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# **The Social Evolution of the Canadian Forces – Post Somalia**

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## **THE SOCIAL EVOLUTION OF THE CANADIAN FORCES – POST SOMALIA**

A Thesis Submitted

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*“Military forces have to be, in some senses at least, representative of the society which recruits, pays and deploys them. But, if the principle is clear, the practice is somewhat more complicated...”*<sup>1</sup>

*“The Canadian Forces are a Canadian institution and also face the pressures imposed by changing societal norms and expectations. Canadians expect their public institutions to provide equity in employment and to fully respect Canadian law, as well as government policy and management practices. They also expect their armed forces to uphold high ethical standards.”*<sup>2</sup>

*“The Commission’s recommendations complement the changes and reforms that we have introduced over the course of the past few years. In the aftermath of Somalia, DND and the CF could not wait to address many of the problems that faced Canada’s military.”*<sup>3</sup>

## **PART I - INTRODUCTION**

In 1993, the record of service and distinction of the Canadian Forces was marred by disturbing and intolerable events, uncovered following the deployment of the Canadian Airborne Regiment to Somalia. The confidence of the public in the Canadian Forces had been shaken. Recommendations of the *Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of the Canadian Forces to Somalia* were made, amongst other reforms, to prompt necessary social change and further strengthen the institution. To what extent have the Canadian Forces evolved socially since the Somalia affair? Part II of this paper sets the scene surrounding the Somalia affair, and other scandals which surfaced and contributed to damaging the image and reputation of Canada’s military. Cumulatively, these incidents acted as catalysts which transformed the social make-up of the Canadian Forces.

In a democracy, it is necessary that the military adhere to common social values. Military effectiveness, as demonstrated in modern conflict, depends upon armed forces being integral parts of the societies they serve, not being isolated from them.<sup>4</sup> In Part III, it is argued that at the time of the Somalia affair, the social gap between society and the military, particularly the Canadian Airborne Regiment, was too wide. This gap needed to be narrowed - and the fallout and debate of the Somalia debacle, coupled with intense media scrutiny, helped close that gap. This paper tracks the opinions of several authors on the subject of the gap, particularly Kohn, Feaver and Cohn for the U.S context (Triangle Institute for Security Studies – *Soldiers and Civilians*), and Okros, Bland and Cotton for the Canadian perspective. Clearly, whatever the future holds, military policy must reflect Canadian society's expectations and be shaped congruent to society's norms. In short, there needs to be a gap, but not too wide, with many of the differences that distinguish the gap being desirable.

As government and society interact and amend social norms and values in Canada, and as government controls and changes the military, the military is, in turn, shaped to reflect society. This argument, presented in Part IV, is central to the analysis of determining the extent to which the Canadian Forces have evolved to meet the norms and expectations of the government and society. Government control of the military is examined, in the context of the Somalia inquiry, and it is concluded that there remains a need to strengthen the role of Parliament in the scrutiny and development of defence policy, and that those in military service have suffered from weak governance. The documents from the Somalia Commission of Inquiry, specifically Rodal's contributions,

and Verdon's 1996 study of immigration and the social implications for the Canadian Forces, are key sources for this section.

Since the Somalia affair, the Government of Canada commissioned work on several studies, including the *Phillips Employee Feedback Study* in 1995 and the Standing Committee of National Defence and Veteran Affairs (SCONDVA) in 1997. A number of initiatives were undertaken to address the government's responsibility to improve Quality of Life issues related to social norms and government expectations. As noted in Part V, SCONDVA's recommendations were tabled in their original document, *Moving Forward*, and updated in its subsequent reports. SCONDVA concluded that the government needed to revive its commitment to its military forces, the latter having suffered from economic hardship, inadequate housing, increased time away from home, and several other social shortfalls. The thrust of Part V is to demonstrate that the Canadian Forces suffered due to neglect from the society in which it serves.

The alignment of military policies with Canadian society is fundamental to a healthy civil-military relationship. In Part VI, it is argued that human rights are now a preeminent value in the Canadian Forces, evolving congruent to society and recognizing the rights and freedoms of individuals. Many of the Canadian Forces' policy changes resulting from the *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms* were implemented coinciding with and concurrent to the Somalia incident and Commission of Inquiry, and are moving the Canadian Forces in the direction in which Canadian society has been moving for

some time. Policies regarding gender integration, sexual orientation, religious accommodation and others are examined further in Part VII.

Throughout the Somalia Commission of Inquiry, with the assistance and encouragement from a curious and inquisitive media, the Canadian Forces were exposed to public scrutiny in an unheralded manner. Part VIII reveals that the Somalia scandal resulted in a negative public opinion and damaged the military's reputation. However, recent public opinion, as noted in results from several polls and surveys, has been positive due to the implementation of policy changes which have re-aligned the military to better meet society's expectations and needs. However, it is further argued that military leaders have been unable to translate growing public opinion into more defence funding, which in turn is needed, for example, to complete morale building Quality of Life initiatives.

The Canadian Forces are capable of fundamental change at the institutional and cultural levels that reflects evolving values in Canada. In context of the Somalia affair, the place of the military in Canadian society will be reviewed, coincidental with an examination of factors affecting the relationship between the armed forces, government and society. The society in which and for which the Canadian Forces serve is in the process of social change. As stated by the Minister of National Defence, "few institutions in Canada are as truly reflective of society as the Canadian Forces".<sup>5</sup> This paper will demonstrate that the Canadian Forces have evolved as a result of the Somalia

affair and changing societal norms, to better meet the expectations of the government and the Canadian public.

### ***General Concepts and Definitions***

The procedures and policies put in place to address the concerns raised by the Somalia Inquiry, and other studies that followed, must be monitored to ensure they are effective and are taking the Department in the direction that Canadians expect and deserve. If the military is to reinforce the contract of trust that now exists with Canadians, then the Canadian Forces must demonstrate a continued commitment to change. The military cannot act, individually or collectively, in a way which affronts the values of the society it serves. At the outset of this paper, it is necessary to provide definitions of the key concepts and themes, all of which are needed to establish a link and backdrop to the argument regarding the social evolution of the Canadian Forces. Specifically, societal values and norms, public and government expectations, unlimited liability, ethos, ethics, and the social contract are defined.

The core traditional values of the Canadian Forces are love of country, courage, loyalty, submission to discipline, duty, honour, and the unlimited liability of service and self-sacrifice.<sup>6</sup> The values of the Canadian Forces provide a direct social link between the military and the society it serves.

“It is evident that in a rapidly evolving world the CF must have the capability to adapt to new challenges. They must reflect the changing realities of Canadian life and of global security. The development of such a capacity calls for a

redefinition of the military ethos as well as significant changes in training, education, professional development and the care of members of the forces”.<sup>7</sup>

The task of redefining military ethos was undertaken following the Somalia scandal. According to a Department of National Defence statement of the Canadian military ethos published following the Somalia affair, the Canadian military sees itself as “a distinct sub-set of the entire Canadian fabric”.<sup>8</sup> This notion of corporate separateness flows from the distinctive mandate of the Canadian Forces to maintain the security and defend the sovereignty of Canada, if necessary by means of force. Unlike other professions in our society, the Canadian Forces can be called on to ensure the very survival of Canada.<sup>9</sup>

The 1997 post-Somalia Commission report on ethos and values in the Canadian Forces defined ethos as the distinctive “purpose, culture and values that define the Canadian Forces as an organization and as a community.”<sup>10</sup> The military ethos forms the basis of all aspects of service in the Canadian Forces, setting forth the principles and ideals which men and women in the military must subscribe to, both collectively and as individuals. While its fundamental values are integrity, courage, loyalty, selflessness, and self-discipline, the ethos further requires dedication to country, the honouring of Canadian values, and commitment to professional excellence.

The Oxford Dictionary describes ethos as “the characteristic spirit or attitudes of a community, people or system”.<sup>11</sup> As described in the *Ethos Statement of the Canadian Forces*, the men and women who make up Canada’s military must “understand and

respect the same values which their fellow Canadians hold dear – fairness, integrity and respect for the rule of law”, and acknowledge that the “profession of arms places special emphasis on duty, honour, loyalty, discipline, courage, dedication, and teamwork”.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, the Statement obliges service men and women to “act in a way that meets the highest expectations and standards of Canadians”, and to be prepared to “make the ultimate sacrifice because they are confident in the values of Canadians and the purposes for which their service is rendered”.<sup>13</sup> The *Ethos Statement of the Canadian Forces* was written to provide members of the military with a solid foundation on which to base their conduct and expectations of one another, and to reflect the changing realities of Canadian life and of global security. In short, the military ethos is firmly rooted in the values of Canadian citizens.

Canadian citizens also expect their armed forces to uphold high ethical standards. Ethics, defined as the “science of morals in human conduct”<sup>14</sup> or the study of right or wrong, has received a great deal of attention in recent years. Ethics is a matter of choosing moral values, with values being beliefs of how to conduct oneself. Values should be at the heart of everyday decision-making and need to be translated into behavior that form the basis for individual and social life. In the mid-1990s, the Department of National Defence recognized that changes to ethics standards and norms within the Canadian Forces were necessary. The Canadian Forces have issued a *Statement of Ethics*, highlighting a set of three ethical principles and a list of six core ethical obligations that respond to the unique core of the military community. The three principles are: respect the dignity of all persons; serve Canada before self; and obey and

support lawful authority. The six ethical obligations are integrity, loyalty, courage, honesty, fairness and responsibility.<sup>15</sup>

Morality in the Canadian Forces is incorporated in the area defined as military ethics. Although the Canadian Forces ethics system must be rooted in the value system of Canadian society, military moral values do not necessarily translate into the values of society in its entirety. An ethical gap, a difference in moral standards between the military institution and society, must be accepted as without it, the military would fully resemble society, assumed to be peaceful in character, thereby negating the warrior culture needed in war. However, in a democracy, no military exists exclusively for its own benefit. Rather, it serves the society it protects and must share the fundamentals of that society's moral values.

Just as the Somalia mission caused an examination of the relationship between military and civilian authority, so too has it afforded a review of the relationship between the military and society at large.<sup>16</sup> The Canadian Forces are an institution which must face the pressures imposed by changing societal norms and expectations. The Oxford Dictionary describes norms as “customary behavior”, and expectations as “something expected or hoped for”.<sup>17</sup> Canadians expect their public institutions to provide equity in employment and to fully respect Canadian law, as well as governmental policy and management practices. Changes required in the Canadian Forces to meet the expectations of the citizens of Canada surfaced as a result of the Somalia affair. The Canadian Forces are responding to this challenge, addressing specific deficiencies that

have been identified, and taking action needed to rebuild the trust and confidence of the Canadian public. <sup>18</sup> Furthermore, “priority”, and “necessary connection” are demonstrated in this paper: the changing social norms and expectations of government and society are evident *before* the social change in the CF, and are *necessarily* connected to it.

The Canadian Forces also have their own needs and expectations from the government and society they serve. Since the Somalia affair, the Canadian Forces have embarked on a mission to overhaul their social system. However, while a military cannot be, nor should it be expected to be, an exact blueprint of society as a whole, the military is required by government to be representative in the widest sense. Furthermore, while the Canadian Forces has an obligation of unlimited liability for any requirement that the people of Canada legitimately demand, the government must accept its end of the bargain. The government has, as a result of its neglect of the military, taken notice of the military and has put programs in place to facilitate and monitor its progress. As the government is entrusted with the power and the authority to make regulations for the Canadian Forces, and place a service member in harm’s way to protect national interests, it also has a moral obligation to care for the well being of the Canadian Forces.

The military functions under the conditions of unlimited liability. Serving members are expected to deploy at a moment’s notice to any theatre of conflict and are asked to put their lives at risk in the interest of the nation. The concept of unlimited liability in the defence of national interests is what distinguishes the military member

from other professionals. The military allows for the lawful killing of others in the performance of its tasks, and the responsibility of military leadership permits the sacrifice of soldiers' lives to achieve military objectives. "The stark and brutal reality of these differences from normal society has traditionally been a distinguishing feature of military life, contributing to a sense of separateness – even superiority – in relation to the civilian population." <sup>19</sup>

When soldiers become non-commissioned or commissioned officers, they freely enter into a moral and legal contract that imposes professional duties and standards. Neglect of the military ethos encourages soldiers to see military service as a job while focusing on self-serving interests instead of the obligation of the profession. What the Somalia Commission report revealed was that the Canadian Forces ethos was abandoned, allowing its professional and ethical values to seriously erode. The public confidence and trust, so crucial for armed forces in a democracy, became seriously weakened, and the credibility and legitimacy of the Canadian Airborne Regiment was called into question.

Military service within the Canadian Forces is based on volunteers who are employed at will. Moreover, within the profession of arms, there is an implied existence of a moral contract between the soldier and the broader society in which the soldier serves. Canadians must be committed to and supportive of their armed forces, and in return, Canadian Forces' members are expected to put their lives at risk when called upon to do so. The contract between soldiers and society is one of mutual trust, support and reciprocity. Likewise, Canadian government and defence leaders, the key

links between society and members of the Canadian Forces, have a particularly important role in the maintenance of the social contract between the military and society.

## **Part II – THE SOMALIA AFFAIR, AND ITS AFTERMATH**

### *The Somalia Affair*

In December 1992, soldiers of the Canadian Airborne Regiment deployed as part of the United Task Force (UNITAF) to provide humanitarian relief and secure order to Somalia. In 1993, certain events transpired that blemished the reputations of various individuals, the image of Canada's military, and the nation itself. Those events included repulsive hazing rituals prior to deployment involving members of the Canadian Airborne Regiment, the shooting of Somali intruders at the Canadian Camp in Belet Huen and most notably, the beating death of the teenager Shidane Arone in the custody of soldiers of 2 Commando. The Somalia mission was also tarnished with alleged instances of withholding or altering key information. "In short, the mission went badly wrong, systems broke down, and organizational failure ensued."<sup>20</sup>

The horrifying images of a dying Shidane Arone shocked the Canadian public. The Department of National Defence (DND) was attacked for their actions in Somalia and the subsequent handling of the problems which surfaced later. What became known as the Somalia Affair pushed into the glare of public scrutiny some of the problems that had been building in the Department over a number of years. It also raised specific

criticisms as to how DND was led and controlled, and how the Department reacted to the Somalia Affair. This negative public reaction forced the government to launch a public inquiry into the events surrounding the death of Shidane Arone and other perceived wrongdoings surrounding the UNITAF mission. <sup>21</sup>

The Somalia Affair has triggered many reviews and debates. A Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces to Somalia was initiated on 20 March 1995, and ran for 27 months until its report was tabled to the Governor-in-Council on 30 June 1997. <sup>22</sup> One hundred and sixteen witnesses appeared before the Commission, and over 150,000 documents were catalogued. <sup>23</sup> A vast array of reforms were proposed; in total, the report made 160 recommendations <sup>24</sup> that were generally well received both internally by the military leadership and externally by the government and society at large. However, the Commission subjected Canada's armed forces to an intense level of public scrutiny and analysis, revealing deep-rooted shortcomings inherent to the profession of arms and bringing immense harm to its reputation, reporting that the military was at "variance with public expectations, and anathema to the profession of arms". <sup>25</sup> Despite the changes that had been implemented by the Canadian Forces while the work of the Commission was in progress, the Commission's report left lingering doubt on the part of many citizens about the state of military leadership in Canada.

While the absence of leadership, good order and discipline in the Canadian Airborne Regiment leading to the murder of Shidane Arone was the most disturbing revelation, other aspects of the Somalia operation were strongly criticized. These ranged

from the manner in which the operation was planned and launched, to how information was handled at NDHQ. At the same time, the Somalia Commissioners criticized a number of military witnesses for giving testimony that “was characterized by inconsistency, improbability, implausibility, evasiveness, selective recollection, half-truths, and plain lies”.<sup>26</sup> In January 1995 a Somalia video showing Canadian paratroopers vowing to “kill niggers” was aired on national television, and three days later a second video showing disgusting hazing rituals of troopers eating feces was made public.<sup>27</sup> In June 1995, Colonel O’Brien, one of the officers who played a pivotal role in the management of the Somalia operation, pleaded guilty in a court martial to two charges involving fraud and misuse of Department of National Defence resources.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, the malaise regarding discipline and ethics called into question the military justice system and military police investigation services, public accountability, transparency, and equity and fairness.

From a social perspective, the events surrounding the Somalia mission were a culmination of several factors, and prompted an examination of the relationship between the Canadian Forces, the government, and society. Social problems at the time of the Somalia debacle were categorized into three main themes. First, orientations and practices set elements of the army in the opposite direction from that required by governmental policy and public expectations of the forces. Second, the ineffectiveness of a military command system was overwhelmed by the demands of adapting to social

changes. Finally, interest and attention by political authorities responsible for guidance and democratic control of the military were lacking.<sup>29</sup>

The Minister of National Defence, the Honourable Art Eggleton, took the recommendations of the Somalia Commission of Inquiry very seriously. He saw them as fair and constructive recommendations for improving the Department, and directed the set up of a mechanism to rebuild the trust of the Canadian public in their military. Mr Eggleton stated:

“If we are to reinforce the contract of trust that exists with Canadians, we must demonstrate our commitment to change. To ensure accountability in the implementation of the reforms, I have asked Canadians, from wide ranging backgrounds, to be part of a Monitoring Committee on Change in the Canadian Forces and the Department of National Defence... I believe the establishment of the Monitoring Committee along with the many other initiatives described in our response will ensure the openness, transparency and accountability of the Canadian Forces and the Department of National Defence as our institution evolves to better serve the security needs of Canadians and Canada's interests in the world.”<sup>30</sup>

### ***Incidents Since Somalia***

Public concerns about leadership and professional failings in the Canadian Forces were not limited to events surrounding Somalia. Other sad, disturbing and intolerable incidents gave observers reason to believe that the Canadian Forces were undergoing a serious erosion of military ethos, and called into question the Canadian military, its leaders, its discipline, its command and management, and even its honour. There has

been but a handful of these highly objectionable incidents, but they have further contributed to the erosion of the confidence of Canadian citizens in their Armed Forces.

Examples included unacceptable conduct by Canadian Forces members and misuses of public funds by senior officers in other operational theatres. The most serious example of unacceptable conduct occurred at Bakovici mental hospital in Bosnia in 1994, where Canadian Forces members were investigated for engaging in black-marketing activities and prostitution, assaulting hospital patients, and fraternizing with nurses.<sup>31</sup>

One of the more publicly known examples of financial impropriety on the part of a senior officer was that of Colonel Reno Vanier who, after an interview with military police investigating him for misuse of DND funds while commanding United Nations forces in Haiti, vanished from sight. He was discovered twelve days later floating and incoherent in the Rideau River. At his subsequent court martial, Colonel Vanier was convicted of charges related to bribery, fraud, fraudulent concealment, and absence without leave.<sup>32</sup> In December 1996 the former Deputy Chief of Defence Staff, LGen Roy, was administratively released from the Canadian Forces for making fraudulent claims for living expenses for which he was not entitled.<sup>33</sup>

Collectively, the nature and circumstances of these events, without question, generated doubt about the Canadian Forces' ethical underpinnings, especially in the mind of the media. In view of these incidents, and several others as highlighted in Scott Taylor's *Tarnished Brass* and *Tested Mettle*, many people came to believe that

“misconduct and leadership failings in the Canadian Forces were shockingly common, if not endemic”.<sup>34</sup> Even the Minister of National Defence, Doug Young, was led to conclude that “ the confidence of Canadians in the Forces has been shaken”.<sup>35</sup>

### **PART III - THE CIVIL-MILITARY GAP DEBATE**

The debate on the civil-military gap began with Samuel P. Huntington’s *The Soldier and the State* (1957) and Morris Janowitz’s *The Professional Soldier* (1960). The issue of civil-military relations was already well-known, but the question of a gap between the two communities began to receive the attention of academics, politicians, and military leaders alike.<sup>36</sup> In 1999, in the United States, a study by the Triangle Institute for Security Studies (TISS) noted a growing disparity in political and social views between civilians and members of the military. While the study reports the civilian-military differences are growing, it concludes the gap has not become overwhelming and its effects should not be exaggerated. The project’s main focus was to answer four questions: What is the nature or character of the civil-military gap ? What factors shape it ? Does the gap matter for military effectiveness and civil-military cooperation? What, if anything, can and should policy makers do about the gap ?<sup>37</sup> A comprehensive comparison was undertaken by the Triangle Institute for Security Studies using a broad, in-depth survey of some 4,891 respondents representing three key groups: the general public, influential leaders, and up-and-coming military officers.<sup>38</sup>

The authors of the TISS study state in the introduction that the gap has been framed as “cultural”, and the concern is that a “gap in values or attitudes between people in uniform and civilian society may have become so wide that it threatens the effectiveness of the armed forces and civil-military cooperation”.<sup>39</sup> They further define the concern as follows:

“Differences between civilian and military are, of course, necessary and desirable: even in a society based on civil liberty, personal autonomy, and democratic governance, military institutions must subordinate the individual to the group, and personal well-being to mission accomplishment. Members of the military must risk their lives and give up many personal freedoms in order to succeed in battle. But some scholars and commentators have argued that the typical differences are changing into something more ominous. This concern is fueled by anecdotal reports of military contempt for civilian culture, accounts of civilian hostility to the traditional martial values, and evidence from the inexorable demographic trends showing fewer and fewer personal connections with the military as it contracts”.<sup>40</sup>

There were several key findings reported in the Triangle Institute for Security Studies survey. While many analysts fear a diverging gap between military and civilian culture, possibly contributing to problems in civil-military relations, others warn of a closing gap – a “civilianization” of the military – contributing to the decline in military effectiveness.<sup>41</sup> The U.S. military as an institution received very positive evaluations from all groups of respondents, however, there “is reason to worry about the differences in opinion and belief between society and the military and to be vigilant about finding ways to manage it”.<sup>42</sup>

A few themes appear more often than others in the literature: one is that there is a necessary cultural gap between the military and civilian communities, and that particular

gap is positive. The military needs its distinctive culture, and as long as it is dependent on the surrounding society for recruits, funding, and services, the cultural divide cannot become dangerously wide.<sup>43</sup>

To be sure, for a military organization to survive and be effective, it must retain an irreducible core of differences from civil society. This, perhaps, explains the size of the gap discovered by Triangle Institute for Security Studies researchers with regard to certain values. Military officers, researchers found, doubt that the civilian world values the same things they do, and perhaps they have a point. The requirements of self-sacrifice, discipline, loyalty and altruism demanded by military service cannot be squared with a society that, though brimming with energy, celebrates the opposite values of individuality, c8 57prog, rsirvtntt.Acci

reasons, tried to use quotas or other systems to ensure that all ranks are, at least, broadly representative of the societies they serve, it is accepted that the end-result can only be an approximation.<sup>46</sup>

On average, the military is more socially conservative than society as a whole. “For obvious practical reasons, the military can never be the precise mathematical reflection of the society from which it comes”.<sup>47</sup> Since some gaps between the military are inevitable, and even essential for military effectiveness, both communities must find ways to live with them, and accept that the behavior of the military should not lead it into conflict with the norms and values of society generally.<sup>48</sup> However, if the military does not, at least, make some attempt to adjust to changing social patterns and increased tolerance, then it risks marginalising itself, losing public and political support, and no longer attracting the best people, which can hardly be good for military efficiency either. The Triangle Institute for Strategic Studies has determined that although the United States’ defence budget has not yet been hurt by the gap, the personal connections to the military are declining, and as a result, support for national defence is likely to decrease in the future.<sup>49</sup> The TISS project, with several dozen authors and advisors, concluded that there are many gaps, only some of which are worrisome. “Although it should not be exaggerated, concern is justified”. There are problems that, if left unaddressed, will undermine civil-military cooperation and in some circumstances, harm military effectiveness.

### *Civil-Military Gap – A Canadian Comparison*

There are many Canadian parallels to the general concepts concluded in the TISS survey of the gap between the United States military and American society. It must be stated up front, however, that much of the Canadian literature relies to a great extent on anecdotes and reflections based on personal exposure to the military. What is lacking in the Canadian context of the gap is a thorough examination that addresses both the empirical and the normative issues. Available literature provides an overview of the Canadian context with reference to the very limited data which exists, and reflections on the fundamental issues that have been primarily an American-focussed body of work.<sup>50</sup>

The members of the Canadian Forces view themselves as part of a unique organization in society, not as public servants. When citizens join the Canadian Forces, they join with a set of expectations that ultimately affects their commitment to remain in the organization. By swearing an oath of allegiance, a service member makes a commitment to the country and its people to defend Canada's vital interests at any cost.<sup>51</sup> Common to most modern military organizations is the notion of being different from the rest of society. The Canadian military is no different from other armed forces in feeling a consequent separateness from society.<sup>52</sup>

Charles Cotton, in his 1980s Institutional/Organizational thesis, conducted empirical research on the Canadian Forces and argued that unless steps to the contrary are

taken, “societal change normally causes military organizational change, which in turn causes individual change”.<sup>53</sup> Cotton believes that the optimum is to have a military organization that is both internally cohesive and congruent with civilian society. In achieving this goal, military leaders must articulate institutional values and emphasize the organizational priority of operational readiness. He further argues that it is “necessary to develop a blueprint for shaping both convergent and divergent trends to create an emergent military that is operationally effective as a deterrent force and firmly embedded in a society in which the public perceives military service as a valued role”.<sup>54</sup> Cotton’s Institutional/Organizational model conceptualizes the military and society as interdependent and interactive, where military leaders consistently shape the organizational culture to emphasize the nation over the military organization.

In periods of national threat and protracted operations, military service has broad legitimacy and public status, and the functionality of traditional military culture is clear. Decades of detente, however, coupled with rapid social and technological change, weaken both the external and the internal integration of the military institution in society, creating a special leadership challenge.<sup>55</sup>

More recently, General Dallaire makes a similar argument regarding the gap, arguing that as the rest of the nation moves forward with changing social attitudes, the Canadian military risks being left behind and becoming isolated from the nation. “Accordingly, an unacceptable gap could be created that will alienate and isolate us from the very public we are sworn to serve”.<sup>56</sup> This situation could render the Canadian

Forces' senior leadership incapable of maintaining the initiative with the nation and the government, reacting to challenges and crises vice proactively anticipating and preparing for them.

Dr Bland, in a 1999 article, notes that it is often stated, sometimes with little reflection, that Armed Forces mirror their societies. However, Bland contends that armed forces tend to be isolated from their societies and look inwardly to their own values and interests.<sup>57</sup> Furthermore, he suggests that the gap can increase because Canadian politicians fail as overseers of the military, neither paying enough attention to their responsibility to guide and audit military leaders nor familiarizing themselves with the details and history of defence policy. During the 1993-1994 defence review, Bland notes that officers protested, alleging that their views were being subordinated to voices from outside the profession. "Politicians, and the defence minister especially, grumbled that officers were only content with political direction if it followed their notions of what policy ought to be".<sup>58</sup> Dr Cotton articulates many of the same points in his writings, that pressures to reform the military institution have been realized from outside military circles, often straining civil-military relations. The Canadian military "has been perceived as resistant to change. And more generally, the military and its host society are widely perceived to be out of alignment".<sup>59</sup> In this context, the way the military defines itself appears to diverge from how civilians define the military.

Consensus appears to be merging among certain scholars that models need to be oriented toward a convergence of the social linkages between the military and society.

This claim is supported in several recently issued documents, including *People in Defence – Beyond 2000*, which charges the military to “reflect and uphold fundamental Canadian values by striving to meet the expectations that Canadians have of Defence as a national institution.”<sup>60</sup> These values are listed as support for official languages, diversity programs, human rights and individual development in ethics. Cotton argues that, in other literature, these links need to be characterised by operational cohesion. “In other words, Canadians seem to want their military ethos and charter together. Neither an isolated cohesive military community, nor a radically civilianized military will do”.<sup>61</sup>

Rodal, in his perspectives on the Somalia events, suggests that it was the government that distanced itself from the armed forces, and was ultimately responsible for widening the gap which facilitated the isolation in which “the Airborne’s rogue culture flourished and permitted forces to be deployed in demanding situations without the benefit of national doctrine and positive command”.<sup>62</sup>

Other debates in the Canadian context also provide strong arguments in favour of a more divergent, or wider gap. As mentioned previously, many regard the military as a classic ‘distinct society’, as there is continued need for investment in forms of military identity. As the standards or norms desired by society and those desired by the military are different, Winslow makes the argument that the military and civilians eye each other with suspicion. Her position is that attempting to model the military society after the civilian society will ultimately fail. Winslow “resents the way many are trying to make the military system more peaceful and politically correct. In order to act aggressively,

you have to be aggressive, you have to possess within you the necessary values to be able to kill someone if you have to. But in the civilian Canadian society, these values are unacceptable".<sup>63</sup> Society desires a politically correct, polite, non-offensive military that intends on accepting individual rights and is managerially efficient. The military, particularly the combat arms, desires a disciplined soldier that is capable of defeating the enemy to accomplish the mission through aggressive action. In light of this, the military has no choice but to choose what societal norms to adopt and when. Attempting to make the military and civilian communities asymmetrical would only lead to the loss of cohesion and operational effectiveness of the military. Therefore, as much as society tries to assimilate the military, it would appear that the nature of the military profession necessitates that it be distinguished as a "distinct society".<sup>64</sup>

The concept of the Canadian military's "distinct society" has been recently debated by others. Dr English claims that, as long as Canada maintains military institutions such as the Royal Military College and the Canadian Forces College, both of which are capable of "transmitting Canadian military culture to each successive generation of officers",<sup>65</sup> the military's culture will survive and evolve as a distinct entity. With regards to comparing the Canadian debate to that of the United States, English is clear. "Whatever the outcome of this debate in the US, it is clear that, as we have seen, the CF have resolved this debate in favour of a fairly small gap between military and civil cultures".<sup>66</sup>

Seven years after the Somalia affair, Capt (N) Okros presents a different view of the gap from the previously mentioned authors. Okros compares the TISS-measured civil-military relation to the Canadian context. He argues that there are not only tolerated gaps, but, in fact, desired differences between militaries and societies. “The key issue in the civil-military gaps research is not to determine whether gaps exist rather it is to define the desired state.”<sup>67</sup> Okros states that subordination of the military to civil control is critical to ensuring that the military does not become a society unto itself. Furthermore, militaries are required to develop unique warfighting techniques and “establish higher behavioral standards which contribute directly to higher operational readiness”.<sup>68</sup> These statements lead to the conclusion that not only is the military permitted to develop certain skills, but as a profession it is also authorized to establish and regulate a distinct identity and culture. “This latter component is clearly visible in specific national legislation and codes of service discipline which have legal status. Thus, it is expected that, on certain dimensions, militaries will differ from civil society”.<sup>69</sup>

In discussing congruence, Okros states that Canadians generally support their government and key national institutions, such as the courts, police, medical system, and military, which translates into more positive opinions than their American counterparts. “The entire issue of civil control over the military is less of an issue as Canadians generally support a more active role of the government in many aspects of their lives than is the case in the US”.<sup>70</sup> Okros points out that disagreements by senior military officers to government decisions, such as the unification of the services in 1968, has resulted normally in personal resignations vice a “constitutional crisis”.<sup>71</sup>

On the other hand, when discussing divergence, accepted differences, or tolerated gaps, Okros emphasizes that there is little empirical evidence confirming the extent of any gap between the Canadian Forces and society; rather, there are indicators of a generally similar state as in the United States. Specifically, Okros notes that the “Canadian Forces and defence experts would prefer to see a higher priority given defence in budgetary allocations and various concerns have been expressed regarding social legislation”.<sup>72</sup> In peacetime, Canadians have not seen the military as an important national institution and traditionally have not supported defence spending.<sup>73</sup> Another noticeable difference between Canada and the US pertains to the amount of debate and relative importance attached to these issues. Given the Canadian parliamentary system, there appears to be less public discussion of many government policies among politicians (and, from there, the media or academics) and, within this context, defence issues have not had the salience for the Canadian people as has been the case in the United States. Furthermore, Americans accept limits on civil rights in the military while Canadians do not.<sup>74</sup> Finally, Okros remarks that, pertaining to identity and norms, the military appears to have support to remain distinct “as long as these are expressed as behavioral norms which are set at a higher standard than for society as a whole and are demonstrably related to bone fide job requirements”.<sup>75</sup>

Until more empirical research is conducted on the subject of the gap between the military and Canadian society, the arguments will continue to be made largely on personal reflection and comparison. In 1993, at the time of the Somalia affair, one could

argue that the gap between society and the military, particularly the Canadian Airborne Regiment, was too wide. And the fallout and debate of the Somalia debacle, coupled with intense media scrutiny, helped close that gap. Furthermore, an examination of both the government and the military, and a study of the “social contract” ensued. While tracking the opinions of several authors on the subject of the gap, it is clear that whatever the future holds, policy must reflect Canadian society’s expectations and be shaped congruent to society’s norms.

## **PART IV – CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONSHIP**

As government and society interact and amend social norms and values in Canada, and as government controls and changes the military, the military is, in turn, shaped to reflect society. This argument is central to the analysis of determining the extent to which the Canadian Forces have evolved to meet the norms and expectations of the government and society.

Von Clausewitz, in his book *On War*, describes society, its government and its armed forces as being inherently inseparable and interrelated.

“As a total phenomenon its dominant tendencies always make war a paradoxical trinity ... the first of these three aspects mainly concerns the people; the second the commander and his army; the third the government... These three tendencies are like three different codes of law, deep-rooted in their subject and yet variable in their relationship to one another... Our task is to develop a theory that maintains a balance between these three tendencies, like an object suspended between two magnets”.<sup>76</sup>

Governmental and public expectations of Canada's military have evolved in concert with changes to the strategic landscape, Canada's defence and international orientation, and with societal change. Canada has experienced fundamental change since the formative previous engagements of its military in World War II and the Korean conflict.

Changes in Canada's demographics have been substantial. The pace of demographic change, since World War II, has given "Canada a marked multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious character".<sup>77</sup> Canada is now considered to be one of the more pluralist countries in the world.<sup>78</sup> As a developed country, Canada is relatively unique in its need to maintain and increase its population base and thus will continue to require substantial levels of immigration to accomplish this. Moreover, multiculturalism is increasingly considered a characteristic of Canadian society as a whole.<sup>79</sup> In his 1996 report, John Verdon concludes that "Canada is both multicultural and a true melting pot, where diversity contributes to a culture which is a creative synthesis of its components, and in the process transforms the individual components as well".<sup>80</sup> Verdon further states that the Canadian society of the future will likely not be recognizable as we know it, regardless of where our immigrants come from.

Considerable change has also been made in the area of norms and values. Canada has evolved from a society characterized by 'Peace, Order and Good Government', to one more distinguished by democratic, individual and community rights. Landmark expressions of these fundamental changes include the *Official Languages Act*, the

*Multiculturalism Act*, and *the Canadian Human Rights Act*. The impact of these watershed political and legal expressions is discussed in more detail in Parts VI and VII.

Just as society and government have interacted, the government has taken steps to influence Canada's military. The Government of Canada is accountable to its citizens to ensure that its armed forces are prepared to defend the country. Similarly, the government must gain the confidence of its military forces by persuading them that their needs and aspirations are given due consideration, and must give them clear, well-defined military objectives. On the one hand, the Canadian Forces, and their political leaders, must respond to the strategic demands by building militarily effective organizations. On the other hand, the political masters "must ensure that the armed forces are responsive to wider societal values and thus to the society that pays for them".<sup>81</sup> The key challenge is to strike a balance between these competing demands.

In the United States, the question of civilian control of the military has received much debate in recent years. The focus of the public debate suggests that civilian leaders in the United States are facing an insubordinate military. The rhetoric directed attention to the theory of civil-military relations to better understand the factors that shape the interactions between civilian and military institutions and to appreciate the determinants of civilian control. Civil-military relations' theory, however, remains underdeveloped. "The empirical literature is vast and informative but it has advanced primarily along theoretical lines of analysis laid out by Huntington and Janowitz thirty or forty years ago".<sup>82</sup>

In Canada, civil control of the armed forces and the relationship between the political and military leaders have become a critical issues for debate. Canadians generally are nonchalant regarding the significance of this political responsibility until serious issues about the behavior of members of the Canadian Forces and the Department of National Defence become public.<sup>83</sup> Somalia is an example of this. In 1994, however, a Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons reported that “whatever our individual views on particular issues of defence policy and operations, there was one matter on which we agreed almost from the beginning – that there is a need to strengthen the role of Parliament in the scrutiny and development of defence policy”.<sup>84</sup>

In practice, the Cabinet collectively, under the direction of the Prime Minister, is responsible and accountable to Canadians to control the Canadian Forces in all respects.<sup>85</sup> Canada’s constitutional arrangements and laws provide a set of checks and balances meant to control the authority of the government, the armed forces, and the civil bureaucracies. In effect, responsibility for formulating defence policy and implementing and administering that policy is shared among the Governor General, the Prime Minister, the Minister of National Defence, the Chief of Defence Staff, and, in a narrow sense, the Deputy Minister of National Defence.<sup>86</sup>

Many of the problems of the Canadian military over the last three decades do not originate solely from within the profession. Instead, as Dr Cotton suggests, those in military service have suffered from weak governance from society.<sup>87</sup> Other critics

reinforce this theme, suggesting that members of the Canadian Forces have been misled and betrayed by their government. Although seemingly harsh judgement, this perception has been fuelled by personnel pay freezes, significant downsizing, increased operational tempo, and capital equipment rust-out. In contrast, it has also been argued that “Canadian military leaders have repeatedly demonstrated their understanding of the concept having accepted government decisions to: demobilize following the two World Wars; demilitarize the economy in the 50s; integrate and then unify the services in the 60s; accept bilingualism in the 70s, etc.”<sup>88</sup>

Government, in no uncertain terms, is responsible for military activities; however, this does not diminish the fact that Canadian defence leaders are the key link between government and members of the Canadian Forces. They, therefore, have a particularly important role in the maintenance of the social contract between the military and society. Indeed, in most cases, the actual decisions or recommendations to government affecting most Canadian Forces members are made by Canadian defence leaders. Thus, if the social contract has been broken, responsibility for this surely must rest in large part with Canadian defence leaders.<sup>89</sup>

The social relations between the military and the wider society, particularly the areas of convergence and divergence, were introduced previously. The Canadian military and society must deal with the tensions arising from the need for armed forces, with their distinct organizational structure, culture and ethos, to remain apart from society, yet at the same time reflect and defend that society’s civilian norms and values.

Another strong indicator that demonstrates that the military is being shaped to reflect society have been reported by John Verdon. Verdon concludes in his 1996 report that “the Canadian Forces is likely to become more polyethnic and also has a role to play in helping to develop a multicultural, polyethnic and cohesive Canada”.<sup>93</sup> Verdon also notes that there are two important themes that suggest that the role of the Canadian Forces in building a cohesive Canada is becoming a reality. These are, first, the ethnic representativeness of the reserves in the military and second, the tendency for the majority of regular force recruits to have some degree of previous exposure to the Canadian Forces. “Together, these two phenomena provide a basis to believe that the children of immigrants and future immigrants are more likely to see the CF as a viable vocation”.<sup>94</sup>

The civil-military challenge is to harmonize a military powerful enough to perform tasks civilians legitimately ask of them, yet maintain a military subordinate enough to do only what civilians authorize.<sup>90</sup> This unique status invariably leads to a vast array of laws designed not only to control the armed forces, but also to assist in ensuring that the values of broader society are maintained within the social fabric of the military. Thus, civilian governments are in danger if they have armed forces that they cannot adequately control, or if their military forces do not identify with broader societal goals.<sup>91</sup> The Canadian Forces is obligated to fully embrace the legislation of the nation. The Canadian nation is founded upon the principle that acknowledges the dignity and worth

of the individual. The Canadian Forces, which exists to defend Canada and keep it secure, must always be guided by this principle.<sup>92</sup>

## **PART V – QUALITY OF LIFE AND SCONDVA**

Since the Somalia affair, the government of Canada has undertaken a number of initiatives to address its responsibility vis-à-vis the social contract with the Canadian Forces, and its role in breaching this contract.

On 8 October 1997, three months after the Somalia Commission of Inquiry was released, the Minister of National Defence formally requested the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veteran Affairs (SCONDVA) to review the social and economic challenges facing members of the Canadian Forces and their families. A total of 89 recommendations were made in the report of the Standing Committee entitled *Moving Forward: A Strategic Plan For Quality of Life Improvements in the Canadian Forces*, which was tabled in the House of Commons in October 1998. In the second Annual Report on Quality of Life in the Canadian Forces to SCONDVA, 55 of the 89 recommendations were assessed as being completed.<sup>95</sup>

In SCONDVA's original report, *Moving Forward*, the Committee strongly endorsed the need for change. It was noted that members of the Canadian Forces were suffering from economic hardship, inadequate housing, increased high-risk operations with equipment that was old and ill-suited to the task at hand, career stagnation, increased

time away from home, multiple moves on short notice, and a perceived lack of public recognition for their efforts.<sup>96</sup> Furthermore, between 1994 and 1999 the defence budget was reduced by 23 percent, representing a 30 percent reduction in real purchasing power, with personnel reductions over the same period in the order of 30 percent for uniformed members and 45 percent in civilian employees.<sup>97</sup> Throughout the SCONDVA hearings it was learned that military personnel, particularly at the lower ranks, felt they were the victims of a series of broken trusts, having been let down by their government, leadership and the public. Another theme reported was that military personnel believed they had been forgotten by the nation they had sworn to serve.<sup>98</sup> In short, SCONDVA requested that the government revive its commitment to its military forces.

The SCONDVA team also noted the requirement to make explicit a written social contract, to replace the unwritten implicit contract which has traditionally existed between the military and the government, and by extension, the public.<sup>99</sup> In the SCONDVA report, while they chose not to make explicit the "social contract," they did articulate five principles on which a commitment to military members must be based. These are: that members be fairly and equitably compensated; that all members and their families be provided with ready access to suitable and affordable accommodation which must conform to modern standards; that military personnel and their families be provided with access to a full and adequate range of support services offered in both official languages; that suitable recognition, care and compensation be provided to veterans and those injured in the service of Canada; and, that members be assured reasonable career progression and that in their service they be treated with dignity and respect.

Additionally, military members must be provided with the appropriate equipment and kit commensurate with their tasking.<sup>100</sup>

In March 1995, the *Phillips Employee Feedback Survey* was commissioned to study issues relating to leadership, management and employee morale in the Department of National Defence. It supports the conclusions made subsequently by the SCONDVA team. Sixty-five per cent of service members agreed that people in their unit are under a great deal of stress, only 20% of personnel agreed that the level of morale in their unit was good, 26% agreed that the Department of National Defence recognizes and supports their need to balance family and work life, and only 36% perceived that there is a great deal of public respect in the Canadian Forces.<sup>101</sup> Clearly, the issues of high stress, poor morale and a perception of a lack of caring contribute to having a debilitating effect on organizational effectiveness. All of the above reinforces SCONDVA's conclusion that the military suffers from low morale and a sense of abandonment,<sup>102</sup> and that numerous elements of the social contract have been breached.

Recently, significant accomplishments have been made through the Quality of Life program in the areas of maternity and parental leave benefits, family care assistance, and regional cost of living allowance.<sup>103</sup> As stated in the Chief of Defence Staff's 2001 Annual Report to SCONDVA, the Government still believes that the dialogue raised in the Report is the best way of informing Parliament about what action is being taken. It will also serve to remind Canadians of the valuable contribution made by the Canadian Forces by Members of Parliament through their work on Quality of Life.<sup>104</sup>

In response to the recommendations of the Standing Committee, the Majority report affirmed the government's commitment to the Canadian Forces as a national institution; however, that commitment has not been "explicitly" defined. Members of the Canadian Forces still await mention of mutual expectations, obligations, or accountabilities. Instead, the report contends that the five Quality of Life pillars, pay and allowances, housing, care of injured personnel, military families, and work expectations and recognition) correspond to the unwritten social contract.<sup>105</sup> In short, the Standing Committee's report tabled identified the social and economic challenges facing members of the Canadian Forces, but the work on a social contract remains unfinished, and it is unclear what exactly constitutes the "traditional" social contract. It is accepted that there must be a high level of commitment from the Canadian Forces to willingly follow political direction, to obey the laws of the country, and to protect Canadian values and interests. However, what degree of commitment should be expected from the people of Canada towards its armed forces to preserve this fundamental military service? The relationship between the armed forces and its society is complex. For the moment, the military remains without a social contract, in the form of a signed agreement, covenant or declaration.

## **PART VI - THE CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS – EFFECT ON CANADIAN FORCES POLICY**

The 1982 *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* elevated equality rights issues within Canada to a position of undeniable supremacy in Canadian society, ensuring equal protection and benefit without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin,

colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability. Legal rights include the right to life, liberty and security. Fundamental freedoms include freedom of conscience and religion, freedom of thought, belief and expression, including freedom of the press, freedom of peaceful assembly and association.<sup>106</sup>

Technically, members of the Canadian Forces are under the jurisdiction of civil law and are allowed fundamental rights and freedoms. In practice the latter is not always true. As members of the Canadian Forces, they are subject to additional liabilities and rights prescribed in military law. Canadian military law is that part of the law of Canada that applies to persons serving in or with the Canadian Forces, and derives legal authority from *the National Defence Act* with further amplification within *Queen's Regulations and Orders* and Rules of Engagement. Use of force in domestic operations, once the military is deployed, is governed by the *Criminal Code of Canada*.

In 1986, the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) directed the establishment of a Charter Working Group to examine the *Charter* in relation to the military justice system of the Canadian Forces. Furthermore, a Charter Task Force was directed to examine the situation of women, homosexuals, retirement age, physical and medical standards, and common-law relationships in the Canadian Forces.<sup>107</sup> The CDS' Charter Working Group recommended extensive amendments to the *National Defence Act* and *Queen's Regulations and Orders*. The working groups' recommendations resulted in changes to search and arrest procedures, pre-trial custody of offenders, applicability of civilian offences, civilian lawyers at Summary Trials, and a reduction in the punishment powers

of Commanding Officers and officers delegated to hear Summary Trials.<sup>108</sup> Later, policy amendments would be made to Summary Trial and Court Martial processes, judicial independence within the military justice system, the right of legal representation during a Summary Trial, role of women, sexual orientation, common law relationships, physical disability, and obesity. Many of these amendments have reduced the perceived gap between society and military values.

A soldier must be able to judge what is an offence both within society and within the military. Society imposes its laws upon Canadian Forces personnel and the military imposes more laws that may coincide with, or be more severe than, civil law. This naturally places additional pressure on soldiers, especially on those less experienced. Other professions, including lawyers, doctors or law enforcement officers, have similar pressures as they have their own regulating bodies.<sup>109</sup> Furthermore, while all Canadians inherently have the right of freedom of speech, as indicated in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, any individual within the Canadian Forces gives up this right upon enrolment. “The professions of medicine, law and others do not have the same restriction on speaking publicly as ‘dissidence’ is expected without ‘violence and mutiny’.”<sup>110</sup>

Arguably, the soldier has the same rights as any other individual in the work force, in that he must follow orders of those superior to him if the order is lawful. Vocations such as law enforcement and fire fighting are also inherently dangerous. However, what sets the soldier apart from the policeman or fireman is that death may be an undeniable eventuality and safety precautions in war may be minimized to accomplish

the mission. For example, a fire chief may not order one of his fire fighters into a burning building if the situation is considered to be too dangerous, but a military leader may order his soldiers to attack a well defended position to accomplish a mission regardless of risks. The military profession demands the total and almost unconditional subordination of the interests of the individual if the interest of the group should require it. Surrender of one's life, above all, differentiates the military profession from others.

“For the military, the core values of military culture are subordination of the self to the group and the idea of sacrifice: the individual must be willing to subordinate him or herself to the common good – the team and common task. Furthermore, there must be a willingness to sacrifice one's life for the team in peace and war – without this, an armed force will lose”.<sup>111</sup>

Many of the changes resulting from the *Charter* were implemented coinciding with and concurrent to the Somalia incident and Commission of Inquiry. Policies regarding gender integration, sexual orientation, and others require more examination and will be discussed in further detail below. Suffice it to say, at this point, that the alignment of policies with Canadian society is fundamental to a healthy civil-military relationship within a democracy such as Canada. Moreover, the *Charter* is moving the Canadian Forces in the direction that Canadian society has been moving in for some time.<sup>112</sup> As a result of the *Charter*, today's military personnel are better aware of their rights as individuals. That said, Canada's soldiers, sailors and airmen also understand and accept that by joining the Canadian Forces, they have forfeited a degree of their individual rights. This willingness to sacrifice individual rights will only be tolerated however, if it is accompanied with a recognition of the significance and importance attached to the value of “respect for the individual”. The pre-eminence of human rights and the

accompanying significance of “respect for the individual” in Canadian society has been understood by the leadership of the CF and are well reflected in a revitalized Canadian Forces Ethos Statement and the Statement of Defence Ethics.

## **PART VII – GENDER INTEGRATION, HOMOSEXUALITY AND OTHER POLICIES**

Generally, armed forces around the world have found themselves yielding – willingly or grudgingly – to many of the trends in contemporary social norms. In the United States, for example, the prime example of this is the opening up of almost all career fields in the military to women (with the exception of infantry combat). Similarly, as taboos have melted away in civil society with regard to homosexual behavior, the United States military has found itself forced to yield deep-seated aversions to the requirements of neither asking nor telling.<sup>113</sup>

In Canada, the Department of National Defence is determined to meet the highest standards of fairness and equal-opportunity rights to make the working environment equally accessible to and tolerant of all individuals. In regards to the *Charter*, the Canadian Forces are confronted with a dilemma faced by all armed forces within a democratic society. In order to remain relevant and in contact with Canadian society, Canadian values must be reflected within the organization. Yet, the values necessary to defend the society, are often at odds with society itself. To be an effective servant of society, the Canadian Forces must concentrate, not on the increasingly liberalized values of society, but on the values necessary to be successful on the battlefield. Furthermore,

as an institution founded on the premise of duty and service to the nation above all else, the subordination of individual rights long helped to define the military ethos.<sup>114</sup>

### ***Gender Integration***

The Canadian Forces claim to be world leaders in terms of the proportion of women in the military and the number of areas in which they can serve. Since 1992, all Canadian Forces occupations are open to women except for service in submarines.<sup>115</sup> The landmark 1989 Canadian Human Rights Tribunal decision directing the ‘full and complete’ integration of women in the CF specifically stated that the CF was to give the rights of women a greater weight than given to combat effectiveness or cost. Fundamentally, the key issue at stake in the 1989 case was the speed of gender integration, not the principle.<sup>116</sup>

Society’s pressure has forced senior military management to accelerate women through levels of employment training and advancement. To ensure that the careers of female members of the Canadian Forces are not impeded by systemic barriers, a policy was announced in 1997 to ensure female officers have access to the Canadian Forces Command and Staff Course.<sup>117</sup> This policy represents one initiative to increase the full participation of women throughout the Canadian Forces at all levels of training and employment.

One indicator of the penetration of civilian norms in the military is the degree to which it reflects the larger society in which it is found. In March 1993 the Canadian Forces effective strength was 77,783.<sup>118</sup> Of these, only 10.7% were female, which obviously does not reflect the gender distribution of males and females in Canadian society. Today, women remain under-represented in the Canadian Forces although the 1989 Human Rights Tribunal decision that all military occupations and employment be opened to women has had the effect of increasing the number of female applicants.<sup>119</sup> Further research is needed to investigate why women would not be attracted to apply for entrance into what has been a traditionally male preserve. Their presence in the army, particularly the combat arms, is negligible, while women are entering the navy and air force in much larger numbers than before.<sup>120</sup>

Studies suggest the presence of women tends to moderate the ‘warrior attitude.’ As much as society demands rapid equality for women within the combat arms, the transitional period of traditional attitudes and women ‘proving’ themselves in the combat arms, for example, will take time. Arguably, the Canadian Forces differ from their American and British counterparts in more readily accepting social legislation and actively seeking to align military policies with public expectations. “While the CF did drag its feet in the 1970s and 1980s regarding gender integration, the organization clearly learned some valuable lessons and moved much more quickly to accept homosexuals when challenged to do so and has now shifted to a much more proactive approach in this domain”.<sup>121</sup> In comparison, the US military has been allowed to limit civil rights considerations being “unable to handle gender and sexual orientation issues”<sup>122</sup> due to a

relative priority for military effectiveness and cost. Also, United States military leaders are less receptive than civilians in seeing women in combat and homosexuals serving openly in the military due to reservations about its moral health.<sup>123</sup>

### ***Homosexuality***

Parallel to gender integration, as introduced above, issues have arisen regarding acceptance of homosexuals in militaries. The potential adverse effects have been subscribed to by authors such as Huntington and Janowitz. The effectiveness of a combat force is in its cohesiveness, which is based on the individuals within that group. Effectiveness is the responsibility of the institution's professionals, which in the CF would be the officers, who must instill, develop and nurture the group. Indeed there is a certain "machismo" in the combat arms where relationships are close and minor differences between individuals can severely affect the group morale and cohesion. Open homosexuals may face harsh criticism and perhaps endure isolation in combat units. As with gender equality, until there is full acceptance of homosexuals by soldiers in the combat arms, the cohesiveness of the section will have a weak link that endangers the overall operational effectiveness.<sup>124</sup>

Natural tensions will exist between the military institution, committed to serve and defend the people and values of a nation, and the *Charter*, crafted to serve and defend the rights of the individual. Since 1992, sexual orientation has not been a factor for recruitment and employment in the Canadian Forces. The Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces have kept pace with other government departments

with respect to policies on same-sex benefits, including a medical and dental benefits policy introduced in December 1996.<sup>125</sup> Other areas include compassionate leave, leave without pay for spousal accompaniment, pensions, family programs and relocation regulations.<sup>126</sup>

In contrast, the gap in the United States' view of sexual orientation is apparent in differences over social and cultural issues, highlighted by the confrontation over gays in the military in the first days of the Clinton administration. General Colin Powell and the Joint Chiefs of Staff publicly challenged the president's desire to let gays serve openly in the armed forces. Congress eventually compromised with legislation that allowed gays to serve, only if they weren't open about their homosexuality.<sup>127</sup> The military and civilians in the United States differ on their views in allowing gays and lesbians to serve openly. Seventy-six percent of military officers oppose homosexuals openly serving in the military, but over 50 percent of civilians say gays and lesbians should be able to serve openly.<sup>128</sup> Military leaders in the United States have objected to policies against the employment of homosexuals and lesbians, and against the widespread employment of women in combat roles, often on the grounds that fighting efficiency will be undermined. In each case, however, it is likely that "what is really at stake in most nations is the masculine (indeed almost macho) image of the military, more than military efficiency. This kind of argument tends to be self-defeating in the long run".<sup>129</sup> The debate in the United States continues, however. Peter Feaver argues that the military, as a preeminent institution in society, should reflect societal norms because that is what society values. Feaver states that this was the essence of the argument for lifting the ban on homosexuals

serving openly in the military, and earlier efforts to expand opportunities for women and African-Americans. “If we as a society say it is wrong to discriminate on the basis of these particular descriptive features, then the military should not do so, period”.<sup>130</sup>

### ***Religious Accommodation, Racism, and Other Policies***

The relevant differences between the Canadian and US militaries pertain primarily to the application of social legislation. One example is the Canadian Forces policy on religious accommodation which enables aboriginal men to grow their hair long and wear it in ceremonial braids, or others to wear turbans, veils or hajibs.<sup>131</sup> As we enter an era of globalization and increasingly rapid change, a relatively significant number of visible minorities and Aboriginal peoples are expected to join the ranks of the all services in the first three decades of this millenium. Policies will need to continue to reflect a more culturally aware Department of National Defence and Canadian Forces in an increasingly multi-cultural country. A second example is the protection of personal privacy which, for example, means that Commanding Officers are not to be informed of certain medical conditions such as a diagnosis of members of their Units as HIV positive. Furthermore, a policy on granting of sick leave was changed allowing medical officers to grant sick leave up to 30 continuous calendar days without consent of a member's commanding officer. This policy will ensure that a member receives the medical treatment and leave required to properly recover without unit pressure to return to work.<sup>132</sup>

Other policies have been put in place to deal with the well being of personnel in the course of duty. In September 1997, a policy was announced to deal with service members injured in a special duty area and are no longer fit to remain in the Canadian Forces.<sup>133</sup> The policy gives priority for members to be appointed to positions in any department of the public service. This initiative was particularly welcome as Canadian Forces members had previously been released without support from the Department of National Defence.

Since 1993, the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces have had in place a policy of zero-tolerance for racist conduct of any kind. All Canadian Forces members were required to take the Standard for Harassment and Racism Prevention training course.<sup>134</sup> Later, the Canadian Forces introduced Diversity training. To address the Somalia Inquiry's recommendation to establish an independent review body, embodied in an Inspector General, the Minister of National Defence announced and appointed an Ombudsman with direct access to the Minister, Chief of Defence Staff and the Deputy Minister. The Ombudsman is to act independent of the chain of command and is accessible to all members of Department without fear of retribution.<sup>135</sup>

To a large extent, the Canadian Forces have adjusted a wide range of internal policies, programs and regulatory mechanisms to conform to the standards expected in broader society. From official bilingualism to the recognition of women in combat roles (1989), common-law marriages (1991) and gays and lesbians (1992), the Canadian Forces have been on the leading edge of change in Canadian society. All have occurred

as a result of legal challenges under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and have broken down military homogeneity and insularity. Interpretations of this phenomenon range from being reflective of the Canadian social and cultural tradition to Canada's military culture being demilitarized by successive governments who have used it as a test bed for various social experiments.<sup>136</sup> While some differences remain, these generally fall within the scope of variability across society as a whole. The arguments that the Canadian Forces must be exempt from complying with broader standards, in order to maintain operational effectiveness, is not supported by the general public, political officials or the courts.<sup>137</sup>

## **PART VIII – PUBLIC OPINION OF THE CANADIAN FORCES**

Throughout the Somalia Commission of Inquiry, with the assistance and encouragement from a curious and inquisitive media, the Canadian Forces were exposed to public scrutiny in an unheralded manner.<sup>138</sup> Without question, the Somalia scandal revealed a negative public opinion which would severely damage the military's reputation. However, since the Somalia scandal, the Canadian Forces have with some success worked diligently to improve its public image. "The fact remains, however, that front-page newspaper photographs of the bloodied body of Shidane Arone are burned into the public consciousness".<sup>139</sup> The scars left from the Somalia affair serve as vivid reminders to the Canadian Forces, and particularly the Army, that never again can such an abandonment of leadership and responsibility be permitted.<sup>140</sup>

Despite Somalia's problems and the negative media coverage received, recent public opinion shows that Canadians are generally supportive of their military. There are some indicators that both the general population and government understand that there are some unique aspects to military culture, however, there is little acceptance for military exclusions for what are seen as fundamentals of Canadian society. "Acceptance of multi-cultural identities and the principles of natural justice/due process in law with growing external and internal interest in the issues of employment of those with disabilities, mandatory retirement, the rights of association and collective representation"<sup>141</sup> all serve as examples where military policies continue to be adjusted and re-aligned to meet society's norms and expectations.

Military leaders must take advantage of the growing positive public opinion, one that rates the Canadian Forces as a first-class organization that has restored its image in recent operations. Most notably, since Somalia, the Canadian Forces have been judged by its performance on international peace support operations in Kosovo, Bosnia and Afghanistan, and by its ability to assist Canadians during national catastrophes such as the Saguenay (1996) and Red River (1997) floods, and the Ice Storm of 1998. An October 1999 poll conducted by the Pollara opinion-research firm confirmed that 88 percent of Canadians had a favourable impression of the Canadian Forces, 85 percent of respondents agreed that the Forces were doing a good job, and that 71 percent felt that the country needs the Canadian Forces a great deal.<sup>142</sup> Regarding quality of life issues, the survey showed 72 percent of respondents supported pay increases for the lower ranks, while 67 percent were in favour of increased funding for CF housing. Martin Shadwick,

a defence analyst and professor at York university, indicated that the results “would embolden, in theory, a government to conclude that the public supports defence in general terms and you could draw from that implicit support to spend a little bit of money”.<sup>143</sup>

The results of the survey compared to a 1998 Pollara poll which reported that despite the Somalia affair, almost three-quarters of respondents agree the Forces is a good career choice for young Canadians and that soldiers are well trained, with two-thirds believing the Defence Department’s budget should be increased to improve quality of life for military personnel and their families.<sup>144</sup> A September 2001 Compas report determined that eight times as many Canadians support more military spending than those who favour less.<sup>145</sup>

According to a recent article in the Toronto Star, Canadians have decided, following the highly publicized death of four Canadian soldiers killed by “friendly fire” in Afghanistan, to use the occasion

“as an opportunity to express their apologies to our armed forces. For years, they’ve been grossly underfunded and treated as marginal to Canadian life. Now... they’ve shown Canadians that they are an essential part of this society and, in several vital aspects, that they represent the very best that this society can produce”.<sup>146</sup>

The recent positive public opinion, however, has not translated into additional funding for defence, which in turn is needed, for example, to complete morale building Quality of Life initiatives. As noted in the February 2002 Report of the Standing Senate

Committee on National Defence on Security, the Canadian Forces budget was reduced by approximately 23 percent<sup>147</sup> from the period 1993 to 1998, the years immediately following the Somalia scandal. Canada contributes only 1.2 percent of its GDP to defence, the second lowest in NATO, where the average is 2.1 percent.<sup>148</sup> Furthermore, there is a growing perception amongst allies that Canada has neither the will nor the resources to engage in anything more challenging than low-level peacekeeping.<sup>149</sup> Late in 1999, the Secretary General of NATO, Lord George Robertson, took the unprecedented step of publicly criticizing Canada's defence weaknesses.<sup>150</sup> Despite the well publicized terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the level of funding allocated to the Department of National Defence in the Budget of December 2001 was disappointing. Minor increases were provided to expand Joint Task Force 2, for Operation Apollo in Afghanistan and for Research and Development into Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defence. However, the Standing Senate Committee on National Defence and Security was clear on its assessment... "Let us be blunt. These increases, while helpful, do not address the chronic, critical under funding of the Department of National Defence".<sup>151</sup>

In an article summarizing recent Canadian public opinion polls, Okros cites a 2000 Shadwick report which indicated that "in peacetime, Canadians have not seen the military as an important national institution and traditionally have not supported defence spending".<sup>152</sup> He further reveals that despite overwhelming endorsements that Canada needs a strong, modern, combat capable military to maintain an international standing, "when it came to a zero-sum choice, defence spending rated last of all choices with

Canadians choosing to allocate an additional tax dollar to propping up the Canadian film industry rather than improving the state of defence”.<sup>153</sup> In short, money spent on national defence is thought to reduce the availability of funds for nationally-sponsored benefits, notably in the areas of health care and education. In postmodern societies, military budgets have declined in response to political pressure for a peace dividend.

Deputy Prime Minister Manley recently stated that a credible foreign policy is dependent upon a robust defence capability.<sup>154</sup> However, Canada’s capacity is far from robust. As Mr Manley remarked in a November 2001 statement, “you can’t just sit at the G-8 table and then, when the bill comes, go to the washroom. If you want to play a role in the world, even as a member of the G-8, there is a cost to doing that”.<sup>155</sup>

The government and public are on record as indicating that they believe Canada, viewed by other nations as an important middle power and responsible member of the international community, has a moral obligation to assist and even take a leadership role in ensuring global stability and human security. Canada has become recognized both nationally and internationally as a world leader in this domain, as witnessed by the Ottawa Convention on Anti-personnel Landmines and the Rome Treaty creating an International Criminal Court.<sup>156</sup> In the December 1999 Pollara survey, public support for Canadian Forces operations to protect human rights and provide humanitarian aid was 92 and 96 percent respectively. Furthermore, 95 percent supported the monitoring of peace agreements when hostilities ceased and 94 percent of Canadians endorsed the safeguarding of civilians in a war zone.<sup>157</sup>

Despite being unable to translate overwhelming public support into defence funding, the Canadian Forces can never again allow another “Somalia” to occur, and continue to demonstrate that it is fully committed to the kind and scale of institutional reform called for in the Somalia Commission reports. Military leadership will need to keep in mind that both the public and the politicians have important expectations of their military, and one of these is that there must be a credible and visible return on investment for the \$10 billion a year Canadians pay for their military. Reflecting the nation’s makeup and offering outstanding opportunities for Canadian youth to contribute to global peace and human security, the military will show itself to be “an overt instrument of national unity and a bearer of Canadian values, both at home and abroad”.<sup>158</sup> As such, the Canadian Forces will be held in high regard by the public and the government as it will be seen as a competent, efficient force which is capable of achieving Canada’s foreign and security policy goals.

## **PART IX – CONCLUSION**

The military, following the debacle that was known as the Somalia affair, became a public institution that was scrutinized, badgered and bloodied in the months that followed. In perspective, the Somalia events were viewed from a variety of angles, by the media, government, public and the military itself, yielding many different insights, debates and recommendations to remedy the Canadian Forces’ shortcomings.

The numerous investigations, studies and reports related to the Canadian Forces since 1992, have in themselves allowed a thorough airing of the problems and concerns. As a result, the Canadian public, government, and defence leadership have become much more aware of the Canadian Forces and its needs. Clearly, the Canadian Forces had been unable to maintain pace with changing societal norms and expectations, having lost both the confidence and respect of Canadian citizens.

Since the Somalia affair, the Canadian Forces have embarked on a mission to overhaul its social system. However, while a military cannot be, nor should it be expected to be, an exact blueprint of society as a whole, the military is required by governments to be representative in the widest sense. Furthermore, while the Canadian Forces has an obligation of unlimited liability for any requirement that the people of Canada legitimately demand, the government must accept its end of the bargain. The government has, as a result of its neglect of the military, taken notice of the military and has put programs in place to facilitate and monitor our progress. As the government is entrusted with the power and the authority to make regulations for the Canadian Forces, and place a service member in harms way to protect national interests, it also has a moral obligation to care for the well being of the Canadian Forces.

The Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces have had to meet the challenges of societal change concurrent with a rapid reduction of the military's resource base and extraordinary operational tempo. The military has taken on a new

image, shaped primarily by the enforcement of the provisions of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, resulting in a basic restructuring of Canadian Forces policies and practices in a wide variety of areas. These positive changes were necessary to maintain relevance and cohesion with Canadian society. The effect is that the Canadian Forces have become more congruent with societal norms.

The factors discussed in this paper do not represent an exhaustive list. Initiatives highlighted are only part of a continuous process of change, as the Canadian Forces and the Department of National Defence continue to evolve by addressing new challenges imposed by society. Having been scarred, neither the Canadian Forces, nor the politicians who are charged to oversee it, can afford to become complacent again.

The society in which and for which the Canadian Forces serve is in the process of social change. The procedures and policies put in place to address the concerns raised by the Somalia Inquiry, and other studies that followed, must be monitored to ensure they are effective and are taking the Department in the direction that Canadians expect and deserve. The military cannot act, individually or collectively, in a way which affronts the values of the society it serves. The Canadian Forces have evolved socially to better meet the expectations of the government and the Canadian public. Recent public opinion provides evidence that citizens are satisfied with the progress made so far. If the military is to reinforce the contract of trust that now exists with Canadians, then the Canadian Forces must demonstrate a continued commitment to change.

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