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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE / COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES  
CSC 30 / CCEM 30

EXERCISE

**New Horizons**

**Canadian Multiculturalism: A Neglected Military Resource**

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## **Abstract**

This paper argues that DND should pursue a policy that makes better use of Canadian multiculturalism. The author first investigates how cultural biases affect soldiers, sailors, and aircrew in the field. Then through a number of short case studies he explores how linguistic ability and/or cultural awareness have become factors in a number of military operations ranging from Vietnam to the current War Against Terrorism. By reviewing the history of Canadian demographics it is then demonstrated why the CF is in a perfect position to take advantage of the ever-increasing multicultural diversity in this country. Finally, recommendations are made to make better use of Canadian cultural diversity, namely by: actively recruiting first and second generation Canadians into the CF; using more efficient means of tracking the linguistic abilities and the cultural background of CF personnel in order to provide support for international military operations; and increasing the emphasis on language and cultural training for personnel prior to deployments.

Canada's history as a non-colonizing power, champion of constructive multilateralism and effective mediator, underpins an important and distinctive role among nations as they seek to build a new and better order.

*Canada in the World*<sup>1</sup>

What I say to an American may not always be interpreted the same as if I say it to a Canadian, an Australian, or a Fijian... You can issue orders and edicts, and demands that things happen, but that doesn't get the job done in this multinational environment.

Unidentified UN officer serving in the Sinai<sup>2</sup>

In issuing *Canada in the World*, in 1995, the Government recognized the importance of Canadian culture when dealing with the rest of the world. In promoting its main objectives of international prosperity and security, the Department of Foreign Policy and International Trade (DFAIT) chose 'Canadian values and culture' as the key means of exporting its foreign policy agenda.<sup>3</sup> Interestingly enough, the Canadian *Defence White Paper* of the previous year had largely neglected the potential impact of harnessing the resources of our multicultural society to accomplish the Department of National Defence's missions abroad. In fact, the only reference to Canadian values or culture in the *Defence White Paper* was with regards to the Canadian 'tradition' of multilateral security cooperation (participation in peacekeeping and NATO).<sup>4</sup> More recently, the importance of recognizing cultural differences within operational environments has gained increased visibility in Canadian military circles.

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<sup>1</sup> *Canada in the World* (Ottawa: CIDA Canada, 1995), 9.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in, G.L. Gillespie, *Culture the Key to Coalition Operations* (Toronto, CFC, 2002), 13.

<sup>3</sup> *Canada in the World*, i.

<sup>4</sup> *1994 Defence White Paper* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 1994), 27-39.

Canadian Forces College (CFC) students and the Defence and Civil Institute of Environmental Medicine (DCIEM, now DRDC Toronto) have published a number of articles, dealing with the importance of cultural and language training prior to both coalition and peacekeeping operations.<sup>5</sup> However, in spite this work, little has changed with respect to CF policy concerning cultural and language training. The only CFAO on the subject deals with “foreign language – instruction, testing and qualifications”, and is largely limited to setting the language requirements for 35 embassy positions around the world.<sup>6</sup>

This paper will argue that DND, like DFAIT, should pursue a policy that makes better use of Canadian multiculturalism. In doing so it will begin by defining culture, and investigate how cultural biases might affect soldiers, sailors, and aircrew in the field. Then, through a number of short case studies, it will be demonstrated how linguistic ability and/or cultural awareness have become factors in a number of military operations ranging from Vietnam to the current War Against Terrorism. By reviewing the history of Canadian demographics it will also be shown why the CF is in a perfect position to take advantage of the ever-increasing multicultural diversity in this country, and why this needs to be done. Finally, recommendations for making better use of Canadian cultural diversity, namely: the active recruiting of first and second generation Canadians into the CF (and particularly the Reserves); a more efficient means of tracking

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<sup>5</sup> Colonel G.L. Gillespie’s *Culture the Key to Coalition Operation*, and Donna Winslow’s *Canadian Warriors in Peacekeeping: Points of Tension in Complex Cultural Encounters* are good examples of this type of research.

<sup>6</sup> CFAO 9-61.

the linguistic abilities and the cultural background of CF personnel in order to provide support for international military operations; and an increased emphasis on language and cultural training for personnel prior to deployments.

Since this discussion is dealing primarily with culture, it is useful to begin by defining the term. While also including material objects, the basic concept of culture concerns shared systems of beliefs, values, customs, and behavior that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning.<sup>7</sup> Language is a particularly important tool for the development of any culture, because the very definition of culture implies that it involves all behavior that is learned, as opposed to instinctive or inherited.<sup>8</sup> Language is also important within the context of culture because, “language is the key to our ability to cope rapidly and effectively with new circumstances. It enables us to coordinate the activities of many people to achieve desired ends...”<sup>9</sup>

Cultural differences within coalitions and alliances are considered to be ‘soft’ frictions, which include differences in language, ethics and social beliefs. They differ from ‘hard’ frictions, comprising technology, rules of war, doctrine and logistics. Just as failure to deal with hard frictions can lead to mission failure, the failure to recognize cultural or ‘soft’ differences can also lead to disaster.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Daniel G. Bates, and Elliot M. Fratkin, Cultural Anthropology (Second Edition) (Needleham Heights: Allyn & Bacon, 1999), 5.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*, 5.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid*, 62.

<sup>10</sup> Gillespie, 2.

Given these definitions, it becomes possible to gauge the potential role of culture and language in military operations. Canadian research in this area has tended to be delineated into studies concerning peacekeeping operations, and those dealing with coalition operations. The preponderance of the former studies is perhaps not surprising, considering Canada's propensity to get involved in peacekeeping operations, as well as the national sense of shame that was felt in 1993 when a sixteen year old Somali boy was tortured to death by Canadian peacekeeper.<sup>11</sup> In the wake of the latter incident, DND conducted the *CF Survey on Ethical Risks in Peacekeeping* in 1998. The survey determined, not surprisingly, that 'cultural differences', and particularly the issue of applying Canadian cultural values in ethical decision-making abroad, topped the list of respondents' concerns.<sup>12</sup> The Survey's author concluded that:

It is most important for peacekeepers to be made aware of customs/patterns of behavior in the area of operations. Sadly most Canadians are ignorant and make mistakes because of this lack of 'soft' knowledge. A better-informed soldier will make the right decision and will be less likely to find himself in a tempting or compromising position.<sup>13</sup>

It is a fairly benign conclusion, and the issue is perhaps better summed up by M. Vanderpool:

Unless carefully managed, interventions by peacekeeping forces may do more harm than good... Peacekeepers' own cultural standards of appropriate behavior... will frequently differ from those of members of the

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<sup>11</sup> M. Vanderpool, *The Cross Cultural Adaptability Scale: A Comparison of the Psychometric Properties Observed in a Canadian and an Australian Administration* (Ottawa, DND, 2002), 1.

<sup>12</sup> Donna Winslow, *Canadian Warriors in Peacekeeping: Points of Tension in Complex Cultural Encounters* (Toronto: DND, 1999), 5.

<sup>13</sup> J.P.M Maillet, *Canadian Forces Ethics and Peacekeeping Survey Report* in, Winslow, 13.

opposing factions, and even from those of other forces participating in the mission. Issues arising out of such differences may cause irreparable damage to the peacekeeping mission should they, for example, result in a decision that offends the cultural or religious sensitivities of either or both opposing parties, or even of another contingent.<sup>14</sup>

Here Vanderpool identifies the fact that the issue of cultural misunderstanding is not limited to differences between the peacekeepers and opposing factions within the host nation, but also to the 'coalition' that makes up the peacekeepers themselves. The importance of understanding one's friends during operations is perhaps even more important than understanding either one's enemies, or the warring factions if the operation involves peacekeeping. The cultural divide separating allies can be just as wide as the one between potential adversaries.

A NATO study has identified four broad cross-cultural categories that allow one to characterize a culture. These categories are: power distance, which relates to differences between the status of superior/subordinate in their relationships; uncertainty avoidance, which relates to the use of bureaucracy as a means of dealing with uncertainty; individualism versus collectivism, which relates to whether individuals identify themselves through group or personal goals and achievements; and masculinity versus femininity, which relates (somewhat stereotypically) to whether individuals consider successes in terms of achievement or interpersonal harmony.<sup>15</sup> In a subsequent NATO survey, the cultures of 44 nations involved in coalition operations in the Former Republic of

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<sup>14</sup> Vanderpool, 1.

<sup>15</sup> Keith G. Stewart, Michael C. Bonner, and Neil G. Verral, Cultural Factors in Future Multinational Operations, in G.L. Gillespie, Culture the Key to Coalition Operations (Toronto: CFC, 2002), 10.



Yugoslavia were characterized using the system developed by Keith Stewart *et al.*

Country	Power Distance	Uncertainty Avoidance	Individualism vs Collectivism	Masculinity vs Feminism
Argentina	Medium	High	Medium	Medium
Canada	Low	Low	High	Medium
India	High	Low	Medium	Medium
Venezuela	High	Medium	Low	High
Malaysia	High	Low	Low	Medium
Denmark	Low	Low	High	Low <sup>16</sup>

While representing only a small portion of the survey results, the above sample provides an adequate example of how cultures can clash within a coalition. Even though the values for high, medium and low in each category are not quantified by the authors of the survey, it is possible to imagine the potential problems associated with a gay subordinate from Denmark going to work for a Venezuelan supervisor, or a Canadian subordinate presenting operational priorities to a Malay Commanding Officer.

In addition to the cultural dimension of the challenges to coalitions stated above, the issue of language will likely remain a problem for Canadians troops operating in any type of coalition. Even within NATO it is common for people working in their second, third, or fourth language to miss the ‘unspoken’ meaning of a statement, facial expression, or gesture.<sup>17</sup> As coalitions and alliances expand to include non-traditional allies, the occurrence of this type of problem has the

<sup>16</sup> Elfrat Elron, Boas Shamir, and Ben-Ari Eyal, Why Don’t They Fight Each Other? Cultural Diversity and Operational Unity in Multinational Forces in, Gillespie, 11.

<sup>17</sup> Gillespie, 13 .

potential to become even more pronounced, particularly since new partners are increasingly being represented by traditionally 'non-westernized' nations such as Middle Eastern countries and former Soviet Republics, where English has not been the predominant language in the past.

So far the discussion has focused on potential challenges facing troops in a culturally diverse operational environment. But has this potential friction manifested itself in the past? Is there evidence that proves the importance of cultural and linguistic knowledge in military operations? The answer to both these questions is yes. Through a series of historical case studies it is possible to demonstrate the impact that cultural awareness and/or language ability can have on operations. While there are a large number of cases to choose from in this regard, only the Vietnam Conflict, Operation Desert Storm, and the War Against Terrorism will be examined here for the sake of brevity.

During the Vietnam Conflict, the United States recognized the benefits of using culturally aware troops in the battle for the 'hearts and minds' of the Vietnamese people. In 1961, a US Army Command and Staff College study identified a lack of cultural training as a major deficiency in US doctrine in fighting against Communists in the 'Wars of Liberation'. As a result, 2,000 Special Force soldiers were given cultural and language training in 1961. A number of these individuals were subsequently deployed to South Vietnam where they worked as medical specialists assisting the Montagnard tribes of the Pleiku Plateau. Because of

their cultural awareness and language skills, these soldiers quickly developed a relationship of trust with the Montagnard.<sup>18</sup> Interestingly enough, it was a relationship that the South Vietnamese government had failed to establish with these important tribes, which consisted of some 200,000 persons in the South with another 400,000 in the North. The Vietnamese considered the Montagnard tribesmen as inferior, and labeled them *moi* or savages.<sup>19</sup> By respecting the customs and taboos of the Montagnards, US Special Forces were able to foster participation in the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) program. The animistic tribes participated in the CIDG program because they believed that military operations were “both pleasing to the spirits and good for their communities.”<sup>20</sup> In addition to facilitating military action against insurgents, US Special Forces gathered much human intelligence that would not have been possible had operatives not had language training.<sup>21</sup> By 1964, Special Forces had made a significant contribution to the war, while at the same time participating in much civil action. US Special Forces participated in building schools and markets, initiating sanitation and agricultural projects, and treating over 1.5 million people in village di

respect the masses. Misunderstanding the importance of the plateau tribes (and other peasants), the South Vietnamese Army continued to treat the Montagnards with complete contempt until the population as a whole came to identify itself with the Communists, who had made the effort to cultivate good relationships with the tribesmen.<sup>23</sup> The second problem was that the majority of American troops did not receive anywhere near the level of cultural training afforded to the Special Forces. As one former operative put it,

American soldiers arriving in Vietnam found themselves in an environment totally different to anything they had ever experienced. They were not used to the heat, the rain, the jungle; they did not know the Vietnamese people and their culture; they did not speak their language; and, most significantly, they did not know who or where the enemy was or how to find out.<sup>24</sup>

These were problems that the Special Forces had quickly overcome. Working from mountain outposts, and amongst the people, operatives readily adjusted to the climate and culture of Vietnam, and learned who the enemy was and where to find him.

America lost the war, but learned a valuable lesson from it. Subsequent to the war in Vietnam, the United States developed the concept of Foreign Assistance Officers (FAOs). These individuals are chosen for their ability to learn languages. Having been given basic language training they are posted to various countries for a two-year term, during which time they are expected to act as advisors to the host nation. The system is designed to produce an in-house

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<sup>23</sup> *ibid*, 20 and 62.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid*, 79.

capability that provides the US Armed Forces cultural and linguistic expertise in every region of the globe.<sup>25</sup>

The development of FAOs, and an understanding of the importance of culture in operations, would later play a critical role in the United State's success during Operation Desert Storm. Due to his personal knowledge of Middle Eastern culture, and the input of FAOs, General Norman Schwarzkopf understood that Coalition's efforts against Iraq were extremely susceptible to cultural sensitivities. Amongst the most widely publicized concerns in this area were: the ever present threat of Scud attacks to Israel, which might bring that nation into the conflict, thus leading to a breakup of the Coalition; and Arab concerns about not being seen as lackeys of the West. While Secretary of State, James Baker, conducted a game of shuttle diplomacy to keep Israel out of the war and the Coalition together, Schwarzkopf did his part by fostering cross-cultural interaction throughout the Campaign. A Gulf States' command and control network was put into place that allowed Saudi Lieutenant General Khalid bin Sultan to command Coalition forces in tandem with Scharzkopf. The system worked remarkably efficiently due to the use of culturally aware liaison teams in the parallel headquarters.<sup>26</sup>

Having examined two American examples of the importance of cultural understanding to operations, it is worth exploring the issue from a Canadian

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<sup>25</sup> Gillespie, 21-22.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid*, 15 and 23.

perspective. Operation Apollo was Canada's initial contribution to the US-led Campaign (or war) Against Terrorism. Known as Operation Enduring Freedom, the Campaign Against Terrorism began in the fall of 2001 after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attack by Al-Qaeda against the Continental United States. As part of its contribution to the campaign, Canada deployed a series of warships to the Northern Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman, and Southern Arabian Gulf. Well-suited to provide a relay between the US Navy and other Coalition assets in the area,<sup>27</sup> the Commander of the Canadian Task Group was quickly assigned his own multinational task group, which was given the primary mission of interdicting escaping Al-Qaeda and Taliban leaders who chose to use the sea when exiting Afghanistan via Iran and Pakistan.<sup>28</sup>

One of the factors affecting the potential success of the Task Group's mission was a lack of intelligence information. Unfamiliar with the area and traffic patterns, the Canadian Staff was at a disadvantage when trying to station assets for interceptions. A key breakthrough in this area came from an unexpected source, a corporal logistics technician on board HMCS ST JOHN'S. Corporal Keith Muffty was born in Karachi, spoke fluent Urdu (Pakistani), and was well versed in Pakistani culture. Since the majority of dhows being investigated by the Task Group were originating in Pakistan, he was quickly put to work as an interpreter with HMCS ST JOHN'S Naval Boarding Party. Corporal Muffty

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<sup>27</sup> The key reasons for this decision were the fact that Canadian equipment fits were compatible with both USN and NATO systems, and that Canadian assets were adept at working with multinational forces where language was an issue.

<sup>28</sup> Comments on Operation Apollo are based on the author's personal experience as CANTASKGRU ROTO II Combat Officer.

proved to be a much more effective interpreter than the military linguists who had been assigned to the mission, in part because of his excellent linguistic skills, but equally because of his understanding of Pakistani culture. Putting Pakistani crews at ease, Corporal Muffty's efforts allowed the Task Group to develop a detailed analysis of year-round dhow traffic patterns in the Gulf of Oman. For his efforts he was awarded a Commander Joint Task Force South West Asia Commendation, and was written up in *The Trident* as Canada's "Secret Weapon" in the War on Terrorism.<sup>29</sup>

Following the success of Corporal Muffty, another first generation Canadian proved extremely effective in gathering intelligence for the Task Group. Lieutenant Commander Arvinder Ajula was serving in the Gulf of Oman as HMCS WINNIPEG's Combat Officer. Coming from an East Indian background, Lieutenant Commander Ajula again elicited otherwise unobtainable information, this time from crews of Indian dhows. Since the Indian crews were generally disenchanted with their Muslim neighbours, they were willing to provide a wealth of information ranging from likely hiding spots for terrorists traveling by dhow, to the specifics of who owned the dhows on various routes throughout the year. It is doubtful that the information gathered through these two individuals could ever have been obtained from other sources. Certainly the reaction to naval linguists speaking poor Urdu or Hindi was generally distrust, and a subsequent lack of cooperation. This is perhaps not surprising, as in the part of the world where the

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<sup>29</sup> "Secret Weapon", The Trident, Vol 36, No 20, Monday, October 21, 2002.

Task Group was operating, “a group of soldiers showing up at your house in ‘black pajamas’ is usually a bad sign.”<sup>30</sup>

Just as the American experience in Vietnam and Operation Desert Shield highlights the importance of cultural awareness during military operations, the effective application of human resources by the Canadian Task Group during Operation Apollo indicates how Canadian multiculturalism could benefit the CF. However, before making recommendations with regards to methods for tapping and developing these resources, it is worth examining the history of Canadian demographics in order to determine the potential that this nation’s population represents in such an endeavor.

Canada’s ethnic roots are French and English. Pre-Confederation Canada was a battleground between two superpowers, and the outcome of this conflict was represented on the new Dominion’s coat of arms by the rampant lion and chained unicorn. Traditionally settled by Britons and Northern Europeans, it became clear by 1867 that this pool of settlers could not fill the vastness of the new nation. Threatened by the rapid westward expansion of the United States, Canada looked for new sources of immigrants in Ireland and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. At the same time, Chinese immigrants were introduced, not so much as settlers, but as a source of cheap labour.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Quote from an unknown US staff officer. Author’s personal experience.

<sup>31</sup> Eva Mackey, The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 32-33.



In the years immediately after World War II the majority of immigrants came from Europe. This group was made up predominantly of Eastern Europeans escaping Communist oppression, and 'more desirable immigrants' (according to the government of the day) from the Netherlands, Scandinavia, and the United Kingdom. By the late 1950s, however, even this pool was drying up. This led to an influx of Southern Europeans: Italians, Portuguese and Greeks, who became the driving force behind the rapid urbanization of Southern Ontario. The latter groups were not well received in Canada, resulting in a decision by the government to 'de-racialise' the immigration selection process. Fuelled by a world economic boom that made it more and more difficult to attract skilled labour, by 1967 Canadian immigration law was amended to allow Asians and other Third World nationals into the country on the same basis as Europeans. With more than half of new Canadians arriving from the Third World, the Trudeau government officially adopted a policy of "Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework" in October 1971.<sup>32</sup>

The concept of multiculturalism suits Canada well. With the exception of the aboriginal population, no Canadian can trace his family history in North America back beyond the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and the vast majority of Canadian families have been in the country for fewer than a hundred years. It is not surprising therefore that many Canadians still maintain ties with the culture of a family homeland. On the streets of cities such as Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver it is not unusual to hear a dozen languages being spoken by Canadians from diverse ethnic

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<sup>32</sup> *ibid*, 52-53.

backgrounds. The importance of multiculturalism in Canada is not just a reflection of the makeup of the country, but also in the attitude of Canadians towards other cultures. In a country comprised predominantly of immigrants, Canadians have become unusually tolerant of other cultures. *A Globe and Mail* article described this attitude as follows:

We [Canadians] are against the idea that people should be treated differently because of their skin colour, language, religion or background. We are for the idea that all Canadians should be treated as full citizens. We are against the idea that any Canadian is more purely Canadian than any other, no matter how far back his or her ancestry goes... Ours is a modern nationalism: liberal, decent, tolerant and colour blind. That is what Canada represents to the millions of people who come here from other countries.<sup>33</sup>

As a result of this positive attitude towards multiculturalism, immigration continues to be the most important factor in sustaining population growth in Canada. Sixteen percent of the population is now made up of first generation immigrants coming predominately from the Middle East, Africa, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. In researching demographic trends for DND, Tracey Wait noted that 60% of these new Canadians have settled in urban Ontario.<sup>34</sup> Wait has recognized that this generation of visible minorities is not well represented in the CF, and blames recruiting practices which target smaller towns and rural regions over metropolitan centers.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> "The Canadian Idea", *The Globe and Mail*, 4 November 1995.

<sup>34</sup> Tracey Wait, *Canadian Demographics and Social Values at a Glance: Impact on Strategic HR Planning* (Ottawa, DND, 2002), 8.

<sup>35</sup> *ibid*, 13-14.

While first generation Canadians represent a significant recruiting pool, the CF keeps no statistics on its ability to attract these individuals. Perhaps it is too afraid of being branded as racist. In 2002, the DND did conduct a Self-Identification Census, but only in order to ensure that the department was conforming to legislation passed in the 2002 Employment Equity Act. To this end, the Census identified numbers of four specific minority groups within the Forces: women; aboriginal peoples; visible minorities; and persons with disabilities. The statistics formulated from the Census do little to identify shortfalls in recruiting immigrants in general, because the category of 'visible minorities' includes many families that have been in Canada for generations, and ignores our success in recruiting white immigrants. However, the Census does show that only 4.6% of the Regular Force is made up of visible minorities, a much lower number than would be expected, given ratios within the general population.<sup>36</sup>

Up to this point, it has been argued that cultural awareness and linguistic abilities are important in military operations. It has also been demonstrated that Canada is a multicultural society, both in the sense of demographics and in Canadians' willingness to accept other cultures. The focus will now shift to recommendations that are aimed at tapping the multicultural nature of Canada. Three recommendations will be made: the first deals with the recruitment of 'new

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<sup>36</sup> N. Holden, Canadian Forces self-Identification Census Preliminary Result (Ottawa: DND (DMGIEE 3-8), October 2002), 1.

Canadians'; the second with the tracking of cultural knowledge; and the third with developing a better cross-cultural understanding within the existing Force.

As noted, Canada's 'ethnic' population is growing faster than the rest of society, due to immigration. This presents both a challenge to the CF, and a potential source of excellent cultural awareness and linguistic ability. It is a challenge because the CF should reflect society, and yet it does not. Visible minorities are not represented in the CF to the degree that they are in other walks of life. It has been posited that the reason for this is demographics; specifically, the fact that the CF traditionally recruits in areas where visible minorities do not settle. The solution to the problem is recruiting in metropolitan areas using methods that target communities that normally do not follow the Canadian media.<sup>37</sup> Since many new immigrants wish to remain within their ethnic communities in urban centers, the use of the Reserves as a bridge between civilian life and the Regular Force should be considered.<sup>38</sup> This is not a new idea, and statistics gathered to date should indicate the potential that further efforts in this area might achieve. In 2002, the percentage of CF personnel represented by visible minorities was five times higher in the Reserves than it was in Regular Force. In terms of pure numbers, the Regular Force employed 665 persons from visible minorities, while the much smaller Reserves employed 791.<sup>39</sup> These statistics indicate that, despite common misconceptions, visible minorities are quite open to serving in the CF under the right conditions. The Reserves allow exposure to the CF while

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<sup>37</sup> *ibid*, 14.

<sup>38</sup> Gillespie, 22.

<sup>39</sup> Summary of CF Representation Stats (Ottawa: DND, Oct 2002).

allowing recruits to remain in their communities. Yet the money expended on recruiting Reservists in urban communities is no different than in other parts of the country.<sup>40</sup> More active recruitment of first and second generation Canadians in urban communities would give the CF an enormous advantage in operations because of the language skills and cultural awareness that these individuals would bring to the organization. Such personnel could either be used in the field, or as cultural and language instructors for other servicemen.

In implementing any policy that makes use of cultural awareness and linguistic abilities, there will be a need to track capability. The Military Personnel Record Resume (MPRR) is the perfect tool for this. MPRRs currently contain only information relating to 'tested' language ability. Out of operational necessity, cultural background and language ability should be tracked in the future using this tool. Having a centrally controlled record of cultural backgrounds and linguistic abilities would allow the CF to quickly identify experts within the organization, instead of asking individuals to come forward during times of crisis (as was the case with OP APOLLO).

Finally, there is the question of how best to train the current generation servicemen in cultural affairs. A possible solution is to offer tertiary language training to individuals who already hold the bilingual language profiles expected of their rank and trade. Since learning a second language indicates some aptitude for languages in general, this would serve as both an incentive for

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<sup>40</sup> Email correspondence with CFRC Toronto 1-20 April 2004.

learning French or English, and a method of selection for further language training. By learning a chosen language (the CF could limit the list to those languages that would likely to influence operations), members would be exposed to different cultures, thus providing the CF a tool not unlike the United States' FAO program.

The success of military operations today is tied to cultural awareness and linguistic ability. The Department of Foreign Policy and International Trade has recognized the importance of Canadian multiculturalism in national efforts to influence an ever-changing world. It is a concept that the Canadian Forces would be wise to adopt. In operations such as Vietnam, the First Gulf War, and the War Against Terrorism, cultural understanding has played a key role in the success, or failure, of these missions. In Vietnam, the United States learned a valuable lesson with regards to the use of culturally aware troops. From it the United States developed the concept of FAOs to act as a basis for understanding the cultural challenges facing it in operational theatres throughout the world. Canada too has had some success in using culturally aware personnel to improve operational effectiveness, and yet no policy has been adopted that makes use of the multicultural nature of Canadian society, or the openness of Canadians to other cultures.

DFAIT is a small department that will not be able to execute Canadian foreign policy on its own. One of the government's most effective tools for exporting

Canadian values is the CF, but only if the military is able to operate in a manner that takes into account cultural sensibilities. This paper has argued that there are some simple solutions to this challenge. By focusing recruiting drives in areas where immigrants tend to settle, the CF may be able to attract new Canadians who can help the Forces build up its cultural awareness of potential theatres of operation. By tracking linguistic ability and cultural background on MPRRs, DND could also make better use of the assets that it already has available when it comes to preparing itself for deployment. Finally, the CF could use some of its resources to provide tertiary language training to its members, thus improving the Forces' ability to interact with both other Canadians and foreigners.

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