jobs, trade, pollution, ideas etc¹⁴. Core executive actors today find themselves caught in a maelstrom of pressures, to which they have responded by attempting to redefine and clarify their powers just as those powers are in many respects leaching away to higher authorities and processes¹⁵. It is this fragmentation of institutional authority matched by increasing public demands for accountability that creates the “hollow crown” of limited and often seemingly incoherent government¹⁶. This search for accountability requires a growing focus on the actors involved in policy and power transfer, and the kinds of social forms these actors take. The question must therefore be answered- what are some of these other authorities to which power is diffusing? The following are a few of Canada’s key SOAs which have arisen under the power shift brought on by globalization.

¹² Rosenau, James N.. "Governing the ungovernable: The challenge of a global disaggregation of authority." *Regulation & Governance* 1.1 (2007): 88-97. Print.

¹³ Rosenau, *Governing the ungovernable* pg. 90

¹⁴ *Ibid*, , Pg. 91

¹⁵ Saward, Michael (1997). In search of the hollow crown. In: Weller, Patrick; Bakvis, Herman and Rhodes, R.A.W. eds. *The Hollow Crown: Countervailing trends in core executives*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 16–36.

¹⁶ Hill, Dilys. "The hollow crown: countervailing trends in core executives." *Parliamentary Affairs* 51.2 (1998): 211. Print.

i. Market Economy and the Private Sector

Globalization is seen by many as a consequence of trade liberalization— as trade barriers come down, economies become more interdependent. Some, however, see it the other way: globalization has forced trade liberalization. In reality, they would seem to be concomitant factors, occurring at the same time and acting reciprocally¹⁷. Regardless, authors label the changes as “the emergence of a world economy, a world polity and perhaps a culture, in short, the emergence of a world society¹⁸.”

Today, many scholars write that national boundaries are not as significant as boundaries of economic activity, and that the “growth and dynamism of the international economy constrains domestic political capacity for economic control and manipulation”¹⁹. Undeniably, under globalization, states have been increasingly susceptible to market forces, a domain where their governments remained very active prior to 1945²⁰. Peter Drucker succinctly explains that “from now on any country... that wants to do well economically will have to accept that it is the world economy that leads and that domestic economic policies will succeed only if they strengthen, or at least not impair, the country’s economic position²¹.” Indeed, states such as Canada have shifted their economies to “commerce-driven, globe-centred capitalism” through the application of privatization and deregulation²². This has over time lead to a diminished role

¹⁷ Andreychuk, Raynell , William Young, and Marlene Jennings. "Library of Parliament Research Publications." : Globalization and Governance: Contemplating the Global Village. Parliament of Canada, n.d. Web. 2 May 2014. <<http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/LOP/ResearchPublications/cp9-e.htm>>.

¹⁸ Giddens, Anthony (1991), *Sociology*, Cambridge: Polity Press, cited by Michael Hanagan, “States and Capital: Globalizations Past and and Present”, in: *The End of Globalization*, (Eds. Don Kalb et al.), USA (Maryland 2000): Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

¹⁹ Seward, Hollow Crown pg. 31

²⁰ Sezen, Seriyе. "The impact of Globalization on the Organization of Public Administration: Turkish Case." *Turkish Public Administration Annual 27-28 (2001)*: 3-26. Print.

²¹ Drucker, Peter F.. *The frontiers of management: where tomorrow's decisions are being shaped today*. New York: Truman Talley Books, 1986. Print.

²² Savoie, Donald J.. *Power where is it?*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010. Print. Pg. 45

for government in production, accumulation and distribution while taking on a more active regulatory role.

The private sector has replaced government as the dominant actor in the global economy, and key economic decisions are taken in a number of places and in complex multi-national business organizations²³. Savoie identifies a new key authority in this sphere—corporations (and actors functioning on their behalf).

Corporations and business associations have long been characterized in the policy process as interest groups, who seek to influence the regulatory and legislative process. Increasingly however, theorists have been arguing that corporate interest groups directly influence policy through significant financial expenditures and established connections with policymakers—that economic power equates political power²⁴. Powerful corporate political actors are believed to shape federal policy agendas through lobbying, testimony, public relations and advertising campaigns, political contributions, and other means. Corporations also are policy entrepreneurs—that is, policy agenda-setting advocates who generate new policy issues, maintain old issues, and attempt to guide issues through the policy process²⁵.

Economically powerful individuals and corporations can easily connect with the politically powerful. Even if they are not able to connect directly, they can now hire lobbyists to do it for them. Lobbyists continue to have an influential voice among those trying to shape public policy and government decisions. They can deliver messages to politicians, employ this contact to identify business opportunities, and can also assist politicians with material to challenge the advice of their public servants or to spin for the media in their departments²⁶. Well-funded

²³ *ibid*, Pg. 46

²⁴ Domhoff, G. W. (1970). *The higher circles*. New York: Random House.

²⁵ Baumgartner, Frank R., and Bryan D. Jones. *Agendas and instability in American politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993. Print.

²⁶ Savoie, *Power*: Pg. 186

interest groups can also gain or buy access or can finance a research project with a think tank or research institute to make their case before the politically connected or the media, while ordinary citizens must rely on their members of parliament²⁷. Ottawa has seen an exponential growth in the number of firms over the last thirty-five years, with now over sixty lobbying firms listed in the Ottawa directory. Evidently in this fashion, private sector corporations and their lobbyists hold a significant amount of authority in the governmental policy making process.

Evidently the interconnected global economy and the emerging importance of private sector actors has lead to a more fluid and transient nature for political power than any time in the past. Power is now held in places beyond organizations, institutions and formal processes, and now in networks, lobbyists, and key personalities. A prime minister and his Cabinet are no longer have an independent capacity to perform the role of formulating the government's political and policy agenda, and the public service is now an institution that must manage not only politicians but also private interests.

ii. Bureaucracy

Not only have states' socio-economic functions been transformed, but their institutional organizations, as well as their conceptualization of public services have also entered into a thoroughly transformative process. The processes of globalization, and particularly those fostering global capitalism, are directly responsible for having prompted political and administrative elites to restructure the State and adopt new governance practices.

The shift towards a growing, interconnected market economy has required governments to adopt certain practices in order to remain economically competitive and ensure economic growth

²⁷ *ibid*, Pg. 227

matches its population needs²⁸. Indeed, various forms of fiscal crisis, caused by an inefficient public bureaucracy, is the most often-cited rationale for the adoption of governance changes. Additionally, however, in the case of the developing world, external pressures exerted by international agencies (such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund) and growing economic needs have played a crucial role in encouraging public sector reforms. Across the world, as weaknesses and failures of traditional state bureaucracy in terms of its unmanageable size, managerial inefficiency, public inaccessibility, and excessive corruption, increased during the 1980s and 1990s, countries adopted a new agenda in order to reduce the role of the public bureaucracy and transfer resources out of state governments and to restructure the public service with the idea that the business sector was more productive, efficient, innovative, responsive, and customer oriented²⁹. Canada, along with many other prominent countries such as Britain, Australia and the Netherlands, has also adopted this change in governance to increase decentralization—a system referred to as new public management (NPM)³⁰. The term NPM describes a phenomenon that ranges from managerialism to a full range of government reports. It is an approach that mirrors that of private sector and advocates treating citizens like customers, separating public administrators from the public policy process, and allowing for government to function as a “business within the public sector³¹” In Canada it includes initiatives such as decentralizing certain powers to provincial governments, changing management methods, reducing the size of the federal public sector, the privatization/commercialization of certain public enterprises, increased contracting, and an

²⁸ Haque, M. Shamsul (2004). “New Public Management: Origins, Dimensions, and Critical Implications.” In Krishna K. Tummala (ed.), *Public Administration and Public Policy*. Oxford, UK: Eolss Publishers Ltd.

²⁹ *ibid*

³⁰ Weller, Patrick Moray, Herman Bakvis, and R. A. W. Rhodes. "Decentralization and Public Management Reform." *The hollow crown: countervailing trends in core executives*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997. 176-197. Print.

³¹ Box, Richard C. et al. (2001), “New Public Management and Substantive Democracy”, *Public Administration Review*, 61(5): 608-619.

expansion of user charges and expenditure restraint. The federal government took key steps to consolidate departmental portfolios; creating a number of arms-length bodies; using private-sector consultants; and implementing a system of Programme Review³².

This form of governance has been pursued for many reasons that extend beyond the need for fiscal restraint, but also with the aim of making the management of operations and operational performance “more responsive to the criteria of economy, efficiency and effectiveness³³.”

Canada in specific has adopted NPM by consolidating departmental portfolios; reassigning significant responsibilities to the provinces; creating a number of arms-length bodies; using private-sector consultants; and implementing a system of Programme Review³⁴.

The implications of decentralization for the management of the state are twofold: first, it entails greater delegation of authority to public service managers in the line operations of government; and second, it creates a challenging balance in providing strategic policy direction and ensuring adherence without extensive intervention in policy implementation at the operational level³⁵.

Because of the increased delegations of authority, managers in the public service have been given greater influence over the deployment of resources to deliver public services and to mix the ways in which they use the resources to achieve economies and efficiencies³⁶. They have also been enabled to contract out certain functions to private sector on their own initiatives and/or to undertake functions within their organizations that previously had to be secured from other “common services” departments. The logic behind these changes is that front-line

³² Keating, Michael. "Budgeting." Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development . N.p., n.d. Web. 3 May 2014. <<http://www.oecd.org/gov/budgeting/435153>

³³ Weller, pg. 192

³⁴ Glor, Eleanor D.. "Has Canada Adopted The New Public Management?." *Public Management Review* 3.1 (2001): 121-130. Print.

³⁵ Weller, Pg. 177

³⁶ *ibid*, Pg. 183

government managers were expected to be better at running things than politicians, with a greater understanding of the issues and the financial and human resources management needs³⁷. As their responsibilities increase, high-level public servants are progressively losing the fairly distinct administrative space they once occupied. They are no longer anonymous in their delivery of public services thanks to their horizontal and cross-departmental relationships, as well as the growing pervasiveness of access or freedom to information legislation³⁸. These transformations have been coupled with a greater emphasis on accountability for results, particularly from the centre (ministers) who remain responsible for the functioning, decisions, and acts of their respective departments³⁹. According to Savoie, managers have seen oversight increase tenfold from thirty years ago; units have been created or expanded to manage or monitor various processes, and there now exist more management layers between front-line employees and departments' deputy ministers⁴⁰. This is demonstrative of some of the key challenges facing political leaders as they enter governments—a prime minister's political power, which is based on hierarchy and command and control, is not easily applied under this new model. Donald Savoie has succinctly summarized the key challenge brought on by NPM in saying, “the problem has everything to do with elaborate bureaucratic processes, and no one could point to an individual or individuals to establish what went wrong, why, how, and to what extent⁴¹.” It is challenging to determine where political power lies in the complexity of the new bureaucracy; power has shifted between politicians and bureaucrats, but political accountability requirements have not evolved in the same manner.

³⁷ Savoie, Power: Pg. 137

³⁸ Savoie, Power: Pg. 164

³⁹ Weller, Pg. 193

⁴⁰ Savoie: Power: Pg. 149

⁴¹ *ibid.*: Pg. 151

iii. Consultants

In 1967, John Deutsch contended that civil servants would have a reduced role in the development of new policies because of the “increasing use of private consulting firms, research institutes and the latest phenomenon, the so-called think tank⁴².” Indeed, thanks to the aforementioned system of NPM, public managers find themselves involved in arranging networks that may enable them to gain the advantages of the government’s scope and scale without the negatives associated with bureaucracy (ie. redundancy and rising costs).

Consultants in this case are understood as non-state, private-sector, profit-driven actors that are nevertheless involved in the policy process through contractual arrangements with state agencies. They are, almost by definition, concerned with knowledge—it is through the provision of expert knowledge that consultants and management consultant firms make their living in shaping, directing, and informing the policy process⁴³. As government departments shifted into a system of NPM, they often did not have the skills or capacity for program delivery, creating the gap for consultants to insert themselves into. As such, NPM has been a driving force beyond the emergence of consultance of a new actor in the political realm.

Canada has not been shielded from the trend towards increased contracting, and has intensified the use of such consultants with measures to "cut expenditures in an age of austerity" particularly in the areas of temporary help, IT consultants and management consultants. Since 2005-06, costs have increased by almost 80 per cent, to nearly \$5.5 billion over the period in these areas alone. Only two departments—Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC)—account for about

⁴² Meredith, H. and Martin, J. 1970. “Management Consultants in the Public Sector. *Canadian Public Administration*. 13:4, 383-395.

⁴³ Prince, R.. "Policy transfer, consultants and the geographies of governance." *Progress in Human Geography* 36.2 (2012): 188-203. Print.

half of all management consulting contract expenditures, while the Department of National Defence (DND) was the next largest at about 12 per cent⁴⁴. With these statistics, it is undeniable that the federal government has become porous as consultants are increasingly being used in all facets of government workings. As such, these individuals now appear to be the best positioned to influence the making of public policy and perhaps most likely to usurp some of the core functions of the executive.

This frame-of-mind has been echoed by Ralph Nader's 1976 Centre for Study of Responsive Law, which indicated that consultants, along with think tanks, are part of a "shadow government" that has effectively "taken the policy-making function away from elected and appointed public officials⁴⁵." Although governments may initially invite them in, such bodies have made themselves ever more attractive if not indispensable. Even the highest levels of government have been increasingly using their expertise and reports in decision-making, often in contentious areas⁴⁶.

The influence of consultants on policy and decision-making also has an impact on accountability. In a recent article, Donald Savoie argues that "policy issues no longer respect organizational boundaries and, as a result, policy-making has now become horizontal, consultative and porous⁴⁷." The challenge of holding consultants accountable is that, "consultants do not have a minister, they have clients; however, career officials not only have ministers, they must also live with the consequences of their policy advice⁴⁸."

⁴⁴ Howlett, Michael, and Andrea Migone. "The permanence of temporary services: the reliance of Canadian federal departments on policy and management consultants." *Canadian Public Administration* 56.3 (2013): 369. Print.

⁴⁵ Saward, *The Hollow Crown*: Pg. 107

⁴⁶ *ibid*, Pg. 109

⁴⁷ Savoie, Donald. 2004. "Searching for accountability in a government without boundaries." *Canadian Public Administration* 47:1. Pg. 7

⁴⁸ *ibid*, Pg. 11

The delegation of authority to nongovernmental agents is thus hugely challenging for governments. It has been stated that “privatization only changes the venue, not the public responsibility. And if government pays the freight, government necessarily has to police the contractor⁴⁹.” Yet the more reach contractors have under a privatized system, the less capacity government is likely to retain.

The increased use of such actors has incontrovertibly lead to a shift in power and capacity in policy making⁵⁰. Evidently there can be numerous benefits to contracting; however coordination, maintaining internal governmental capacities and institutional memory, and accountability are complex matters. As NPM continues to be a reality for government leaders, they are progressively faced with the extensive skills and influence of such actors who can continue to shape the direction of political and governmental decisions.

iv. Think Tanks

As seen above with consultants, governments have increasingly been contracting work out under the system of NPM. This is the reality faced for information-seeking as well.

Think tanks, defined as “independent organizations engaged in multi-disciplinary research intended to influence public policy” have been progressively prevalent⁵¹ and have been given power as a result of the government’s. They constitute actors who “commission research, who mediate between experts and officials, and who develop strategies for dissemination of arguments⁵².” In Canada, they include organizations such as the Fraser Institute, the Council of

⁴⁹ Kuttner, Robert. "False Profit." *The New Republic* 1 (1989): 22-23. Print.

⁵⁰ Seward. *The Hollow Crown*: Pg. 204

⁵¹ James, Simon. "The Idea Brokers: The Impact Of Think Tanks On British Government." *Public Administration* 71.4 (1993): 491-506. Print.

⁵² Tupper, A. (1993), Think tanks, public debt, and the politics of expertise in Canada. *Canadian Public Administration*

Canadians, the Asia-Pacific Foundation of Canada, the C.D. Howe Institute, and a number of prestigious universities and colleges.

While often characterized by a distinct orientation, be it liberal or conservative, the reports and opinions of such organizations often seen to carry weight by virtue of their independence from government. Recently, however, think tanks have been recast as hybrid organizations operating in the space between the political, economic, academic, and media fields⁵³. Authors explain because of this pre-perceived independence and apolitical nature, such organizations are unique in their ability to draw on the "capitals" defining those fields and to put them to work in novel ways and new contexts⁵⁴. Rather than defining think tanks as the tools of elite or non-elite interest groups, this reframes them as dependent on a wide range of external actors. This dependence does not, however, mean there is little influence. Think tanks are one of many high-profile but unelected policy actors.

Think tanks attempt to shape public opinion and the intellectual climate in which decision-makers operate through the provision of "one-pagers" and "backgrounders" to the media and by holding well-publicized conferences and seminars drawing together intellectuals and practitioners. This high-profile exposure has forced governments to establish units in their central agencies and line departments to deal with these voices and to brief their superiors and ministers⁵⁵. In tandem with media attention, think tanks have been capable of exerting pressure on government to embrace a policy in their favour⁵⁶.

⁵³ Medvetz, T. 2012. *Think Tanks in America*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

⁵⁴ Mclevey, John. "Think Tanks, Funding, and the Politics of Policy Knowledge in Canada." *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue canadienne de sociologie* 51.1 (2014): 54-75. Print.

⁵⁵ Savoie, Power: Pg. 179

⁵⁶ *ibid*, Pg. 181

Such organizations do not only function outside of government; frequently commissioned to do work or research, they also use their political relationships to seek to influence through their close ties with key policy makers on the inside⁵⁷.

Canadian think tanks in particular have helped to structure the broader policy agenda and have served as an important conduit for the distribution of academic ideas on policy problems to government and the media. They have historically been useful in challenging the prevailing assumptions, as well as specific policies, held by line department bureaucrats⁵⁸ through strong media presence and through the provision of expert testimony before parliamentary committees⁵⁹. This is demonstrative of how they have quickly become a key authority in policy development.

v. Media (and individuals)

Media have always been and continue to be important political actors in their own right. Their power is unique in that they are capable to shape a policy agenda and to influence voters, politicians, and public servants to take positions that they would not otherwise take. In brief, they hold the soft power of persuasion and agenda setting. It is a power that has grown in parallel with other actors, but also one that has allowed them all to attain power on their own. All think tanks, individuals, opposing politicians, consulting firms, corporations, and governing parties are umpired through the media they use and the scope and scale of their audiences and rely on them to obtain and retain these audiences.

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, Pg. 177

⁵⁸ Saward, *The Hollow Crown*: Pg. 105

⁵⁹ Abelson, Donald E.. *Do think tanks matter? assessing the impact of public policy institutes*. 2nd ed. Montreal [Que.: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009. Print. Pg. 106

As it has been seen, media not only provide information and entertainment and but also play a central role in working of democracies, mediating what is frequently referred to as the “public sphere”⁶⁰— the space for public association and debate leading to the formation of public opinion and political movements, and where parties that can hold private interests accountable⁶¹. Some authors emphasise the critical role of the media in the public sphere, distinguishing between the early press who highlighted political controversy and the more recent development of media that commodify the news. This commodification was caused by the increased prevalence of technology such as television, radio and social media, which has a tendency to turn short snippets and clips to sum up major policy issues or, much more often, to report on policy and government happenings. Scholars indicate that this new approach to presenting the news is less deferential and much more subjective⁶², a phenomenon which Savoie refers to as “tabloid media”— a reference to the media’s lack of hesitation in creating controversies and for its heavy focus on political gaffes⁶³. This new reality has lead to a both a breakdown in the governments’ capacity to campaign on legitimate policy ideas, as well as in the trust between the government and the media⁶⁴. Governments have responded by adding resources to the offices to manage these new pressures, meaning that funding is increasingly being spent on partisan purposes or reactionary politics rather than on research for policy issues⁶⁵. As a result, a good number of politicians now maintain that good government means “perpetual campaigning⁶⁶.”

Organized media is not the only challenge, however. In the early 2000s, social media emerged as a political tool for promoting campaigns and engaging citizens online.

60 .Habermas, Jürgen (2006), Political Communication in Media Society: Does Democracy Still Enjoy an Epistemic Dimension? The Impact of Normative Theory on Empirical Research1 Communication Theory 16 (4): 411-426., Communication Theory, p. 416.

61 McQuail, Dennis. 2005. McQuail’s Mass Communication Theory. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

62 Savoie, Power: Pg. 87

63 Ibid, Pg. 88

64 Ibid, Pg. 89

65 Ibid, Pg. 97

66 Ibid, Pg. 96

The Government of Canada has begun using new Web 2.0 technologies to promote citizen involvement. As a result, over time it has established Twitter, Facebook and a number of consultative accounts. For example, the Public Health Agency of Canada provided up-to-the minute updates on the H1N1 pandemic on Twitter, reaching a broad scope of citizens instantly.

Government leaders are also turning to social media to “consult the public while in office⁶⁷,” so much so that citizens now have come to expect the opportunity to provide comments and ask questions on a wide variety of online channels, placing greater demand on government websites, but also on political reactivity to their opinions⁶⁸. Governments are therefore increasingly faced with the challenge of finding “balance between corporate direction and departmental flexibility” thanks to the new public pressures resulting from social media⁶⁹.

Digital formats also make it easier for governments to share information in a more open manner – a process referred to as “open government.” This increased sharing and openness brings a number of challenges.

First, the government is confronted in finding an appropriate balance between openness and data protection. A recent report by the Canadian Journalists for Free Expression indicates that “more than half of the federal institutions surveyed for their performance on access to information ranked below average and five failed outright,” a sentiment echoed by Democracy Watch as well as by the Information Commissioner herself, Suzanne Legault⁷⁰. This is demonstrative of the challenge governments face in attempting to negotiate public trust in the face of the expectation

⁶⁷Linders, Dennis. 2012. “From e- Government to we- Government: Defining a Typology for Citizen Coproduction in the Age of Social Media.” *Government Information Quarterly* 29(4): 446-454.

⁶⁸McNutt, Kathleen. "Social Media and Government 2.0." The Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 May 2014. <<http://www.schoolofpublicpolicy.sk.ca/res>

⁶⁹Roy, Jeffrey. 2006. *E- Government in Canada: Transformation for the Digital Age*. Ottawa, ON: University of Ottawa Press.

⁷⁰The Canadian Press. "Failing grade for government on information access." *CBCnews*. CBC/Radio Canada, 10 May 2011. Web. 19 May 2014. <<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/failing-grade-for-government-on-information-access-1.1070787>>.

and
The Canadian Press. "Information watchdog overwhelmed by complaints against Harper government." *The Globe and Mail*. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 May 2014. <<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/information-watchdog-overwhelmed-by-complaints-against-harper-government/article15104546/>>.

of openness and accountability while maintaining an independent capacity to develop policy and programs. Second, by having data more accessible, it follows that the interpretation of that data is open to a wider public that may or may not have the expertise and/or the appropriate degree of trust to provide meaningful comment on its implications for society.

Indeed, it has been seen that new media have been key in empowering individuals or groups whose views or sentiments would otherwise not have been heard. Digital citizens have and will continue to impact politics and government at watershed moments, but also impact government functions on a daily basis. A recent example is the Idle No More movement, which gained momentum in December 2012 due to the passing of Omnibus Bill C-45. By means of Twitter and Facebook, young First Nations and non-First Nations people alike started a nationwide conversation on issues ranging from treaty rights to youth unemployment, resource extraction and inadequate housing and education. The successfully organized protests and rallies, and gained media attention throughout the process. Ron Stagg, a professor at Ryerson University, stated that the campaign was so successful as issues “were seen as local issues rather than national issues. [...] [What this group has done with social media is to make (them) into a national issue. In fact, it’s even international⁷¹.” Although the movement did not directly lead to policy changes, it did lead to awareness and discussion from all political sides. It has been seen that prolonged pressure of this sort can indeed assert expectations of government and create a groundswell of support so powerful that the need for a governmental response is clear⁷².

Evidently media has a major role to play in shaping public opinion, disseminating information, and in strengthening minority voices. As it has become more pervasive,

⁷¹ Donkin, Karissa. "Social media helps drive Idle No More movement | Toronto Star." thestar.com. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 May 2014. <<http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2013>

⁷² Accenture. "How Social Media Is Reinventing Government." Accenture. N.p., n.d. Web. 18 May 2014. <<http://www.accenture.com/SiteCollectionDocuments/PDF/Accenture-Digital-Citizen-Social-Media.pdf>>.

governments have been challenged in maintaining a positive public image as well as managing the dissemination of information. It has become another consideration when governments craft their communication and messaging, and one that is continuously evolving. Ultimately, it is one of the major sources of newfound power and influence that governments are faced with.

As Canada has shifted into a system of New Public Management brought on by the reactionary forces of globalization, government leaders have strived to make the institutions of government work in harmony, stressing coordination, consistency, and avoiding duplication or overlap⁷³. They also, however, want to have an impact on their society and shape that society through policy change and program development.

Over the past two decades, however, these governing authorities have had to adapt to the erosion of their governing capacity by both external economic and political suprabodies and internal fragmentation. The various emerging actors and their powers are expanding and growing, driven by the causal factor of globalization and decentralization. In turn, the dirigiste, cohesive and controlling model of state power no longer dominates, either in reality or in theory. Many authors have discussed the idea of the diffusion of power away from the core executive in Westminster governments, and refer to the concept as the “hollowing” of the state⁷⁴.

Sites of authority are now often difficult to identify, since modern governance structures are typically composed of chains of delegated authority with, at each level, more or less “agency slack⁷⁵.” When not carefully monitored, authority that is delegated can be “lost”—transferred, permanently if unofficially, to such agents. This internal reshaping and the external erosion of

⁷³ Saward, *The Hollow Crown*: Pg. 198

⁷⁴ Weller, Patrick Moray, Herman Bakvis, and R. A. W. Rhodes. *The hollow crown: countervailing trends in core executives*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997. Print.

⁷⁵ Kiewiet, D. Roderick, and Mathew D. McCubbins. 1991. *The Logic of Delegation: Congressional Parties and the Appropriations Process*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

state capacities has forced the core executive actors to play a mediating role between external powers and internal capacities, managing a host of voices, opinions, and powers. This is reflective of a hollowing out of core executive capacity due to globalization, even while core executives actively seek to develop their own internal power.

Since the trend line for the future seems likely to involve an ever growing vulnerability of executive power to global events and processes, the controls exercised by the state at home appear destined to undergo a corresponding expansion. The proceeding section will outline specific ways in which the rational, elected actors look to their own legitimacy with the aim of carving out for themselves a more subtle and flexible role to enhance domestic control over the remaining, re-shaped, and newly revised levers of national policy making⁷⁶.

⁷⁶ Saward: *The Hollow Crown*, Pg. 34

Section II: Reacting to the Hollow State

Modern government executives face a paradox in that their bureaucratic capacity for action in terms of knowledge, expertise, budgets and personnel resources is high, while, at the same time, phenomena such as globalization and democratization have severely undermined their ability to directly control social outcomes. The erosion of governmental capacity to independently affect change has led to a hollowing of the state, which scholars have learned a great deal about since the concept arose. We now know that Ministers and Prime Ministers need different competencies and skill sets to effectively function in the hollow state; and that its very existence raises important questions about democratic accountability and, in turn, the legitimacy of the administrative state⁷⁷. In coming to terms with these challenges, many government heads, including Canada's Prime Ministers and Executives, have developed a renewed interest in understanding the techniques of policy implementation and have developed new policy instruments with the intention of managing state-societal interactions in order to assure general support for their aims and initiatives.

i. Why Information Management and Message Control

Substantive policy instruments, or those instruments intended to directly affect the nature, types, quantities and distribution of the goods and services provided in society, are increasingly being coupled with procedural policy instruments, which are designed to indirectly affect outcomes through the manipulation of policy process. A large number of typical procedural policy instruments have been identified by scholars over the last few decades, including education, training, institution creation, the selective provision of information, formal evaluations, hearings

⁷⁷ Terry, L. D.. "The Thinning Of Administrative Institutions In The Hollow State." *Administration & Society* 37.4 (2005): 426-444. Print.

and institutional reform⁷⁸. These scholars have found that the main purpose of such instruments is to manipulate the links and nodes of the networks of actors involved in policy-making⁷⁹.

It is clear that in democratic states a government's desire to alter a policy process is intimately tied to the extent to which the voting public considers existing processes and procedures, as well as proposed policies credible and legitimate. If a prime minister wants to implement changes, he is dependent on whether or not his ideas and decisions can be sold, and the ultimate buyers are the electorate. With this understanding, scholars have found that a key feature in studying procedural instrument choice is the extent to which existing subsystems need to be manipulated in order to retain the political trust or legitimacy required for governments to govern⁸⁰.

Governments which are faced with major legitimation problems, or problems with selling their ideas, are likely to consider instruments such as government reorganization in order to restructure policy networks and reconstruct legitimacy; however those facing low levels of de-legitimation are likely to use minor network manipulation to legitimate their existing and suggested policies and processes⁸¹. Of particular relevance to this discussion is the procedural policy instrument of the selective provision of information, referred to here as information management and message control. It can be the most effective policy tool available to political leaders in providing what is referred to in the field of economics as "nudges", subtle suggestions

⁷⁸ Eliadis, F. Pearl. *Designing government from instruments to governance*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005. Print. Pg. 36

⁷⁹ See Kiun, E.-H.. "Analyzing and Managing Policy Processes in Complex Networks: A Theoretical Examination of the Concept Policy Network and Its Problems." *Administration & Society* 28.1 (1996): 90-119. Print.

And

Leik, Robert K.. "New directions for network exchange theory: strategic manipulation of network linkages." *Social Networks* 14.3-4 (1992): 309-323. Print.

and

Weimer, David Leo. "Policy Networks and Governance." *Institutional design*. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1995. 161-79. Print.

⁸⁰ Howlett, Michael. "Managing The "Hollow State": Procedural Policy Instruments And Modern Governance." *Canadian Public Administration/Administration Publique Du Canada* 43.4 (2000): 412-431. Print. Pg.422

⁸¹ Howlett, *Managing The Hollow State*, Pg.423

and shaping of decision-making of groups and individuals⁸². While the prime minister may have formal power, using information management and message control allows this authority to turn into a greater form of decision-making power⁸³.

The effort to conceptualize information management and message control in the political process and as a policy instrument must start with the understanding that public opinion, defined as “the political values, attitudes, or opinions of the general public of a country or other political unit, usually understood to include voting patterns or other political behavior”⁸⁴, is the eventual target of government communication.

While in most modern liberal democracies, including in Canada, the norm of popular sovereignty and government legitimacy is achieved formally through competitive elections, at the substantive level it is fulfilled through the responsiveness of the decision makers to public opinion⁸⁵. Indeed, despite the idea that the democratic process allows for governments to achieve a mandate from their electorate and produce/implement decisions, there exists a feedback loop to public opinion⁸⁶, which requires these governments to remain responsive in order to retain their power and legitimacy. Without public approval, they have the potential to lose their governing mandates. This means that in order to reduce dependence on the external environment and to

⁸² Kahan, Dan M.. "Gentle Nudges vs. Hard Shoves: Solving the Sticky Norms Problem." *The University of Chicago Law Review* 67.3 (2000): 607-645. Print.

And

Johnson, Eric J., Brian Wansink, David Schkade & Others. "Beyond nudges: Tools of a choice architecture." *Marketing Letters* 23.2 (2012): 487-504. Print.

⁸³ Ure, Colin. *Prime ministers and the media: issues of power and control*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2003. Print. Pg. 29-30

⁸⁴ Finifter, Ada (1995). *Public Opinion*. In Lipset, Seymour Martin (ed.), *The Encyclopaedia of Democracy* (pp. 1027-1035). London: Routledge.

⁸⁵ Etzioni, Amitai (1968). *The Active Society. A Theory of Societal and Political Processes*. London: Collier-Macmillan/New York: The Free Press. Pg. 504

⁸⁶ Fuchs, Dieter/Pfetsch, Barbara (1996). *The Observation of Public Opinion by the Governmental System*. Research paper series, Science Center Berlin for Social Research, FS 96-105, Berlin, December 1996.

increase policy-making autonomy and independence, governments must resort to actively exerting influence on public opinion⁸⁷.

Government communication is mediated through the mass media, which serves as links between the government and the citizens, but is also powerful in setting the public agenda and shaping public opinion⁸⁸. It has the capacity to set the standards by which political actors are being evaluated among the audience by highlighting issues and neglecting others⁸⁹. With this media power, policy problems have self-reinforcing qualities as they come to dominate policy agendas blocking other potential issues to become posed as problems⁹⁰. This reality has two consequences: it is in the governments' vital interest that the political issues on the public agenda parallel with the priorities of its political agenda; and from the executive's point of view, only those issues should be stressed in the media that shed a favorable light on its performance. Modern political parties and governments in power have reacted to this reality by adopting the approach of a "permanent campaign" with the understanding that in order to govern successfully, they must proactively determine the public agenda by controlling the media agenda⁹¹.

The objective of controlling the issues on the public agenda by shaping the media coverage makes information management an important element in government communication, however the practice is challenged. Since the late 1980s, openness and transparency have emerged as key tenets vital to maintaining legitimate governance and positive public opinion as they have been

⁸⁷ *ibid*, Pg. 11

⁸⁸ Rogers, Everett M., Dearing, James W. & Bregman, Dorine (1993). *The Anatomy of Agenda-Setting Research*. *Journal of Communication*, No. 2, 43, 68-84.

⁸⁹ Iyengar, Shanto, and Donald R. Kinder. *News that matters: television and American opinion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987. Print.

⁹⁰ Erkkilä, Tero. *Government transparency: impacts and unintended consequences*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. Print. Pg. 134

⁹¹ Blumler, Jay G. (1990). *Elections, the Media and the Modern Publicity Process*. In Ferguson, Marjorie (ed.), *Public Communication. The News Imperatives* (pp. 101-114). London, Newbury Park, New Delhi: Sage.

And

Linsky, Martin (1986). *Impact. How the Press affects Federal Policymaking*. New York, London: W.W. Norton & Company.

seen as a counterbalance to performance-seeking governance programmes⁹². Selective information and messaging can, in many cases, go against these societal values. But while historically it was indeed argued that to be rational was to seek “good government”—one which is built on transparency, accountability, efficiency, and honesty⁹³, this concept of rationality has evolved. Presently, it is argued that in the face of fragmentation and complexity, it is instead rational for core executive actors to reshape the state so that it “better suits their own ends⁹⁴.” As such, the core executive of the modern state has a much stronger interest in “perceptions of good government than in the reality of it”⁹⁵.

Political leaders now operate in a multidimensional landscape populated by various groups with different beliefs, values, emotions and desires⁹⁶. They have been required to change their approach to communication and interaction with the media, and have done so in a number of ways. They have increasingly turned away from the traditional press release policy - based on interpersonal exchanges between politicians and journalists - to a professionalized and specialized process of strategic communication controlling the flow of news⁹⁷. The use of communication specialists for strategic message-crafting and image management for high-profile personalities has become more prevalent, as has the use of marketing principles such the assessment of audiences and the mediums to be used⁹⁸. Essentially, communication has become

92 Palgrave Publishing. "Paradoxes and Unintended Consequences of Transparency." Palgrave. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 May 2014. <<http://www.palgrave.com/PDFs/9780230300057.pdf>>.

93 Saward, *The Hollow Crown*, Pg. 30

94 *ibid*

95 *ibid*

96 Berk, Laurey, Phillip Clampitt, and M. Lee Williams. "Leaders as strategic communicators: more is not always better. For example, a leader who uses five or six mediums to Communicate can fail, unless the messages are Coordinated and connected to corporate goals ." *Ivey Business Journal* 66.5 (2002): 50. Print.

97 Pfetsch, Barbara (1999) : *Government news management – strategic communication in comparative perspective*, Veröffentlichungsreihe der Abteilung Öffentlichkeit und Soziale Bewegungen des Forschungsschwerpunkts Sozialer Wandel, Institutionen und Vermittlungsprozesse des Wissenschaftszentrums Berlin für Sozialforschung, No. FS III 99-101

98 *ibid*, Pg. 9-11

a top down process whereby the media are the means and the public the targets while the strategies are determined by the political objectives of the specific actor. In the case of government and its executive, practices of information management and message control aim at informing the public, legitimizing decisions, mobilising public and political support, creating trust in its performance, and by the executive's need to make its message compatible with the institutional prerequisites of the political process⁹⁹.

In the light of the general developments of globalization, information management and message control is a practical solution for governments to strategically communicate their messages and use the media to further their political and policy goals. Indeed, it can be easy to see why a ruling party would want to maintain public popularity and high personal standing in a landscape permeated by provinces, parties, individuals and critics representing different parts of the country and thusly priorities. Maintaining a positive public image is important for achieving policy goals and avoid backlash from public-opinion, party factions, inter-governmental organizations, international allies, and the opposition parties, particularly when it comes to immense expenditures and policy decisions such as those for international trade, infrastructure, and national defence. It is logical therefore that party leaders have a strong need to manage the requirements and expectations of a variety of opposing actors who are challenging them to balance decision-making and responsible government. The value of public support is what prompts prime ministers to manage or otherwise control how they and their decisions are portrayed in the media.

⁹⁹ Sarcinelli, Ulrich (1994). Mediale Politikdarstellung und politisches Handeln: analytische Anmerkungen zu einer notwendigerweise spannungsreichen Beziehung. In Jarren, Otfried (ed.), Politische Kommunikation in Hörfunk und Fernsehen. Elektronische Medien in der BR Deutschland (pp. 35-51). Opladen: Leske + Budrich. As mentioned in Pfetsch, Barbara (1999) : Government news management – strategic communication in comparative perspective, Veröffentlichungsreihe der Abteilung Öffentlichkeit und Soziale Bewegungen des Forschungsschwerpunkts Sozialer Wandel, Institutionen und Vermittlungsprozesse des Wissenschaftszentrums Berlin für Sozialforschung, No. FS III 99-101 Pg. 9-11

ii. How Information is Shared in Canada

There are a number of ways in which modern Canadian governing parties ensure they can control the information and messaging they share.

The Privy Council Office (PCO) in particular has seen an immense growth in its usage by Canadian politicians, and specifically of the Prime Minister¹⁰⁰. The “communications and consultations” unit of the PCO manages questions on contentious issues, and even basic demands for information from reporters are now sent to this office for review, editing, and approval prior to public release¹⁰¹. Public appearances by cabinet ministers – whether it's a speech or an interview – are carefully staged, starting with a "message event proposal" vetted by the Office. Even bureaucratic announcements, which could normally be managed without the Prime Minister's approval or review, have been under close scrutiny and management. As Ottawa reporter Susan Delacourt wrote, “It is now standard, for instance, for reporters to submit questions in writing to the government only to wait hours, days, or even weeks for a committee-approved response¹⁰².” Such careful oversight has allowed for recent media coverage to reveal that government scientists and librarians have complained they are being “muzzled¹⁰³” when they attempt to present their research, while bureaucrats themselves have been seeking longer extensions to handle access to information requests and vet the information provided¹⁰⁴.

¹⁰⁰ Savoie, Power: Pg. 140

¹⁰¹ Savoie, Governing from the Centre. Pg. 123-124

¹⁰² Delacourt, Susan. "Dictating the terms of the political conversation | Toronto Star." thestar.com. N.p., 20 July 2012. Web. 25 May 2014. <http://www.thestar.com/news/insight/2012/07/20/dictating_the_terms_of_the_political_conversation.html>.

¹⁰³ The Canadian Press. "Prestigious science journal slams Harper government's muzzle on federal scientists | Toronto Star." thestar.com. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 May 2014. <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2012/03/01/prestigious_science_journal_slams_harper_governments_muzzle_on_federal_scientists.html>.

¹⁰⁴ Campion-Smith, Bruce. "How Harper controls the spin | Toronto Star." thestar.com. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 May 2014. <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2008/05/26/how_harper_controls_the_spin.html>.

Question Period has also become increasingly standardized and institutionalized. Lead party members have been found to use simple, short statements while the opposition has focused on more concrete and accusatory wording—all of which is scripted and pre-approved by communications professionals¹⁰⁵.

The prime minister is seldom in the Chamber, only having appeared for 40% (19) of the 47 question periods during the spring 2014 sitting¹⁰⁶. When he does attend, it is to carry out the task of public performer in the Commons¹⁰⁷. He never appears before any of the standing (legislative) committees business, but rather his performances now consist of periodic visitations to answer questions, make statements, deliver set piece speeches, and occasionally intervene in debates¹⁰⁸. Essentially he limits himself to the provision of statements chiefly about international summits and crises (especially crises which might involve military forces), and important developments in Canadian politics with which he is personally associated¹⁰⁹.

On some rare occasions, a Prime Minister may deliver major speeches to unveil a new policy and then allows the government bureaucracy to determine the details and intricacies of the plan after the announcement takes place¹¹⁰. This has allowed Prime Ministers who come to power under a majority government to pursue their desired projects while in office, such as Pierre Elliot Trudeau and language policy, Brian Mulroney with regional development agency, and now Stephen Harper with free trade.

¹⁰⁵ Whissell, Cynthia. "The Emotionality and Complexity of Public Political Language in Canada's Question Period." *English Language and Literature Studies* 2.4 (2012): 68-76. Print.

¹⁰⁶ Fekete, Jason, and Lee BERTHIAUME. "Truant Trudeau says he's in touch with Canadians outside Ottawa." *www.ottawacitizen.com*. N.p., 5 Aug. 2014. Web. 11 July 2014.

<<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/Truant+Trudeau+says+touch+with+Canadians+outside+Ottawa/9824526/story.html>>.

¹⁰⁷ Ure, Colin. *Prime ministers and the media: issues of power and control*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2003. Print. Pg. 24

¹⁰⁸ Rhodes, R. A. W., and Patrick Dunleavy. *Prime minister, cabinet, and core executive*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995. Print.

¹⁰⁹ Ure, Colin. *Prime ministers and the media: issues of power and control*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2003. Print.

¹¹⁰ Savoie, Power, pg. 139

To ensure they can retain power even from internal dissenters, Prime Ministers have also gradually focused on safeguarding Cabinet unity in the face of media and public communication, ensuring that all the ministers speak with one voice¹¹¹. They have done so in guaranteeing that the collective decision-making process remain protected by the rule of confidentiality, which enables ministers to engage in full and frank discussions necessary for the effective functioning of a Cabinet system prior to major policy announcements or changes¹¹². In many cases, collective responsibility has more to do with ensuring prime ministerial control than to present a collective voice.

Occasionally when wanting to by-pass Cabinet altogether, prime ministers announce important government initiatives without the approval or even the knowledge of their cabinets: Trudeau's imposition of a sweeping austerity programme on his return from the Bonn summit, BC Premier Vander Zalm's announcement of his government's opposition to abortion, Ontario's Bill Davis's surprise purchase of an oil company are but a few illustrations. This is what Savoie refers to as 'governing by bolts of electricity'¹¹³. It allows for Prime Ministers to impose their desired policies and changes in a timely manner, and without hindrance.

Indeed, it can be seen that recent Canadian Prime Ministers, and particularly Stephen Harper, have adopted a zeal for message control. So much so, that former Liberal Leader Stéphane Dion charged that he is presiding over the "most secretive government in our history"¹¹⁴. Stephen Harper's Conservative government also won the Code of Silence Award from the Canadian Association of Journalists in 2012, in recognition for "Canada's most secretive government or

¹¹¹ Ingham, Bernard. *Kill the messenger*. London: HarperCollins, 1991. Print.

¹¹² Also referred to as Cabinet Confidences. See the Treasury Board website for additional information: <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/atip-aiprp/tools/qpcc-cprc-eng.asp>

¹¹³ Savoie, *Governing From the Centre*

¹¹⁴ Campion-Smith, Bruce. "How Harper controls the spin | Toronto Star." *thestar.com*. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 May 2014. <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2008/05/26/how_harper_controls_the_spin.html>.

publicly funded agency”¹¹⁵. This form of information management has been done in order to ensure that the government in power can manage public opinion, prevent controversy, and shape public policy. It does not however, come without a price.

iii. Negative implications of information control

To be sure, Prime Ministers’ desire to control political messaging has been criticized. Harper in particular was condemned for using prorogation to skirt the will of Parliament, and his refusal to accept and respond to expert opinion on law and order issues is regularly put in a negative light. A recent book by Lawrence Martin has drawn public attention to this particular aspect of Harper’s governance by indicating that he “is shown to be an excessive partisan with a need to dominate and an almost manic desire for secrecy and information control¹¹⁶”. This view has been echoed by a number of scholars, activists, and opposing politicians, and has ultimately brought to question the legitimacy and accountability of the “Harper Government”.

A result of this has also lead to a shift in public opinion about the governance and government of Stephen Harper himself, something that the Prime Minister was evidently attempting to manage. A national survey conducted by Ipsos Reid found that after seven years in office, half of the country believed that Harper has a “hidden agenda,” and 69 per cent of people believe “the Harper Conservatives are too secretive and have not kept their promise to govern according to high ethical standards¹¹⁷.”

¹¹⁵ The Globe and Mail. "Harper government most secretive, journalists say." The Globe and Mail. N.p., 29 Apr. 2012. Web. 11 July 2014. <<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/harper-government-most-secretive-journalists-say/article4103406/>>.

¹¹⁶ Patten, Steve. "STEPHEN HARPER: AUTHORITARIAN PARTISAN AND RADICAL SOCIAL CONSERVATIVE IDEOLOGUE?." *Socialist Studies / Études socialistes* 8.1 (2012): 258-269. Print.

¹¹⁷ Kennedy, Mark. "Secrecy and ethics cast dark cloud on Stephen Harper’s government: poll." *canadacom*. N.p., 7 Apr. 2013. Web. 25 May 2014. <<http://o.canada.com/news/national/secrecy-and-ethics-cast-dark-cloud-on-stephen-harpers-government-poll>>.

iv. Checks on Accountability

Given the latent threat of public opinion manipulation and, it is vital that societies have a means of checking and balancing the messages that emanate from government and mainstream media sources. Where media cannot or does not fulfill its role as a watchdog effectively, civil society must find other means to gain information and develop opinions. While the Prime Minister and his Cabinet has found ways to retain secret information, there have indeed been efforts to retain a level of openness so that the public and parliamentarians alike can preserve access to government information through the appointment of independent reviewers.

The *Parliament of Canada Act* mandates the Parliamentary Budget Officer (PBO) to provide independent analysis to the Senate and House of Commons on the state of the nation's finances and the government's estimates

The Office of the Auditor General (AG) is the final Officer of who audits departments and agencies, most Crown corporations, and many other federal organizations. The Office's overarching aim is to hold the federal government accountable for its stewardship of public funds¹¹⁸. The aforementioned PBO's work aims to complement the AG's work—while the PBO forecasts spending, trends and estimates which are prospective in nature, the AG takes a retrospective view of the Public Accounts and plays an assurance role while exposing areas requiring attention and providing recommendations for improvement to Parliament¹¹⁹.

One of the AG's key duties is to call attention to anything that he considers to be of significance and of a nature that should be brought to the attention of the House of Commons. To complete these duties, he has more tools granted to him to do so than the PBO thanks to the *Auditor*

¹¹⁸ Government of Canada. "Welcome to the Office of the Auditor General of Canada." Government of Canada, Office of the Auditor General of Canada.. N.p., n.d. Web. 2 Dec. 2013. <http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/admin_e_41.html>.

¹¹⁹ Government of Canada. "What We Do." Government of Canada, Office of the Auditor General of Canada.. N.p., n.d. Web. 2 Dec. 2013. <http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/au_fs_e_371.html>.

General Act, which grants him “free access at all convenient times to information that relates to the fulfillment of his or her responsibilities and he or she is also entitled to require and receive from members of the federal public administration any information, reports and explanations that he or she considers necessary for that purpose¹²⁰”.

¹²⁰ *ibid*

Section III: Case Study

The previous sections have outlined the newly emerging actors who are increasingly challenging governments' sovereign authority in developing national policies and in realizing their policy objectives, as well as a concrete manner in which governments have attempted to manage these newfound challenges. The purpose of this section is to provide a specific case study demonstrating the pervasiveness of these actors and government reactivity.

Certain areas historically managed solely by the federal government have now been exposed to the input and meddling of new actors. Weapons and equipment procurement in Canada as well as the acquisition of capability for the military, both which have historically been inefficient processes and have often been secondary to political consideration, are one area in which this has occurred¹²¹. As New Public Management took hold, the Canadian Government was forced to reassess its existing system and function within an environment where the procurement process and its operating culture result in effective program delivery and an optimal economic return to the taxpayer¹²². It can be seen as far back as the Trudeau Government where it became common practice for academics, parliamentary committees, think tanks, media pundits and retired senior officers to press the merits of the country's defence policies and public provide opinions¹²³. As such, military expenditure and government procurement has been one particular area in which the Canadian Federal Government has been attempting to enhance its capital and shape empirical factors in order to achieve its desired results.

¹²¹ Plamondon, Aaron. The politics of procurement: military acquisition in Canada and the Sea King helicopter. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010. Print.

¹²² CADSI. "Canada's Defence Industry: A Vital Partner Supporting Canada's Economic and National Interests." Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 June 2014. <http://www.defenceandsecurity.ca/UserFiles/File/IE/Military_Procurement_Main_Report_March_09_2010.pdf>.

¹²³ Shadwick, Martin. "REVIEWING DEFENCE POLICY." Department of National Defence. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 June 2014. <<http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vol12/no4/page79-eng.asp>>.

Rarely are defence acquisition issues of substantial concern in Canadian politics, or able to shift an entire election, but they have proven to be of momentous magnitude at various points in history. In 1993, cancelling a major defence contract for new search and rescue helicopters was part of the official Liberal Platform and considered to have been one of the “swing issues” of the election. In this case the Liberals stated that the purchase of these helicopters during a time of fiscal restraints was a waste of money, and they cancelled the contract within hours of taking power¹²⁴. Recent acquisitions have been more even controversial. The Canadian Force’s attempt to replace the Sea King helicopters was considered to be the worst procurement failure in Canadian history, even surpassing the Avro Arrow cancellation in 1959¹²⁵ because of what Defence Minister Peter MacKay calls “the Liberal governments' stop-start attempts at acquiring helicopters¹²⁶”.

Recent procurements, however, have seemingly been more challenging. In 2008, the Government of Canada under Prime Minister Stephen Harper established the Canada First Defence Strategy (CFDS) which provides stable long-term funding and a roadmap for the modernization of the Canadian Forces over a 20-year period. While it is expected that the Canadian Forces will be spending \$240 billion in order to re-equip its three branches (land, sea, air) between 2008 and 2027¹²⁷. The CFDS specifically announced that Canada would be acquiring 65 "next-generation fighters" as part of its commitment to renewing the equipment of the Canadian Forces¹²⁸. In 2010, the Government announced its intention to purchase the Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II Joint Strike Fighters (F-35s) provided by Lockheed Martin in

¹²⁴ Plamondon, Aaron. The politics of procurement: Preface.

¹²⁵ *ibid*

¹²⁶ CBCNews. "Bittersweet 50th anniversary for Canada's Sea King helicopters." CBCnews. CBC/Radio Canada, n.d. Web. 29 Nov. 2013. <<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/bittersweet-50th-anniversary-for-canada-s-sea-king-helicopters-1.1349878>>.

¹²⁷ Jenkins, Tom. Canada first - leveraging defence procurement through key industrial capabilities report of the special adviser to the minister of Public Works and Government Services.. Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services Canada], 2013. Print. Pg 11

¹²⁸ Nossal, Kim. "Late learners: Canada, the F-35, and lessons from the New Fighter Aircraft program ." International Journal 68 (2012): 162. Print.

2010. The F-35 procurement has been a source of considerable controversy in public policy circles in Canada since this announcement.

C. Key Actors

There are a number of key actors imposing pressures and challenging the government's legitimacy and discrete decision-making power in the realm of defence procurement. They represent all realms and stakeholders, including academic, political, and industrial—all of who have their own position on the acquisition of the F-35 as Canada's next fighter jet.

i. International Relations and Global Market Considerations

Globalized industrial partnerships propelled the F-35 procurement process from the outset, with Canada having joined in 1997, turning the US-UK collaboration into a multinational one. Currently Canada sits as a Level 3 partner with the expectation of providing between \$100-200 million to the program along with Australia, Denmark, Norway, and Turkey¹²⁹. The aircraft is being produced by a U.S.-led consortium of eight (unequal) partners, of which Canada is a junior member¹³⁰. Evidently, the complex multinational ties run deep.

Canada-US relations are a major driving factor behind the push for the F-35s. Not only because Canada faces a series of deadlines and important program milestones as a Level 3 Partner, but also because of the initial attractiveness in promise of retaining partners in key US-led industrial and high-tech networks, while achieving relatively cheap access to latest-generation stealth

¹²⁹ Vucetic, S., and K. R. Nossal. "The International Politics of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter." *International Journal: Canada's Journal of Global Policy Analysis* 68.1 (2013): 3-12. Print.

¹³⁰ Bell, Matthew, Mark Bobbi and Keri Wagstaff-Smith, "JSF : Weighing up the partner nation benefits," in *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 3 February 2010, p. 23.

technology¹³¹. Further, as fourth-generation jets will eventually go obsolete, it is expected that the emerging fifth-generation market will be dominated by the U.S., Russia, and China¹³². With Canada's political and social history, its normative and ideological preferences, and its alliances, it would evidently face significant political and strategic ramifications if it were to consider replacing an American-led initiative like the F-35 with a Russian or Chinese program.

Scholars Srdjan Vucetic and Atsushi Tago also highlight how integrated Canada, amongst other countries, is in the USA "security hierarchy" which ranks how states voluntarily trade autonomy and sovereignty for "order, prosperity, and cheaper security provided by the US"¹³³. As the "patron" state, the US provides security to Canadian clients that required some form of alliance and agreement. They explain that the internal logic of this discourse is powerful: "if the F-35 purchase could help establish Canada as a 'responsible,' 'reliable,' 'credible,' and even 'influential' ally within the US international security network, and as an otherwise important contributor to global security, then that procurement might well be worth every penny". This will, in turn, allow for Canada to preserve its capacity to maintain (or enhance) its status as a reliable and prominent ally in Western-led air campaigns and to develop the international prestige in defence capacity¹³⁴. Proponents of the F-35 initiative also point to Canada's history to illustrate that the country seldom, if ever, operates in a theatre of war without its allies. If Canada wants to use air power to do anything other than defend its sovereignty in the coming decades,

¹³¹ Vucetic and Nossal. "The International Politics of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter."

¹³² Wyss, Marco, and Alex Wilner. "The Next Generation Fighter Club: How Shifting Markets will Shape Canada's F-35 Debate." *Canadian Military Journal* 12.2 (2012): 18-27. Print.

¹³³ Tago, A., and S. Vucetic. "The "Only Choice": Canadian and Japanese F-35 Decisions Compared." *International Journal: Canada's Journal of Global Policy Analysis* 68.1 (2013): 131-149. Print.

¹³⁴ Massie, Justin. "Bandwagoning for status: Canada's need of the F-35." *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 17.3 (2011): 251-264. Print.

military interoperability with its allies will be of paramount importance¹³⁵. As such International image, existing political alliances, and global pressures are therefore a major deliberation in the acquisition of the F-35s.

ii. Industry Pressures

International pressures were coupled with economic considerations when the F-35s were first deliberated as an option for Canada.

The 2006 Memoranda of Understanding between the Government of Canada and the prime contractors (Lockheed Martin and Pratt & Whitney) stated that continued access to industrial opportunities was contingent upon the Government of Canada remaining a partner in the Program and procuring the Joint Strike Fighter (F-35) aircraft¹³⁶. The Government estimated that through the JSF program, Canadian companies would be guaranteed access to a number of key competitive opportunities, including an estimated \$12 billion in potential industrial opportunities for work on the aircraft platform¹³⁷.

The industry is currently made up of over 700 firms of all sizes that generated \$25.1B in direct revenues in 2013¹³⁸. These companies make up the domestic defence industrial-base and provide vital support to Canada's defence and economic interests. They are playing a growing role as they are more frequently direct operators in military missions, and a continuing role as suppliers

¹³⁵ See McDonough, David. "Canada and the F-35 procurement: An assessment." Canadian International Council Canadas hub for international affairs Canada and the F35 procurement An assessment Comments. N.p., 29 Oct. 2010. Web. 19 July 2014. <<http://opencanada.org/foreign-exchange/canada-and-the-f-35-procurement-an-assessment/>>.

And

Lagassé, Philippe, and Justin Massie. "Tories and Grits are as one on defence policy." The Globe and Mail. N.p., n.d. Web. 4 Aug. 2010. <http://www.ieim.uqam.ca/IMG/pdf/Tories_and_Grits_are_as_one_on_defence_policy.pdf>.

¹³⁶ Public Works and Government Services Canada. "Frequently Asked Questions." National Fighter Procurement Secretariat (NFPS). N.p., n.d. Web. 15 July 2014. <<http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/app-acq/stamgp-lamsmp/snacfaq-nfpsfaq-eng.html#a9>>.

¹³⁷ Government of Canada. "Government of Canada Delivering Long-Term Jobs and Economic Opportunities to Kitchener." Industry Canada, Minister of Industry. N.p., 29 Nov. 2010. Web. 19 July 2014. <<https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/064.nsf/eng/06114.html>>.

¹³⁸ Government of Canada. "The State of the Canadian Aerospace Industry." Industry Canada, Office of the Deputy Minister, Industry Sector. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 July 2014. <http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/ad-ad.nsf/eng/h_ad03964.html>.

of key products, technologies and services. As such, corporations and industry groups have been vocal on the topic of the F-35 acquisition and its potential economic gains.

Members of the Canadian Joint Strike Fighter Industrial Group, an industry group representing over 35 Canadian companies that are currently performing work in the production phase of the procurement program, have exerted pressures on the Canadian Government through media and lobbying. They have publicly highlighted that “any delay in the purchase of the new fighter will have real consequences for Canadian industry” and that any delays will ensure that “current Canadian F-35 contracts and jobs will very soon start going to countries that are today buying the aircraft¹³⁹”. Individual corporations such Boeing and Eurofighter are also making the case for their respective fighters through media releases and exhibits at the Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries (CADSI) defence trade show. Such groups represent major industrial stakeholders whose success or failure would have a direct impact on the Canadian economy, granting them some amount of influence in defence acquisitions. They frequently have strong lobby groups as well as financial capacity that can be used to leverage policy decision. For example, during discussions in the Standing Committee on National Defence, government officials expressed worries that Lockheed Martin would have shut the Canadian aerospace industry out of its supply chain if Ottawa had not committed to the F-35¹⁴⁰. If such threats were executed, Canada could lose a substantial amount of economic potential and the Conservative Government would face severe criticism from industry stakeholders. As such, both internal and external market pressures have been consistently applied to the Government of Canada’s decision making process on the F-35s.

¹³⁹ Canadian JSF Industry Group. "Canadian JSF Industry Group releases open letter on F-35 procurement | Skies Magazine - Aviation is our Passion.." Canadian JSF Industry Group releases open letter on F-35 procurement | Skies Magazine - Aviation is our Passion.. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 June 2014.
<<http://skiesmag.com/news/article/CanadianJSFIndustryGroupreleasesopenletteronF35procurement#.U53ItVhdWyc>>.

¹⁴⁰ Tago and Vucetic. "The "Only Choice"

iii. Non-Government Actors and the Media

Industry-lead initiatives and advocacy has been coupled with action not only from the most obvious stakeholders, but also from non-governmental organizations, think tanks, and the media itself.

Think tanks and NGOs have taken on a dual role of both informing and advocating on the topic of the fighter jets. Project Ploughshares, for example, issued a press release basing their data off information from William Hartung of the U.S. Center for International Policy, and accused Lockheed Martin of exaggerating job figures in relation to the F-35. The non-governmental organization said that if Lockheed Martin has presented inflated job figures in an effort to please its U.S. audience, “then it might be inclined to do so for a Canadian one, too¹⁴¹.” The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) and the Rideau Institute also released a report entitled “One Dead Pilot” which claimed that the F-35s are too dangerous to be used by the Canadian military due to their single-engine¹⁴². They also released a study authored by the University of British Columbia political science professor Michael entitled “The Plane that Ate the Canadian Military,” which questioned the operating costs of the F-35s and the data used to reach estimates for funding¹⁴³. Such reports have been released occasionally throughout the duration of the acquisition process, and have been considered to both create and revive debates in the public sphere. They have also forced Governments to reply in some manner. A spokesperson for Minister Diane Finley, for example, responded to the CCPA’s “One Dead Pilot” report by

¹⁴¹ Epps, Kenneth. "The F-35 is not a job creation program." Project Ploughshares. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 June 2014. <<http://ploughshares.ca/2014/01/the-f-35-is-not-a-job-creation-program/>>.

¹⁴² Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. "One Dead Pilot ." One Dead Pilot 9 June 2014 Byers (Embargoed) (2). N.p., 9 June 2014. Web. 15 June 2014. <<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/1184545-one-dead-pilot-9-june-2014-byers-embargoed-2.html>>.

¹⁴³ Pole, Ken. "Report: F-35 costs could reach as high as \$126 billion | Skies Magazine - Aviation is our Passion.." Report: F-35 costs could reach as high as \$126 billion | Skies Magazine - Aviation is our Passion.. N.p., 30 Apr. 2014. Web. 19 July 2014. <<http://skiesmag.com/news/article/ReportF35costscouldreachashighas126billion#.U8qsao1dWyc>>.

indicating that “independent third-party experts, with access to all of the real facts on this file, have worked to ensure that the reports prepared by DND are rigorous and impartial¹⁴⁴.”

The press also remains a major actor in shaping public opinion surrounding the F-35s. Prior to 2012, it would frequently capitalize on the lack of public information by filling the void of data on the F-35s with its own “leaked” articles. In June 2014, Reuters cited multiple sources who said the government's review of potential CF-18 replacements is done and the federal government are about to finalize a decision to buy a 65-plane fleet of F-35s without a competition¹⁴⁵. CBC had a similar report but with the caveat that Cabinet would make the final decision (the Reuters version had Prime Minister Stephen Harper already providing his approval of the F-35 purchase). And the Canadian Press was also reporting that a market analysis, which looked at alternatives and was compiled by the Royal Canadian Airforce and overseen by a panel of independent experts, is still being assessed¹⁴⁶.

Such outlets have had a long history with criticizing the F-35 acquisition dating back to the initial announcement on the program. They have historically criticized the aircraft as being too expensive, too short-ranged and too complex for Canada's needs and also questioned the suitability of the F-35 to patrol Canada's vast airspace¹⁴⁷. These actors provide the public with a number of both academic as well as non-objective opinions but also with public criticism and

¹⁴⁴ Canadian Press. "Tories dismiss 'One Dead Pilot' report after think-tank revives F-35 safety debate." National Post News Tories dismiss One Dead Pilot report after thinktank revives F35 safetydebate Comments. N.p., 10 June 2014. Web. 19 July 2014. <<http://news.nationalpost.com/2014/06/10/tories-dismiss-one-dead-pilot-report-after-think-tank-revives-f-35-safety-debate/>>.

¹⁴⁵ Pugliese, David . "Confusion reigns on the F-35 front in Ottawa." Ottawa Citizen. N.p., 10 June 2014. Web. 15 June 2014. <<http://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/confusion-reigns-on-the-f-35-front-in-ottawa>>.

¹⁴⁶ *ibid*,

¹⁴⁷ See, for example:

The Canadian Press. "Report:Ottawa set to spend \$9B on new U.S. fighter jets from single source." The Guardian. N.p., n.d. Web. 16 June 2014. <<http://www.theguardian.pe.ca/Living/2010-06-08/article-1298066/ReportOttawa-set-to-spend-9B-on-new-US-fighter-jets-from-single-source/1>>.

And

Blanc, Daniel. "Harper bending to U.S. on sole-source fighter purchase, documents reveal." The Globe and Mail. N.p., n.d. Web. 16 June 2014. <<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/harper-bending-to-us-on-sole-source-fighter-purchase-documents-reveal/article1600070/>>.

concern. They have both the capacity to shape public knowledge as well as public opinion on issues at hand, requiring governments to attempt to manage their influence through the means they have available to them.

iv. The Auditor General and the Parliamentary Budget Officer

Increasingly, defence acquisitions have been an issue of internal management as well.

The Auditor General (AG), whose primary purpose is to provide independent and reliable information concerning the federal government's use of federal tax dollars by performing regular financial audits, has been very critical of the F-35 acquisition. In October 2010, AG Sheila Fraser identified "troubling" systemic problems, rigged competitions and cost overruns in defence procurement programs and indicated that the F-35 purchase could cost far more than the budgeted numbers indicate¹⁴⁸. Her warning came at a bad time for the Harper government, which was at the time taking heavy fire for its decision to embark on the costly F-35 jet-fighter acquisition without a competitive bidding processes, further fuelling the public and political perceptions on the matter.

The AG's commentary was piggy-backed by the the Parliamentary Budget Officer (PBO) Kevin Page in 2011. With the mandate to provide independent analysis to Parliament on the state of the nation's finances, the government's estimates and trends in the Canadian economy, he presented a cost analysis of the F-35 program and concluded a total cost C\$29.3B over 30 years, not the C\$16B to C\$18B claimed by the government, resulting in a per aircraft cost of C\$450M¹⁴⁹.

Despite the Department of National Defence (DND) denying the substantial increase, the new

¹⁴⁸ Chase, Steven. "Fighter jet purchase risky, Auditor-General says." The Globe and Mail. N.p., 26 Oct. 2010. Web. 16 June 2014. <<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/fighter-jet-purchase-risky-auditor-general-says/article1215642/>>.

¹⁴⁹ Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer. "An Estimate of the Fiscal Impact of Canada's Proposed Acquisition." Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer. N.p., 10 Mar. 2011. Web. 2 June 2014. <http://www.pbo-dpb.gc.ca/files/files/Publications/F-35_Cost_Estimate_EN.pdf>.

AG Michael Ferguson heavily criticized the government's F-35 procurement in his 2012 Report, stating that the government did not run a fair competition, there was a lack of consultation, that costs were seriously understated and misrepresented to the PBO, and that decisions were made without required approvals or documentation¹⁵⁰. Three days after the release of the report, the AG appeared before the House of Commons Defence Committee and stated that his investigation revealed that the government would have known that the F-35 program estimate was C\$25B at the time that the Defence Department told the PBO it was C\$14.7B, in the weeks leading up to the May 2011 federal election¹⁵¹. Generally, such an accounting error could be attributable to bureaucratic miss-step rather than an explicit political act. Indeed, the Government rejected the assertions made and instead defended their stance by indicating that the estimation of the acquisition of the jets did not include operating and salary costs, but accepted that these costs should have been included in the earlier report to the PBO and promised to do so in the future¹⁵².

The Auditor General and PBO have therefore been substantial actors exerting significant pressure on the Government to maintain an honest and cost-effective approach to the acquisition. Their reports have been the primary source of information on the process for the public and political opposition, and by containing criticism, discrepancies, and concerns, they have had the capacity to inform public opinion and support.

v. New Public Management

The shift of bureaucratic functions to New Public Management has undoubtedly had major effects on government acquisitions, to which the F-35 acquisition process has not been immune.

¹⁵⁰ Office of the Auditor General of Canada. "2012 Spring Report of the Auditor General of Canada." Government of Canada, Office of the Auditor General of Canada.. N.p., n.d. Web. 2 Dec. 2013. <http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/english/parl_oag_201204_02_e_36466.html>.

¹⁵¹ Fitzpatrick, Meagan. "True F-35 cost likely known by cabinet, auditor says." CBCnews. CBC/Radio Canada, n.d. Web. 2 Dec. 2013. <<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/true-f-35-cost-likely-known-by-cabinet-auditor-says-1.1168003>>.

¹⁵² Ibid

Scholars have identified three common elements to NPM across governments: changes in machinery of government, new approaches to internal management, and reduction in the role of the state¹⁵³. It can be argued that prior to 2012, the Government's approach to the acquisition process did indeed attempt to align with some of the NPM values. In particular, limiting the role of the state in the research and development of the aircraft and outsourcing this to the private sector is one evident key application of NPM.

Since 2012, however, there has been an extensive amplification of the bureaucracy as Government shifted its approach in managing the procurement process.

On April 3, 2012, the Government of Canada announced a Seven-Point Plan in response to the findings and the recommendation in the aforementioned Chapter 2 of the 2012 Spring Report of the Auditor General of Canada. The report identified concerns with the way key information was being developed and presented to Canadians and recommended that the Government refine its estimates for the full life-cycle costs of the F-35 and make those estimates public. The responsive Plan included commitments to steps such as freezing the funding envelope for the acquisitions; establishing a new F-35 Secretariat who would provide annual updates to Parliament; for Treasury Board Secretariat to commission an independent review of the acquisition and its assumptions and make the report public and more¹⁵⁴.

The required establishment of a new Secretariat led to the emergence of the National Fighter Procurement Secretariat within Public Works and Government Services Canada. Its primary responsibility was to provide review, oversight, and coordination of the implementation of this Seven Point Plan and its work aimed to establish an improved governance and

¹⁵³ Kernaghan, K. and Charih, M. (1997) 'The Challenges of Change: Emerging Issues in Contemporary Public Administration'. *Canadian Public Administration*, 40:218–33.

¹⁵⁴ Public Works and Government Services Canada. "Frequently Asked Questions." National Fighter Procurement Secretariat (NFPS). N.p., n.d. Web. 15 July 2014. <<http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/app-acq/stamgp-lamsmp/snacfaq-nfpsfaq-eng.html#a9>>.

coordination structure, strengthen due diligence, and commit departments to transparency through more timely and effective communications. Additionally, it was accompanied by the key decision-making body for the oversight and coordination of the action plan—the Deputy Minister Governance Committee (DMGC). This committee is chaired by the deputy minister of Public Works and Government Services but also includes deputy ministers from National Defence and Industry Canada as well as ex-officio members from the Privy Council Office, Treasury Board Secretariat, the Department of Finance and the National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister¹⁵⁵.

The thickening of the bureaucracy may have seemed like a step away from the system of NPM, however it is quite evident that NPM values have continued to place pressure on the government. NPM changes include three elements: private sector management approaches; the development of production and service standards; as well as taking into account more than the financial bottom line¹⁵⁶. The OECD has also added improved policy capacity and better information for policy development to the criteria¹⁵⁷.

In this particular case, it is evident through the recommendations of the Auditor General as well as the criticism of a number of groups, that the government has been prompted to adopt private sector management approaches such as using concepts such as total quality, service standards, value for money, and results. In addition, the concept of the balanced scorecard, or an initiative aimed to take into account more than the financial bottom line, has also been strongly voiced throughout the process as critics have asserted that the procurement of fighter jets is a process

¹⁵⁵ Government of Canada. "Secretariat and Governance." Public Works and Government Services Canada. N.p., n.d. Web. 18 July 2014. <<http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/app-acq/stamgp-lamsmp/sg-eng.html>>.

¹⁵⁶ See

Glor, Eleanor D.. "Has Canada Adopted The New Public Management?." *Public Management Review* 3.1 (2001): 121-130. Print. and

Kaplan, Robert , and David Norton. "The Balanced Scorecard – Measures that Drive Performance." *Harvard Business Review* 1 (1992): 71-79. Print.

¹⁵⁷ OECD. *Public Management Reform and Economic and Social Development*, (1998) <http://www.oecd.org/puma/budget/pubs/pmr98/index.htm>.

that must examine more than the monetary value of each aircraft but also Canada's current and long-term needs and political or military relationships, as well as anticipated strategic role in global conflicts, and needs for interoperability¹⁵⁸.

As will be seen below and previously with the Auditor General, in addition to the introduction of production and service standards, there been extreme pressures on government to ensure proper policy capacity and full, wholesome information prior to making any decisions on the topic. This would ensure that Canada invests in fighter jets that have long-term potential, but again demonstrates how the values of NPM have permeated the procurement process.

vi. Consultants

The reactionary thickening of the bureaucracy following the Auditor General's report in 2012 empowered specific consultants in a very unique way. The aforementioned Seven-Point Plan, for example, directed the Treasury Board Secretariat to commission an independent review of National Defence's acquisitions and sustainment project assumptions and potential costs for the F-35, and to make the report public. Following a competitive procurement process, KPMG was awarded the contract for the independent review. By commissioning a report from the private sector and ensuring that it becomes publicly available, the Auditor General empowered KPMG to hold government to account and entrusted the firm with restoring public's faith in the government's approach and financial reporting on the acquisition process.

The report's anticipated release caused a significant amount of public and media speculation regarding its contents. Four days before the Government published the report, the Ottawa Citizen ran a front page headline, *Federal government cancels F-35 fighter purchase* and

¹⁵⁸ Wyss, Marco, and Alex Wilner. "The Next Generation Fighter Club: How Shifting Markets will Shape Canada's F-35 Debate." Canadian Military Journal 12.2 (2012): 18-27. Print.

indicated that the soon-to-be-released KPMG would put the program costs at over \$40B, that the federal Cabinet operations committee had decided to cancel the purchase and hold a competition¹⁵⁹. This immediately prompted the Prime Minister's Office to deny the report, declaring it to be "inaccurate on a number of fronts"¹⁶⁰.

The government ultimately released the KPMG report on 12 December 2012, in which KPMG noted that National Defence has not built in enough contingency funds to account for the wild swings in sticker price of the plane. It projected the acquisition's life-time cost at C\$45.8 billion over 42 years, an amount was at least three times higher than what the federal government had been publicly announcing, and more than four times higher than the initial price tag of \$9 billion¹⁶¹. Although KPMG did not publicly comment on the report, its findings were widely publicised and critiqued. Its scathing results were compounded upon by the industrial offsets report, also released on 12 December 2012, which showed that the best estimate of potential benefits to Canadian industry would be C\$9.8 billion, far below the C\$45.8 billion the government was forecast to spend. In reaction, at a press conference on the day both reports were released, Minister of Public Works Rona Ambrose stated that the government had chosen to "hit the reset button" and were taking the time to do a complete assessment of all available options¹⁶². Indeed, consultants were again empowered in the options analysis. Moving ahead with the government's procurement reboot, a committee of independent, non-government experts was struck to oversee the air force's review of the F-35's capabilities, costs and industrial benefits to Canada, as well as those of its competitors: the Boeing Super Hornet, the Eurofighter Typhoon

¹⁵⁹ Tandt, Michael. "Federal government cancels F-35 fighter purchase: source." Canada.com. N.p., 6 Dec. 2012. Web. 21 July 2014. <<https://o.canada.com/news/national/1107-col-dentandt/comment-page-1>>.

¹⁶⁰ Payton, Laura. "Tories misled Canadians on F-35, opposition MPs charge." CBCnews. CBC/Radio Canada, 7 Dec. 2012. Web. 21 July 2014. <<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/tories-misled-canadians-on-f-35-opposition-mps-charge-1.1148921>>.

¹⁶¹ KPMG. "KPMG Report F-35 Life Cycle Cost Framework." KPMG Report F-35 Life Cycle Cost Framework. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 July 2014. <<http://www.documentcloud.org/documents/537970-kpmg-report-f-35-life-cycle-cost-framework.html>>.

¹⁶² CBC News. "Fighter jet plan 'reset' as F-35 costs soar." CBCnews. CBC/Radio Canada, 12 Dec. 2012. Web. 21 July 2014. <<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/fighter-jet-plan-reset-as-f-35-costs-soar-1.1203373>>.

and the Dassault Rafale. It comprised of University of Ottawa professor Philippe Lagassé, Communications Security Establishment chief Keith Coulter, former federal comptroller-general Rod Monette and former civil servant turned policy consultant James Mitchell, who were tasked with assessing the methodology used and the analyses performed and to provide guidance at key milestones in the work. The review was central to the government's promise to revisit the decision to purchase the F-35 without a competition. Its results would again determine the accuracy and validity of the Royal Canadian Air Force's (RCAF) options analysis and had the capacity to validate or discredit the analysis in the public eye. This evidently entrusted them with a distinctive opportunity to justify the government's decision-making.

Historically, Canada has relied on the private sector to deliver its military hardware, including fighter jets. Although there are a number of efficiencies to be had in the usage of private industry in the delivery of such services and products, this reliance has had a substantial adverse effect on Government. Allowing for public consultants or corporations to become independent stewards or auditors of defence equipment makes logical sense given the rotational nature of the federal public service and the Canadian Forces as well as the length of time and use of Canada's fleets in service¹⁶³. This reality has, however, allowed for an overly thin layer of experienced and knowledgeable public servants in this area. To compound on this, even public servants with procurement knowledge do not, for the most part, have experience on major capital purchases because of the paucity of such purchases in the last 20 years. These exist too few officials with defence procurement knowledge and experience remaining in government—even public servants with procurement knowledge do not, for the most part, have experience on major

¹⁶³ CADSI. "Canada's Defence Industry: A Vital Partner Supporting Canada's Economic and National Interests." Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 June 2014. <http://www.defenceandsecurity.ca/UserFiles/File/IE/Military_Procurement_Main_Report_March_09_2010.pdf>.

capital purchases because of the paucity of such purchases in the last 20 years. Evidently, the country has seen the private sector's monopoly on knowledge in this field affect its government capacity to adequately make properly educated decisions and evaluations, relying on private or academic sector knowledge during their policy development. Consequently, Canada has seen an increased risk avoidance coupled with redundant layers of process and management to compensate for this lack of corporate knowledge¹⁶⁴.

vii. Official Opposition

Opposition parties have been strongly working against the F-35 acquisition since the very eve of the announcement. Although the Liberals were the governing party when Canadian participation in the Joint Strike Fighter program over 10 year prior, it was the announcement of an untendered sole-sourced contract by the Conservative Government in 2010 that propelled the acquisition process into the spotlight. Immediately, opposition parties were united against the Conservative minority.

As the AG's 2011 report was revealed, the backlash from the opposition parties escalated.

Opposition Leader Thomas Mulcair, in a speech to the Economic Club of Canada, said, "we have clear and convincing evidence that the government intentionally provided false information to Parliament and that's serious. This is a basic question of respect of our institutions¹⁶⁵." In the House of Commons he reiterated his concern and stated that "the report is a litany poor public administration, bad decision making, and a lack of accountability by Conservative ministers¹⁶⁶."

¹⁶⁴ ibid

¹⁶⁵ ibid

¹⁶⁶ CTV News. "Military kept Parliament in dark over F-35 costs: Auditor." CTV News. N.p., 3 Apr. 2012. Web. 1 June 2014. <<http://www.ctvnews.ca/military-kept-parliament-in-dark-over-f-35-costs-auditor-1.791536>>.

During the 2011 election the New Democratic Party (NDP) went so far to state that "our defence policy is broken" and that they would prioritize investment in naval ships over new fighter jets in an attempt to garner votes in coastal regions¹⁶⁷.

Ironically, the F-35 acquisition was not a deciding factor in the ensuing election campaign as the Conservatives attained a majority. Despite this reality, however, opposition parties were able to bring the issue of the F-35s to the surface of political debates. After the release of the 2012 AG report, they were able to do so once again. They called for the resignations of both the prime minister and Defence Minister Peter MacKay as the AG scathingly indicated that they DND did not exercise due diligence in choosing the F-35 fighter jet to replace the CF-18, wasn't forthcoming with Parliament about its true estimated cost, and made key decisions without required approvals or proper documentation.

NDP Leader Tom Mulcair said that if PM Harper knew the wrong figures were given to Canadians, it's "unconscionable" and if not it was "incompetence," while interim Liberal leader Bob Rae stated that "this prime minister has systematically misled the Canadian people on this issue¹⁶⁸." Such strong criticism and language denotes the lack of confidence in the capacities of the PM, and brings into question his ability to conduct a procurement of this scale. It could evidently be persuasive in the development of public opinion.

D. Government Reactions and Their Fallout

Evidently the Government of Canada has taken specific action to mediate the effects and powers of such actors, and this remains true for those who have a capacity to influence the F-35 acquisition process. In particular, the government implemented the procedural policy instrument

¹⁶⁷ Kirkup, Kristy. "New ships not jets, say NDP." Toronto Sun. N.p., n.d. Web. 29 Nov. 2013. <<http://www.torontosun.com/news/decision2011/2011/04/08/17922626.html>>.

¹⁶⁸ Fitzpatrick, Meagan. "Tories rush to contain F-35 fallout." CBCnews. CBC/Radio Canada, 3 Apr. 2012. Web. 16 June 2014. <<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/tories-rush-to-contain-f-35-fallout-1.1194906>>.

of the selective provision of information, or as explained in the previous section, information management and message control.

Information management and message control began with the unveiling of the F-35 decision, and more specifically with an attempt to control the scope of the dissemination of information and to prevent excessive public criticism. To announce their new fighter jet policy, the Conservative government convened an offsite press conference on a Friday afternoon. This act is only one of similar examples which demonstrates the government's attempt to managing the media and reactions. On other occasions, the Party arranged for senior civil servants to deliver short media briefings to discuss the jet purchase policy¹⁶⁹, and the government is currently refusing to release a "public " report, instead suggesting that it will announce a decision when the House has risen for the 2014 summer¹⁷⁰.

Primetime press conferences, among other benefits, allow for politicians to grapple with difficult questions in front of a relatively large viewing audiences¹⁷¹. A late afternoon press conference, and particularly one that occurs on a Friday prior to a weekend when people are aiming to go home after a long work week or in the summer during an expected political news break, will instead ensure a relatively small audience. Further, by using civil servants rather than political figures to present some policy decisions, the Government is limiting coverage and publicity, further ensuring a smaller dispersion of information.

¹⁶⁹ Chase, Steven. "Ottawa officially scraps F-35 purchase as audit pegs costs at \$45-billion." *The Globe and Mail*. N.p., 12 Dec. 2012. Web. 19 June 2014. <<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/ottawa-officially-scraps-f-35-purchase-as-audit-pegs-costs-at-45-billion/article6260601/>>.

¹⁷⁰ Berthiaume, Lee. "Government mum on when F-35 decision will come." *Ottawa Citizen*. N.p., 3 June 2014. Web. 22 June 2014. <<http://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/government-mum-on-when-f-35-decision-will-come>>.

¹⁷¹ Eshbaugh-Soha, Matthew. "Presidential Influence of the News Media: The Case of the Press Conference." *Political Communication* 30.4 (2013): 548-564. Print. Pg. 560

The initial announcement of the procurement process was itself carefully choreographed, with the ministerial trio of Peter MacKay (Defence), Tony Clement (Industry), and Rona Ambrose (Public Works) simply saying that Canada needed the F-35 not only because it was the "very best" design available for purchase, but also because Ottawa had already contributed over \$170 million to its development¹⁷². Rather than providing specifications on the jet and the statement of requirements prepared by the military and a material team at DND, the Conservatives simply argued that it built on the 2008 "*Canada First Defence Strategy*," which budgeted for a fleet of 65 "next generation" fighter jets¹⁷³. Such "lines" have been increasingly common in all major policy decisions. Because of the historic public opposition to major monetary spending including that defence acquisition as well as the need to bypass other departments' "red tape," the Government has become increasingly sensitive in its information management. To do so, there has been an increased use of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) as the centre for government information management and message control.

The Office has required for information to be vetted and approved prior to any release, ensuring that the Prime Minister's expectations for information sharing are met. By maintaining tight control over what is discussed with the press, the Prime Minister is able to manage communication between his government and the Canadian public, limiting the possibility that the media will run off in a direction that has little to do with a message averse to his positioning. From the government's perspective, a press conference that has journalists asking questions unrelated to the conference topic is of little use to them, and one that allows for well-informed, concrete criticisms can be even more damaging. This tight control over communication has manifested to the extent that former Assistant Deputy Minister of defence material Dan Ross,

¹⁷² Tago, A., and S. Vucetic. "The "Only Choice": Pg. 131-149

¹⁷³ *ibid*

referring to the risks of the F-35 as a jet, stated that “for seven and a half years, whenever a journalist asked to do an interview, it was denied [...] the Defence Department doesn’t communicate and it asks the (Prime Minister’s Office) for permission and they say no, and no one ever communicates¹⁷⁴.”

The carefully planned timing of announcements and the careful choosing and approval mechanisms of the PMO have not always provided the desired results. Following the initial announcement for the F-35 acquisition, the Liberal Opposition at the time attacked the Conservatives for sole-sourcing the fighter aircraft acquisition, while the New Democratic Party (NDP) raised budgetary questions and called for a general review of national priorities. During this time of criticism, the Prime Minister and his appointed ministers chose not to provide concrete information such as the operating costs for fear of more extensive criticism¹⁷⁵. Instead, as time went on, issues such as performance shortfalls and delays began to emerge while the government continued to attempt to shape public information through editing Wikipedia articles on the F-35 and encouraging positive feedback from Canadian stakeholders¹⁷⁶. They did so in attempt to shape a positive public opinion in support of the F-35 acquisition.

Despite these attempts, the controversies were compounded upon by the aforementioned criticism and conflicts between the Government and the Auditor General and Parliamentary Budget Officer, who highlighted the lack of "due diligence" in the fighter jet selection and the misstated acquisitions costs in both reports and in front of the Public Accounts Committee. As a

¹⁷⁴ Berthiaume, Lee. "Former top defence official defends handling of F-35 file, blames Harper government secrecy." National Post News Former top defence official defends handling of F35 file blames Harper governmentssecrecy Comments. N.p., n.d. Web. 29 Nov. 2013. <<http://news.nationalpost.com/2013/01/21/former-top-defence-official-defends-handling-of-f-35-file-blames-harper-government-secrecy/>>.

¹⁷⁵ Plamondon, Preface.

¹⁷⁶ Tago, A., and S. Vucetic. "The "Only Choice": Pg. 131-149

response to the AG's appearance in front of committee, the Prime Minister issued an injunction against him to prevent the release of any e-mail correspondence with the Committee in regards to his appearance, saying that compliance with access to information requests would be a breach of parliamentary privilege¹⁷⁷¹⁷⁸. This move prevented any additional information, criticism, or questioning from escaping into the public sphere, demonstrating an attempt to limit the negative press and save-face during a time when there was very little positive press or coverage of the acquisition process. The AG's only recourse was to chastise the administration by stating that "I can't speak to individuals who knew it, but it was information that was prepared within National Defence, and it's certainly my understanding that that would have been information that, yes, that the government would have had. [...] I can only frame it as, they had information ... they should have used that as the opportunity to bring that forward¹⁷⁹."

From here, the F-35 evolved into a true scandal—the Liberals called for Harper's resignation; the NDP spoke of incompetence and tax dollar waste; pundits spun stories of undue influence of Lockheed Martin lobbying; third-party auditing confirming the PBO's life cycle cost estimates, and the media printed headlines such as "F-35 Dead in the Air¹⁸⁰." This onslaught of criticism forced the government to respond, which Minister Rona Ambrose did in a press conference stating that the government "has hit the reset button [and is] taking the time to do a complete assessment of all available aircraft¹⁸¹." Two years later, however, in mid-April 2014 after the

¹⁷⁷ Like Cabinet secrecy, parliamentary privilege is a constitutional convention that is upheld in law. In *New Brunswick Broadcasting Co. v. Nova Scotia (Speaker of the House of Assembly)*, the court stated: "Privilege" in this context denotes the legal exemption from some duty, burden, attendance or liability to which others are subject. It has long been accepted that in order to perform their functions, legislative bodies require certain privileges relating to the conduct of their business. It has also long been accepted that these privileges must be held absolutely and constitutionally if they are to be effective; the legislative branch of our government must enjoy a certain autonomy which even the Crown and the courts cannot touch."

¹⁷⁸ Editorial. "Parliamentary privilege should not be overused" *The Globe and Mail*. N.p., n.d. Web. 2 Dec. 2013.

<<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/editorials/parliamentary-privilege-should-not-be-overused/article4537276/>>.

¹⁷⁹ Fitzpatrick, Meagan. "True F-35 cost likely known by cabinet, auditor says." *CBCnews*. CBC/Radio Canada, 5 Apr. 2012. Web. 30 June 2014. <<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/true-f-35-cost-likely-known-by-cabinet-auditor-says-1.1168003>>.

¹⁸⁰ Tago, A., and S. Vucetic. "The "Only Choice": Pg. 131-149

¹⁸¹ Rona Ambrose, statement to the press, as quoted in John Geddes, "A clearer path for fighter jets, but a grim day for Peter MacKay," *Maclean's*, 12 December 2012.

topic had weaved out of the mind of political and public thought, the long awaited "options analysis" of the different fighter aircraft available was completed by the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). The report itself was not made public, forcing speculation as to what the Government's considerations could be¹⁸². A few months later, in June, the government's independent panel on the new fighter aircraft released a statement as well. The panel oversaw the RCAF's assessment of the risks and costs of each possible fighter choice, but did not make a recommendation as to which aircraft to buy, instead stating that it had no hesitation in pronouncing the RCAF's assessment of all four aircraft was "rigorous and impartial"¹⁸³. Again, the government chose to release only a partial version of the report to the public, and only once it announced the next steps it will take¹⁸⁴. Much of this had to do with the influence and concerns of private sector companies, who provide commercially sensitive information to the government for reporting purposes but rely on the government's maintenance of its confidentiality so as to not undermine their competitive positions in Canada.

One of the panelists compared the panel's independent seal of approval to the Auditor-General's signing-off on the government's books, however political observers have noted that the delay of the report is likely a tactic to keep the F-35 procurement from causing controversy and being an issue in the 2015 election¹⁸⁵. Alan Williams, the former head of procurement at the Department

182 Postmedia News. "F-35 decision back in government's court as air force completes major study." www.ottawacitizen.com. N.p., 4 Oct. 2014. Web. 22 June 2014.

<<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/technology/decision+back+government+court+force+completes+major+study/9734296/story.html>>.

¹⁸³ Chase, Steven, and Daniel Leblanc. "Tories play down report suggesting longer timeline for replacing jets." *The Globe and Mail*. N.p., n.d. Web. 22 June 2014. <<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/tories-play-down-report-suggesting-longer-timeline-for-replacing-jets/article19188094/>>.

¹⁸⁴ *ibid*,

¹⁸⁵ Chase, Steven, and Daniel Leblanc. "Tories given green light for F-35 jet decision." *The Globe and Mail*. N.p., 12 June 2014. Web. 30 June 2014. <<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/tories-given-green-light-for-f-35-jet-decision/article19151099/>>.

And

Brewster, Murray. "Report on F-35 fighter jet rivals complete." *Macleans.ca*. N.p., n.d. Web. 30 June 2014. <<http://www.macleans.ca/news/report-on-f-35-fighter-jet-rivals-complete/>>.

of National Defence and who was in charge of the country's initial involvement in the F-35 program, also dismissed the panel report as public relations ploy¹⁸⁶. Indeed, it is easy to see how the government would attempt to appease public calls for an open tender by using an independent panel of experts. Winning the seal of approval from such independent monitors was could also have been a final attempt for the Prime Minister to “nudge” public opinion towards supporting the F-35s and in general, seeing the acquisition process as a positive policy initiative. In keeping the full report from the public but allowing small, positive information to be revealed, the government subtly shapes public information and consequently public opinion and support, a smart tactic considering the strong connection between what’s on the news and public opinion¹⁸⁷.

All of the above-mentioned actions, reactions, and tactics are demonstrative of the efforts made by government leaders, and specifically the prime minister, to retain control over information and messaging in order to effectively shape public knowledge and to persuade public opinion towards the support of his own desired policies. His attempts at tight control and limited information, however, seemingly worked against him in the long run. While no major party, media outlet, or think-tank openly argued against the national pursuit of an up-to-date tactical air attack capability, there was substantial concern with how the Conservative Government approached the issue. Negative information on the Government’s dominant policy choice slowly became revealed through the gaps in the system, and without strong government communication revealing its true intentions, costing and processes, the policy was inadvertently opened up for criticism. The entire F-35 fracas came down to the questions of accountability (i.e., sole-

¹⁸⁶ Pugliese, David. "Panel sends decision on new fighter jet to federal cabinet." Ottawa Citizen. N.p., 12 June 2014. Web. 22 June 2014. <<http://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/panel-sends-decision-on-new-fighter-jet-to-federal-cabinet>>.

¹⁸⁷ Iyengar, S., & Kinder, D. R. (1987). News that matters: Television and American opinion. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

sourcing) and costs¹⁸⁸. Indeed, until December 2012 all potential and actual political liabilities experienced by the Conservatives over the F-35 had to do with the procurement process and their communications strategy. In particular, it can be seen that one of the major challenges for the procurement process has been communication, as the Conservative Government has been heavily criticized for its “culture of secrecy¹⁸⁹” throughout this process.

It is clear that the Conservative Government began the process with the intention of acquiring the F-35s through the sole-source acquisition. This intention, however, hinged on the extent to which the voting public considered the existing procurement processes and procedures, as well as the extent to which it found the proposed policies credible and legitimate. Unfortunately, military expenditure and defence equipment acquisitions have been particular areas in which the Canadian Federal Government has struggled to enhance and maintain its political capital and shape empirical factors surrounding public discussion. The Canadian Force’s recent attempt to replace the Sea King helicopters was considered to be the worst procurement failure in Canadian history, even surpassing the Avro Arrow cancellation in 1959¹⁹⁰ because of what Defence Minister Peter MacKay calls “the Liberal governments' stop-start attempts at acquiring helicopters¹⁹¹”. Despite the reality that the Liberal Government undertook the Sea King replacement, the challenges have continued on under the Conservative Party. As such the existing credibility, legitimacy, and capacity of the government’s procurement capacity is weak and the Conservative Government is functioning in a system where it must work diligently to

¹⁸⁸ Tago, A., and S. Vucetic. "The "Only Choice": Pg. 131-149

¹⁸⁹ Stewart, Brian. "Brian Stewart: The F-35 fiasco and Ottawa's culture of secrecy." CBCnews. CBC/Radio Canada, n.d. Web. 2 Dec. 2013. <<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/brian-stewart-the-f-35-fiasco-and-ottawa-s-culture-of-secrecy-1.1244783>>.

¹⁹⁰ Plamondon, Preface.

¹⁹¹ CBCNews. "Bittersweet 50th anniversary for Canada's Sea King helicopters." CBCnews. CBC/Radio Canada, n.d. Web. 29 Nov. 2013. <<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/bittersweet-50th-anniversary-for-canada-s-sea-king-helicopters-1.1349878>>.

both gain and retain the political trust or legitimacy required to make substantial monetary decisions to the ultimate buyers—the electorate.

In this particular case, the government approached the challenge by implementing strategic policies to negotiate the existing policy networks and to reconstruct its legitimacy, and specifically, it implemented the procedural policy instrument of the selective provision of information, or information management and message control.

It is generally understood and accepted that politicians will use communication specialists for strategic message-crafting and image management for high-profile personalities, as well as a number of other key tactics such as message approval and the use of marketing principles such as the assessment of audiences and the mediums to be used. Despite the understanding that there are potential benefits and rational reasons for governments employ such tactics to control information and ensure consistent messaging, it is challenging to see why the government chose the path it did on communication with the F-35 file.

From the conception of the acquisition process, as the government became convinced back in 2008-09 that the F-35 was the only real option for Canada, it chose to remain secretive and abstain from providing the public with information. Secrecy on such matters is supposed to provide government with the ability to shape public perceptions and support a positive image—its aim is to give the inner circle (and the government) a critical advantage in implementing choice public policy. As the executive retains secret information, it not only grows its social capital but also shapes the empirical factors received and interpreted by the Canadian public and electorate in order to achieve their desired policy outcomes. In the case of the F-35s, however, the extent of information control did not help the Conservative Government. Instead, it presented

the public and opposing politicians with a single, unproven, unverified and unquantified policy option during a time when botched previous acquisitions processes were still present as vivid, unpleasant memories but also during a time when value-for-money and competitiveness were substantially valued. As the media circulated reports criticizing the aircraft as being too expensive, too short-ranged and too complex and not suitable for Canada's needs¹⁹², there was little concrete information coming out of official government sources to clarify or inform the public. This lack of information, exacerbated by a lack of public knowledge of the details of the contract with Lockheed Martin, had substantial effects on public acceptance of the F-35s as a policy option. March 2011 poll data conducted by Nanos Research showed that the majority of Canadians opposed purchasing the F-35. Even 56% of those identified as Conservatives opposed the purchase¹⁹³. In this case, therefore, the strategic release of information and intense control over messaging worked in tandem with the public's existing apprehensions and concerns, swaying their opinion away from the government's desired outcome. Instead, it brought up concerns about legitimacy, openness and transparency in the process of defence acquisitions.

It can therefore be seen that in limiting public access to information and tightly controlling messaging to such an extent early on in the process, the government made itself a target for the opposition, cast doubt on its own motives, backed itself into a corner on options and costs, and allowed for a perception of incompetence. The less information publicly available

¹⁹² For examples, please see:

Byers, Michael. "\$16 billion for the wrong planes | Toronto Star." The Toronto Star. N.p., 18 July 2010. Web. 21 July 2014. <http://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorialopinion/2010/07/18/16_billion_for_the_wrong_planes.html>.

and

Leblanc, Daniel. "Harper bending to U.S. on sole-source fighter purchase, documents reveal." The Globe and Mail. N.p., 11 June 2010. Web. 21 July 2014. <<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/harper-bending-to-us-on-sole-source-fighter-purchase-documents-reveal/article1600070/>>.

¹⁹³ Ibbitson, John (March 2011). "Canadians don't share Harper's zest for fighter jets, debt reduction, poll shows". Globe and Mail (Toronto).

to justify a minister's position made the unilateral support for the F-35s suspicious and confusing to Canadians and to opposing parties.

As the Auditor General's report was released, the minister and prime minister were left fumbling to explain why all the studies and cost projections could not be shared with the public, while the ones which were increasingly casted doubts about the potential of the F-35 itself, as well as questions about cost overruns. Individual ministers were left with the responsibility of explaining enormously complex decisions to an increasingly angry and impatient public who had little information on the policy option itself, but significant information on the secrecy of its elected government.

After the Auditor General's report and recommendations were made public, the Government took some concrete steps to ensure that transparency and accountability re-entered the acquisition process. In particular, implementing the recommendations of the AG and following through with the various check-and-balances such as the KPMG report, the RCAF options analysis review panel, as well as yearly progress reporting have been major steps in this process. At this point, however, it was evident that using minor network manipulation through information management and message control had backfired. Instead, the major policy instrument of government and process reorganization was needed to manage historic and ongoing concerns with the process.

The challenges in retaining legitimacy in the F-35 acquisition has certainly been a political lesson—neither the minister nor the government benefitted from policy making done in secrecy and with little information. A transparent and legitimate process which opens government policy-making to expert review not only shields a minister from potential criticism, but is also assigns the task of vetting complex issues to a representative range of experts, and is far more

likely to lead to a decision that is widely seen as both legitimate and sound. It does not compromise the government's leadership of such issues, but rather supports the idea of effective, competitive government procurement. This lesson is a demonstration that an increase in the executive's power at the expense of "values in our society" such as civic discussion, access to information, and accountability¹⁹⁴ now requires for governments to re-strike the balance between accountability and secrecy in order to uphold these values and prevent not only the mismanagement of government funds, but also ensure the Government is acting legitimately and on behalf of the Canadian people.

Conclusion

Globalization and an increasingly interconnected world have heavily influenced the policy-making process in Canada. External pressures have required for the country to adapt in a number of ways, including ensuring the stability of the global markets, managing global and domestic media, and shifting to a system of New Public Management in order to provide better public services at lower cost, while at the same time maintaining democratic control and accountability over the content of public policy. Despite these efforts, new powers are emerging to challenge the sovereign capacity of government leaders to make decisions and shape programs and policies. These leaders continue to want to have an impact on their society and shape that society through policy change and program development, and they have been required to react through the implementation of policy instruments in order to obtain and retain legitimacy in the public sphere.

Information management and message control have been significant procedural policy instruments utilized by governments in recent years. They have been found to be a practical

¹⁹⁴ "Keeping Secrets: Congress, the Courts, and National Security Information." Harvard Law Review 103.4 (1990): 906-925. Print.

solution to strategically communicate messaging and use the media to further political and policy goals with the aim of shaping public opinion and support while avoiding backlash from party factions, inter-governmental organizations, international allies, and the opposition parties.

The recent F-35 is a particularly poignant case study that demonstrates how message control does not always function in favour of the governments who employ it. It has been demonstrated that during the period of time where government employed strict message approval and control as well as intense secrecy, it was faced with a confused public and accusations of mismanagement. In order to re-gain public support and demonstrate proper fiscal management, it was required to implement substantial internal change and increase transparency as well as the frequency and quality of external communications. While it is logical for party leaders to manage the requirements and expectations of a variety of opposing actors who are challenging them to balance decision-making and responsible government, it is also necessary to balance message control with accountability and transparency. The F-35s are a perfect example of why strict message control cannot supersede the democratic values of transparency and accountability.

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