

ARI Research Note 98-13

**The Western European Military Establishment:
A Re-Assessment**

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Research and Advanced Concepts Office
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June 1998



U.S. Army Research Institute
for the Behavioral and Social Sciences

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**U.S. Army Research Institute
for the Behavioral and Social Sciences**

A Directorate of the U.S. Total Army Personnel Command

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Research accomplished under contract
for the Department of the Army

University of Hull

Technical Review by

Joseph Psotka

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1. REPORT DATE (dd-mm-yy) June 1998		2. REPORT TYPE Interim		3. DATES COVERED (from. . . to) Aug 95 - Feb 96	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE The Western European Military Establishment : A Re-Assessment				5a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER N68171-95-C-9059	
				5b. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER 0601102A	
6. AUTHOR(S) Harries-Jenkins G. (Editor)				5c. PROJECT NUMBER B74F	
				5d. TASK NUMBER 4902	
				5e. WORK UNIT NUMBER C05	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) University of Hull Hull HU6 7RX United Kingdom				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences 5001 Eisenhower Avenue Alexandria, VA 22333-5600				10. MONITOR ACRONYM ARI	
				11. MONITOR REPORT NUMBER Research Note 98-13	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES : Task was performed under the European Research Office Board Agency Announcement regarding research in the behavioral and social sciences					
14. ABSTRACT (<i>Maximum 200 words</i>): This report considers the refinement of the conceptual framewok to this research task and reviews the proceedings of a workshop held at Beverly, United Kingdom from 17th to 20th of November. Two revised national case studies are presented.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Military manpower; comparative military studies; defense policy; post-modern military					
SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF			19. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Unlimited	20. NUMBER OF PAGES 49	21. RESPONSIBLE PERSON (Name and Telephone Number) COR: Dr. George Lawton (703) 617-5590
16. REPORT Unclassified	17. ABSTRACT Unclassified	18. THIS PAGE Unclassified			

SECOND INTERIM REPORT

SEPTEMBER 1995 - FEBRUARY 1996

The Western European Military Establishment

A Re-Assessment

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CONTRACT: N68171-95-C-9059

The Research reported in this document has been made possible through the support and sponsorship of the US Government through its European Research Office of the US Army. This report is intended only for the internal management of the Contractor and US Government.

Case Study: France
Professor Bernard Boëne

WESTERN EUROPEAN MILITARY
ESTABLISHMENTS : A REASSESSMENT

Final Case-Study on *FRANCE*

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Comparative Research on Military Institutions Workshop,
Beverly, UK, 17-20 November 1995,
With the assistance of the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral
and Social Sciences.

1. CONTEXT

The year before last saw the publication in France of the first Defense White Paper (DWP) in over two decades¹. Though a significant exercise on its own merits, it has been widely regarded as no more than an interim document pending the advent to power, in 1995, of a new president and government.

Written by a committee of senior civil servants and military officers working within Cabinet guidelines, the DWP tried to size up a situation that has been radically transformed : not only in the sense that the Cold War and its massive Soviet danger have come to an end, but also and more importantly, in that for the first time since the 1815-circa 1865 period, France is now without a discernible military threat against the security of its territory.

Several factors, however, have been at work so far to minimize the impact on perceptions and attitudes of such a notable transformation in strategic circumstances. While many have come to doubt the relevance of armed forces to such present security risks as terrorism, uncontrolled immigration, internal violence², drug trafficking, or the internationalization of organized crime, the general feeling appears to be that a power such as France, if it is to retain a role worthy of its past in world affairs, must maintain an active foreign policy, which it could not possibly do without adequate military means. One might add that in a country whose long military tradition is replete with ups and downs—a country invaded three times, in whole or in part, during the last five generations—, something resembling unspoken but culturally ingrained strategic realism continues to dominate the national scene, among élites as well as the general populace : the idea seems to hold that there is no such thing as a risk-free international environment, and that France should never be caught off its guard. Premised on such sentiments, the Gaullist legacy—restoration of national prestige—has emerged fairly intact from over two decades of non-Gaullist rule, and survived the rise of (real, if somewhat ambiguous) European sentiment : it figures as one core component of a widening basic political consensus³. This goes far to explain the fair measure of political timidity on the part

¹ Livre Blanc, 1994 [Literature Cited : Entry 1]. The previous edition had been published in 1972.

² Sporadic eruptions of violence in the huge suburban housing projects built in the sixties and seventies, where the poor and (increasingly) first- and second-generation immigrant families from the Third World tend to be concentrated, have become a common feature of French life, and a source of deep official concern known as *le problème des banlieues*, or more recently, *la fracture sociale*.

³ France used to be a deeply divided polity, a situation dating back to the French Revolution, and which peaked in the quasi-civil war that went on during World War II. But no longer : with the advent of a huge and amorphous middle class, it has turned into a rather consensual society, firmly unified around values such as freedom (defined negatively as the absence of constraints), a fair amount of social equality, and an unideological taste for material well-being. The political consequences of a process dubbed by some *the "anglo-saxonization" of French society* have become increasingly visible in the last twenty years.

of successive governments faced with the prospect of having to initiate far-reaching changes, at the possible cost of disturbing a nonpartisan consensus of now long standing on defense matters.

As a result, pressures for "peace dividends", so prevalent in the West after the demise of the Cold War, have been distinctly less conspicuous in France than in neighbouring countries or the United States. While in 1990-1992 the then socialist government adroitly preempted such pressures by announcing a curtailment of conscript service (from 12 to 10 months) and a *gradual* decrease in force levels and budget authority/ GDP ratios, the French armed forces are still manned and funded at levels which differ less significantly from past practice than elsewhere⁴.

Using FY 1990 as a baseline, the reduction in force⁵ has reached -12% in 1995 and is projected to lead by the year 2000 to a stabilized overall strength of some 380,000 (-17%) *if all policy parameters remain constant*. Likewise, the proportion of gross domestic product spent on defense, which stood at 3.6% (including retirement pensions) was until recently expected to reach rock bottom at approximately 3.0-3.1%. Yet it should be noted that a comparison of FY 1990 and FY 1996 defense budget authority levels yields no absolute decrease in current franc terms (1990 : 189 billion francs, 1995 : 194 billion, estimates for 1996 : 190 billion, pensions excluded).

Looking to the future, however, the above picture may not hold true beyond a couple of fiscal years : the apparent wait-and-see attitude of those in office as regards a possible sea-change cannot last for much longer. Hard choices will have to be faced, for extraneous reasons if for no other : the new president seems intent on reducing public deficit and debt levels, and budget cutters will more than likely consider the MoD fair game. There is talk, as of this writing, of a new 6-year defense program law which would entail economies of up to 25% in investment programs⁶. Whether or not retrenchment affects military spending dramatically, and whether it affects it in the shorter or longer term, this signals that the process of change, which can be said to have hardly begun, will in all likelihood accelerate before the decade draws to a close.

Such being the case, the French military establishment appears to be on the verge of a transition of as yet uncertain proportions and characteristics. The present assessment can do no better than describe and analyze current realities and doctrine as defined by the *Livre Blanc*, while pointing along the way to the various options open to decision-makers, and to the more probable choices, with their attendant consequences, dilemmas and challenges.

⁴ The post-Cold War drawdown has so far been much less substantial than the spontaneous reduction in force which occurred in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s under the influence of "decline of the mass army" processes.

⁵ For comparative purposes here, the Gendarmerie (whose strength—some 92,000, including 12,000 conscripts—has tended to *increase* slightly over the long term) has been left out of account, even though it is part of the Ministry of Defense and is entrusted with military missions.

⁶ Some argue that a growing discrepancy, due to time lag or freezing of funds, between budget authority levels and budget outlays has already effected a reduction of such magnitude. See ISNARD, 1995 [Literature Cited : Entry 2].

The thesis offered here is that in defining new directions, the harder part will not concern strategic concepts, on which standard deviation from current official positions is minimal among experts and across the spectrum of mainstream politics ; rather, it will hinge on procurement doctrine and possibly a few big-ticket hardware options, as well as on the fate of an age-long, but eroding, organizational format.

2. STRATEGIC PLANNING

Having identified, in ways that cannot differ greatly from the results of similar exercises in other countries, the characteristics of the new international environment⁷, the DWP went on to spell out the respective amounts of continuity and change that will affect defense policy.

2 A. Policy objectives

At the risk of laboring the obvious, the defense establishment is charged at all times with protecting the nation's vital interests, by which is meant territorial integrity of mainland and overseas France (including sea and air approaches), defense of population, discretionary sovereign prerogatives, economic lifelines as well as international status. The novelty here resides in the recognition that the relative weight of the nation in world affairs is dwindling, that the level of interdependence with its neighbors and allies has increased, and that it could not very well pursue these ends in isolation. It also lies in the acceptance of the fact that the link between defense policy objectives and national interests is less direct in the new context than it used to be under the Cold War : it is now expressed in the broader need to bolster international stability as a precondition for status and collective security⁸.

Accordingly, France has resolved to work towards the long-term goal of the "common defense" affirmed in the 1992 European Union Treaty. Multilateral cooperation will also be the order of the day in such frameworks as NATO, OSCE, and the UN, all of which will be used as power and influence multipliers in the French contribution to war prevention, conflict resolution and the rule of law in international affairs.

Thus, closer defense ties with Britain and Germany will be developed⁹, and specific programs instituted with Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands (EuroCorps),

⁷ To wit : multipolar power structure, increased freedom of action for regional powers with substantial military capabilities, weak but insistent assertion of *Idealpolitik*, proliferation of NBC weapons and ballistic delivery vehicles, uncertain leadership role of the only superpower left, return of nationalism and religious fanaticism in some parts of the globe, ethnic tensions in Central and Eastern Europe ; closer linkages between external and internal security, real time media coverage ; globalization of trade, communications and movements of people, growing interdependence, severe imbalance in the geographic distribution of population and economic growth, emergence of three trade blocs, heightened importance of economic factors in the measure of power. In sum : increased instability and complexity of world affairs.

⁸ It is thus recognized that French interventions in subsaharan Africa, pursuant to bilateral defense agreements with its former colonies, will no longer be conducted in the name of strategic interests but as a "moral" contribution to continental stability in a region where France's influence remains substantial.

⁹ The DWP emphasizes strategic-military convergence with Britain, political convergence with Germany, and makes cooperation and pooling of assets among these three countries the main driving force behind a future European defense identity. It recognizes that the nuclear factor will be crucial.

Italy and Sweden (defense industries). A stronger role will be sought for the WEU, as the provisional defense arm of Europe, capable of acting on its own initiative in cases where Article 5 guarantees of the North Atlantic Treaty would not come into play. France, which continues to value a U.S. military presence on the Continent, will support efforts aimed at renovating NATO's structures, strengthening its European pillar and extending its missions and area of interest ; though it does not consider rejoining NATO's integrated military structure, and participation in Atlantic Council or Military Committee meetings will be decided on a piecemeal basis, France intends to play a more active role within the Alliance in order to promote a better political balance and truly concerted action. Likewise, it will seek an enlarged European security framework to include Russia.

France will also act to strengthen the authority and military expertise of the United Nations' Security Council, regarded as the only proper legitimation agency for international action aimed at keeping the peace (even if it favors delegation of such intervention authority to other, regional organizations in certain cases) ; as a permanent member of the Council, it will not hesitate to place French military assets under UN command whenever political and organizational conditions can be precisely defined and agreed upon. Bilateral defense agreements will be continued in Africa (conditional upon progress toward democracy and a better protection of human rights) and cooperation instituted or extended with Central European former member-states of the late Warsaw Pact. Finally, arms control, disarmament and counter-proliferation efforts will be pursued with a view to making verification more cost-effective and to preventing leaks of arms and military technology to third parties.

2 B. Mission statement : reordering of priorities

France's strategy, as befits a democracy, is defensive : its basic consensus on defense would admit of no other. Structured and organized so as to avoid war or limit military confrontations, French military forces are not designed for entanglements in long and costly battles.

Nuclear weapons cannot be disinvented, nor should they, in so far as nuclear deterrence contributes to war avoidance better than would conventional deterrence, be done away with entirely. Therefore, in the French view, no change is called for in nuclear doctrine, aiming as it did before, through the promise of unacceptable damage, to deter any foe from jeopardizing French vital interests. Based on a proportional, countervalue deterrence concept, that doctrine has from the beginning emphasized strict sufficiency, and precluded overkill capacity or actual use of nuclear assets as part of an operational strategy. As a result, France's nuclear armoury will not be affected by current disarmament efforts aiming to reduce U.S. and former Soviet excess capacity.

However, a new balance is in order between nuclear and conventional forces. Under the Cold War, the main body of conventional assets, geared to propping up the strategic status quo in Central Europe, would have served to test enemy intentions in time of war, deliver an ultimate warning in the form of a "pre-strategic" nuclear strike, and buy time for the president to reach a final push-button decision. A strategy of *action* was reserved for a small minority of forces specially

earmarked to intervene on a limited time, limited objective basis outside of the main Central European theater (essentially in French-speaking Black Africa or on odd peacekeeping missions). In other words, conventional strategy was then almost entirely subsumed under an overarching nuclear deterrence posture.

In the new international environment, devoid as it is of a designated foe posing an identifiable and massive door-step threat, but full of unpredictable sources of conflict in the world at large, the priorities have to be reversed. Central to French defense will be a strategy of action designed to promote stability and world peace, and if need be, in conjunction with others, to counter regional powers with world class conventional assets and rudiments of NBC armouries, capable of antagonizing France's security interests directly or indirectly. The permanent nuclear deterrence posture will become more peripheral, i.e. reserved for the more serious emergencies, which are also—at least for the foreseeable future—the less probable¹⁰. The unpredictable nature of risks and threats, geographic locations of possible conflicts much further afield than Central Europe or Africa, the multinational character of military action to prevent or solve them, all point in the direction of strengthening capabilities in various domains where France (more generally, Western Europe) had so far often counted on U.S. assets : intelligence, strategic mobility, command, control and communications, interoperability.

2 C. Tasks : evaluation of risks and threats, scenarios for the possible use of force

Contrary to assumptions commonly voiced after 1990, a North-South cleavage has not replaced the old East-West divide. The South itself is diverse and tension-ridden, while Eastern Europe's future is uncertain. The only known factor is that it will be difficult to predict the sources of destabilization calling for joint preventive, protective or remedial action on the part of status quo powers. Not even a resurgence of massive danger from the East can be entirely ruled out, though in that case lead time would be on the order of at least one decade.

Given its geographic position and the main sources of its essential supplies, France is primarily interested in the stability of Europe, the Mediterranean and the Middle East, to which must be added the immediate environment of its overseas dependencies. Africa remains part of France's area of interest. However, peacekeeping missions could send its forces to the Far East or Latin America.

Protection against terrorism, nuclear blackmail, air or ballistic attack, and disruption of internal security will have to be provided for. Should such risks become clear and present threats, the civil and economic components of defense will have to be reinforced.

On the strength of such considerations, and on the basis of circumstantial evidence, the DWP went on to outline six scenarios for the use of force, complete with projected type of response and assessment of probability, which can be summed up in tabular form, adapted from the original :

¹⁰ This obtains despite widespread, but implicit, recognition among élites that possession of nuclear assets remains a major source of political influence in the international arena : hence the controversial resumption of nuclear tests in 1995-1996, before the indefinite extension of the 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty freezes the distribution of legitimate world atomic power.

Scenario	Characteristics	Type of response	Probability, time frame, duration, collateral threats
<p>1. Regional conflict, no vital interest at stake Location : within 3,000 to 4,500 mile radius of continental France, to the East and South</p>	<p>Sizeable, high intensity assets involved, but actual intensity variable Multinational action No nuclear risks</p>	<p>Projection of air and naval power Projection of ground forces Goals : restore international order, implement UN resolutions, prevent extension of conflict, protect lifelines</p>	<p>High, Short and medium term, Variable, Terrorism, reprisals against nationals</p>
<p>2. Regional conflict, with vital interests at stake Location : Europe, Mediterranean, Middle East</p>	<p>Crisis with potential escalation to high intensity Multinational action Nuclear risks</p>	<p>Projection of heavy forces + nuclear deterrent maneuver Goals : strong signal, interposition, coercion</p>	<p>Plausible, Medium term, Short to medium, Whole range of hostile retaliatory actions</p>
<p>3. Aggression against overseas dependencies</p>	<p>Surprise attack for territorial gain, destabilization Independent action amidst international pressures</p>	<p>Projection of adequate forces Goals : restoration of sovereignty, protection against subversion and terrorism</p>	<p>Low, but rising, Medium to long term, Short to medium, Renewed attempts at destabilization</p>
<p>4. Action on the strength of bilateral defense agreements Location : Africa</p>	<p>Low intensity conflicts Independent action, though multinational implication not excluded</p>	<p>Prepositioning of forces, swift intervention, Goals : restore sovereignty of friendly state, interposition, protect civilian population, civil order</p>	<p>Very high, Short, medium and long term, Short, "Quagmire" situation</p>
<p>5. Peacekeeping and operations in support of international law Location : anywhere</p>	<p>Low intensity conflict management, narrow legitimacy constraints and toleration of casualties Multinational military action, international political mandate</p>	<p>Intervention by flexible, versatile forces Goals : monitoring of agreement implementation, interposition, humanitarian assistance, surveillance of borders, air space and territorial waters</p>	<p>Very high, Short, medium and long term, Short to medium, "Quagmire" situation</p>
<p>6. Resurgence of a massive threat against Western Europe Possible source : Europe, later other regions</p>	<p>High intensity and NBC threat + indirect pressures (subversion) Cold War pattern of deterrence, or multinational action</p>	<p>Restoration of force levels, capabilities and readiness to Cold War standards Goals : deter massive threat, limited action at the periphery</p>	<p>Very low, but mortal danger cannot be ignored Remote in time, advance notice, Indefinite stand-off, Cold War dilemmas</p>

2 D. Capabilities and posture

Five of the six scenarios outlined allow the partial relaxation of readiness standards and gradual decrease in force levels now under way. These should be enough to simultaneously sustain a major regional high intensity engagement as part of a multinational coalition, one peacekeeping/ humanitarian assistance operation, and overseas presence, while continuing to honor bilateral commitments in Africa or elsewhere. On the other hand, the sixth scenario, however improbable, calls for a capacity to reconstitute forces back to their previous Cold War strength and readiness levels, which should not be lost sight of in force planning.

New capabilities will receive a high order of priority. Intelligence acquisition through human agencies or high-technology programs¹¹ will be beefed up so as to permit real-time crisis management. C³ assets will comprise an interservice headquarters capable of contributing core elements to a multinational theater operations staff. Strategic mobility will be enhanced through a modular configuration of intervention forces, and the procurement of long-distance airlift, sealift assets in sufficient numbers to allow swift power and force projection¹².

French military capabilities will be organized into three main components : permanent security posture forces, instant and deferred reaction forces, permanent support structure. The first will include the nuclear deterrent force, intelligence functions, prepositioned assets and territorial defense air, naval and ground units. The second, borrowed from existing organic commands, will comprise a minimum of 120,000 "deployable" service members, or the equivalent of eight or nine divisions, of which two or three, combining versatile light and heavy assets, will be on a permanent readiness status. The third will be made up of logistic, administrative, science and technology, training, recruiting, preparedness/ mobilization and planning organizations. All three components will be responsible for plans to reconstitute high readiness and force levels in the event of Scenario 6 materializing [Articulation of forces chart about here].

Service strengths will remain as they are, give or take a few thousands, for the Navy (63,000), Air Force (90,000) and Gendarmerie (92,000). However, Army strength will be brought down to 227,000 (from 280,000 at the turn of the 1990s, and 320,000 in 1984), *if* the present mixed format of conscripts, volunteers and professionals is maintained.

The Navy will count on about 100 ships (2/3 blue water, 1/2 combat), plus patrol aircraft and helicopter flotillas. Its contribution to territorial defense will revolve around the nuclear strategic submarine fleet and coastguard operations. Sea control and power projection missions will be assumed by the aircraft carrier battle group and nuclear attack submarine fleet. Main lines of effort will include

¹¹ Among them, the Helios optical satellite family, radar observation and communications monitoring satellites, modernization of electronic warfare assets, computerized analysis and synthesis of intelligence data. Multinational cooperation in these fields (as well as in the field of electromagnetic interception at a later stage) will be vigorously pursued.

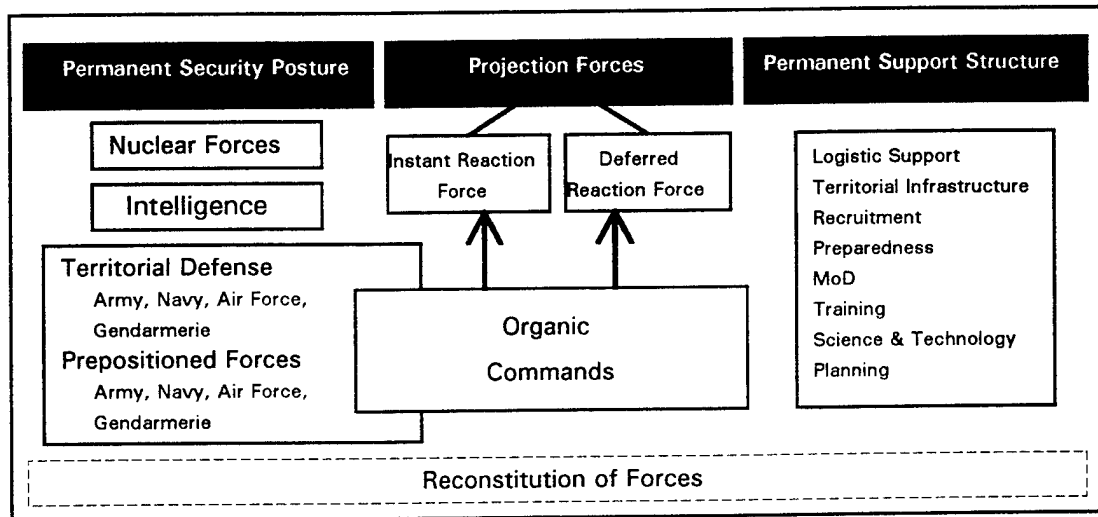
¹² For reasons of cost-effectiveness, European cooperation (long-range cargo aircraft, landing craft) and resort to civilian assets (logistic support) are envisaged.

enlargement or qualitative modernization of antisubmarine, minesweeping, anti-aircraft capabilities.

The Air Force, in addition to air defense and strategic nuclear delivery systems maintenance, will concentrate on long-range strategic mobility. Control of vast air space areas several thousand miles from mainland France by means of AWACS and tactical aircraft, an increase in the number of in-air refuelling aircraft, all-weather deep penetration using offensive/ defensive electronic warfare devices and stand-off munitions, massive bombing as well as surgical strike capabilities comprise the main lines of effort. In all, French air forces will total some 20 tactical squadrons (of which 12 will ensure at all times the deployability/ sustainability of 6 to 9 combat squadrons), in addition to territorial air defense assets, the nuclear squadrons, 20 aerial refuellers and some 100 tactical and logistic cargo aircraft.

The 8 or 9 Army divisions previously mentioned will receive extra close artillery and medical support assets. Their technological modernization will continue apace, especially in the field of precision-guided weapons and C³I systems, with a view to maximizing effectiveness and minimizing casualties.

Articulation of Forces



Source : Livre Blanc sur la Défense, 1994, p.121.

2 E. Constraints

The newly-expressed political will to reduce public deficits is expected to bring pressure to bear on the investment side of the defense budget. The more pessimistic view of the future limits nuclear deterrence assets to 3 ballistic missile nuclear submarines of the new generation, and air-to-ground nuclear missiles to an improved version of the existing medium-range vehicle. In conventional terms, cuts of up to 25% would probably doom the second nuclear-powered aircraft carrier of the *Charles-de-Gaulle* class, delay procurement and extend the life of the *Rafale* tactical combat aircraft, as well as restrict production of the *Leclerc* main battle tank to a few hundred altogether. If such trends are embodied in the 6-year program law to be discussed by Parliament in 1996, they will jeopardize some of the tasks

defined under the six scenarios, and bolster the need for European cooperation, division of labor and interoperability.

Another constraint, rarely mentioned, is the *cultural* capacity of an armed force, which for over thirty years was mainly equipped and trained to fight a hypothetical high intensity, short duration battle in Central Europe, to convert to more versatile uses of force entailing flexibility, vertical integration of multinational units, and a modulation of levels of violence to suit a variety of contexts.

In marked contrast to the U.S. military, whose self-image restricts its role to the massive application of force to produce decisive effects, the French military establishment, even if some officers privately express their reluctance to serve as "mercenaries" in blue berets under the UN flag, has hitherto shown more than willing to cover the full spectrum of possible commitments, from high intensity warfare to the milder forms of peacekeeping. This has to do in part with a historical culture in which political conflicts are complex and "lived with" rather than set and solved in black-and-white terms, in part with past experiences, in the heyday of empire, where troops were employed in various capacities, including civilian tasks, without ever losing their military character or even, in the case of Foreign Legion or marine troops, their *élite* status.

Yet, paralysis of action and recent instances of humiliation in Bosnia have produced complaints about ineffectual postures or rules of engagement, and more rigid, "shoot or scoot" attitudes. Whilst this is perfectly understandable and legitimate, it also foreshadows narrower military options for politicians in office, and possibly a redefinition of the balance between political and military thinking.

3. ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The modalities of materiel and manpower procurement, as well as organizational issues of adjustment to post-Cold War tasks, are among the more problematic areas of concern in the new context. These aspects are fraught with technical, economic and sociopolitical difficulties ; the new European dimension plays a significant role in the solutions to be brought to bear on them. The common denominator here is that while the French tradition of mechanistic, input-led bureaucracy is still alive, by any measure it is not well : variously ascribed to financial constraints, internal organizational stress, stiffer competition from outside, public opinion fatigue or influence from neighboring countries, the need for a new, more cost-efficient, market-oriented, effects-led management strategy is only beginning to dawn on French *élites*.

3 A. The transition to versatile, flexible forces and multinational operations

Most effectiveness-related problems in the new environment affect the Army : apart from a higher density of operations in time and the need for increased interservice coordination and "cultural interoperability", the other two services have not been experiencing new difficulties as regards roles and force structures.

When compared with the volume of troops permanently or temporarily stationed outside NATO Europe or overseas France prior to 1990, personnel now serving away from their normal garrison, home port or base have risen by a factor

of 3. With most of those sent to post-Cold War troublespots rotated in and out 2 or 3 times a year, and in a time of declining service strengths, this has meant a probability of seeing action of one sort or another multiplied by a factor of about 7 or 8. Unlike constabulary interventions in Black Africa (Scenario 4), which for 30 years have been the preserve of Parachute, Marine and Foreign Legion battalions, traditionally apart, the new, post-Cold War missions of the more likely sort (Scenario 5) cannot very well be reserved for units specially earmarked for such purposes, first because they are stressful, second because they would soon divide the mainline Army into hyper- and hypoactive components, to the detriment of overall cohesion. Thus, such missions have been spread among a much wider range of units. This argues strongly in favor of versatility, the more so as such "new missions", while they tend to be concentrated in the lower half of the intensity spectrum, sometimes require high intensity elements¹³.

The second characteristic of emerging structures in the new context is a modular configuration of forces. Uncertainty as to the environment, objectives and specific conditions of missions to come has led, as in the U.S. ("building blocks") or in the U.K. ("force packages"), to the idea of organizing assets in advance into a series of coherent, self-contained, mix-and-match sets of units borrowed from the various organic commands for a given mission. Such modules can be assembled at the last minute to compose "menus" of forces adapted to the particular, unforeseen requirements of a situation suddenly calling for military action.

The meaning of versatile, flexible forces may well be affected in future by the effects of retrenchment or of a decline in Army strength following upon a hypothetical switch to an AVF : the question, as in Britain, would then be whether it is more advisable to maintain the whole range of capabilities or, through a measure of selectivity, to arrange for a division of military labor at the European level. But this trend has yet to become apparent.

Part of the novelty about new missions is the blend of military, political (home and local), social/ economic, and diplomatic considerations that make them unique, in degree if not in character. Real-time media coverage—the CNN effect—certainly adds to the complexity, and enhances the role and responsibility of junior cadres in the field who are the only ones to have the whole picture : news of a given incident is broadcast worldwide before full reports have had a chance of reaching central echelons and top-down orders can be issued by return. It is not rare to hear platoon leaders or company commanders in Bosnia complain that when they ask for instructions from headquarters, the unmilitary-sounding reply often boils down to "do as you think best". This probably entails short-circuits along chains of command, and a disturbance of routine bureaucratic patterns, but these developments remain to be fully documented in the French case.

Modular structures, on the other hand, have brought to the fore issues of primary and secondary cohesion. The long-established policy of not sending draftees away from continental France (or Germany) against their will has meant that those who volunteer to fill units assigned to operational missions overseas have

¹³ To borrow the current jargon, they are subject to "reversibility" : what begins as humanitarian assistance may well develop into conventional fighting without notice, as was the case in Somalia.

to be removed from their original units before the missions starts. Such "cannibalization" of conscript outfits puts unit cohesion in jeopardy, a problem that in the nature of the case promises to grow less acute with the passage of time, but keeps recurring with each changing of the guard. What is more, in environments where integration of units in the field is vertical rather than horizontal, the "cobble together" approach inherent in modularity raises the issue of secondary cohesion among outfits that are not organically related, and therefore not used to concerted action. A three-week cohesion period prior to mission departure has been instituted, but for lack of assured cultural engineering know-how, nobody seems quite sure what to make of it.

An additional source of preoccupation is the dwindling enthusiasm of conscripts to volunteer : in 1992, in the glow of *Idealpolitik* and humanitarian assistance, each opening for the former Yugoslavia was oversubscribed 4 times ; today, after the mounting frustration of peacekeeping—a notion which remains vague and ambiguous for public opinion at large as well as for the simple soldier—in the intervening years, there are fewer than two candidacies for each slot, even though pay is multiplied by three or four. Hence, the suspicion that draftees, from the planner's point of view, are not a reliable enough source of deployable troops, and that if such trends persist, these will have for the most part to be made up of true volunteers...

Driven by cost-sharing and legitimacy considerations, the multinational nature of a sizeable portion of missions in the new context has consequences that have not passed unnoticed¹⁴. Unlike the situation which prevailed under the Cold War, in which major national formations were juxtaposed and mostly self-contained¹⁵, in the new environment, units of battalion-, company- and even platoon-size from different national contingents are routinely called upon to act together as part of a multinational division of labor. A common experience in the last five years has been the relative isolation of French contingents for lack of sufficient command of English among NCOs and privates. But over and beyond the problem of linguistic communication, or the difficulties involved in harmonizing procedures, technical arrangements, etc., there remains an issue that is less easily apprehended and ought to top the agenda of military social scientists : that of cultural interoperability. The problem is thorny in that organizational and national identities, which provide the basis for internal primary and secondary cohesion, must continue to be cultivated, while multinational organizational effectiveness requires emphasis on what is common to all the cultural traditions involved. A further difficulty is that the national contingents participating in such operations are not invariably the same. Unity in diversity promises to be a hard nut to crack for social scientists, and the initial approach should probably be restricted to European or NATO nations.

¹⁴ Whatever the difficulties, declared anti-European sentiment among officers is not one of them, as the 1992 ERGOMAS survey made abundantly clear. [Literature Cited : Entry 3]

¹⁵ For the most part, only central staffs, precisely those in which French participation within NATO was restricted, were integrated and truly multinational.

3 B. Materiel procurement and the defense industrial base

For about a quarter-century after 1960, France built up a significant defense industrial base around a hard core of state arsenals. It was present in all compartments of the arms market. Extensive exports served to lengthen production series and make unit costs bearable for the equipment of French forces. The rationale was to ensure independence in equipment supplies as the basis for de Gaulle's "autonomy of decision" within the Alliance. Defense industries now account for 2% of GDP, 5% of industrial employment, 7% of total industrial output, and 5% of exports (10% of the world market). However, they have reached a state of crisis and are now being overhauled.

Faced with increased competition from non-NATO countries for low and medium technology weapons (a logical outcome of transfers of expertise to customer nations over three decades), France can no longer count on exports to bring down unit costs of such materiel needed for its own forces. It has therefore abandoned the idea of being active in all compartments of the arms market, and will consider leaving such production lines (especially as regards dual civilian/ military technologies) to the private sector, or buying equipment off the shelf abroad. In the latter case, a measure of reciprocity will be sought.

Concentrating on high technology programs, French defense industries in the state or private sectors will have to solve the problem of spiralling costs related to rising complexity, lengthened life cycles of programs, and heavy initial investment. Restructuring will entail taking into account the possibilities offered by European cooperation, based on mutual preference, coherent division of labor and industrial alliances¹⁶. Interoperability will become an overriding consideration.

The most difficult problems reside in restructuring shipbuilding and land equipment manufacturing assets (which will entail reduction of excess capacity and loss of jobs) and in the definition of new relationships, based on cost-effectiveness as well as political considerations, between the State and private firms¹⁷.

Restructuring along European, more liberal lines will amount to a cultural revolution for the corps of military R & D and production engineers (DGA) and its associated private firms (some of which had such close ties to it that until recently they could be likened to the State in private disguise). The process, with its attendant social and economic consequences, is expected to be painful : it is symptomatic that the DWP devotes 10% of its contents (chapter 7) to the subject.

3 C. Organizational format : functional aspects

The main question mark concerns a possible break with the long-established republican tradition of drafting young men into military service. The DWP opted

¹⁶ Two missile production hubs, representing about 3/4 of European output, are envisaged. A similar structure is contemplated for satellites. In aircraft production, scattered among a number of countries and programs, integration of civilian and military aerospace activities within the same firms will become standard practice. Development of a European capacity in simulation, test and evaluation technologies is in order.

¹⁷ It is hoped that equipping the EuroCorps will provide the incentive and momentum needed for launching a truly European defense industry into orbit in that sector.

for continuity : the armed forces will continue for the time being to rely on a mixed format in which, except for the Army, conscripts are a minority¹⁸.

Such a choice is problematic in the new international environment. The weaknesses of a mixed force were revealed during the Gulf War, when Britain's all-volunteer force was able to deploy some 40,000 soldiers in Saudi Arabia whereas France, with a military establishment nearly twice as large, could field only 15,000 ; Navy ships had to disembark their drafted sailors before sailing full steam to the Gulf. The reason for such a state of affairs is that France has a long tradition, going back to the late 19th century, of not using its conscripts for missions other than defense of the national territory, unless they volunteer to participate in such missions¹⁹. Now, the proportion of those who will volunteer cannot be *planned*—the chances are it would be a function of political factors, the nature of the operations involved, and public opinion reactions, none of which can be predicted years or even months in advance—, and no politician in his right mind would want to make out-of-area deployments compulsory.

The only solution is to allow the proportion of rank and file volunteers to rise, so as to absorb nearly all of the 120,000 or so deployable Army troops prescribed by the DWP. Though the difficulty is less acute, it affects the Navy as far as its blue-water sailors are concerned, but not the Air Force (whose flying personnel and ground engineers are all professionals). As this occurs at a time when overall force levels are falling, conscript manpower requirements are likely to reach a critical point where draftees, already in the minority overall in the forces, will be a minority in their male age cohorts (a little under 400,000 young men will turn 18 every year over the next decade).

Now, there is no historical example of a conscription system, universal even less than selective, functioning for a very long time when fewer than half of those eligible are called to the colors²⁰. Recent evidence suggests that once that threshold is crossed, the plunge to an all-volunteer force is taken at short notice, without much of a public debate, by politicians in fear of a deterioration of attitudes and a loss of legitimacy : such was the case in the United States a quarter-century ago,

¹⁸ In 1995, the numbers are 186,000 draftees, 205,000 volunteers or professionals, and 44,000 civilian employees, distributed as follows :

Service	ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE
Draftees	135,000	18,000	33,000
Volunteers/ Professionals	104,000	45,000	56,000
Civilians	32,000	7,000	5,000

The Gendarmerie would add 80,000 professionals, 12,000 conscripts, and 1,000 civilians ; the various interservice agencies, 13,000 professionals, 7,000 conscripts and 57,000 civilian employees (mainly State arsenal workers).

¹⁹ Algeria was the obvious exception, thanks to a legal fiction which made its three *départements* part of France, not of the Empire.

²⁰ Unless there are symbolic compensations, as was the case for instance in late 19th century Imperial Germany, or material ones, as in Holland for two decades prior to the recent switch to an AVF. Selective minority conscription systems raise slightly different problems, especially when, as in Scandinavia, they are based on a lottery, but the relative frustration mechanism underlying sentiments of equity remains basically the same since equality *ex ante* cannot conceal inequality *ex post*.

and much closer to us, in Belgium and the Netherlands. Once the wheels of the relative deprivation mechanism start turning, there is no stopping them with half-measures. And it is obvious to many that the rise in drafted manpower requirements which followed the curtailment of service from 12 to 10 months (more men needed for the same number of man-days a year) will not be enough to counteract the negative effects of the projected further decline in service strengths. Any further curtailment of service obligations is precluded on the grounds of effectiveness, unless a true militia system is adopted, which would mean a radical departure from the present format and does^{NOT} appear to be in the cards.

The choice in favor of a rise in the proportion of volunteers/ professionals has already been made. After a while, the question will be : why not go all the way to an AVF ? It is, as of today, uppermost in the minds of many politicians, even if military officers are less sanguine about it²¹. Hesitations and doubts on that score relate to symbolic, sociopolitical factors (see section 5 F) more than to purely functional considerations. The only price to pay in that regard for a format recognized as better adapted to the new international context would be an Army of yet smaller proportions, which would bring the French armed forces very close to the British. The problem is not so much increased budget costs as the assured failure to recruit rank and file volunteers in sufficient numbers to man a 227,000 army : analysts do not bet on any more than 160,000, of whom a little under half would be officers and NCOs.

3 D. From effectiveness to efficiency ?

The French armed forces have gone through periods of abrupt reform and reduced budget circumstances before : making do and muddling through are part of the culture, and there is no reason to suspect that, despite possible quantitative overstretch, qualitative combat potential will suffer unduly.

However, introducing cost-efficiency considerations as a consequence of steep retrenchment measures and/ or a switch to an AVF will amount to a cultural revolution, especially in the Army. Cost-consciousness, as long as conscripts provide a rich source of cheap labor, is largely absent. A new managerial philosophy would probably be cramping of style and initiative, and be deeply resented to begin with. A shift away from conscription would mean increased dependence on civilian personnel and society, and possibly a polarization of force components along the lines of Moskos' I/O Model, with some sectors going for further rationalization, market orientations, competitive individualism and matrix organization, while others, developing into a niche for warrior-class culture, would preserve holistic functional features of the traditional sort. Integration problems would have to be solved.

4. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

In an atmosphere that has hitherto been mostly conservative, changes have been introduced in that area, some of them in response to organizational stress, others clearly one or two steps ahead of anticipated trends.

²¹ The 1992 ERGOMAS survey showed that among officers about 2/3 favored retaining a mixed format. [3]

4 A. Personnel policy

The first issue raised in the Army was the effects of the reduction in force on careers : a smaller number of units to staff and lead or command should have meant a corresponding decline in the volume of officers and NCOs. For morale reasons, and due to a legal status protective of career interests, the decision was made not to drive out older career personnel, in a context characterized already for some time by a surplus of lieutenant-colonels and senior noncoms. Such a decision, made at the risk of demoralizing younger cadres, was rationalized on the grounds that the Army ratio of officers and NCOs to overall service strength (32% at the turn of the 1990s) was lower than in most comparable armies, and the pursuit of technological modernization required more skilled career personnel. A further consideration now is the need to provide for a hypothetical reconstitution of forces under Scenario 6.

As a result, officers' career lines are now jammed (officer intakes in the 1970s and 1980s were one half larger than they are now), and personnel managers privately see no other way out of gridlock than short careers, a notion alien to the French officer tradition. Subalterns and captains would be hired on a contractual basis, while permanent career status would be reserved for deserving officers (i.e. war college graduates) of the rank of major and above. This measure is still on the drawing-board, and would have to be approved : if it is, it will no doubt create a sensation. In the meantime, the surplus of senior officers is beginning to show unanticipated bureaucratic effects²² which remind this writer of the strictures passed on the U.S. Army of the 1960s and 1970s by Edward Luttwak²³.

Short of mandatory separation for those who have become supernumerary in the present circumstances (which would require an Act of Parliament, a hypothesis consistently rejected by successive governments), a possible way out of the quandary resides in better resettlement strategies. Military personnel managers had until recently shown little interest in encouraging voluntary separations by helping service members find satisfactory second careers. In the sixties and early seventies, this was unnecessary because a vibrant economy meant that an abundant supply of attractive jobs took care of the problem. In the late seventies and throughout the eighties, excess personnel generated by a protective legal status remained within manageable limits. Now that the problem has reached an acute stage, due to the reduction in force, serious efforts have gone into advisory services, agreements with employers' associations, outplacement in the Civil Service and the like, but the executive labor market prospects so far have mostly frustrated such efforts : senior officers stay on, even though they are often promised the benefit of a retirement pension corresponding to the next higher rank if they leave...

Moves towards a greater flexibility of jobs, such as management by specialty as well as by arm, allowing cross-posting, and more attention paid to the skills acquired by individual service members, have accompanied a reorganization of commands along more functional lines ("Armées 2000") in the last few years,

²² This occurs at a time when the need for shorter chains of commands and lighter intermediate control staff structures asserts itself : real-time crisis management, imposed by CNN, requires devolution of military decision-making to the strata closest to the field, as well as stricter political control from Paris.

²³ LUTTWAK, 1984. [4]

taking into account a deepening of the division of labor in the wake of technological modernization.

New ground, likewise, has been broken lately by a new reserve personnel management plan ("Réerves 2000"). Instead of the huge numbers which, in Cold war days, existed on paper but were seldom called to the colors for training, the plan calls for the mobilization of a maximum of half a million. Officers and noncoms used to serve by virtue of an informal arrangement whereby only a small pool made up of the most "activist" among them, known to local military authorities, were assigned on a purely voluntary basis, subject to their often uncertain availability for service, to mobilization slots almost entirely separate from active-duty units. They now have to sign formal contracts, backed by guarantees that their civilian careers will not suffer, thanks to agreements reached by the MoD with various confederations of employers. Touted as "part-time professionals", they are offered "career" development schemes which parallel those of active-duty cadres, with whom closer organizational links have been established. France, as one observer remarked, may not have an AVF, but it now already has a reserve system which resembles the American or British systems.

On the other hand, contrary to U.S. or U.K. experience, minorities have so far been non-problems, probably because activist groups on the outside, among those which could help them advance the cause of emancipation or recognition, have traditionally lacked interest in the military.

Racial or ethnic minorities are underrepresented among conscripts because the sons of North African immigrants often are bi-nationals and tend to escape service ; they are distinctly over-represented in the combat companies of all-volunteer units (though, due to low absolute numbers, the phenomenon lacks visibility). Five years ago, at the behest of the then minister of Defense, Muslim service members saw their rights affirmed : *hallal* menus were introduced, and their promotion to the rank of corporal or sergeant made easier. These measures did not receive maximum publicity, and in practice were toned down for fear of stirring mainstream resentment.

Women, whose numbers rose substantially in the seventies before stabilizing around 15,000 (7% of volunteer/ professional personnel, 4% of all military personnel), in theory have been fully integrated since the early eighties, except for combat units where female access is restricted by low quotas. In practice, however, close to 3/4 of them are sergeants engaged in specialist jobs. Female commissioned officers are still a tiny minority. But discontent is little in evidence, if only because their reasons for joining the services are job security, a highly structured environment, military family backgrounds, and the desire to do something different from the routine jobs in which civilian women tend to concentrate when they are gainfully employed²⁴. Female service members are appreciated by personnel managers as a source of high quality recruitment : the rate of selection, which often hardly exceeds 1 in 2 or 3 where men are concerned, frequently rises as high as 1 in 10 or 15 for military women. Their conservative orientations may explain why

²⁴ REYNAUD, 1988. [5]

feminist movements, unlike their American counterparts, have neglected the armed forces as a possible symbolic battleground of choice.

As for military gays, the only occasions when they create something remotely resembling a stir, a quiet one, and short-lived at that, seem to be in the wake of a homosexual *cause célèbre* in America (1993) or Britain (1995), when journalists, sociologists or official fact-finding teams from those countries turn to France to inquire about their status... Part of the secret is cultural : sexuality is part of an individual's inviolable privacy, and nobody is required to declare his or her sexual orientation, or told that homosexuality is incompatible with military life. The norm is that sexual activity is off-limits in military precincts, and indeed out of 15,000 registered disciplinary incidents in 1992, only 20 were related to (homo- in 5 cases and hetero- in 15) sexual matters²⁵. Either the norm is strictly adhered to, or local military authorities handle things informally, if they do not turn a blind eye, as long as service climate is not unduly disturbed. Part of it is also that homosexuality is not illegal per se, and unless a criminal offense is committed, gays or lesbians cannot be discriminated against. So there is little pressure on them, or incentive to vindicate their sexual conduct publicly. It is likely that gays are underrepresented in the services, if only because the virile image the latter project is bound to make them uncomfortable. Gay conscripts, when detected (of their own accord) before induction are often informally discharged by service doctors (with proper medical confidentiality), on the not unreasonable ground that they may create primary cohesion problems in their units : few of them probably pass up the chance of being exempted from military duty at such low cost. Others who do serve, self-selected or otherwise, must be conservative enough, since none so far has come forward with the burning desire to stir things up. This combination of minimum formal rules, at once tolerant and stringent, and informal arrangements in which the key player generally is the medical service, has worked so far apparently to everybody's satisfaction. The only challenge to that fortunate state of affairs could come from an outside group bent on public recognition of homosexuals' rights in the forces—the American, or more recently, British scenario—, but then antimilitary sentiments among such groups in France all but preclude that eventuality, or else from a European Court of Justice ruling in a case originating in another country. In either case, the French military would have to abandon its informal traditions, and make its norms explicit, thereby emphasizing equality between the heterosexual majority and homosexual minorities, and making the former uncomfortable. Formalization would also legitimize, indeed set the seal of approval on, homosexuality, encourage litigation, and make the issue politically sensitive. But we are by no means there yet.

4 B. Leadership and training

For a very long time, authoritarian leadership and top-down managerial styles substituted for oaths of allegiance rendered meaningless in the 19th century by a rapid succession of regimes²⁶ : rigid obedience was regarded as a pledge of loyalty. Liberalization came to the Navy and Air Force in the mid-thirties, mainly

²⁵ ROBERT & FABRE, 1993. [6]

²⁶ MARTIN, 1981. [7]

because of weak leader-to-led ratios and technological complexity : morale and positive commitment replaced stern discipline. The Army lagged behind for fully four decades. It was not until the late seventies that the pace of technological modernization forced it eventually to regard traditional, authoritarian leadership as dysfunctional. It is now in the vanguard : formal leadership courses, emphasizing the autonomy and initiative of individual service members, have been gradually introduced into military schools. Though it would be rash to imply a direct causal link, it is interesting to note that such a development followed on the heels of the introduction of a new field communications system ("Rita") which permits lateral exchanges, relativizes the vertical command dimension, and has materialized the shift from bureaucratic to matrix organization now under way.

Other recent innovations in training include the stress newly laid on foreign languages and organizational cultures of neighboring countries' military establishments, media culture and the proper handling of relations with journalists in a democracy, knowledge of civilian society and institutions as well as international relations : political skills are now the order of the day. There again, the Army leads the pack, as training in the Navy and Air Force is still mostly taken up with engineering and sailing/ flying techniques. But then its officer training courses are now generally one year longer than in the other two services. A development of particular interest in the new context has been the move, imposed by the MoD civilian leadership, towards a "purple" culture among senior officers through the amalgamation of the various service war colleges into a single interservice institution (1993). The new Defense College combines professional military training with heavy emphasis on geopolitics.

5. CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

The picture which prevails today as regards the relationships among armed forces, State and society closely resembles that of the eighties. Short of a hypothetical (and problematic) switch to an AVF, what few changes have occurred since 1990 cannot be expected to produce a major disruption of the existing state of affairs, especially as it has generally been regarded as satisfactory. The only noteworthy trends so far reside in an improved public image and in a partial, as yet barely visible, redefinition of soldier-statesman relationships.

5 A. General perspective

The last three to four decades, marked by the prolonged crisis of the sixties (adjustment to the retreat from empire and to an independent nuclear deterrence strategy) and the seventies (adjustment to adverse sociocultural change : hedonistic emancipation of individuals from normative constraints), have witnessed a gradual decline of the mass armed force and a shift from "radical" to "pragmatic professionalism"²⁷ among officers and, to some extent, NCOs. While one may not have seen the end of the former yet, the latter is by now almost complete. It presents a balanced picture of successful external integration and internal cohesion

²⁷ The shift from radical to pragmatic professionalism, as described and analysed in JANOWITZ, 1960 [8], occurred among French officers mostly in the late sixties, seventies and early eighties.

based on communitarian/ normative orientations which guarantee functional effectiveness. It can certainly be fine-tuned, for instance by attracting more candidates to officership so as to make the corps socially more representative, but one does not see it easily disrupted in any fundamental way for the foreseeable future as far as its professional component is concerned.

5 B. Social integration

The legal status of service members, defined in 1972, remains unchanged. Their civil liberties continue to be strictly restricted when it comes to partisan politics, elected office, or union membership, all deemed incompatible with service in uniform²⁸. Moonlighting, forbidden by law, is virtually unheard of. Such restrictions are widely accepted as natural among those concerned, just as are discipline and obedience, in keeping with a still strongly normative internal culture. High organizational commitment levels are typical of the military when compared to large-scale civilian organizations of the public sector.

Freedom of expression, though the official policy is nominally liberal, is subject to informal restraints in practice. The fear of politicization and the fact that the hierarchical dimension has traditionally prevailed over the professional dimension, especially in the Army (in France, the senior service), are mainly responsible for such a state of affairs. This has unfortunate consequences in that it tends to hinder military thought and a healthy debate within the profession, such as is to be found, for instance, in the United States. The rising level of higher education among officers, who now routinely hold graduate degrees before they reach senior appointments, is likely to bring pressure to bear on such restrictions in future²⁹.

Though wide fluctuations are apparent among services, units, specialties and ranks according to time, place and circumstances, nomadic lifestyles, 24 hours availability for service and frequent separations from family continue to shape the relationship of individual service members to the military organization. However, several recent developments have tended to soften these role expectations. The end of the East-West stand-off and subsequent reduction in force have led to slightly relaxed unit readiness requirements³⁰. The principle of (limited) compensation in time and/ or money has been introduced for service during unsocial hours. Retrenchment has produced installation closures, which should have reduced the opportunities for permanent changes of station. Many hoped, as a result, to see functional and geographic mobility increasingly dissociated, and military families allowed to lead the more normal lives to which they aspire. In fact, the benefits of such a slowing pace of residential turbulence are unevenly distributed, and some, especially among Army officers, have actually seen their conditions worsen in the last three years. What little extra stability has been achieved is offset, more frequently than used to be the case, by unaccompanied tours abroad as part of the new missions, and by a rising number of "geographic bachelors".

²⁸ BOËNE, 1990. [9]

²⁹ The drive for enlarged freedoms of expression/ publication has already started : HOFFMANN, 1993. [10]

³⁰ BOËNE, 1992. [11]

Pay conditions now place career service members among the better paid public servants at most levels. Short-term rank and file volunteers, who barely draw the minimum wage, are distinctly underprivileged in that regard when stationed in continental France, but they enjoy very high pay when on operational duty overseas³¹. Comparisons with the private sector are favorable for non-commissioned officers, while they are rather unfavorable for officers, especially early and late in their careers, at corresponding levels of responsibility. There is however little that is specific to the military here since that is the case throughout the civil service (though not in nationalized utility or industrial companies).

Draftees, who grumbled in the seventies when pocket money was less than 5% of the minimum wage, now seem to be content with 10 to 30%, according to rank : whether or not there is a direct link between the two, protests against the draft are at an all-time low (though that is no guarantee for the future).

Paid vacation time for professionals now exceeds eight weeks, spent (according to survey findings) in locations and activities which are not substantially different from those of civilians. However, it is not rare for a service member in an operational unit not to be able to exhaust his vacation credit due to work overloads or temporary overseas assignments. Other entitlements include clothing allowances, a general 75% reduction on train fares inside France, extra compensation for moving expenses, living in isolated military installations, and the like.

Though the gap with the private sector is the source of some relative deprivation among officers, surveys indicate that all in all the material side of the military condition does not constitute a major problem, especially at a time when unemployment outside runs at 12% of the labor force. The unique feature of professional military life—the immediate enjoyment of a retirement pension upon completion of 15 years' active-duty service for NCOs, 25 for officers—looms large in most military minds, as was revealed when it came under attack in the mid-eighties. The fact that such deferred compensation can be combined with income derived from a second, civilian career make it one of the basic attractions of a military career and a powerful commitment-sustaining factor while on active-duty service³².

In the absence of military unions, collective representation of interests and codetermination of service conditions are problematic. An advisory body called *Conseil supérieur de la fonction militaire* (CSFM), set up some twenty years ago, does not seem to be regarded by most as good enough. Great care has been taken to avoid electing representatives, who are drawn by lot from among those who have put up their candidacies. In the face of the complex social issues they have to deal with, lack of professionalism among those designated is also a problem. As with the freedom of expression issue, institutional innovation is to be expected on that score in the not too distant future.

³¹ One suspects an undeclared policy designed to keep them in the barracks at home and boost individual morale in the face of risk to life and limb abroad.

³² On these and adjacent aspects, BOËNE, 1990 [9]; also, de la GORCE et alii, 1992. [12]

Although both ends of the socio-economic and educational spectrum are distinctly underrepresented³³, the drafted component of the armed services will by and large constitute a social mirror of the nation's male youth for as long as conscription is with us in its present form.

As regards professionals and volunteers, endorecruitment is low (about 10%) among NCOs, but much higher among officers, especially those destined for long careers and senior positions. Proportions of 30 to 45% officers whose fathers were officers themselves are not uncommon, and the figures would be substantially higher if uncles, cousins and grandfathers were taken into consideration. While this is in keeping with high levels of "social reproduction" among elites in the country at large, it surpasses the rates observed in most other professions, reflecting both the uniqueness of a military officer's calling and the *partial* value gap that continues to separate an increasingly individualistic society from its officer corps³⁴. Endogamy—service members marrying daughters of professional cadres—follows a similar pattern : it is fairly low among NCOs, but rises rather dramatically when one surveys the higher echelons. The size of military families, with fertility rates of 2.1 against 1.5 in the population at large, is now larger on average than that of civilian families, though a minority of traditionalist military spouses' very high fertility rates account for much of the difference.

On the other hand, were it not for the higher frequency of geographic mobility, the lifestyles of military families would converge closely with those on the outside. Residence for a majority of married cadres with dependents is now off-base, which de-emphasizes the kind of personal services traditionally supplied by the military on post, and serves to highlight the importance of the civil-military interface at the individual and family level. Membership in civilian associations (mainly art and sporting clubs, or parent-teacher conferences) is more frequent among military families than among their civilian counterparts. Surveys administered in the mid-eighties showed that social relations with civilian friends ranked high in the general sociability of military personnel in about 50% of cases on average³⁵.

Similarly, among military wives over 40% are gainfully employed outside the home today, and an additional 17% are listed as job seekers : a spectacular increase when compared with 1985 figures (30 and 4%, respectively), which bring those rates into line with civilian figures if their husbands' nomadic lifestyles did not make it difficult for them to pursue careers worthy of the name.

³³ Medical and "social" exemptions, affecting school drop-outs more than proportionately, have exceeded 25% in the last two decades, while elite graduate students have tended to legally evade service under the draft.

³⁴ According to the official thesis, this age-old trend is beneficial in that it helps sustain cherished traditions and norms, and informally fosters "institutional memory". Conceding that this true as far as it goes, one must realize that it also acts as a depressant on outside candidacies, since young people without internal connections who would consider military careers as officers may well fear that they would be at a disadvantage because of a lack of implicit knowledge of arcane mores and successful career lines. Not to mention the image problem involved at a time when social representativeness has come to be a major factor in the legitimacy of public institutions. The system's leaders have acknowledged this and launched bona fide efforts to widen and diversify officer recruitment, with only limited effects so far.

³⁵ On divergence and convergence in civilian and military lifestyles, THOUVENIN, "La condition militaire aujourd'hui", in de la GORCE et alii, 1992, pp.13-28. [12]

The extent of the military's social integration can also be assessed in religious and ideological terms. The French version of a rare survey conducted in 1992 as part of a European comparison of Army, Navy and Air Force officers in eight countries included items designed to tap attitudes which, because they are regarded as private matters outside the normal scope of official social-scientific investigations, had never been studied before then³⁶. Results on the subject of religious affiliation and practice were as follows : 93% Catholics by birth and upbringing, less than 2% Protestants, 4% without religious education (only 1% refused to answer the question) ; 18% regular churchgoers, 54% irregular, 15% agnostics, 10% atheists (3% non-respondents). Military officers thus appear to be only slightly more traditional in the latter respect than the population at large.

The picture which emerges from answers to the ideological items places them firmly in the liberal-democratic mainstream, though conservative overtones are not absent, as the following table will show :

Question : In your personal estimation, is the ideal society that which...

	Strongly agree + tend to agree	Tend not to agree + disagree strongly	Don't know	No answer
A. ...grants its individuals total freedom ?	13.5%	84.2%	0.3%	2.0%
B. ...seeks a viable balance between public interests or dominant values on the one hand, individual interests and preferences, on the other ?	92.8%	4.0%	1.1%	2.0%
C. ...is collectivistic and egalitarian ?	4.9%	91.4%	1.9%	1.9%
D. ...is communitarian and hierarchical ?	31.0%	63.4%	2.5%	3.2%
E. ...refers to a common civilization (for instance European) rather than to a purely national identity ?	42.7%	52.7%	2.5%	2.1%
F. ...is multi-ethnic and multicultural ?	24.8%	71.0%	1.9%	2.3%
G. ...accords top priority to its nationals and national interests ?	40.1%	55.7%	1.7%	2.3%
H. ...is entirely regulated by market forces ?	18.0%	77.9%	1.8%	2.3%
I. ...entrusts the State with corrective powers in the allocation of resources ?	59.2%	35.9	2.7%	2.2%
J. ...grants the State full powers to manage the economy ?	6.8%	89.5%	1.4%	2.3%

For lack of strictly similar data on a cross-section of civilian elites, detailed civil-military comparisons have not proved possible. In the light of other data, however, it is doubtful whether such comparisons would yield major departures, on the part of officers, from prevailing patterns of thought and belief. The French officer corps, which had long been socially at variance with its parent society earlier in this century, has grown much more responsive to its dominant values and lifestyles.

³⁶ ERGOMAS survey of French officers, 1992. [3]

5 C. Use of troops in aid of the civilian authorities

The same survey confirmed what has been obvious for a long time : that the military is by no means averse to acting as an emergency force whenever disaster, natural or man-made, strikes in France or abroad³⁷. Such occurrences provide opportunities to test its capacity to react quickly to unforeseen circumstances, as well as to improve its image in the eyes of the population. Troops have been used for that purpose on a number of occasions in the last few years, to clean up beaches, rescue stranded people in heavily flooded areas and a variety of other tasks. Conversely, missions such as the maintenance of public order³⁸, or substituting for striking civil servants or utility workers, are distinctly unpopular with the military³⁹, because they fail to conform to their self-conceptions and detract from their generally positive public image. Such missions, which had not been rare up until the 1960s, have been shunned since then by civilian authorities, basically for legitimacy reasons.

5 D. An improved public image

A dim awareness of the implications of the new context has earned the military a better public image in the populace⁴⁰ : in today's Western societies, the cause of peace and suffering humanity is more popular than war in the name of purely national interests. Belgian survey data have charted this improvement recently⁴¹, and beyond doubt the application of similar instruments in France would produce parallel results. Yearly general survey data collected by the Defense public relations agency (SIRPA) show that the share of favorable opinions about the military, which had risen to over 2/3 in the 1980s (from about 3/5 in the 1970s), is now close to the 80 percent mark.

Media coverage of military issues in the late Cold War period used to be largely indifferent (except when it came to denouncing rights abuses and inequities of one sort or another), betraying a consensus by default on nuclear deterrence strategy and the secondary part played in it by conventional forces. Soldiers, especially when wearing blue helmets, are now presented in an almost systematically favorable light. The adversarial relationship between journalists and service members on conventional theaters of operations (as exemplified by the Gulf War, where the press had to be content with official briefings) is absent in most peacekeeping missions. This does not mean that forces/ media relations do not have to be managed, not only centrally but in the field. A striking new development is that the military are learning fast to become "soldier-communicators".

³⁷ Such missions are deemed "highly" or "rather desirable" in France by 88% of respondents, and abroad by 72%. ERGOMAS survey, 1992. [3]

³⁸ Law and order missions normally fall within the jurisdiction of the Gendarmerie.

³⁹ ERGOMAS survey, 1992, pp.96 and 108. Percentages of officers who judge those tasks "highly" or "rather undesirable" are 75.6% et 92.3%, respectively.

⁴⁰ A young French officer confided to this writer not long ago that wearing a military uniform on the streets has been a whole new experience in the last few years, and the change from the previous period is definitely for the better.

⁴¹ MANIGART, 1993. [13]

5 E. New trends in soldier/ statesman relations ?

These new media attitudes have even produced a phenomenon almost unheard of since the immediate post-World War II period : the popular general⁴². The case of Lt.Gen. Philippe Morillon is as yet unique, but it raises interesting organizational and political issues. It seems as if his panache in handling thorny situations in Bosnia, and the aura the press created about him in France and elsewhere, irritated some of his military superiors in Paris : the Ministry lost no time in removing him from the limelight. A "humanitarian" general turning to politics while still on active duty would have the potential for changing the civil-military equation only to a limited extent ; several would tip the scales more substantially, but the signals discreetly sent out by those in authority indicate that such situations will be guarded against in future. However, things--in France or elsewhere--might prove more difficult than it seems.

The "new" missions assigned to a military commander originate from international mandates, but his national authorities can always choose to withdraw their military contingent ; the orders he receives come through multinational chains of command, but his career is still in the hands of his superiors back home. Criss-crossing lines of authority and divided loyalties have the potential for enlarging the latitude allowed military officers in the field and for granting them independent legitimacy and political clout. So far, when breaking point is reached, national governments usually have their way : as an Italian general put it recently, *"I obey orders from New York only as long as they do not contradict orders from Rome"*. But what if, given that the public opinion dimension is ever present, the legitimacy resources of military commanders are such as to tempt them to become politically active ? The issue of democratic civil control may become serious once again⁴³ since political skills are now undoubtedly a precious asset in an officer engaged in negotiations in the field as part of international third party actions, and the next generation of commanders will come to acquire such skills through normal professional training. In the years to come, attempts at codification of relations among international umbrella organizations, states, media operators, commanders, multinational staffs and troops in the field are to be expected. There is reason to doubt that such clarification will go far enough to solve the problem entirely.

In the countries involved in peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance, there seems to be little public awareness of the potential fall-out from the master trend to a dilution of national sovereignty. It may be too early to decide whether or not such developments contain the seed of sinister long-term consequences. In any case, nobody as yet has expressed any fears in France that the situation might get out of hand, nor would such fears, in all likelihood, be justified for the time being.

⁴² Gen. de Gaulle became famous, in 1940-45 and after, as a politician rather than as an army officer. The only other military figure to attain popularity and turn to politics (at the invitation of politicians in office and after retirement) since the sixties was Gen. Marcel Bigeard.

⁴³ This issue, as American scholars will know, has come to a boil in the U.S. recently : KOHN, 1994 [14].

5 F. Organizational format : sociopolitical aspects

Functional considerations in the new context, as mentioned earlier, invite an increase in the relative weight of professionals and volunteers. Some even argue a fairly strong case for an AVF. Yet, such a drastic step is problematic. Not that the old fear of a praetorian professional force still plays a major role : it seems to have vanished into thin air⁴⁴. But in a country that has not had a true AVF for more than two centuries⁴⁵, and has relied on universal conscription as the hallmark of political citizenship, such a major shift would have deep symbolic meaning : the socio-political underpinnings of the republican tradition are at stake.

The problem is that the legitimacy of universal conscription is being undermined by the pincer trends of declining force levels and rising professionalization. Conscript manpower requirements, in future, may no longer guarantee that a clear majority of young males will serve under arms, thus belying the principle of universality. In fact, the chances are that by the year 2000 those called to the colors will hardly exceed half of any age-cohort coming of military age⁴⁶.

To take up at least some of the slack, the only remedy seems to be a widening of the civilian forms of conscript service that used to attract those who did not wish to bear arms, either for reasons of conscience or of convenience. Such civilian forms, which were instituted in the 1960s and broadened in the 1980s, until very recently accounted for only 20,000 slots in international cooperation, civil defense, fire brigades, police forces, domestic welfare organizations, teaching, and even private firms in need of brilliant young men fresh from business school to be used as foreign market scouts⁴⁷.

These civilian forms of national service are problematic, too. They tend to aggravate *in-service* inequality, thus adding to the basic inequality *before* legally-obligated service. Indeed, since technology has made skills less interchangeable (and since the short duration of service has made remedial education to restore a semblance of equal opportunity extremely difficult), within the forces as without, the treatment reserved for draftees, military or otherwise, has become diverse : the rifleman undergoing basic infantry training, the business analyst discharging his obligation to the State in the New York branch of a private firm, or the young

⁴⁴ The shift from radical to pragmatic professionalism, as well as the absence of a strong nationalist, antiliberal component of public opinion which might look to the armed forces as a rallying point against parliamentary democracy (as was the case from the late 19th century until the end of colonial wars), are enough to account for the removal of old republican fears regarding the potential praetorian leanings of an all-professional armed force.

⁴⁵ Most of the 1815-1872 period saw the Army espouse a *quasi*-volunteer format : a lottery ensured a steady flow of men entering the service for long periods (6 to 8 years). Those unfortunate enough to be so designated had the possibility of buying substitutes.

⁴⁶ On paper, the rate of medical, mental and "social" exemptions is no more than 25%. However, due to the fast-growing proportion of educational deferments, the ratio of those who serve in a given year to the volume of the corresponding age cohort is close to 60%. In-service discharge rates (accidents, family reasons, etc.) currently add some 6 to 8% of those serving to the rate of legal evasion, bringing the total of those who discharge their obligations *to the end* perilously close to half. Hence, the preoccupations of those in office, and of many others.

⁴⁷ *Volontaires du service national en entreprise* : VSNE, a controversial measure from the start.

scientist engaged in defense R & D activities that will look good in his résumé, now live in entirely different service worlds.

Another potential problem is that if new forms of civilian national service are added to absorb surplus demographic resources of up to 50,000 or more, they will no longer be allocated solely on a voluntary basis to those draftees who specifically apply for them, but at least partly on the basis of compulsion. If such is the case, insuperable constitutional difficulties will be involved, not to mention those raised by provisions, in the 1950 European Convention on human rights, against forced labor. Also, while the "old" forms of civilian service fulfilled social needs that neither the market (through lack of recipient solvency) nor public bureaucracies (due to budget constraints) cared to meet, the "new" forms run the risk of being regarded as unfair competition by union workers in more than one sector of activity. Finally, if the ultimate rationale for civilian service is formal equality of citizenship duties, then (a) medical exemptions should be kept to a minimum by applying civilian economy standards (which would add another 100,000 servers), and (b) exclusion of young women becomes unjustifiable. We would then be talking of a proposition involving well over half a million people, with attendant complexity and bureaucratization. In other words, civilian conscription is intrinsically more difficult to legitimate and implement than a military draft (the more so as the latter enjoys the status of a hallowed tradition).

A factor of which French military analysts outside the social science community seem only dimly aware is the gap in aspirations and values that separates those attracted by civilian and military forms of national service. When Charles Moskos first raised that issue⁴⁸, he wrote about "*the long shadow of William James*", the pragmatic pacifist who thought up the notion of a conscripted moral equivalent of war. Recent surveys conducted in Italy and Germany⁴⁹ amply bear out the fear that, instead of uniting a country's youth in the discharge of one's citizen's duties to the community, a dual, civilian and military, type of national service might well divide or even fragment it. Any bureaucratic dysfunction, any organized resistance by a determined minority of protesters would soon wipe out the idealism and give way to the worst possible outcome : cynicism.

Such being the fears and intuitive suspicions of many, one can understand that to some⁵⁰, an AVF would at least be simpler ; it would also be better adapted to the new military context. Under post-modern conditions, at a time when every social group stakes out a claim to its own lifestyle and identity, it could even stray from social representativeness and cultivate a unique functional ethos without loss of legitimacy.

⁴⁸ MOSKOS, 1988. [15]

⁴⁹ NUCIARI, 1994 [16], KOHR, 1994 [17].

⁵⁰ While military professionals do not unanimously relish the idea, the circle of prominent politicians who have declared interest in an all-professional force (among them candidate Jacques Chirac in the fall of 1994, former president Giscard d'Estaing) has grown. According to M. Marsaud, a leading Gaullist proponent of new civilian forms of national service, such forms would gently open the way to an all-volunteer force... (which may explain the tepid enthusiasm they evoke and why current plans along these lines remain deliberately small-scale : they are conceived of as provisional tinkering with the present system, awaiting the time when the real thing, an AVF, will become possible).

Yet, there are those who fret that once the notion of citizenship duties is let go of, it will be extremely difficult to get it back front and center⁵¹ : there is no turning back the clock in that regard, one suspects, unless major disaster strikes, whether in the form of total war, depression or natural calamity. Many officers find it difficult to renounce the measure of normative influence they still have on French society through military socialization of conscripts. Many, on the left as well as on the right, would rally round the notion of a drafted Territorial Army more or less along Swiss militia lines. But there, the question is : in a nation that boasts a higher density of Gendarmerie and police forces to the square kilometer than most comparable countries, is there a real need for such a new organization ? Would it not uselessly divert cadres and instructors needed elsewhere ? Would it not be wiser to apply the draft to the Reserves ? The counter-question runs thus : to make tomorrow's Reserves truly effective as replacement or supplementary forces, they would have to be rather small, which does not serve the purpose of maintaining a link between the forces and the idea of political citizenship.

There appear to be as many good reasons to continue to draft as not to. Public opinion is not so much divided on the issue as confused or deeply ambivalent. Survey data regularly show 2/3 of respondents attached to the draft tradition, but the same proportion opine that the defense function would be more effectively discharged by a fully professional force... How can the circle be squared ? The long-awaited public debate never comes, for a fairly simple reason : cleavages on this issue (which, to boot, also has its technical side, unsurpassed when it comes to levels of complexity) are orthogonal to the main, left-right, political divide. Maybe a referendum would put an end to the quandary (it would have the advantage of placing the organizational format, whether old or new, on firm ground as regards legitimacy, *if* the results are clear enough), or failing that the toss of a coin...

One likely outcome is that events, external or internal, will overtake us : the system's growing inequities will perhaps undermine its legitimacy and eventually derail it, or the rest of West European armed forces will go all-professional—the Belgians, the Dutch have already joined the British, the Italians are wondering, some Germans are thinking about it—and France will perhaps have to follow suit.

CONCLUSION

"The French, like the Chinese, are slow", Morris Janowitz once told the present writer in the early 1980s. Some 15 years later, the truth of his aphoristic judgment—leaving aside the comparison—seems to hold for the former. In trying to place the salient fact amidst a maze of complex issues, this paper has argued that France reacted more slowly and cautiously than most of its allies to the events of the early 1990s, and the major strategic consequences they produced. The recently

⁵¹ One argument frequently put forward by those who favor retaining the draft is that an AVF would mean a short-term rise in youth unemployment by 200,000 or more. Recent studies, however, suggest that the numbers involved would hardly exceed 20,000. See LAUTMAN, 1991. [18]

published DWP has outlined doctrinal evolution, but practical adjustment, grappling with organizational effectiveness problems, is still in its early stages.

However, more significant changes appear in the offing. Retrenchment imposed by the need to reduce ballooning public deficits, will effect what the Cold War's demise in and of itself could not achieve. This, together with the process of adaptation to post-Cold War new missions, is likely to set off a chain-reaction in organizational and civil-military equilibria.

Another source of change is Europe : France has determined that it will, partly from necessity, partly out of authentic European sentiment, become a driving engine of cooperation in defense matters. The consequences will be most visible in efforts to set up an integrated defense industrial base, in multinational formations and operations, and after a while, in cultural evolution towards a true European military identity.

Uncertainty prevails as regards the future of the armed forces' organizational format. A shift to an all-professional force would mean a revolution in cultural rather than in structural terms, since current trends are bringing the French military closer to the AVF model. It appears on the cards in the longer term even though recent formal decisions point the other way : many who advocate a limited national service system privately offer it as a smooth way of ushering in an all-professional force without antagonizing the still sizeable portion of public opinion which remains attached to the notion of citizen service.

Without a doubt, all things equal, a similar exercise assessing continuity and change in five years' time would yield substantially different results.

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Case Study: Netherlands

Dr Jan van der Meulen

SECOND WORKING PAPER, NOVEMBER 1995.

Not to be quoted.

NEW SOLDIERS, DIFFERENT MANAGERS: THE REMAKING OF THE ROYAL NETHERLANDS ARMY .

Project: The Western European military establishment. A re-assessment.

Funded by US Army Research Institute for Behavioural and Social Sciences.

Meeting: Beverley, 17 - 20 November, 1995.

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1. Introduction.

In the spring of 1994 during a meeting with key military and civilian employees, the commander-in-chief of the Royal Netherlands Army, lieutenant-general Hans Couzy, issued a 'mission statement'. In some 200 words goals, qualities and profile of the army had been formulated, which ideally should serve as referential themes and motivational sources throughout the organization. Clearly the relevance of such a mission statement reflects the process of major change the army is undergoing after the Cold War. It also suggests a degree of responsiveness to managerial tools which have been well-tested elsewhere. In fact, upon invitation leaders from trade and industry took on advisory roles with regard to formulating, presenting and implementing this mission-statement.¹

While primarily for internal purposes, the mission statement did not fail to attract attention outside the army, drawing quite some comments, criticism included. Surely the latter did not come as a surprise, because any statement of this scope and length is based on numerous choices and has no possibility whatsoever for any detail. Together with its official explanation and additional elaborations however, the mission statement does suggest the way in which the army leadership projects the identity and image of the developing organization. While evaluation was being foreseen and changes were thought possible, maybe even probable in due time, the mission statement was never meant to be an arbitrary document to be subjected to free-floating discussion. In the words of the commander-in-chief: 'From now on the mission statement should be shared throughout the army'.

In this second working paper I take the different subsections of the mission statement as points of departure for an overview of our four areas of major concern: strategic planning, operational effectiveness, human resource development and civil-military relations. With (other) catchwords: policy, structure, culture, integration. In fact, the five subsections roughly fit in with this framework, although now and again borders are blurring. In every paragraph, after quoting the mission

¹The mission-statement-project was supervised by professional organization-advisers from Burson-Marsteller, well-known to the American Army.

statement, I will briefly linger over the text, its (official) explanation, as well as over elaborations and comments and then point out the broader context of trends, issues and dilemma's. Notions and insights from the first working paper will be implied, referred to and, occasionally, developed. This second working paper can be read as an addendum which summarizes major areas of change and concern through a close reading of the Army's official self-image.

2. Strategic planning.

*'The Army, a key member of our country's armed forces, is dedicated to co-operate internationally to the defence of the Netherlands and our allies. On a global basis, it safeguards peace, security and stability, through peace operations, humanitarian missions and disaster relief.'*²

Instead of 'key member', the original Dutch version of the mission statement uses the word 'indispensable', which, if anything, is an even stronger expression. 'Being the largest Service of the armed forces', the explanation goes, 'the Army plays a vital and often leading role'. According to an elaboration of the mission-statement by the commander-in-chief, as a rule land forces have played a decisive role in military operations and as current crisis-management suggests this situation will continue in the future. (Speech by lieutenant-general H.A. Couzy, delivered to the officer's association on 12 Oktober, 1994. Published in Marineblad, maart 1995))

It would be a bit unfair to juxtapose the observation that in the mean time apparently the Bosnian war has been brought to a standstill through massive air-strikes. Besides, it could be argued that safeguarding a lasting peace still depends on the deployment of groundtroops. Apart from that, as the influential monthly 'Militaire Spectator' (MS, 1994,7) suggests, interservice cooperation is being treated rather offhandedly, or even reluctantly, in the mission statement. It does not seem to do justice to developments on the level of doctrine as well as organization. (Working paper 1, p.2) On the one hand no doubt this position reflects traditional service separateness. On the other hand,

² I make use of the official translation of the mission statement, which is being circulated in an English version, explanation included. Whenever there is a relevant difference with the original Dutch text, I will say so. The label 'mission statement' itself, is invariably used in English. Supposedly, there is no suitable native translation.

being the major 'victim' of restructuring and downsizing, the army probably feels itself being forced to emphasize its uniqueness, indeed its indispensability. Even when speculations about future specialization in the maritime sector by first and foremost contributing to a Euronavy, are premature as well as service-biased themselves, they do suggest the degree to which institutional certainties have been falling apart after the Cold War. (Ger Teitler, *Tasten naar de toekomst. Geopolitieke beschouwingen over instabiliteit en ordening. Marineblad, juli/augustus 1990*) One could contend that each country, in proportion to its size and meaning, has to come to terms with its own (military) overstretch.

Certainly international cooperation is one of the main ways in dealing with the latter. (Working paper 1, p.4,5) Although the mission-statement does not mention the utmost symbol of this trend, the binational German-Dutch army corps, the impression is warranted that it is somewhat more at ease with internationalization than with inter-service integration. (MS, op.cit.) Even letting go of a doctrine of its own does not seem to be anathema to the army. (Couzy, 1994) As far as peacekeeping is concerned, the British doctrine is seen as setting a standard. (P.H. de Vries, K.A. Gijssbers, *Doctrine on the move. MS, 1995,9*)

Although the mission-statement sets in with institutional considerations, the army's two principal tasks are at the centre of the first subsection. As the explanation underlines, defense of the country and of allied territory is on an equal footing with globally safeguarding peace, security and stability. (Instead of 'peace operations' the Dutch version speaks of 'crisis management'). The commander-in-chief contends that while defense of the country is the army's essential legitimation, crisismanagement not only is of the same value, but right now is the most urgent one of the two tasks. This judgement fits in, as it should, with official political agendasetting. (Working paper 1, p.5,6)

Whether the relation between the two tasks really has been settled is somewhat doubtful. It has been argued that, if indeed 'defense' stays on as the fundamental priority task, this should have consequences for the structure of the organisation and the means which it has at its disposal. (MS,

1994,7) It has been hinted at from different sides (professional and political) that new missions cannot be allowed to jeopardize classical tasks, neither in terms of equipment and mentality, nor vis á vis scarce time for exercise. On top of that there has been continuing insistence that more precise criteria should be formulated for decisionmaking about when and how Dutch soldiers should and could be contributing to new missions of whatever kind. (Working paper 1, p.6)

Balancing political desirability and military feasibility is at the forefront of this debate, ever more so after the fatefull role a Dutch army batallion played during the fall of Srebrenica. Tested against the most recent listing of criteria by the government, almost certainly Dutch soldiers would not have been deployed to protect 'safe areas' under such a mandate and with the kind of weaponry they were equipped with. At the time, that's exactly what (part of) the military leadership felt and said, a fact which strongly adds to the bitterness within the army because of 'Srebrenica'.

So while in general there appears to be a broad consensus about tasks and priorities, a closer look suggests ambiguities which under circumstances especially make themselves felt at the political-military interface. Certainly a mission-statement is not the right document to ponder on the possibility of this kind of frictions. Instead, rightly so it takes tasks as given. It could be argued however, that it should have gone one step further, by including a sentence about 'given by whom?' A statement of mission by the Air Force suggests how to do it: 'As Royal Air Force we defend the airspace and we support land- and sea-operations, where ever and when ever the State of the Netherlands demands us to'.³ There need not be a shadow of doubt that the army endorses the same ingrained attitude, but by explicitly saying so, especially in a mission-statement, it would have shown a relevant additional sensitivity for its political environment.

³The rest of the text reads like this: 'We are prepared to contribute worldwide to crisismanagement operations and humanitarian mission. With our weaponsystems we provide Air power, independently and together with allied and friendly nations. We guarantee the availability and deployability of all our means'. Although a statement of mission, the air force has not issued this text as 'mission-statement'. Neither has the navy. The latter service has distributed a summary of its new Operational Concept ('Safety from sea') among its members. Explicitly this summary takes as its point of departure the White Paper in which priorities have been formulated. Admittedly the army circulates a brochure ('Building the future') which does the same. This makes the lack of spill-over to the mission statement all the more conspicuous.

3. Organizational effectiveness.

'A flexible and agile organisation, this army is prepared to carrying out its duties effectively and at very short notice. Its effective combat power, efficient logistics and state-of-the-art equipment support the collective efforts of military and civilian personnel and its reservists'

'Agile' is a translation of 'slagvaardig' which literally means 'ready for battle', but also is a colloquial metaphor for 'prepared for quick action', 'alert'. The first sentence of this subsection can be said to paraphrase the threefold qualification of the military which has become a standing expression ever since the first post-Cold-War White Paper (1991): flexible, mobile and immediately deployable.

Loosing half of its personnel strength, this kind of force practically had no choice than to abandon draftees. (Working paper 1, p.5). Elaborating the mission-statement, the commander-in-chief stresses that the new professional army recognizes only one type of soldier, and that the short-timers should be treated as full-fledged colleagues. Evidently, this is an ideal to be worked upon and not something to be realised overnight. The degree to which traditionally the difference between of ficers and non-commisioned officers has been cultivated, suggests the difficulty of vertical professional integration. Something similar can be said about the relationship between military and civilian employees, the latter bound to eventually make up one-third of overall personnel-strength. As of late reservists are depicted more and more in a flexible-force-concept, made fit for peacekeeping operations. Essentially this concept is in the process of being developed, as so much else is in the army. The fact that for some 15 years to come, conscripts constitute the bulk of the mobilization-reservoir for the main defence task, could have been mentioned at least in the explanation.

'Effective(!) combat power, efficient(!) logistics and state-of-the-art equipment'. appear to be an apt trinity in this context, although equations can be made, also including personnel related variables, which suggest that overall organizational- and cost-effectiveness, falls short of what it could and should be. (Gert de Nooy & Jan Geert Siccama, De kosten van de krijgsmacht: een sleutel tot herijking? Atlantisch Perspectief, 4,5, 1995) Surely this kind of analysis, among other things

depends on the way one views the relationship between tasks, services and allies. Essentially political assessments are at stake, not necessarily only in the field of foreign policy.

Coming back to the mission-statement, it might be argued that 'combat-power' is too crude a term for what the military nowadays is supposed to deliver. Especially while in elaborations almost routinely lipservice is being paid to the Janowitzian notion of 'minimum force', while not forgetting the possibility of 'maximum' force (Couzy, MS, 1994,7), 'proportionate' for instance, would have been a suitable adjective, side by side with 'effective'. A mission-statement aiming for new times, might make a merit of formulating this kind of nuances.

Alongside professionalization, a managerial about-face (Working paper 1, p. 8,9) is one of the more conspicuous structural changes. 'Units with Result Responsibility', are given a degree of freedom to realize explicitly stated goals. Setting priorities within their budget as well as endorsing personnel policies of their own, are among the tools of economic self-reliance. Specific mission-statements symbolize this semi-independence within an organizational archipelago.

It is being recognized that this process of decentralisation entails a break with the fixation on procedures. On the one hand a major cut in central-staffs are thought to be conducive. On the other hand a general change of culture is on the agenda. Part of the latter is implied in the third section of the mission-statement.

'The Army's operational success is determined by the combination of skills and dedication of each individual and the ability to function effectively as a team. Leadership is based on mutual trust and individual initiative. Discipline, mental and physical strength, and comradeship are key characteristics of our Army'.

A new style of leadership is looked upon as the cultural cornerstone of decentralization and self-reliance. 'Individual initiative' is the keyword in this context, while mutual 'trust' is a timely phrase. Taken as such, this kind of conceptual manoeuvring is hardly new. A preoccupation with 'leadership' is more or less of a constant within the military. A couple of years ago, the army had its

'leadership year' and right now the air force summarize its restructuring under the heading 'Perspective on leadership'. The interesting thing to watch is whether the structural change towards delegation will bring about an additional and visible change in leadership styles.

A couple of incidents during the peace-keeping mission in Bosnia suggest that initiative as a leadership-principle still has its limits. In the early phase of the mission two sergeants, while in Sarajevo, refused to return with their unit to a certain spot because they judged it as too risky. Isn't 'acceptable risk', they argued, supposed to be one of the criteria of our deployment? The sergeants were court-martialed and in the end they were sentenced to four months imprisonment for disobeying orders. Besides, they were dismissed from the army. It has been argued not only that this harsh treatment not only contradicts the prophesying of a new organizational culture, but also calls for a diversification of military law. Operations other than war seem to be in want of different rules and regulations, recognizing the vulnerability of lightly armed peace-keepers.

The second incident occurred in the aftermath of Srebrenica. A colonel anonymously leaked to the press information which seemed to prove that the United Nations beforehand had given up Srebrenica as a safe area. Moreover, a classified UN-document contained an agreement between the generals Smith and Mladic about the evacuation of refugees without safeguarding the position of Muslims. The colonel has been reprimanded and was shifted to a different post. His own defence was that he had acted in the general interest.

Besides suggesting that 'initiative' has its limits, both cases also fit in with a debate on an (additional) 'ethical code' for the military and its personnel. This code should not only reflect the demands and circumstances of new missions, it should also incorporate developing values and norms in broader society. While a consensus on the scope and relevance of this programme may not have been reached, 'ethics' appears to constitute a timely topic. In the words of the commander-in-chief: 'Ethics is about acting in a responsible way (...) Western values and norms need not be always and everywhere the right ones. To gain such an insight it is not only necessary to apply

pay attention to this issue during training and education, it also calls for a permanent reflection on ones behaviour vis á vis generally accepted moral principles. Every soldier, leaders in particular, must be held accountable in this regard. This demands moral and sometimes physical courage as well from military leaders'. (Couzy, MS, 1995,7)

Indirectly related to ethics, is a debate on 'discipline', another catchword in this subsection of the mission statement. The official explanation has it that discipline is an age old cornerstone of the army, but that really begs the question. As yet the meaning of discipline after the draft and its relation to 'civilianization' are not settled. (Working paper 1, p. 10,11,12) It would be important to know whether, among other things, generation is a relevant variable in assessing its nowadays style. Part of the current leadership has an axe to grind with civilianization, so it seems. Military managers who are now in the first phase of their career (entering the military academies after 1980) might have less of a fixation with its supposed excesses. Which is not say that they would lack in institutionalism of their own. As research suggests, even the youngest generation of military officers, in the Netherlands as well as elsewhere, to a certain degree are setting themselves apart from society. (Joseph L. Soeters, Value orientations in military academies. A ten-country study. IUS-paper, Baltimore, 1995) So it waits to be seen how different they will turn out be as managers.

Among quite some soft and/or debatable cultural indicators new standards for physical fitness are rather unequivocal. Whereas 70% of all army personnel has been able to meet them, those who failed to do so might have fears about their future careers. In an organization which is closely monitoring and scoring everybody's performance and which ranks personnel according to prospects (good, doubtful, bad), fear is that any test can tip the balance. Which brings us to the fourth subsection of the mission statement.

4. Human resource development.

'The Army guarantees fair and trustworthy care of its personnel and pays special attention to the needs of those whose duties take them abroad, and their families. It offers a wide range of

opportunities for development and excellent training and education programmes, making it an attractive employer.'

Of the five subsections in the mission-statement probably the latter evokes most scepticism among military and civilian employees. The heavy trimming of personnel-strength (Working paper 1, p.9) causes continuing uncertainties about functions and jobs. From 1991 onwards surveys among personnel suggest rather negative feelings about restructuring policies, and a degree of distrust towards responsible authorities. 'Resistance against change', one of these reserachreports was titled. ('Weerstand tegen verandering', 1993; Intern Imago, 1993) This is not to suggest that the army makes a mock of 'fair and trustworthy care', but only that any such policy has to be practised in circumstances that cannot fail to antagonize quite some members of the organization. An additional problem is that downsizing not just grew in scale during a short period, but that it came on top of recently started human resource management which aimed for individualized career-patterns. So from the point of view of the individual uncertainties seemed to multiply during a process of which the end is not yet being reached. In a way, perhaps it never will, structurally adding a dosis of occupationalism which constantly has to be balanced against institutionalism. One could think of attitudinal packages varying throughout ranks, functions and branches as well as changing in the course of careers. Evidently, wanting to be an 'attractive employer', is not an easy task, though some hint at salaries and compensation would have been helpful, a dry comment from the Militaire Spectator has it. (MS, 163,7). To which might be added that at least extra pay for deployment is generous.

In fact, the latter provision fits in with special attention for the ones who are send abroad as well as their relatives. These are not hollow words. Professionally taking care of the veterans of new missions has grown into a policy of its own, not in the least because old veterans, in particular from the war with Indonesia, during recent years made clear how deep a soldiers bitterness can stick. Seeing the way nowadays soldiers on low-risk-missions are treated and comparing how they are able to communicate with their families, some veterans cannot help feeling some extra bitterness.

While most people would agree that new veterans policies are very much in place, in retrospect many felt embarrassed by the home-coming-party prepared for the soldiers of Srebrenica - which of course was life on television. The prime-minister himself pleaded guilty: in view of what happened in Srebrenica with thousands of moslimmen, this kind of welcome was misguided. It waits to be seen how the soldiers themselves will come to terms with the passive role as witness they were forced to play. One way or the other, new missions in all likelihood will generate new trauma's. The so-called Gulf syndrome has manifested itself with soldiers who were deployed from Cambodia to Angola.

One of the political conclusions after Srebrenica was that training programmes for everything not strictly military would be strengthened. This seemed an indirect way of saying that roles and skills implied in peace-keeping showed shortcomings. On a fundamental level the relationship between classical ('green') tasks and new ('blue') tasks is at stake. (See also the first paragraph) Emphasizing the importance of (extra) training for the latter, while firmly holding on to the relevance of the former, does not necessarily has to be contradictory from a professional point of view. Which is not to say that as yet soldier-diplomat mixtures have found their ideal balance. The fact however that recently a general downsizing of training programmes has been decided upon suggests the kind of inconsistency which budget-cutting-politics have trouble avoiding. This is the other side of 'excellent training and education programmes'.

One of the few training programmes exempted from cuts, was basic military training for the new short-time professional soldiers. The feeling was that they already were on a minimum and of top of that, as a survey showed, generally their capacity for learning calls for more rather than less training. (R. Bergman & M. Waterings, Een onderzoek naar de kwaliteit van BBT-ers bij 41 Schoolbatalion en 42 Pantserinfanteriebatalion. Den Haag, 1995) They do not lack in motivation, on the contrary, without questioning they follow any orders. For nco's and officers, who are used to constantly being asked 'why?' by conscripts, this is quite an experience. It somewhat adds though, to worries that the hard-core of the new professional army will be overly macho and a bit estranged

from society. (Working paper 1, p.12) Which brings us to the last subsection of the mission-statement.

5. Civil-military relations.

'The Royal Netherlands Army aspires to be recognised as a valued member and fundamental part of Dutch society, because of its high performance standards, its openness and its many contributions to our country'.

It is noteworthy that while in all the former subsections of the mission-statement the army says what it is, does, guarantees, stands for, in this latter one it 'aspires to be recognised'. Evidently it sees itself as less of a dominant player in civil-military relations, than in organizational structure and culture. This seems to underscore the point made in the first paragraph about the mission-statement showing more sensitivity for the political environment.

Right now the army enjoys a relatively high level of support and sympathy from public opinion. (Working paper 1, p.12,13) 'Srebrenica' only seemed to confirm this, the public endorsing a much more favourable judgement of the performance by Dutchbat than an important part of the mass-media did. Learning to deal with the press has been another lesson drawn by the political leadership from the happenings in Bosnia. Although this seems important enough, especially with an eye to avoiding pertinent blunders, it will hardly suffice for touching, let alone influencing the media-coverage of more fundamental issues. For one thing because these are political and cultural in nature, for another thing because the press follows its own laws and logic, at the interface of democratic debate, communication-technology and commercialization.

From a sociological point of view one might ask whether it still makes sense to conceptualize an overall attitude of 'society' towards the military. In the explanation of the mission-statement it is pointed out that the army, eventually employing some 30.000 people, continues to be one of the biggest employers together with constituting economic importance. In his elaboration the commander-in-chief speaks of the phenomenon that quite often military personnel plays an active

role in the networks of local communities. While both observations are true it seems doubtful whether they can, so to speak, be added up together with performance during missions. Or for that matter, with the degree to which the military succeeds in reflecting demographic heterogeneity. It might be more truthful and fruitful to look upon all these civil-military interactions as packages, made fit for different environments and changing situations.

Of course a mission-statement is not a piece of sociology, but this particular one might have profited from a sociological perspective which more daringly takes into account new times.