CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE / COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES
JSCP 34 / CCEM 34

EXERCISE/EXERCICE
NEW HORIZON

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MILITARY CULTURE, ETHOS AND VALUES AMIDST THE
TECHNOLOGICALLY DRIVEN TRANSFORMATION

Abstract

Military has always played a significant role in molding the youth to soldier by inculcating military culture, ethos and values. In many cases, the history of a country and its struggle to independence that formed the nations pride, culture and character were directly related to that.

This essay will argue that amidst the technologically driven transformation, the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) must still inculcate culture, ethos and values to its servicemen. Initiatives such as Leadership, Image, Values, Experience (LIVE), One SAF, National Education (NE) and Leadership Organisation (LO) were intended to set the cultural mechanism to a positive direction and nurture the spirit of the Third Generation (3G) SAF leaders. War for all its gore and glitz technology, remains very much a test of values, ethos and leadership, and the SAF should not lose sight of that reality.

<u>Introduction</u>

> "*No matter how clearly we see the citizen and the soldier in the same man, how strongly we conceive of war as the business of the entire nation, opposed diametrically to the pattern set by the condottieri of former times, the business of war will always remain individual and distinc*t."[1]

For a long time, wars were fought by young men with ages ranging from the late teens to mid twenties. They also formed the generation that would rebuild their country once the war was over. Their resilience and ability to adapt in trying times was mostly learned from the previous generation, the way of life they were subjected to and, most importantly, the strong culture and traditions with which the country had molded their sons and countrymen. While the history of a country and its struggle to independence formed the nation's pride, culture and character, the military had always played a significant role in molding the youth into soldiers by inculcating military culture, ethos and values in their overall development.

Military culture is defined by James Burk as a composition of four elements: discipline, professional ethos; ceremonial displays and etiquette; and cohesion and esprit de corps.[2] However, one of the most powerful factors influencing the evolution of military culture is the national culture within which the military culture exists. The interaction helps to define the nature of military culture and, in many cases, the culture of a nation's armed forces can have a reciprocal influence on the development of a national culture. Culture is also described as the "bedrock of military

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[1] Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War Indexed Edition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989)*,* 187.

[2] Allan D. English, *Understanding Military Culture: A Canadian Perspective* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 6.

effectiveness" by many authors in readings on military culture in the twentieth century[3]. However, in recent years, military academics have considered the question of culture and how it impacts the perception of readiness in the armed forces. It mainly stems from the principle that culture has considerable implications on society or group as most of their "motivations, aspirations, norms and rules of conduct"[4] derived from culture of that society or group.

This essay will present the argument that inculcating military culture, ethos and values are equally important as maintaining the technological edge in the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF). In addition, it will also highlight the initiatives taken to address the 'heartware' issues amidst the technologically driven effort and its transformation towards a Third Generation (3G) SAF.

The first section of this essay will highlight some of the research work used in understanding military profession, culture and its relationship to the society. It will also underline the organizational culture model linkages to ethos and national values. The next section will then present the nature of the societal change that might impact military values and culture. The next section will highlight the perceived nature of the societal change and its impact on the SAF and will highlight the challenges faced by the mainly conscript SAF. This is followed by a brief analysis of the SAF's military history and culture. Subsequently, the paper will highlight some of the initiatives taken by SAF to ensure that its leaders and soldiers are well nurtured in military culture, ethos and values. Finally, the essay will conclude that inculcating military

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[3] *Ibid,* 10.

[4] *Ibid,* 5.

culture, ethos and values are relevant and paramount for SAF as it proceeds on in its technologically driven transformation journey.

Military professions, culture and relationship with society

Samuel Huntington's model in 1957 explained that the three defining characteristics of a profession are expertise, responsibility, and corporateness. His model also states that professionals "share a sense of unity among themselves and separateness from those who are not members of their profession, partly because of the length of training necessary to achieve professional competence."[5] Hence, military professionals not only have the expertise of the application of violence in the service of the state but also have the ability to "manage violence." This requires virtues and ethos that can be relied upon to perform beyond what is expected of their civilian counterparts.

In the research of military cultures, Soeters and Recht, claimed that all military organizations share these unique characteristics: the communal character of military life, the heavy emphasis on hierarchy, and military disciplined and control. They also argued that the trend is for military organizations to be evolving away from rigid, machine-like cultures toward more flexible, professional cultures. The impetuses for

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[5] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*: *The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations,* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1959), 11-17.
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the shift are: a) orientation toward professional ethical codes, b) leadership based on professional competence, and c) horizontally situated reference groups.[6]

The study of the relationship between armed forces and societies is "eclectic and multidisciplinary,"[7] and includes such disciplines such as anthropology, history, politics, sociology and economics. In 1962, Rappaport postulated that the relationship between armed forces and society can be a determining influence in the type of society that emerges. Examples highlighted are: (1) praetorian states, the most prevalent, where the armed services exist to defend those persons in power, (2) the civil and military polity, where, with internal political stability assured, the primary function of the armed forces is defence against external threat; and (3) the nation–in-arms, where the dominant function of the armed services is public duty.[8]

However, it was Machiavelli who first understood the relationship between military organization and the revolutionary developments in the social and political sphere of his time. In order to minimize the influence of elites and to overcome the unreliability of the mercenary, he promulgated the conscript army as the basis of a republic. Machiavelli was interested in the creation of conscript armies that were composed of inhabitants of the state the army expected to defend because patriotic enthusiasm can only be expected of an army composed of men fighting for their native land and from those living in the same society. He also asserted that political

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[6] Allan D. English, *Understanding Military Culture: A Canadian Perspective* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press: 2004),10-15.

[7] Edmonds, *Armed services and society, 7,* 12.

[8] Allan D. English, *Understanding Military Culture: A Canadian Perspective* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press: 2004), 44.

institutions must also be organized to create favorable conditions for military

organization.[9]

In an organizational culture model, the initial socialization into the profession

of arms takes place during basic training. This is the "military acculturation" that

makes new recruits feel like members of the military. However, there is a challenge

for the military to cultivate a military ethos that reflects age-old military virtues and

today's mainstream values and mores. Military culture and ethos are so closely linked

together that one could debate whether an ethos defines culture or vice-versa. By

definition, ethos is the "characteristic spirit and beliefs of [a] community, people,

system, literacy, literary work or person."[10] The Canadian Army accepts that

maintaining "the military ethos is critical to the army's effectiveness in war." The

Canadian Army's ethos is described as "an all-encompassing military philosophy and

moral culture derived from the imperatives of military professionalism, the

requirements on the battlefield and the demands war makes on human character." It is

based on four tenets: duty, loyalty, integrity, and courage.[11]

Organizational culture generally reflects what it found to be highly functional

in times of strong need and it is continually adapting to natural changes. Therefore,

the organizational rules were created from what that worked which were then passed

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[9] Peter Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press: 1986), 19.

[10] Allan D. English, *Understanding Military Culture: A Canadian Perspective* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press: 2004), 22.

[11] Canada Defence Academy- Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations* (Ottawa, Canada Department of National Defence, 2005), 23.

over to the members of the organization. Edgar Schein stated that "where culture

matter most is in its influence and structure." He also mentioned that organizational

strategy can sometime be dominated by cultural assumptions that are "hardwired' into

their thinking which was influence by the success and failure of the organization.[12]

Nature of change

One of the most obvious changes in recent years is the Singapore public's

perception that there were no specific and powerful threats to Singapore and its

national interest. Despite the arrest of twenty-one Singaporeans working as Jemaah

Islamiyah (JI) operatives in 2002[13] and another two a year later[14], the public in

general had always believed that Singapore was still relatively safe from any hostility

or terrorists threats. The defence community knows that things are not so simple. The

nature of the threats and risks might have been checked but they have not

disappeared.

Another change factor is the growth of individualism. In the past twenty years,

there were significant features of social change in the transition from collectivism to

individualism. This social change was a second-order effect of globalization and

atomization of industry. Job-hopping from one job to another better-paid job is

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[12] Allan D. English, *Understanding Military Culture: A Canadian Perspective* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press: 2004), 15-17.

[13] Channel News Asia, "Terrorist arrest in Singapore," http://www.channelnewsasia.com/cna/arrests/press_020919.htm ; Internet; accessed 1 April 2008.

[14] BBC News, "Singapore details JI arrest," http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/3329857.stm ; Internet; accessed 1 April 2008.

common and hence, had seen traditional group alliances and loyalty weakened. And perhaps above all, the growth of per capita income has enabled people to exercise individual consumer choice.[15] This economic flexibility has stimulated social and political choice, again with the breakdown of traditional allegiances and in many cases social cohesion. It has resulted in many floating customers, floating families and floating voters, shopping around and picking what serves individual's 'taste buds.' In this age of globalization, Singaporeans have become much more mobile. Many have tasted life beyond Singapore's shores and know that there are other opportunities elsewhere.

In countries where the armed forces rely on conscription, the biggest challenge is to deal with the issue of a non self-selection system. Motivation to serve is the foremost significant challenge. Hence, it is more that a verbal commitment when a youth needs to spend 2 years of his or her's life in military training and another 13 years as reservist with a service commitment up to 40 days a year. It is a personal commitment and sacrifice. A Applied Behavioral Sciences Department (ABSD) survey, reinforced the argument that more youths conscripted today are self-focused and questioning than previous generations. Their current values, habits and fitness are generally in contrast to the culture and expectations of the military.[16]

Absurdly, there is still a perception by some that war can be fought by 'the push of the button' and that by having the latest technology to deliver firepower to the

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[15] Dr John Reid, *The Armed Forces and Society* (RUSI Journal; April 1997, 142, 2; Military module), 30.

[16] LCol Star Soh, *Application of Psychology in HR and Training in a conscript army* (Singapore: Applied Behaviour Science Department: 2000), 3.

adversary, there is no real demand for soldiers to engage in the close fight. Buzzwords such as 'pre-emptive strike' had always been used up by those who have or little knowledge about defence and soldiering.

Hence, there is a significant need for SAF to understand the changes in the society and 'engage' the new generations to, at least, realize the importance of values, ethos and military culture in SAF. It would be a failure of SAF if it were just a 'lip service' by the conscripts to get through the national service.

<u>Military Culture does matter</u>

One of the key milestones in the revolution of military affairs (RMA) is the application of Blitzkrieg in 1940. After the defeat in WW1, Germans conducted a intensive study, under General Hans von Seeckt, to reflect and review thoroughly the cause of the defeat. It was in this study that the Germans start thinking about the future of war. While the incremental and evolutionary improvements in doctrine, training, and technology can be argued as the source of German's victory in 1940, it was the resolute military culture that shaped the thinking process and willingness to study the operational and tactical lessons from the last war. A military culture, from the Prussian reforms of 1807-1814 onward, that "demanded effectiveness and 'joy in responsibility' of every member of the army from rifleman to general, commanded constant training and practice, encouraged experiment and innovation, inculcated

honesty and trust across ranks, units, and branches, nurtures its junior leaders, and punished failure only at its second or third occurrence."[17]

In the realm of the technologically driven future, military organizations could remain flexible and concentrate more on intellectual preparation for future war. However, there must be a dominant factor that could shape and influence the attribute of the organization. The U.S. Marine Corps has the fundamental belief that all the fog and uncertainty of future war could not be addressed by technology. Their culture remain firmly tied to a sense of history both as a learning tool and as a warning to those who would put too much reliance on technology.[18]

This is not a new subject for all, if not most, military organizations. Understanding and inculcating military culture extends the ability to understand the soldier's fighting spirit and to develop it in soldiers and leaders. As inscribed on the World War II Memorial in Washington D.C, "They had no right to win. Yet they did, and in doing so they changed the course of war…even against the greatest odds, there is something in the human spirit- a magical blend of skill, faith, and valor…that can lift men from certain defeat to incredible victory."[19]

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[17] Williamson Murray, "May 1940: Contingency and fragility of the German

Hence, one of the main challenges for SAF is to maintain the youth level of interest of the nation's youth in serving the nation by inculcating recruits with military culture, values and ethos. Using Clausewitz's analogy of a tree in describing military spirit, from a seed it will grow to be a tree under the warmth sun of victory. Later as a tree, it will be able to weather any storm of misfortune and defeat.[20] This spirit "can only be created in war and by great generals though admittedly it may endure, for several generations at least, even under generals of average ability and through long periods of peace."[21]

SAF's beginning

> *"We are here in Southeast Asia for better or for worse and we are here to stay, and our policies are designed to ensure that we stay peacefully in Southeast Asia in accord and amity with our neighbours but with a right to dcide how we order our lives in our own house…any act, any programme, and decision which will help secure a more enduring future for ourselves and our progeny in this region must be pursued whatever the sacrifice."*

> Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's Prime Minister
> In Parliament, 14 December 1965[22]

Singapore is a small city-state of about 647 sq km and population of slightly less than 5 million. Within that confined area, there is a multi-cultural, religiously and ethnically diverse harmonious society. The survivability of Singapore lies on its people and the government's relentless effort to always direct the economy into

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[20] Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War Indexed Edition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989)*,* 189.

[21] *Ibid,*190.

[22] Tim Huxley, *Defending The Lion City: The Armed Forces of Singapore* (Australia: Allen & Unwin, 2000), xviii.

higher value-added, more highly technological and more capital and knowledge intensive activities. Leveraging on technology and public service efficiency, the economy of Singapore largely depends on foreign trade, investment and manufacturing. It is clear that building the capabilities of the SAF has played and continues to play as a central role in the Singapore's government effort to provide a confident and stable outlook for foreign investors and at the same time, ensure security in the face of perceived external threats.

In 9th August 1965, Singapore separated from Malaysia Federation. The separation had forced Singapore to develop its own armed forces. By late 1966, the combination of recruitment problems, breakdown of the defence relationship with Malaysia and most importantly the uncertain future of Britain's security role had persuaded Singapore government to create a much larger citizen army. With advice from Israel, SAF transformed from a relatively small forces of regulars supplemented by volunteer reservists into an Israeli-style mass citizen force based on conscription and long-term compulsory reservist service.

Over years, from the first cohort of Israeli-trained officer graduates to the present officers with acute military knowledge in warfare, the SAF's military culture has been largely based or strategized around the outward defence of the nation through deterrence. And if deterrence fails, its ability to deliver a swift and decisive victory.[23] As the SAF transformed to the Third Generation (3G) Armed Forces which is heavily focused on system-capability and technology, there is still a question of

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[23] The Singapore Army-About us, "Our Mission", http://www.mindef.gov.sg/imindef/mindef_websites/atozlistings/army/About_Us.html . Accessed on 2 April 08.

spirit or ethos of the SAF leaders and soldiers and how these affect SAF's ability? So being a young nation, is there a military culture in SAF? If yes, what is the SAF's military culture?

Technology versus Ethos

While science and technology provides an edge in warfare, it has its limitations. In some cases, it is the ethos, values and spirit that have proven to be the decisive factors that possibly tilted the balance between victory and defeat. A good example would be the Vietnam War. Technologically superior US forces rained all available arsenals of advanced weapons systems and munitions on the Viet Congs. Weapons ranging from the world's first precision-guided munitions (PGM) to the use of chemical weapons such as Agent Orange were used to defoliate the jungles that provided cover to the Viet Congs. Despite a substantial edge in technology over the Viet Congs, the U.S. Army could not overcome was the determination, spirit and ethos of the battle-hardened Viet Congs.[24]

Another good example would be the Yom Kippur War in 1973 in which the ethos of the Israelis to fight and the tactical brilliance of the Israeli military leadership, against all odds managed to not only repel the Syrian forces attack into Israel but also advanced towards Syria's capital Damascus. The victory on the Golan Heights by the Israeli's 7th Brigade with the relative combat power of 1:5 against

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[24] Antony O. Edmonds, "The War in Vietnam," (London: Greenwood Press, 1998), 52.

them, demonstrated the determination and ethos of the Israelis to go against all odds

to defend their country through the application of tactics and decisive decision making

by the commanders. In this particular case, despite the Syrians' using the most

advanced Soviet T62 tanks and superiority in numbers, it was not enough to

overwhelm the Israelis. It was also described as the fight to the finish – literally

"death or glory." [25]

These two examples demonstrate the significance of ethos and the spirit to set

the conditions for success even when the adversary has the technological superiority.

It also reaffirmed that "war is a matter of heart and will first; weaponry and

technology second."[26] James M. Dubik recognized that brute strength counts, but

unless one side is overwhelmingly strong and uses that strength skillfully, a stronger

spirit and ethos matters more than physical strength. If an enemy can use just enough

strength to persevere until his opponent's will slacks, the weaker enemy will win. [27]

The Vietnam war is an excellent example of clashes in will and fighting spirit in

which the technologically weak prevails. SAF, therefore, needs to take cognisance of

the importance in inculcating military ethos and values amidst it's 3G Transformation.

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[25] History Learning Site, "The Yom Kippur War in 1973," http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/yom_kippur_war_of_1973.htm Accessed on 2 April 2008.

[26] Gordon R. Sullivan and James Dubik, "Land Warfare in the 21st Century," *Military Review* (September 1993), 31.

[27] James M. Dubik, *Has Warfare Changed? - Sorting Apples from Oranges*, (Arlington: Institute of Land Warfare, 2000), 3.

The Way Ahead

"*Discipline, skill, good-will, a certain pride, and high morale, are attributes of an army trained in times of peace. They command respect, but they have no strength if their own. They stand or fall together. One crack, and the whole thing goes, like a glass too quickly cooled…An army like this will be able to prevail only by virtue of its commander, never on its own. It must be led with more than normal caution until, after series of victories and exertions, its inner strength will grow to fill its external panoply. We should take care never to confuse the real spirit of an army with its mood.*"[28]

SAF in its humble beginnings stressed the importance of the armed forces and society's relationship as one of the founding bases of SAF Code of Conduct and public Declaration in 14 August 1967 (see Figure 1) by then, Defence Minister, Dr Goh Keng Swee. The SAF Code of Conduct and the SAF Core values[29] formed the foundation for leaders to base their preaching of the SAF's values to the conscript soldiers.

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[28] Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War Indexed Edition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989)*, 189.

[29] Centre of Leadership Development, *Spirit and System Leadership Development for a Third Generation SAF* (Singapore: Pointer Journal of the Singapore Armed Forces SAFTI MI Monograph. 4, 2005), 8.

The SAF Code of Conduct (COC, July 1967)

The SAF Code of Conduct comprised six rules of conduct as summarised below:

- We will always Honour our Nation. We will do everything to uphold it and nothing to disgrace it.
- At all times, we must bear in mind that we are protectors of our citizens.
- We are loyal to the armed forces, and we take pride in our unit, our uniform, our discipline, our work, our training and ourselves.
- We must be exemplary in our conduct. We respect others and by our conduct and bearing win the respect of others.
- We are courageous but not reckless. We are devoted to duty but not to ourselves.
- We guard our weapons as we guard secret.

The two bases for the Code of Conduct as explained by Dr Goh Keng Swee:

Professional efficiency: "The history of the more successful armies has shown that even though there is no written guide as to the behaviour and attitude of members of the army, there nevertheless exists a rigid and well-defined code of behaviour handed down from one generation of officers to another. We do not have a professional officer caste in Singapore and in fact in most modern democracies, the concept of a professional aristocratic hereditary group of officers has fallen into disrepute. ...Nor can we wait for a tradition to develop among our army officers in the way it did in Europe and elsewhere. This will not take decades but several generations. It is for this reason that the code spelt out in explicit terms for the guidance of the armed forces will be useful in establishing high standards of behaviour and thus ensure that a sense of dignity and purpose prevails throughout the Army".

Relation between armed forces and society: "It is well known that Singapore is an open city, a free port and market place in which products from all countries of the world can enter freely and compete with each other. ...we are ... exposed to ideas from all over the world. ....At the same time, our society is in the course of transition. The young of today no longer accept all that their parents tell them. The parents themselves, if they are of the older generation, are probably in a bewildered state of mind, hardly able to comprehend twentieth century ideas and social forces. What is the right thing to do in these circumstances? Should we follow Mao Tse Tung's famous dictum 'Let a Hundred flowers bloom, a Hundred schools of thought contend?' It is the function of the Government to govern and of leaders to provide leadership. When the hundred schools of thought contend, it is the duty of the Government and the leadership to support the school of thought that it believes to be in the long-term interest of the people. As regards the Armed Forces, because of this exposure to ideas and nations abroad, as well as antiquated prejudices handed down from within our own cultures, some very strange notions are being held by people not only outside the armed forces but also within them... In this situation, it is silly to do nothing in the hope that the matters will right themselves."

Today, the SAF Code of Conduct is still introduced to SAF recruits in Basic Military Training. The 1997 SAF Core Values Handbook recognises the SAF Code of Conduct as one of several of the SAF's "Individual Statements of Belief" or Manifestos. Specifically, the Code of Conduct serves to remind our servicemen of four of the seven SAF Core Values as follows: Loyalty to Country, Discipline, Professionalism and Ethics.

Figure 1: SAF Code of Conduct

Source Spirit and System Leadership Development for a Third Generation SAF, 8.

Running in parallel with the SAF's effort in preaching values to the

servicemen were the campaign of National Education (NE). The aim of this campaign

is to create awareness to the youth in appreciating how the nation came about,

understanding the significance of the challenges we face and being actively involved

in building the nation's future.[30] National Education is about engaging hearts and

minds. It is about developing a citizenry that is in tune with national issues – past,

present and future. Hence, NE became one of the important building block in

deepening the beliefs and sense of ownership to the defence of the nation.

Currently, SAF is setting it's Transformation journey in motion. As the SAF

transformed into a 3G SAF, the focus is not only on the integration of networks and

systems but also addressing the hearts and spirit of the people serving the SAF. One

of the key thrusts is the notion of being One SAF. In the words of the Chief of

Defence Force, LG Desmond Kwek, "I see One SAF in the context of three anchors

in the SAF that will stay relevant and vital into the future: our sense of mission, our

shared values, and our emphasis on people." [31]

While being mission focused, One SAF put great emphasis on the 'heartware'

– values and people. Defined by the core values of loyalty, ethics, professionalism,

care for soldiers, leadership by example, discipline, and fighting spirit, each Service

and every servicemen, whether uniformed or civilian, whether regular or National

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[30]Nexus, "Why National Education?" http://www.mindef.gov.sg/nexus/NE_whyNE.asp ; Internet; accessed 1 April 2008.

[31]Cyberpioneer, "In Conversation with LG Kuek," http://www.mindef.gov.sg/imindef/publications/cyberpioneer/people/2007/jul07_people.html ; Internet; accessed 1 April 2008.

Serviceman; and regardless of different backgrounds and upbringing, attributes and qualities, badges and uniforms, must share the same commitment, passion and professionalism in their service, engendered through his or her positive experience in the SAF.

Another initiative to promote a positive experience during National Service is L.I.V.E[32]. 'L' refers to Leadership and Learning, 'I' represents Image and Identity, 'V' is for Values and 'E' represents 'Experience.' This campaign is aimed at all servicemen, leaders and soldiers alike, to display a high level of professionalism; and, maintain a positive image by nurturing values and promoting a positive experience during the national service.

While the national servicemen were inculcated with values, military ethos and pushed to the limits in training, SAF's military culture has not been battle tested or subjected to extreme measures. Unlike the CF where the military culture was molded from experience in the two world wars and the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, the SAF draws its culture from Singapore's ethnic diversity and the sense of pride of being Singaporeans no matter where or from which ethnic society they come.

The monograph, *Spirit and System: Leadership development for a Third Generation SAF* produced by Centre of Leadership Development SAFTI MI, highlighted the historical perspective of the SAF's thinking with regard to leadership and ethos amidst SAF transformation and addressed some of the "people" issues

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[32] Cyberpioneer, "L.I.V.E to the fullest," http://www.mindef.gov.sg/imindef/publications/cyberpioneer/people/2006/oct06_people.html; Internet; accessed 1 April 2008.

which relate to the culture of the SAF and Singapore. While the beginnings of First Generation (1G) SAF emphasized the subject of Spirit by shaping the military ethos and the Second Generation (2G) focus on the development of systems and structures, the Third Generation (3G) SAF will focus on nurturing the spirit and ethos through better appreciation of the new operating environment. This is achieved through a shared vision, openness and professional mastery that are the essence of Learning Organization (LO). It is also the cultural mechanism needed to nurture the professional Spirit and Ethos needed in the SAF.

The framework shown in Figure 2 "facilitates a reflection on the different cultures of military organization in the context of environmental changes that demand greater agility, adaptability and market-based considerations to drive efficiency." [33]

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[33] Centre of Leadership Development, *Spirit and System Leadership Development for a Third Generation SAF* (Singapore: Pointer Journal of the Singapore Armed Forces SAFTI MI Monograph. 4, 2005), 27
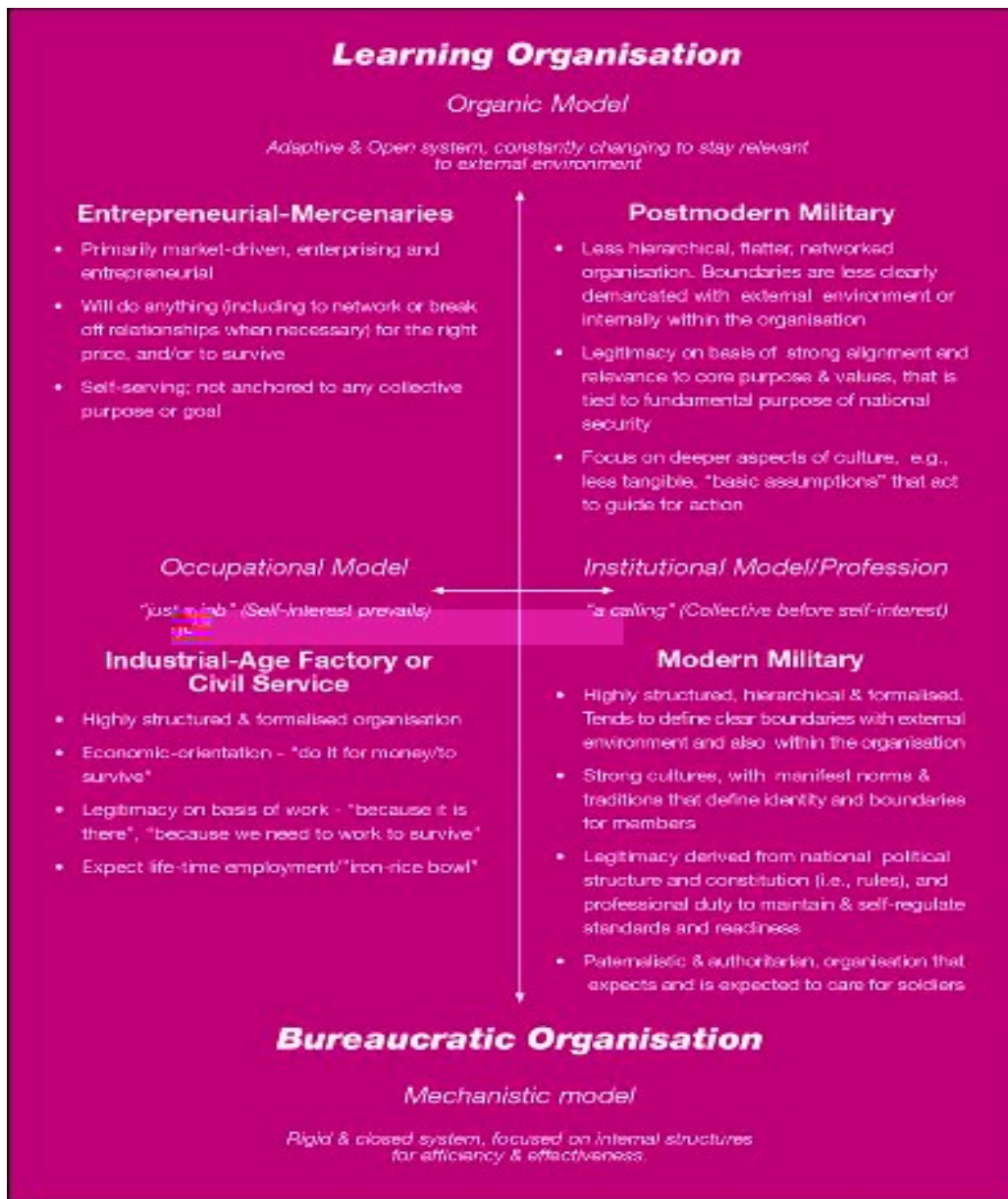
Figure 2: Learning Organization Model

Source Spirit and System Leadership Development for a Third Generation SAF, 27.

In summary, it is important that the SAF has taken a concerted effort to train and prepare its soldiers, not only in the hardware but also through an understanding of its values and spirit – "heartware." Initiatives like LIVE, emphasis on ABSD, and One SAF integrated with NE are targeted to win the hearts and minds of the society. The

3G SAF also will not only transform in the way it does business but also how it manage its people and especially its leaders. Initiatives from the Centre of Leadership Department (CLD) to change leaders cultural thinking were really appreciated. Hence, while it is a long process in inculcating military culture, SAF had taken the initial step to address this goal and hopefully these initiatives will bear fruit in the future.

Conclusion

The issue of culture is an important issue for a conscript military organization like the SAF. As the SAF moves forward in its transformation journey, there will be a greater emphasis on how it manages and trains its people – Singapore only resources. It is through the academic research by Samuel Huntington, Soeters and Recht and others that military culture and relationship with the society are redefined and analyzed. This academic work has led military organizations to understand the importance of integrating the military within a nation and its social structure.

Understanding the changes in society due to globalization and the increase in capitalism will enable SAF to appreciate the new generation of conscripts better. Inculcating military culture, ethos and values does matter as proven in many great militaries and their rich histories. Using the CF and Canada's cultural mosaic gives the SAF a good perspective of the complexity involved in understanding the ethic diversity that closely resembles that of Singapore. The rich history, profound heritage and experience that the CF had gained in both world wars and peacekeeping operations has notably shaped the nation's culture and, most importantly, redefined how the CF does its business. The commitment and dedication shown by the CF in

Afghanistan speaks profoundly of the importance of addressing the "heartware" issues.

While military culture stems from the nation's culture and traditions, Clausewitz emphasized that military culture is forged through wars fought by great commanders. This is something that SAF must ponder how to 'short-circuit' the process without have the experience of war. SAF being a young military organization and with limited experience, must find ways to continually engage the new generations at any opportunity. In recent years amidst the transformation journey, the SAF has initiated good programmes to get the buy-in from leaders, soldiers and society alike. LIVE, One SAF and NE had significantly set the cultural mechanism to a positive direction. With respect to the leadership perspective, the CLD, in its monograph, had addressed the need to "nurture the spirit" of the 3G SAF leaders through LO in order to be more adaptive in thinking and actions.

No matter how high the level of sophistication that one's army has, it should not underrate the culture, ethos and values as something that may and must be present in the army to a greater or lesser degree. Significantly, the SAF does realize that inculcating military culture, ethos and values will be a long-term process and requires commitment from all ranks. But, it has set the learning journey into motion and hopefully, in the realm of transformation, people will understand the importance of having those strong inner beliefs.

War is the business of people. While technology, science and system are important elements to provide the comparative advantage to shape the battle, they are

not deterministic for victory, even in future warfare. The way human beings conduct war, the technologies we use, our fighting doctrine, our organizations and other aspects of fighting have changed and will always change. But these are merely incidental in the classic sense. The essential nature of war will never change as long as human beings prosecute it. War for all its gore and glitz technology, remains very much a test of values, ethos and leadership, and the SAF should not lose sight of that reality.

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