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WHAT IS FAIR PUBLIC POLICY? A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF POLICIES, SERVICES AND SUPPORT FOR MILITARY VETERANS IN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES

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By LCol M.H. Higuchi

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ABSTRACT

Canada's participation in Afghanistan has been one of the largest deployments of Canadian Forces soldiers into an active conflict in over half a century. The 2006 announcement of the New Veterans Charter (NVC) by Veterans Affairs Canada was a step in addressing both the changing needs of veterans and the changing public values. Unfortunately, the unveiling of the NVC was received with displeasure amongst veterans groups and deemed to be insufficient to meet the needs of current veterans. The purpose of this paper is to examine the policy development of the NVC with a view of understanding the underlying rationale for its creation. This analysis will take place using two methods. The first method will be through the use of historical institutionalism to better understand the evolution of public values which influenced the creation of the NVC. The second method will be a comparative analysis with the American veterans' policy to determine what gaps exist within Canada. Overall the results of the analysis show that Canada's veterans' policy caters to careerist soldiers who have been involved in peacekeeping missions over the past several decades. By contrast, the American veterans system is designed to support temporary soldiers who have been mobilized to support major international conflicts about once every decade. Should Canada continue a highly operational international role within its current fiscal constraints, it will increasingly become more reliant on short-term soldiers thus necessitating a greater demand for veterans support. Recommendations such as expanded transition assistance, the greater veteran employment within DND, and the expansion of post-secondary educational benefits to veterans post-release will assist in meeting these needs.

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Re-establishment and Compensation Act, also known as the New Veterans Charter (NVC), was passed in Parliament in 2005 and brought into force in 2006.¹ This act replaced the Canadian War Veterans Allowance Act which primarily provided services to those veterans (and their eligible dependants) who participated in World War I (WWI), World War II (WWII), and the Korean War.²

Since its introduction, veterans and their advocacy groups have criticized the New Veterans Charter for being insufficient to meet the needs of those who served their country. For example, the Veterans Ombudsman expressed concern that almost one third of those receiving disability pay would fall below the poverty line once they reach 65, as many of their benefits cease when not receiving a Canadian Forces Pension.³ The government's response to these criticisms was to suggest that the NVC would be a 'living document,' that would be open for amendments as required to ensure that the needs of veterans are met. This position was confirmed when the government commissioned a report from the House of Commons Standing Committee of Veterans Affairs and then introduced a legislative amendment to the NVC in 2011 to address many of the failures of the original act.⁴ However, the advisory group created by Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), Veterans Ombudsman and other parliamentary committees still contend that much remains to be done to ensure that veterans are treated equitably. Key areas of concern include a lack of family support services and ensuring financial security for the injured.⁵

¹ *Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Re-Establishment and Compensation Act*, Public Law C.21, (2005): .

² *War Veterans Allowance Act*, Public Law W-3, (1985c): .

³ Sonja Puzic, "Canada's Veterans Charter Failing Disabled Soldiers: Ombudsman," CTV News, <http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/canada-s-veterans-charter-failing-disabled-soldiers-ombudsman-1.1478144> (accessed January 29, 2015).

⁴ David Sweet, *A Timely Tune-Up for the Living New Veterans Charter* (Ottawa, ON: Parliament of Canada, 2010).

If the perception exists that Canada is not doing enough for its veterans, this begs the question of whether or not Canada treats its military veterans fairly. Fairness is a relative term which must be placed in context of each party. From a public policy standpoint, fairness can be determined in two ways. The first is through an examination of a policy to ensure congruence with the public's values and demands. Another way is to compare a specific policy with those of a similar jurisdiction to determine whether service standards are equitable. To determine whether Canada treats its military fairly, two questions will guide the analysis: 1) How do Canadians and American view their military veterans? 2) What is a fair level of support for military veterans?

To address the issue of fair treatment of the military, it is important to analyze the influences on the governmental decision makers who ultimately approve any changes to the veterans support services as an institution. The public's values and perceptions towards the military, and veterans in particular, play an important role as they ultimately shape public opinion and the decision making process. Public (or societal) values run deep and ingrained in a national psyche, while perceptions are more malleable and can change depending on external circumstances. Therefore government policies should ideally be based on the public's values, even though the question of fair compensation is influenced by present perceptions and veterans' roles in society.

A government's role in developing public policies, as a representative of the people in a democratic society, is equally influenced by both the public's values and perceptions. While many short term decisions are made with perceptions in mind, strategically astute governments make decisions on long-lasting public policies based on the public's values. By focusing on the

⁵ Roméo A. Dallaire and Donald Neil Plett, *A Study of the New Veterans Charter* (Ottawa, Canada: Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence - Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs, 2013), 1-31.

public's values, the government of the day is able to better resonate with key societal values rather than changing public perceptions.

With these concepts in mind, this paper will argue that the New Veterans Charter is fair and was created in line with Canadian public values. Stating this does not absolve the government of the day from continuously monitoring and adjusting the Charter, nor does it mean that all veterans will be happy with the Charter. What it does mean is that substantial reforms to the Charter are not likely to occur in the near future unless Canadian public values shift dramatically to support a major policy change.

To examine the fairness of current veteran government policies, the historical significance of the Government of Canada's (GoC) decisions towards veterans support will be first analyzed using historical institutionalism. The discussion begins with an analysis of Canadian public values over time and its resultant impact on veterans benefits from WWI until the present day unveiling of the NVC. To provide a comparative framework, the public policies developed by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) will then be analyzed in a similar manner to its Canadian counterpart. By setting the context for the discussion based on historical institutionalism, the Canadian and American veterans' policies will then be compared with a view to determining gaps in the Canadian system.

The United States (US) veterans' system was chosen as a basis of comparison for several reasons. First from a values perspective, the US's geographic location, economic co-dependency and its status as a world superpower has resulted in Canadians naturally comparing themselves to their neighbours to the south on many issues of political importance. The likely conclusion is that Canadian perceptions and values are influenced more by the US than any other country in the world. Second, as one of the largest funded organizations, the DVA has a budget that

surpasses all other systems in the world. As such, there exists a wide variety of literature on this system, thus enabling a critical analysis to be conducted.

Numerous data sources were used in this paper. The majority of literature was obtained from online journal databases and Internet searches. Print documents were obtained from the Royal Military of College library. The types of referenced sources were as follows:

1. Primary sources from peer-reviewed journals found from online journal databases such as EBSCO Host and Proquest published from 1970, although the majority of sources are within the past twenty years.
2. Books published since 1990 to provide historical context to the analysis of the public's values.
3. Reports from Governments of Canada and the United States covering the military, veterans and the population in general, published within the past twenty years.
4. Gray literature from newspapers and research organizations published within the past ten years.

This paper will be organized into six chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction in which the context is set, thesis introduced and methodology explained. Chapter 2 will introduce the theories used in the paper, and include a detailed explanation of historical institutionalism and its role in analyzing and comparing cross-national public policies. Chapter 3 will be a detailed analysis of the Canadian New Veterans Charter, specifically focused on the context by which it and its antecedents were created. Chapter 4 will be a similar analysis as Chapter 3, only this time will concentrate on the services provided by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. Chapter 5 will be a critical comparison of the Canadian and American values and veterans' support systems with a view to understanding the differing evolution of the two countries'

policies. Chapter 6 will then provide recommendations for possible changes to Canadian veterans' support policies.

CHAPTER 2 - BACKGROUND

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the underlying theories that will be utilized in the examination of both the Canadian and American veterans' support systems. The first two sections will set the stage of public policy research overall and the roots and basic precepts required to fully understand historical institutionalism. The next section will introduce historical institutionalism and its application in the analysis of real-life public policies. Historical institutionalism will then be contrasted with other modern-day models used within the scholarly field of social and political science. Finally, the challenges of using historical institutionalism when comparing cross-national public policies will be discussed.

Differences Between Social and Political Sciences

The creation of public policies as an institution is a phenomenon which has been ongoing since the first governments were created in Ancient Greek and Roman empires. Their analysis was first conceived through the study of political science which attempted to break down the rationale for their development into quantifiable laws. The expectation was that these laws could then be studied and experimentally reproduced through scientific method. While recent scholarly work has gradually expanded to include more 'soft' or unverifiable experimental methods, by in large, most political science focuses on the use of empirical evidence to prove theories or hypotheses.⁶

Social science on the other hand, is a relatively recent discipline compared to its political science counterpart. While very similar to political science in its attempts to analyze and predict

⁶ Tobin J. Grant, "What Divides Us? the Image and Organization of Political Science," *PS, Political Science & Politics* 38, no. 3 (2005), 380.

human behavior, social science focuses more on the interactions between social groups within society. The main difference between social and political science is the methodology by which they each arrive at a conclusion. Political science focuses more on the end results and the broader rationale for why circumstances occurred, whereas social science focuses more on the human perspective underlying the results, rather than the results themselves.

Social science produces descriptive inferences, causal inferences, and interpretations of events that are more than just data collections. Credible social science conclusions are drawn from methods grounded in rigorous introspection about what individuals can and cannot claim to know about the world. When researchers are transparent about the procedures that they use to produce and evaluate their conclusions, they give these conclusions a meaning that others can inspect for themselves.⁷

This quote from Academy of Science Award recipient Arthur Lupia highlights the fact that social science can bring additional perspective to analysis by focusing more on the journey and less on the data which can at times be flawed in their interpretation.

Public Values and Perceptions

As defined by this author, public values are deep rooted views, morals and cultural roots ingrained throughout society which change slowly over time. Values are generally politically agnostic, as they survive changes in government and are influenced by cultural upbringing, environmental factors, education, work and others. In the realm of public policy and institutions, values play a key role in the shaping of a government's decision makers into developing sustainable entities which must remain well after a given government falls. One example of values affecting public institutions is the current public demand within democratic countries for governments to provide transparency in its institutions as a form of public governance oversight.

⁷ Arthur Lupia, "What is the Value of Social Science? Challenges for Researchers and Government Funders," *PS, Political Science & Politics* 47, no. 1 (2014), 3.

As demonstrated by Frias-Aceituno et al., the level of transparency provided by governments is directly related to public's values and cultural views of what is appropriate.⁸ As the creation and change of public institutions takes an inordinate amount of time in heavily bureaucratized nations, it is political leaders who must guide strategic change based on awareness of the public's values.

Perceptions, on the other hand, are views of the world seen by the public through a particular lens. This lens can change quickly, depending on the source of information, the topic and the source influencing the change. As the lens through which a public interprets various policies, perceptions can drastically change a public's opinion on a specific topic over a short period of time. This being said, long-standing perceptions through continuous messaging from stakeholders can cause shifts in the public's values. The problem faced by the public is their ability to interpret the conflicting messages it receives from organizations with competing interests, some who do so for the public good and some who do not. Using the example of smoking in English pubs, it was only after several years of lobbying and public messages that a law was finally passed in Parliament to ban smoking in these establishments.⁹ While some political decisions will be made through pressure from public perceptions, more astute governments create long-term policies based on a public's values, which are enduring and can withstand the swings of temporary changes to a public's perceptions.

Historical Institutionalism

Historical institutionalism (HI) is an approach to studying politics and social science

⁸ José-Valeriano Frías-Aceituno, Lázaro Rodríguez-Ariza and María-Isabel González-Bravo, "The Effect of Societal Values on Local Government Transparency: Applying Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions," *Lex Localis* 11, no. 4 (2013), 830.

⁹ Kate Power and Oksana Mont, *The Role of Values and Perceptions in Policy Making for Sustainable Consumption* (Copenhagen, DK: European Topic Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production, 2011), 12-13.

which attempts to view the outcomes of decision makers with context in mind.¹⁰ When considering the context of a decision, it is easier to break down the influences of the decision into component parts, thus theoretically enabling a scholar to better predict future outcomes when similar situations occur. By dissecting institutions into component parts through the analysis of context, it is rationally arguable that similar institutions are more easily compared to one another. When viewing public policies as an institution and specific public's values as the context for analysis, it is therefore theoretically possible to compare similar public policies across different jurisdictions.

The root of HI was born equally out of the social science and political science foundations. Social scientists created HI to understand the human dynamics that form institutions and which shape the ultimate decisions made by them. These studies tended to focus on individual institutions. Political scientists created HI to rationally explain why certain outcomes occurred across various jurisdictions under similar circumstances. Their studies tended to focus more on comparative research across different regions and the role of institutions in the ultimate outcome. An example of this is the study of how different countries responded to the economic shock of the 1970s oil crisis.¹¹ This led to the study of the historical underpinning of institutionalism as a function of governmental policy shaping. But in order to study HI, it is important to first define institutions. According to a noted historical institutionalist Sven Steinmo, "the most common definition for institutions is: rules."¹² Rules are important on a global scale as they shape global public behaviour through the provision or removal of benefits, or the dictating of social norms. Therefore, institutions created by democratically elected

¹⁰ Sven Steinmo, "Historical Institutionalism," *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences* (2008), 121.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

officials must represent the social norms, or values, of the public at large.

The study of HI has broad ranging impacts on the social and political science fields, but most specifically when used in a cross-comparative context. Historical context is critically important for decision makers who shape public policy, as culture and values impact how decisions are made in certain jurisdictions and will not necessarily translate into the same decision made elsewhere. Using the simple example of a family, the first born child always receives a different upbringing than later siblings as parents learn from their mistakes. Later children grow up in a different household because their parents' time is split amongst the various siblings. Therefore, to expect that each child will grow up to be the same person, even if raised by the same parents, is illogical to most individuals. But once the historical context is understood, it is easier to rationalize why parents make certain decisions with first born children, and not with their latter siblings. As such, HI allows scholars to make sense of the historical context behind institutions and better enable a detailed comparative analysis.

Other Methods of Public Policy Analysis

Now that historical institutionalism has been discussed in depth, the next section will explore competing methods of analyzing public policy. It should be noted that there are literally hundreds of different methods (and their subsets) proposed by various political and social scientists worldwide and an exhaustive review of them is well outside the scope of this paper. The purpose of this section is to explore the nuances of how public policy is created and the various points of reference or models by which social and political scientists view the creation of public policy. Within the spectrum of methods, those selected for discussion as a comparative framework are as follows: Advocacy Coalition Framework, Multiple Streams Analysis, Electoral Connection, and Social Construction. As each framework is discussed, its relevance in the

analysis of the New Veterans Charter and its American counterpart will be discussed.

Advocacy Coalition Framework's (ACF) basis is that public policy is shaped by coalitions of individuals, who with common beliefs, fight in the political arena to ensure that their specific public policies are enacted.¹³ This is achieved through the direct influence of constituents to their elected officials, through special interest groups and researchers. Much of the research in this area focuses on the coalitions, specifically how they form, how are they composed, their structure and how they influence public officials. One of the tenants of this method is the assumption that long-term change takes time as the vast array of coalitions compete within the political arena for their ability to influence the final public policy.¹⁴ In the case of veterans policy, one might use ACF to analyze how the coalitions of veterans and special interest groups, such as the Royal Canadian Legion, are trying to influence a change to the financial benefits of the NVC by taking the federal government to court. While this type of analysis is beneficial for justifying why a decision was made, it doesn't enable one to answer the question as to whether or not that decision was the correct one, or a fair one. Therefore ACF is not an ideal methodology for analyzing the fairness of the New Veterans Charter.

Multiple Streams Analysis is a model whereby "a dynamic set of processes whereby problems, ideas, and politics combine with choice opportunities to elevate issues to prominence."¹⁵ The idea is that these streams (problems, ideas and politics) at some point join together, and at that time there is a window of opportunity to change the institution (i.e. government policy). This window in time is fleeting, as decision makers are inundated with

¹³ Christopher M. Weible, Saba N. Siddiki and Jonathan J. Pierce, "Foes to Friends: Changing Contexts and Changing Intergroup Perceptions," *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis* 13, no. 5 (2011), 499.

¹⁴ Christopher M. Weible et al., "A Quarter Century of the Advocacy Coalition Framework: An Introduction to the Special Issue," *Policy Studies Journal* 39, no. 3 (2011), 349-360.

¹⁵ Michael K. McLendon, "Setting the Governmental Agenda for State Decentralization of Higher Education," *The Journal of Higher Education* 74, no. 5 (2003), 487.

information from all three streams at the same time and it is rare that they can be transfixed on a single issue long enough to gain traction and move it forward. A recent example of this was the push for gun control legislation in the United States immediately following the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre. In the aftermath, legislators were initially transfixed on instituting stronger gun control legislation and had massive public support across the nation. In this case significant lobbying efforts by the National Rifle Association delayed decisions on the proposed bill until public support for the bill died down and the window of opportunity closed. This methodology provides good context as to why a decision was made, and enables a good historical context behind the decisions which allows a scholar to determine the fairness behind the decision. Unfortunately this methodology does not lend well in the comparative context as the joining of streams is an infrequent and unpredictable event and therefore difficult to replicate in a cross-jurisdictional manner.

The Electoral Connection (EC) method is the supposition that all elected officials will do what is best in order to be re-elected. EC assumes that elected officials will act as representatives of their people and make decisions based on what is popular with the majority of their constituents.¹⁶ It is postulated that elected officials are influenced by four categories of voters: the entire district, likely voters, core supporters, and personal friends. While extremely divergent from HI, EC it is important to note that for the majority of decision makers who seek re-election and are not constantly in the public spotlight, their voting record on various bills is normally a key platform component and thus must respect the wishes of the majority of voters. As voting records are reviewed as historical record and not in the present moment, they are generally judged by constituents' values, rather than their molded perceptions at the time any

¹⁶ Erik C. Ness, "The Politics of Determining Merit Aid Eligibility Criteria: An Analysis of the Policy Process," *Journal of Higher Education* 81, no. 1 (2010), 36.

debate surrounding the event is taking place.¹⁷ In other words, for hot-button issues, voters are able to have a cooling-off period to judge the merits of a particular policy before allowing it to influence their opinion of their legislator in question. As such, EC analysis tends to focus more on public values, rather than perceptions. This methodology tends to support the analysis of the rationale behind decisions, as well as the concept of fairness, but tends to focus disproportionately on the bipartisan aspects of politics and therefore is not ideally suited for comparative analysis purposes.

Social Construction Framework (SCF) is a method designed to identify the causal relationship between policy design and its affects (both positive and negative) on its targeted population.¹⁸ SCF supposes that all policies which target a specific group of the population is created because the public by-large has a specific view of that group of society. The original goal of SCF was to explain why some groups are continuously advantaged through public policy while others continue to be disadvantaged. One example of the latter would be the continual construction of more prisons and longer prison sentences for criminals, since they are seen within society to be bad and deserving of greater punishments.¹⁹ This policy would contrast with others' views who suggest that further rehabilitation of criminals would be better for society as a whole instead of further incarceration. An individual using SCF attempts to correlate the linkage between the targeted population and their corresponding perceptions within society to rationalize the public policy instituted by government. In many ways, SCF is similar to HI as it focuses on public values and perceptions at large towards a specific subset of the population. The difference is that SCF supposes that politicians will make policies to remain elected and will tend to create

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Anne Schneider and Helen Ingram, "Social Construction of Target Populations: Implications for Politics and Policy," *American Political Science Review* (1993), 334-335.

¹⁹ Ibid.

policies which focus more on a population's current perceptions towards the target group, rather than their deep seated values. As such, this methodology does not support the thesis of values-influenced decision making of public officials postulated in Chapter 1 and will not be used in this paper.

Challenges of Cross-National Comparative Methods

The previous sections have addressed historical intuitionism and other methods of comparative policy analysis. The next section will discuss further the difficulties encountered when comparing policies which cross national boundaries. These problems include cultural bias, political influence, economic conditions and the institutions themselves.

When conducting cross-national comparative analyses, the context of results being analyzed is of utmost importance. Media professor Sonia Livingstone describes the process of research, when applied to cross-national comparative analysis, requires the combination of both contextual interpretation through insider knowledge and of rational interpretation through the use of outsider knowledge.²⁰ While rational interpretation is the unbiased view of a nation's information without the cultural bias, contextual interpretation is equally important to understand the fundamental reasons why a nation and its people behave in the way that they do. This includes the understanding of religion, social interactions, history and influences which shape a nation's people and their way of understanding. As no one individual is able to fully comprehend every culture, researchers also need to be aware of their biases when developing conclusions. As cross-national comparative analyses rely heavily on cultural interpretation there is risk of being biased towards a single nation if only a single researcher is involved. For the

²⁰ Sonia Livingstone, "On the Challenges of Cross-National Comparative Media Research," *European Journal of Communication* 18, no. 4 (2003), 491.

purpose of this paper, it is recognized that the author has much greater experience in the Canadian domain of public policy, rather than its American counterpart. As such, conclusions of American public policies must be treated with a greater level of skepticism than their Canadian equivalents.

While the influence of cultural influence in cross-national studies is significant, political power is also important when considering the development of public institutions. As the overseers of governmental public institutions, politicians are the key decision makers who approve or force changes in public policy. While the discussion of what motivates politicians was addressed in the last section, their resultant ability to make or force changes of public institutions is significant and cannot be overlooked. While sometimes these changes will be a true representation of the public's wishes, there are many examples of institutions which were created for political reasons. Such examples include legislation aimed at changing the power of the courts, powers of unions in collective bargaining and their ability to strike, and even welfare reform.²¹ When conducting cross-national comparative analysis, the consideration of political influence is therefore a worthwhile consideration, especially when considering the history of how an institution changed over time.

Economic factors also play a significant role in the evolution of public institutions. The economic prosperity of a country is directly tied to the monies it acquires through taxes, to enable the funding of public institutions. The interwoven relationship between public institutions and the economy is complex, as many institutions are established directly to influence a country's economy (banks, taxation organizations, insurance organizations, etc). Conversely, many public institutions are created or changed depending on the performance of the

²¹ Jonas Pontusson, "From Comparative Public Policy to Political Economy: "Putting Political Institutions in their Place and Taking Interests Seriously", " *Comparative Political Studies* 28, no. 1 (1995), 123.

economy. In some cases, public institutions are created when the economy is limited by archaic institutions and require fundamental changes to ensure continual economic growth. Such examples were seen within many Islamic countries over the last century when the creation of financial, monetary, and legal institutions enabled these states to continue their economic growth which had previously been limited by *Shari'ah* law.²² This transition to a market economy enables a balance between the views of the public and the economic prosperity of the nation, cementing the coexisting relationship between the economy and governmental institutions.

The last of the challenges to be addressed in this section are those related to the institutions themselves. As countries are independent entities with different decision makers, they each may develop unique methods of handling the same problem. Often one way to solve a problem will have no different result than another, but the decision makers of the time decided it would be more suitable for their specific population. One example highlighted by a healthcare study in Europe is the differing ways in which doctors provide care to their patients. In this study, it was recognized that patients in England registered with only a single general practitioner (GP), while patients in Belgium and Italy often saw more than one GP, resulting in different patient participations in the discussed survey.²³ In this example, the differences in the healthcare institutions across the three countries caused disparities in the quantitative results received from surveys. While both systems are comparatively effective, the differing context had a significant impact on the final results due to an unbalanced reporting across the three countries. When scholars are able to identify these discrepancies through an in-depth understanding of the institutional context, they can more accurately interpret the results.

²² Abdel Hameed M. Bashir, "Property Rights, Institutions and Economic Development: An Islamic Perspective," *Humanomics* 18, no. 3/4 (2002), 84-85.

²³ Sally C. Dean et al., "The Challenges of Cross-National Research in Primary Health Care Across Europe," *Family Practice* 22, no. 3 (2005), 343.

Summary

This chapter has provided the theoretical foundation for the cross-national institutional analysis which is to be conducted throughout the remainder of this paper. In this chapter it can be seen that the roots of HI are based on both political and social sciences as it tends to focus on both why and how public institutions were created and change over time. The differences between values and perceptions were also discussed and the way they too shape public policy. The history of HI was discussed in detail and focused on the essence of HI in which scholars believe that human beings are both rational and egocentric beings. It also discussed that instead of trying to analyze why a decision was made, HI scholars instead focus on the context of how the decision was made or what outcome came as a result of a decision. The suitability for HI was later discussed and compared to other policy analysis frameworks, namely: Advocacy Coalition Framework, Multiple Streams Analysis, Electoral Connection, and Social Construction. Each of these frameworks were judged for their ability to analyze the New Veterans Charter and its American equivalent, but ultimately rejected for the use of HI. Finally, the challenges of cross-national comparative policy analysis were discussed to provide context in the future analyses of Canadian and American veterans' support systems.

CHAPTER 3 - CANADIAN VALUES AND VETERANS SUPPORT POLICY

The purpose of this chapter is to examine support for veterans within a Canadian context. This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section will describe Canadian values, in general, and specifically towards veterans support. Next, the historical evolution of Canadian veterans' institutions will be investigated. Current services provided to Canadian veterans will then be discussed, separating those provided by VAC and those provided by other organizations. The final section will include an analysis of Canada's veterans' policy.

Canadian Values

This section will explore the values of Canadians with a view of providing context to the rationale of how the public policy for Canadian veterans' services was created. This is the first step in the evaluation of public policy using HI. To accomplish this, public values vis-à-vis social services in general will be first examined, followed by public values towards the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and military veterans.

Best summarized by the author Seymour Martin Lipset, Canada as a national identity, was developed through consensus from the original foundation of Canada in the *British North American Act*.²⁴ This form of consensus is also outlined by historian William Stahl who says:

It is clear why the Fathers of Confederation spoke of "peace, order, and good government" rather than "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." The virtues of monarchy subordinate the individual to the community. Instead of liberty and happiness, loyalty and responsibility are stressed. Freedom may be a watchword, but equality is not, and freedom is always tempered and circumscribed by obligations and the rights of others.²⁵

²⁴ Seymour Martin Lipset, *Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada* (Psychology Press, 1991), 46.

These two authors highlight the key aspects of Canadian public values which include the acceptance of institutions and the desire to support the needs of the community instead of the needs of the individual. This perspective underlies the notion that Canadians subscribe to the idea of a welfare state. Canadians accept that governments control many of society's services including healthcare and education, and through community responsibility support the notion of obligation to help those less fortunate through the provision welfare services. When contrasting to those services provided to military veterans, the public institutions of welfare income support, disability support and healthcare are relevant to the topic of discussion. As such, Canadian values towards those topics will be discussed next.

Welfare Services

One purpose of the welfare system is to provide a financial cushion for individuals when they lose their job and are trying to get a new one. In Canada, at the national level, this support is comprised of two components: Employment Insurance (EI) and Social Assistance (SA). Reforms of both institutions in the mid-1990s attempted to change these institutions from simple cheque provision to case management systems. This change attempted to reduce the dependence on welfare services by encouraging individuals to return to employment as soon as possible. This philosophical change in the welfare system emphasized a philosophy of self-determination and attempted to remove those personnel stuck in the 'welfare trap' in which individuals became reliant on SA on a permanent basis.²⁶ Unfortunately some of the legislation enacted to reduce the dependence on SA included such items as mandatory drug testing, regulations for firing

²⁵ William A. Stahl, *'May He have Dominion...': Civil Religion and the Legitimation of Canadian Confederation* (Regina, SK: Luther College, University of Regina, 1986), 4.

²⁶ Jorgen Hansen, Magnus Lofstrom and Xuelin Zhang, "State Dependence in Canadian Welfare Participation," (2006), 14.

employees and resigning positions, as well as snitch lines which created a negative persona for those using welfare services.²⁷ These new regulations enacted in the mid-1990s, likely shaped public perceptions continuously over the past two decades to the point where the average citizen believes that many welfare recipients are fraudsters trying to take advantage of the system.²⁸

Disability Support

The Canadian disability support policy at an individual level is about “addressing results and focusing on what people aspire, or could aspire, to do.”²⁹ In essence, the focus is about trying to accommodate disabilities and enabling personnel to work within society to the best of their abilities. Unfortunately, within Canada, the system to support people with disabilities is considered to be fragmented and a patchwork of programmes at the federal, provincial and municipal levels. Some programs are effective, while others provide duplication of services.³⁰ Disability support can take a variety of roles from financial compensation to specific programs aimed at making the workplace more accessible. An example relevant to the New Veterans Charter is the Canadian Pension Plan Disability Program (available to all Canadians who pay into the plan) that provides a disability supplement to injured workers who are no longer able to work.³¹ If recipients earn income while collecting disability, they may forfeit portions of this benefit. Fortunately, there is a threshold earning amount to allow workers to earn some income in a temporary capacity as a means of transitioning them back to the workplace before full

²⁷ Dorothy E. Chunn and Shelley AM Gavigan, "Welfare Law, Welfare Fraud, and the Moral Regulation of the 'never Deserving' poor," *Social & Legal Studies* 13, no. 2 (2004), 220.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Michael J. Prince, "Canadian Disability Policy: Still a Hit-and-Miss Affair," *The Canadian Journal of Sociology* 29, no. 1 (2004), 62.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Michele Campolieti and Chris Riddell, "Disability Policy and the Labor Market: Evidence from a Natural Experiment in Canada, 1998–2006," *Journal of Public Economics* 96, no. 3 (2012), 307.

benefits are eliminated. From a values perspective, most Canadians support workplace accommodation since the public's values are universally based on the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*³², which recognizes that people with disabilities should not be subject to discrimination.

Healthcare Services

Universal healthcare is a source of pride for most Canadians as it provides all residents with essential healthcare regardless of age, gender, race, religion or economic status.³³ The principles of Canada's national healthcare program are enshrined in the *Canadian Health Act* which includes:

1. Accessibility, which permits all qualifying personnel to receive necessary medical treatment regardless of their personal economic situation;
2. Comprehensiveness, which requires all medically necessary services provided by a hospital and medical practitioners to be covered;
3. Public administration, which requires the health system to be administered on a non-profit basis by a public authority;
4. Portability, which allows Canadians to access healthcare services at any province, regardless of place of residency; and
5. Universality, which requires 100% of all necessary medical costs be fully covered at the public expense.³⁴

These principles form the core of the Canadian healthcare system, which while administered at

³² *Constitution Act, 1982. Part I - Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, (1982): .

³³ The Canadian Press, "Poll: Canadians are most Proud of Universal Medicare," CTV News, <http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/poll-canadians-are-most-proud-of-universal-medicare-1.1052929> (accessed March 9, 2015).

³⁴ *Health Canada Act*, Public Law C-6, (1984): .

the provincial level, is still federally regulated. While this healthcare system provides essential services, many people still require supplemental insurance to cover prescription costs and other services received at home as the *Canadian Health Act* only covers services provided in a medical facility.

The Canadian Armed Forces

The Canadian public's view towards members of the CAF's personnel has been very positive over the past few years, with an overall increase in confidence of 9% since 2007 (see Table 1). In fact, it is the only profession within the top 10 which experienced an increase in public confidence during the survey period. It is expected that much of this increase is due to the increased scrutiny of the military as a result of the Afghanistan mission in which 158 CAF personnel died while in theatre. The live streaming of several ramp ceremonies in Kandahar, coupled with the outpouring of public support along the Highway of Heroes when fallen personnel were transported from Trenton to Toronto, evoked a level of public pride in the CAF not seen since WWII. In parallel to the increased support to serving CAF personnel, the plight of military veterans entered the limelight. As injured soldiers returned from Afghanistan, the public's perceptions of military veterans changed from being limited to WWII seniors, to including younger people injured in their service to Canada. While public support for soldiers is strong, the overall priority for the defence mandate, when compared to other national policy priorities is listed quite low.³⁵ This seemingly conflicting view may be explained by the fact that the public feels relatively safe and that the military is already doing a good job, thus

³⁵ Nanos Research, "Policy Priorities (2011, June 2) Healthcare, Jobs, Deficit Top Priorities – Senate, Defence at Bottom," Nanos Research, <http://www.nanosresearch.com/library/polls/POLNAT-W11-T481E.pdf> (accessed March 6, 2015).

necessitating less attention by national decision makers. From a veteran standpoint, the view of public support for military, and by extension military veterans is strong, as evidenced in a 2012-2013 survey in which 94% of the respondents continue to believe “that Canadians have an obligation to ensure our veterans find meaningful employment after they’ve finished their service in the Canadian Armed Forces.”³⁶

Table 1 - List of Trusted Professionals

Profession	% Trust (5-7 out of 7)	% Change (since 2007)
Firefighters	88%	-5 points
Emergency Medical Technicians (New)	86%	N/A
Nurses (New)	85%	N/A
Pharmacists	78%	-8 points
Doctors	75%	-5 points
Canadian Soldiers	74%	+9 points
Airline Pilots	73%	-8 points
Farmers (New)	71%	N/A
Dentists (New)	67%	N/A
Teachers	65%	-4 points
Chefs (New)	58%	N/A
Police Officers	57%	-12 points
Daycare Workers	56%	-3 points
Judges	52%	No change

Source: Ipsos Reid, “Life-Savers, Medical Professionals Top the List of Most Trusted Professionals”, 16 June 2012

Historical Background of Canadian Veterans Services

The next section will review the historical background that led to the creation of the New Veterans Charter. This historical significance, coupled with the previous section on examination of values, will enhance the understanding of the Canadian context of the NVC and a comparison

³⁶ David Pugliese, "Survey shows Public Support for Veterans," Nanos Research, http://www.nanosresearch.com/news/in_the_news/Ottawa%20Citizen%20November%205%202013.pdf (accessed March 6, 2015).

with the American veterans' system.

Great War Veterans

The origins of the NVC can be traced back to the treatment of veterans after the Great War. Unfortunately, this treatment is regarded more as a black-mark on Canada's legacy and a significant collection of lessons were learned for the treatment of veterans after WWII to the present. In 1918, the view in Canada was that militarization had removed independent thought from many soldiers as they were given the basic necessities of life. The general consensus was therefore, that "for their own sake, returned men must face the cold economic reality, not handouts".³⁷ As such, while medical rehabilitation was provided for injured soldiers, the vast majority of healthy soldiers were left on their own to search for a job and provide for their families. Unfortunately the War saw significant periods of inflation in Canada, while the salaries of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) had essentially remained constant. Desmond Morton adeptly summarized the situation as such:

Although there were many Canadians who were poor, physically and mentally disabled, and wracked with pain, veterans were different. Their poverty was a conscious result of public policy. Ottawa had set CEF pay scales and had held them steady throughout the war while other wages and prices had soared. Moreover, the government had decided that disabled veterans and their families would remain poor, for it had based pensions on the wage rate of unskilled labour.³⁸

This poverty resulted in an unprecedented wave of strikes and riots in 1919 and the early 1920s.

While successive governments attempted to address the damage and appease veterans, the problem never completely went away and the bitterness of WWI veterans remained.

³⁷ Desmond Morton, "The Canadian Veterans' Heritage from the Great War," in *The Veterans Charter and Post-World War II Canada*, eds. Peter Neary and J. L. Granatstein (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 21.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

While many public policies towards veterans did not stand the test of the time after WWI, some values from that era still remain in force today. One example is linking veterans' disability pensions to military service. This decision came about because many of the WWI recruits were those with pre-existing conditions and who were unable to find work themselves, thus resulting in an inordinate burden on the military healthcare system. First proposed by Major J.L. Todd, a professor of parasitology, the idea of a pension board that would objectively evaluate claimants and determine a level of disability attributable to service arose.³⁹ While the morality and fairness of the system was then a subject of intense public discourse, it achieved the effect of minimizing the liability to the crown, and to a much smaller degree maintaining morale of military veterans by restricting abuse of the system.

WWII Veterans

Based on the experiences with WWI veterans, in 1939 the government of Prime Minister Mackenzie King made plans for the eventual demobilization of Canadian soldiers involved in WWII. Throughout the war years, several pieces of legislation were drafted, which when combined together became known as the Veterans Charter. Under the supervision of Ian Mackenzie, the Department of Veterans Affairs was established in 1944 to manage the wide array of services for returning war veterans. The intent of the Veterans Charter was to provide "Opportunity with Security."⁴⁰ While its original goal was to ensure the continued morale of the soldiers overseas and to minimize the possible spread of discontent with the soldiers' return, it had the secondary goal of attempting to counteract the anticipated post-war slump by enhancing

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Peter Neary and J. L. Granatstein, *The Veterans Charter and Post-World War II Canada* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 7.

the economy by developing a well-trained and motivated labour force. The services provided by the Veterans Charter were divided into the following categories: reintegration into civil society, compensation, insurance, physical rehabilitation, and disability support.⁴¹ Each category will be discussed in turn in the following section

To address the reintegration into society, the Veterans Charter provided a wide variety of services to enable soldiers to return back to civilian life. From a job perspective, there was legislation of the public sector to guarantee soldiers' previous employment and priority hiring into the federal public. A university education, which was previously reserved for the socio-economic elite, was made available to all veterans who qualified academically and by 1950 over 50,000 veterans were attending university institutions. Technically oriented soldiers were able to undertake vocational retraining which resulted in over 70,000 former soldiers becoming skilled apprentices.⁴² The largest initiative undertaken by the government was the *Veterans Land Act*, which provided former soldiers the ability to buy land through low-payment loans through the newly created Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation. While the initial intent was to populate the Prairie Provinces and cultivate the land, it eventually provided the benefit to urban veterans to purchase their first home at a low 5% interest rate and a 25 year term.⁴³

From a compensation perspective, there was the expected grumbling from dissatisfied pensioners, but overall there was not the same amount of resentment and public disorder as seen during the 1920s. Pensions for all enlisted men were set at a junior officer level and the favourable acceptance rate was significantly higher at 86.3%.⁴⁴ The high level of acceptance

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Thomas Lemieux and David Card, "Education, Earnings, and the 'Canadian GI Bill'," *Canadian Journal of Economics/Revue Canadienne D'Économique* 34, no. 2 (2001), 320.

⁴³ Richard Harris and Tricia Shulist, "Canada's Reluctant Housing Program: The Veterans' Land Act, 1942-75," *The Canadian Historical Review* 82, no. 2 (2001), 265.

was credited to Minister Mackenzie who had directed his bureaucracy that “wherever a case is in doubt, always lean backwards in favour of the man.”⁴⁵ This attitude ushered an era of respect for the DVA and credibility in the government to manage the post-war era.

Insurance support was an important service as it allowed many soldiers who were rejected from private insurers due to their military service, to acquire life-insurance and therefore provide security to their families. Physical rehabilitation and disability support services were also expanded in the post-WWII era, and by 1946 DVA was managing over 30 military specific hospitals including some specializing in the treatment of paraplegia and tuberculosis. Many handicapped veterans were able to gain employment through the efforts of DVA with an impressive 62.5% of those classified at 75-100% handicapped gaining employment by 1950.⁴⁶

The policies for veterans’ social services provided the foundation for the creation of similar policies for the Canadian public writ large. The Canadian Pension Plan (CPP) and Old Age Security (OAS) have roots in the policies originally created for veterans within the context of a social welfare state.⁴⁷ As such, veterans’ policy was the impetus for social reforms within this nation.

Evolution of the Veterans Charter

Other than the Korean conflict in 1950, Canada did not deploy any significant number of soldiers in a wartime scenario until the 2005. These early veterans continued to age from the 1950s to 1990s and the policies to support them evolved along with them. Most of these policies involved expanded healthcare services as WWI and WWII veterans became senior

⁴⁴ Jeff Keshen, "Getting it Right the Second Time Around," in *The Veterans Charter and Post-World War II Canada*, eds. Peter Neary and J. L. Granatstein (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 76.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Neary and Granatstein, *The Veterans Charter and Post-World War II Canada*, 180

citizens. The Veterans Independence Program (VIP) is one such example of a national homecare strategy implemented by the DVA to allow senior veterans to stay at home as long as possible. The intent was to allow veterans to maintain a good quality of life in a familiar setting, while simultaneously reducing healthcare costs by preventing admissions to the more costly long term care homes.

Launched in 1981, the VIP was the first of its kind as DVA dealt with the moral and eventually legal responsibility to provide long-term care for veterans of WWI, WWII and the Korean War.⁴⁸ The first of its kind, the VIP allowed communities or families to care for ageing veterans through the payment of contracted services to provide assistance while the member stayed at home. Items such as snow shovelling, housekeeping, personal care, and social transportation all cost significantly less to the department, yet increased the morale of the veterans. This pilot project grew in scope over the next two decades as the number of veterans over age 65 increased. As veterans died, many left surviving spouses who also required care. In the mid-1990s, the VIP expanded slightly to allow for limited benefits for surviving spouses as recognition of their contribution as unpaid labour to reduce the costs to the department.

The New Veterans Charter

The New Veterans Charter was introduced into Parliament in 2005 and received Royal Assent three weeks later. Its purpose was to correct two identified deficiencies of the previous system under the *Pension Act*⁴⁹. The first concern was the fact that a veteran could only receive benefits under the newly designated Veteran Affairs Canada department if they were in receipt of

⁴⁸ James Struthers, "Comfort, Security, Dignity: The Veterans Independence Program, a Policy History," *Charlottetown: Veterans Affairs Canada* (2004), 8.

⁴⁹ *Pension Act*, Public Law P-6, (1985b): .

a disability pension. Unfortunately, the disability pension was inadequate for income replacement as it was originally designed to compensate for pain and suffering. Therefore, many disabled veterans were barely scraping by financially. The second factor was that the disability pension system did not encourage veterans to transition to civilian life. As the only way to access more money to live a normal life was to demonstrate an increasing level of disability, veterans were focused more on being sick, rather than trying to get healthy.⁵⁰ As such, the NVC was introduced to separate those financial benefits designed to compensate for pain and suffering and those benefits designed to provide income replacement for those individuals unable to work. Due to the speed of the parliamentary approval process, the Minister of Veterans Affairs declared that the NVC would be a 'living' document which would be renewed as required to ensure that the care of veterans was maintained.⁵¹ It should be noted that the New Veterans Charter was designed for personnel who became veterans after 1954, whereas veterans of WWI, WWII and the Korean War were grandfathered under the old *Pension Act* and *Veterans Health Care Regulations*.⁵² A more detailed examination of the benefits provided under the New Veterans Charter follows.

Services Provided to Canadian Veterans

While the New Veterans Charter makes up a significant portion of the total services and benefits available to veterans, it is by no means the only source of support. Other organizations which contribute to veterans' compensation and services include those provided by the Department of National Defence (DND) and other federal departments, those provided by

⁵⁰ Sweet, *A Timely Tune-Up for the Living New Veterans Charter*, 4

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Veterans Health Care Regulations*, Public Law SOR/90-594, (2013a): .

provincially run organizations and those provided by the private sector. Each organization will be discussed in turn.

Services Provided by Veteran Affairs Canada

The purpose of VAC is to provide:

The care, treatment or re-establishment in civil life of any person who served in the Canadian Forces or merchant navy or in the naval, army or air forces or merchant navies of Her Majesty, of any person who has otherwise engaged in pursuits relating to war, and of any other person designated by the Governor in Council...and the care of the dependents or survivors of any person referred to.⁵³

This mandate comprises two key components: the care and treatment of the ill and injured, and the re-establishment into civil life of military personnel and their families. VAC provides support to an estimated 697,400 personnel (as of March 2014)⁵⁴ from both regular and reserve forces with a 2013/2014 budget of \$3.638 billion⁵⁵. Within the context of the NVC, VAC provides services that are loosely divided into four categories: disability support, financial support, health support, and transition to civilian life support. Each one is discussed in turn.

Disability Support. From a disability support perspective VAC provides a variety of rehabilitation services. First it provides medical support to enable veterans to stabilize their health issues. Next it provides psycho/social support to enable veterans to attain independent living as much as practicable. Finally, VAC provides vocational support to enable injured veterans to transition to jobs more suited to their disabilities.⁵⁶

⁵³ *Department of Veterans Affairs Act*, Public Law V-1, (1985a): , 2.

⁵⁴ Canada, Department of Veterans Affairs, "General Statistics," <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/news/general-statistics> (accessed March 19, 2015).

⁵⁵ Canada, Department of Veterans Affairs, "More Money for Veterans' Services," <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/news/vac-responds/info-graphics/budget-increase> (accessed March 19, 2015).

⁵⁶ Canada, Department of Veterans Affairs, "The New Veterans Charter for CF Veterans and their Families - Services and Benefits," http://www.veterans.gc.ca/public/pages/publications/system-pdfs/ServiceBenefits_e.pdf (accessed March 19, 2015).

Financial Support. From a financial support perspective, VAC provides a variety of benefits to ensure that injured veterans and their families are not economically disadvantaged as a result of an injury incurred during military service. While injured veterans are rehabilitating and unable to work, VAC ensures that a veterans' incomes do not drop below 75% of their gross pre-release salary. They also may receive a Permanent Impairment Allowance if they suffer lost job opportunities because of a permanent injury. Finally, veterans may receive an additional supplement if the two allowances above are insufficient to meet their families' basic needs. In addition to monthly disability benefits, veterans who are injured on the job are entitled to a one-time lump sum disability award as compensation for pain and suffering.⁵⁷ This disability award, which can reach sums up to \$250,000, has been one of the more controversial portions of the NVC and will be discussed further in the following section.

Health Support. From a health support perspective, the NVC has two categories of services; services provided to all veterans and those provided to veterans of WWI, WWII and the Korean War. Health Services provided to all veterans are quite extensive and include any health care benefits not provided by provincial health care plans and are directly related towards the injury for which VAC is providing care. Elderly veterans in the second category above may qualify for services under the VAC's VIP homecare program which has minimized the number of veterans being institutionalized. The benefits of the VIP are multi-fold as not only has it shown increased morale among veterans who are able to stay at home longer, but it has shown significant cost-savings in the order of 10:1 according to internal VAC estimates.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ D. Pedlar, W. Lockhart and S. Macintosh, "Canada's Veterans Independence Program: A Pioneer of "Aging at Home"," *Healthcare Papers* 10, no. 1 (2009), 75.

Transition Support. From a transition to civilian life perspective, VAC provides some specialized services tailored for veterans. First it provides access to a specialized group life-insurance plan for those who are unable to qualify for other group plans due to their injuries. It also provides job placement programs for any releasing veteran who is unable to find a job within two years of leaving the CAF. These transition services have evolved over the past few years, mostly as a result of initial dissatisfaction from within the veteran community where in 2007 almost 57% of the respondent veteran population found their transition to civilian life difficult and 37.6% perceived that they did not achieve a successful transition.⁵⁹ A later survey by VAC, utilizing different questions and methodology, showed that the 25% of the population had difficulty adjusting, whereas the unemployment rate of veterans decreased to 8%, comparable to the national average.⁶⁰ Since the introduction of the NVC in 2006, VAC has introduced many outreach programs within the private sector to enable veterans to transfer many of their skills to the civilian workforce. The introduction of programs such as Canada Company has also enabled private companies to specifically hire ex-military personnel into jobs which suit their specific needs. While the methodologies of the two surveys differ, the new initiatives by VAC may account for the changes in satisfaction rates between 2007 and 2010.

Services Provided by Other Federal Government Departments

In addition to services provided by VAC, military veterans receive services from other federal departments. Through their retirement contributions while a member of the CAF, those who have at least 20 years of pensionable service or 10 years and a medical release, receive a

⁵⁹ Timothy Black and Chiara Papile, "Making it on Civvy Street: An Online Survey of Canadian Veterans in Transition." *Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy* 44, no. 4 (2010), 392.

⁶⁰ Canada, Department of Veterans Affairs, "Survey on Transition to Civilian Life: Report on Regular Force Veterans," <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/pdf/about-us/research-directorate/survey-trans-exec.pdf> (accessed March 19, 2015).

defined benefits retirement package equivalent to 2% of the average of their best five years' salaries, for each year served. This benefit is indexed for inflation and available until the member dies. As many pension plans in the private sector are now switching to defined contributions, the guaranteed benefit CAF pension plan is generous when compared to those available to the average Canadian citizen. In addition to the CAF pension, releasing veterans also have access to the same social safety nets available to the general public including the CPP, OAS, Employment Insurance (EI) and Social Assistance (SA).

DND also plays a key role in assistance to families through the Canadian Forces Personnel Support Agency (CFPSA). CFPSA provides a variety of social and welfare services designed to support CAF members and their families through the delivery of leisure, recreation, counselling and financial assistance services.⁶¹ These include the family resource centres and recreation facilities such as gyms and pools, which not only support the local military population, but the public as a whole. While not specifically designed for the support of veterans, any veteran who decides to live near a major military installation can gain access to many of these same services, which while are similar to those provided at the municipal level, are often available at a much reduced cost.

Services Provided by Provinces

At the provincial level, the significant support service heavily utilized by veterans is the provincial healthcare system. As discussed earlier, Canada's universal healthcare system, which is administered at the provincial level, provides extensive coverage to all Canadian citizens, regardless of financial means. This basic level of healthcare enables veterans and their families

⁶¹ Military Family Services Canada, *Supporting Military Families - 2013 Annual Report* (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, 2013b), 1-18.

access to any medically necessary treatment at a hospital or doctor's clinic. Additional coverage for prescriptions, orthotics, dental and physiotherapy are covered through individual supplemental medical plans.

Services Provided by Private Groups

As an augmentation to publically available healthcare, the Public Service Healthcare Plan provides comprehensive healthcare coverage for CAF members, veterans and their families. This group insurance plan is available to all serving and previously serving federal public servants and enables veterans to gain access to expensive items such as prescription drugs at a significantly reduced cost. Group dental coverage through a separate plan ensures that military veterans and their families have access to dental care at a level seen by many private employers.

From an advocacy perspective, private organizations such as the Royal Canadian Legion and other veterans associations provide a voice for the veterans dispersed throughout the country. These associations provide input into federal policy through participation in the New Veterans Charter Advisory Group⁶² and contribute to the public discourse with federal, provincial, and municipal politicians to ensure that the best possible support is available for military veterans.

Development of Canadian Veterans Policy

This section will delve further into the details surrounding veterans' policy in Canada and specifically study the underlying reasoning for the creation of the New Veterans Charter. The historical underpinning of the NVC will be examined to rationalize how decision makers created today's policies. Additionally, the successes and gaps in the policies will be examined.

⁶² Canada, New Veterans Charter Advisory Group, *Honouring our Commitment to Veterans and their Families. the "Living" Charter in Action* (Ottawa, ON: Veterans Affairs Canada, 2009), 1-48.

Public Policy Trends

To examine the NVC as a public policy instrument, using HI the first step is to examine the context in which the policy was created. In this instance, the context is the wider trend of Canadian public policy shifts over the past decades to determine if the development of the NVC fits within this trend.

One reason for changing public policy is that the demographics of those for whom the policy is designed to support has changed. The original veterans' policy was created to support primarily veterans who participated in WWI, WWII and to a lesser degree the Korean War. The existing program is no longer relevant to WWI veterans, as the vast majority had died in 2006, with the last remaining veteran passing away in 2010 at an age of 109.⁶³ In addition, many of the WWII veterans, who made up the majority of the population, were in their 80s and 90s, and a change was required to support the next generation of veterans. Canada fielded a military of about one million in 1945 and reduced to a regular force of fewer than 200,000 by the 1950s. Later cuts to the CAF reduced numbers to around 100,000 by the mid-1970s and 1980s. In addition, Canada did not participate in any major conflict in substantial numbers between the end of the Korean War and the start of the Afghanistan conflict, a period of almost 50 years. While primarily a peacekeeping force between the 1960s and 1990s, CAF personnel sustained injuries in substantially less numbers than those who participated in active hostilities. As such, it is rational to expect that VAC would adjust its services to prepare for the significant drop in clients over the next twenty years as the WWII veterans pass away, leaving only those veterans of the peacekeeping years.

⁶³ CBC News, "Canada's Last WW I Veteran Dies," <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/canada-s-last-ww-i-veteran-dies-1.909280> (accessed March 23, 2015).

Another way that policy shifts have occurred over the past decades is to accommodate the changing status of military personnel. During WWI and WWII, the way that Canada supported its veterans was through the old Pension Act system which was designed to reward mass numbers of volunteers who patriotically went overseas to defend their nation. When they returned, the pension system enabled the hundreds of thousands of civilian personnel to easily return to their original careers through the simple provision of monthly cheques, rather than comprehensive support services. Today's veterans 'transition' to civilian life after a life-long career in the military more frequently than WWII personnel who 'returned' to civilian life after having served in the military for a relatively short period of time.⁶⁴ Those leaving the CAF these days do so to either retire, for voluntary purposes to seek another career, or because of medical reasons. While the NVC provides some benefits to all the previously mentioned categories, the majority of services are designed for those who are forced to release for medical reasons and are therefore no longer able to pursue their military career. Many post-career veterans have had the opportunity to save for retirement in addition to their defined-benefit pension plans, thus ensuring a safe and secure retirement comparable to those in the private sectors. It is therefore reasonable that VAC adjust its policies to accommodate the reduced number of veterans that would require its services as they expect to be self-sufficient at retirement.

Other changes in public policy were the welfare reforms which occurred in the 1990s and the significant cuts in public services in an attempt to reign in the public deficit. These cuts forced many departments to develop measures, policies, and procedures to ensure accountability and transparency in service delivery and thus led to the shift towards self-determination previously discussed. While enacted well after the cuts of the 1990s, the NVC had the end result

⁶⁴ Sweet, *A Timely Tune-Up for the Living New Veterans Charter*, 9

of reducing the financial benefits to injured soldiers as evidenced by Aiken and Buitenhuis who compared the pre and post-NVC financial benefits.⁶⁵ This reduction in benefits is currently the subject of a class-action lawsuit by seven veterans of the Afghanistan conflict in which they claim that their benefits have been drastically altered as a result of the NVC.⁶⁶ While the reduction of financial benefits is real and already identified by VAC's own New Veterans Charter Advisory Group,⁶⁷ this does not equate to a reduction in spending by VAC as its budget has actually increased every year since 2006.⁶⁸

The results of the budget increases within VAC can be justified by the policy shift from a benefits delivery to a service delivery model. As discussed in the previous section, the VIP is but one example of VAC's switch in this policy. This switch was likely brought on by many factors, not the least of which was the need for accountability and transparency to ensure that the mandate of effectively transitioning military personnel to their civilian lives was being delivered in an effective manner. Additional changes were also required as recent clients (products of the Bosnia and Afghanistan conflicts) were exhibiting lower levels of health than their predecessors, especially within the realm of operational stress injuries (OSI) and mental health issues.⁶⁹ These health issues led to the greater need to assist in the rehabilitation and vocational transition services not previously found within VAC. These gaps were highlighted by the Standing

⁶⁵ Alice Aiken and Amy Buitenhuis, *Supporting Canadian Veterans with Disabilities: A Comparison of Financial Benefits* (Kingston, Ontario: School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, 2011).

⁶⁶ Tamsyn Burgmann, "Lawsuit Against Government 'biggest Battle' of Canadian Veteran's Life," The Canadian Press, http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2014/12/04/lawsuit_against_government_biggest_battle_of_veterans_life.html (accessed March 23, 2015).

⁶⁷ Canada, New Veterans Charter Advisory Group, *Honouring our Commitment to Veterans and their Families. the "Living" Charter in Action*, 29-34

⁶⁸ Canada, Department of Veterans Affairs, "Veterans Affairs Canada's Budget has Increased as the Number of Veterans has Declined," <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/pdf/info-graphics/budget-increase.pdf> (accessed March 23, 2015).

⁶⁹ Canada, Department of Veterans Affairs, *New Veterans Charter Evaluation - Phase I* (Ottawa, ON: Audit and Evaluation Division - Veterans Affairs Canada, 2009), 2.

Committee on Veterans Affairs which summarized them as such:

No one doubts that it is appropriate to help released military members, including those who are released for medical reasons, in finding satisfactory employment in civilian life when they are able to do so. However, favourable conditions must also be present. In light of the evidence heard, for such a successful transition to be possible, at least four conditions must be met: ongoing, personal physical rehabilitation support; rapid personal vocational rehabilitation support; short-term financial incentives for vocational transition; and guaranteed long-term financial security. In addition, each of these conditions must take into account the veteran's family, and, as necessary, separate support measures must be offered to family members. Of those four conditions, the *Pension Act* adequately met only the last. The main criticism made of the New Veterans Charter is that it meets only the first three, and inadequately so.⁷⁰

Examining the evolution of recent public welfare policy, VAC's mandate did not seem congruent with the rest of the federal government policies and thus required a review. The creation of the NVC seems to fit within the context of the historical public policy trends within the department and the needs of its clients. The shift to accommodate a different client group may account for the change in policy that led to the decision to close several VAC sites across the country where there was reduced demand. These policy revisions also fit with the changes in the characteristics of veterans in that many later veterans have made the military a career, compared to their earlier WWI and WWII counterparts. Finally, the reduction in budgets that created a shift in policy towards self-determination, combined with a service-based approach to help many veterans better transition to the civilian workforce, are reflected in the creation of the NVC as a part of federal public policy.

Successes of the New Veterans Charter

In 2010, VAC conducted a telephoned National Client Survey (NCS) of its clients to determine their level of satisfaction with their services. The NCS was conducted by an

⁷⁰ Sweet, *A Timely Tune-Up for the Living New Veterans Charter*, 5

independent company and the results suggested that 8 out of 10 VAC clients were satisfied with the services they received.⁷¹ This survey also showed that CAF veterans were less satisfied with their services (67%) compared to War veterans and their survivors (90% and 86% respectively)⁷². Due to the high level of media attention garnered by veterans in their demand for changes to the NVC, an independent NGO named Our Duty Inc conducted a secondary analysis of the 2010 NCS using only the report as information. This NGO alleged that it was not conducted in accordance to the design standards set out by the national Panel on Telephone Public Opinion Survey Quality.⁷³ These allegations were based on the premise that the telephone interviews were too long, and that the survey did not adequately account for non-response bias. While these allegations may have some merit, in the opinion of this author, the results would not likely have changed substantially. This is partly due to the fact that recent media attention has been focused on Afghanistan veterans who have been released since about 2005. These veterans constitute a small percentage of the overall veterans serviced by VAC and are likely represented by the fact that CAF veterans were less satisfied than their WWII counterparts.

Perceived Gaps of the New Veterans Charter

While the introduction of the NVC seems to have been in line with public policy shifts over the past decades, and seems to have been well received by a majority of veterans, a substantial number of media reports still indicate that improvements are required. To date, the current government has honoured its commitment in retaining the NVC as a ‘living document’ and has been receptive to changes and suggestions that would improve the lives of veterans, so

⁷¹ Corporate Research Associates Inc., *Veterans Affairs Canada - National Client Survey Final Report* (Charlottetown, P.E.I.: Veterans Affairs Canada, 2010), 41.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Jeff Rose-Martland, *Results Unsatisfactory: A Critical Review of the 2010 VAC National Client Survey* (St. John's, NL: Our Duty Inc., 2012)11-13.

long as it still meets the original intent of the policy.⁷⁴ Parliamentarians and senators have also worked to ensure that gaps in the system are addressed. For example, the Senate Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs, led by the Honourable Romeo Dallaire, published a report that recommended that more work needs to be done to ensure that the quality of life of disabled veterans is not severely impacted by their release from the CAF. This report also recommended that VAC adopt a better communications strategy with veterans and their advocacy groups.⁷⁵

While the recommendation to revise the Earning Loss Benefit to improve the quality of life of disabled veterans is still being reviewed by VAC, the first steps to improve communications with veterans and their advocacy groups are evidenced by the replacement of key leaders within VAC. In October 2014, the Prime Minister announced that retired General Walter Natynczyk, a highly respected, former Chief of Defence Staff, would become the new Deputy Minister for VAC.⁷⁶ In January 2015 the Prime Minister also announced that Erin O'Toole would take over as Minister of Veterans Affairs to replace the previous Julian Fantino, who had a difficult relationship with veterans.⁷⁷ These changes will hopefully be the first step in VAC again gaining the respect of veterans and their advocacy groups and yielding to more fruitful discussions on ways forward to improve the NVC.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to conduct an analysis of the Canadian veterans support

⁷⁴ Canada, New Veterans Charter Advisory Group, *Honouring our Commitment to Veterans and their Families. the "Living" Charter in Action*, 1-48

⁷⁵ Dallaire and Plett, *A Study of the New Veterans Charter*, 1-31

⁷⁶ The Canadian Press, "Retired General Natynczyk, Head of Space Agency, Moves to Veterans Affairs," <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/retired-general-natynczyk-head-of-space-agency-moves-to-veterans-affairs/article21373056/> (accessed March 24, 2015).

⁷⁷ Susana Mas, "Erin O'Toole, Veterans Affairs Minister, Announces 'Veteran-Centric' Approach," CBC News, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/erin-o-toole-veterans-affairs-minister-announces-veteran-centric-approach-1.2929728> (accessed March 24, 2015).

policies. The primary focus was on the development of the policies and their overall effectiveness within the Canadian society. To examine the development of the New Veterans Charter as the hallmark of current veterans' policy, an analysis of Canadian values towards the welfare state and veterans in general was conducted to establish context within the public's mind. Next, the evolution of the veterans' policy from post WWI to the present was undertaken to see how federal decision makers have changed the policy to fit within the political and demographic climates. An overview of current services provided by VAC, other government department and the private sector were examined which will provide a point of comparison in Chapter 5. Finally, the relevance and effectiveness of the NVC was discussed which showed that while the policy was in line with previous changes to veterans' institutions, and while the vast majority of veterans were satisfied with the current policy, a good number of new veterans felt that the policy did not meet their needs. The next chapter will conduct a similar analysis, but from the American standpoint.

CHAPTER 4 - AMERICAN VALUES AND VETERANS SUPPORT POLICY

The purpose of this chapter is to conduct an overview of the veterans' support policies used within the US. This chapter will be divided into four sections. The first section will describe American values towards the welfare state and towards the military and its veterans. The next section will investigate the evolution of American veterans' support policies over time and how they were affected by the major conflicts over the past century, namely WWI, WWII, the Vietnam War, the two conflicts in the Middle East. A summary of services provided by the DVA, other government departments, and the private sector will be examined. The final section will analyse American veterans' policy.

American Values

Noted historian Seymour Lipset describes the American culture as, "Being American, however, is an ideological commitment. It is not a matter of birth. Those who reject American values are un-American."⁷⁸ This view could be compared to a religious philosophy, and coupled with the concept of individualism, are the quintessential values which make up the American psyche. The religious fervor within the US and the need to adopt an American way of thinking has yielded such terms as the 'melting pot' in which external cultures are less tolerated and expected to conform to the American way, rather than permitting a freedom of practice.⁷⁹ The view that the American way is the better way has led to a perspective of 'exceptionalism' amongst Americans, driven primarily from their economic and military primacy within the world

⁷⁸ Lipset, *Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada*, 19

⁷⁹ Anne Wortham, "The Melting Pot," *The World & I* 16, no. 9 (2001), 4.

context. Individualism in many ways is the opposite of socialism and is deep rooted in the views that individuals have the right to make their own destiny. According to Lipset, Americans are less tolerant of big government and object to any imposition of rules and regulations that limit their freedom to do what they want.⁸⁰ These perspectives can be traced back to the origins of the American Revolution where the founding fathers of the Constitution fought back against an oppressive British regime that taxed them heavily and imposed rules which limited individual freedoms. The distrust of governments is manifested within the Constitution through the purposeful distribution of powers amongst the President and Congress so that no one organization can become too powerful. It is also evidenced in public opinion polls which showed that Americans were “significantly less positive [than Canadians] toward government intervention as measured by responses to items related to welfare, economic liberalism, and economic conservatism”.⁸¹

Welfare Services

Welfare services which include disability support, while funded at the national level, are primarily administered at the state level. At the national level, the Social Security Administration is the lead agency which provides policy oversight and funds to the state organizations.

Although many Americans are distrustful of big government, the fact is that a good number of Americans live in poverty, specifically the bottom 20% earn less than half that of the national poverty line.⁸² Instead of providing welfare through the government, Americans instead tend to favour individual contributions to charities of their choice to deliver the necessary services to

⁸⁰ Lipset, *Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada*, 19

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Douglas W. Elmendorf, *The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2008 and 2009* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2012), 9.

needy individuals. A 1987 Decima survey found that Canadians donated C\$122 per capita to non-religious causes compared to US\$180 by Americans (at the time one Canadian dollar = 80 US cents).⁸³ Current research has shown that Canada has overtaken the US in a per capita donation rate, however this is likely due to the one time significant drop in donations in 2008-2009 as a result of the Great Recession which did not hit Canada as hard. These numbers now continue to grow and will likely outpace Canada in the near future.⁸⁴

Healthcare Services

Until 2010 when the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* was signed into law by President Obama, the US was the only industrialized country without a national healthcare plan.⁸⁵ Even with the implementation of the new Act, also called Obamacare, the goal is still only 95% coverage, since the premise of the plan is simply to regulate the healthcare insurance industry and make it accessible to everyone. Even if there are fines for those who do not purchase the mandatory coverage, there will still be some who cannot afford to pay or chose not to seek coverage. However, it is a significant improvement on the previous system when over 45 million citizens were uninsured because they couldn't afford the coverage.⁸⁶ The impetus for the change was the great number of citizens who were no longer able to afford health insurance because they had now contracted an illness, or their economic circumstances had changed.⁸⁷ As such, this created a system in which the profits of corporations were a higher priority than the

⁸³ Lipset, *Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada*, 143

⁸⁴ Richard Eisenberg, "Charitable Giving by Americans is Bouncing Back," *Forbes Magazine*, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2014/06/17/charitable-giving-by-americans-is-bouncing-back/> (accessed March 24, 2015).

⁸⁵ *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act*, Public Law 111-148, (2010): .

⁸⁶ Consumer Reports, "Update on Health Care Reform," *ConsumerReports.org*, <http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/2012/06/update-on-health-care-reform/index.htm> (accessed March 24, 2015).

⁸⁷ Jill Quadagno, "Why the United States has no National Health Insurance: Stakeholder Mobilization Against the Welfare State, 1945-1996*," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 45 (2004), 25-44.

welfare of American citizens. While the implementation of Obamacare was possibly a step in the right direction, it was by no means a substitute for the universal health care seen in Canada and European countries.

American Military and its Veterans

A cornerstone of American exceptionalism is pride in its armed forces and the fact that it possesses the most powerful military in the world. This is achieved by the US spending more money on its military than the next twenty most powerful countries combined.⁸⁸ The military has consistently been respected by the American public garnering consistently over 70% of a favourable response since the mid-1970s.⁸⁹ In fact, since 2001 when the military gained an eighteen point increase in support, the military remains one of the most trusted professions by the public.⁹⁰ Also noteworthy is that the public is able to make a clear distinction between their opinions of the two main wars fought in the Middle East (to which they basically disagree) and their opinions towards the military personnel who participate in these wars. PEW Research, a non-partisan think tank conducted a study into the public's perceptions of the military and its veterans. The findings suggested that 91% of the public surveyed were proud of the soldiers in the military, even though 57% of people thought that the Afghanistan and Iraq wars were not worth fighting.⁹¹ While public confidence in most US institutions has waned over time, support for the military has grown, seeing significant jumps in support during times of intense conflict,

⁸⁸ Amanda Macias, Jeremy Bender and Skye Gould, "The 35 most Powerful Militaries in the World," Business Insider, <http://www.businessinsider.com/35-most-powerful-militaries-in-the-world-2014-7> (accessed December 9, 2014).

⁸⁹ Karlyn Bowman, Jennifer Marsico and Heather Sims, *Polls on Patriotism and Military Service* (Storrs, Connecticut: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 2014), 40-41.

⁹⁰ PEW Research Centre, "Public Esteem for Military Still High," PEW Research, <http://www.pewforum.org/2013/07/11/public-esteem-for-military-still-high/> (accessed March 24, 2015).

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

namely the First and Second Gulf Wars (See Figure 1).

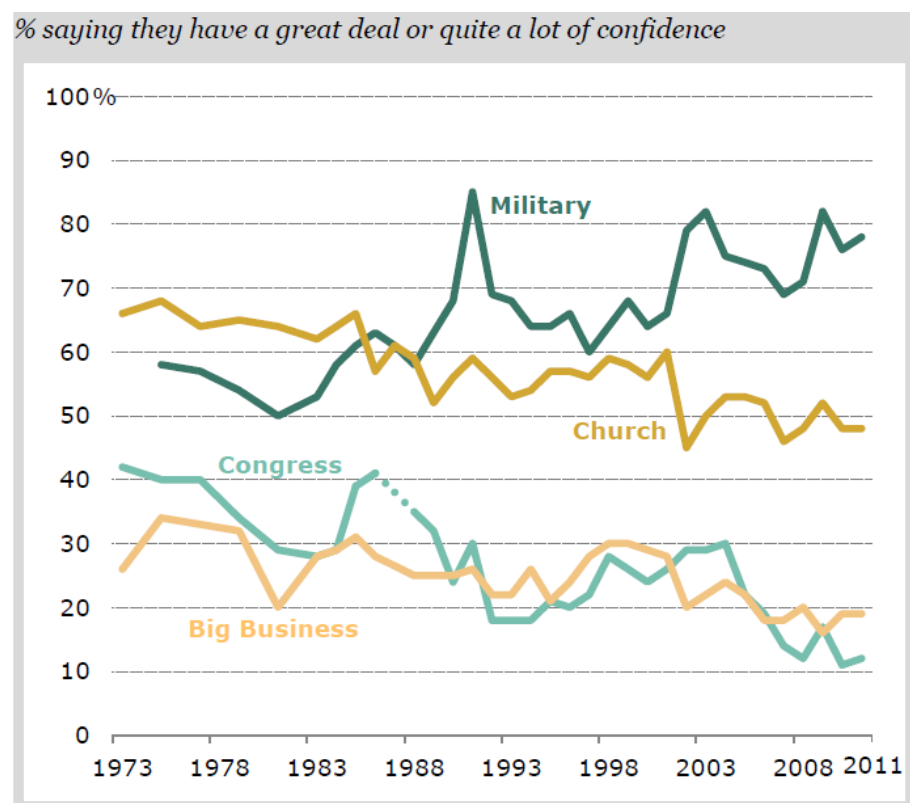


Figure 1 - American Confidence in Institutions

Source: PEW Research Centre, *The Military-Civilian Gap – War and Sacrifice in the Post-9/11 Era*, 63.

While public support for the military is significant, support for military veterans is even more so. In the post-WWI, WWII and Vietnam eras, public support for a federal institution to provide support services for veterans remained a clear priority.⁹² From a benefits perspective, since WWII, there is a public perception that overall benefits for veterans have been reduced and that Vietnam and Gulf War veterans deserve better. In fact, when asked in 2013 if the funding allocated for veterans' benefits and services should be increased, decreased or remain the same,

⁹² Paul Herrnsen and Kathleen Weldon, "A Hero's Welcome: The American Public's Attitudes Toward Veterans," Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, <http://today.uconn.edu/blog/2014/11/a-heros-welcome-the-american-publics-attitudes-toward-veterans/> (accessed March 24, 2015).

53% of the general public supported increasing spending while only 6% supported a decrease.⁹³ Therefore, support overall for veterans can be classified as greater than or equal to that of the military in general, likely as a result of the acknowledgement of their hard work and sacrifice in ensuring the safety and liberty of the US.

Historical Background of American Veterans Services

WWI Veterans Support

In the aftermath of WWI, soldiers returned home to discover their salaries had not kept pace with the increases in compensation of their civilian counterparts. Many companies and average citizens had made good money during the war, while soldiers' salary levels had remained fixed. This inequality led to a significant poverty for the WWI veterans and resulted in calls for compensation adjustment.⁹⁴ The first form of compensation came in 1924 when Congress passed a bill entitling veterans to a deferred interest bearing certificate that was redeemable in 1945. It would pay veterans one dollar for each day of service, \$1.25 for each day overseas, plus four percent interest compounded annually. Furthermore, the new legislation would allow the Veterans Bureau to grant a loan up to 22.5 percent of the face value of the certificate to purchase a home or start a business.⁹⁵ As this bonus was essentially unavailable until a soldier's death, it was nicknamed the tombstone bonus. While calls for expanded military care for disabled veterans continued to gain support from legislators in Congress, the call for an immediate payout of the wartime bonus continued to grow. With the stock market collapse in 1929 and the ensuing Great Depression, veterans saw themselves as being economically

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Stephen R. Ortiz, "Rethinking the Bonus March," in *Veterans' Policies, Veterans' Politics*, ed. Stephen R. Ortiz (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2012), 175.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

disadvantaged compared to their civilian counterparts. Taking out loans on the certificate became harder and veterans encountered a 50 percent higher unemployment than non-veterans of the same stature in life.⁹⁶

With the dissatisfaction high within the veterans' community, an army of protesters marched to Washington D.C. in 1932 and camped out at Capitol Hill for several months. When the protesters were ordered to leave and refused, the police moved in and were unsuccessful. The Army was eventually called in to intervene, resulting in a riot which injured many veterans and their families. This riot became the defining factor which enabled President Roosevelt to be elected in fall of 1932, after which he passed an act authorizing an immediate payment of \$2 billion in WWI bonuses to veterans.⁹⁷

The issue of compensation for war service and the success of political activism of individual veterans were defining moments for the veterans who previously had relied on national associations to lobby for their needs. Additionally, during a time of great spending restraint caused by the Great Depression, the lobbying of veterans groups for more governmental spending was the small whisper which grew louder as the idea caught root and spread within the greater population. In this sense, American veteran's lobbying was seen as the forefront of policy change and set the precedent for others to gain similar benefits.⁹⁸ These trends would continue after WWII and the Vietnam War.

WWII Evolution of Veterans Services

American participation in WWII was the greatest of all wars ever fought by the US

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

(Figure 2). These veterans, which represented almost 9% of the total population (not including dependants), created one of the greatest voting blocks in history and undoubtedly had the greatest influence on public policy. The passing of the *Servicemen's Readjustment Act* (G.I. Bill) of 1944 by Congress provided the most wide ranging veterans' benefits ever seen, covering all aspects of a veterans release including: a cash payout, home loans, business loans, educational assistance, in addition to medical and rehabilitation assistance for those injured.⁹⁹ These benefits, especially the educational assistance, became so pervasive through American society, that receipt of undergraduate and graduate degrees became a necessity to become a professional and to achieve the American Dream.¹⁰⁰ As one of the intents of the bill was to increase human capital lost as a result of the war, veterans quickly flocked to take advantage of the low-interest loans to buy a house or start a business. They also went to university and college in droves as the bill provided not only tuition, but a monthly stipend for living expenses. This significant increase in educational attainment, compounded with the influx of new businesses, has been attributed to the rise of the middle class within the mid-twentieth century and the subsequent rise in economic status of the US.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ *Servicemen's Readjustment Act*, Public Law 78-346, (1944): .

¹⁰⁰ Glenn C. Altschuler and Stuart M. Blumin, *The GI Bill - A New Deal for Veterans* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), 87.

¹⁰¹ Dayne D. Batten, "The GI Bill, Higher Education and American Society," *Grove City College Journal of Law & Public Policy* 2 (2011), 14.

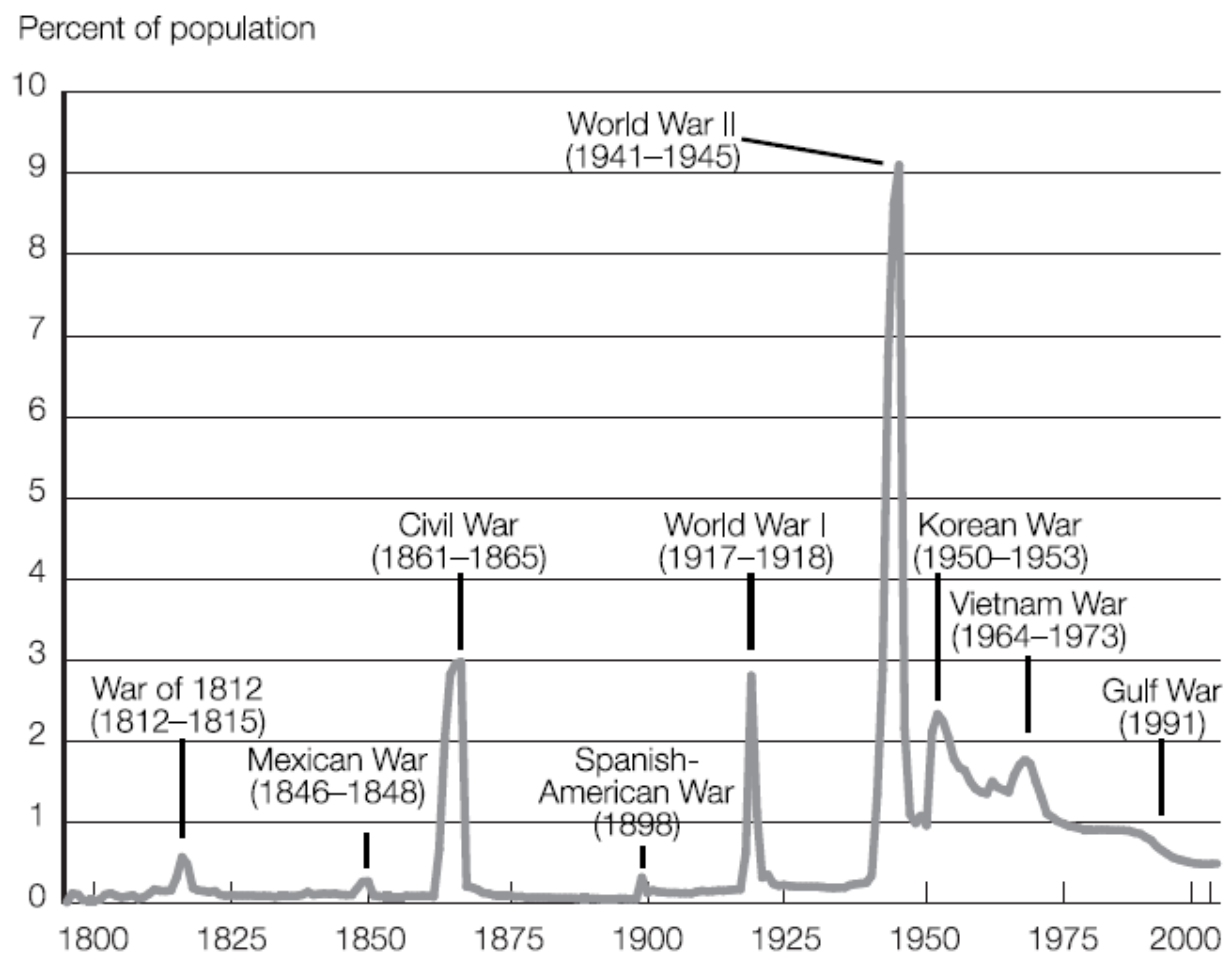


Figure 2 - Participation in the U.S. Armed Forces

Source: Segal and Segal, *America's Military Population*, 5.

Like the WWI who advocated for benefits, WWII disabled veterans were instrumental in their fight against inequalities, specifically disabled students' rights to attend post-secondary institutions. While many healthy veterans received benefits from the G.I. Bill, which provided access to post-secondary education, those who were injured during WWII were captured under a different piece of legislation which focused more on rehabilitation and reintegration to enhance the prospects of employment within society. These programs were designed to enable injured veterans to fit into society, essentially forcing veterans with disabilities to make the necessary

accommodations, not the general public.¹⁰² Veterans with disabilities were often seen as undesirable, making others uncomfortable. As such, many universities actively discouraged individuals with disabilities from attending their campuses. Political activism of VA students who initially attended Illinois State University under a trial program later expanded to encompass all US veterans and civilians with disabilities. These fights in the late 1940s transformed Illinois State University (ISU) to become one of the “premier accessible campus” in the country designed to accommodate those with mobility limitations. By 1955, ISU was accepting 150 US and international students a year.¹⁰³ This legacy again demonstrates the effect that veterans had in forcing public policy changes and led the way for broader and more inclusive changes and benefits for everyday citizens.

Veterans Support Benefits 1960 – Present

In the two decades after WWII, the US participated in two significant conflicts in Korea and Vietnam and the benefits granted to WWII veterans continued to be available to veterans of these wars, with some adjustments. One of the major adjustments included the expansion of veterans’ benefits to soldiers who had never served overseas in a conflict with the introduction of the *Veterans Readjustment Benefits Act* in 1966.¹⁰⁴ This act was passed despite a highly contested discourse on the cost of patriotism. Many thought that only those who fought in combat should receive benefits, however in the interwar periods, many servicemen did not actively serve in a conflict. The result was to expand benefits to all servicemen, but not as generously as before. Those who participated in the Vietnam War were to suffer from this

¹⁰² Sarah F. Rose, "The Right to a College Education? The G.I. Bill, Public Law 16, and Disabled Veterans," *Journal of Policy History* 24, no. 1 (2012), 27.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ *Veteran's Readjustment Benefits Act*, Public Law 89-358, (1966): .

decision as many returned from the war complaining of the lack of financial incentives. Many news articles highlighted the fact that the funds provided for college were insufficient to meet the need and that many veterans were becoming destitute.¹⁰⁵ While several legislative amendments were made in an attempt to increase the benefits paid to Vietnam veterans, they never came close to those afforded to their WWII veterans. This failure by public figures was likely due to the fact that the Vietnam War was seen as the “Bad War”, resulting in a neglected generation of veterans.¹⁰⁶

As the Cold War progressed, the government introduced changes to reduce the impact of government through the introduction of a type of education insurance in which both soldier and the government contributed to obtain benefits upon release. Later adjustments in the Post-9/11 era also expanded these benefits, to include National Guard and Reserve Force personnel, creating a holistic approach to benefits provision.

As the earlier conflicts focused primarily on veterans’ financial benefits, the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan tended to focus on the mental and physical health of discharged soldiers. Mental health conditions were overlooked in previous wars and individuals were perceived as being ‘weak’. With several high-profile suicides and mass killings by returning soldiers from Iraq and Afghanistan, the public’s attention quickly turned to the need to ensure that discharged soldiers were able to cope with the mental trauma encountered while in combat.¹⁰⁷ For these reasons, the US Department of Veterans Affairs recently requested an eight percent increase in 2016 funding to support not only the active service personnel, but also the Reserves and National

¹⁰⁵ Mark Boulton, "A Price on Patriotism: The Politics and Unintended Consequences of the 1966 G.I. Bill," in *Veterans' Policies, Veterans' Politics*, ed. Stephen R. Ortiz (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2012), 242.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ NBC Washington, "A History of Shootings at Military Installations in the U.S." NBC, <http://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/A-History-of-Shootings-at-Military-Installations-in-the-US-223933651.html> (accessed April 16, 2015).

Guard personnel who also served their county.¹⁰⁸

Services Provided to American Veterans

While the DVA provides the vast majority of services to American veterans, the development of veterans' policies includes input for many other sources. The Department of Defence (DoD), state veterans' affairs organizations, and privately run organizations all contribute to the total support network for military veterans. Each organization will be discussed in turn.

Services Provided by US Department of Veterans Affairs

The DVA supports an estimated population of approximately 22 million veterans with a total budget of about \$218 billion in 2014.¹⁰⁹ This budget supports a variety of organizations including the Veterans' Administration (VA) which provides financial benefits and provides administrative support to the policies, the Veterans' Health Administration (VHA) which provides all the health support services to veterans, Veterans' Benefits Administration (VBA) which oversees the disbursement of education benefits and the home loans program, and the National Cemetery Administration which manages the national cemeteries within the US and American cemeteries abroad.

Disability Support. Disability support management and financial services are provided by the VA while the medical side is provided by the VHA. The VA provides disability

¹⁰⁸ Emily Wax-Thibodeaux, "White House Budget: Over-Strapped VA Gets a Proposed 7.8 Percent Budget Boost," Washington Post, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/federal-eye/wp/2015/02/02/white-house-budget-over-strapped-department-of-veterans-affairs-gets-a-proposed-7-8-percent-budget-boost/> (accessed March 28, 2015).

¹⁰⁹ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, "VA Benefits and Health Care Utilization," <http://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/pocketcards/fy2015q1.pdf> (accessed March 30, 2015).

compensation as a lump sum tax free payment as a form of disability insurance. It also provides a monthly compensation to cover extra living expenses incurred as a result of the disability. Loss of salary as a result of a service related disability is also covered.

Financial Support. Financial support services, outside of those provided as a form of disability support, are administered by the VBA. One service available to both service members and veterans is the home loans program which provides access to low-interest mortgages with no down payment or mortgage insurance requirements. These loans are available through private lenders, but a percentage of the loans are guaranteed by DVA which reduce the risk to the lenders. VBA also gives service members and veterans access to a specialty group life insurance plans. The plan changes depending on circumstances, but the end result is that all veterans are able to acquire reasonably priced insurance, regardless of any service-related injuries which would normally have disqualified them from a private insurer.

Health Support. Health services for American veterans are provided by the VHA. All veterans are eligible to access services provided by the VHA, provided they have 24 months of active service without a dishonourable discharge. All applicants are assigned a priority level dependant on their service attributable injury or income level, which enables access to a predefined set of services. Services are provided at one of the 153 medical centres, 931 outpatient clinics or 134 long term care homes through the support of over 200 000 workers within the VHA network.¹¹⁰ Services include primary care services to specialized surgical and emergency services. Also included are enhanced rehabilitation and counselling services to enable injured veterans to transition back to and operate in civilian life.

Transition Support. One of the hallmarks of the VBA is the post 9/11 G.I. Bill which

¹¹⁰ U.S. Congressional Budget Office, *Quality Initiatives Undertaken by the Veterans Health Administration* (Washington D.C.: Congress of the United States, 2009), 4.

provides any military member who served a combined 90 active service days with a honourable discharge, access to a wide range of educational services.¹¹¹ These services are provided on a pro-rated basis depending on the amount of time served. Services include tuition at a post-secondary institution, a monthly housing allowance, compensation for books and school supplies. It also provides access to a wide variety of veteran scholarships donated by the private sector. These benefits are also transferrable to a veterans' spouses (under certain conditions) if not used by the veterans themselves. The VBA also provides a variety of transition programs designed to align military members with their ideal job after release. Additionally, it provides financial incentives to employers by paying up to half the veterans' salary if the employers agree to keep them on for the period of at least six months.¹¹²

Services Provided by Other Government Agencies

The DoD provides a variety of assistance programs to serving members which are transferrable to upon release from the active service. One such example is the provision of a tuition grant through the Military Spouse Education and Career Opportunities Program designed to help serving and retired members' families in the transition to civilian life.

In addition to national programs, many states possess their own department of veterans' affairs which manage a variety of benefits. Georgia for example, provides a variety of tax exemptions to disabled veterans, or to those soldiers who received specific wartime medals or decorations, in addition to state run long term care homes.¹¹³ Florida provides additional benefits

¹¹¹ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, "Post 9/11 G.I. Bill - it's Your Future," http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/docs/pamphlets/ch33_pamphlet.pdf (accessed March 30, 2015).

¹¹² U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, "Special Employer Incentives," <http://www.benefits.va.gov/VOW/docs/seiflyerfinal.pdf> (accessed March 30, 2015).

¹¹³ Georgia Department of Veterans Service, "State Benefits for Georgia Veterans," <http://veterans.georgia.gov/state-benefits-georgia-veterans> (accessed March 30, 2015).

for employers to encourage them to hire veterans, or to enable veterans to become self-employed by waiving many of the licencing fees.¹¹⁴ In general these services complement and enhance those provided at the national level.

Services Provided by Private Organizations

Advocacy Groups. Within the US, the largest veterans' advocacy groups are the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. They assist veterans by providing a single voice and source of revenues by which lobbying efforts towards congressmen and congresswomen may be directed. Additionally, at times they may provide legal assistance to veterans in specific court cases that have national implications.

Private Businesses. In 2011, President Obama announced the 100 000 Jobs Mission. The purpose of this initiative was to challenge the private sector to hire 100 000 veterans coming back from the Afghanistan and Iraq missions. By September 2014, a total of 178 businesses had hired about 190 046 veterans demonstrating a very successful campaign to reintegrate veterans into the workforce.¹¹⁵ These targets were bolstered by publications in prominent magazines such as Forbes which helped demonstrate that hiring veterans isn't just patriotic, but also makes good business sense.¹¹⁶ These two examples demonstrate that the American private sector is highly engaged in the post-war demobilization efforts of the American military. This support is in addition to other benefits for military service members and veterans including free/reduced admission to theme parks, special rates at movies, discounts on car purchases and other perks in

¹¹⁴ Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs, "Florida Veterans' Benefit Guide," <http://floridavets.org/resources/va-benefits-guide/> (accessed 03/30, 2015).

¹¹⁵ 100 000 Jobs Mission, "New RAND Corporation Report Details "Successful Approaches" of 100,000 Jobs Mission to Enhance Private Sector Veteran Employment Efforts," <https://www.veteranjobsmission.com/press-releases/720> (accessed March 31, 2015).

¹¹⁶ Katie Drummond, "Veterans make Valuable Employees, so Why Aren'T More Getting Hired?" Forbes Magazine, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/katiedrummond/2012/06/12/cnas-veterans-jobs/> (accessed March 31, 2015).

which local businesses attempt to demonstrate their patriotic assistance and recognition of the military.

The list of services detailed in this section is by no means exhaustive, but include the major benefits available to military veterans. These benefits include a dedicated medical system for those with service related disabilities, access to post-secondary education, home loans benefits and a multitude of career transition programs. These programs mesh well with a military that has gone through several iterations of mobilization and demobilization in the past century, fighting major wars in Europe, the Pacific, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Development of American Veterans Policy

The following section will further examine the American veterans' policy by reviewing its historical roots and linking current policies to American values. The review of current policies will be undertaken by examining trends over time which helped guide the reasoning of decision makers in their development. The successes and gaps with current policies will also be examined.

Public Policy Trends

To determine the current value of veterans' policies, it is important to understand the historical underpinning of how they were created. Ever since WWI when veterans marched on Capitol Hill to demonstrate publically their displeasure with the government's support, veterans have wielded considerable political power and an ability to influence key decision makers. Understanding that Americans tend to view military members as patriots for serving their country, the plights of military veterans can quickly become a major issue and is able to quickly garner public support for change. Considering that about nine percent of the American

population served in the military during WWII, not including relatives and dependants, it is easy to see why this era of veterans received the most generous of all the post-war packages. Some would argue that the benefits afforded to WWII veterans were necessary to keep the economy going.¹¹⁷ But with the protests of WWI likely still fresh in politicians' minds, and considering the G.I. Bill was passed in both the Senate and House of Representatives in a single day, it was likely that public opinion was the primary voting concern of politicians when they approved the legislation.

While veterans of the Korean War received many of the same benefits as their WWII counterparts, those of the Vietnam War received notably less, mostly due to the fact that G.I. Benefits had not been adjusted for inflation. While the Vietnam War was extremely unpopular, the support for the military remained above average with 58% of poll respondents saying that they had a 'great deal' or 'quite a lot' of confidence in the military in 1975.¹¹⁸ This same survey was administered every couple of years by the same organization between 1975 and 2012 and showed the growth and decline of public support for the military throughout several decades. During times of war, support for the military was at its highest, while it receded during times of peace. This was most evident in the group of NBC polls where the support for the military was 46% in December 1988 and increased to 78% in December 1991 during the build-up to the first Gulf War. Assuming that there is a correlation between support for the military and support for veterans, the needs of veterans generally receive the greatest attention from the public during conflicts. These results are even more significant when contrasted against the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan which lasted for a full decade and involved many hundreds of thousands of Americans deploying to the front lines.

¹¹⁷ Batten, *The GI Bill, Higher Education and American Society*, 15

¹¹⁸ Bowman, Marsico and Sims, *Polls on Patriotism and Military Service*, 40

Ever since the American Revolution when patriots were required to take up arms against the British, the military has been a source of pride within the US. Service in the military has been seen as an honourable task, and one required of its citizens to defend life and liberty. As such, the US has historically supported the use of the draft (American form of conscription) which many American citizens see as an obligation of citizenship. While the draft was stopped in 1972, the ability of the US military to mobilize a large force continues to be inherent in its large Reserve Force and state National Guards. In this capacity, the American military routinely takes regular civilians, sends them to warzones, and returns them back to society. In the 2000s, of all the personnel who deployed to Afghanistan or Iraq, 27% were part-time soldiers belonging to either the Reserves or the National Guard.¹¹⁹ With such a heavy reliance on temporary soldiers, and the involvement in a major conflict about every decade, the US has a continuing need to ensure that the reintegration of soldiers in society is of primary concern. It is for this reason that legislation such as the G.I. Bill remains in force, with continual reviews every major conflict. While some may justify these policies as a public debt owed to veterans for their service, others may see it as pre-emptive efforts at minimizing the unemployment and averting potential conflicts with returning veterans.

From the active service military perspective, the US military continues to encourage high rates of attrition through the “up or out” policy in which some ranks are released if they do not get promoted, resulting a younger military. The standard initial engagement contract is set at 8 years, after which a good majority of regular force personnel leave, with the average length of service being less than ten years.¹²⁰ Instead of supporting the notion of the military as a lifelong

¹¹⁹ Michael Waterhouse and JoAnne O’Bryant, *National Guard Personnel and Deployments: Fact Sheet* (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service - Library of Congress, 2008), 5.

career for the regular force, these policies instead support the notion of the military as a transitory career in which many people join for a short period, then leave. As such, veterans' policies must supplement this military policy and must be focused heavily on reintegration of military personnel into the private sector upon their release.

The use of the draft has historically supported lower pay, but greater benefits which motivated temporary recruits to work hard while they served, knowing that they would receive care after release. Since the removal of the draft, the US military as a career suffered from a stigma of poor pay and benefits. As the job of a soldier became more highly technical and required more critical thinking, the US military had difficulty recruiting and retaining the brightest people, especially in the 1990s and early 2000s when the economy was progressing well and jobs in the private sector were readily available. In 1999 the total regular military compensation (RMC), which includes salary, subsistence, housing benefits, and military tax advantages, was well below the civilian equivalent (see Figure 3). Since the 2000 pay increases, at the end of the decade military RMC had radically caught up to their civilian equivalents, now boasting within the 80th percentile of all civilian compensation within an equivalent sector. As such, it has been argued by some organizations like the RAND Corporation that in times of fiscal constraint, military pay and compensation is a legitimate area for possible reductions.¹²¹

¹²⁰ David R. Segal and Mady W. Segal, "America's Military Population," *Population Bulletin: A Publication of the Population Reference Bureau* 59, no. 4 (2004), 10.

¹²¹ RAND Corporation, *Slowing the Increase in Military Pay* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, [2012]).

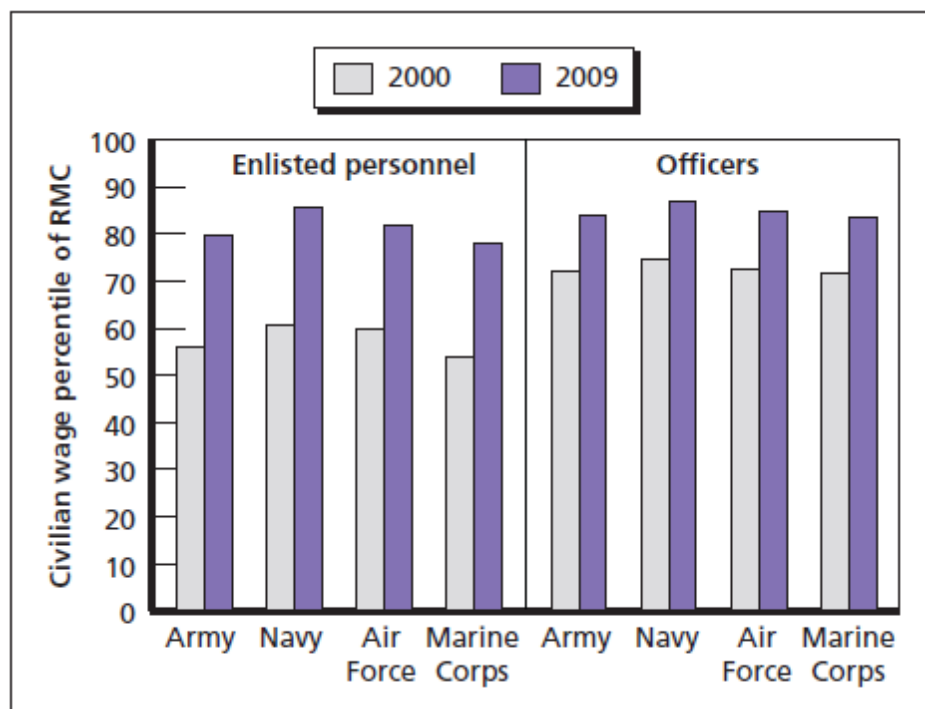


Figure 3 - Regular Military Compensation as a Percentage of Civilian Wages

Source: RAND Corporation, *Slowing the Increase in Military Pay*, 2.

Evaluation of Current DVA Policies

As veterans' support has been a predominant public interest over the past decades, several institutions routinely inquire as to the effectiveness of these policies in an attempt to provide an independent verification of the expenditure of public funds. One such survey by PEW Research examined the overall impact of the DVA and its services. In this survey, when asked if the government has given all the help they require readjusting to civilian life, 53% of veterans said it had, while 47% said it had not.¹²² Whether or not a veteran participated in combat was not a significant modifier as to their attitudes towards the DVA, however if they experienced some sort of OSI, then their opinions of the DVA dropped sharply in which 56% of clients rate the DVA as

¹²² PEW Research - Social and Demographic Trends, *The Military-Civilian Gap: War and Sacrifice in the Post Post-9/11 Era* (Washington D.C.: PEW Research Center, 2011), 55.

doing either a fair or poor job of meeting the needs of today's veterans.¹²³

From a VHA perspective, an independent survey of veterans showed that they rated veterans' hospitals better than their civilian equivalents. A Survey by American Customer Satisfaction Index gave VHA hospitals a rating of 84 for inpatient care and 82 for outpatient care compared to the hospital industry average of 80 and 83 respectively.¹²⁴ Within the same survey, over 90 percent of respondents indicated that they had favourable opinions about inpatient and outpatient care.

From a G.I. Bill perspective, a 2014 survey by Gallup noted that 78 percent of veterans were satisfied with the education benefits available for veterans.¹²⁵ The problem, noted by the survey report, was that a much higher percentage of older veterans were satisfied (those who served in WWII and Korea) than those younger veterans using the current system (84 versus 73 percent respectively).¹²⁶ Overall satisfaction with the programs show a strong desire amongst veterans to pursue a college education after release from the military. In the end, President Obama's statement that the new G.I. Bill will lay "the foundation for one of the largest middle class in history," shows that the many regular citizens use the military as a gateway to a post-secondary education, the economic and political benefits to society which fall well beyond simple support to veterans.¹²⁷

In the remaining sectors covered by DVA such as cemetery services, life insurance and home loans program, their own performance survey concluded that the department met or

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, "Independent 2013 Survey shows Veterans Highly Satisfied with VA Care," Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs, <http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2537> (accessed March 31, 2015).

¹²⁵ Lydia Saad, "Most Veterans are Satisfied with GI Bill Education Benefits," Gallup, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/172082/veterans-satisfied-bill-education-benefits.aspx> (accessed March 30, 2015).

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

exceeded their strategic benchmarks for success.¹²⁸ However, the DVA is currently undergoing a crisis within its ranks where allegations of cover-ups and retaliation against whistleblowers have hit workers' morale, resulting in the department being the second-worst federal department in which to work in 2014.¹²⁹ The DVA has responded to these allegations through its 2014 Performance and Accountability Report and is taking specific action to address the issue of time quotas and performance benchmarks which may have caused some administrators to fraudulently adjust their numbers to receive monetary bonuses.¹³⁰

This chapter examined the American veterans' institution as a whole with specific emphasis on the support services provided by the DVA as the primary public organization charged with this mandate. American values were first examined which demonstrated a clear linkage between patriotism and being associated with the military, whether in uniform or as a veteran. The history behind the evolution of veterans' services showed that the US has historically fought major conflicts about every decade, which has necessitated policies which require the use of temporary soldiers to augment the active force. This reliance on part-time soldiers, who then must transition back to civilian life during the demobilization process, has necessitated the creation of a comprehensive medical care and reintegration policies for veterans. These policies have resulted in the creation of a dedicated medical system for veterans, a comprehensive training and education system, and many other financial benefits to ensure that soldiers are able to successfully gain a career after release from the military. These services viewed in context with the American values towards veterans will be compared against their

¹²⁸ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *2014 Performance and Accountability Report* (Washington D.C.: US. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2014a), 45.

¹²⁹ Jacqueline Klimas, "Veterans Affairs, Homeland Security Worst Places to Work in Federal Government," *The Washington Times*, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/dec/15/veterans-affairs-homeland-security-worst-places-wo/> (accessed March 31, 2015).

¹³⁰ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *2014 Performance and Accountability Report*, 1-370

Canadian counterparts in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5 - COMPARISON BETWEEN US AND CANADIAN SERVICES

One of the purposes of this paper is to examine how the NVC compares to its American counterpart in an attempt to determine if this Canadian public policy is fair for both the Canadian public and its veterans. There currently exists a perception amongst Canadian veterans that they may be getting a ‘raw deal’ in Canada compared to their American counterparts. While this may indeed be the case in practical terms, this chapter will examine these perceptions due to the difference in the evolution of veterans’ policies in the two countries. These policies will be examined in terms of public values, which are the foundation for the development of public policies. In conducting this analysis, it is hoped that Canadian veterans will gain a better understanding of the contrasts between the two nations’ public policies towards veterans. A summary of Canadian and American perspectives related to public values and veterans support can be seen in Table 2.

Public Values and Policy Similarities

On a macro scale, Canada and the US share many similarities. They are both stable, democratic nations which value human rights and the rule of law. As western democracies, they embrace an increase in educational attainment and a greater role of government. Both are highly industrialized nations with strong economic footing, and they both see a stable international system as a good foreign policy.¹³¹ Respected internationally, both undertake active leadership roles within the international community in an attempt to reduce the conflict between other nations. In an era of increasing globalization, they willingly send their military abroad to ensure that regional instability does not spread internationally. Domestically, they accept the

¹³¹Lipset, *Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada*, 55.

concept of a welfare state and the government's role in providing basic care for those less fortunate.

Table 2 - Comparison of Canadian and American Values and Veterans' Policies

Perspective	Canadian	American
Public values:		
General	-Supportive of governmental assistance to the masses.	-Supportive of individual right to choose services they want.
Welfare	-Provision of SA and EI to assist those less fortunate	-Provision of SA and EI as in Canada.
Healthcare	-Universal healthcare for all Canadians regardless of ability to pay since 1984.	-Affordable individual health insurance available to all since 2010.
Own military	-Public has high confidence in CAF. -Today spends about 1% GDP on military. -CAF viewed as peacekeepers throughout late 20 th century. -CAF seen as a long-term career. -VAC supports about 700 000 veterans.	-Public has high confidence in US military -Today spends about 3.8% GDP on military -Military has been involved in a major conflict almost every decade since WWII -Military seen as a transitory career. -DVA supports about 22.6 million veterans.
Veterans Support:		
Disability services	-VAC assists injured veterans in their physical and vocational rehabilitation.	-DVA assists injured veterans in their physical and vocational rehabilitation.
Financial support	-VAC provides compensation and sustained funding for those unable to work as a result of their injuries.	-DVA provides compensation and sustained funding for those unable to work as a result of their injuries.
Healthcare	-Healthcare services not provided by provincial healthcare are generally covered. Services only available to those with service related injuries.	-Dedicated healthcare support network of hospitals and clinics. Available to all veterans and their families, with priority given to those with a service injury.
Transition assistance	-Outreach programs with private sector organizations to assist veterans' transition to civil employment. -Priority hiring into federal public service.	-G.I. Bill to enable all veterans to go to college after release. -Home and business loans program. -Financial incentives for private employers to hire a veteran. -Priority hiring into state and federal public service.

From a military standpoint, both nations are co-located on the same continent and are isolated by large expanses of water. As such, they have a reduced commitment domestically for defence of their nations and instead prefer to deploy their forces abroad to stop threats before they arrive on North American soil. This view was reflected in the significant roles both countries assumed in WWI and WWII, bringing their full nations' military economic powers to bear in an attempt to battle the external threat. Because of this involvement, both nations had to deal with a large number of soldiers returning from WWI and WWII and their reintegration into civil society. From a historical standpoint, it is possible to see that many of the veterans' policy decisions (and their errors) were similar at the conclusion of WWI, and the same lessons were learned in the creation of policies after WWII. As such, both nations enjoy veterans' support systems that provide the same basic needs: disability support, financial assistance, health services and transition assistance. The access to these services for veterans of Canada or the US differs, partly due to the differences in national values between these two countries.

Public Policy Differences

The next section will further examine the Canadian and American values towards social welfare, healthcare, and their militaries. While at times these countries' values have evolved in parallel, at other times there are quite divergent from one another. From a social welfare perspective, McBride and McNutt argue that while the US espouses the purest example of a liberal welfare state, Canada is now slowly adjusting its policies to follow a similar

philosophy.¹³² Since 1996, the US has enforced a more rigid “work for help” philosophy in which all welfare recipients, less those in exceptional circumstances, must work a minimum number of hours or they lose their federal income support. In Canada, while some of these policies are evident in provinces such as Ontario, they have not been adopted by all, as Quebec and Newfoundland-Labrador continue to support more socialist policies.¹³³

From a healthcare perspective, the differences in values are beginning to converge after having been quite distinct over the past two and a half decades. Ever since the introduction of the Canada Health Act, Canadians have enjoyed universal healthcare care, regardless of financial and pre-existing medical conditions. Up until the introduction of Obamacare, many Americans could not afford healthcare and it was the public perception that people needed to work to afford healthcare. The only exception was through a limited Medicare system which provided healthcare for seniors and people with disabilities who were unable to work. From a veterans’ standpoint, the US was unique in that it provided a universal healthcare option for veterans in parallel to the private system. In Canada, on there is a limited federal role for the provision of healthcare services to veterans which is ultimately a provincial jurisdiction. Instead, the federal government provides specific funds to provinces to assist veterans. This is illustrated by the fact that VAC is currently undergoing negotiations to transfer St. Anne’s Hospital, the last federally owned veterans’ hospital, to the Province of Quebec.¹³⁴ The rare exception in VAC’s case is the recent introduction of nine OSI clinics to assist those veterans suffering with mental health

¹³² Stephen McBride and Kathleen McNutt, "Devolution and Neoliberalism in the Canadian Welfare State Ideology, National and International Conditioning Frameworks, and Policy Change in British Columbia," *Global Social Policy* 7, no. 2 (2007), 180.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Canada, Department of Veterans Affairs, *Veterans Affairs Canada 2015-16 Report on Plans and Priorities* (Ottawa, ON: Veterans Affairs Canada, 2015b), 8.

disorders.¹³⁵

From a military perspective, the public values of a nation are shaped initially when the state becomes independent. Since the US became a nation through war with Britain, and Canada was created through a peaceful negotiated separation, the core values of the citizens of Canada and the US were different. These values are best summarized by author Seymour Martin Lipset:

Americans, from the days of the Revolution on, have resisted authority, demanded their rights, and preferred weak government, while Canadians have complained less, been less aggressive, and desired a strong paternalistic government. Berton believes it is significant that as a soldier he “asked for ‘leave,’ a word that suggests permission...[while American] G.I.s were granted ‘liberty,’ a word that implies escape.”¹³⁶

Since the American Revolution, the US has been a more militaristic state. Even including the right to bear arms into their own constitution, Americans subscribed to the need for military might to address injustices, and have placed great honour on those who take up arms to defend the nation. Americans are supportive of the draft as it is seen as a moral obligation of citizenship. As one remaining great power unscathed from the destruction of WWII, the US quickly grew militarily and economically. Currently the US spends 3.8 percent of its world-leading GDP on its military.¹³⁷ With the onset of the Cold War, the US used its military might to combat the spread of communism and become the ‘world police’. In doing so, they engaged in a major conflict about every decade since the end of WWII, resulting in the need to mobilize and demobilize each time. To support the mobilization and demobilization efforts every decade, the US grew to rely heavily on ‘conscripts’ who would supplement the regular force during wartime,

¹³⁵ Canada, Department of Veterans Affairs, "Network of OSI Clinics," Department of Veterans Affairs Canada, <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/services/health/mental-health/understanding-mental-health/clinics> (accessed April 12, 2015).

¹³⁶ Lipset, *Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada*, 44

¹³⁷ The World Bank, "Military Expenditure (% of GDP)," The World Bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS> (accessed April 8, 2015).

and could be released during times of peace. These policy decisions and resulting demanding operational activities, created a large number of veterans who required veterans' services. These veterans, like their predecessors during WWI who encamped on Capitol Hill, fought politically for their rights and had the support of the public who saw them as heroes fighting for life and liberty.

Canadians on the other hand, are seen as the polite neighbours to the North. Reliant on their powerful neighbour to the South for protection ever since the end of WWII, Canada has reduced military resources to the point where the current level is only one percent of total GDP.¹³⁸ Since Lester B. Pearson won the Nobel Peace Prize for his actions during the Suez Crisis, Canadians have seen their military role as peacekeepers. These perceptions were reinforced as Canada involved itself most UN peacekeeping missions from 1957 onwards, including the frequent provision of international leadership. This value was cemented further as Canada did not participate in any major armed conflict from the end of the Korean War in the 1950s until Afghanistan in the mid-2000s. With reduced operational activities, the Canadian military relied more on its regular force to sustain its operational commitments both at home and overseas. Since few Canadian soldiers entered the combat zone, many veterans released without medical limitations. Those veterans who elected to transition to another career were seen as no different as a civilian counterparts who decided to change jobs. As few veterans after the Korean War required significant support services, Canada's veterans' policy did not undergo any major changes until the New Veterans Charter in 2006, more than 50 years after the original Veterans Charter.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

Comparison of Veterans' Support Policies

Before comparing the differences in veterans support policies, one must first recognize the differences between the American and Canadian militaries. The American military is the most powerful in the world with a budget of about \$600 billion (USD) and an active force of about 1.4 million personnel. Canada by contrast, has a budget of about \$18 billion (USD) and a total active force of just under 70 000.¹³⁹ By comparison, the US has about ten times the population of Canada, but spends over thirty times the Canadian budget on its military. The US also differs in the fact that it has played a substantial role in major armed conflicts in almost every decade since WWII, having participated in the Korean and Vietnam Wars, two wars in Iraq, and one in Afghanistan. As such, the US military tends to rely more heavily on temporary soldiers to supplement its regular force and to maintain their operational commitments. Throughout most of the second half of the twentieth century, Canada by contrast, has fielded more of a peacekeeping force and has deployed a lesser overall percentage of its force to less volatile regions. From a soldier perspective, the difference in pay between American and Canadian soldiers is significant. In 2013, a Canadian infantry corporal with about 5 years of experience made about \$57,000 CAD¹⁴⁰ while the same American soldier made about \$32,500 CAD (assuming an exchange rate of 1.2 CAD for every USD).¹⁴¹ While some of these gaps are offset by generous US housing and meal allowances, the reduced pay rates in the US make it difficult to attract soldiers to the military as a long-term career. As pension values are defined by the gross salary earned (before allowances), higher career earnings equate to better financial

¹³⁹ Macias, Bender and Gould, *The 35 most Powerful Militaries in the World*

¹⁴⁰ Canada. Department of National Defence, "Regular Force NCM and Class C Pay Rates," <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/caf-community-pay/reg-force-ncm-class-c-rates.page> (accessed April 13, 2015).

¹⁴¹ U.S. Army, "Benefits," <http://www.goarmy.com/benefits/money/basic-pay-active-duty-soldiers.html> (accessed April 13, 2015).

benefits at retirement. Length of service is critical in determining pension values. While the average length of service by American service members was previously highlighted at less than ten years, Canadian recruits (following successful completion of the initial 3 year training period), on average enjoy a 22 year career in the military.¹⁴²

From a veteran's perspective, the populations supported by both VAC and DVA are quite different. Within the DVA, only 5.5 million out of the total 22.6 million military clients served in peacetime (24%).¹⁴³ This is compared to Canada where the vast majority (approximately 80%) of the veterans have served in peacetime.¹⁴⁴ These discrepancies affect the type of healthcare and other transition services necessary to reintegrate these veterans into civil society. In the US veterans' benefits are used as a recruiting incentive for the military itself, knowing that once they serve their time and release, all qualifying veterans gain access to the G.I. Bill. This program has assisted a large number of financially disadvantaged young people in the US to achieve a college education that they otherwise would have been unable to afford.

From a veterans' income support perspective, both organizations have similar policies on providing compensation to those who are injured on the job. Both nations provide an initial payment for pain and suffering, and they both provide a stipend to allow the military member and their family to have an adequate lifestyle without severe financial discomfort. For some veterans this is temporary funding while they undergo vocational rehabilitation and reintegrate into the workforce. While the public discourse in this area is evident, governments of both countries have committed themselves to reviewing these benefits on a regular basis. In Canada, for

¹⁴² Alan Okros, "Becoming and Employer of Choice: Human Resource Challenges within DND and the CF," in *The Public Management of Defence in Canada*, ed. Craig T. Stone (Toronto, ON: Breakout Educational Network, 2009), 168.

¹⁴³ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *Department of Veterans Affairs Statistics at a Glance* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2014b), 5.

¹⁴⁴ Canada, Department of Veterans Affairs, *General Statistics*, 1

example, there has been a recent expansion of benefits to critically injured veterans.¹⁴⁵

From an income support perspective, the range in health and rehabilitation benefits available to Canadian and American veterans is quite similar. The greatest difference between the two countries is that the American system is dedicated to supporting veterans and their families, while the Canadian, for the most part, relies upon the existing provincial healthcare system to deliver the necessary health services. The American system has the critical mass to ensure its fiscal effectiveness and research focus, thus enabling it to provide services targeted to a specialized clientele. In Canada, the dispersed nature and smaller populations lend itself to rely more heavily on public service as a whole through integration with the public healthcare system.

The Canadian-American differences are most pronounced when examining the current suite of job-placement programs available in the two countries. Both countries provide re-educational and vocational training for members who are released for medical reasons, however the US extends many of these same benefits to all veterans. In Canada, medically released individuals gain access to limited vocational rehabilitation at post-secondary institutions, but as detailed in a Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs Report, only about one in eight members releasing under medical circumstances take advantage of this service.¹⁴⁶ The remaining individuals gain access to a limited job bank and priority hiring within certain provincial and federal governmental organizations. American veterans on the other hand, have access to the G.I. Bill which entitles them to a full college education so long as they served the minimum time. They also benefit from low-interest home loans, and a wide variety of employment incentives

¹⁴⁵ Canada, Department of Veterans Affairs, "Government of Canada Announces New Benefits and Services for Veterans and Families," Department of Veterans Affairs Canada, <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=951849> (accessed April 12, 2015).

¹⁴⁶ Roméo A. Dallaire and David M. Wells, *The Transition to Civilian Life of Veterans* (Ottawa, ON: Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence - Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs, 2014), 1-3.

including federal and state tax breaks for employers of veterans. As such, the career transition benefits for releasing veterans, generally due to the transitional nature of military service in the US, is significantly better than Canadian equivalents which cater more towards long-term soldiers.

Summary

In summary, Canadian public values are, in general, more socialist than their American counterparts. Canadians support the concept of a larger government which provides for the people and the Canadian system tends to benefit the less fortunate as a means of ensuring a common standard of living throughout the country. From a veteran's perspective, the public tends to view the Canadian military as a regular career and not significantly different than other public servants. As such, while some services are available for those who were injured during their service, most military veterans enjoy a similar standard of living when compared with the general public.

The American system is in some ways diametrically opposed to itself. The American public generally supports the concept of individualism and of less government support. They support the notion that people should have the freedom to choose which services they need and want, as long as they have the means to pay for it. Their support for veterans however, goes in very much the opposite direction. The DVA provides all-inclusive support for veterans through the provision of government run health care, funding for post-secondary education, house loans and a benefits-laden system for employers. This system provides an advantage to military veterans when compared with the average citizen, partly in recognition of the personal sacrifice and honour of having served in their country's military.

This chapter has provided a comparative analysis of the Canadian and American veterans' public policies through the lens of the historical roots of these policies and the evolution of public values which influenced them. The American system has evolved while it wrestled with a significant number of veterans produced out of several wars since WWII. It was also designed to accommodate the transient nature of military service in the US which is less than ten years. Fortunately, the American attitudes towards its military veterans are very positive, thus enabling the DVA to have a significant portion of the national budget. Canada on the other hand, generally views its military members as careerists, whose main focus during the second half of the twentieth century was on peacekeeping, rather than fighting wars abroad. Well paid compared to their American counterparts, Canadian veterans often enjoy generous pensions which enables them to live comfortably in a society which already provides universal healthcare and other social security nets. As such, most Canadians see their military veterans as part of the regular society and not necessarily entitled to any special services over and above a regular citizen.

CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

For much of the public, the delivery of veterans support services is an obligation for the government as a social contract to those who risked their life in the service of their countries. The level and availability of those services however, is an issue that governments must balance along with other social priorities. The question of what is a fair public policy related to veterans services, has been explored in this paper. This examination was guided by an exploration of public perceptions and the notion of a fair level of services for its military veterans. Policies such as the Canadian New Veterans Charter were created in line with current public values, and only a change in these values will result in a broad review in the Charter.

In Chapter 1, public policy fairness was first defined as the requirement to adhere to public values by balancing the needs of the targeted group and those of society. This was achieved through an analysis of Canadian public values towards veterans, the military, and social services in general. The public's attitudes towards the military and its veterans are generally positive and most recently demonstrated through the outpouring of public support during the Afghanistan conflict. Changes to the NVC to move the VAC from a cheque provisioning focus to more of a case management organization, were seen to be congruent with other public policy changes (such as Social Assistance), and therefore do not demonstrate a dramatic departure from the status quo. While there exists continuous demands by veteran advocacy groups for greater benefits, the public today generally views Canadian military veterans as career soldiers who served as peacekeepers in low-conflict areas throughout the last half of the twentieth century. Until this view changes, the expectation of expanded benefits should be tempered, as those retiring from a career in the military are already seen to be receiving generous pensions not available to their private industry counterparts.

The second means of testing fairness can be determined through a comparison of a similar policy, targeting a similar population group, within a different jurisdiction. Table 2 showed that many of the American veterans' policies were quite similar to those seen in Canada. This summary is supported by the study conducted by the VAC Audit and Evaluation Division who expanded this comparison to include Australia and the United Kingdom and showed that the overall services provided by Canada were quite similar across all four nations.¹⁴⁷ All countries possessed comprehensive policies to support injured or disabled veterans as evidenced by the Canadian and American public who highly valued the work that the military performs and consequently expected those who suffer injuries should receive care. All four nations also have policies that support the transition of military members back into civil life, but the level of services depend on the characteristics of the specific veteran's population. In the Canadian context, data show that many military personnel serve most of their career in the military and thus have fewer requirements for services to assist with the transition to other careers. By contrast, the American military is highly transitory in nature with a short average career length. This, coupled with the significant use of Reserve Force and National Guard soldiers, has resulted in a wider array of transition services that cater to a more diverse range of needs.

While this paper has examined the fairness of the NVC, the question of what is fair is ever evolving, as values and perceptions change over time. Two of the public beliefs highlighted above are currently being challenged, demonstrated by as public discourse. First, a 2009 survey by the Commissionaires, a non-profit organization which employs 8000 veterans, showed that while the public believes that about half military veterans receive pensions, the real number is

¹⁴⁷ Canada, Department of Veterans Affairs, *New Veterans Charter Evaluation - Phase I*, 22

closer to 30 percent.¹⁴⁸ This is but one example which challenges the society's views of the military and its veterans in an era in which Canada has increased its military presence in small conflict regions around the world. In this regard, the CAF has increasingly relied upon its Reserve Force to augment Regular Force members deploying into conflict areas.¹⁴⁹ The end result is that Canada seems to be moving closer to the American model of relying on temporary soldiers to fulfil its needs, and therefore requires a review of its veterans' services. Based on this premise, the following recommendations are offered:

Recommendation 1 – Transition Assistance. Identified in the VAC 2014 Life After Service Studies (LASS) Report is the fact the average Regular Force member's income levels decreased by almost \$6000 a year after release and took eight years to reach pre-release levels.¹⁵⁰ This level is compared to Reservists who saw their average incomes increase immediately upon release and maintain an upwards trajectory. These indicators demonstrate that many Regular Force military personnel are encountering difficulties in transitioning to civilian positions and require additional assistance. While VAC has initiated private sector outreach and skills translation programs to support veterans, more still needs to be done. The US example in which tax incentives are provided to employers to hire veterans is but one active policy solution which may assist veterans in their civil reintegration.

Recommendation 2 – Expanded Employment of Veterans Within DND. A key issue related to the declining use of reservists is the reduction in the number of employment opportunities for veterans with operational experience and the risk that this valuable experience

¹⁴⁸ The Uniter, "Military Pensions Not as Sweet as most Think, Survey Shows," The Uniter, <http://uniter.ca/view/military-pensions-not-as-sweet-as-most-think-survey-shows> (accessed April 29, 2015).

¹⁴⁹ Pamela Wallin and Roméo A. Dallaire, *Answering the Call. The Future Role of Canada's Primary Reserve* (Ottawa, ON: Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, 2011), 15.

¹⁵⁰ Canada, Department of Veterans Affairs, *2013 Synthesis of Life After Service Studies* (Ottawa, ON: Research Directorate - Veterans Affairs Canada, 2014a), 15.

will not be passed onto the next generation of soldiers.¹⁵¹ This issue translates to all veterans, many of whom (injured or not) have valuable experience which can be brought to bear to assist the CAF's training system and other areas that are under-resourced. The expanded employment of veterans, either as civilians or as part-time reservists, would have the double benefit of freeing up Regular Force members to move to high-tempo units, and also provide permanent employment opportunities for veterans. While more costly than the temporary movement of CAF personnel to fill urgent vacant billets, the targeted employment of veterans would provide a societal benefit for out-of work veterans and provide DND the benefit of a wealth of experience.

Recommendation 3 – Education Benefits. One of the greatest successes of the post WWII Veterans Charter was the GI Bill which enabled a large number of veterans to obtain a post-secondary education. The 2014 LASS suggested that the average releasing CAF veteran was 19% less likely to possess post-secondary education when compared with the average working Canadian.¹⁵² While serving in the military, programs exist for CAF members to obtain post-secondary education. However the demands of their full time roles, limit their ability to take advantage of this benefit. Unfortunately access to this program ceases once a member releases, whether it was used or not, with the exception of medically released members who receive an additional two years of education post-release. One recommendation would be to extend this educational benefit to members following release to enhance their employment opportunities and to help to address the income deficit.

While rightfully the attention of the current government has been focused on the plights of veterans with disability, the needs of the remaining majority of veterans need also to be addressed. The difficulty in transition to civilian life for a good number of veterans is the next

¹⁵¹ Wallin and Dallaire, *Answering the Call. The Future Role of Canada's Primary Reserve*, 30

¹⁵² Canada, Department of Veterans Affairs, *2013 Synthesis of Life After Service Studies*, 15

policy block which the government will likely tackle in its commitment to continuously reassess the NVC. These recommendations provide but one option for the government's consideration to make lives better for current military personnel during their civilian transition, thus ensuring that society's debt for their service is paid in full.

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