

# **Looking Ahead: Contexts of Canadian Forces Leadership Today and Tomorrow**

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## Introduction

1. Our cultural proverbs tell us that history repeats itself (or, if you prefer, plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose) – and, on the other hand, that no two problems are exactly alike. If both of these observations are true, then we ought to retain ideas and habits of continuing usefulness while remaining alert and open to the need for innovation when circumstances change. This paper is an attempt to infer some of the implications for military leadership of several cultural, operational, social, and other portents of a future that will only partially resemble the past. Taken as a whole, these trends define the major contexts of Canadian Forces (CF) leadership doctrine that must be reckoned with if it is to be adaptive.<sup>1</sup>

2. Among the many possible issues that could have been examined, the following were identified as most likely to affect CF leadership doctrine into the foreseeable future: the effort at professional renewal that has been under way since the mid 1990s; the expanded range and frequency of operational missions and tasks since the Cold War; the presence of more military and non-military partners in peace-support operations; the enhanced information and communications capability acquired through digitization of the battle-space; the fact that the world in general has become more unstable and more unpredictable; a public environment that is more aware of and reactive to military affairs; and changes in society and the social make-up of the CF.

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<sup>1</sup> This line of thought, as well as several of the ideas discussed, was suggested by the excellent chapter authored by Boas Shamir and Eyal Ben-Ari, *Leadership in an Open Army?*, in James G. Hunt, George E. Dodge & Leonard Wong (eds.) *Out of the Box Leadership: Transforming the Twenty-first Century Army and other Top-Performing Organizations*, 1999.

### Professional Renewal within the CF

3. In February 1999, the Chief of the Defence Staff established the office of Special Advisor to the CDS on Officer Professional Development (a mandate which was subsequently expanded to Professional Development in general). *Officership 2020*, its initial major project, is described as an initiative to ensure that the CF has the leadership it will need to meet the challenges of the future. It is also a strategy for reforming the officer corps pursuant to direction provided by the Minister of National Defence in 1997, and in response to recommendations from the Somalia Commission of Inquiry and requirements identified in internal reviews (e.g., Officer Development Review Board [Morton Report], 1995; Report of the Royal Military College Board of Governors Study Group, 1997). More recent projects addressing the development of Non-Commissioned Members and General/Flag Officers also have a future orientation and emphasize a renewal of professional values and responsibilities.

4. This effort to revive professional values in the CF has at least three major implications for the practice of leadership. The first is that it broadens the concept of professional obligation to include more than the relatively narrow duty of getting the job done in the most economical way possible. Conduct that is consistent with national and international law and with professional military ethics is also required. With reference to the idea of military professionalism, this means *how* things are done is as important as *what* is achieved. Outcomes or ends associated with conventional notions of organizational effectiveness must also pass a professional-effectiveness means test. Moreover, a revitalized professionalism also suggests that, while discharging their functional responsibilities, leaders must consider and observe all of their moral obligations – to superiors, subordinates, peers, civilians, people subject to special protection, and ultimately to the Government and people of Canada. Hence the first consequence of professional renewal should be an enhanced awareness of the “complexity of military obligation”<sup>2</sup> and a more profound appreciation of the responsibility to sort out the conflicts that will arise from this complexity.

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<sup>2</sup> For an elaboration of this concept, see Nicholas Rescher, *In the Line of Duty: The Complexity of Military Obligation*, U.S. Air Force Academy Lecture on War Morality and the Military Profession, 1990, and Michael Walzer, Two Kinds of Military Responsibility, in L.J. Matthews & D.E. Brown (eds.) *The Parameters of Military Ethics*, 1989.

5. A second consequence of professional renewal is the extra burden of responsibility placed on leaders for observing and upholding professional standards and safeguarding the integrity of the profession of arms in Canada. Granted, military regulations explicitly require all officers and NCMs to become acquainted with, observe, and enforce specific statutes, *Queen's Regulations and Orders*, and all other regulations, rules, orders and instructions that pertain to the performance of their duties. But the obligation in question here goes beyond the mere avoidance of illegality. It also entails positive duties of promoting and evaluating professional competence (including the establishment of operationally valid standards of readiness and effectiveness, linking individual and collective training to such standards, conducting realistic evaluations of readiness, etc.), reinforcing ethical conduct by all members (honesty, diligence, loyalty, fairness, etc.), creating a healthy professional culture, and defending professional military values and principles when faced with institutional and other pressures that threaten them. In short, military leaders, especially in the executive cadre, will have to deal more effectively than in the past with their dual responsibilities and loyalties – namely, leadership of the military profession in accordance with the dictates of the professional ethic, and leadership of the military institution according to the prerogatives of the Government and its central bureaucracies – and any potential conflict between them.

6. As an illustration of the gap in understanding which exists among senior CF officers concerning the role of the executive cadre and its relationship to the Government, one has only to refer to the results of some recent survey work by the CF Leadership Institute (CFLI) with attendees at the Command and Staff Course (CSC), the Advanced Military Studies Course (AMSC), and the National Security Studies Course (NSSC).<sup>3</sup> Although findings are based on a modest sample (n = 90) and must be treated as preliminary, the response patterns to several items are thought-provoking. For example, with reference to an opinion item on the proper role of the senior military leadership in decisions to commit forces abroad, surprisingly high percentages of officers indicated that the senior leadership's role should be to "Advocate" or "Insist" on such matters as the rules of engagement, military goals, exit

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<sup>3</sup> Sarah Hill, CFLI Armed Forces and Society Project, personal communication. This research is a Canadian adjunct to work by the American Triangle Institute for Security Studies (TISS) on the gap between the military and civilian society.

strategy, force composition, and so on; correspondingly small percentages selected “Advise” as the most appropriate role. On a related item, 32% of these senior officers indicated they would be influenced to leave military service if the senior uniformed leadership did not “stand up for what is right in military policy.” It seems evident that, in reconciling professional with institutional obligations, senior leaders will have to do a better job in sorting out their advisory and advocacy responsibilities and in explaining the balancing act required to both internal and external audiences. This kind of observation has been made before:

“In a number of areas (e.g., laws which shape personnel policies, political influences on infrastructure, operational taskings, and defence allocations), government decisions circumscribe the ability of senior commanders and staffs to exercise significant discretion in policy matters and resource utilization. There are costs and trade-offs involved in every decision and some number of them affect CF members directly or indirectly. Although the principles of civilian control and military responsiveness to government are well understood at senior levels of the CF, this may not be the case at lower levels of the organization. These facts of life need to be explained in terms the membership can understand and accept. Otherwise, members are likely to form or cling to unrealistic expectations concerning the power of the senior leadership to decide policies and/or the appropriateness of senior leadership publicly opposing unpopular policies.”<sup>4</sup>

7. The third implication of professional renewal is related to the hope to establish a culture that epitomizes the military ethos and to forge a professional identity that will embrace all CF members. At a time when military-skills training already consumes extensive resources, this additional socialization requirement may be a tall order, and not just because of the additional resource costs involved. The inculcation of a common professional value set and the development of a cohesive military culture are comparatively easier tasks when the values of the parent civilian culture are closely aligned with those of the military, and when incoming members of the CF have similar backgrounds and value systems – in other words, when recruit cohorts are socially homogeneous. Work done by Michael Adams of the Environics Research Group on Canadian “value tribes” suggests that Canadian culture as a whole is becoming increasingly postmodern (“the macro-politics of institutions is being eclipsed by the micro-politics of personal networks”).<sup>5</sup> This is not a particularly good fit with the Social-Traditional values of the military and represents one aspect of the socialization challenge.

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<sup>4</sup> K.W.J. Wenek, Briefing Note for the CDS – Unresponsive chain of command, 29 May 1995.

<sup>5</sup> *Sex in the Snow: Canadian Social Values at the End of the Millenium*, 1998, p. 22.

8. Another comes from the type and diversity of value sets military recruits will bring into the CF. Interested in the military applications of values research, the Directorate of Strategic Human Resource Coordination (DSHRC) commissioned Environics to look at recent recruits. By reverse-engineering demographic data, a rough profile was constructed which revealed CF recruits as typical of their age group (i.e., low on awareness of mortality and religiosity; high on sexual permissiveness, civil disobedience, equal relationships, and the pursuit of personal happiness to the detriment of duty). They also scored high on attraction to violence, risk-taking, and enthusiasm for technology, while scoring low on introspection, primacy of family, and everyday ethics.<sup>6</sup> In key areas, this orientation is notably divergent from the ideals of the military ethos.

9. What this means for CF leaders is that the military ethos, value system, and professional identity will not be automatically or easily assumed by some new members. Typically, the CF has attracted young (17-24 year old) rural (non-metropolitan, less than 100,00), white males possessing a high school education or less,<sup>7</sup> in other words, recruits who are often incomplete in their education, development, and maturation. The CF will continue to attract this group to military service, but is also bringing in higher numbers of recruits with post-secondary education. The better educated recruits are more likely to share some of the individualistic values of a postmodern orientation, and hence are more likely to be the “free thinkers” of their cohorts, conscious of their rights and sensitive to infringements perceived as arbitrary. On the other hand, the incompletely educated will have different adaptation difficulties, and on average, are more likely to have more training setbacks and present more disciplinary and administrative problems.<sup>8</sup> The socialization challenge will be significant, but it is not clear that adequate provision has been, or can be, made in entry-level training regimes that are already heavily loaded. This task of socializing new members into a

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<sup>6</sup> Tracey Wait, *Canadian Demographics and Social Values at a Glance: Impact on Strategic HR Planning*, DSHRC Research Note 2/02, January 2002.

<sup>7</sup> Tracey Wait, *Youth in Canada: Population Projection to 2026*, DSHRC Research Note 2/01, January 2001.

<sup>8</sup> It is for this reason that the US Armed Services have, for decades, placed a high premium on high school completion, as it is the best single indicator of successful adaptation to the military; see Mark Eitelberg, Janice Laurence, Brian Waters, & Linda Perelman, *Screening for Service: Aptitude and Education Criteria for Military Entry*, Human Resources Research Organization, 1984.

common professional value system will be further complicated by other value-diversity issues, discussed later in the section on social change and the composition of the CF.

10. In terms of the functional distinction that can be drawn between direct leadership (leading people in the execution of day-to-day operations) and indirect leadership (leading organizations into the future),<sup>9</sup> the executive cadre has the major role to play in articulating and communicating professional obligations, in defining the military ethos, and in reconciling conflicts between institutional and professional obligations. Unit-level leaders have a stronger role to play in reinforcing professional values and in ensuring compliance with professional norms of behaviour. Moreover, because professional acculturation is a relatively slow process, unit-level leaders also have to assume a major responsibility for member socialization.

#### Changes in Missions and Tasks

11. In the spectrum of conflict and operations on which current capability planning is based, the Defence of North America and Collective Defence figure at the most violent end of this spectrum and were the primary focus of military planning and training during the Cold War. The expert view today, however, is that, the terrorist attacks on North America of September 2001 notwithstanding, there is no major military threat to Canada and the United States for the foreseeable future, and likewise, NATO will face no military threat to its territory.<sup>10</sup> Everybody knows what has changed of course. As characterized by a number of military analysts, present trends indicate “a devolution of warfare, with informal war – that involving non-state actors, often operating outside normative structures like the law of armed conflict – superseding formal war between state militaries.”<sup>11</sup> Another trend is “the blurring

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<sup>9</sup> See T.O Jacobs & E. Jaques, Executive Leadership, in R.Gal & A.D. Mangelsdorff (eds.), *Handbook of Military Psychology*, 1991; Stephen Zaccaro, *Models and Theories of Executive Leadership: A Conceptual/Empirical Review and Integration*, 1996.

<sup>10</sup> VCDS Force Planning Scenarios, [http://vcds.dwan.dnd.ca/dgsp/dda/scen/intro\\_e.asp](http://vcds.dwan.dnd.ca/dgsp/dda/scen/intro_e.asp).

<sup>11</sup> Steven Metz, *Future War, Future Battlespace*. Presentation at the Leadership in the Armies of Tomorrow and the Future Conference, Kingston, ON, February 2002.

of distinctions between things that used to be separate, like war and peace, security and law enforcement, the military and non-military dimensions of security.”<sup>12</sup>

12. In blended operations, the nature of a mission can easily shift back and forth across distinct military objectives or simultaneously involve different kinds of objectives: domination through the conventional use of force, deterrence through military presence and the implied use of force, stabilization through policing, and rebuilding through the provision of aid and assistance. In 1995, General Charles Krulak, Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, established the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory to help fight what he described as the three-block war: “One moment they will be feeding refugees and providing other humanitarian relief. A few hours later (conducting peace keeping operations) Marines will be separating fighting warlords and their followers . . . Later that day, they may well be engaged in mid-intensity, highly lethal conflict – and all this will take place within three city blocks.”<sup>13</sup> In short, so-called normal military operations have become ambiguous shape-shifting exercises characterized by an inter-mingling of civil, political, humanitarian, and combat dimensions.

13. To the extent that operations of the above type, especially army operations, are likely to be carried out by relatively independent and dispersed teams, the importance of *mission-oriented command* as a governing concept of operational doctrine is reinforced – subject to any countervailing effects introduced by advanced communications capabilities (see subsequent section on the digitized battle-space). Like General Krulak, the senior CF leadership has a responsibility to ensure operational doctrine (including questions of force structure, weapons and equipment, etc.) keeps pace with the changing mix of missions and tasks. Meanwhile, junior NCMs and junior officers will require a more cosmopolitan understanding of world affairs and a new kind of situational awareness that will permit confident decision-making and appropriate independent action in complicated scenarios. To some extent, this has been recognized in the Enhanced Leadership Model recently introduced

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Commandant of the Marine Corps, White Letter No. 3-98, 26 June 1998.

for new officers. What this means for NCMs is that their leadership training and education should probably be more like that provided to officers,<sup>14</sup> as it seems to be increasingly the case that decisions and actions taken at the tactical level have the potential for strategic repercussions. With respect to general leadership competencies, strong diagnostic skills, the ability to deal with a fatter envelope of relevant factors in the military estimate, and a broad, flexible, behavioural repertoire are indicated.

### Operating Arrangements

14. Additional complexity has been introduced by changes in the operating arrangements of military forces. The conventional picture of military power being exercised decisively and unencumbered by non-military considerations has become increasingly atypical. As described by Shamir and Ben-Ari, “joint exercises between armies of different nations, multinational peacekeeping forces, and multinational crisis intervention forces have become widespread and common.”<sup>15</sup> According to DND’s *Military Assessment 2000*, military power will continue to be a decisive factor in defending values and interests, but “the ‘New Peacekeeping Partnership’, involving the armed forces, other government departments and a variety of non-governmental organisations, will be increasingly relevant.”<sup>16</sup>

15. Because such coalitions will also bring into play a mix of interests, priorities, training, and experience,<sup>17</sup> “military leadership under such circumstances cannot . . . depend only on authority, technical capacity or proficiency, or tactical ability. There is need for political sensitivity, intellectual awareness, and a good familiarity with the norms, cultures and mores of the environment within which the military unit is operating. . . . Cultural sensitivity and skills related to boundary-spanning activities [dealing with people and organizations external to the unit] such as liaison, mediation, and negotiation thus become preconditions for

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<sup>14</sup> See Lieutenant-Colonel Bernd Horn, A Timeless Strength: The Army’s Senior NCO Corps, *Canadian Military Journal*, Summer 2002, for a supporting view.

<sup>15</sup> *Leadership in an Open Army?*, p. 24.

<sup>16</sup> Scot Robertson, NDHQ/ Directorate of Defence Analysis.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Lieutenant-General (ret’d) Romeo Dallaire, *Command Experiences in Rwanda*, in Carol McCann & Ross Pigeau (eds.) *The Human in Command: Exploring the Modern Military Experience*, 2000.



effective military leadership.”<sup>18</sup> For leaders accustomed to working in NATO or NORAD within the context of a particular service, this challenge of cultural interoperability is not so much a matter of qualitative change as it is of degree, but, in the new international coalitions involving non-NATO partners, they will have to adjust to unusual levels of social heterogeneity while balancing the several roles they are expected to perform. Any requirement to conduct joint operations adds another dimension to this mix. Allan English has noted, for example, that although the CF has been a unified service for some time, the most formative years for CF officers are spent in a single-service environment and culture; hence leadership styles tend to reflect the strengths and biases of the parent service culture.<sup>19</sup> This means that the ability of CF officers to operate effectively in a joint environment cannot be assumed on the basis of time accrued in a unified service.

16. In short, behavioural complexity theories, as discussed by Zaccaro in the context of strategic or executive leadership,<sup>20</sup> will also apply at the level of operational leadership in both joint and combined operations. The basic premise of behavioural complexity theories is that leaders require significant behavioural flexibility to deal effectively with diverse social relationships and national/organizational/service cultures, a broad range of leader roles, and competing social/political interests. In terms of a new dominant type of military professional, many of the requirements for effective performance of the new kinds of military missions and tasks under these new operating arrangements reflect the emergence of the soldier-scholar-diplomat in place of the warrior-technician of the Cold War period.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Shamir & Ben-Ari, p. 31.

<sup>19</sup> *The Masks of Command: Leadership Differences in the Canadian Army, Navy and Air Force*, Presentation at the Conference on Leadership in the Armies of Tomorrow and the Future, Kingston, ON, 6-7 February 2002.

<sup>20</sup> Stephen Zaccaro, *Models and Theories of Executive Leadership: A Conceptual/Empirical Review and Integration*, 1996.

<sup>21</sup> Charles Moskos, *Toward a Postmodern Military: The United States as a Paradigm*, and Franklin Pinch, *Canada: Managing Change with Shrinking Resources*, in C. Moskos, J.A. Williams & D.R. Segal (eds.), *The Postmodern Military: Armed Forces after the Cold War*, 2000.

## The Digitized Battle-space

17. With respect to advanced information technology, the adoption of manoeuvre warfare and mission command as war-fighting and command philosophies<sup>22</sup> poses some unique challenges. Under the broad umbrella of the Revolution in Military Affairs, one of the capabilities afforded by the digitized battle-space is the promise of a real-time common picture of the battle-space everywhere all the time. But, as Labbé notes, the resulting flow of information tends to draw commanders back to their headquarters and away from the battlefield. The related temptation, with the capability of direct communications to all levels of the organization, is to micro-manage operations from higher-than-normal levels of command. In this regard, it seems important to ask what lessons were learned from the Vietnam experience of stacking command helicopters over the battlefield. Maybe not many, judging by complaints of the American air commander about the detrimental effects of video teleconferencing on the conduct of the NATO air campaign in Kosovo.<sup>23</sup>

18. In any case, the point to note is that actual behaviour in these information-rich environments may be less influenced by doctrine and training than by organizational culture, individual command style, and the situational factors of information volume and operational tempo. For example, with respect to the effects of situational factors, relatively low volumes of information, coupled with a moderate tempo of operations, will allow or encourage commanders with a controlling style or who conform to a controlling culture to micro-manage, whereas either information flooding or a high tempo of operations may leave no option but to default to a mission-command style, regardless of operating culture or the commander's personality.

19. As van Creveld has reminded us, under a mission-oriented command system, "commanders are trained to tell their subordinates what to do, but not how. Provided only that they keep within the framework of the whole, wide latitude is granted the latter to devise

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<sup>22</sup> Colonel Serge Labbé, *Time, Tempo, and Command*, in McCann & Pigeau, 2000.

<sup>23</sup> Cited in Brigadier-General (ret'd) Joe Sharpe and Allan English, *Principles for Change in the Post-Cold War Command and Control of the Canadian Forces*, 2002.

and carry out their own measures.”<sup>24</sup> An unintended consequence of the real-time direct-communications capabilities provided by the digitized battle-space may be to curtail or stifle the independence of action and initiative venerated by mission-command theory and deemed essential to exploit the compressed decision-action cycle of high-tempo operations.

20. If this is to be avoided, senior commanders charged with preparing the CF for the future will have to work at developing the culture and habits of a mission-command style, or what is termed in leadership theory, appropriate delegation. It follows that they will also require a fairly robust developmental attitude toward subordinate commanders. They will have to acquire, if necessary, and exercise the discipline and culture of allowing subordinate commanders to learn firsthand from their experiences. And as a pre-condition to the above, they will have to keep open the window of tolerable risk for leadership and command mistakes during training and operations.<sup>25</sup> The difficult part will be to keep the balance right – allowing sufficient freedom of action to exploit opportunities while maintaining just the right amount of control to prevent catastrophic error (q.v., the performance-oversight lessons of the Somalia inquiry), particularly when the inclination in an environment of increased public scrutiny and accountability will be to shorten the leash. One approach is take advantage of systemic performance measurement and of the improved monitoring capabilities of information technology. These were key lessons of the Somalia inquiry and reflect the general governance principle that “Decentralization goes hand in hand with central monitoring.”<sup>26</sup>

### A More Unstable and Unpredictable Strategic Environment

21. At a higher level of abstraction, what has also changed is the entire structure of stability and predictability that fifty years of Cold War stand-off gave us. To use a climate

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<sup>24</sup> Martin van Creveld, *Fighting Power: German and U.S. Army Performance 1939-1945*, 1982.

<sup>25</sup> For an extended discussion of these kinds of challenges in the U.S. Army, see Leonard Wong, *Stifled Innovation? Developing Tomorrow's Leaders Today*, U.S. Army War College, April 2002, who concludes that “the Army values innovation in its rhetoric, but the reality is that junior officers are seldom given opportunities to be innovative in planning training; to make decisions; or to fail, learn, and try again.” The chief culprit in his view is a centralizing controlling culture.

<sup>26</sup> Percy Barnevik, CEO of ABB, cited in Robert D. Kaplan, *The Coming Anarchy*, 2000, p. 82.

metaphor, the strategic environment of the Cold War period could be characterized as reliably chilly under the influence of a globally stable high-pressure system. As a result, organizational thinking and planning were highly focussed and oriented to relatively static steady-state models. The strategic environment today, in contrast, shows signs of significant global warming but with widespread localized turbulence. Organizational effectiveness in this kind of environment requires more flexible and adaptable thinking and planning. There may be no such thing as steady-state any more, so that military leaders will have difficulties if they cling to a concept of leadership that is more appropriate to the Cold War era. In suggesting the kind of mental and cultural adjustments that will have to occur to keep pace with global, domestic, political, economic, social, and other change, Shamir and Ben-Ari paint a picture of the necessary paradigm shift:

“Leadership in mechanistic organizations is contained within formal patterns of authority and is primarily based on the exercise of legitimate power . . . . The military organization of the future is likely to be more ‘organic’ in nature. Organic organizations are characterized by a more flexible division of labor, decentralization of decision-making, low reliance on formal authority and hierarchy and on rules and regulations to coordinate work, and greater reliance on non-restricted, two-way, informal communication and coordination systems.”<sup>27</sup>

21. Some evidence of the CF’s adjustment in basic assumptions about the practice of leadership can be seen in the attempted move away from a rules-governed and compliance-oriented organization toward a principles-governed and values-oriented organization. The intent to develop a more streamlined package of Defence Administrative Orders and Directives (DAODs) to replace the unwieldy library of Canadian Forces Administrative Orders (CFAOs) and other instructions is indicative. So too is the value-expressive orientation of the Statement of Defence Ethics, which was developed to be consistent with a management climate of devolved authority and to reduce dependency on the alternative solution – a detailed and extensive code of conduct. In an operational context, this is also the thrust of mission-oriented command as opposed to procedurally based command. These exercises can all be viewed as part of a conscious effort by the executive cadre, with varying degrees of success, to devolve authority.

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<sup>27</sup> *Leadership in an Open Army?*, p. 27.

22. At the direct level of leadership, the message, in short, is that “leadership is going to require far more internalized, intentional, personal thought and reflection and far less reliance on either rote application of learned behaviours or overly simplistic doctrine across situations.”<sup>28</sup> There is a related implication – pushing decision responsibility back up the chain in uncertain situations will not aid in leader development. The need for flexibility and rapid adaptation to changing conditions means that the leader in the hot spot or the hot seat will, in many circumstances, have to accept the responsibility for figuring things out for himself or herself. For starters, that requires education in theories and principles, rather than training in rules and procedures. Hence, a three-inch thick operator’s manual like the *CDS Guidance to Commanding Officers* won’t be of much use unless the underlying principles are internalized and sharpened by experience.

### Public Environment

23. One of the conclusions that was appended to the American military experience in Vietnam was that democracies cannot sustain protracted military commitments when vital national interests are not at stake and/or when the military mission has dubious legitimacy. The democratization of opinion that has accompanied the growth of both wired and wireless global telecommunications has sharpened the question of legitimate military action. Increasingly, it seems, in today’s many conflicts, the line between aggressor and victim cannot always be cleanly drawn, or the necessity or value of an expeditionary military commitment is arguable, or the likelihood of a political success by military means is uncertain. According to Shamir and Ben-Ari, military leaders are faced with two kinds of legitimacy concerns in such circumstances: “First, more often than in the past, they need to deal with moral qualms among soldiers, among themselves (and within themselves), and to build an internal credibility for their operations. Second, they need to constantly respond to a sensitive civilian environment in their capacity as military leaders in order to construct an external legitimacy for their actions.”<sup>29</sup> Canadian participation in the Gulf War prompted legitimacy questions of the first kind, while the use of the CF at Oka raised legitimacy

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<sup>28</sup> Capt(N) Alan Okros, Director CF Leadership Institute, personal communication.

<sup>29</sup> *Leadership in an Open Army?*, p. 22.

questions of the second kind. Nor are questions of legitimacy likely to get any easier.<sup>30</sup> As discussed in an earlier paper (*Looking Back: CF Leadership Problems and Challenges Identified in Recent Reports and Studies*), dealing with these kinds of pivotal motivational issues will require military leaders at all levels to be much more adept in understanding and influencing fundamental beliefs, values, and attitudes. This is the thrust of transformational leadership as originally outlined by Burns.<sup>31</sup> Shamir and Ben-Ari, in different language but with similar intent, emphasize the ability to manage meaning.

24. Another novel feature of the public environment in which military forces now operate is more openness. In part, this transparency has been externally induced by generally less deferential attitudes in the population toward public institutions and by policies of liberalized access to official information. Transparency has also been pressed on the CF through the exposés of investigative and go-anywhere journalists (and anyone else with a hand-held video camera) and an increased willingness among military members and their family members to go public with their complaints and criticisms. During the Cold War era, the CF was essentially out of sight, out of mind, and left to its own devices (the characterization of the Korean War as “the forgotten war” is illustrative). This no longer seems to be the case. There are more oversight bodies and there is more scrutiny. The chief benefit is a more carefully regulated organization, since, as one commentator on the new interconnected and globalized environment has noted, “there is no greater restraint on human behavior than having other people watching and knowing exactly what you’re up to.”<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, excessive examination and criticism has a chilling effect and could contribute to the creation of a leadership cadre that is dysfunctionally cautious and risk-averse.<sup>33</sup> This may be the risk that has to be assumed for past lapses in self-regulation, but officers and NCMs performing

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<sup>30</sup> This is the premise of Michael Ignatieff’s Young Memorial Lecture at the Royal Military College of Canada, *Ethics and the New War*, 25 October 2001.

<sup>31</sup> James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership*, 1978.

<sup>32</sup> Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, 2000, p. 461.

<sup>33</sup> For example, CFLI research on the gap between the military and civilian society shows that almost 2/3 of a sample of select CSC, AMSC, and NSSC senior officers view the media as somewhat hostile or very hostile in their depictions of the military, and that this proportion is higher than that for comparable American officers. Sarah Hill, CFLI Armed Forces and Society Project, personal communication.

direct leadership tasks have to be reassured that, if they conduct themselves professionally, the CF will support them; otherwise safe leadership will drive out good leadership.

25. A third dimension of the post-Cold War public environment involves the way the public views the military as a symbol of the country, which is somewhat at odds with how the military sees itself. In a 1996 article for *The Globe and Mail*, Paul Koring summarized the situation as follows:

“There is an enduring disconnection between Canadian society and its armed forces. If the average Canadian thinks about the military at all, it is to misunderstand it, to think of it engaged in noble efforts repairing schools in some far-off place or dangling beneath a helicopter rescuing sailors. . . . In more than a dozen interviews with historians and military officers both serving and retired there is widespread agreement that the “disconnect,” as they call it, separating Canadian society and its military, does exist. There was far less consensus on what, if anything, can be done about it.”<sup>34</sup>

26. On the other hand, the Canadian public has, in the main, been supportive of justifiable combat operations in places like the Persian Gulf, the Balkans, and Afghanistan, which is good news for the many CF members who like to see and project themselves as warriors first and foremost. But the public has been especially supportive and proud of the CF’s role in peace-support and humanitarian operations, both domestically and abroad.<sup>35</sup> That is because this is how Canadians see themselves – as good neighbours to the world – and as such, the military and other national institutions, to the extent that they are involved in neighbourly activities, acquire iconic status in the public imagination (hence, too, the dismay when the icon is tarnished). They symbolize Canada’s idea of itself in the world.

27. It is not clear, however, that CF leaders have appreciated just how important this ‘good neighbour’ identity is to the Canadian public and to many individual members (how else explain the many voluntary initiatives of Canadian service men and women abroad in helping people in desperate circumstances?). The stock response generally goes something like: ‘Yes, that’s all very good, but our primary business is warfighting; the other stuff is

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<sup>34</sup> Warriors, weenies and worriers, Saturday October 19 1996, Section D.

<sup>35</sup> The Somalia Commission of Inquiry was sensitive to this notion in observing that “peacekeeping has come to be regarded as a national vocation” and in noting that “In 1993, the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs reported that it was the ‘sole military activity that Canadians fully support’.” *Dishonoured Legacy: The Lessons of the Somalia Affair*.

secondary.’ Drawing again on the preliminary results of the survey research conducted by the CFLI, the opinions of a sample of senior officers attending the CSC, AMSC, and NSSC reflect this qualitative distinction. Asked to rate the importance of a variety of uses/roles for the military, national security issues were rated as Very Important (fight and win country’s wars – 95%; provide disaster relief within Canada – 46%; deal with domestic disorder in Canada – 41%) whereas policing and external commitments were rated as Very Important by much smaller percentages (control drug trafficking – 14%; address humanitarian needs abroad – 13%; intervene in civil wars abroad – 6%).<sup>36</sup> The emergent post-Cold War activities associated with contributing to or maintaining international peace and security do not seem to have registered as a core responsibility for the CF, despite what the Canadian public may think.

28. In this post-Cold War period, fundamental questions about the military’s mission, strategy, and character constitute another aspect of the civil-military “gap,”<sup>37</sup> which will widen if military leaders at any level persist in a narrow interpretation of the CF’s function. The divergence between public expectations of the CF and the identity the CF sees for itself is explicit in the challenge and warning expressed by General Dallaire:

“Militaries must find the correct balance between providing the training, equipment priorities, and force structures required for classic RMA-type warfighting, as well as the much broader multidisciplinary competencies that leaders require to be able to develop innovative solutions and methods for conflict resolution. . . . Furthermore, conflict resolution operations will demand that military doctrine be modified, upgraded, or even created outright, and that changes be made in leadership training, stress management policies, and possibly even organizational structures. Unless we achieve this new balance of competencies, we will fail to meet our nation’s expectations in ninety per cent of the operations that we will be called upon to perform.”<sup>38</sup>

As discussed elsewhere,<sup>39</sup> the legacy ethos for many serving members continues to reflect Huntington’s conservative realism (i.e., pessimistic, collectivist, nationalistic, etc. and

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<sup>36</sup> Sarah Hill, CFLI Armed Forces and Society Project, personal communication.

<sup>37</sup> For a general review of this issue as it has unfolded in the US, see Lindsay Cohn, *The Evolution of the Civil-Military “Gap” Debate*, Paper prepared for the TISS project on the gap between the military and civilian society, 1999, [http://www.poli.duke.edu/civmil/findings\\_publications.html](http://www.poli.duke.edu/civmil/findings_publications.html).

<sup>38</sup> Lieutenant-General (ret’d) Romeo Dallaire, *The Theatre Commander in Conflict Resolution*, in Bernd Horn & Stephen J. Harris (eds.) *Generalship and the Art of the Admiral: Perspectives on Canadian Senior Military Leadership*, p. 273.

<sup>39</sup> K.W.J. Wenek, *Wanted: A Military Ethos for the Postmodern Era*, Presentation at the Conference on Leadership in the Armies of Tomorrow and the Future, Kingston, ON, 6-7 February 2002.



oriented to warfighting). Yet it seems that this ethos and the associated Westphalian doctrine of state sovereignty are not only at variance with new realities and the expectations of the Government and the Canadian people, but are not entirely consistent with the military threat assessment and do not completely reflect the pattern of recent CF operations.

### Social Change and Composition of Forces

29. One of the emerging hallmarks of what some military sociologists are calling the postmodern military is the transition from the largely homogeneous male-dominated organizations once characteristic of Western militaries to forces that are quite different in their demographic make-up.<sup>40</sup> Roles previously denied to women have been opened up, allowing for full integration in some instances. Homosexuals are allowed to serve without discrimination in many armed forces. Visible minorities are being courted.

30. In the CF, which has often been at the forefront of this social change, social diversity has been a given for some time now. Today, approximately 27% of CF members are Francophones, 14% are women, 9% are visible minorities, and just over 1% are Aboriginal peoples. The proportion of recruits born outside Canada is on the increase, with 9% of the 2001 intake being foreign-born.<sup>41</sup> To a greater or lesser extent, the CF is also mixed in terms of religion, marital and family status, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, educational attainment, part-time (Reserve) vs. full-time (Regular) participation, and other demographic characteristics. Although projections for Canada suggest an even more heterogeneous population in the decades ahead, with close to one million 17-24 year olds being a visible minority by 2016, or one quarter of the recruitable youth cohort,<sup>42</sup> it is not clear that this will translate into similar upward shifts in the overall composition of the CF. First, the participation of three of the groups (women, visible minorities, Aboriginals) designated for assistance by the federal Employment Equity Act has been chronically modest

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<sup>40</sup> Charles Moskos, John Allen Williams, and David Segal (eds.), *The Postmodern Military: Armed Forces after the Cold War*, 2000.

<sup>41</sup> Tracey Wait, *Organizational, Social and Demographic Change in the Canadian Forces: 1976-2001*, DSHRC Research Note 3/02, February 2002.

<sup>42</sup> Wait, *Youth in Canada*.

in the CF, and has not increased dramatically even with special efforts to remove barriers and encourage higher enrolment rates. Second, the military-participation rates for youth cohorts in a now-smaller Regular Force are quite low at about 15-20 per 10,000,<sup>43</sup> so that human-resource efforts to increase civilian labour-market penetration tend to be, and may remain, weak.

31. Group diversity is often viewed as a leadership challenge by virtue of the extra effort required to develop cohesive teams, and frankly, the CF has demonstrated a number of failings and weaknesses in achieving a high level of social cohesion in a diverse population (several of these are highlighted in a companion paper, *Looking Back: CF Leadership Problems and Challenges Identified in Recent Reports and Studies*). Aside from examples of discrimination by some white males against other groups, there are also tensions between the Regular Force and the Primary Reserve and between operational and support occupations. While the aim of military socialization is to inculcate a common value orientation reflecting core Canadian and professional values, the challenge will be to achieve cohesion across different social and minority groups which will vary in their values and identities. This situation is complicated further by the CF's legal obligations to recognize and promote multiculturalism and to accommodate group differences. It is arguably the case that racial, ethnic, and other forms of diversity should not be cause for internal friction for the next generations of military recruits, who will be more likely to have grown up in, and to have been socialized into, a multicultural society and way of life. But this should not be assumed. Even with appropriate socialization into the professional ethos and values of the CF, the fault-lines of social identity could show in times of political and social stress and bring with them the potential for conflict with others or with the institution.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> This figure is derived from the current Regular Force strength of 60,000, an average recruiting figure based on the historical annual attrition rate of 8%, and the size of the 17-24 year-old youth cohort, which will fluctuate between 3.5 million and 2.7 million over the next couple of decades (in other terms, approximately 216,000 males alone attain military age each year – Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook 2001*, <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook>).

<sup>44</sup> These are not hypothetical issues. Refusal to deploy a Jewish member to the Persian Gulf resulted in a major human rights case. Likewise, the participation of aboriginal members in operations such as the one at Oka, the deployment of female members to conservative Islamic countries, and similar scenarios have posed serious policy and practical questions.

32. What is also likely to be a continuing difficulty for the CF is dealing with the evolution of mainstream social values and the accompanying pressures for change in conservative social institutions such as the military. In recent decades, CF leaders at both NDHQ and unit level have been slow to accept a heightened rights consciousness in the general population and have been resistant to accommodating some of the core values of the liberal democratic society the CF inhabits. While operational requirements and their centrality are often used to rationalize an essentially authoritarian culture, even in the more discretionary domain of personnel administration the exercise of fundamental human rights and freedoms, procedural fairness, and the expression of individual voice have been subject to tight and sometimes arbitrary limits. This clash of values was evident, for example, in the debate over a 1995 proposal to establish a third-party administrative complaint-handling and problem-solving office operating outside the chain of command but within the CF, despite well documented problems with extant procedures and culture.<sup>45</sup> Opposition to the idea of an internal CF ombudsman reporting internally to the CDS was based on a serious concern that the existence of this alternative to the chain of command would undermine military authority and leadership. Consequently, after discussion at the October 1996 meeting of Armed Forces Council, it was decided to shelve the ombudsman proposal indefinitely (also shelved was an alternative proposal by the Chief of Review Services to establish an Inspector General, who would have had broad powers to initiate systemic investigations and the additional authority to receive and investigate individual complaints). What the CF got in the end was an imposed solution in which the executive leadership had little say – an external ombudsman reporting to the MND, and coincidentally, transmitting directly through the media to the public.

33. The fact that educational attainment in the Canadian population continues to show an upward trend probably means that some portion of future CF members will generally be

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<sup>45</sup> These problems included: high levels of dissatisfaction with the internal grievance system, including reasonable apprehension of bias (i.e., chain of command was both respondent and adjudicator); problems in establishing fair harassment complaint and investigation procedures; a lack of trust and confidence in the chain of command indicated by the increased incidence of members communicating directly with the Minister of National Defence, their Member of Parliament, the federal Human Rights Commission, and the media; and repeated demands for public accountability and oversight by the Minister's Advisory Board on Gender Integration, the Canadian Human Rights Commission, and former members of the CF.

more knowledgeable and better able to think for themselves. For example, 21% of the 2001 recruit intake had not completed high school versus 32% of serving members, whereas 47% of the 2001 recruit cohort possessed a high school education versus 37% of serving members.<sup>46</sup> From the fact that higher proportions of recruits also fall into the older 25-34 year-old and 35-and-over cohorts and arrive with family responsibilities in place (21% married or with a common-law partner, 11% with children),<sup>47</sup> we can also probably assume that many of them are more mature than the typical 17-24 year-old single recruit. The fact that we have entered a postmodern rights era<sup>48</sup> probably means that some CF members will be more aware of their rights as individuals, less tolerant of perceived infringements on their rights, and more assertive in seeking redress. To a large extent, this is a direct consequence of higher educational attainment and the increases in literacy and social consciousness that come with education.<sup>49</sup> The fact that digitization, miniaturization, and global telecommunications have led to an unprecedented democratization of information<sup>50</sup> probably means additional pressure on leaders to be more candid, democratic, and responsive to subordinate voice.

34. In this emerging social environment, the general challenge for senior military leaders will be to decide what the chain of command should mean in both operational and administrative terms – whether it should be only a means to an end and what that proper end is, or whether it should be an end in itself. The present tendency to treat the chain of command as an end itself has contributed to the kind of confusion noted by Sharpe and English in their discussion of centralized personnel administration in the CF:

“More and more the centralized agencies are communicating directly with the soldiers, sailors and airmen about policy changes that affect their life. Quality of life has become the purview of the MND, the NIS [National Investigative Service] is a constant presence in the background second guessing discipline and conduct issues,

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<sup>46</sup> Tracey Wait, *Organizational, Social and Demographic Change in the Canadian Forces: 1976-2001*, DSHRC Research Note 3/02, February 2002.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Michael Ignatieff, *The Rights Revolution*, 2001.

<sup>49</sup> For a discussion of these issues, see Tracey Wait, *Literacy in Canada and the Canadian Forces*, DSHRC Research Note 1/01, January 2001.

<sup>50</sup> Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, 2000.

the Maple Leaf announces career policies ahead of the chain of command even knowing about them, and the medical and social work 'chain of command' often counsel, move, release or retrain their people without informing COs. The combined effect of all this is to leave the COs powerless in the eyes of their soldiers . . .<sup>51</sup>

Evidently, these changes in administrative practice challenge the total-control assumptions that underpin operational understanding of the chain-of-command concept.

### Conclusion

35. The foregoing discussion suggests three broad implications for CF leadership doctrine. These too can be grouped in terms of the previously identified categories of leader responsibilities and leader attributes, and a new category, leader behaviours.

36. First, new additions or emphases are indicated in the spectrum of leader responsibilities, including a keener sense of the leader's particular moral obligations as a practising professional and of the leader's general obligations to the military profession. Furthermore, an apparent gap between public perceptions of military roles/identity and senior officers' perceptions indicate some rethinking of the ethos statement may be necessary, especially in its treatment of CF purpose and military identity.

37. Second, in the area of leader competencies and other attributes, changing operational and social contingencies point to the need for an awareness and mastery of the cultural, national, and international contexts in which military leaders function and associated abilities in dealing with complexity in cognitive, social, and behavioural terms. Furthermore, these requirements seem increasingly to be as applicable to NCMs as to officers. In a related vein, the task of successfully socializing a more heterogeneous population of recruits into a professional culture might be more difficult in the future and will require flexible leaders with a strong developmental orientation. By extension, leaders will have to be much better equipped to sort out the competing values of a pluralistic culture and to strike an appropriate balance between the commonality required by the military ethos and the flexibility required under the reality of diversity. With respect to leaders' generic responsibilities for mission achievement and social integration, the possibility of a higher incidence of serious conflicts

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<sup>51</sup> *Principles for Change in the Post-Cold War Command and Control of the Canadian Forces*, 2002, p. 61.

between personal and institutional beliefs and values – in operational circumstances and on matters of institutional social policy – will require strong skills in interpersonal communications and in altering perceptions, attitudes, and values, or otherwise in resolving such conflicts.

38. Third, in the domain of leadership style and behaviour, the flexibility required for high-tempo operations points to a mission-command culture and more sophisticated performance-monitoring and measurement. The objective of the former is increase military responsiveness, while the latter preserves accountability. Similarly, the need to accommodate the shifting social make-up and values of the Canadian population calls for a more differentiated leadership approach to operational issues and personnel administration, in the latter case, one that is more consistent with the mainstream values of Canadian society.