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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE / COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES
CSC 29 / CCEM 29

EXERCISE/EXERCICE NEW HORIZONS

DO OFFICERS NEED DEGREES?

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La présente étude a été rédigée par un stagiaire du Collège des Forces canadiennes pour satisfaire à l'une des exigences du cours. L'étude est un document qui se rapporte au cours et contient donc des faits et des opinions que seul l'auteur considère appropriés et convenables au sujet. Elle ne reflète pas nécessairement la politique ou l'opinion d'un organisme quelconque, y compris le gouvernement du Canada et le ministère de la Défense nationale du Canada. Il est défendu de diffuser, de citer ou de reproduire cette étude sans la permission expresse du ministère de la Défense nationale.

Abstract

In 1969, MGen Roger Rowley produced a comprehensive review of how officers were recruited, trained and developed, complete with recommendations and a roadmap of the way ahead through the 1970's. One of the key recommendations was that all officers should possess a university degree. At the time, his recommendation was viewed against the backdrop of the changing aspirations of the demographic from which officers were recruited, the top 15 percent of the general population intellectually.

Rowley's recommendation was not carried out, but subsequent events produced several more reports that also recommended that officers would have a university degree. The Minister of National Defence prepared the last of these reports in 1997, following the inquiry into the Somalia scandal. Minister Young went outside the department and obtained the advice of several respected academics. With strong ministerial support, the CF has been vigorously promoting the concept of all officers possessing a degree.

If all officers must possess a degree, the CF must ensure that the degrees are relevant to serving officers, with all degrees containing courses in leadership, ethics, psychology, Canadian history, Canadian civics and politics, military history, international affairs, cross-cultural relations, mathematics, logic, information technology, physics, chemistry, French and English. This will ensure that the future leaders of the CF will have a solid foundation upon which to build their further Professional Military Education.

The Department of National Defence (DND) has undergone severe budget cuts over the past several years, a budget reduction from 1.8% of GDP in 1994 to 1.1% of GDP in 2001.¹ The resulting commentary and major editorial discussion has been on how the capital procurement budget has been repeatedly robbed to make ends meet. What is often missed in this focus on the 'rusting out' of Departmental hardware and weapons systems is the effect that the same fiscal shortfalls have had on the personnel side. "A decade of staff shrinkage has seen the Canadian Forces (CF) diminish from more than 80,000 personnel to approximately 52,400 effective."² The resource and manpower limitations are not the only challenges facing the CF. The increased uncertainty in the post Cold War world, combined with the increased pace of technological change inherent in the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA), makes it more critical than ever that the Canadian Forces are led by the best officers available.

For the past thirty-five years the CF has been in a period of prolonged and dramatic restructuring, operating in a state of constant change. Starting with integration, then unification in the mid-1960's, the CF has in turn dealt with official bilingualism, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, human rights, employment equity, and the full acceptance of women into non-traditional roles and duties. Each of these milestones brought with it a review of the policies and procedures associated with Officer Professional Development. While each was important in its own right for helping the CF adapt to change, all the reviews owe a significant debt to the report commissioned by General J.V. Allard, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) following unification. Led by Major General Roger Rowley, the Officer Development Board received the following direction from the CDS and the Minister of National Defence (MND). They were:

¹ Conference of Defence Associations Institute, *A Nation at Risk*, [<http://www.cda-cdai.ca/pdf/nationatrisk.pdf>], p22

*to examine all phases of the regular officer profession from selection and initial training to the highest levels, with a view to producing an Officer Development Plan designed to ensure maximum efficiency and economy of resources in the selection, training and education of the officer corps required to command and administer the Armed Forces.*³

This comprehensive 1969 review of how officers were recruited, trained, and developed was necessitated by the recent unification of the Army, Navy, and Air Force into a single entity, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). Prior to this, each service had been responsible for the education, training and career management of their officers. The amalgamation of the three traditional services into a unified force not only demanded that a new co-ordinated system of officer development be implemented, it also provided the opportunity for a thorough examination of all aspects of officer recruiting, education, training, retention, and professional development.

In his three-volume report, MGen Rowley presented the optimum system of developing officers for the CF, beginning in 1970 and continuing through to the 1980's. The most radical of the recommendations in his report was that all officers with the exception of those commissioned from the ranks, should have a post-secondary university degree. Over the past three decades, in report after report, the CF has repeatedly concluded that officers should be university educated.⁴ The problem with implementing that recommendation has been a lack of funds to either subsidize additional individuals university training through the Regular Officer Training Plan (ROTP) or to expand and target recruiting efforts to entice individuals already in possession of a

² The Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, *For an Extra \$130 Bucks...*, 12 Nov 2002, [<http://www.parl.gc.ca/37/2/parlbus/commbus/senate/com-e/defe-e/rep-e/rep02nov02-e.htm>]

³ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Report of the Officer Development Board*, (Ottawa: 1969), Vol 1, p v.

⁴ In addition to the Rowley report produced in 1969, there have also been the Officer Career Development System (Review) released in Aug 1983, The Kitchen Report on Out-Service Training for Officers released in Mar 85, The Officer Corps Study Ph I released in Jun 89, and The Morton Report of the Officer Development Review Board in 1995.

degree to join as Direct Entry Officers (DEO). This lack of commitment has resulted in a low percentage of serving officers with a university education. As many of these individuals have managed to perform well and achieve senior and flag rank without the benefits of formal education, there has been a natural reluctance to endorse a recommendation, which would require an allocation of scarce fiscal and personnel resources. Even today, only two of the four senior leaders of the CF have an undergraduate degree.⁵ They are undoubtedly very professional officers, having risen to the pinnacle of command, but have managed to do it without an undergraduate degree.

The aim of this paper will be to determine whether officers need an undergraduate degree. It will examine what characteristics and traits are desired in a professional officer. In addition it will look at the reasoning and logic behind the recommendations that all officers should have a degree and how university training can be used as an essential building block upon which subsequent Professional Military Education (PME) can be constructed. Finally, it will recommend how the needs of both the military and academia can be coordinated to ensure that the original precepts for advocating undergraduate studies are followed.

The dictionary definition defines a professional as "relating to, or belonging to, a profession"⁶ and further defines a profession as being a "vocation in which a professed knowledge of some department of learning or science is used in its application to the affairs of others or in the practice of an art founded upon it. Applied specifically to the three learned

⁵ Based on their official biographies on the DSA DWAN site, LGen Campbell (CAS) and LGen Jeffery (CLS) do not have a degree. Gen Henault earned his B.A. from the University of Manitoba after he had been commissioned under OCTP. VAdm Buck has a BSc from McGill. Of note, none of these officers is a product of RMC.

professions of divinity, law, and medicine; also to the military profession."⁷ That the military should be included with the three learned professions should not be a surprise, as there have been times when the very existence of the state depended on the abilities of the military. Canada is fortunate to have not been threatened militarily since 1814, although as a nation we made significant military contributions to both World Wars, Korea and the Cold War. What specifically is the relationship between being a professional military officer and the perceived requirement for a university degree?

Rowley infers that the CF recruits its members from Canadian society as a whole and that the values and aspirations of that society will be reflected to a certain extent in the CF. The fact that his concerns were that youth were now "identifiable as a separate social group.....that youth now has a culture of its own, free of the restraints and demands that colour the attitudes of the rest of society"⁸ seems quaint in our post MTV age. But the underlying concern of how to attract individuals with the intellectual capacity to perform the tasks expected of officers is even more difficult in the current 'slacker' age than it was in the 'hippy' age. Demographics alone have shrunk the potential officer recruit pool, with the desirable 15 to 24 year old demographic shrinking from 18.5% of the total population in 1971 to just 13.3% in 2001.⁹ Rowley was concerned that while potential officers must come from the top 15% intellectually, of the male population, the rapid increase in the number of young men in the 18-24 age group attending

⁶ The Concise Oxford Dictionary, edited by Judy Pearsall, (10th ed; Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2001), p 1141

⁷ The Oxford English Dictionary, edited by R.W. Burchfield, (2nd ed; Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1989), Vol XII, p 573

⁸ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Report of the Officer Development Board*, (Ottawa:1969), Vol 1, p 27.

⁹ *The Canadian Global Almanac*, (Canada: John Wiley and Sons Canada, 2002), p 45.

university would necessitate recruiting from the population destined to attend university.¹⁰ Thus it was not the possession of a university degree in itself which Rowley was advocating, but that those aspiring to obtain a degree were also those who would be above the eighty-fifth percentile in intelligence. Rowley then goes on to examine the societal pressures acting on this attractive demographic group that was pushing them to get a degree.

The requirement of a university degree for an officer has been forced, in effect on the services by the increased number of degree holders in Canada and this in order solely that the standards of officer quality existing in previous years be maintained. The same young man, strongly dedicated toward a service career, who during the 1930s and 1940s would have entered his chosen career as soon as possible, now wants a degree first, quite independently of whether he needs it or not. He demands it because the other young men in his level of society, with whom he will associate in his own community throughout his life, will have university degrees. He also wants it because of a genuine desire for higher education to broaden his scope of interests and to increase his fulfilment of life. He wants it because it is available to him and because his parents and teachers have strongly impressed on him the desirability of it.¹¹

It was this cultural shift in the aspirations of that portion of society from which officers were recruited which forced the upgrading of the curriculum at the Royal Military College (RMC). With the passage of The Royal Military College of Canada Degrees Act in 1959 by the Ontario Legislature, the College was empowered to confer degrees in Arts, Science, and Engineering.¹² While inclusion of degree granting programmes into officer training was a new concept, the requirement for educating prospective officers was not. RMC itself was established by an Act of the Canadian Parliament in 1874 "for the purpose of providing a complete education in all branches of military tactics, fortification, engineering, and general scientific

¹⁰ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Report of the Officer Development Board*, (Ottawa:1969), Vol 1, pp 30-31 This increase in the numbers of young men attending university is discussed in Annex B in excerpts from the Bladen Report, but can be attributed to the increasing educational aspirations of young Canadians during the post-war prosperity

¹¹ Ibid, Vol 1, p 32

¹² "About RMC", The Royal Military College of Canada Website, [http://www.rmc.ca/about_e.html], 26 Apr 03

knowledge in subjects connected with and necessary to thorough knowledge of the military profession."¹³ Rowley recognized that the granting of a degree did not necessarily mean that the prospective officer was gaining applicable military knowledge. Rowley rejected a manpower approach that would try to tie the knowledge gained while obtaining a degree with the needs of the service. He felt that "a more flexible system based upon general sociological and technological trends"¹⁴ would be sufficient to meet the needs of the service as well as those of the individual. He accepted that it was desirable for officers to possess a thorough grounding in mathematics, physics, electronics and science to understand and utilize the complex and sophisticated weapon systems being introduced. Rowley also felt that modern administration and management would be crucial skills in the post-unification CF. But these were only desirable supplementary outcomes to the purpose of the degree, which was to obtain an education in the broadest sense of the word.

Education at this level, which is elementary in relation to the knowledge and communication level of our times, constitutes a training of the mind, an imparting of vigour to the intellect. After commissioning, the young graduate learns and grows by experience - experience of men and of systems - his mind trained not so much by what he has learned in his years at college, but by the mental discipline of learning and analysis. Thus a hard and challenging course in history, for example, forces the student to grasp the essential data, to analyse critically the pattern and to build for himself, and alone, criteria of assessment. This acquired ability of understanding is at once the pleasure of study and its most enduring and useful characteristic. Equally good and analogous cases can be made for electrical engineering, for physics or for any of the recognized disciplines. It is this ability to acquire knowledge, to analyse and to understand, which must be imparted to our future officers.¹⁵

This view of the value of obtaining a degree as a broadening of the mind is consistent with current literature. In a series of papers produced for the Minister of National Defence to

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Report of the Officer Development Board*, (Ottawa:1969), Vol 1, p 34.

assist his review of Leadership and Management of the Canadian Forces in 1997, several leading academics also recognised the value of all officers possessing a degree. Professor Albert Legault of Laval University stated; "the rapid advances of civilian society as regards educated communication and debate have not been paralleled in the Armed Forces."¹⁶ Dr David Bercuson of the University of Calgary felt that "the Canadian Forces should insist on higher and better formal education for its commissioned officers. All officers should hold a university degree or its equivalent."¹⁷ In their reports to the MND, Desmond Morton and Dr Jack Granatstein deplored the fact that just over half of the serving officers possessed a university degree.¹⁸ Professor Morton went on to note that, "when one Canadian in five [20%] completes such a degree or its equivalent, this is no longer an elitist pre-requisite for a commission in Canada's armed forces. No self-professed profession would accept less."¹⁹ These observations came 28 years following the recommendation of the Rowley report that "a general higher education of university calibre in arts, science, and management subjects was seen to be essential to constitute the foundation from which all young officers must be developed."²⁰ The current officer professional development doctrine, *Officership 2020*, states that "the requirement for a higher educated Officer Corps is to be achieved by commissioning degreed officers."²¹

¹⁵ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Report of the Officer Development Board*, (Ottawa:1969), Vol 1, p 35.

¹⁶ Legault, Albert, *Bringing the Canadian Armed Forces into the Twenty First Century*, (Ottawa: DND,1997), p 39.

¹⁷ Bercuson, David, *Report to the Minister of National Defence*, (Ottawa: DND, 1997), p 16.

¹⁸ Granatstein, Jack, *For Efficient and Effective Military Forces*, (Ottawa: DND, 1997), p 19.

Morton, Desmond, *What to Tell the Minister*, (Ottawa: DND, 1997), p 3.

¹⁹ Morton, Desmond, *What to Tell the Minister*, (Ottawa: DND, 1997), p 23.

²⁰ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Report of the Officer Development Board*, (Ottawa:1969), Vol 2, p 18.

²¹ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Canadian Officership in the 21st Century, Strategic Guidance for the Canadian Forces Officer Corps and the Officer Professional Development System*, (Ottawa: 2001), p II-8

	Rowley Report ²² (01 Oct 1967)		Legault Report ²³ (31 Dec 1996)		Current ²⁴ (01 Apr 2003)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total # Officers	15,205	100%		100%	13,780	100%
Undergraduate Degree ²⁵	4185	27.5%		46.5%	7156	51.9%
Postgraduate Degree	853	5.6%		6.8%	1874	13.6%
Total Degrees	5038	33.1%		53.3%	9030	65.5%

Table 1 - Comparison of Officer Post Secondary Education

As can be seen from Table 1, over the past 35 years the CF has made progress towards the stated goal of all officers having a degree. If the recommendations presented by MGen Rowley had been implemented at that time, those recruited in the late 1960's would now be approaching the 35-year service point and with the exception of those commissioned from the ranks, all officers would possess an undergraduate degree.

With the renewed emphasis on post secondary education of the officer corps following the Ministers report to the Prime Minister (PM) in 1997,²⁶ it has become a critical requirement for promotion, particularly in the operational trades where traditionally performance in primary

²² Canada, Department of National Defence, *Report of the Officer Development Board*, (Ottawa:1969), Vol 1, Figs 4 & 6.

²³ Legault, Albert, *Bringing the Canadian Armed Forces into the Twenty First Century*, (Ottawa: DND,1997), p 40.

²⁴ DHRIM 4-2, DND, 24 April 2003. This data was produced at the request of the author from the DND Human Resources Database.

²⁵ This number is of those officers possessing a Bachelors degree only. It is assumed that those possessing a Post-Graduate degree also possess a Bachelors degree. Thus the total number of Bachelor degrees would be the sum of all those with degrees.

²⁶ Young, Douglas, *Report to the Prime Minister on the Leadership and Management of the Canadian Forces*, (Ottawa: DND,1997), p 15.

military duties was key.²⁷ This represented an acceptance by the senior leadership of the CF of having a professional officer corps with post secondary education. This is remarkable only because all previous attempts to implement a degreed officer corps policy, dating back to the Stedman Report in 1947,²⁸ had been stalled and blocked. In his 1997 report to the MND, Dr Granatstein assessed that this lack of success in promoting a university educated officer corps was due to the fact that

*a large number of senior officers believe passionately that education is **not** a necessary qualification for officers or, if it is, is only something for junior officers to worry about. Indeed, some with this churlish, backward mind-set appear to hold as an article of faith that too much education dulls fighting spirit, and this may account for the shoddy way the CF has treated officers who secure graduate degrees, and especially PhDs who seem to be deliberately pushed out of the military.²⁹*

While the turnaround on this matter by the senior leadership was the result of firm direction received from the MND in his 1997 report to the PM, it has not been without cost. There are many serving officers without degrees who possessed the necessary intellect to be officers when they were recruited. Despite Rowley's prediction that the top 15 percent intellectually of individuals in society would strive for a degree, these individuals were motivated more by the call to arms and are found predominantly in the operational classifications of MARS, Pilot, ANAV, Infantry, Armour, and Artillery. They have proven, through performance on both formal professional development courses and in their duties, that they have acquired the necessary mental discipline. This gap between the implementation of a policy on

²⁷ The introduction of a new Performance Evaluation and Reporting system in 1998 divided the report into performance and potential components. The potential component became the key determinant for promotion to the next rank and the possession of post secondary qualifications was a quantifiable component of the professional development category in this section. In the 2002 ANAV Capt-Maj promotion board, learning was worth 12% of the final score with a quarter of the points or 3% awarded for an undergraduate degree.

²⁸ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Canadian Officership in the 21st Century, Strategic Guidance for the Canadian Forces Officer Corps and the Officer Professional Development System*, (Ottawa: 2001), p BN 1/15.

post-secondary education and compliance would have been a problem no matter when the policy was implemented. This was foreseen by the Rowley report where he stated that "special attention will have to be devoted to raising the level of formal education of those who enter the profession through the OCTP."³⁰ The current administrative programs in place, including reimbursement of tuition costs of courses taken, the accreditation of military courses and professional development training, along with the implementation of distance learning facilities on bases and deployment sites, have all provided tools for motivated individuals to start their degrees. Once commitment has been demonstrated, increased spaces in programs such as Air Force Degree Completion Programs (AF D Comp P)³¹ and the Initial Baccalaureate Degree Programme (IBDP)³² provide these officers subsidized periods of 1 to 2 years of full time study in which to complete their degree.

While the CF appears to be finally implementing the recommendation for a degreed officer corps, is this emphasis on post-secondary education satisfying the goal of training the mind and imparting vigour to the intellect? When MND Young approached the academic community in 1997 for recommendations to resolve the woes of the Armed Forces following the Somalia scandal, their recommendations reflected their own biases. As academics with an interest in history, strategic studies and foreign affairs, they of course expected that an officer corps that was *educated*, in the truest sense of the word, would be better able to handle any mission or tasking received from the government. What they did not foresee was that military officers are experts at identifying problems and determining the best course of action. With the

²⁹ Granatstein, Jack, *For Efficient and Effective Military Forces*, (Ottawa: DND, 1997), p 20.

³⁰ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Report of the Officer Development Board*, (Ottawa: 1969), Vol 1, p 35.

³¹ CANAIRGEN 023/02

³² DAOD 5031-7, [http://www.forces.gc.ca/admfincs/subjects/daod/5031/7_e.asp], 26 April 03

increased PER potential points being allocated to the possession of a degree, ambitious and practical officers went about obtaining a degree. A cottage industry sprang up amongst several universities, where credits for previous military courses and life skills, combined with a few correspondence courses earned a degree. The CF often instigated these partnerships, feeling a loyalty to those officers stranded by the change in policy. Dr William Glover decries these 'degrees of convenience', as he feels that the individuals involved do not master a body of knowledge or develop analytical skills, but are merely participating in a "ticket-punching exercise."³³ He then refers to Dr. Jack Granatstein's comments to the Ottawa Military History Colloquium on 27 January 1999, where Dr. Granatstein "acknowledged that if he and his colleagues had anticipated the way their call for university degrees would be mocked, they would not have made it."³⁴ It is indeed ironic that the individuals who were proponents of an undergraduate degree for all officers are pleading that they were taken too literally, that the degree was just a way to ensure the *education* of potential officers. While they did not wish to see a linkage between particular degrees and military occupation codes (MOC's) their views appear to have again converged with those presented in the Rowley report.

Rowley felt that there needed to be a mix of academic disciplines within the officer corps and he divided them into the broad fields of Arts, Science, and Engineering.³⁵ He then conducted a survey amongst appointed OPI's from each branch of the CF and tabulated their responses. He found that overall there was a nearly equal requirement for each of the three degree fields. It is interesting to note that while the Air Force and the Navy desired 70% and

³³ Dr William Glover, "We Reposing Especial Trust and Confidence in your Loyalty, Courage and Integrity... The Officer Corps of 2020" in *Contemporary Issues in Officership: A Canadian Perspective*, ed by LCol Bernd Horn (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 2000), p 44.

³⁴ *Ibid*, p 44.

75% respectively of their officers to have science and engineering degrees, the Army branches desired that between 75-85% of their officers have an arts degree.³⁶ This is likely due to the more technical focus of those two services in the late 1960's compared to the Army who had specialist engineering MOC's to look after their equipment and were more interested in studies that would make better leaders and decision makers. Rowley understood that all three disciplines were important in achieving his goal of developing a well-educated officer. As the military could only directly influence the course of studies at the Royal Military College, he concluded that

*Regardless of the programme of studies selected, each officer cadet at the military colleges must include certain subjects in his undergraduate courses. These are: mathematics, science, military management, government, military geography, history, economics and basic psychology; courses in parent and second languages will also be required*³⁷

This vision of a well-rounded officer is reflected in the current core curriculum at RMC that all officer cadets must take, regardless of specialization or degree stream. This core curriculum consists of minimum standards for Mathematics (which also includes Logic and Information Technology), Sciences (Chemistry and Physics), Canadian History, Language and Culture, Politics, International Relations, Leadership and Ethics.³⁸ This core curriculum of 17 to 19 course equivalents (30-42 percent of a degree) is based on defined minimum competencies laid out by a Core Curriculum Committee composed of representatives from each of the three environments.³⁹ Since the emphasis at RMC is to produce capable, knowledgeable and

³⁵ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Report of the Officer Development Board*, (Ottawa:1969), Vol 2, p 20

³⁶ Ibid, table p 19.

³⁷ Ibid, p 25.

³⁸ "Academic Programmes", Royal Military College of Canada website, [http://www.rmc.ca/academic/registrar/programme/cal-acadpro_e.htm], 7 May 2003

³⁹ Dr John Scott Cowan, "RMC and the Profession of Arms: Looking ahead at Canada's Military University", *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol 2, No 3, (Autumn 2001), p 7.

resourceful officers for the CF, the fact that an RMC undergraduate degree contains 11 to 50 percent more courses than the same degree from a civilian university⁴⁰ is not surprising. The follow on question must then be on which is better suited for a military officer: a focussed, specialist degree such as that espoused by Dr William Glover, where the individual masters a body of knowledge and analytical skills to work within that body; or the more generalist approach advocated by RMC's principal, Dr Cowan.

Academics such as Drs Glover and Granatstein, being familiar with academia, feel that there is no such thing as too much education. The United States Air Force (USAF) has historically encouraged university education and in particular, highly technical degree fields. Colonel (ret'd) Dennis Drew taught at the Air University at Maxwell AFB for 20 years and felt that "both flyers and non-flyers worship more often at the altar of superior technology than at the shrine of superior strategy"⁴¹ He goes on to state that as of 1995, 50 percent of all active-duty officers possess a graduate-level degree, mainly from civilian university programs held on Air Force Bases. His concern is that of the 322 programs available, only two directly concern the art of war, with 19 programs containing a tangential relationship. By far the majority of the programs were business related, encompassing such disciplines as business administration, human resources management and other degrees not relevant to the profession of arms⁴². He sums up by saying that "perhaps we need to remind ourselves that our business is not business, our business is war."⁴³ I agree with his sentiments and feel that many of the perceived and actual problems in the CF today are a direct result of these business solutions being applied incorrectly

⁴⁰ Ibid, p 8.

⁴¹ Col Dennis Drew, "Educating Air Force Officers: Observations after 20 Years at Air University", *Airpower Journal*, Volume XI, No 2, (Summer 1997), p 42.

⁴² Ibid pp 39-40

to a military force. The perceived civilianisation of the CF is really the result of our own officers using the latest business buzzwords and theories from Masters of Business Administration (MBA) schools, resulting in such destructive programs as Alternate Service Delivery (ASD), just in-time-procurement, and business planning instead of budgeting. These business models do not take into account the differences between business and the military. Their focus on the bottom line, while important, is unable to determine the real costs of forgone training and experience. While satisfying the short term accounting goals these business solutions result in deficits that can end up costing lives or even the nation itself.

Just as we must be reminded that our business is war with respect to the graduate degrees pursued, we must also recognize that same paradigm in our undergraduate degrees. Again, Dr Cowan of RMC is providing a solution for those officers who join the CF under the Direct Entry Officer (DEO) program. These individuals are recruited after completing a degree at a civilian university and are therefore more specialized than their compatriots who have graduated from RMC. These individuals do not have the broad educational experiences that are contained in the core curriculum at RMC and so "DND has settled upon a period of Professional Military Education (PME) as part of the Enhanced Leadership Model for new officers."⁴⁴ RMC cadets receive a well rounded education as part of their curriculum, while DEO officers, following an individual prior learning assessment, will receive an additional period of PME under the control of the RMC continuing studies division to fill in gaps left by their more specialized degrees.

The parallels between the USAF experience with graduate degrees and the Canadian experience with undergraduate degrees is similar. Instead of the focus being on the relevance of

⁴³ Ibid, p 40.

the education being acquired to a career as a military officer, the merit boards only look to see if a particular, easily measured deliverable such as a degree is present. It is much harder to quantify the knowledge gained by an officer who, as a true *professional* is pursuing a personal professional development program composed of reading and analysis of history and current events. If in fact we truly are a profession, these sorts of activities would be encouraged and rewarded in the merit board process as much as an MBA or Doctorate in Engineering is currently. To a small extent this is starting to occur, with the recognition of senior professional development courses such as AMSC and NSSC by merit boards considering promotion to Colonel/Captain(N) and flag ranks.

The current sponsored Post-Graduate program in the CF is a good example of encouraging narrow technical specialization for specific duties in the sponsoring organization once the degree is obtained. Unfortunately there are very few sponsored post-graduate opportunities in Strategic Studies or War Studies. The problem associated with an over emphasis on specific technical specialization was well stated by former USAF chief of staff General Michael Dugan when he observed that the USAF was

*producing a generation of illiterate truck drivers... officers who aspire to senior leadership positions know a great deal about airplanes and precious little about airpower. They can skilfully talk with their hands about air tactics but are ill prepared to think with their heads about air strategy.*⁴⁵

Specialization is necessary, indeed critical, in a few technical areas and for specialist officers such as doctors and lawyers. However, for the majority of officers in the traditional military occupations, I think that the ideal undergraduate degree should possess general appreciation and

⁴⁴ Dr John Scott Cowan, "RMC and the Profession of Arms: Looking ahead at Canada's Military University", *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol 2, No 3, (Autumn 2001), p 7.

knowledge of core subjects that are particularly applicable to a military professional, with a specialization in an area of personal interest. Post-graduate degrees should be on either technological niches to support our programs or general studies relevant to the military profession. While personal interests are important factors in maintaining motivation to complete post-graduate studies, it is my opinion that too many serving personnel are choosing their postgraduate fields of studies with a view to employment prospects following their military service.

The Canadian Forces is currently subsidizing individuals to obtain post-graduate degrees through the Advanced Degrees for Regular Force Officers program.⁴⁶ It is time that the military stepped back and assessed the point of these education initiatives. If we are in fact a professional military, it is not enough to get the 'tick in the box' that completing a degree, any degree can provide. The degree must be relevant to the further enrichment of our skills as officers, to enable us to remain innovative and intellectually aggressive in a changing world. Our cognitive skills, strategic thinking and articulation must be first rate to allow us to clearly see and find our way to the desired end state in a world consumed by accelerated change. A university degree alone will not ensure that outcome, but if the processes involved in obtaining that degree are properly weighted, the **education** achieved while gaining the degree will succeed in producing an officer corps that is up to the challenges of the future. Dr Cowan said it best at the May 2001 RMC convocation; "Do not, please, believe, that the much heralded RMA, the Revolution in Military

⁴⁵ Col Dennis Drew, "Educating Air Force Officers: Observations after 20 Years at Air University", *Airpower Journal*, Volume XI, No 2, (Summer 1997), p 38.

⁴⁶ CANFORGEN 064/02 provides details on the administration of this program.

Affairs, is purely a technological revolution, a revolution of devices. The real RMA is knowledge and that revolution is upon us now."⁴⁷

Canada needs a professional, well-educated officer corps to help steer the CF in an uncertain and often dangerous world. When junior officers may be called upon to be skilled leaders, technical experts, diplomats, and interpreters, as well as warriors, good training is no longer enough. Faced with situations that can often have strategic consequences, our officers need good judgement. This judgement comes from the mental flexibility and strength that a solid, broadly based university education can impart. Our future officers will still be recruited from the top 15th percentile of intelligence in the general population. **These officers do need degrees.** We must vigilantly ensure that these degrees are relevant to the needs of the military profession, at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level. This will ensure that Canada's knowledge RMA will effectively and efficiently guide us into the 21st century and beyond.

⁴⁷ Dr John Scott Cowan, "RMC and the Profession of Arms: Looking ahead at Canada's Military University", *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol 2, No 3, (Autumn 2001), p 6.

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