Promoting Institutional Change: Perspectives from the Bolivia Initiative

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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

At the 2003 Conference of American Armies in Ottawa, the Commanding General of the Bolivian Army, General Cesar Lopéz Saavedra officially requested support and assistance from the Canadian Forces (CF) to implement his reform agenda. Canadian Forces Leadership Institute (CFLI) staff, after an initial assistance visit, helped organize an international seminar, for March 2004. The aim of the seminar, entitled “Democracy, Multiculturalism, and the Armed Forces: the Challenges of Human Security”, was to provide international perspectives on implementing diversity, professional development, and leadership initiatives in the military.

Much was accomplished in the conference, including an agreement to design a pilot project for increasing indigenous representation at the Army Military College. The aim is to increase indigenous representation in the army leadership of the future. The other half of Gen. Lopéz’s reform plan includes professionalization and leadership initiatives.

Its work on diversity and professional development initiatives, and leadership development, put CFLI in a unique position to support the Bolivian Army reforms. This support continued throughout 2004 with the placement of two academic advisors in Bolivia. One was charged with advising diversity initiatives at the Army Military College, and the other focused on Army wide professional development and leadership initiatives.

This essay describes my experience as a CFLI contracted academic advisor for the Bolivian Army. It aims to provide a hands-on practical perspective on supporting military transformation to accompany the scholarly works in this volume. The essay is structured around a series of “lessons learned” from first hand experience, largely ignoring the academic literature on the military transformation.

This essay details the background of the social, economic and political context in which the Bolivian army operates, to clarify how, and why, CFLI became involved in what the Canadian Defence Academy (CDA) has termed, the “Bolivia Initiative”. This will also contextualize my roles, the challenges I faced, and the lessons I learned.

Personalizing the events allows the reader to understand the complexity of facilitating and assisting the transformation process in this specific initiative. As such, the lessons should not be construed as universal in their applicability; they are solely the lessons I learned from the challenges I faced. They include the importance of the following: establishing credentials; selecting and maintaining the aim; adopting to organizational culture and leadership styles; and, understanding how to operate inside distinct organizational cultures.

Establishing my credentials and those of CFLI fostered a friendly and productive work environment. Understanding the situational context in which the Bolivian Army operates allowed me to relate their experience to that of the CF and provided a term of reference that internalized the importance of the work. Selecting, agreeing upon, and maintaining the project objective was one of the more difficult tasks I had. This is for various reasons outlined below. It is enough to say that patience, understanding, and most importantly, leverage, went a long way. Lastly, understanding and adapting to the organizational culture of the Army allowed me to work within, and outside of the organization when needed.

There are two constant themes throughout this paper: the presence and role of the personal academic advisor of the Commanding General of the Bolivian Army, Mr. Juan Ramón Quintana, and a comparatively informal (by CF standards) manner of doing business.

Mr. Quintana, a former Army officer, is a specialist in South American security and defence issues. Affiliated with the University of the Cordillera, he is also the coordinator of the Security and Democracy Observatory (SDO), an institution monitoring security and defence issues in Latin America. Both Mr. Quintana, and his organization, provided invaluable academic and logistical support to the project. He served as a valuable resource for insight into the current situation of the military and the personalities involved in the project.

With respect to the informal workings of the Army, this is solely my perception on which I have made no judgement. This perception is based on my experience with the CF and can be explained in two ways. First, as a short term academic advisor, it would have been unrealistic for me to "learn the ropes" and work effectively up to bureaucratic and administrative standards. In other words, short cuts were taken largely for my benefit. Secondly, this project was a novel undertaking for the Army; it was new and unfamiliar ground. Working informally meant no "paper trail", responsibility, or accountability, in case of project failure. Whatever the reason, the fact remains, I had to adapt to a different way of working while in Bolivia.

Background

The Bolivian Army is cash strapped but rich in human resources. Obligatory military service of twelve months provides an average of 20,000 recruits every year. Leading these recruits are 6000 "professionals", a term including non-commissioned officers (NCOs) and officers.

Racial divisions permeate the Army. While the majority of the Bolivian population is indigenous (60-70%) divided into three main groups; Aymara, Quechua and Guaraní, the officer corps is primarily of European or mixed descent. The NCO corps is primarily indigenous yet not recognized as such. Family names, being the only effective manner of denoting racial descent, are usually changed in order to, in the words of the Commandant of the Army Military College, "camouflage" racial descent. Career aspirations force many individuals to hide their indigenous backgrounds. That the Army does not reflect the cultural make-up of the society it serves, is clear.

The tumultuous events of 2003 occurred against this backdrop. In February, and again in October 2003, the army, by Presidential Order, confronted massive social protests over raised taxes, government trade policies, and the slowing pace of development. The order was legal and the army fulfilled its duty. However, the death and injury of more than a hundred protestors in October, and loss of political support, led to the flight of former President Gonzalo Sanchéz de Lozada who was replaced by the Vice-President, Carlos Mesa.

The killing of protestors, protection of the former president (widely seen as corrupt), and continued press reports of conscripts being used as indentured agricultural labourers, has led to a loss faith in the military institution by the average Bolivian. For an institution claiming to be “El Forjador de la Patria” (the Forger of the Nation), these events and their repercussions have lowered morale, and brought into question the very existence of the military, an issue that will be discussed at the first ever constitutional assembly in 2005.

The Bolivia Initiative

The events of 2003 made clear the need for reform initiatives to raise public confidence in government organs, in particular the Armed Forces. President Carlos Mesa pledged to support constitutional and political reforms, publicly calling on the army to assume a lead role in professionalization and diversity initiatives to serve as examples for the public sector.

Prior to assuming leadership of the Army, General Lopéz, while Chief of Staff, began developing a significant reform program. Attending the Conference of American Armies in Ottawa in 2003, Gen. Lopéz, through Mr. Quintana, sought information on CF initiatives related to professionalism, professional development, and diversity initiatives. In November 2003 he officially requested from CFLI.

With Mr. Quintana’s advice, the Army began planning a two-stream reform program including diversity initiatives at the Army’s military college, and professionalization initiatives at the Headquarters of the Chief of Staff of the Commanding General. I was directly involved with the latter of these streams.

General Lopéz incorporated advice from Mr. Quintana and CFLI into a draft plan and further elaborated his program in a speech to graduates of the Command and Staff Course in Bolivia. He cited the need for full inclusion of the indigenous population and women into all levels of the Army and a reorientation of, and commitment to, professional values, ethics, and leadership. His principle objectives for the Army included the elaboration of, and compliance with, professional standards, development of a new leadership model, and diversity initiatives. This speech, the campaign plan, and other statements from the General, being on paper and accessible, provided important leverage for my work in Bolivia.

His campaign included civil/military dialogue in the form of two international conferences on multiculturalism, education, and leadership in the armed forces. The first conference was held in March 04, and the second, held the following September, was informed by the results and recommendations of the previously mentioned diagnostic.

The first conference, mentioned above, was widely acclaimed as the first time indigenous and military leaders exchanged opinions and perspectives on the Armed Forces and the democratic system. As mentioned previously, the conference included CFLI and international academics presenting on civil/military relations, multiculturalism in the armed forces, human rights, and leadership in the military. Closing the conference, Gen. Lopéz verbally ordered the Commandant of the Army military college to develop a pilot program facilitating the entry of indigenous candidates. This public, and verbal order was a sign of things to come.

The follow-up conference, from 13-15 September 2004, entitled "Multiculturalism, Education, and Leadership in the Military: Challenges and Opportunities" allowed the Army to present the findings of the institutional review it had conducted. Similarly, a draft program for diversity initiatives at the army military college was presented. The conference was highly regarded by the press and all those involved.

It is important to note that this initiative took place within the Army; it did not apply to the Armed Forces. However, in early August 2004, President Mesa issued a decree calling on the Armed Forces to conduct much the same exercise. The directive called on the armed forces to research and consider diversity, professional development, and leadership development initiatives. Results from the Armed Forces diagnostic are still pending.

Duties and Responsibilities

I worked directly with an analysis group of the Headquarters of the Chief of Staff of the Commanding General of the Army (JEMGE), tasked with carrying out the diagnostic. Four different areas where considered: military professionalism, leadership in the army, obligatory military service (OMS), and the viability of creating and sustaining, a research institute within the army. The aim was to locate deficiencies and provide options and recommendations for future action, policies, and programs.

Each area under consideration had a working-group. Led by a Colonel, JEMGE consisted of three Lieutenant Colonels, supported by two Majors and civilian staff. A Lt. Col was responsible for each of the areas under consideration with the exception of OMS, the responsibility of a Major. A typical working-group included a Lt. Col., a Major, and myself. I provided research and methodological assistance to the working groups charged with researching different models of professionalism and leadership.

The materials forming background of my work include *"Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada"* (POA), and the draft leadership manuals produced at CFLI. In the professionalism working group I aimed at using POA as an example of a model of military professionalism - a term of reference - that JEMGE could use and adapt to elaborate a similar product. The aim of the leadership-working group was to analyse different leadership models in order to create their own leadership doctrine. The CFLI manuals were important resources that provided a values-based perspective on leadership.

PART II: LESSONS LEARNED

The background, history, aim, and my role in this project being explained, Part II of this paper focuses on practical, project related, lessons-learned. They provide practical perspectives to accompany the academic work in this volume.

The lessons detailed here include the importance of establishing professional and organizational credentials; fully understanding the social, economic, and political context, and the effects thereof, on staff motivation; and, understanding institutional functioning and norms, as well as the dominant style of leadership.

Establishing institutional and personal motivations and capabilities in a clear and frank manner created an friendly and therefore efficient working environment. Secondly, understanding the social, economic, and political background against which the Army functions, was important for developing perspectives and arguments that established project buy-in and internalized the importance of the work among JEMGE personnel. Lastly, military culture is not uniform across cultures or countries. That differences exist in organizational structures, functioning, and leadership styles, is a truism. Understanding how the army worked, the leadership characteristics, and how, and when, to work inside or outside of formal channels, maintained project momentum.

Establishing Credentials and Capabilities

Establishing my credentials and motivations, including those of CFLI, in a frank and honest manner, created a productive and cordial work environment. First, I established, better yet, I clarified, my own credentials, and those of CFLI explaining the motivation for involvement in this project. Misunderstanding could have been avoided by initially clarifying the financial capabilities of my involvement. Lastly, it was important to articulate the role of outside institutions supporting the project, in this case, Mr. Quintana and the SDO.

Advising a group of senior officers was as nerve raking for me, as working with a junior reserve officer/graduate student, must have been disappointing for them. During the pre-project staff assistance visit, I was introduced with credentials incorporating an element of exaggeration and artistic license. Following the visit, I clarified what my credentials exactly were: “an officer in the reserves” quickly became “a Second-Lieutenant in the reserves”, “consultant” became “academic advisor”, and “specialist in defence policy” became “ I read a lot of military history”. Explaining who I am, what I have done, and what I wanted to do, emphasizing that this project was a mutual learning experience, honestly and frankly clarified my credentials. This created a high level of trust and amicability that increased our efficiency.

Equally important, was establishing the credentials and motivation of CFLI. The Bolivian military has always been considered “the sick boy” of South America. Having fought wars against all its neighbours, the only successfully repelled foreign invasion was in 1967 when the Army captured Che Guevara and his followers. Throughout its history, the Army has received a number of foreign military missions: the French in the early 1900s, followed by the Germans, and now the U.S. As a result, there is a natural scepticism to imposing first world practices on a third world military.

Realizing this, I described the turbulent history of the CF in the 1990s, adding that the effects were still felt and the CF has only recently began implementing purposed reforms. The motivation of CFLI, it followed, was to measure foreign reception of the Canadian model of professionalism, and research the transferability of diversity initiatives to the CF. In short; it was as much a learning experience for CFLI, as it was for the Bolivian Army. Creating a sense of working in a mutually beneficial learning environment distinguished our involvement from other missions to Bolivia.

Establishing the amount of resources available for project support is part and parcel of establishing credentials. That Foreign Affairs Canada (FAC), via the Human Security Program (HSP), and not DND, funded CFLI participation - that one government department funded another - was surprising to JEMGE. I had to describe funding process and our limitations on several occasions in response to JEMGE proposals. This issue would have been resolved by articulating financial parameters and limitations from the beginning.

Establishing credentials and capabilities, and providing a clear description of the roles of any organization outside of, yet supporting the project, was as important as articulating financial parameters. Mr. Quintana's organization provided logistical and academic support. I worked out of their offices. With previous military experience, Mr. Quintana personally knew many of the officers I worked with; he also knew many people outside of JEMGE who assisted the work. This resulted in a close relationship that was not immediately clarified, a fact that later led to confusion.

JEMGE assumed that Mr. Quintana was directly connected to the project by being contracted by CFLI. In fact he served as a personal, albeit informal, advisor to the Commanding General of the Army. This placed him in an informal coordinating role; he had the resources, network, and experience, which I needed. Now, being well published, Mr. Quintana is often sought out to provide commentary on defence and security issues. In one such case he responded to an article on a conference wherein the Minister of Defence, the Commander of the Armed Forces, and the Commanders of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, all presented different views of the future roles and capabilities of the Armed Forces. Based on this divergence of perspectives, Mr. Quintana commented that the Armed Forces lacked coherent and unified strategic leadership. His op-ed appeared the page after the initial article and needed to be read in context with the principle article.

Focusing solely on the op-ed, the reception by JEMGE was not enthusiastic. Many took his statements as personal insults. Questions where raised as to the exact role he played in the project and whether or not his comments reflected the beliefs of CFLI, and by extension, the Government of Canada. They asked for my perspective and opinion on the leadership at JEMGE, as a microcosm of the Armed Forces.

Clarifying Mr. Quintana's role would have ensured no direct connection to Canada and avoided insinuations that CFLI agreed with, moreover, endorsed his perspectives. The Army leadership, Mr. Quintana, or myself, establishing his and the SDO's role, could have avoided this.

Fully and frankly establishing my credentials and motivations created an atmosphere of trust and camaraderie that paved over future arguments and disagreements. For JEMGE, understanding the motivation behind CFLI support distinguished this project from previous missions to Bolivia. Understanding that we were learning from them, as they were from us, diminished the perception of CFLI directing the project, removing the stigmatism of being just another foreign military mission. After establishing my financial capabilities, there was no confusion over what I could, or could not do. Lastly, fully detailing the role of Mr. Quintana and his organization would have avoided the misunderstanding detailed above.

Context: Institutional and Personal

I use the term "institutional context" to refer to the stresses and strains that the Army, as a whole, suffers. Understanding the cumulative effect of the strains of 2003 on the Army and its personnel, contextualized personal and professional motivations, or lack thereof, in this project. This helped me inspire dedication and the will to succeed at the task at hand.

The Bolivian Army currently suffers an identity crisis. The events of 2003 shook popular faith in the military, hitherto considered one of the more dependable state institutions. The upcoming Constitutional Assembly will address the future role of the military, its funding, and resource allocation. The very existence of the military as an institution will be discussed in an arena including portions of the population that bore the brunt of the clashes of 2003. This has led to the realization that to survive, the military must adopt and transform to reflect the reality, and gain the faith and support of Bolivian society.

Against this backdrop, the army has deployed 200 soldiers in support of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). The Army recognizes its larger international role reflects its performance as an extension of Bolivian foreign policy rather than as national gendarme.

Two trends are apparent here. First is the recognition that to be effective, the Army must have the support of, and reflect Bolivian society; for the most part, it has, and does neither. The second is that being active internationally has raised its national prominence. The fact that these troops performed admirably under fire in July 2004 reinforces the notion of professionalism among the Army. So, there are two broad groups of officers: those who believe that reform and transformation are essential to survival, and those who believe participation in MONUC and future missions will raise domestic support for the Army and reflect its professionalism.

From my perspective neither is entirely correct. Regardless, recognizing these institutional trends was important for validating and creating support for the diagnostic wherefrom future institutional reforms will stem. Nonetheless, the expected occurred. The professionalism-working group confronted me with the argument that the permanent corps, the Officer and NCO corps, is professional by virtue of training and the fact that the Army plays a larger role overseas.

Replying that this being the case but, they have nonetheless been tasked to conduct this study, would have only reaffirmed the belief they were carrying out another order from above, as opposed to convincing them that this was necessary, and ground-breaking work. The issue was motivating the group so that project work, intellectually and academically challenging, was not disregarded in favour of more familiar, and therefore safe, menial tasks.

To do this I first tackled the peace support operations. A short history of the of the CF peacekeeping experience of the 1990s, convinced the group that increased participation in international peace support operations was not the end all, and be all of military professionalism. Incidents during deployments to Somalia, Croatia, and Haiti, not only distracted from the admirable performance of the majority of deployed personnel, but also underlined a lack of professionalism, and professional values and ethics in the CF. This provided perspective to my point that international deployments undoubtedly raise the operational experience of the army, but fail to address the fundamental values, ethics and standards, which increase operational effectiveness.

Understanding the context in which these officers operated allowed me to relate their institutional experience to that of the CF in the 1990s. Relating the Canadian experience providing perspective to the group and helped them to internalize the importance of the work. By internalizing the work, the group was unified it with a common, albeit broad, goal.

Leadership

Above I described my attempts to motivate the group towards a common goal. The next issue was how to accomplish the work. Operationalising this motivation involved agreeing upon timings, benchmarks, goals, and outcomes. Strong leadership was required to direct this intellectually and academically demanding work.

The problem was the lack of an oversight mechanism to direct, monitor, and evaluate the progress of the project. This resulted in little to no coordination between the working groups. The absence of strong leadership resulted in three scenarios needing resolution; first, the lack of coordination between JEMGE working groups threatened to produce a scattered, as opposed to methodologically sound series of findings; secondly, without definition, some of the terms employed during the project led to time consuming and confrontational discussions; and lastly, conflicting interpretations of the General’s intent almost de-railed the professionalism working group.

Working with each group, I had a broad idea of where they were going and how they were getting there. And, they where going down separate roads in different ways. The point of the exercise was for all JEMGE personnel involved in the project, to consider and discuss the work so that everyone knew, understood, and learned from each group’s progress. Without this forum, the result would have been disparate and uninformed working groups, presenting unsound analyses. Monitoring each group to ensure overall cohesion at JEMGE was the responsibility of its leadership. However, it did not happen.

I therefore recommended holding weekly coordination meetings wherein each group presented progress updates. I thereby avoided reporting directly to JEMGE leadership on the progress of each individual group’s work. This also allowed members to provide comments and suggestions on each other’s work. These weekly meetings where a success, in so far as other taskings did not distract member attendance. Failing this, I argued that the officer commanding JEMGE should review each group’s proposed work plan prior to them researching their respective areas, and thereafter monitor progress.

This was agreed upon and implemented. Each group had to present a work-plan detailing the scope, objectives, goals, outcomes, and methodology, prior to beginning the work.

Providing scope to each working group fell largely to me. In the leadership-working group, this was relatively easy due to the progressive inclinations of the officer in charge. Moreover, General Lopez's intent was quite simple: develop a leadership model. Working with professionalism was more complex because the Bolivian Army is a conscript army. Moreover, there are an abundance of differing models and theories regarding military professionalism. Developing standards of professionalism was dependent on resolution of these two points and agreement on Gen. Lopéz's intent (which was never put in writing for our reference).

To operationalize Gen. Lopez's intent, which I read as "elaborate and comply with professional standards", I saw three necessary tasks. First, given the role that POA played in this project, it was natural that each working group should read and discuss the material. To this end, POA was translated into Spanish. To ensure that all the officers read and *understood* the material, I recommended discussing the material in a series of workshops I designed. This ensured, that at the very least, each officer would be familiar with the material. Secondly, they needed to extract the methodology making it relevant to the Bolivian context and the intellectual capacity of the army.[1] Logically, the third task consisted of laying the groundwork for elaborating a similar model of professionalism applicable to the Bolivian Army.

A few words are needed here to explain role, contents, and logic of POA to understand the difficulties I encountered.

POA is the defining document for members of Canada's profession of arms. It is the first time the CF has attempted to define itself and communicate the central philosophy of service. It serves a cornerstone document establishing the intellectual and doctrinal basis for CF personnel and professional development systems. POA addresses the profession of arms in theoretical terms articulating a statement of the Canadian military ethos and its role as a unifying force for members of the CF. Detailing the attributes of the profession of arms, it explains the management of the profession in the Canadian context. It provides CF members with a full understanding of what their professional duty consists and how they should perform it. Lastly, the manual provides principles to guide the stewardship of the profession.

POA takes the scholarly literature on professionalism and adapts it to the Canadian context, taking into consideration Canadian values, and ideals, and the moral and practical requirements to maintaining a volunteer force.

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[1] One of the main functions of conscription is education. Many frontier units provide Spanish literacy training to conscripts. Any doctrinaire statement similar to POA, to be universally applicable, would need to take the education standards of the military into account.

POA elaborates a "professional construct" - what it means to be a military professional in Canada. It is best to view the construct as a triangle with identity, expertise, and responsibility being the three sides: these are the professional attributes of the profession of arms. The concept of "military ethos" unifies the professional attributes, reflecting how military professionals view themselves, fulfil their roles, and relate to government and society. This construct is all inclusive considering all regular and reserve force members of the CF to be military professionals. The professional construct is subsumed and continuously affected by government direction and control.

The working group had several concerns with this material. Being a conscript army, the group took me to task on the applicability of the Canadian model to Bolivia. It simply was not applicable to Bolivia, considering conscript soldiers are not volunteers. Moreover, an inclusive model of professionalism, equated officers to conscripts and NCOs.

From their perspective, experience, knowledge, and expertise defined professionalism. Whereas conscripts and NCOs accumulated technical capabilities, only officers met the conditions necessary to be considered professionals. The mixing of responsibilities and skills between the NCO and Officer corps in the CF, as well as the all inclusive construct, is unheard of in Bolivia.

Their perspectives differ dramatically from the Canadian model, which incorporates both practical and moral considerations in defining professionalism. Morally, by swearing the Oath of Allegiance, and wearing the uniform, an individual becomes a member of the profession of arms in Canada. Embracing the military ethos; becoming trade or occupation qualified; pursuing high standards of the required expertise; and understanding; and, accepting and fulfilling all commitments and responsibilities inherent in the profession, is a practical demonstration of professionalism. Given that conscript personnel cannot fit into the Canadian model by virtue of not *voluntarily* subscribing to the moral and practical demands of the profession, I distinguished between *military professionals* and *members* of the profession of arms.

My concern was that any reforms focussing on professional development would focus solely on the officer corps. While reform is usually top-down, I worried they would forget about the bottom; that their perspective would ensure reform touched only the top, forgetting to move down in the future. Following the logic, if not wording of POA, with reference to unqualified CF members, I argued that *membership* in a profession is distinct from *professional status.* However, this did preclude the application of professional development programs. By drawing a clear distinction between officers, and NCOs on one hand, and conscripts on the other, my argument worked. Being imbued with the same values, martial or otherwise, the latter two groups were, for the time being, "granted" membership status to the profession of arms.

The working group overly concerned itself with operational and strategic matters – the nuts and bolts of military professionalism. This is largely because the officer in charge of the group came from an operational command, and had previously played a role in securing Bolivian participation in UN peace support operations while seconded to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. He focused on training and education systems, information which was beyond my mandate and capabilities to provide.

While education, training, and experience is crucial for the military profession, I argued they were not the only factors denoting professionalism, of which operational effectiveness is the clearest demonstration. Most of the academic literature on professionalism in general, and military professionalism specifically, cite education and training as one of three elements; the other two being a sense of corporateness, or identity, and service to the state and adherence to transcendental values.

In the Canadian context education and training result in expertise which, with identity, responsibility, and a unifying military ethos, constitutes military professionalism. The military ethos combines the beliefs and expectations regarding military service, Canadian values, and Canadian military values. POA notes how military values must reflect, and can never contradict civil values, found in the laws and norms of a country. If the diversity initiatives at the military college were an attempt to make the Army more reflective of the society it serves, it followed that the Army's professional ethos should reflect the values of its parent society. My aim here was to change the functionalist focus of the working group to a broader perspective of professionalism: in other words, to consider the values of Bolivian society and their relation to Bolivian military values, and by extension the relation of the military to society.

Leveraging the campaign plan of the commanding general with the material in POA, I reached a compromise wherein the working group laid the foundations for research into a similar doctrinaire statement and subsequently continued on their functionalist interests in education and training systems.

Intellectually demanding exercises require strong leadership to guide, coordinate, and provide definition and scope. Unfamiliar and confusing territory, however, can diminish what would otherwise be good leadership. This was the case at JEMGE. Establishing weekly meetings ensured that everyone knew what everyone else was doing and could provide commentary. Using the Commanding General's speeches and draft campaign plan, in conjunction with creative interpretation and compromise, motivated the professionalism-working group to chart unfamiliar territory. Lastly, workshops on POA involving all of JEMGE, and personnel from other departments, created a forum to discuss the material and its applicability to the Bolivian Army.

Chain of Command

I mentioned earlier that Gen. Lopéz verbally ordered the Commandant of the Army military college to design a program facilitating the entry of aboriginal candidates noting this was a sign of things to come. This became glaringly apparent while organizing the September conference.

Every organization by virtue of being an organization has an established system of responsibility, authority, and accountability. In the military context this is referred to as the chain of command. An organization, military or otherwise, is made up of individuals, with their own interests to protect, motivations, and professional goals - not to mention personal and professional rivalries or antagonisms. This is a natural state of affairs, the effect of which distorts the ideal functioning of any organization. In my case the result was a situation where working outside rather than within, the chain of command was more effective. This was the case organizing the September seminar.

While helping to organize the September conference I was confronted a paradoxical situation. Given the unique situation of Mr. Quintana vis a vis the Commanding General of the Army, I almost replaced the chain of command. Secondly, personal antagonisms within the Army forced me to by-pass the chain of command. In the former, I was unintentionally privy to instructions and taskings before JEMGE, which was officially appointed to organize the Army's role in the conference. In the latter, I intentionally avoided the chain of command to coordinate the activities and respond to the requirements of the Army's public relations cell (DICOSE) and a Canadian military public relations crew tasked to cover the conference.

Throughout the three months of the project, the September conference loomed in the background. Planning did not begin until August and the beginning of the month was dominated by the Armed Forces to preparing for Independence Day celebrations, which involve military parades throughout the country. The planning process was only initiated in the third week of August.

Four organizations planned the September conference: the Army, the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations (MAIPO), the SDO, and CFLI. The Army, following the format of the previous conference in March, agreed to provide labour, facilities, transportation and security for foreign presenters, a public relations team to record the conference, and lodgings for the aboriginal groups attending. MAIPO agreed to coordinate the arrival of participating indigenous groups. The SDO coordinated administrative matters, while CFLI coordinated foreign academic participation.

Coordination between the Army and outside governmental agencies proved easy. Coordination within the Army, despite the fact that the different cells where in the same building, proved more difficult.

Prior to JEMGE being formally tasked, Mr. Quintana, Gen. Lopéz, and I, discussed the responsibilities the Army would assume for the conference over coffee and cookies on 24 Aug 04. Five minutes and several phone calls into the meeting, the General tasked the relevant personnel and mobilized the required resources. In five minutes he did the job of JEMGE and I shudder to estimate the time it would have taken otherwise. JEMGE did not receive this information until I informed them a week later. They did not know who, or what, to coordinate resulting in confusion and frustration between JEMGE, and the personnel the General had personally tasked with me in the middle. Admirable for masking it, I am sure an amount of this resentment was directed toward me; far be it for an academic advisor to inform senior officers of decisions and actions taken by their superiors.

A chain of command or clearly delineated lines of authority, accountability and responsibility, implies an effective communication system whereby messages are received and replied to frequently and efficiently; even more so if the communication takes place in the same building. This is the ideal. The reality is that personal antagonisms, competition, and scepticism over the work at hand, frustrate the ideal, resulting in a situation where working within, becomes less effective than working outside of the chain of command.

This was the case making arrangements between DICOSE and JEMGE, on the first and second floors respectively, of the Commanding General's Headquarters. Coordination was needed to avoid crossover and repetition in work between the Bolivian and Canadian public relations teams. Capabilities had to be established, linguistic support was needed, and a plan had to be drafted to avoid work duplication and fully maximize both their potentials. Rather than dealing with DICOSE directly, I informed JEMGE of my requirements, respecting the request that future coordinating activities be conducted through their office. However the heads of JEMGE and DICOSE, I was informed by personnel within JEMGE, where personally antagonistic. This resulted in a lack of cooperation so that messages I sent to DICOSE requesting meetings to begin planning never reached their destinations. Mr. Quintana was able to put me in contact with the officer commanding DICOSE. So, this time I intentionally went outside the standard parameters and walked downstairs.

Being a well-known and published academic, Mr. Quintana's extensive personal network became very important. Through him I was able to by-pass the formal chain of command. Meetings with the commanding General of the Army where a phone call away, and unpublished speeches were at my disposal. Mr. Quintana was able to arrange meetings directly with DICOSE thus avoiding JEMGE. This allowed me greater freedom of movement in coordinating the activities of the public relations teams.

Avoiding the chain of command, I was able to do what was not done *within* the chain of command. Mr. Quintana was a valuable resource providing me with contact information of individuals who provided assistance. The downside was that in several cases I became more a coordinator than an academic advisor, as was the case after relaying instructions the Gen. Lopéz had verbally issued.

CONCLUSION

"Military transformation" is a misleading term in the context of this project. The tendency is to view transformation from an operational perspective encompassing a change of equipment, tactics, command and control practices, and missions. The Bolivia Initiative does not fit this framework. Rather, the aim is to support the Bolivian Army's attempts to improve its institutional self-regulatory capacity; elaborate standards of professionalism incorporating societal values; and, design professional development programs, diversity initiatives, and leadership doctrine. The process is a component of the professionalization of state institutions directed at earning the respect and support of the population they serve.

The CF went through a similar experience during the 1990s. Increasing operational tempos, funding cutbacks, elitism among some units, and poor leadership within the CF and DND helped create the conditions leading to incidents in Somalia, Bosnia, and Haiti. Despite the admirable performance of the majority of deployed personnel, the cumulative effect of these, and other domestic incidents involving CF personnel, was a loss of faith in the institution among Canadians. Alongside absentee leadership, subsequent studies and inquiries noted the lack of a professional ethos and a values system directing CF personnel. Canadian participation in the reform initiatives of the Bolivian Army is a direct result of this experience and subsequent reforms.

From the Bolivian perspective the CF emerged from the 1990s with a coherent professional philosophy and ethos, and an increased sense of self-worth, all of which enhance its operational effectiveness. The year 2003 holds as much significance for the Bolivian Army, as the 1990s do for the CF, and the Bolivian military has since come under a similarly high level of public and political scrutiny. Realizing this, the Army, under the initiative of General Lopéz, began the introspective process.

This essay summarizes my experience from the first phase of this process. It notes how frankness in establishing personal and institutional credentials, capabilities, and motivations, created a friendly, understanding, and mutually beneficial working environment. Relating the Bolivian to Canadian experience dissolved scepticism of importing values and methods from a first world to a third world military. This also internalized the work, providing a frame of reference that motivated the personnel involved. Lastly, it describes the importance of being able to function inside and outside the organizational structures.

The lessons learned from the first phase were considered and applied in designing the second phase of the initiative. While supporting the institutional diagnostic was important, it did not generate sufficient knowledge, discussion, and debate, to drive future change. Professionalism development and the diversity initiatives at the military college are the focus of the second phase. Accordingly, I will develop and implement a course on military professionalism in conjunction with JEMGE.

The aim of the course is threefold. First, to present the Canadian model of professionalism with a view to generating internal Army discussion of features applicable to the Bolivian context. Secondly, it aims to plant the seeds for development of a similar Bolivian model. Lastly, it aims to train select officers and senior NCOs to train further personnel on military professionalism. It is a “train the trainers” course, the most effective format of disseminating and promoting, as an example, the Canadian model of military professionalism throughout the Bolivian Army.

Given Bolivian suspicions of first world practices in third world contexts, the course broaches the scholarly work on military professionalism and the methodology behind POA. It is not solely focused on POA. Rather, it is designed to leave room for discussions on how to adapt POA and relevant scholarship to the Bolivian context.

I applied the lessons learned from the first phase in how I now work with JEMGE. As opposed to dividing my energies between working groups, I now deal with only two officers: a project OPI, and the officer commanding JEMGE. While I am charged with developing the course, JEMGE deals with logistical and administrative matters. To avoid any confusion in roles or objectives evident in the first phase, I drafted and negotiated a "Project Charter". The charter describes budgetary and time constraints clearly articulating the roles and requirements for this phase. While negotiating this charter was time consuming, the end result is enhanced clarity.

The Bolivia Initiative is important for several reasons. First, it is a mutually beneficial initiative in which the CF and the Bolivian Army learn from each other. Secondly, it represents Canadian participation and expertise in a growing trend in South American militaries. Lastly, it is consistent with current foreign policy objectives.

While the Bolivian Army benefits from Canadian expertise in leadership, professional development and diversity initiatives, the CF also benefits by learning from the results of these initiatives in Bolivia. In the case of the March and September seminars, for example, the results of indigenous/military discussion were recorded and published presenting valuable insight into indigenous/military issues. With the professionalization course the CF can evaluate the value and effectiveness of implementing a similar program.

Secondly, South American militaries, as a whole, have embarked on a series of professionalization initiatives. This is manifested in their increasing roles in international peace support operations, which has steadily increased over the last decade. This participation represents, in part a search for a raison d'etre after the unpopular military dictatorships of the 'lost decade'. It is also a result of a broad desire for increased participation in the international political and economic order. Peacekeeping, mine clearing, and civic action abroad, represent new skills, missions, and roles undertaken in new multilateral contexts. With CFLI assistance and support, the Bolivian Army is keeping pace with other regional militaries.

Lastly, this initiative can be viewed within the framework of greater Canadian attention to South America in general, and South American defence issues specifically. However, it is important to note that CF participation in Bolivian Army reform is consistent with current Canadian foreign policy, the second pillar of which, outlined in the 1995 foreign policy statement, includes the exportation of Canadian values. In the final analysis the values of the CF, outlined in POA, are consistent with, and reflective of, Canadian values.