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## CAF VALUES AND ETHICS REQUIRE CONTINUOUS CONSULTATION IN A “PEOPLE FIRST” APPROACH

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# CANADIAN ARMED FORCES VALUES AND ETHICS REQUIRE CONTINUOUS CONSULTATION IN A “PEOPLE FIRST” APPROACH

## AIM

1. This service paper considers the question, “Does a ‘people first’ approach to the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) require changes to our Values and Ethics as we move forward, considering the new generation and an ever more ethnically diverse population in Canada?”

## INTRODUCTION

2. The Department of National Defence (DND) and CAF *Code of Values and Ethics* sets the standard of expected behaviours for all personnel.<sup>1</sup> Compliance is an order for all CAF members and is necessary for good order and discipline. According to the *Code*, “by committing to these values... CF members strengthen the ethical culture of the public sector... and contribute to public confidence...”.<sup>2</sup> The CAF’s defining work on the profession of arms in Canada, *Duty With Honour*, emphasises that “the legitimacy of the profession of arms requires that it embodies the same values and beliefs as the society it defends, limited only by the functional requirements of the military”.<sup>3</sup> As a public institution, military values – and in turn, military behaviour – must reflect the wishes of the public in order to maintain their confidence. If they do not, this public confidence is undermined.

3. A country’s social culture defines all aspects of values and ethics in public institutions, from the statements of values and ethics themselves, to the specific measures and enforcement mechanisms that ensure these are respected.<sup>4</sup> Thus, changes in Canadian social culture warrant a review of CAF values and ethics. This service paper first reviews features of the ongoing demographic evolution in Canadian society, and then identifies potential ensuing areas of difference between these aspects and those already incorporated in the enterprise. Finally, it proposes a consultative approach to confirming and reconciling these potential differences, to ensure that the CAF reflects the values of Canadian society and retains its legitimacy and confidence.

## DISCUSSION

Canadian society has become increasingly ethnically diverse

4. Since the *Code* was first developed in 2003, Canadian society has become increasingly diverse. The millennial generation is the most ethnically diverse in the

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<sup>1</sup>Department of National Defence, *Department of National Defence and Canadian Forces Code of Values and Ethics* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2019).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Department of National Defence, *Duty With Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2009), 30.

<sup>4</sup>Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, *Trust in Government: Ethics Measures in OECD Countries* (Paris: Public Affairs and Communication Directorate, 2000), 11.

country's history.<sup>5</sup> It is defined as those born between 1980 and 1995, and given the usual age range of enrollment to the CAF, now makes up the bulk of new recruits. By 2036, when this generation will make up the senior leadership of the CAF, 44-50 percent of the Canadian population will be either immigrants or their Canadian-born children, with up to 40 percent belonging to a visible minority group.<sup>6</sup> Diversity is increasing in the CAF albeit at a slower pace: between 2016 and 2018, the proportion of visible minorities in the regular force rose from 6 to 7.2 percent, with a 2026 target of 11.8 percent.<sup>7</sup>

5. Concurrently, Canada's overall approach to multiculturalism has evolved. The integrative model of the early 2000s focused on integration of cultures around a common Canadian identity, with emphasis on rights and responsibilities. By 2016 a more inclusive model prevailed, focusing on social inclusion with emphasis on promoting "diversity as strength".<sup>8</sup> Thus, there is a growing expectation that cultural differences are to be celebrated and empowered in their own right rather than merely integrated into a shared common ground. This expectation is institutionalised in the DND/CAF: the *2019-20 Departmental Plan* explicitly sets indicators to ensure that the "Defence team reflects the values and diversity of Canadian society".<sup>9</sup>

Core Canadian values remain generally constant

6. The question is implicit in the *Plan*: are values changing as Canadian society becomes increasingly diverse? In 2003, *Duty With Honour* listed "the democratic ideal, the concept of peace, order and good government, the rule of law, and the strength to be drawn from diversity" as the core Canadian values. There are the "powerful influence" that lead to the three military ethical principles: to respect the dignity of all persons, to serve Canada before self, and to obey and support lawful authority; and the supporting departmental values of integrity, loyalty, courage, stewardship and excellence.<sup>10</sup>

7. Since then, surveys of civilian society generally show the aforementioned core Canadian values to remain generally constant today. While language varied from that used in *Duty With Honour*, a major poll of Canadians conducted by Abacus Data in 2017 called *The Canada Project* found that support for these values, and national institutions that embody them like the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, is broad and strong among

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<sup>5</sup>EnviroNics Institute, *Canadian Millennials Social Values Study* (Toronto: EnviroNics Institute, 2017), 3.

<sup>6</sup>Statistics Canada, *Immigration and Diversity: Population Projections for Canada and its Regions, 2011 to 2036* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2017).

<sup>7</sup>David Akin, "Canada's Armed Forces, struggling to hit diversity goals, turns to new digital recruiting tools", *Global News*, 14 September 2018, last accessed 26 October 2019, <https://globalnews.ca/news/4450927/canada-armed-forces-diversity-goals-digital-recruiting/>.

<sup>8</sup>Augie Fleras and Jean Lock Kunz, *Media and Minorities: Representing Diversity in a Multicultural Canada* (Toronto: Thompson Education Publishing, 2001).

<sup>9</sup>Department of National Defence, *Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces 2019-20 Departmental Plan* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2019).

<sup>10</sup>Department of National Defence, *Duty With Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2009), 31.

both immigrant and life-long Canadians.<sup>11</sup> Though there have been shifts in attitudes to specific practices such as same-sex marriage and medically-assisted death, or in overall trust of government, core democratic values remain consistent. Also in 2017, when Canadians were polled as part of an Americas-wide study by Vanderbilt University of public beliefs on democracy and governance, Canadian millennials were the most confident group that the political system protects citizens' rights – almost double in confidence over their parents – suggesting that core values remain steady for the generation ahead.<sup>12</sup>

8. Canadians most clearly articulate their values and confidence in public institutions during federal elections. While it is too soon to incorporate any analysis from the 2019 election, “Canadian values” were front and centre in 2015 and a subsequent party leadership campaign. Debates included a proposal for a “values test” for prospective immigrants, to include questions around the equality of men and women under the law, the prohibition of coercion or violence against those who disagree with one’s views, and the importance of work to achieve quality of life.<sup>13</sup> While the public discourse around such a test was fraught with undertones of perceived discrimination and did not ultimately lead to any policy change, the proposed content and the test itself was broadly supported, with 84 percent of Canadians agreeing some kind of test ought to be implemented as part of the immigration process.<sup>14</sup>

9. In particular, the growing community of Canadians of non-European descent appear to support these core Canadian values in the context of military recruitment and service. In Ipsos Reid public opinion research, Chinese-Canadians (2011), Asian- and Arab-Canadians (2012) and Black-, Filipino- and Latin American-Canadians (2014) felt that pride in the country and the perception of a well-structured and equitable military environment, all supported their motivation in a potential military career. Overall, barriers to enrollment amongst these groups were identical to those amongst non-minority Canadians: the obligation to carry out orders, periods of separation from family, and loss of one’s freedom.<sup>15</sup> Similar research in allied forces also finds demographic

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<sup>11</sup>Paul Wells, “A new survey explores what makes us Canadian”, *Macleans*, 1 June 2017, last accessed 25 October 2019, <https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/a-new-survey-for-canada-150-explores-what-makes-us-canadian/>.

<sup>12</sup>Vanderbilt University Latin American Public Opinion Project, *AmericasBarometer Final Report June 2017*, last accessed 27 October 2019, [https://www.enviroicsinstitute.org/docs/default-source/project-documents/americasbarometer-2017/americasbarometer---canada-2017---final-report.pdf?sfvrsn=5f8edadf\\_2](https://www.enviroicsinstitute.org/docs/default-source/project-documents/americasbarometer-2017/americasbarometer---canada-2017---final-report.pdf?sfvrsn=5f8edadf_2).

<sup>13</sup>Janice Dickson, “Leitch releases her list of ‘Canadian values’ test questions for immigrants”, *iPolitics*, 6 March 2017, last accessed 25 October 2019, <https://ipolitics.ca/2017/03/06/leitch-reveals-what-she-wants-to-ask-during-canadian-values-screening/>.

<sup>14</sup>Paul Wells, “A new survey explores what makes us Canadian”, *Macleans*, 1 June 2017, last accessed 25 October 2019, <https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/a-new-survey-for-canada-150-explores-what-makes-us-canadian/>.

<sup>15</sup>Barbara Waruzynski, “The Diversity Recruitment Challenge: Factors Shaping Visible Minorities’ and Aboriginal People’s Perceptions of the Canadian Military”, *Ergomas* (n.p.: Res Militaris, July 2017), last accessed 26 October 2019, [http://resmilitaris.net/ressources/10259/09/res\\_militaris\\_article\\_waruzynski\\_the\\_diversity\\_recruitment\\_challenge.pdf](http://resmilitaris.net/ressources/10259/09/res_militaris_article_waruzynski_the_diversity_recruitment_challenge.pdf).

diversity in the military has not changed core military values, but rather ensures consistency with those of the nation.<sup>16</sup>

Millennial Canadians have clear expectations regarding work and engagement

10. Rather than differences in core democratic values, millennial Canadians have clear expectations regarding work and engagement distinct from other generations. In 2017, the Environics Institute for Survey Research conducted the *Canadian Millennials Social Values Study*. While titled a “social values” study, the *Study* addressed broad orientations to life, career/work and political/civic engagement rather than fundamental beliefs as in any particular aspect of a liberal, rules-based democracy like Canada as discussed above.

11. The *Study* found that, when approaching their careers, millennials overall place the highest priority on balancing work and their personal life, 80 percent believing this to be “critically important”. Only 30 percent felt that work that makes an “important contribution to society” was an equally compelling priority.<sup>17</sup> This is not to say that millennials do not value social contribution at all – only 13 percent said outright that this was “not especially important” – but that careers that depend on such motivation, such as military service, are especially sensitive to competing priorities. Higher education, such as graduate work, as well as South Asian cultural background, tended to correlate more strongly with a focus on social contribution.

12. Regarding “social values”, the magnitude of any adaptation needed by the enterprise to accept the next generation of CAF members might be less than that experienced between previous cohorts. In some aspects, millennials appear to have attenuated some of the shifts between preceding generations. For example, whereas they are weaker than older Canadians on the values of “duty” and “religiosity”, “fulfillment through work”, “national pride” and “community involvement”, they are less different from the Generation X and Boomer generations than these latter generations were from their respective parents.<sup>18</sup> In fact, millennials are stronger than previous generations on “multiculturalism”, “adaptability to complexity” and “enthusiasm for technology”, while being at least similar on “global consciousness”. This implies that these future sailors, soldiers and airwomen and men, as well as their civilian counterparts, could find the increasingly-multicultural, complex and technical world of military service to be more readily relatable.

13. That said, millennials continue to prioritise many of the aspects that typically associate with the coming-of-age of youth. Canada’s young adults have always been the largest source of recruits to the CAF, so the integration of “new blood” is nothing new.

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<sup>16</sup>Congressional Research Service, *Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunity in the Armed Services: Background and Issues for Congress* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 5 June 2019).

<sup>17</sup>Environics Institute, *Canadian Millennials Social Values Study* (Toronto: Environics Institute, 2017), 26.

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

“Pendant for risk”, “pursuit of novelty”, “pursuit of originality” and “personal creativity” all factor prominently in the attitudes of millennial Canadians.<sup>19</sup> However, while these are to some extent typical of all generations during this stage of life, millennials demonstrate these even more strongly than their parents did at the same stage. Especially with modern access to social media and group communication, many of the typical behaviours observed today amongst young adults bear this out: as compared to the youth of previous generations, there is a sharper focus on individual fulfillment and personal interests, and in relation to authority, an expectation for engagement and consultation around rule-setting rather than deference. This suggests that the future CAF will need to adapt the development and delivery of direction – whether orders in the context of the chain of command, human resources policy and programmes, or personnel support benefits and privileges, and so on – around a presumption for open and shared decision-making.

Institutional legitimacy during perceived social change requires continued consultation

14. There is no publicly-available baseline or tracking data regarding such “social values” amongst members of the CAF. However, self-selection of informed and motivated Canadians to military service will probably attenuate some of the shifts needed to integrate new members and maintain the legitimacy of the CAF with the general public. As a professional military that rejects the notion of forced service, the CAF enrolls Canadians who, to some extent, already accept the existing values of the enterprise before they even enter the recruiting office. However, acknowledging the perceived changes in Canadian society, continued consultation is needed to maintain the CAF’s trusted status with the general public and its capacity to enroll and support the careers of millennial Canadians. While the country’s *core* democratic values might not have changed appreciably since *Duty With Honour*, the interplay of changing “social values” and cultural expectations as described above warrant an agile and adaptive mindset.

15. Modern institutions commonly and effectively incorporate continued consultation as they adapt to the demands of their workforce and the general public. In a 2013-2016 study of a broad variety of US companies and industries involving tens of thousands of participants, Deloitte identified the critical need to shift from traditional managerial and leadership approaches to one akin to coaches and star athletes adapting to one another, and the importance of consultation. “For many millennials, ongoing consultation is not a sign of weakness, but rather a real-time feedback loop used to self-correct”.<sup>20</sup> In particular, consultation must be genuine and empowered, with a reasonable likelihood that good faith input will lead to actual change. “Don’t shy away from direct and transparent communications that drive away ambiguity, but remember to keep it baloney-free”.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Selena Rezvani and Kelly Monahan, *The Millennial Mindset: Work styles and aspirations of millennials* (Deloitte Development, 2017), 14.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.



16. Continuous consultation is a natural and logical component of transformational leadership. As the prized form of leadership in the CAF, transformational leadership prioritises effective influence behaviours including consultation and joint decision making, to ensure the values of the organisation remain current and carry through to its members.<sup>22</sup> This is not a new concept in federal service. A 1994 review for Canadian public administrators observed, “the emerging public service culture will contain a blend of old and new values... three traditional values – integrity, accountability and fairness, equity – will occupy an especially prominent place in that emerging culture”.<sup>23</sup> A 2000 study by the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) of its members remarks, “a key challenge for government is to adapt... to ensure that its core values and standards meet changing public expectations. A modern set of core values should combine ‘traditional’ values... with ‘new’ values...”.<sup>24</sup>

17. The key appears to be in ensuring that these values founded through consultation carry through into actual concrete actions in the workplace. One current example of effective continuous consultation amongst federal institutions with particular appeal to the millennial cohort – “the new public service” – is the GCcoworking initiative. This two-year pilot programme permits employees to access shared, alternative workplaces with “greater flexibility in where and how employees work so they can be as productive as possible”.<sup>25</sup> Ongoing consultation is a key element of the initiative, starting from the initial proposal and concept of flexible work arrangements<sup>26</sup> to the collection, integration and action of real-time feedback in the administration of the pilot. Open and public use of social media, such as the Twitter hashtags #FlexibleWork and #ConditionsTravailSouples, as well as internal communications across all ranks and job classifications, empowers the quantity and quality of feedback. Collection of data relevant to the analysis of potential intergenerational differences and benefits, e.g. length of time in position, rank and classification, etc., allows for shaping to ensure the programme adapts to suit emerging desires.

## CONCLUSION

18. The ongoing demographic evolution in Canadian society brings the potential for areas of difference between the ethics and values of the nation at large and the Defence enterprise. A consultative approach to confirming and reconciling these potential

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<sup>22</sup>Department of National Defence, A-PA-005-000/AP-004, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2005), 66.

<sup>23</sup>Kenneth Kernaghan, “The emerging public service culture: values, ethics and reforms,” *Canadian Public Administration* 37, no. 4 (December 1994): <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1754-7121.1994.tb00883.x>.

<sup>24</sup>Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, *Trust in Government: Ethics Measures in OECD Countries* (Paris: Public Affairs and Communication Directorate, 2000), 9.

<sup>25</sup>Public Services and Procurement Canada, *GCworkplace: A modern workplace for the new public service*, 15 July 2019, last accessed 27 October 2019, <https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/biens-property/mt-wp/mt-wp-eng.html>.

<sup>26</sup>Employment and Social Development Canada, *Flexible work arrangements: What was heard*, September 2016, last accessed 27 October 2019, <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/consultations/what-was-heard.html>.

differences would help ensure that the CAF reflects the values of Canadian society and retains its legitimacy and confidence.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

19. Continuous consultation should be established throughout the CAF at two levels. The first would be across the enterprise as a way to baseline and track the “social values” of CAF members. This could take the form of existing surveys, like the aforementioned Environics study of millennial Canadians, performed by external agencies to ensure comparability as well as avoid any potential institutional conflicts of interest. While there does not yet appear to be any significant shift in core Canadian values that would engender necessary changes in military values, this broad survey would help set the baseline against which to assess continued convergence or detect divergence.

20. At a more granular level, active and ongoing consultation should be established around individual programmes and initiatives throughout the enterprise. Human resources and personnel-related programmes should be prioritised, as these lend well to consultation (as opposed to warfighting operations) and connect directly to the aforementioned shifts in millennial Canadians “social values” and employer approaches. For example, Honours and Awards and the Canadian Forces Personnel Appraisal System (CFPAS) processes touch on many of the “social values” mentioned above where millennial Canadians diverge from previous generations (e.g., “personal creativity”, “pursuit of originality” and “fulfillment through work”), and it is not yet widely acknowledged that these programmes reflect these shifts. Leaders in charge of these programmes should establish ongoing consultation processes where they actively seek feedback from representative members across the enterprise to assure their validity and credibility. While social media could be used to quickly and broadly capture feedback, in many circumstances privacy considerations must prevail. Similarly, members’ chains of command might not be appropriate avenues through which to seek and provide input. Consultative panels drawn from a cross section of employees, with transparent reporting of issues raised and actions taken, have been used elsewhere and could be an ideal model for collection and empowerment of input in the CAF.

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