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DEVELOPING CULTURAL AWARENESS IN THE CAF: A ROADMAP

Maj T.A.D. Norton

JCSP 41

Exercise Solo Flight

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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE – COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES
JCSP 41 – PCEMI 41
2014 – 2015

EXERCISE *SOLO FLIGHT* – EXERCICE *SOLO FLIGHT*

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Word Count: 2866

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**It is said that if you know your enemies and know yourself, you will
not be imperiled in a hundred battles;**

**if you do not know your enemies but do know yourself, you will
win one and lose one;**

**if you do not know your enemies nor yourself, you will
be imperiled in every single battle.¹**

Sun Tzu

It is posited by many scholars that present day warfare has predominantly shifted from 3rd to 4th Generation warfare. 3rd generation warfare being characterized by physical maneuver, maximizing speed, firepower and initiative to attack the enemy's weaknesses with strength and which has evolved with advances in weaponry and networking capabilities to be extremely rapid and high intensity. It is the form of conflict that has characterized war between states since World War 1 and therefore remains the type of warfare that conventional state militaries are primarily trained and equipped to fight.² 4th generation warfare is the result of the recognition by non-state actors that they cannot successfully engage in conventional combat against modern state militaries who are proficient in 3rd generation warfare and therefore need an alternative way of war to achieve their aims. While it is similar to the low intensity or small wars fought throughout the Cold War era, it is defined by the "use of all available networks, political, economic, social and military to convince the enemy's political decision makers that the perceived benefit is either unachievable or too costly to the perceived benefit."³ This form of warfare is increasingly idea based, as opposed to state centered, as in the case of violent Jihadists. It uses a dispersed network of people, vice organized military forces that are fielded by states, and is a process likely to continue to increase in prominence in the future because of the success it is seen as having today. This change in the nature of war was sagely predicted by Colonel William Lind, et all, in their 1989 work *The Changing Face of War: Into The Fourth Generation*, which looked at the US losses in Vietnam and

¹ Sun Tzu, *The Art of War* (China, 6 BCE) Chapter 3.

² Colonel Thomas X. Hammes, USMC. *The Sling and The Stone: On war in the 21st Century*. (USA: Zenith Military Classics, 2006), 4.

³ *Ibid*, 4.

Somalia, the unmatched conventional military might of the US, and the expected further advancements in technology to conclude with the prediction that wars like those being fought in Iraq and Afghanistan today would become the norm rather than the exception.⁴

Confirming the concept of 4th generation warfare, and that it posed a challenge to the US military, retired three star US general Stanley McChrystal describes his arrival in Iraq in October 2003, as the Commander of the Joint Special Forces Operations Task Force (J-SOTF); “We began a review of our enemy, and of ourselves. Neither was easy to understand... [We found they were] more network than army, more a community of interest than a corporate structure”⁵. He admits that, “like all too many military forces in history, we initially saw our enemy as we viewed ourselves”.⁶ McChrystal goes on to define the struggle he faced, in both Iraq and Afghanistan, with understanding the culture of the insurgents and the culture of his own diverse forces. His forces were composed of conventional and SOF elements from numerous countries as well as elements from a large number of government departments. His challenge was forging a network from those diverse forces that was robust enough to compete with the insurgents. The challenge was to understand the cultures of the various forces and other governmental departments that Western countries send to conflicts today, as well as the respective cultures within which they are fighting and the cultures of those being fought. McChrystal says of his struggle to understand his own diverse force; “As we learned to build an effective network, we also learned that leading that network — a diverse collection of organizations, personalities, and cultures — is a daunting challenge in itself”.⁷

While the focus thus far has been on US forces and experiences, this struggle to come to terms with the change in warfare applies across the West. From a Canadian perspective, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) is expected to achieve success in any mission, whether it’s fighting and winning in combat

⁴ William S. Lind, *et al.*, “The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation,” *Marine Corps Gazette* (October 1989): 22-26.

⁵ Stanley A. McChrystal “It Takes a Network: The new front line of modern warfare,” *Foreign Policy* (February 21, 2011): (online version no page numbers)

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

alongside the nation's allies in more conventional warfare (3rd generation) against another state or in 4th generation warfare against any form of non-state actor. To do so it is expected to engage in all facets of the Contemporary Operating Environment (COE) in order to implement lasting solutions to conflict.⁸

While the respective combat capabilities of the three elements and SOF are essential to combat effectiveness, more than the sum of the parts is required in the COE and therefore the CAF has developed the concept of Joint Interagency Multinational and Public (JIMP) to reflect the complexities of the COE and the partnerships required for success within it. At the national strategic level successive Canadian governments (GOC) have employed a comprehensive approach to operations, under the current Conservative government this has been termed Whole of Government (WOG) stating clearly that from the Canadian perspective modern conflicts require more than strictly military solutions.⁹

The CAF are also tasked to conduct a myriad of operations besides conventional conflict. For example the CAF practice military diplomacy on behalf of the GOC through Foreign Military Engagements (FME) and exchanges, with one current example being Op REASSURANCE where CAF personnel are deployed in support of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) efforts to provide assurance measures to selected Central and Eastern European allies "through the provision of military capabilities for training, exercises, demonstrations and assigned NATO tasks".¹⁰ The CAF also conduct operations in support of other government departments (OGD), most commonly Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada through non-combat operations such as international disaster assistance through the Disaster Assistance Relief Team (DART) and Non-combatant Evacuation (NEO) tasks both of which require members of the CAF to maintain an enhanced state of readiness for deployment. As well as longer term humanitarian and peace keeping efforts in support of the United Nations (UN) such as Canada's longest-running overseas commitment, Op JADE, where CAF personnel have been deployed in the

⁸ Department of National Defence, *CFJP 3.0 Operation* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2010), 8-2.

⁹ Elissa Goldberg, "A Whole of Government Approach," *OPENCANADA.ORG* last modified 16 May 2012, <http://opencanada.org/features/the-think-tank/comments/a-whole-of-government-approach/>

¹⁰ National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces, "Operation Reassurance" last modified 15 December 2014, <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/operations-abroad/nato-ee.page>

middle east continuously since 1954. The breadth, structure and complexity of these operations require CAF personnel to be able to work effectively with a variety of people, in a wide variety of places doing a wide variety of things, all of which require members to be able to understand a multitude of actors with very different cultures from Canada's own.

While operations have primacy of purpose, the CAF must also account for the impacts that the diversification of the Canadian population will have on it. In order to attract, recruit and retain people from an increasingly diverse population the CAF must be prepared to understand a diversity of cultures and decide what evolutions to its own culture are both necessary to appeal to these increasingly heterogeneous prospective recruits as well as acceptable from the perspective of continued organizational cohesion and thereby effectiveness.¹¹ Further, the CAF must be able to understand the changes in Canadian culture such that it will be able to continue to effectively represent and communicate with this population, in order to maintain relevance to them.¹²

In spite of the multitude of operations other than war just examined, there can be no argument that the CAF must be able to defend Canada and fight and win the wars the nation commits it to and therefore as a modern Western military it must remain prepared to engage in high intensity 3rd generation warfare between states. This is the *raison d'être* of a nation's armed force. In order to be prepared for its primary purpose, the defense of Canada in major combat operations (MCO), the CAF must retain proficiency in this most destructive form of warfare. From this line of thought has followed the idea that by effectively preparing, equipping and training for the most intense form of conflict, MCO, the CAF will be able to perform with excellence in operations that are characterized by a lower level of violence, a 4th generation warfare. This is especially true of the CA who state: "The ability to live, train and fight as

¹¹ Canadian Military Journal, "Diversity," last modified 14 July 2008, <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vol13/no4/page25-eng.asp>

¹² *Ibid.*

part of a Combined Arms Team effectively separates professional armies from all others. It is the foundation upon which the Army's ability to force generate is built."¹³

However, based on the experience of the CAF since Korea, and those of our American and NATO allies more broadly, the probability of rapid deployment to fight a high intensity conflict is not nearly as probable as rapid deployment to conduct operations that are lower in intensity on the spectrum of conflict, yet still have significant strategic effect on Canada. Further, it is assumed in the Canadian Forces Joint Publication 3.0 Operation (CFJP 3.0), the document that defines how the CAF intends to conduct operations, that any future MCO will be hybrid in nature. That is, even an MCO is assumed to have significant non-conventional facets to it.¹⁴ These facts combined present a comprehensive argument in support of not only maintaining, but further developing the type of supporting capabilities employed during operations in Afghanistan. The primary enabling factor for all of these capabilities was the ability to understand the culture in which operations were being conducted.

Supporting capabilities such as the Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (OMLT), the Rana Radio Detachment, the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), influence activities units and the concept that every soldier is a sensor all stem from the Afghan experience and all are undergirded by an understanding of culture. None of these capabilities existed in the CAF prior to 2001 and all were developed primarily after combat was joined in Kandahar. These capabilities were quickly developed and admirably employed in the Afghan Theatre of Operations (ATO) once they were fielded, but they were ad hoc in nature and it took years to truly professionalize them. In these resource constrained and post conflict times, both individual and collective training time and resources are being allocated to conventional war fighting skills in the both the US and Canadian armies.¹⁵ For example, while the author was deployed to Exercise Maple Resolve 2014 (Ex MR), there were very few civilians in the battle space

¹³ Department of National Defence, "Advancing with Purpose: The army strategy 3rd edition," (Canadian Army: 2014), 11.

¹⁴ Department of National Defence, *CFJP 3.0 Operation* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2010), 8-2.

¹⁵ 58 Scout (pseudonym), "Where is the Garrison Army going? I worry it is going back to spit and polish, while ignoring hard lessons of the last century," *Foreign Policy*, last updated 12 February 2013, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/02/12/where-is-the-garrison-army-going-i-worry-it-is-heading-back-to-spit-and-polish-while-ignoring-hard-lessons-of-the-last-decade/>

and they were far outnumbered by opposing conventional forces, contrasted to the authors previous two Ex MR where actors portraying civilians, insurgents, allies, NGOs and the press far outnumbered opposing conventional forces. While statements to this effect from senior leaders are hard to find, it is apparent to those in the Army's field force that a return to conventional operations is under way.

The solution must not reduce the CAF readiness to engage in high intensity combat, rather it is essential to augment and truly provide this readiness into the future of 4 GW, or even to be effectively prepared for full spectrum operations in a conflict characterized as hybrid war. Junior officers and soldiers must understand and demonstrate their proficiency within their trade and specialties when they complete basic training and basic officer training and remain focused on conventional skills and abilities throughout their careers. This will ensure that the CAF is prepared for its *raison d'être*. However, the ability to understand culture, its own, that which it is operating in, and that which it is operating against, is essential to mission success today and will only become more so in the future.

That the CAF elements remain cloistered is no surprise, they were designed for 3rd generation warfare where the creation of combat power required well established, organized and equipped elements to control the air, sea and land respectively. To this end, after an army style introduction to the CAF in St Jean for both officers and NCMs, the respective elements retain all further professional development up to the senior officer and NCM rank. The Individual and Collective Training systems, however, remain focused primarily on the primary combat functions necessary to fight and win in their respective environments. This focus is exclusionary, with combat skills being prized at every level up to Colonel or Professional Development Level (PD) four, which does not result in a focus on culture nor the supporting skills required to support combat operations in the COE.¹⁶ To enable success within the JIMP framework in the COE, which for Canadians since the Korean war been characterized by operations other than conventional war, whether peace keeping, enforcing no fly zones or fighting non-conventional adversaries in a counter-insurgency (COIN) campaign, the ability to understand other Canadian agencies, our allies,

¹⁶ National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces, "Canadian Armed Forces Professional Development," last updated 08 August 2013, <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/training-prof-dev/index.page>

our enemies, the populations within which the CAF will be deployed and non-governmental organizations is essential to mission success. As the quotes from General (retired) McChrystal and Sun Tzu illustrated, understanding its own culture, and that of its enemies, is imperative to a modern military. The question then is not how important culture is to the CAF, but what to do about it.

The primary constraint is that the solution must not reduce the CAF readiness to engage in high intensity combat. Rather, it is essential that cultural awareness training augment traditional combat readiness in order to provide not just a ready, but also a relevant force for the modern world. Therefore, junior officers and soldiers must understand and demonstrate their proficiency within their trade and specialties when they complete basic training or basic officer training respectively and they must further develop these conventional skills and abilities throughout their careers as is currently programmed in the CAF Professional Development System.¹⁷ This will ensure that the CAF is prepared for its *raison d'être*. However, the other skills required in the COE must also be institutionalized.

The CAF must increase its understanding of, and ability to employ, culture. This fact is recognized in *Cultural Intelligence and Leadership: An Introduction for Canadian Forces Leaders*, but this document ends with some ideas for inclusion of Cultural Intelligence in the CAF, not a defined plan. This paper then aims to pick-up at the idea point and move forward to a plan designed to incorporate culture into the development of all members of the CAF. This will be accomplished by looking at what is currently be done within the CAF to develop this capability, then examining what allied militaries, international business, diplomatic departments and academic research has shown are promising methods to develop the ability to understand and employ culture and finally these will be combined to create a road map for the development of improved cross cultural competence within the CAF.

The concept of culture is admittedly complex due to its pervasiveness in the human environment, but is made more so by the number of definitions and descriptions of culture currently in use, let alone the terms describing how to develop it or asses a level of proficiency in its employment. This paper will employ the Cross Cultural Competence (3C) model described by Dr Brian R. Selmeski in his 2007 article,

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Military Cross-Cultural Competence: core concepts and individual development, written for the US Air Force Culture and Language Center, as:

the ability to quickly and accurately comprehend, then appropriately and effectively engage individuals from distinct cultural backgrounds to achieve the desired effect. Despite not having an in-depth knowledge of the other culture, and even though fundamental aspects of the other culture may contradict one's own taken-for-granted assumptions/deeply-held beliefs'.¹⁸

3C will be used over the Cultural Intelligence (CQ) model employed in *Cultural Intelligence and Leadership: An Introduction for Canadian Forces Leaders* which was originally developed by industrial-organizational psychologist P. Christopher Earley the Dean of the Business School at National University of Singapore and organizational-behaviouralist Soon Ang the Director of the Centre for Leadership and Cultural Intelligence at the Business School at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. As developed by these two CQ is understood as “an individual's capability to adapt effectively to new cultural contexts”.¹⁹ Further:

CQ is a multi-component construct consisting of four facets, each of which has low to moderate correlation, confirming their distinctiveness. These sub-elements entail differing levels of abstraction, and include:

- Meta-cognition—strategies of awareness, planning, and checking of knowledge;
- Cognition—command of domains of cultural knowledge;
- Motivation—direct attention to learning and functioning in culturally diverse situations;
- Behavior—verbal and non-verbal enactments.²⁰

While there are many other terms and definitions for this currently very popular topic the completeness, clarity and accuracy of the 3C definition is why it will be used throughout this paper. The importance of clarity with regard to the definition cannot be overstated if it is to be used to create a road map on which CAF doctrine will be built. As Dr Schmelski states, even the fact that CQ uses the term

¹⁸ Brian R. Selmeski, “Military Cross-Cultural Competence: core concepts and individual development” *AFCLC Contract Report* 2007-01 (16 May 2007), 12.

¹⁹ Karen D. Davis (editor), *Cultural Intelligence and Leadership: An introduction for Canadian Forces leaders*, (Canada DND: 2009),11

²⁰ Ibid.

intelligence is problematic in a military environment where the word intelligence has a meaning and purpose different from that meant by usage of the word in CQ.²¹

Paper outline:

Intro – Define the need and describe the concept.

Chapter One – Will examine the CAF Professional Development Framework (PD) to look at what is currently being developed with regard to cultural awareness in order to determine at what time and to what level individual members 3C is developed.

Chapter Two – A review of academic, foreign military, NGO, DFAT-D and other literature on effective means to develop 3C in trainees. This will include both a general understanding of culture designed to create a baseline which will enable those so trained to work cross culturally in a general manner and to incorporate specific cultural information between the assignment of a mission and deployment. Since this period can be very short, even measured in hours, priority will be placed on the development of the general ability to work culturally as Theatre Mission Specific Training (TMST) may not even occur for some deployments such as NEO or DART

Chapter Three – Will provide the road map for incorporation of 3C into the CAF PD system as well as specialist courses and capabilities. For example, the center of excellence for the CIMIC, Psy Ops and Influence Activities is the Peace Support Training Center. The paper will examine what they teach with regard to culture and if some of this can be extrapolated and taught to the force as a whole. This paper will examine training plans from PSTC, and seek to determine whether there is currently a COE for culture, whether it is necessary to create one or if culture should be taught in another manner.

²¹ Brian R. Selmeski, “Military Cross-Cultural Competence: core concepts and individual development” *AFCLC Contract Report* 2007-01 (16 May 2007), 12.

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