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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE / COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES

CSC 32 / CCEM 32

MASTER OF DEFENCE STUDIES – RESEARCH PAPER  
MAÎTRISE EN ÉTUDES DE LA DÉFENSE — PROJET DE RECHERCHE

**IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP ON INDIVIDUALS' AND GROUPS' BEHAVIOUR  
AND MENTAL HEALTH DURING DEPLOYED OPERATIONS**

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24 April 2006

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## **Abstract**

*Recognizing that the Canadian Forces (CF) constitute an essential national security capability, the Canadian Government often calls upon its military power to defend Canada's interests and values in various deployed locations throughout the world.*

*Although deployed operations are very important and can constitute a considerable part of our military assignments, the continually increasing deployments of Canadian Forces personnel over the past decade have significantly increased the levels of stress on soldier's confidence and morale. Employing data from recent Canadian missions, this paper examines how leadership influences soldier's effectiveness during their deployments.*

*Based on research, there is a relationship between the deployments and its effects on morale, unit cohesiveness, and confidence in leadership, which directly impact operational effectiveness. One critical issue that can be drawn from these dimensions is that of combat or operational stress*

*To achieve success in deployed operations, full potential of human resources are essential. Therefore, everyone should make every effort to learn about stress, recognize when it is present, and practice coping techniques to keep stress from mounting. This study demonstrates that effective leadership plays a critical role in mitigating that stress and ensuring the success of future missions.*

## **IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP ON INDIVIDUALS/GROUPS BEHAVIOUR AND MENTAL HEALTH DURING DEPLOYED OPERATIONS**

*“A man does not have himself killed for a few halfpence a day or for a petty distinction. You must speak to the soul in order to electrify the man.”*

Napoleon Bonaparte

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the Canadian “National Security Policy” (April 2004), core security interests are described as: 1) protecting Canada and Canadians at home and abroad; 2) ensuring that Canada is not a base for threats to our neighbours and allies; and 3) contributing to international security.<sup>1</sup> Recognizing that the Canadian Forces (CF) constitute an essential national security capability, the Canadian Government needs to be able to call on military power to defend Canada’s interests and values.

The Canadian Forces adapt constantly to the evolving security environment and stand ready to act in response to conflicts around the world. In the CF Army alone, almost 4,000 soldiers a year deploy on missions for restoring peace and renewing hope in various places such as Haiti, Bosnia, Africa, Afghanistan, and the Middle East.

During these deployments, many factors can influence the behaviour as well as the mental health of individuals and groups. In our day to day activities, most sources of stress can sometimes be avoided, but in deployed operations, operational stress can lead to serious behaviour and mental health problems. The term “operational stress” used in this paper encompasses combat-induced stress and all other forms of operational stress encountered by CF personnel while deployed on operations.

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<sup>1</sup> Privy Council Office, *Securing an Open Society: Canada’s National Security Policy* (Ottawa: PCO, 2004), 7.

The continually increasing deployments of Canadian Forces personnel over the past decade have significantly increased the levels of stress on soldier's confidence and morale. Perhaps more now than ever, effective leadership will play a critical role in mitigating that stress and ensuring the success of future missions. Employing data from recent Canadian missions, this paper will examine how leadership influences soldier's effectiveness during their deployments.

In the profession of arms, effective leadership is a crucial element required to achieve success in military operations. In the majority of formal organizations, leadership roles "exist to serve collective effectiveness."<sup>2</sup> Consequently, the operational commander's effectiveness must be defined in relation to his organization's collective effectiveness. According to the CF leadership doctrine, effective leadership is defined as, "directing, motivating and enabling others to accomplish the mission professionally and ethically while developing or improving capabilities that contribute to mission success."<sup>3</sup>

When military historians write about campaigns, missions and operations, they often describe the strategy, the operational conduct, the weapons and equipment. However, some also discuss human dimensions, which are equally important to success in battle but can hardly be measured or cannot be measured at all, such as the emotional element called morale. "Morale is the human dimension's most important intangible

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<sup>2</sup> Department of National Defence, A-PA-005-000/AP-003 *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Doctrine* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2005), 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.



element.”<sup>4</sup> Morale is the level of confidence of how people feel about themselves, their peers, their units, and their leaders. High morale has a direct impact on cohesive teams and units that will lead them to the achievement of common goals.

Starting with the human dimension in operations, this paper explores the importance of military cohesion in deployed operations, stress mitigation, and then describes the results of studies conducted in various deployed locations. The second chapter examines stress in military operations by describing the potential stressors related to deployed operations, the environmental sources of stress, stress related injuries and how soldiers can cope with operational stress. The last chapter focuses on leadership. It will examine leadership research, motivation, and will describe the various leadership styles.

The studies presented in this paper have been conducted in specific theatres of operations. While some of the results are similar across the various operational settings, it is important to avoid generalization as there are obvious differences in the organizational structure (e.g., U.N., NATO, or National chain of command), the type of mission/role (e.g., peacekeeping, peacemaking, combat operation) as well as in environmental conditions (e.g., climate, local culture, level of threat).

To lighten the text, masculine gender will be used throughout this paper.

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<sup>4</sup> US Army Field Manual (FM) 22-100, *Army Leadership* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1999), 3-3.

## **COMBAT DUTY AND MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS**

We occasionally hear about or from people in our immediate surroundings, such as friends, family members and coworkers that they are “stressed out.” Most of the time, the experience of distress or strain is work related. Over the last two decades, the literature on occupational stress has blossomed considerably. People are generally concerned about the detrimental effects that certain organizational and job characteristics may have on the employee. We are well aware that military personnel of the Canadian forces are certainly not immune to job-related stress.

The military profession and in particular the work environment can be quite conducive to occupational stress, especially in deployed operations. Although deployed operations are very important and can constitute a considerable part of our military assignments, they can have some degree of impact on our personnel and our units. Since there has been a significant number of stress injuries and mental illnesses reported over the years, the CF as well as the United States Army have conducted research to assess the relation between operational deployments and mental health.

## CHAPTER 1 - THE HUMAN DIMENSION IN OPERATIONS

The most important resource in the military institution is our people. Part of knowing how to benefit from this most precious resource in deployed operations is understanding the stresses and demands that influence the soldiers.<sup>5</sup> In terms of leadership, the human dimension consists of two key elements: leader and followers. Leadership is not an exact science; every person, unit or organization is different. In addition, the environment in which leadership takes place is shaped first by the leader himself, who he is and what he knows; second, by the people who surround the leader; and third, by everything that occurs around him or the external factors.<sup>6</sup>

This chapter examines the human dimension, particularly in operations. The human dimension in operations covers a wide spectrum, including morale, cohesion, esprit de corps, and élan. Mission success can only be possible if the unit works as a team. Therefore, it behooves the leaders to build a strong team based on confidence, trust, and cohesiveness. Relationship of leadership, morale/cohesion, and confidence in leadership form the major elements of the human dimension covered in this chapter.

### MILITARY COHESION

Military cohesion involves the bonding of members of a unit in such a way as to sustain their will and commitment to each other, the organization, and the mission.<sup>7</sup> When a newcomer arrives to a unit or when an “augmentee”—personnel from different

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<sup>5</sup> US Army Field Manual (FM) 22-100, *Army Leadership* . . . , 3-2.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-1.

<sup>7</sup> U.S.G. Sharp and W.C. Westmoreland, *Report on the War in Vietnam* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1968), 108.

military units who are attached to or augment a formed unit—shows up in theatre, he may feel like an outsider. Upon arrival to his new organization, his skills may be unknown to others, and mistrusted by fellow soldiers, which can lead to aggravate the stress of his first deployment. In addition, it is very difficult to quantify how long it takes for soldiers to integrate into a unit. Therefore, it is very important to integrate new personnel as quickly and smoothly as possible, in order for the unit to gain and maintain its operational effectiveness, and to operate as a team. Replacement personnel with prior experience in theatre will be more readily accepted than those without experience.

Research has identified two types of military cohesion: Task cohesion and social cohesion. According to Colonel Wm. Darryl Henderson, a US Army Vietnam veteran and author of *Cohesion: The Human Element in Combat*, social cohesion refers to the emotional bonds that soldiers develop through friendship while they spend their spare time together and enjoy each other's company.<sup>8</sup> "Some have gone as far as to suggest that social closeness indicates an emotional commitment to each other."<sup>9</sup> Task cohesion, on the other hand, refers to the shared commitment to mission or task accomplishment. Leaders should clearly understand and recognize that there is a distinct difference between the two types of cohesion. According to research, social cohesion is more crucial to successful group cohesion than is task cohesion. Therefore, although task cohesion is important as it allows members of a group to share a common goal, leaders are encouraged to foster social cohesion in their respective organization. Not only social cohesion has been identified as being critical to mission success, it also contributes in

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<sup>8</sup> Darryl Henderson, *Cohesion: The Human Element in Combat* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1985), 4.

<sup>9</sup> The Army Lessons Learned Centre, "Stress Injury and Operational Deployments," . . . , 12.

lowering the impact of stressors as described in the article from the Army Lessons

Learned Centre:

The recent Mental Health Survey confirmed the importance of social cohesion, showing that there is a correlation between the degree to which a soldier feels supported within the unit and within the CF, and the likelihood of them experiencing symptoms of stress injury.<sup>10</sup>

Although group cohesion can reduce the likelihood of succumbing to operational stress, it can also be a major stress intensifier. When a member of a unit is killed or injured, the impact on the morale of the group can be much greater and more intense. “Nevertheless, conventional wisdom is that group cohesion allows for a more rapid recovery from combat stress and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) than in a non-group environment.”<sup>11</sup>

Studies indicate that smaller groups can foster a higher social cohesion than larger groups. For example, social cohesion in a section or a platoon is much stronger than in a battalion. Due to the nature of its size, members of a small unit not only work in closer proximity, but they also have a tendency to spend more time together in a social setting. The strong bonds and the friendship that they develop will allow them to minimize the effects of stress better.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, unit integrity during a deployment is an important contributor to the success of the operation.

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<sup>10</sup> The Army Lessons Learned Centre, “Stress Injury and Operational Deployments,” . . ., 13.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>12</sup> Henderson, *Cohesion: The Human Element in Combat* . . ., 14.

## Leadership and Cohesion Factors

In *Management of Stress in Army Operations*, Arthur Siegel *et al* describe that according to studies of high morale from World War Two up to the release of their book in 1981, eight leadership and cohesion factors have been identified:<sup>13</sup>

1. Trust and confidence in one's fellow soldiers;
2. Trust and confidence in the competence of and fairness of one's NCOs;
3. Trust and confidence in the competence of and fairness of one's Officers;
4. Trust and confidence in one's equipment;
5. Trust and confidence in the technical abilities and military power of the unit;
6. A sense of support from the civil community;
7. The belief in one's ability to defeat the enemy; and
8. Trust and confidence in one's own combat ability.

It is suggested that a cohesive unit and an effective leader represent the essential elements required to develop the factors mentioned above. The role of the military leader in the establishment of a cohesive unit is twofold: he is the task specialist and the social specialist. In a deployed operation, the leader's concern is to achieve the group's goal of maintaining peace or defeating an enemy in combat. "As a social specialist, a leader's main function is preserving good personal relations within the group, maintaining morale, and keeping the group intact."<sup>14</sup> In this type of environment, the functions of a successful social specialist prevent mutiny and decrease such symptoms of low morale. It is the social function that prevails in achieving cohesion as a team or unit. "The ideal military leader combines excellence as a task specialist with an equal flair for social or heroic leadership."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Siegel, *et al*, *Management of Stress in Army Operations* . . . , 33.

<sup>14</sup> George Yeakey, "Situational Leadership," *Military Review* Vol. 82, Iss. 1 (Jan/Feb 2002): 73.

<sup>15</sup> Yeakey, "Situational Leadership," . . . , 73.

## Confidence

Confidence in leadership can be based upon the competence of the leader, “whether the leader cares about the soldier’s welfare or whether the leader is candid or courageous enough.”<sup>16</sup> To increase the confidence in leadership, the troops must be assured that their leader is making every effort to look out for their well-being, before his own, and that good leadership is demonstrated consistently. In addition, a more confident unit exists when each soldier in a unit has confidence in the competence and abilities of one another.<sup>17</sup> When the confidence is genuine and long lasting, the troops are more prone to focus on mission accomplishment. In terms of developing self-confidence, the soldier must demonstrate his ability to accept responsibility and to perform his job in a competent manner. In deployed operations, this will also help to keep stress from building up.

To build confidence in his equipment, the soldier must know how to make the most of it, which means that it is imperative to “have a clear understanding of what his equipment can and cannot do.”<sup>18</sup> It is necessary to train and practice with the equipment in order to learn how the equipment can be used to best advantage, and learn the procedures until they become second nature. A belief in his own competence coupled with confidence in his equipment will raise the soldier’s total confidence in his fighting capability.

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<sup>16</sup> The Army Lessons Learned Centre, “Stress Injury and Operational Deployments,” . . . , 16.

<sup>17</sup> Siegel, *et al*, *Management of Stress in Army Operations* . . . , 42.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

## STRESS MITIGATION

When deploying on a peacekeeping mission or a combat operation, the first step in preventing or mitigating operational stress is to establish selection criteria, which by participation in a deployment should be limited to those who do not have a history of serious pre-existing physical, behavioural, financial or family stressors. This emphasizes the requirement for all leaders, particularly the senior leadership of an organization, to know their soldiers. The second step is to focus on the kind of preparation that the soldier requires before taking up the mission. For example, personnel selected as peacekeepers should be sent on a course at the international peacekeeping training centre to learn about the particular mission, the goals, objectives, the responsibilities involved, and perhaps cultural awareness. Education should also include instructions on how to recognize the anticipated stressors and how to handle the pressure associated with them. The third step relies on leadership to provide direct and clear communications at all times to include debriefings after crises have occurred. The final step is to continue to do psychological research on this important subject in order to prevent or minimize further stress casualties.<sup>19</sup>

In order to desensitize soldiers from potential operational stress, units should consider realistic training during the pre-deployment phase, especially if they are deploying in a hostile or potentially hostile environment. All unit members should train together in order to gain confidence in their leaders, peers and equipment. Training should be realistic enough to provide an exposure to some of the potential stressors.

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<sup>19</sup> Robert A. Baron, Bruce Earhard, and Marcia Ozier, *Psychology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., 1998), 539.



However, training should not be too realistic to the point whereby the unit begins to experience operational stress casualties. One way to mitigate this is through synthetic training, which is a modernized and computerized form of training that is becoming popular in the CF. Training in a synthetic environment offers the opportunity to familiarize the troops with their theatre surroundings, the geography and the nature of the battlefield environment, thus reducing as much as possible the negative impact of operational stress.

Leaders are strongly encouraged to reward their troops in theatre. Soldiers are always proud to receive awards and medals for their accomplishment. An important step in mitigating stress is to reward the soldiers as soon as possible after they experienced a stressful situation or event. When Brigadier-General Roméo Dallaire was the force commander for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda, from October 1993 until August 1994, he and his troops were exposed to atrocities resulting from the genocide. They felt helpless in preventing the slaughter of civilians. BGen Dallaire and his peacekeepers were traumatized by the sight of the bodies of dead Rwandans that filled the streets, the fields, and the river banks; the sight of a “combat zone” that evolved before their eyes.<sup>20</sup> At the end June, BGen Dallaire rewarded his soldiers by presenting a series of medals and commending them for their work. During his speech he stated:

It must be pointed out . . . that there are trying and blurred moments ahead of us. I can only advise that you all hold your composure and continue to perform your duties to the best of your ability. I am always ready and willing to give you direction that will lead to the attainment of the mission goal.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Department of National Defence, A-PA-005-000/AP-004 *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2005), 28.

<sup>21</sup> DND, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations* . . . , 29.

## HUMAN DIMENSIONS OF OPERATIONS SURVEY

Taking care of the troops and maximizing their performance depends on the climate the leadership creates in the organization. In essence, climate represents the way people feel about their organization. “Climate comes from people’s shared perceptions and attitudes, what they believe about the day-to-day functioning of their outfit.”<sup>22</sup> These shared perceptions and attitudes have a direct impact on the motivation of the soldiers and the trust they feel for their unit and their leaders. According to the US Army Field Manual (FM) 22-100, “it’s the leader’s behaviour that has the greatest effect on the organizational climate.”<sup>23</sup>

One of the tools available to enhance Commanding Officers’ knowledge of the climate of their units is called the Human Dimensions of Operations Survey (HDO). This tool is used by the CF “to measure the psychological dimensions of combat readiness and the stress and strain associated with operations.”<sup>24</sup> Since its inception in 1988 by W. Wild, author of *Proposal for studying the human dimensions of combat readiness*, the HDO has gone through several iterations. Supported by the Chief of Land Staff, the administration of a standardized HDO was initiated in August 2002, for a two-year period. “The administration of the HDO would occur five times for each tour at regular intervals”<sup>25</sup> during the pre-deployment, deployment, and post-deployment phases. The climate in an

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<sup>22</sup> US Army Field Manual (FM) 22-100, *Army Leadership* . . . , 3-12.

<sup>23</sup> US Army Field Manual (FM) 22-100, *Army Leadership* . . . , 3-12.

<sup>24</sup> Capt K.J. Brown, *Human Dimensions of Operations Survey: Revision and Two Year Validation*, (Ottawa: Director Human Resources Research and Evaluation, 2005), 1.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

organization is dependable on a network of the personalities; as people are transferred in and out of the unit, the climate changes. Since climate is generally short-term, this is why it needs to be measured often.

The Army has measured the HDO over the course of several operational tours including Bosnia, Kosovo, Haiti, and Afghanistan. This section highlights the results of a few studies conducted in deployed operations since the early 1990s.

### **Unit Climate Profile**

Based on the importance of the relationship between leadership and soldier's effectiveness during deployments, the Operational Effectiveness Section of the Directorate of Human Resource Research and Evaluation (DHRRE) developed a questionnaire called the Unit Climate Profile (UCP) Questionnaire. The UCP is a subset the Human Dimensions of Operations Survey. "The goal of the UCP is to provide commanders with an additional source of information about the levels of morale, cohesion, ethos, and confidence in leadership than they currently have access to."<sup>26</sup> Commanders can refer to this information to initiate the necessary changes in theatre to improve morale and cohesion.

In his report entitled *Confidence in Leadership: Replication of Murphy & Farley's Exploratory Analyses of the Unit Climate Profile*, Tzvetanka Dobрева-Martinova explores three major themes: 1) UCP consistency across deployments and mission theatres; 2) Relationship of leadership, morale/cohesion and confidence in leadership, along with the consistency of these relationships across deployments and rank

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<sup>26</sup> Brown, *Human Dimensions of Operations Survey*. . . , 6.

levels; and 3) Unique effects of positive and negative leadership practices on unit-level morale/cohesion.<sup>27</sup>

The UCP used for the study is a 62-item survey instrument. The purpose of this tool is to provide “commanding officers with a method to measure and monitor important human dimensions affecting the operational effectiveness of army units.”<sup>28</sup> The various dimensions covered in the study are, positive and negative leadership, military ethos, professional morale, ideology, morale/cohesion, as well as confidence in leadership at different levels such as, Section Commander, Senior Non-Commissioned Officer, Platoon Commander, Company Sergeant Major/Squadron Sergeant Major, Company Commander, and Commanding Officer.

## Background

Over the course of the mid- to late 1990s, a UCP survey was conducted amongst three CF contingents deployed on peace support operations, which the results were analyzed by Murphy and Farley and reported in 2000. The purpose of the study was to explore the interrelationship of morale, cohesion and confidence in leadership. Initial exploratory analyses of the data reflect some interesting overall trends:

1. There is a link between soldier morale and confidence in leadership. When morale was high, the confidence in leadership was high. When data showed any decline in morale, the level of confidence in leadership would also drop accordingly. According

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<sup>27</sup> Tzvetanka Dobreva-Martinova, *Confidence in Leadership: Replication of Murphy & Farley's Exploratory Analyses of the Unit Climate Profile* (Toronto: Defence and Civil Institute of Environmental Medicine, 2001), 5.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

to the results, this relationship between soldier morale and confidence in leadership was consistent across the deployment cycle amongst the three contingents studied.

2. Pre-deployment data, which was collected in two contingents, depicted a significant decline in the confidence in leadership scores from the pre-deployment to phase 1 of the deployment (early deployment). Then from phase 1 to phase 2 (mid-deployment), confidence consistently increased in all three contingents.
3. Survey data also demonstrated a similar pattern of decline in perceptions of unit cohesion throughout the deployment cycle for all three contingents. Interestingly, this troubling decline in cohesion seemed to continue upon the return of the troops to Canada. “The authors hypothesized that the post-deployment declines for each factor might indicate a general malaise or burnout syndrome among the veterans of peace support operations – at least in the contingent that they studied.”<sup>29</sup>

In order to better understand the differences that they found in the levels of morale and cohesion, further exploratory analyses of sub-units within the same contingent were conducted by Murphy and Farley. Results were as follows:

1. The highest morale scores came from two sub-units largely composed of regular service personnel. In contrast, the sub-units comprised of more augmentees had relatively low morale scores. These findings are interpreted by Murphy and Farley as evidence that the sub-units with augmentees had less time to develop morale and cohesion.

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<sup>29</sup> Tzvetanka Dobрева-Martinova, *Confidence in Leadership* . . . , 17.

2. However, it is interesting to note that in terms of confidence in leadership, the sub-units displayed widely different scores. The study indicates that the highest level of confidence in leadership was displayed by a sub-unit with augmentees.

#### Follow-up on the Trends

The report from Dobрева-Martinova is an effort to follow-up on the trends reported by Murphy and Farley. Although every efforts were made by Dobрева-Martinova to parallel the analyses conducted by Murphy and Farley, direct comparisons were impossible “because of the differences in the UCP sub-scales used for the analyses.”<sup>30</sup> The exploratory analyses reported by Dobрева-Martinova are based on items comprising the UCP dimensions used in the Human Dimensions of Operations (HDO) project. The psychometrically derived dimensions used by Dobрева-Martinova offer the advantage of being able to compare results with “any other UCP surveys conducted within the HDO project and to the longitudinal data that are currently collected at DHRRE.”<sup>31</sup>

The surveys were conducted throughout five rotations of CF personnel deployed on operational missions in the Balkans in the 1990s. As part of the HDO project, the information is usually collected at five stages of the deployment cycle: pre-deployment, three stages of the deployment in the theatre of operations, and post-deployment— after the soldiers have returned to Canada. However, because the HDO was a relatively new project when Dobрева-Martinova was writing his report and the mechanisms for survey administration were not all structured and standardized, the survey data was collected for

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<sup>30</sup> Tzvetanka Dobрева-Martinova, *Confidence in Leadership* . . . , 18.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

“only one or several but not all the stages of the deployment in the reported five rotations.”<sup>32</sup>

According to the results presented in the report, the unit climate profiles were quite consistent across deployments. The previous findings from Murphy and Farley suggested that in the course of the deployment cycle for the three contingents studied, there was a decline in morale and cohesion, particularly in the post-deployment phase. The study from Dobreva-Martinova also highlights a similar observation in addition to the decline in confidence in leadership upon the return of the soldiers in Canada. Murphy and Farley suggest that “these declines in morale, cohesion and confidence in leadership in the post-deployment phase might be due to more macro-level post-deployment adjustment factors that warrant further study.”<sup>33</sup>

Dobreva-Martinova reports that the most important factor related to morale and cohesion levels within a unit, regardless of the deployment phase, were the positive leadership practices. Perhaps the positive leadership practices should be considered as a potential resource to facilitate the post-deployment adjustment of the returning troops to Canada. The report also indicates that the troops reported the highest confidence in their Section Commander, which suggest that this finding is based on the Section Commander’s close proximity to the troops. Therefore, the “Section Commander could be instrumental in implementing change and positively affecting other climate dimensions such as the morale and cohesion in the primary military group.”<sup>34</sup> In

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<sup>32</sup> Dobreva-Martinova, *Confidence in Leadership* . . . , 18

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

addition, the results have demonstrated that positive leadership is a significant predictor of individuals' morale and unit cohesion. Dobрева-Martínova suggests that commanders at all levels ought to display positive leadership behaviours and practices, which are an excellent resource toward positively influencing the morale and cohesion in an army unit.

As a survey instrument, the UCP has proven to be a great tool in following the dynamics in the climate of an army unit across a deployment cycle. Commanding Officers and commanders can use the results to assess the readiness status of their troops and make decisions accordingly. Dobрева-Martínova also indicates that military research and anecdotal experience supports the usefulness of tracking the dynamics in the confidence in leadership across a deployment cycle, which reveals that confidence in leadership is an important determinant of success in operations and of efficient military performance. A comprehensive understanding of the confidence construct and its dynamics in the course of a deployment allows the commanders to build and maintain trust and confidence in their own leadership. Such an understanding can also be used to enhance “optimal performance of their troops, particularly in the demanding and challenging situations faced by military units.”<sup>35</sup>

## **UNITED STATES ARMY AND OVER-STRECHED RESOURCES**

Prior to the commencement of the second Gulf War, the United States Army reported significant problems with over-stretched resources. The purpose of this section on the US Army situation is to highlight the fact that other armies also experience problems related to deployed operations. In addition, the increase in the number of

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<sup>34</sup> Dobрева-Martínova, *Confidence in Leadership* . . . , 33.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*



deployments, the thin resources available and the heavy operational tempo for the CF could result in a similar situation for Canada in the near future.

Following the end of the Cold War, the US Government initiated a Force Reduction Program in the early 1990s. The number of active-duty men and women under arms decreased from more than 2 million during the Gulf War to less than 1.4 million. The Pentagon also kept the requirement to maintain the capability to fight two major regional wars at the same time. During that same period, the military was facing a major new deployment roughly every six months, which most of them were operations, like Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia or Kosovo.<sup>36</sup>

All these deployments changed the lives of tens of thousands American soldiers. The events of September 11 just added 'fuel to the fire'. The war on terrorism expanded so quickly that military personnel were faced with more frequent deployments, which meant further training for these new missions, thus resulting in less time at home with their family. It seems that the US troops are under constant pressure of being on a permanent war footing. During the first three months of 2003, "the United States had more than twice as many troops on overseas missions at any given time as it did in 2000."<sup>37</sup>

Due to the number of deployments and the highly publicized death toll in Iraq, it is harder for the Army to recruit new soldiers, let alone to keep the ones they have. They

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<sup>36</sup> Nicholas Confessore, "G.I. Woe," *Washington Monthly* (March 2003) [journal on-line]; available from [http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/features/2003/0303\\_confessore.html](http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/features/2003/0303_confessore.html); Internet; accessed 09 January 2006, 2.

<sup>37</sup> Confessore, "G.I. Woe," . . . , 2.

are caught in a vicious circle. The US military is so short of some specialties that it has imposed a stop-loss on their personnel; they do not let them retire or resign. This situation no longer meets the definition of a volunteer force. Soldiers are overburdened, overstretched, and very frustrated. In addition, units being deployed often have to cannibalize other organizations for personnel. Ideally, formations have months to train together as a team, since experience shows that units that train together for long periods before a deployment, develop cohesion and trust and are far more effective in combat.<sup>38</sup> Unfortunately, since the post-Cold War, most deployments are generated on a moment's notice. The troops have fewer opportunities to develop camaraderie with their fellow soldiers, spend less and less time with their family, and have more demanding and unpredictable schedules. The challenge for the leadership at all levels, to include the Commander in Chief, is to keep their troops motivated.

The US Army faces a downward spiral; if their soldiers are driven too hard and are deployed too often, some of them will choose not to re-enlist in the Army, “compounding the personnel shortage and increasing the burden on those who stay.”<sup>39</sup> How can they fix the situation? There are three possibilities. One is to reduce the overseas commitments, but this presents quite a challenge between the US Army and the Government. The United States needs to maintain the military capability to combat terrorism while meeting its peacekeeping commitments, and fighting a major war at the same time.

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<sup>38</sup> Confessore, “G.I. Woe,” . . . , 5.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

That leaves two other possibilities: One of them is to increase the number of soldiers, and the other is to use the troops they have more efficiently. As mentioned earlier, recruiting levels are significantly low, therefore, increasing the number of troops will be very difficult. Their best option is find a way to reorganize their military so that they can commit more of the soldiers on the ‘right kinds of jobs’, “while utilizing them more efficiently and effectively than before.”<sup>40</sup>

Even though the US Army has more troops than the Canadian Army, the fact that they send more soldiers in theatre results in similar problems in terms of morale and cohesion.

## **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter on the human dimension in operations highlights that the deployments pose significant problems in terms of demands on the soldiers. In sum, there is a relationship between the deployments and its effects on morale, unit cohesiveness, and confidence in leadership, which directly impact operational effectiveness. One critical issue that can be drawn from these dimensions is that of combat or operational stress, which is discussed in details in this next chapter.

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<sup>40</sup> Confessore, “G.I. Woe,” . . . , 9.

## **CHAPTER 2 - STRESS IN MILITARY OPERATIONS**

### **THE BASIC NATURE OF STRESS**

“Stress is a physical and psychological response to life experiences that challenge or threaten us.”<sup>41</sup> In other words, it is a reaction of the mind and the body to utmost demands. Stress is natural and a fact of human life. All of us experience many stressful events throughout the course of a day, a week, or a month. For example, simply driving to work in rush-hour traffic or playing sports can be somewhat stressful for most of us. Some circumstances are more stressful than others, including being involved in a natural catastrophe such as a tsunami or in military operations. However, not all stress is bad stress. Receiving a promotion or graduating can also produce stress. Stress has an impact on how we behave; perhaps it is what keeps us alive in certain situations or helps us survive in various conditions. Most people cope with regular and even large amounts of stress in an effective manner; however, some individuals are quite overwhelmed by stress, either because the stressful events, which are often called stressors, in their lives are too intense or numerous, or because they are unable to cope with more common types of stressful events.<sup>42</sup>

### **STRESS IN ARMY OPERATIONS**

In deployed operations, certain sources of stress can sometimes be avoided, while others are unavoidable. To achieve success in combat, full potential of human resources are essential. When soldiers are exposed to high stress, it can result in reduced

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<sup>41</sup> Baron, Earhard, and Ozier, *Psychology* . . . , 530.

<sup>42</sup> Garry Martin and Joseph Pear, *Behavior Modification: What It Is and How to Do It*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1999), 367.

performance capability and increase the potential for stress casualties. Therefore, stress awareness, its effects, and its management remain a concern for leaders and should be a high priority. For the purpose of this paper, “the term operational stress reaction will refer to the psychological and physiological responses of those personnel”<sup>43</sup> in peacekeeping and peacemaking missions, as well as in combat operations.

Morale and disciplinary problems often show themselves in behaviour as a result of stress. The situation can be worse when there is a lack of unit cohesion and esprit de corps. In operations, this can be very serious. For example, “records show that certain WW II units, in which cohesion and esprit were lacking, had far more physical and stress casualties than other units and, as a result, they performed poorly in combat.”<sup>44</sup> The various battles fought in WW II were considered continuous combat operations. Some of the major sources of stress identified in continuous operations are fatigue due to lack of sleep; mental stress caused by fear, uncertainty, anxiety, and conflict; low light levels when light is needed for performance; and day/night rhythms, because our bodies are accustomed to be asleep during certain hours.<sup>45</sup>

## **STRESSORS IN MILITARY OPERATIONS**

To address the issues regarding the exposure CF personnel to new and often traumatic stressors during deployments on U.N. missions, a Statement of Understanding (SOU) was signed off in May 1994 between the Land Forces Command (LFC) and the

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<sup>43</sup> Kelly M.J. Farley, *Stress in Military Operations* (Willowdale, ON: Canadian Forces Personnel Applied Research Unit, 1995), 2.

<sup>44</sup> Arthur Siegel, *et al*, *Management of Stress in Army Operations* (Alexandria, VA: US Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 1981), 27.

<sup>45</sup> Siegel, *et al*, *Management of Stress in Army Operations . . .*, 4-5.

Canadian Forces Personnel Applied Research Unit (CFPARU). One of the objective of the research, as established in the SOU, was to “determine the prevalence and nature of the stressors experienced by army personnel deployed on U.N. peacekeeping missions”<sup>46</sup> Findings from this research would later be used to examine the relevance of pre-deployment training as well as the effectiveness of Critical Incident Stress Debriefings (CISD). The study was conducted by distributing a standardized stress questionnaire, called Canadian Forces Stress in Military Operations Questionnaire (CFSMOQ), to 408 army personnel of various ranks from Junior NCMs to Senior Officers deployed to the Former Yugoslavia. The CFSWOQ was administered in February 1995. Five main factors were analyzed in this study: Leadership/Management, Safety of Self and Others, External Relationships, Privacy and Adjustment, and Family Concerns.

From the data analysis, the top reported stressors and symptoms were as follows:

“A ‘double standard’ among ranks when it comes to applying the rules”, “Superiors overreacting to situations”, “A feeling that people in this unit are often treated like ‘kids’”, “A feeling that the U.N. is powerless to change the situation here”, and “Inadequate or insufficient equipment”. Most often occurring symptoms were “cold or flu”, “headaches”, “trouble sleeping”, “aches and pains”, and “overly tired”.<sup>47</sup>

According to the analysis, it is important to note that the longer a soldier is in theatre, the more likely the number or degree of stressors and physical symptoms experienced will be reported. All of the above-mentioned stressors, with the exception of the one about the U.N. being powerless, involve the leadership and management at different levels.

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<sup>46</sup> Farley, *Stress in Military Operations* . . . , 1.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, iii.

The results of this study demonstrate that the operational stressors have a direct impact on the health of the soldiers during deployments. Out of the five factors or categories of stressors extracted for this study, the soldiers reported greatest dissatisfaction with leadership and management issues. The dissatisfaction with this category stems from five items: “A lack of support from superiors; A lack of trust or confidence in superiors; Superiors overreacting to situations; Superiors looking over your shoulder; and A feeling that people in this unit are often treated like ‘kids’.”<sup>48</sup> There are several means or approaches that leaders can take to reduce the level of dissatisfaction. For example, empowering their personnel to do their job in order to decrease the levels of close supervision; leaders need to show the example or “walk-the-talk” to minimize the appearance of double standards; to increase the level of confidence, leaders need to pay closer attention to their troops and communicate with them on a regular basis.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL SOURCES OF STRESS**

When deployed on operations, soldiers are working in so called ‘high risk professions’, which by they are often confronted with acute stressors or critical incidents. They may be involved in life threatening situations and can be exposed to potentially traumatic events. They also feel intense fear, horror or helplessness. “In some respects, the psychological trauma that results from human produced disasters can be more dramatic and long lasting than those associated with natural disasters.”<sup>49</sup> Why is that so? One important reason is perceived loss of control. If a natural disaster occurs, a tsunami, hurricane, or tornado, we do not expect to have control, although we can often take

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<sup>48</sup> Farley, *Stress in Military Operations* . . . , 16-17.

<sup>49</sup> Baron, Earhard, and Ozier, *Psychology* . . . , 537.

precautions. However, when a disaster strikes as a result of human actions, such as genocide, death of soldiers or civilians from an explosion, or being held captive, we have the impression that our lives are out of control.<sup>50</sup>

Research concerning traumatic events has shown that exposure to acute stressors may lead to serious mental disturbances, such as post-traumatic stress disorder.<sup>51</sup> It has been long recognized that stress can have debilitating effects on military performance. PTSD was once referred to as shell shock, which was brought to public attention by war veterans. During the Normandy campaign of World War II, stress effects were such that “the soldier was slow witted; he was slow to comprehend simple orders, directions and techniques, and he failed to perform even life saving measures such as digging in quickly.”<sup>52</sup>

In an 1995 study reported in an article called “Post-traumatic stress disorder in prisoners of war and combat veterans of the Dieppe Raid: A 50-year follow-up,” the author, A.L. Beal, makes a comparison between Canadian veterans of World War II who were prisoners of war and veterans who had the same combat exposure but did not become prisoners of war. Post-traumatic stress disorder was more prevalent and more

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<sup>50</sup> Baron, Earhard, and Ozier, *Psychology . . .*, 538

<sup>51</sup> J.T. Mitchell and A. Dyregrov, “Traumatic Stress in Disaster Workers and Emergency Personnel: Prevention and Intervention,” In *International Handbook of Traumatic Stress Syndromes*, ed. J.P. Wilson and B. Raphael, 905-914. (New York: Plenum Press, 1993), 906.

<sup>52</sup> Arthur Siegel *et al*, *Management of Stress in Army Operations* (Alexandria, VA: US Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 1981), 13.



serious for the prisoners of war, and it was still evident fifty years later.<sup>53</sup> In some cases, the onset may be delayed for several years.

### **PEACEKEEPING POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER**

In 1956, Lester Pearson, suggested that the United Nations send international forces to the Middle East, under the UN flag. Pearson had a vision that peacekeeping would become a way of resolving international conflict. Military personnel were sent to the “hot spots” of the world as UN observers to enforce cease fire agreements. For the past five decades, Canadian organizations have participated in every UN peacekeeping mission. The Canadian Forces received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992, in recognition of their work.<sup>54</sup>

Over the years, the role of the UN peacekeeper has changed to more and more active involvement. Their responsibilities and specific duties have increased to include settling disputes by peaceful means, managing conflict, reconstructing destroyed cities, distributing relief supplies, and disarming warring parties. Based on experience, many soldiers report that peacekeeping is anything but peaceful. According to research, five main sources of peacekeeping stress have been identified. First, there are the stressors associated with combat itself: the real threat of attack, injury, and death; the death of friendly soldiers or civilians; and handling dead bodies. Second, there are the stressors associated with the nature of the work: the pressure of having to complete different tasks in very little time. Third, there are the ambiguities and the contradictions of the actual

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<sup>53</sup> A.L. Beal, “Post-traumatic stress disorder in prisoners of war and combat veterans of the Dieppe Raid: A 50-year follow-up,” *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry* 40 (1995): 177-184.

<sup>54</sup> Baron, Earhard, and Ozier, *Psychology* . . . , 538.

role played by the peacekeepers; the need to preserve your own life while providing assistance in dangerous circumstances. Fourth, there are personal stresses or family concerns: being separated from the loved ones, the inability to deal with family matters from a distance. Finally, there is “UN role stress” which arises when peacekeepers find themselves disagreeing with the policy of neutrality or dealing with complex Rules of Engagement, to which will be covered in a later section.<sup>55</sup>

The effects of the above mentioned stressors upon individual peacekeepers can be minimized or mitigated in different ways, such as strong group cohesion, high morale, available social support if/when needed, and the confidence of the peacekeepers in their leaders and peers. These factors can contribute significantly in mitigating the stress in the theatre of operation, thus increasing the competence in the field and reducing the incidence of burnout. Under different circumstances, these stressors can lead to severe occupational stress or “psychiatric illnesses such as PTSD and brief reactive psychosis (BPR), [which] are two syndromes specifically identified as responses to extraordinary stressors.”<sup>56</sup>

### **Common Symptoms of PTSD**

Before describing the various symptoms of PTSD, it is important to take into consideration that “as individuals vary so does the range of severity of their symptoms. It

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<sup>55</sup> Baron, Earhard, and Ozier, *Psychology* . . . , 539.

<sup>56</sup> Kelly M.J. Farley, *A Model of Unit Climate and Stress for Canadian Soldiers on Operations*, Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, (Ottawa: Department of Psychology, Carleton University, 2002), 19.

should also be made clear that there are a variety of other medical conditions that manifest very similar symptoms as PTSD but which are not PTSD.”<sup>57</sup>

According to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV)*, PTSD is characterized by symptoms following exposure to a traumatic stressor. The symptoms are divided into three groups: “re-experiencing of the specific event, avoidance of trauma related stimuli, and increased emotional arousal.”<sup>58</sup>

In the re-experiencing symptoms, the person repeatedly relives the event in at least one of these ways: Intrusive, distressing recollections - thoughts, images; repeated, distressing dreams; through flashbacks, hallucinations or illusions, acts or feels as if the event were recurring; marked mental distress in reaction to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble the event; and physiological reactivity - such as rapid heart beat, elevated blood pressure in response to these cues.<sup>59</sup>

In the second group of symptoms, the person repeatedly avoids the trauma-related stimuli and has numbing of general responsiveness (absent before the traumatic event) as shown by three or more of the following: Tries to avoid thoughts, feelings or conversations concerned with the event; tries to avoid activities, people or places that recall the event; cannot recall an important feature of the event; marked loss of interest or

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<sup>57</sup> Department of National Defence, *Statistics Canada CF Mental Health Survey: A "Milestone,"* [http://www.forces.gc.ca/health/information/op\\_health/stats\\_can/engraph/MH\\_Survey\\_e.asp](http://www.forces.gc.ca/health/information/op_health/stats_can/engraph/MH_Survey_e.asp); Internet; accessed 8 January 2006.

<sup>58</sup> Suicide and Mental Health Association International (SMHAI), *Common Symptoms of PTSD*, <http://suicideandmentalhealthassociationinternational.org/commptsdsym.html>; Internet; accessed 8 January 2006.

<sup>59</sup> SMHAI, *Common Symptoms of PTSD* . . . .

participation in activities important to the patient; feels detached or isolated from other people; restriction in ability to love or feel other strong emotions; and feels life will be brief or unfulfilled (lack of marriage, job, children).<sup>60</sup>

Finally, in the third group, at least two of the following symptoms of hyperarousal were not present before the traumatic event: Insomnia (initial or interval); irritability; poor concentration; hypervigilance; and increased startle response.<sup>61</sup>

These PTSD symptoms listed above tend to surface immediately after experiencing the trauma, however, a delay of up to several years can occur in some cases. It is also essential to note that “PTSD can only be diagnosed after a minimum of a month of experiencing PTSD symptoms.”<sup>62</sup>

## **ROLE CONFLICT, AMBIGUITY AND OVERLOAD**

Soldiers are often faced with competing or opposing demands, tasks that are not clearly defined, or the requirement to complete too many tasks in a short period of time while on operations. Role conflict, ambiguity, and role overload can have detrimental effects for individuals and units throughout a deployment. On one hand, leaders need to keep their troops occupied to avoid boredom and frustration, but on the other hand, these negative effects can lead to “job dissatisfaction, job-related tension and anxiety, reduced performance and effectiveness, and a greater propensity to leave the organization.”<sup>63</sup>

To avoid the harmful effects, it is necessary for the leaders to clearly define the

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<sup>60</sup> SMHAI, *Common Symptoms of PTSD* . . . .

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> DND, *Statistics Canada CF Mental Health Survey: A "Milestone,"* . . . .

<sup>63</sup> Farley, *Stress in Military Operations* . . . , 24.

anticipated in-theatre work roles and their parameters, which need to be clearly communicated to all throughout the pre-deployment and deployments phases of the operation. Moreover, to maintain a high morale in theatre, it is essential that the troops be afforded some leave and “R&R” time to decompress and keep their mind sane. Therefore, it is important to establish a leave/work schedule that will minimize potential manpower shortages. If manpower shortages are unavoidable, then the tasks should be prioritized and assigned in light of the actual human resources available.<sup>64</sup>

## **RULES OF ENGAGEMENT**

Throughout the Cold War period, a number of notions on the nature of military operations were taken for granted. For example, while training during large-scale exercises, soldiers would follow the Rules of Engagement (ROE) as they progressed through the various alert conditions (i.e., from peacetime to war). ROE were fairly similar and predictable from one exercise to the next. However, the complexity of the operations has increased significantly since the Berlin wall came down. Operational objectives are not always clear and can even change as the political situation fluctuates. Before proceeding to the theatre of operation, it is essential that the operational leaders, along with a representative from the Judge Advocate General (JAG), understand all the ROE pertaining to the campaign/operation. They, in turn, must brief their personnel and train accordingly. To remind themselves of the ROE in effect, soldiers normally carry a ROE card in their pockets.

Even when deployed personnel understand the ROE, it doesn't mean that they are immune to operational stress, especially in the face of restrictive ROE such as during

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<sup>64</sup> Farley, *Stress in Military Operations* . . . , 24.

peacekeeping missions. Soldiers occasionally become disillusioned with missions that feature restrictive ROE, which forces them “to play the role of bystanders to the violence erupting around them as they are unable to take the necessary steps to stop the violence.”<sup>65</sup> For example, many soldiers suffered stress related injuries and/or mental illnesses following their tour of duty for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda, to include the force commander, Brigadier-General Roméo Dallaire.

## **STRESS MANAGEMENT**

### **Coping with stress**

Everyone involved in a theatre of operation will be exposed to various levels of stress; we cannot run away from, nor hide from stress. Managing stress requires action by individual soldiers, leaders, commanders and mental health professionals. Effective coping with operational stress will keep soldiers from becoming stress casualties. In order to be able to cope with stress, one has to recognize when it is present. Certain signs or symptoms will be felt which allow us to recognize the presence of stress such as (in no particular order) aggression, depression, fatigue, inability to concentrate, and nightmares.<sup>66</sup> Symptoms can start to appear before, during or after the operational deployment, and soldiers can show one or many signs of stress.

In order to reduce the number of stress casualties during deployed operations, it is highly recommended that coping techniques be taught to all soldiers as part of their training. One of the dispositional factors that appear to be an important personal coping

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<sup>65</sup> The Army Lessons Learned Centre, “Stress Injury and Operational Deployments,” *Dispatches: Lessons Learned for Soldiers* Vol 10, no. 1 (February 2004), 16.

<sup>66</sup> Siegel, *et al*, *Management of Stress in Army Operations . . .*, 73-75.

resource is self-efficacy.<sup>67</sup> According to Albert Bandura, a Canadian psychologist known for his work on social learning theory, self-efficacy is the belief in one's capacity to perform a specific task. "The higher a person's feelings of self-efficacy, the better that person tends to perform a task."<sup>68</sup>

All deployed personnel should also make every effort to stay in good physical condition, which will increase their physical stamina and their tolerance to stress. Soldiers who stay in good shape usually feel better about themselves and are more likely to perform better. Stress must be confronted and subjugated. Denying the reality of stress can lead to physical injury and/or mental illnesses. Coping with stress is an important skill that everyone should learn and master, but the key factor in order to cope with stress effectively is to be able to recognize it.<sup>69</sup>

### **Leader responsibility**

The leader has the responsibility for stress management in his organization. This responsibility includes: looking out for the well-being of their personnel, providing information on how to reduce stress, initiating and supporting a stress coping program, ensuring that each soldier has received training and can effectively perform the coping techniques, and encouraging their personnel to seek help when in need and to remind them of the available services.<sup>70</sup> To prevent stress reactions, leaders should behave with confidence, maintain a positive attitude, and act as role models. They should also create

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<sup>67</sup> Farley, *A Model of Unit Climate and Stress for Canadian Soldiers on Operations* . . . , 22.

<sup>68</sup> Baron, Earhard, and Ozier, *Psychology* . . . , 507.

<sup>69</sup> Siegel, *et al*, *Management of Stress in Army Operations* . . . , 35.

<sup>70</sup> Siegel, *et al*, *Management of Stress in Army Operations* . . . , 57.

a positive atmosphere, and when time permitting, leaders should encourage team sports and activities, which enhance group cohesion in addition to the physical benefits.

Effective leadership can significantly reduce the impact of stress, providing that the leaders are aware of and understand the sources of stress as well as the possible reactions to them. Time can be critical in the sense that the leaders must be able to deal with the various stress problems before they get out of control. If or when a disastrous situation occurs and the unit or someone in the unit has become highly stressed, it is imperative for the leader to exercise direct and forceful leadership. It becomes important for the soldiers to have confidence that their leader is competent and will effectively provide guidance accordingly.

## **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In summary, stress is ever present in our day-to-day activity. However, for soldiers who are exposed to high levels of stress, it can result in reduced performance capability and increase the potential for stress casualties. To achieve success in deployed operations, full potential of human resources are essential. Therefore, everyone should make every effort to learn about stress, recognize when it is present, and practice coping techniques to keep stress from mounting.

The next chapter focuses on leadership; how it can ameliorate or exacerbate the operational stress identified in this chapter, and how leadership influences soldier's effectiveness during their deployments.



### CHAPTER 3 - LEADERSHIP

As a follow-up to the definition of effective leadership in the introduction, the key for effective leaders to obtaining results is developing the skills needed to direct, motivate, change, and control the efforts of people toward the accomplishment of organizational goals. In addition, effective leaders “exemplify the military ethos in all they do.”<sup>71</sup> Effective, strong leadership is essential in operations. “A leader who demonstrates competence and earns authority, develops the confidence of subordinates in his leadership.”<sup>72</sup> Without confidence in leaders, soldiers will not feel confident in performing effectively during operations or winning in combat. In this sense, Lord Moran defines leadership as “the capacity to frame plans that would succeed and the faculty of persuading others to carry them out in the face of death.”<sup>73</sup>

Although authority accompanies leadership, this authority should be different from the automatic or perceived authority based on rank and position. Proper authority should be earned based on recognition by subordinates that the leader is competent in providing direction, and will confidently guide the unit to achieve success in operations.

Effective leaders also know when and how to reward outstanding performance, and when punishment is warranted. Aside from recommending exceptional performers for promotions and awards, leaders must reward their soldiers in a proper fashion, whether in garrison or in theatre. Deserving candidates should be praised publicly, in

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<sup>71</sup> DND, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations* . . . , 30.

<sup>72</sup> Siegel, *et al*, *Management of Stress in Army Operations* . . . , 43.

<sup>73</sup> Lord Moran, *The Anatomy of Courage*. (Garden City Park, New York: Avery Publishing Group Inc., 1966), 180.

front of their peers, and should be assigned responsibilities according to their potential, thus instilling trust and confidence. Punishment, on the other hand, should be done privately and immediately following the occurrence of bad behaviour or disobedience. It is important to provide the reason(s) why the person is being punished and ways for avoiding further occurrences or to improve inappropriate behaviour. In order not to diminish the soldier's self-confidence, the leader should punish the behaviour, not the person. In addition, punishment must match the level of infraction. For example, a soldier should not be sent to detention for being "out of dress".

The effects of poor leadership are best described by the interviews with combat soldiers in Korea: "There were also clear-cut cases where a leader's obvious fear, inability to control himself, poor decisions, or even mere absence were responsible for the loss of tactical advantages, men, and equipment."<sup>74</sup> Even in the "heat of the moment", leaders need to remain calm, self-confident, and provide clear direction, or else, others will assume direction if the leaders cannot lead. Many soldiers who experience emotional stress of combat, will follow anyone who "does something."

Leaders need to interact with their followers, peers, superiors, and others, whose support they need in order to accomplish their objectives. To gain their support, an effective leader must be able to understand and motivate them. To understand and motivate people, a leader must know human nature.

We often hear the saying "A leader needs to walk the talk." However, individuals in leadership positions need to realize that all leader decisions and/or actions result in

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<sup>74</sup> Siegel, *et al*, *Management of Stress in Army Operations* . . . , 32.

consequences, whether intended or unintended. The intended consequences are good because they reflect the leader's anticipated results, whereas the unintended consequences are the results that have an unplanned impact on the unit or mission accomplishment.<sup>75</sup>

## **LEADERSHIP RESEARCH**

Because of the multiple facets of leadership, researchers have centred their studies on selected areas. Six major categories of studies are presented in this section.

### **Positional Power**

Some people regard leadership as the exercise of positional power: The higher the position in the organizational structure, the more power is awarded to the position. What we should be concerned with in the leadership context is legitimate power, which is "the formal power given to a position."<sup>76</sup> For example, the positional power of a Company Commander exceeds that of a Platoon Commander; in turn, the Platoon Commander has more power than a Section Commander. When we view leadership in terms of positional power it separates the person from the role. Unfortunately, we spend less attention to the individual's attributes because most of the attention is focused on the use of positional power. We often use such terms as 'the power of a Commanding Officer', which is not really related to the person in such position.

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<sup>75</sup> US Army Field Manual (FM) 22-100, *Army Leadership* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1999), 3-18.

<sup>76</sup> Paul M. Muchinsky, *Psychology: Applied to work*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, Inc., 2003), 414.

Leaders are sometimes remembered in history by their inability to use all the power their positions give them. Others try to exceed the power granted by their positions, and in some countries leaders emerge to the top of the hierarchy by securing power through military or political coups. It is difficult to separate leadership itself from the characteristics of people in leadership positions. “But research on positional power has shown that some leadership issues transcend individual differences.”<sup>77</sup> As identified in the leadership doctrine of the CF, leadership effectiveness is about “achieving the right balance of position and personal power.”<sup>78</sup> This achievement of the right balance is discussed in greater details in a later section on leadership styles.

### **The Leader**

One of the most researched areas of leadership is the characteristics of individual leaders. Leadership theories often evolve from analyzing and understanding the differences between personal traits and behaviors. Many studies focused on trying to comprehend what behaviors individual leaders display that influence the judgment of whether they are viewed as strong leaders or weak leaders. However, research alone is not sufficient to determine who is the best candidate for a command position. Due to the complexity of the operations and the ever changing technology, refinement of the selection process for leadership positions is a must. In addition, there is a necessity to devote more research to training people to enhance their leadership skills.

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<sup>77</sup> Muchinsky, *Psychology: Applied to work . . .*, 414.

<sup>78</sup> Department of National Defence, A-PA-005-000/AP-004 *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2005), 63.

### **The Follower**

Another area of interest for researchers is the characteristics of the followers. Casual observation in garrison and in a theatre of operations suggests that “some people are easier for leaders to work with than others.”<sup>79</sup> According to research, there is evidence that a leader’s performance is not the same across various groups of followers.

### **The Influence Process**

The influence process is what the author of this paper considers the most important category of research on leadership. There is much to gain from studies that examine the relationship or link between the leaders and the followers, particularly as they influence one another. The researchers’ focus of attention is often on the dynamics of this relationship, without neglecting the characteristics of the two parties. We are not only interested about what leaders “do” to a group to influence its members in the pursuit of a goal, but also on how this process is enacted. The numerous methods of influence include persuasion, manipulation, authority and coercion.<sup>80</sup>

### **The Situation**

Research on leadership has also concentrated on the situation or context in which leader–group relationships occur. The situation can greatly influence the behaviors that a leader has to demonstrate to be effective. “Research on situational factors has tried to identify how various contexts differ and what effect they have on leader behavior.”<sup>81</sup> For

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<sup>79</sup> Muchinsky, *Psychology: Applied to work . . .*, 415.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

example, a Sergeant teaching a first-aid course, a Section Commander on a reconnaissance in Afghanistan, and a Company Commander in a Command Post, are all facing a different situation and will all exhibit a different pattern of behavior to be effective. Studies show that in a favorable situation the leaders usually emphasize interpersonal relationships and are supportive of the group. In contrast, in the unfavorable situation the leaders become more task oriented and are more concerned with goal achievement than with interpersonal relationships. In short, different context evoke different styles of leadership behavior.

### **Leader Emergence versus Leader Effectiveness**

In this final category of study, researchers are interested in the dynamics of what causes leaders to emerge within a group. In this emergence process there are two ways which by leaders can emerge: formal and informal. The formal means is when a person is designated as the leader, while the informal process occurs when a person evolves as the leader amongst a group without having been so designated. In sum, “leader emergence is concerned with the process that results in someone’s being regarded as the leader of a group.”<sup>82</sup>

In terms of leadership effectiveness, researchers are focused on the performance of the leader. When assessing this line of research, investigators examine the characteristics of the leader (or the group) such as verbal fluency, sensitivity, decisiveness, and so on, that are associated with evaluations of the leader quality and the criteria for effective leadership. Effective leadership might be viewed as success in

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<sup>81</sup> Muchinsky, *Psychology: Applied to work . . .*, 416.

<sup>82</sup> Muchinsky, *Psychology: Applied to work . . .*, 416.

tasks/mission accomplishment or acceptance by the group. Analysis shows that individuals who emerge as leaders are usually “characterized as having high general mental ability, followed by the Big 5 personality characteristics of conscientiousness, extraversion, and emotional stability.”<sup>83</sup>

### **Conclusion on Leadership Research**

To conclude this section on leadership research, it is important to understand that researchers do not limit their studies on only one of the above mentioned six areas. For example, when studying the influence process, the investigator might consider the situations in which influence attempts will be successful. My purpose in describing these categories is to highlight the major areas of leadership research that should be considered when analyzing the impact of leadership on individuals/groups behaviour and mental health during deployed operations.

### **MOTIVATION AND EMOTION**

Leaders have the responsibility to keep the troops motivated. “The term motivation refers to the internal processes that activate, guide, and maintain our behaviour.”<sup>84</sup> In other words, motivation, coupled with opportunity, helps us to achieve our objectives and reach our goals. In contrast, emotion is about how we feel: afraid or angry, sad or happy, feeling shame or proud. Emotions also play a crucial role in our behaviour. Moreover, emotions influence our perceptions: For example, when we are in

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<sup>83</sup> The “Big 5” theory of personality defines personality in terms of five major factors: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Muchinsky, *Psychology: Applied to work* . . . , 417.

<sup>84</sup> Baron, Earhard, and Ozier, *Psychology* . . . , 402.

a good mood, we tend to enjoy life a little better. Therefore, soldiers who are motivated and emotionally stable usually display a higher level of performance.

Leaders are also encouraged to promote creativity. To accomplish this, leaders need to ensure that their personnel are provided the resources, the proper tools, and the freedom to think “outside the box” and act creatively.

### **Maslow’s Needs Hierarchy**

What does a soldier need to stay motivated and perform effectively? Which specific motives influence his behaviour at any given time? If the soldier is very hungry and cold, will he be motivated to help build a camp? Probably not. Abraham Maslow proposes that different motives, or needs as he calls them, form a hierarchy. Essentially, the needs at the bottom of the hierarchy must be at least partly satisfied before those higher up can influence behaviour (see Figure 1). This theory is called hierarchy of needs.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Robert A. Baron, Bruce Earhard, and Marcia Ozier, *Psychology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., 1998), 406.





**Figure 1 - Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

Source: <http://www.pateo.com/article6.html>

At the base of Maslow's needs hierarchy are *physiological needs*, such as for water, food, and sleep. On the next step we find the *safety needs*, for feeling safe and secure. One step above these are *social needs*, which include the need to belong, to have friends, and to be loved and appreciated. All these needs before mentioned form what Maslow calls the *deficiency needs*: They are the basic needs that must be satisfied before the higher levels of motivation, or *growth needs*, can emerge. Above the social needs are the *esteem needs*, such as the needs for self-respect, for the approval of others, and for success. Ambition and the need for achievement are closely linked to esteem needs. Finally, at the top of the hierarchy are *self-actualization needs*, which include the need for self-fulfillment or the desire to become all one is capable of being. These self-actualization needs comprise concerns not only with one's own interests but also with

issues relevant to the well-being of others. I would suggest that effective leaders have reached the top of the needs hierarchy—self-confident, highly motivated, well respected by superiors, subordinates and peers alike, and care for the well-being of others before their selfish interests.<sup>86</sup>

Maslow's theory seems to be appealing, but is it accurate? This theory may not have been considered amongst the Canadian military, but it has been studied in a number of Canadian organizations. Research findings are mixed. Some results suggest that grown needs do come after lower-level deficiency needs. In contrast, other findings indicate that people sometimes seek to satisfy higher-order needs even before the lower ones have been met. In addition, several needs, and motivations relating to them, can sometimes be active at once. Interesting but largely unverified, Maslow's needs hierarchy provides a framework for organizing our thoughts about motivation.<sup>87</sup>

Before examining the various styles of leadership, I will briefly highlight the characteristics and competencies that a leader requires to lead or influence others.

### **Characteristics and Competencies of Leadership**

According to research, there are individual qualities that directly influence leadership effectiveness. Among those that regularly turn up in studies, we find such characteristics as: "intelligence, competence, integrity, fair and considerate treatment of others, open and progressive thinking, and, additionally in the military literature,

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<sup>86</sup> Robert A. Baron, Bruce Earhard, and Marcia Ozier, *Psychology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., 1998), 406-407.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 407.

courage.”<sup>88</sup> This list is not exhaustive and it does not guarantee the beholder of those commonly identified attributes that he will be an effective leader. Nevertheless, according to the CF leadership doctrine, “CF Officers and NCMs can improve their capacity to be effective leaders by acquiring and developing competencies”<sup>89</sup> in the following generic domains of human capability: knowledge and skills, cognitive ability, social capacities, personality, and motivation and values.

Hersey, Banchard and Johnson describe three general skills or competencies required to influence others: diagnosing, adapting and communicating, which respectively reflect a cognitive or cerebral, a behavioural, and a process competency.<sup>90</sup> In diagnosing, the leader needs to understand what the current situation is and what he can reasonably expect to make it in the future. Although there is a discrepancy between the two, which is the problem to be solved, this is what the other competencies are aiming to resolve. Adapting, on the other hand, engages in closing the gap between the current situation and what the leader wants to achieve by adapting his behaviour and other resources accordingly. Finally, communicating represents the interaction with others “in a way that people can easily understand and accept.”<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Department of National Defence, A-PA-005-000/AP-004 *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2005), 60.

<sup>89</sup> Department of National Defence, A-PA-005-000/AP-003 *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Doctrine* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2005), 19.

<sup>90</sup> Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson, *Management of Organizational Behavior*. . . , 9.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-10.

## LEADERSHIP STYLES

In their book called *Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources*, Hersey, Banchard and Johnson suggest that “one of the most important elements of a leadership situation is the style of the leader.”<sup>92</sup> Based on different assumptions and theories, there are a number of different approaches or styles to leadership. Some people favour a particular style of leadership that they adopted early in their career and will maintain the same style throughout with very little variation. However, by using only one style, leaders demonstrate their inflexibility and “will have difficulty operating in situations where that style doesn’t fit.”<sup>93</sup> Others will develop and vary their style based on education, training and experience as they ascend in ranks. The leadership style that individuals employ is based on “a combination of their beliefs, values and preferences, as well as the organizational culture and norms which will encourage some styles and discourage others.”<sup>94</sup> It is suggested that to be effective during deployed operations, a leader must adapt a style that is appropriate to the environment, context, and the people he is influencing.

When discussing leadership styles, it is important to highlight the extremes: authoritarian and laissez-faire or free rein.<sup>95</sup> The authoritarian leaders tell people what to do with no explanation and without seeking advice from their followers. This style of leadership should normally only be used on rare occasions. For example, during a

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<sup>92</sup> Paul Hersey, Kenneth H. Blanchard, and Dewey Johnson, *Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources*, 7th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1996), 167.

<sup>93</sup> US Army Field Manual (FM) 22-100, *Army Leadership* . . . , 3-15.

<sup>94</sup> ChangingMinds.org, “Leadership Styles,” [http://changingminds.org/disciplines/leadership/styles/leadership\\_styles.htm](http://changingminds.org/disciplines/leadership/styles/leadership_styles.htm); Internet; accessed 19 March 2006.

<sup>95</sup> DND, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces –Conceptual Foundations* . . . , 64.

combat operation an appropriate condition could exist where the leader would use it providing that he has all the information to solve the problem, he is short on time, and the soldiers are well motivated. Otherwise, the authoritarian style could be perceived as a vehicle for yelling at subordinates, using demeaning language, and abusing their power. In other words, when used inappropriately or in an unprofessional fashion, the soldiers will lose their confidence in their leader, and it will negatively impact unit morale.

In the laissez-faire style, the leader allows his subordinates to make the decision or to do as they please. However, it is essential to note that the leader is still responsible for the decisions that are made. In certain situations, leaders are encouraged to empower their troops providing that they are able to analyze the situation and determine what needs to be done and how to do it. Nonetheless, this style of leadership lacks the monitoring and reporting controls as required by the principle of accountability. “In this important respect, laissez-faire leadership differs from delegation and amounts to an abdication of leadership.”<sup>96</sup>

Due to the complexity of the peacekeeping missions and combat operations, it is suggested that leaders use techniques from different styles to motivate the soldiers and accomplish the mission. Therefore, only three leadership approaches that offer more than one leadership style are considered in this paper: situational, transactional, and transformational.

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<sup>96</sup> DND, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces –Conceptual Foundations* . . . , 64.

## Situational Leadership

Over the course of a deployment, soldiers are exposed to a multitude of situations. From this perspective, effective leaders must be able to adjust their leadership style to the situation as well as to the troops they lead, thus adopting a style that will influence soldier's success. Situational leadership was developed in the late 1960s by Paul Hersey and Kenneth H. Blanchard, and has been described as "one of the more widely recognized approaches to leadership."<sup>97</sup>

The concept of situational leadership is based on the interaction between the amount of direction and guidance provided by a leader, the amount of socioemotional support a leader gives, and the readiness level that followers demonstrate in their performance of specific tasks, functions, or objectives.<sup>98</sup> This concept was essentially developed to allow individuals who are attempting leadership, to be more effective in their daily exchanges with others, regardless of their role. Considering that individuals' skills vary over time, this approach "suggests that leaders should change the degree to which they are directive or supportive to meet the changing needs of subordinates."<sup>99</sup>

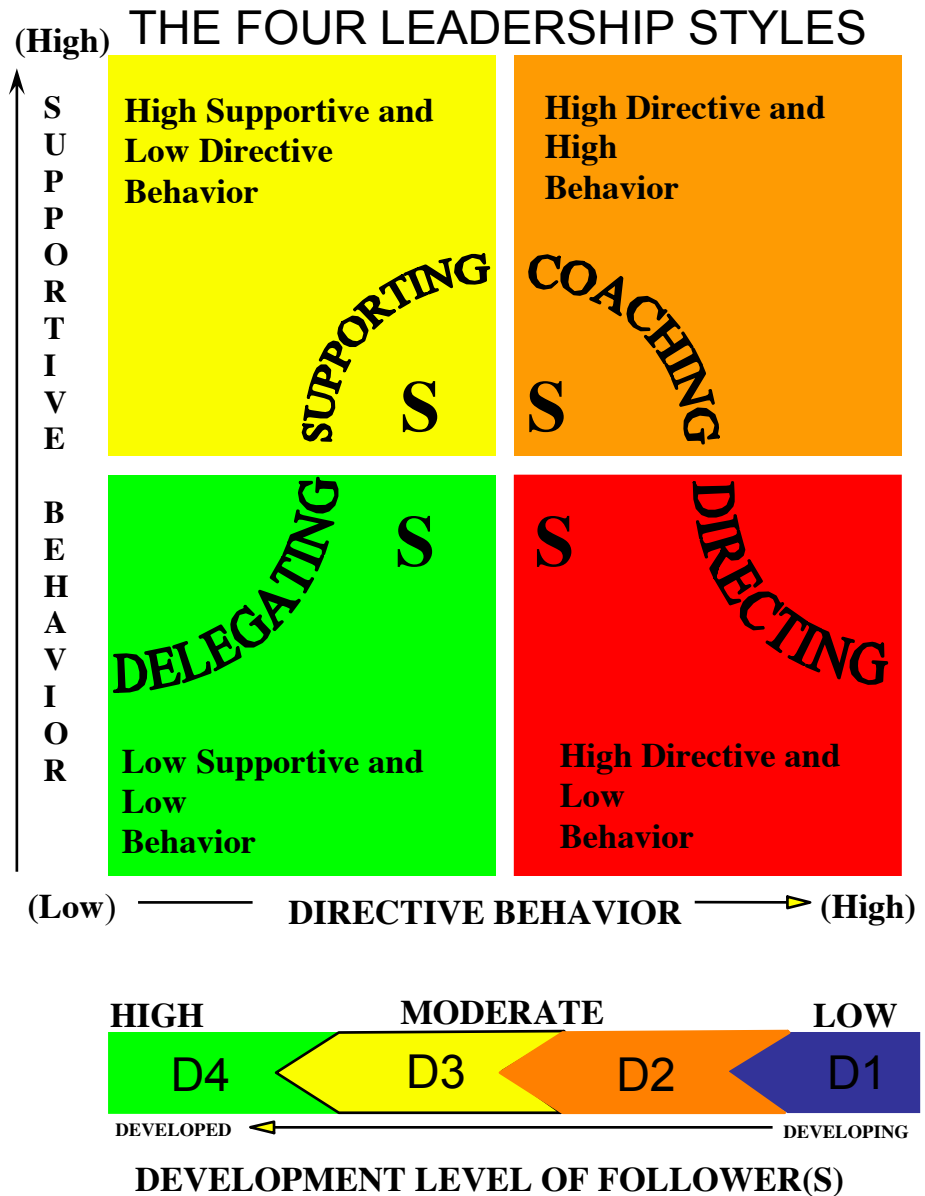
The situational approach is illustrated in the model called the Situational Leadership II (SLII) model, as developed by Blanchard *et al.* in 1985 (see Figure 2).

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<sup>97</sup> Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2004), 87.

<sup>98</sup> Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson, *Management of Organizational Behavior* . . . , 189.

<sup>99</sup> Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice* . . . , 87.



**Figure 2 - Situational Leadership II Model**

Source: <http://www.afrotc.umd.edu/academicSlides/AS%20Slides%20Fall%2005/AS300%20Slides/AS300%20Lsn%2018%20SitLead.ppt#301,10,Slide 10>

The model rests on two fundamental concepts: leadership style, and the development level of the follower. There are four leadership styles (S1 to S4) that match the development levels (D1 to D4) of the followers. The four styles suggest that leaders should put greater or less focus on the task in question and/or the relationship between

the leader and the follower, depending on the development level of the follower.<sup>100</sup> What follows is a brief description of the four styles.<sup>101</sup>

S1: Directing Leaders – When the follower cannot do the job and is not motivated, then the leader takes a highly directive role, telling them what to do and without a great deal of concern for the relationship. The leader may also provide a working structure, both for the job and in terms of how the person is controlled.

S2: Coaching Leaders – This style is primarily used when the follower wants to do the job but lacks the skills or knowledge. In this case, the leader acts in a friendlier manner as he persuades and helps the follower to complete the task.

S3: Supporting Leaders – In this style of leadership, the leader does not focus exclusively on goals but allocates the tasks and processes to the subordinates. In other words, the leader facilitates and takes part in decisions, but control remains with the subordinates.

S4: Delegating Leaders – This style is preferred when the followers can do the job and are motivated to do it. The leader can basically leave them to it, trusting them to get on with the job.

The situational approach is based on the idea that the followers move back and forth along the development continuum, which “represents the relative competence and

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<sup>100</sup> Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson, *Management of Organizational Behavior* . . . , 191.

<sup>101</sup> Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice* . . . , 89-90.



commitment of subordinates.”<sup>102</sup> To be effective, the leaders need to diagnose where the followers are situated on the development continuum and adapt their style of leadership according to the development levels of their subordinates.

### Military Applications

Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership theory (SLT) is practical and easy to understand, and its principles have been studied in various organizations, from corporations to schools to churches, however, there is little literature on military use. A recent study conducted in the U.S. Naval Academy tested Hersey and Blanchard's 1996 version of the SLT in a military population using the instruments developed for the theory. “The military environment provides a clear delineation of relationships between subordinate and superior relationships where the superior is responsible for developing subordinate's maturity.”<sup>103</sup> The data demonstrates that the outcome measures used indicate that the leadership is performing in an efficient manner and that satisfaction with supervision, the job, and the organization is high. Leaders considering the readiness or maturity level of their subordinates are employing the appropriate leadership style.

The situational leadership model has proven to be is a very popular and widely used model that emphasizes using more than one leadership style, particularly in developing subordinates in the military. It assumes that as the subordinate gains training, experience, and guidance, he will be better prepared to face various challenges and accomplish the goals of the organization with less leader influence. With time, as he goes

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<sup>102</sup> Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice* . . . , 91.

<sup>103</sup> George W. Yeakey, “Situational Leadership,” *Military Review* Vol. 82, Iss. 1 (Jan/Feb 2002): 77.

up in ranks, the subordinate will eventually become the leader. Considering that “it is a complex model with complex variables . . . follower readiness is a multifaceted dimension that is difficult to measure.”<sup>104</sup> The situational leadership model provides a wide range of applications and continues to be used in the military services as a training vehicle in virtually all formal leadership training programs. However, further research is needed in order to determine the validity and the efficacy of this model in deployed operations.

### **Transactional Leadership**

According to Peter Northouse, the transactional approach to leadership “refers to the bulk of leadership models, which focus on the exchanges between leaders and their followers.”<sup>105</sup> The leader provides followers with resources and rewards in exchange for motivation, performance, and effective task accomplishment. The transactional leader works through creating clear structures whereby it is clear what is required of their subordinates. Leaders who endorse this type of leadership, usually ensure that formal systems of discipline are in place.

A great aspect of this approach is that it teaches leaders to provide conditional reward to reinforce good behaviour and to discourage inappropriate behaviour. There are instances where the transactional approach is acceptable, if not preferred. For example, a leader who wants to emphasize safety could reward some individuals with short leave if the unit prevents any serious safety-related incidents over the period of a deployment.

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<sup>104</sup> Yeakey, “Situational Leadership,” . . . , 79.

<sup>105</sup> Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice* . . . , 170.

“In this case, the leader’s intent appears clear: unsafe acts are not tolerated and safe habits are rewarded.”<sup>106</sup>

Selecting transactional leaders for deployed operations can be a double-edge sword. Not only they are responsible and highly reliable, but “in situations of conflict, they refer to rules and procedures.”<sup>107</sup> The rules and standardized operations work fine as long as they are routine. But when situations arise that do not precisely fit the rules, the system breaks down. The transactional leader is inefficient at confronting problems for which programmed decision rules have not been established.

There are other major drawback with this approach to leadership. When the transactional leader allocates work to a subordinate, he is considered to be fully responsible for it, whether or not he has the resources or capability to carry it out. When things go awry, then the subordinate is considered to be personally at fault, and is punished for his failure.<sup>108</sup> This type of situation would be unacceptable during a deployment because it will negatively impact morale and cohesion. The leader who relies exclusively on the transactional approach, rather than combining it with the transformational one, evokes only short-term commitment from the followers and discourages innovation and risk-taking.

According to a study called *The Army Socio-cultural Survey* (CROP 3SC), which was commissioned in 2004 in support of the Army Campaign Plan strategic objective of “Shape Army Culture,” “most of our soldiers feel that older styles of transactional

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<sup>106</sup> US Army Field Manual (FM) 22-100, *Army Leadership* . . . , 3-17.

<sup>107</sup> Joseph, P.T. “Leadership Styles and Emotional Competencies: An Exploratory Study,” *Journal of the Academy of Business and Economics* (April 2003): 3.

<sup>108</sup> ChangingMinds.org, “Leadership Styles,” . . . .

leadership still predominate.”<sup>109</sup> Because of the high level of dissatisfaction with issues related to transactional leadership, soldiers tend to favour a transformational approach to leadership, which is what the CF leadership doctrine is promoting.

### **Transformational Leadership**

As the name suggest, the transformational approach to leadership “transforms” subordinates by challenging them to rise above their immediate needs and self-interests. This type of leadership is essentially developmental: it emphasizes individual growth, from a personal and professional aspect, and organizational enhancement. Key features of transformational leadership include empowering and mentally stimulating subordinates. First, the leader motivates them as individuals, and then as a group.<sup>110</sup>

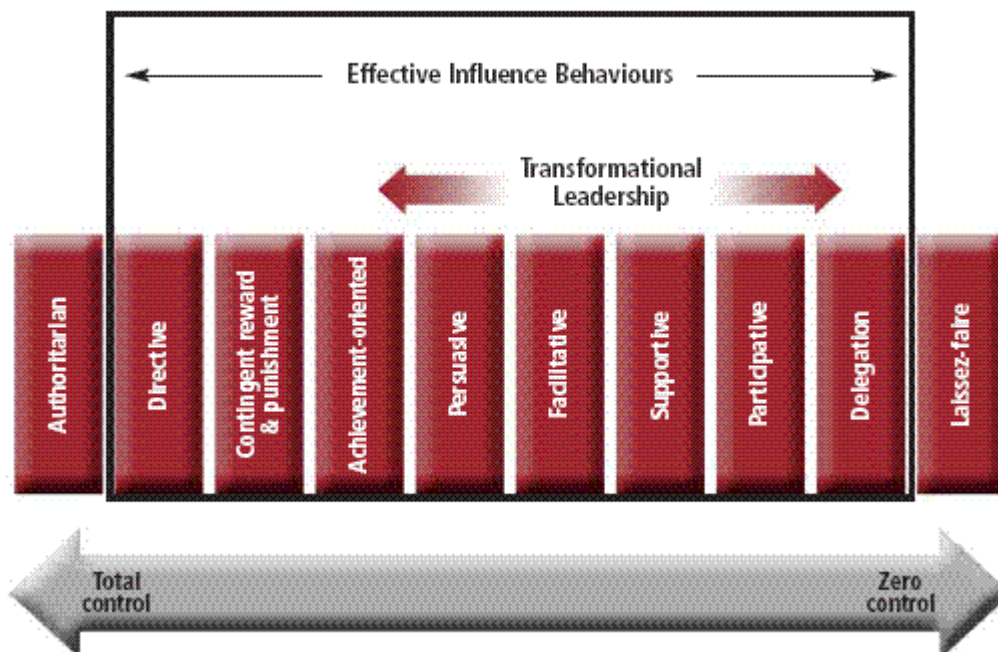
In terms of effectiveness, current academic literature suggests that transformational approach to leadership is more effective than transactional. Transformational leaders know how to motivate their subordinates “by presenting them with a compelling vision and inciting them to progress beyond personal interests for the good of the unit.”<sup>111</sup> In other words, transformational leadership inspires subordinates and enables them to endorse revolutionary change. These types of leaders, through their personal traits and their relationship with the subordinates, go beyond a simple exchange of traits and productivity.

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<sup>109</sup> Department of National Defence. *Canada’s Soldiers, Military Ethos and Canadian Values in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. (Ottawa: Director General – Land Capability Development, 2005), 54.

<sup>110</sup> US Army Field Manual (FM) 22-100, *Army Leadership* . . . , 3-17.

<sup>111</sup> DND, *Canada’s Soldiers, Military Ethos and Canadian Values in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* . . . , 37.



**Figure 3 - Spectrum of leader influence behaviours**

Source: A-PA-005-000/AP-003 Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Doctrine

Figure 3 depicts the general pattern of influence of the transformational approach, which “incorporates and combines several of the influence behaviours.”<sup>112</sup>

Leaders who endorse the transformational approach, first communicate their intent and then step back and let their subordinates work. When leaders communicate their reasons for their decisions or actions, subordinates can build a broader understanding and ability to exercise initiative and operate effectively. Transformational leadership fosters innovation. Not all leaders are attuned to innovation in the same way, but the fact that transformational leaders are highly motivated for innovation is because it is a personal trait for them. It allows them also to take advantage of the skills and

<sup>112</sup> DND, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations . . .*, 67.

knowledge of experienced subordinates who may have better ideas on how to accomplish a mission.<sup>113</sup>

Some of the studies have demonstrated that transformational leadership augments or supplements transactional leadership, and training in that area would be a beneficial addition to leadership training programs. This approach to leadership can be beneficial in deployed operations because it is very effective during periods that call for change or present new opportunities. According to the CF leadership doctrine, “superior CF leaders, or transformational leaders, give followers valid reasons to be hopeful and committed.”<sup>114</sup>

### **The Dark Side of Leadership**

The study of leadership can involve the characteristics of leaders, the characteristics of the group that is led, the situation in which leadership occurs, and the interaction of these factors (e.g., certain types of leaders in certain types of situations), and circumstances “that are presumed to enhance individual, unit and organizational functioning.”<sup>115</sup> Unfortunately, leadership behaviour can also be harmful to individuals and organizations or even destructive at times.

In a report to the US Secretary of the Army in 2003, entitled “Assessing Leaders to Establish and Maintain Positive Command Climate,” authors Craig Bullis and George Reed describe destructive or toxic leaders as follows:

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<sup>113</sup> US Army Field Manual (FM) 22-100, *Army Leadership* . . . , 3-17.

<sup>114</sup> DND, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces –Conceptual Foundations* . . . , 70.

<sup>115</sup> Steve Harvey, *The Dark Side of Leadership: Some Unintended Consequences*, Submitted to Canadian Forces Leadership Institute (March 2003), 3.

Destructive leaders are focused on visible short-term mission accomplishment. They provide superiors with impressive, articulate presentations and enthusiastic responses to missions. But, they are unconcerned about, or oblivious to, staff or troop morale and/or climate. They are seen by the majority of subordinates as arrogant, self serving, inflexible, and petty.<sup>116</sup>

Aggressive behaviours are often viewed as violation of what should be appropriate treatment. One of the Army values is respect, and a toxic leader displays a lack of respect to his subordinates. Toxic leaders should not be tolerated. During the selection process of team leaders and commanders for deployed operations, board members should pay close attention to the individuals selected and it can lead to severe consequences to the organization and the mission.

## **TECHNOLOGY AND LEADERSHIP**

New technology always presents challenges to Army leaders. Leaders at all levels need to continually learn how to manage it and to make the best use of the new equipment and processes.

Although technological advances have the potential to permit better and more sustainable operations, there is perhaps too much reliance on technology to the detriment of the personnel. Today's advance in technology does not help the situation in terms of the confidence that personnel have in their leaders. Some of the leaders in command positions rely heavily on C2 systems to stay current on the situation in the field, which means less interaction with their subordinates. In addition, these state-of-the-art systems

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<sup>116</sup> Craig Bullis and George Reed, *Assessing Leaders to Establish and Maintain Positive Command Climate*, A report to the US Secretary of the Army (February 2003), [http://www.carlisle.army.mil/research\\_and\\_pubs/research\\_and\\_publications.shtml#](http://www.carlisle.army.mil/research_and_pubs/research_and_publications.shtml#); Internet; accessed 19 March 2006.

offer the opportunity to micro-manage even more and/or bypass the chain of command, which can have a detrimental effect on the mid- and lower-level supervisors and subordinates. This “over-control can quickly lead to personnel de-motivation.”<sup>117</sup>

Leaders, especially at senior levels, should take every opportunity to empower their people to do their job.

## **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Individuals selected for command positions in deployed operations hold tremendous responsibilities. They are not only responsible for the success of the mission, but also for the well-being of their troops. Therefore, it behooves leaders at every level to keep their subordinates motivated by helping them to fulfill their basic needs.

Out of the three approaches to leadership highlighted in this chapter, transformational leadership stands out as the best available option that leaders should endorse during deployments.

## **CONCLUSION**

Despite the fact that it is practically impossible have “stress free” deployed operations, the leadership has the responsibility for the well-being of their personnel. Soldiers are integral functioning members of their primary group. The loss of fellow troops to physical or psychological injury resulting from operational stress can compromise the entire group's operational efficiency. To mitigate the negative effects of stress that impinge on individuals and units, it is imperative that all personnel selected for a deployment be made aware of and understand the potential stressors that awaits them in

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<sup>117</sup> Dr. Ross Pigeau and Carol McCann, “Re-conceptualizing Command and Control,” *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Spring 2002): 57.



theatre. This study demonstrated that effective leadership plays a critical role in mitigating that stress and ensuring the success of future missions.

To enhance cohesiveness within the unit in operations, it is essential that leaders communicate with their personnel during the preparation or pre-deployment phase, and throughout the deployment in theatre. Leaders need to clearly define the mission statement as well as to provide detailed expectations, explanations, and stay up to date with respect to the Rules of Engagement and the rules and regulations in effect for the specific operation/mission. To enhance morale and cohesion, unit personnel selected for a deployment need to train together prior to going in theatre. In addition, to build trust and confidence in leadership, leaders at all levels need to empower their personnel to do their job, reduce the “micro-managing”, and provide open lines of communication for the dissemination of information through the chain of command.

The Unit Climate Profile has proven to be a useful tool to acquire information about the levels of morale, cohesion, and confidence in leadership in deployed operations. “With a resurgence of recognition of the vital role of the soldier’s state of mind”<sup>118</sup> during deployments, we cannot overstress the importance of unit climate and the need for further research.

In spite of stress and changes, whether social or technological, leadership always involves shaping human emotions and behaviours. Therefore, based on the complexity of the peacekeeping missions and combat operations, it is suggested that leaders adapt their leadership styles according to the situation and the people they are leading.

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<sup>118</sup> Brown, *Human Dimensions of Operations Survey*. . . , 20.

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