

Defence transformation: A short guide to the issues addresses the challenges of force transformation through a generic and ultimately practical approach. The insights shared in this monograph emerged from a Southern African context, but the author's wide experience in other countries has allowed him to present the salient issues in a meaningful way for a wider audience. It is as accessible to learners, as it will be to academics, practitioners and policy-makers. The approaches and lessons learned that are presented have been applied successfully in some Southern African countries and their validity will clearly resonate in other parts of Africa. It is hoped that this publication will assist armed forces in African countries, as well as in other countries in the developing world in their efforts to professionalise themselves and in their commitment to the established and emerging democracies within which they are located.

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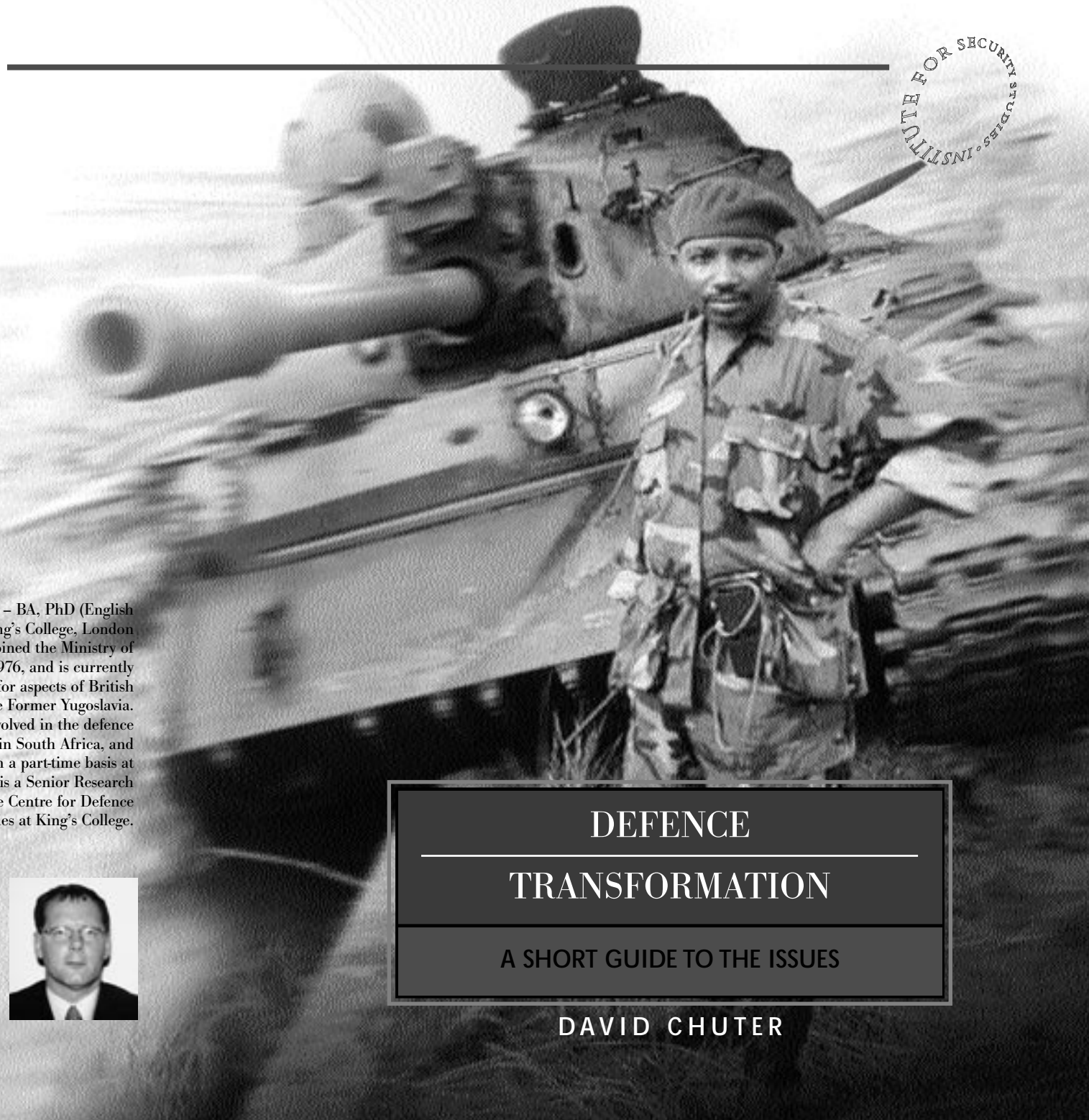
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DEFENCE TRANSFORMATION

A SHORT GUIDE TO THE ISSUES

DAVID CHUTER



The mission of the Institute for Security Studies is to conceptualise, inform and enhance the security debate in Africa. This is pursued through applied research and analysis, formulating and impacting on relevant policy, facilitating policy formulation, raising the awareness of decision makers and the public, monitoring trends and policy implementation, collecting, interpreting and disseminating information, national, regional and international networking and capacity-building.

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A Rwandan soldier next to a destroyed Ugandan tank after clashes between the two countries in Kisangani, Democratic Republic of Congo, on 5 May 2000.

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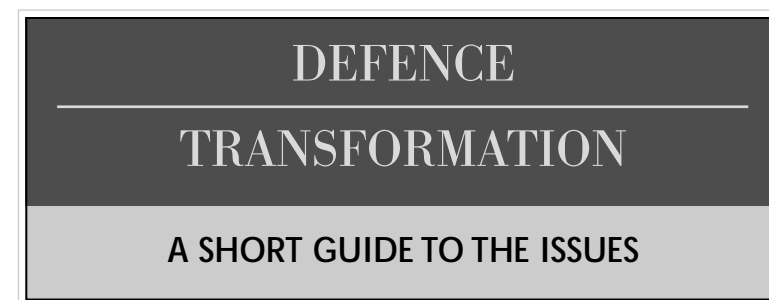
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Since it is my intention to say something that will prove of practical use to the enquirer, I have thought it proper to represent things as they are in real truth, rather than as they are imagined.

Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, (1514), Book XV

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PREFACE

Armed forces in many parts of Africa have been undergoing profound changes over the past decade. Prominent among these transformational challenges have been the various attempts to restructure forces in such a manner that their culture, ethos and activities are consistent with the democracy within which they operate.

Transformation, particularly in the African context, is a wide-ranging concept that encompasses a variety of interrelated fields. Transformation processes, if thoroughly pursued, impact upon virtually all aspects of an organisation's existence and, as such, require astute management if the success of such processes are to be ensured. For transformation processes to be successful, it is essential that three crucial mission success factors are acknowledged during the management of the process itself:

- providing decisive and strategic leadership over the process itself;
- ensuring that high levels of legitimacy ('buy-in') accrue to the process; and
- determining the scope of the transformation process itself – organisational culture, traditions, leadership style, racial and gender composition, and other factors.

In essence, four major transformation 'clusters' can be determined within the management of any defence transformation process:

- *Cultural transformation*: This entails the transformation of the culture of the institution in question, the leadership, management and administrative ethos of the institution and the traditions upon which the institution is predicated. It also entails the transformation of the value system upon which the institution is based.
- *Human transformation*: This entails the transformation of the composition of the institution with regard to its racial, ethnic, regional and gender composition and its human resource practices.
- *Political transformation*: This process strives to ensure that the conduct and character of the institution in question conform to the political features of the democracy within which it is located – an acknowledgement of the principle of civil supremacy, the institution of appropriate mechanisms of oversight and control, adherence to the principles and practices of accountability and transparency, and so on.

- *Organisational transformation:* This constitutes a more technocratic process within which the organisation in question is right-sized, its management practices and its diverse organisational processes made more cost-effective, and its ability to provide services rendered more efficient.

Wide-ranging transformation processes of the type referred to above are immensely difficult to accomplish in their entirety as the transformation of the security sectors in Lesotho, Sierra Leone and, partially, in South Africa has demonstrated. Shifting priorities, resource limitations, skills deficits, weak leadership and the sheer novelty of the transformational terrain may bedevil such initiatives. The restructuring of the security sector of many African countries, particularly those that have emerged from either an authoritarian or a violent past, however, demands a visionary and integrated transformational strategy capable of ensuring that the country's security institutions do not regress into previous behavioural patterns.

African armed forces have attempted, in varying degrees, to deal with these transformational challenges. These challenges differ from country to country and are, self-evidently, conditioned by the specific political, institutional and cultural requirements of the country in question. A number of examples serve to highlight these developments. Uganda has undergone a wide-ranging and largely successful demobilisation programme which saw the successful reintegration of thousands of combatants into civilian life. Namibia and Zimbabwe both successfully managed to integrate former belligerents into capable and cohesive national armies. Countries such as Ghana, Senegal, Botswana and Kenya have managed to accumulate considerable experience and respect in the terrain of peacekeeping, while Nigeria has played, and continues to play a prominent and constructive role in regional security initiatives.

Perhaps one of the most comprehensive and successful transformation processes has occurred in South Africa itself and it is from this country that the impetus for the writing of this monograph initially emanated. South Africa has managed to date, and largely successfully to implement and co-ordinate no fewer than five major transformational initiatives co-terminously.

The first has been the integration process during which eight different armies, each with their own traditions, culture and military histories, were integrated into a national defence force admitting to a common culture and identity and united in a common allegiance to the country's new *Constitution*. The second has been the stabilisation of the country's civil-military relations as evidenced in the robust role which the country's legislature has begun to play in the oversight over and management of the country's defence affairs.

The third has been the manner in which defence policy has now become a process that is managed in an open and consultative manner incorporating parliament, the civil sectors of government, military officers and civil society in this process. This was most vividly demonstrated by the completion of the Defence Review process in 1998 which, for the first time in the country's history, managed to produce a national consensus on defence. The fourth challenge has been the transformation of the entire South African National Defence Force to ensure the creation of an institution that was both right-sized and cost-effective.

The final challenge was to create both a Ministry of Defence and an integrated Defence Head Office consisting of both civilians and military personnel who could effectively manage the Department of Defence's diverse strategic, planning and budgetary processes in an accountable, affordable, adequate and appropriate manner. This latter process was initiated in 1993 and it was during this period that Dr David Chuter made his first visit to South Africa.

It was evident to many South Africans in the early 1990s that defence would have to be managed in a substantially different manner from those patterns that applied in the past. The system of secrecy, the lack of public scrutiny over the budget and the immense influence of the military could not continue as before. The negotiators of South African political transition believed that a critical first step was to create an appropriate Ministry of Defence to manage the disengagement of the armed forces from the political arena and to oversee their activities on behalf of both the legislature and the executive.

South Africans were unfamiliar with these new defence concepts and it was as the result of the sterling efforts of a small group of individuals located mainly in the African National Congress, the Mass Democratic movement and think-tanks such as the Military Research Group, the Defence Management Programme at the University of the Witwatersrand and the Institute for Security Studies that much of this debate was pioneered.

These individuals were greatly assisted in their endeavours by the contribution which David Chuter made both as a lecturer on the Defence Management Programme and an advisor to the Military Research Group. His contribution helped to debunk many of the myths surrounding civil control over the armed forces and provided people with a pragmatic understanding of what was required to manage the armed forces effectively in a democracy.

His insistence on acknowledging the primacy of civil control as opposed to civilian control over the armed forces helped to allay the fears of many military officers who

had felt that it was indeed civilians who had repeatedly misused them in the past. They were quite prepared, however, to respect the authority of these civil authorities, because they had been duly mandated by the legislature to govern on behalf of the citizenry.

Chuter also highlighted that defence policy should be managed in an interactive manner utilising the skills of both civilian and military personnel. Such a process would ensure a product that was rich in comparison and that drew on the wide range of competencies available in both sectors. This monograph attempts to highlight some of the practical challenges that armed forces throughout the developing world may have to consider when restructuring their respective defence organisations.

Although this monograph initially emerged from a Southern African context, it has been written in a generic style to reach as wide an audience as possible. The insights provided here have been applied successfully in a number of Southern African countries and it is felt that their validity will resonate outwards into other parts of Africa.

It is an honour to acknowledge the sterling efforts of David Chuter in this regard and it is hoped that this publication will assist African armed forces in their ongoing efforts both to professionalise themselves and to remain committed to the established and emerging democracies within which they are located.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Like most books, this monograph is ultimately the product of many hands, some of them unwitting. It has its origins in the year I spent from 1993/94 at the Centre for Defence Studies, at King's College. During this time, I was fortunate enough to be given the opportunity, in Europe and South Africa, to bring some of my personal experience to bear on the problems of other countries undergoing defence transformation. The Centre were subsequently kind enough to keep me informally on their books, and to allow and encourage me to address these issues at conferences and in training courses in different parts of the world. Back in the Ministry of Defence, my job subsequently took me to a number of countries, mostly in Asia, where the problems of defence transformation were being grappled with, and where the experience of the United Kingdom was often in demand.

I benefited enormously from all these formal and informal contacts, but space prevents me from thanking those (even if I could remember them all) who contributed ideas, recollections and observations in conversations in conference halls and government departments, in restaurants and hotels, in bars and in cars, often at improbable hours of the day or night. However, I should thank two groups of people. One includes of all those (mostly students) who told me, in different places and at different times, that I really ought to write this down. After much thought, I decided that I should. So I did.

The second group includes those who have helped directly, either by giving me live audiences to practice on, or by commenting on the manuscript, or both. At King's College, Professor Michael Clarke, Executive Director of CDS, and Dr Chris Smith, Head of the North-South Programme, gave me many opportunities to road-test the ideas in this book, as well as commenting very helpfully on parts of it. Dr Beatrice Heuser of the Department of War Studies offered me the repeated use of her students as sounding boards, as well as commenting on the work as it progressed. In South Africa, I have been honoured to be associated with the Defence Management Programme of the School of Public and Development Management at Wits University since its inception, and Dr Gavin Cawthra, now Director of P&DM,

and Dr Rocky Williams are probably more responsible for the existence of this book than anyone else. Their professional encouragement, as well as their personal kindness and hospitality have been unstinting and outstanding.

Finally, I should stress that the opinions in this book are mine alone, and not those of the British government, or any part of it.

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INTRODUCTION

DEFENCE TRANSFORMATION

This monograph is about defence transformation: the process by which nations are adapting their defence policies to the post-Cold War world, and rethinking defence from the ground up. Although it covers issues such as budgets, organisation and accountability, it begins with more fundamental questions about the role of the armed forces and their place in society, and the way in which the defence community makes and implements defence policy, because, in any defence transformation process, these things have to come first.

There is no single process called 'defence transformation'. Every country's experience and every country's starting-point are different. But, in almost all cases, transformation has its origins in the decline and fall of the Cold War system, and the consequences which followed from that. The dynamics of the Cold War, although dangerous and illogical, did at least provide the majority of the states in the world with some kind of framework within which to make defence and security policy. States might be members of a formal alliance, they might provide base facilities or political support, or they might, indeed, base their entire defence and security policies on *not* being members of an alliance. Few states, in whatever part of the world they may be, escaped the consequences of the Cold War. Now, all that has gone.

As will be explained later, the dominant mode of the Cold War was what can be called 'threatism', that is, the concentration on developing forces to meet an actual or potential threat from outside. In turn, this tendency itself arose from the ideological dynamic of the Cold War, in which each side believed the other to be naturally aggressive, waiting only for the right circumstances to attack. The escape from threatism and the formulation of a defence policy based on sensible objectives for the use of military force, amount between them to the greatest single challenge in the process of transformation.

In addition, the tense atmosphere of the Cold War was not very supportive of democracy, or the development of mechanisms to ensure the proper degree of subordination of the military to the civil power and its use in ways which were supported by the nation as a whole. Defence policies tended to be conducted by a

technocratic élite. All this has to change now, and nations are grappling with questions around how to conduct defence policies in a democracy. The respective roles of military and civilian personnel, the influence of the finance and foreign ministries, the role of parliament and civil society, all have to be reconsidered from first principles.

The relaxation of international tension over the last decade has brought with it the unthinking assumption that defence budgets and defence forces should be reduced in size, even if the demands on them are actually increasing. Partly, this results from the political need to be seen to respond to the end of the Cold War, and partly reflects the urgency which most governments have felt to identify money to divert to tax reductions for the wealthy. But, any consideration of defence transformation has to include questions of how and on what basis defence forces are to be structured and paid for.

Finally, these rather mechanistic and bureaucratic processes have to be accompanied by a process of cultural transformation as well. In some cases, the armed forces and those who lead them have to be introduced to new ways of thinking and acting which the rest of the world is adopting or has already adopted. Issues such as race and gender representation have to be thought through.

Consequently, this monograph is not concerned, except briefly, with issues of theory. It is designed to be of practical use to those involved in the formulation and execution of defence and security policy, as well as those whose work or interest brings them into contact with the military, or with military matters.

There is no shortage of books covering the same general area but, in almost all cases, they have been written by those with no practical experience of the military or politics. It seemed, therefore, that there might be room for a contribution by someone with a little experience of both. Nonetheless, although the author has spent many years working for the British government, this is not a recommendation for the British way of doing things. Indeed, one of the themes addressed in this monograph is the way in which thinking about defence and security must grow organically out of the political and cultural soil of a country if it is to have any validity, and if it is to last. There is no point in simply adopting the ideas of foreigners, especially foreigners carrying books. In contrast, this monograph is based largely on personal experience and the experience of colleagues and institutions with which the author is familiar after having met, talked to, worked with, and sometimes worked against, military officers, diplomats, civil servants and politicians from nearly every part of the world during his career. Judgements in the text are therefore made on the basis of personal experience, unless otherwise indicated.

Freed from the intellectual shackles of the Cold War, nations have begun to wake up and think for themselves about what they need their military for. This has been a painful, intellectually demanding process, and in most parts of the world has not progressed very far. The greatest obstacles have been conceptual rather than tangible, and have reflected the fact that people find adaptation to sudden change difficult. There are Cold War nostalgics, who try to cling to the ideas of the 1980s, substituting, perhaps, Islam for Communism, but otherwise changing little. There are the security conservatives who argue that one should stick to what is tried and trusted. There are also the liberal vigilantes, who, after years of calling for smaller armed forces, or none at all, suddenly want them to be greatly expanded and sent all over the world. This monograph pronounces a curse on all of them, and is intended to help people in a variety of cultures and societies to begin the task of thinking for themselves about what they want and what they need.

The monograph begins with a discussion of the place of the military in civil society, and some suggestions about how to conceptualise the relationship. Thereafter, specific issues are discussed in more detail, including:

- the structuring of forces;
- the setting of the defence budget, and the best use of the money available;
- the planning of operations, and the military role in intelligence activities;
- the conduct and control of military operations if they arise; and
- the public presentation and justification of defence policy and activities.

CHAPTER 1

ARMED FORCES AND WHAT THEY ARE MEANT FOR

Strangely enough, most writing about the military and the state (or 'civil-military relations') assumes that, rather than being of use or value to society, the armed forces are actually a threat to it. Civil-military relations, then, in the work of well-known writers like S E Finer¹ and Samuel Huntington,² consist of making the military as powerless and useless as possible. This is a strange thing to ask taxpayers to spend their money on. This approach is rejected – which is, in any case, a product of 1950s political science theories applied to an area where the authors have no personal knowledge or experience. Instead, this chapter is concerned with how, as part of the transformation process, the most basic questions of all are asked: why is the military necessary and what is it to be used for?

Why is the military necessary?

If civil-military relations were only about the reduction of military power, then the sensible thing would be to abolish the military altogether. The fact that this is hardly ever suggested points to two issues:

- that the military must have some useful role to play; and
- that civil-military questions cannot therefore be limited to the means to minimise military power.

What, therefore, must military forces do? Clearly, it cannot be as simple as "to fight and win wars."³ Not only would many – including most of the military – argue that their role is to *prevent* war, but, by this definition, the military of, say, Fiji and Botswana are wasting their time, since they would be most unwise to fight another country, and virtually certain to lose. And how, at the time of writing, would the role of military forces operating in Sierra Leone or Bosnia be explained? Obviously, a more complex answer is needed.

All states pursue a variety of domestic and foreign policies. Sometimes, these policies need to be underwritten by the use, the threat, or the appearance of violence, and military forces exist to supply this. Some readers may be upset by this emphasis on violence. It is true that many in the military do not actually use weapons, and also

that many military skills are used in non-combatant contexts, such as disaster relief. But these skills and tasks are essentially secondary: if a state wants to concentrate on tackling natural disasters, it is better to set up a civil defence organisation.

The limitations of threatism

Part of the problem is the impact of the Nuremberg trials, during which defendants were charged, among other evils, with waging an aggressive war. To many nations, especially those with no immediate enemy to fight, 'defence' seemed a better term, and ministries of war and ministries of the armed forces became ministries of defence in almost every country. Today, the military is described, in almost every country, as being for 'the defence of the nation'. The problem, of course, is that 'defence' implies an actual or potential threat. There may not be a plausible villain available, especially after the Cold War, or, in contrast, a neighbour may be so big that defence is pointless. It is therefore not surprising that 'defence' has proved to be an elastic concept, and the military has been described, for example, as defending, among others:

- vital national interests;
- an established way of life;
- a constitution; and
- common values.

But, these are only rationalisations to hide the fact that states will use, or threaten to use military force if they think they will benefit from doing so, and if it is politically acceptable. (Of course, large states tend to have larger national interests than small states.) These formulae can also be dangerous: if a nation's constitution prescribes the separation of church and state, for example, then the army could legitimately act against a religious political party which won a free and fair election.

Why the military pose a problem

Once it is understood that the military's role is to provide violence, or the threat of it at the behest of the state, it becomes more clear why civil society – especially democracy – has a potential problem with the military. Simply put, the military cannot be run like a democracy, and civil society cannot – and must not – be run like the military. The military needs to be able to perform its violent tasks in a way which is responsive to public opinion, without compromising the political process, but it must also perform them effectively. Modern military forces are very expensive. The voter and taxpayer expect the military to do a good job, but the way in which

it acts, although it should rest on a clear political mandate, cannot be according to the norms of civil society. This is not to say that it should contradict these norms, but they cannot be the same. There have been various unsuccessful attempts to pretend that this problem does not exist, but these are essentially ways of disguising the problem:

- Military forces exist only to deter war, and should never be used.
- The military consists of citizens in uniform.
- The military exists to defend the constitution.
- The military is a source of stability for the region.

How the military work for the state

The military exists and has legitimacy, because in all societies, most people think that the use or threat of violence is acceptable under certain circumstances. But, the use or threat of violence, even on a small scale, can have catastrophic practical and political consequences if it goes wrong, and so all aspects of planning and carrying out military operations, and training, equipping and organising the necessary military forces must be carefully handled in a way which combines practicality with acceptability. Military officers, but also civilian politicians, diplomats and officials, somehow have to work together to produce a defence policy which makes sense and can be afforded, to structure the military forces properly, to equip and train them and, if necessary, to make use of them, all in a context of general public acceptance. *How* these various actors work together best will necessarily differ from country to country, and there is no magic formula which works well everywhere.

Historical and cultural differences

In spite of the (literally) uniform appearance of military forces, and the superficial similarities of behaviour and doctrine which can be found, military forces vary from one another at least as much as other parts of nations do. In turn, this is partly because they occupy very different places in the security communities of different countries, and because each country has a different set of experiences in war and peace. It is for this reason that the process of conceptualising defence transformation has to begin from the situation in which the country finds itself.

Geography

Most nations have military forces which are based on either a maritime or a continental tradition, or a tradition of isolation. These traditions are not immutable,

of course, and in some cases have changed quite sharply over time. But, geography in the widest sense (including the power and position of a nation's neighbours) will have an important influence on the policies to be adopted. Islands and littoral states without an isolationist tradition frequently develop navies for protection of trade and have only small armies. Conversely, a landlocked state will concentrate on territorial defence by its army. There are anomalous cases: Japan, although an island, did not develop a navy until the late 19th century, partly because of a policy of deliberate isolation, and partly because of dangerous seas and limited trading opportunities in the region. The development of the army coincided with a move to copy Western imperialist practices, and it was the army which dominated Japanese politics in the 1920s and 1930s, with disastrous effects. Size or isolation can confer effective immunity from attack, so military planning in, say, Australia, has always emphasised meeting threats as early and as far away as possible, preferably before they arise. In turn, this orientation implies small, but high-quality forces, able to operate far from home, as well as the maintenance of a technological edge, and considerable investment in intelligence and surveillance assets. On the other hand, a country like South Korea, with a large land-based threat, will need to have large (and therefore conscript) forces permanently on a high state of readiness, and most of its investment will go into land and air power.

Size and power

Small and weak nations are generally more peaceful than large and powerful ones, even though the latter seldom face threats of any kind. For large nations, defeat may be a nuisance, but is not disastrous, and there is a relaxed attitude to the use of violence among the population as a whole. Military operations tend to be seen as a component of foreign or economic policy. Some small nations, like Canada or New Zealand, without a threat and with small forces, tend to devote themselves to the provision of limited, but high-quality contributions to regional or global security.

History

The Anglo-Saxon tradition of the role and place of military forces, from which most writers on this subject come, is not found in most of the world. The place of the military in the life of a nation will be affected by factors such as:

- its involvement in domestic politics in the past;
- its use as an internal security force;
- its past status, and the use it has made of that status;
- its success or otherwise in foreign wars; and
- its regional or international reputation.

In some cases, the military (and especially the army) is seen as the founder or saviour of the nation. In Vietnam, for example, the army wields considerable influence, largely because of its historical record of fighting successfully against the Japanese, Chinese, French and Americans, and its role in the final unification of the country in 1975. In much the same way, the Chinese military is still referred to as the People's Liberation Army, although it did its liberating half a century ago. Conversely, the Japanese military now has little influence or social standing. After the disastrous experiences of the 1930s and 1940s, the military today is a low-status profession, resented or ignored by most Japanese, and feared by every other country in the region.

Cultural factors

Few societies are inherently militarist: all societies seem to pass through stages, in reaction to the kind of factors listed above. But, there are certain cultural factors which have an impact on the place and influence of the military in society. War was originally, of course, the business of the aristocracy, and societies where the aristocracy has retained political and social power (such as Britain, and to a lesser extent France) tend to give them a larger place. There is also the tendency, much stronger in some societies than others, for retired military officers to go into politics. In most cases, and as will be shown later, the military is not very good at politics as such, and tends to shun it. But, individual officers may come to power, often in conditions of crisis, and may be accepted as interim rulers, above politicians, even if their rule is not democratic. Certain countries have a history of attracting such individuals, and, if their interventions are generally thought to have been useful, then the status of the military (as the provider of occasional national saviours) will be enhanced. Finally, of course, everyone who is not a complete pacifist is prepared to admire the military for some things. A military which has kept out of politics and won wars without attracting opprobrium, which has the respect of its citizens and can be sent overseas without embarrassment, will come to have a stronger role in society as a result.

Professionals and conscripts

For the politician, public official, diplomat or journalist, the military is a caste apart, the object of ignorance and even fear. In turn, the military is often in-grown and separate from society, and does not realise how it is perceived. The rest of this chapter is concerned with the military as it is, and how to make the best use of it. In writing this, it has been assumed so far, for simplicity's sake, that the 'military' is the same thing as military officers. In fact, the vast majority of the armed forces (up

to 90%) are not officers, but soldiers, sailors and air personnel. While it is understandable that these individuals are not focused on in books about the military and politics, since they have carried out few *coups*, there are a number of important civil-military issues which flow directly from the fact that the non-officer classes make up the vast majority of the military.

The most important is the balance between national service and professionalism. While the idea of arming the population has always made national leaders nervous, there was a long period of time, roughly from 1850 to 1950, when modern war, with its requirement for very large numbers of infantry, made sheer mass, and therefore conscription, inevitable. Even today, a state which believes that it faces a major conventional threat to its own territory will probably have a national service system of some kind to produce large numbers of trained people to flesh out the military to its required war establishment in a time of crisis. But, conscription was seldom politically popular, and least of all with those who were conscripted.

Some societies have seen powerful arguments in favour of conscription. It avoids the risk of a professional military caste distinct from society as a whole, and can also bring together young people from different social and regional backgrounds. The 'school of the nation' argument for conscription is very powerful in certain societies, and there are some countries where the military performs a whole series of social and educational roles which require conscription for it to be effective.

Yet, even in the days of massive conscription, there was never a simple antithesis between professional officers and conscripted other ranks. All military forces have always depended on non-commissioned officers (NCOs) for much of their effectiveness: the career soldiers at corporal and sergeant level who provide the glue which keeps a military unit together, and in many cases, will go on to be officers themselves, late in their careers. Attracting and retaining such individuals, even in an army where conscription is normal, are very important for any military force. One of the major weaknesses of the old Soviet Army was its almost complete lack of an NCO corps, and the consequent massive misemployment of officers to do any job which required thought or training. In modern times, moreover, navies and air forces have become largely professional, even in states which formally retain conscription, given the complexity of the work involved.

A modern military force is therefore a complex and varied institution. Increasingly, the modern officer – usually a graduate – commands a group of well-educated professionals who are there because they want to be, and who, within reason, have the right to leave and go somewhere else if they desire. Issues such as remuneration and allowances, education and training, posting policy and family welfare

increasingly preoccupy the modern officer, if he or she is to retain a skilled and motivated military force, and so become important issues in the management of defence.

Likewise, the military is no longer (if it ever was) a self-sufficient caste, separate from society as a whole. Increasingly, the military has come into contact with civilians from all walks of life: diplomats and public officials, but also scientists and engineers, salespersons and even journalists. Recent moves to cut the size of armed forces have led to civilians being employed in jobs that used to be military ones. These new individuals – mostly poorly paid and untrained casual workers with little motivation – constitute an especially large problem for the traditional military ethos within which the two worked together. In any event, the military career is not what it was. In most countries, retirement is at 55, or even earlier. Many officers do not wait that long: once the last guaranteed command appointment (a ship or regiment, for example) has been attained or been withheld, many of them leave anyway.

The military as a public service

The first characteristic of any military force is that it is part of the *public service*. The nearest analogues of the soldier are therefore the diplomat, the public official, the teacher, and, in some societies, the doctor. Public service occupations tend to have a number of distinguishing features in any society. They include:

- *Vocation*: The public official has an interest in the job for itself, and believes it to be worthwhile. Job satisfaction is usually high, and is more important than material rewards, which are often modest.
- *Collectivity*: The public official is part of a larger, similarly motivated group pursuing the same broad objectives.
- *Continuity*: The public official generally stays in, or near the same organisation, and makes a long-term commitment to it.
- *Rationality*: In general, public service institutions try to behave in a rational fashion. Recruitment, promotion and posting are generally carried out according to some reasonably rational criteria, and the kind of nepotism and irrationality which typify the private sector are less common.
- *Predictability*: Public services are generally governed by rules and regulations which, while they may limit individuals in some ways, also protect them, and generally ensure uniformity of treatment.
- *Hierarchy and structure*: It is generally clear who is responsible for what, and work will naturally tend to find its own level. Personalised power plays less of a role, and the mixture of fear and sycophancy by which the private sector runs is much less common.

These characteristics – which generally result in reasonably effective organisations – are not the product of chance. They are the kind of pragmatic rules which sensible people make for themselves as they observe what does and does not work, and are characteristic not only of many public sector institutions – the Roman legions and the Chinese Civil Service appear to have worked much like this – but of large, successful private sector organisations as well.

This leads to questions of ethos. Here, use is made of the helpful distinctions made by Francis Fukuyama, between *high trust* and *low trust* societies.⁴ Low trust societies are atomised structures, where individuals trust no-one outside their immediate family, and seek to maximise their personal wealth and power, often to the detriment of others. High trust societies are where there are bonds between individuals who are part of groups, and those individuals are socialised to pursue the good of the group in preference to their own good. In all areas of life, and with great predictability, high trust structures are more successful than low trust structures.

There are three particular characteristics of high trust societies which are relevant in any discussion of the military:

- *Personalisation*: In any structure, even the smallest, everyone depends on everyone else. Structures work best when this co-operation is instinctive and far-reaching. Military institutions have always known the value of personal bonding at all levels, and learned many centuries ago that people work far harder for the approval of their peers than for any amount of money. This, in turn, produces (as indeed does most traditional public sector culture) a sense of obligation to and fellow-feeling with co-workers, and a willingness to 'get the job done'. This enables arrangements with the military (and for that matter the public sector as a whole) to be much less bureaucratic and legalistic than in the private sector.
- *Non-financial ethos*: Military institutions have always realised that, in an effective organisation, personal rewards must not be linked to personal effort, except in the obvious sense that successful people are promoted. Once performance and rewards are linked, people become obsessed with their own situation and trust rapidly disappears. It is interesting that, in military forces where senior office opens the possibility of substantial earnings and even corruption, the cohesion, morale and fighting ability of the force declines. In China, for example, the People's Liberation Army was encouraged to supplement the defence budget by setting up business ventures, with the inevitable corruption this brought.
- *Dedication*: The military commitment to the job – even more than in the public sector in general – is absolute. In certain cases, grievous bodily harm, or even death can result. The officer has no contract which would enable him or her to

cease work if things get too rough. In turn, of course, the officer expects the same treatment, not only from immediate colleagues, but also from the institution as a whole. The officer knows that the parent service – if it is worth joining – will not look for exclusion clauses or fine print as an escape from obligations to its members.

Institutionalising excellence

The great strength of any effective organisation is not so much excellence as *institutionalised* excellence, that is, the expectation of a continuous high standard of performance. Most writing about the military is produced according to Anglo-Saxon cultural assumptions: important among them is the heroic concept of leadership, which sees leaders – in politics, war, even in business – as fundamental to the success of any organisation, and gives them enormous prestige, and, in some cases, enormous amounts of money. But, in reality, even the most wonderful leader can only directly affect a small part of what goes on in an organisation as a whole. Far more important is the everyday competence and consistency displayed by people much lower down, whom the charismatic leader has perhaps never met. What is important is the excellence with which the organisation as a whole conducts itself, since mediocre people can be brought on by a good organisation, but a mediocre organisation will probably overwhelm even the most capable individual.

In general, and rightly, successful organisations have preferred the route of institutionalising excellence rather than cultivating heroic leaders. This has been especially true in the military. In the last century, a genius like Napoleon, Wellington or Chaka, in a sense, could command an army of 50 to 100 000 troops. He could get a general idea of what was going on, and pass orders, even appear at a critical moment on the battlefield. But, quite obviously, overall success depended on having some subordinates of good quality, who would not only do sensible things, but would also know what was in the commander's mind. This last point is critical. As armies have increased enormously in size, and the density of troops on the battlefield has reduced with the increase in firepower, so the subordinate is increasingly on his or her own, in a situation where urgent decisions must often be made. In such a situation, the question is not simply: What do I do? It is rather: What would the commander expect me to do? or even: What would my colleagues expect me to do? In this way, a military force can act as a reasonably articulated whole, even when central direction is not possible. This is not done by telepathy, of course, but by careful training and long experience of working together. It is the process of institutionalising excellence described above, and it is fundamental to any understanding of how the military works.

Finally, and at somewhat greater length, the characteristic of the military which is assumed to come before all others must be addressed: obedience. (Here, reference is made to internal obedience: questions of obedience to civil authority are treated later). Military obedience is usually presented in rather extreme terms by outside commentators. It is often conceived as a machine-like obedience to superior orders, procured by threats of terrible punishments for dissent. Each level of the military owes "explicit and peremptory obedience to the orders of its superior."⁵ This is true up to a point, but there are some significant qualifications to be made.

Firstly, obedience is never and never has been absolute. The concept of the 'lawful order' is deeply enshrined in codes of military law, and, in practice, an order must meet at least three criteria before it can be regarded as acceptable:

- It must be *legal* in terms of the law of the state, since an order to break the law is by nature invalid. Sometimes, the law of the country where persons are stationed also has an influence: in the Gulf War, women in the military could not have been asked to perform driving jobs, because local law in Saudi Arabia prohibited this.
- It must also be consistent with *military law* which, on occasion, is more restrictive than civil law. To take an extreme case, for example, a soldier could not be ordered to go absent without leave.
- Finally, it must not be *repugnant to the spirit of the military*, ie it must be for what are often described as 'military purposes'. Orders should not be given trivially, so that, for example, it would be a badly run military where soldiers were ordered to exercise the commanding officer's dog.

Secondly, obedience is not a cult in itself. Its purpose is to produce effective performance on the battlefield, where there is seldom time or opportunity to debate whether an attack on a particular hill makes sense. Because battles of true annihilation are very rare, victory usually goes to the force which keeps its discipline and coherence the longest. But, victories on battlefields are not won by automata. Indeed, there is evidence that military forces which encourage initiative at all levels succeed much better than those which require unquestioning obedience to orders. It is not hard to see why: "No Plan", as Moltke said, "survives contact with the enemy." As a result, prescriptive orders will rapidly cease to have anything to do with reality, and the military force, not knowing what to do next, will simply do nothing.

The military has learned by experience that individual initiative is essential to success in battle, as well as that such initiative will not arise spontaneously in a difficult situation if it has not been practiced in easier ones. Thus, initiative, rather than blind obedience, is sought in everyone, not just in officers. Indeed, modern

military thinking has canonised this type of thinking as *mission-oriented orders*: a commander will be told what the objective is ('take that hill'), but it will be left to him or her, within certain limits, how this is done.⁶ This state of affairs is not universal. The old Soviet Army, for example, which had great problems of education and diversity as a result of its multiplicity of ethnic and linguistic groups, adopted a policy of rigid drills and training programmes in an attempt to remove the need for initiative. There are also a number of Asian armies where initiative is not greatly encouraged. In both these cases, it must be said that, *compared with the rest of society*, the military officer probably has as much initiative as anyone else. Indeed, in most societies, the junior officer, and even the NCO probably have more scope for decisionmaking than the average middle manager in the private sector.

One of the secrets of military discipline is the *legitimation* of the process of giving orders. In a *properly regulated* military, the one who orders has some advantage of ability, training or experience over the one who is ordered, and this, in turn, results from the general rationality of the system in which they both work. In theory, the superior officer could do (and probably has done) the job of the junior officer. The junior officer knows that, with training and experience, he or she will be able to give these orders too.

The other secret, and perhaps the most important single aspect of military obedience, is that of the *institutionalisation* of the process. It is not individual obedience which matters, but the efficiency of the system in turning directions into practical results. Military institutions, like those in the public sector in general, are mainly geared towards action, and thus systems are set up with the primary purpose to transmit instructions to get things done. This way of working (generally described as 'bureaucracy' by outsiders) is extremely efficient in ensuring that things are done, and usually contains a degree of redundancy to allow for things not happening – or 'disobedience'.

The question of the clear control and effectiveness of the institution as a whole is critical. Although the virtues of superior organisation claimed by the military are often true, it is not always like that. Everyone who has worked in a large organisation knows that unpopular orders are somehow never carried out: papers are lost, promises are not kept, meetings are not held, and so forth. The military, like every other organisation, does not have the resources to track the progress of every order and see that it is followed up. Much relies on trust and the sense of legitimacy. When these are lacking, the problems for a military force can be acute. In most failed military campaigns, problems of command and control are somewhere implicated.

CHAPTER 2

POLITICS, THE MILITARY AND 'CONTROL'

For many countries grappling with defence transformation, there is no more difficult a problem than that of the military and its relationship to the political process. Circumstances will vary. In some cases, transformation may be away from a system where the military had the decisive voice in defence and security policy. In others, the military may have dominated the entire political process. In still others, the military may have been the servant of a political, ethnic or religious group now out of power. If it is accepted that transformation is *into*, as well as *out of* a certain state, then the objective (the 'end-state' as the military usefully call it) is one where the military plays a correct and useful role in the political process. This problem is itself made worse by the words which are used to pose it. Thus, by 'the military' is generally meant officers, usually of a rank above colonel. 'Politics', of course, can mean many things, ranging from debates and elections to power politics and the process of government. If the totality of the political process is considered, however, most people would agree that the military *should* be involved in certain technical aspects of policymaking and implementation, but that they *should not* be involved in fundamental decisions about how the country is run. Examples of a proper role for the military might include:

- a full and appropriate part in the policymaking process;
- appearance by military officers before parliament to explain technical military issues;
- appearance by military officers, in support of ministers, at press conferences and presentations of government policy; and
- on or off the record briefings of the media on military issues.

Yet, the military of many countries have taken a much greater role for themselves than this, and some feel entitled to it now. Many nations undergoing defence transformation have a legacy of this kind to deal with. How should the motivation of the military be understood in such situations?

The roots of military interventionism

Although there have been many brutal and disastrous military interventions in the political process, the vast majority have been for reasons which the perpetrators

themselves believed good, or even worthy of praise. Although there have perhaps been cases where desire for power or wealth has prompted military involvement, these cases are not numerous. Usually, the military itself – if often wrongly – sees its intervention as safeguarding the country in some form. But, what gives a general the idea that he or she has any *right*, let alone duty to intervene, even in a situation of great national danger?

By its very nature, democracy is divisive. Political parties survive and seek power by emphasising their differences from one other. In turn, groups within these parties also seek mutually to distinguish themselves. Individual politicians try to carve out a public profile by associating themselves with a particular tendency or group. Particularly during times of political conflict, there is always space at the fringes for a more extreme party or grouping, but politicians who move to the centre or seek openings with political opponents will find that they lose clarity and definition, and are elbowed aside by more extreme and less scrupulous colleagues.

This kind of thing is containable in a society where the differences between parties are mainly ideological, running in a reasonably orderly way from left to right. But most nations are not like this. Political parties are often the product of personal, family or local loyalties; they may also be the expression of religious or ethnic groups. In such cases, the interests of one party can be impossible to reconcile with the interests of another. Particularly when the electoral process is not perfect, losing parties may well cry foul, and either refuse to accept the result, or work to overthrow the government by extra-parliamentary means. In a family or clan-based political system, the successful party will often feel obliged to reward its supporters with jobs and contracts, thus opening the way to charges (and often the reality) of corruption.

Moreover, parliamentary democracy, admirable in itself, contains a number of covert assumptions which must be met if it is to function as intended. Politics has to be seen, if not as a game, then at least as a process where defeat is something that has to be accepted. As a political loser, a person may have said in public that a victory for his or her opponents will be a disaster for the country, but that is a rhetorical point, rather than a genuine belief. The idea would rather have been to win, of course, but it is better to settle down with good grace to opposition. But what if a person *really* believes that opponents' rule will be a disaster? He or she may be from an ethnic group which greatly fears for its safety under the new government, or from a religious party which regards some of the policies of the opponents as sinful. People may simply fear that the new government does not care very much for democracy or human rights. In such circumstances, it can be almost impossible for parliamentary democracy to function, since the minimum necessary commonality of views which it demands does not exist.

Likewise, there is an assumption that, in some form at least, parliament is putting into effect what the people want. But, even a functioning parliament may not actually represent public opinion very well. Politicians may confine themselves to squabbles and manoeuvres for advantage as the nation falls apart. The divisions in the country and in parliament may be so deep that there is no chance of putting together a workable government anyway. This judgement about the danger of political disunity provides a semi-intellectual underpinning for intervention by the military.

Most work on military intervention has been done, it must be recalled again, in the comfortable West, where it is normal to see the military a bit like a rather expensive insurance policy; necessary, perhaps, but not very welcome when the bill has to be paid. With a few exceptions, Western states run reasonably well, and have not disputed their boundaries by force very much for fifty years now. Classical liberal economics, moreover, finds the military an expensive nuisance, pre-empting resources which could be used for more productive purposes. The military forces of such states will generally be as small and cheap as the finance ministries can get away with.

It is necessary to insist (though it should not be) that the whole status and position of the military vary greatly from this model in the rest of the world, not only in terms of history and culture, as outlined in chapter 1, but in the function that the military performs, and always has done. The military may have a role in development, it may have a large civic action programme, it may own and run factories. It may even be the only institution in the country which has any real legitimacy with all ethnic and religious groups. It may be more acceptable than a discredited police force, and may be admired more than a corrupt government. For all these reasons, therefore, the situation in which the military finds itself, even before a crisis develops, can be completely different in every country, and is most unlikely to conform to Western liberal-democratic norms.

Moreover, if military intervention is analysed in terms of these Western norms, which has usually been the case, a number of important hidden assumptions about the government which might be intervened against must be accepted in turn:

- The government has an effective majority in the legislature, and is able to carry out its programme.
- The government is at least passively accepted as legitimate by all its citizens.
- The government is minimally popular with the electorate.
- The government is minimally competent.
- All interest groups in the country obey the laws promulgated by the government.
- Political opposition and dissent may be expressed without fear.

- The government is reasonably united within itself.
- Government ministers are regarded as honest.

This is a demanding list, and one which every Western country could perhaps not confidently claim to be fulfilling. But, the roots of military intervention frequently lie in the inability of governments to satisfy many (or any) of these criteria. This can be a comment on the quality of the government or the political class. It can also be a comment on the sheer impossibility of maintaining a working democracy in situations of great ethnic and religious diversity, or in a state whose infrastructure is not advanced enough to tolerate the stresses which such democratic functions as elections place upon it.

Another frequent cause of military intervention has been because of a dispute about the legitimacy of the government itself. Several hundred years ago, the position was fairly clear-cut. The army was, in effect, the private property of the ruler of the country to be used in such a ruler's wars. The loyalty of the Egyptian, the Zulu or the Chinese army was to its ruler, and that was all. The democratisation of the past couple of centuries has complicated this position greatly. It is easy enough to agree, in the abstract, that the military owes its loyalty to the government of the day. But, this incorporates the assumption, not merely that the government (ie the party or coalition) is accepted, but that *the type of government* which is in office is also regarded as legitimate. There will clearly always be a minority who are unhappy with the system of government they live under, but they will not usually challenge it openly.

Problems have arisen where there is a fundamental division at the heart of a society about what kind of a government is legitimate, and therefore an uncertainty about to what (or to whom) the army is ultimately loyal, or indeed whose army it actually is. The general tendency of the 19th and 20th centuries was to replace authoritarian monarchies with democratic republics, although not everywhere, and not always at the same speed. Yet, if this transition is now regarded as a positive development, it was not always thought so at the time, and there have been recent cases of armies which have intervened because they genuinely believed that democracy was a threat to the nation itself – not least by making its citizens inferior soldiers.

'Control' of the military

It was noted in chapter one that the minimisation of the power of the military was not the only question of interest in civil-military relations, and that, by implication therefore, the military did have a useful role to play. Clearly, such a role cannot be

limited to actual military operations: an army cannot be taken out of cold-storage and sent off to war. But neither would anyone want to, because the existence of the military is always an important domestic and foreign political fact and, in turn, influences the formulation of many government policies. Some of these are fairly obvious: a well-trained and equipped military may provide foreign policy options which would otherwise not exist. Likewise, emergency planners need to know what the military could offer in the case of a national disaster, and the police will be interested in the help which the military could provide in certain situations. But some are less obvious. If it is decided that a country should develop an aerospace industry for wider strategic reasons (as a number of governments are now doing), then the size of the existing air force and the plans for it will be ingredients in the discussion. Similarly, an upcoming military procurement programme may provide opportunities for the government to secure important civil technology transfers as an offset.

Thus, the military and, indeed, the whole bureaucracy of defence have to be brought into the general process of government. But how should this be done? The place to begin is with the question of the overall position of the military which, in turn, means bringing some clarity to the confused and confusing issue of civilian control.

Civil control and civilian control

These are two separate, but related concepts which are often confused. They are:

- *civil* control of the military; and
- *civilian* control of the military.

By *civil control* is meant the obedience which the military owes to *civis*, the state. The military is one of a number of instruments of the state, of which other examples are the police, the fire service, the diplomatic service, and, in many countries, the medical service. Like these other bodies, the military has a duty of loyalty to the state, which employs it on behalf of the citizen and the taxpayer. The military, among its other functions, thus advises on the formulation of defence policy and helps to carry it out. But it does not *make* defence policy, of course, any more than doctors make health policy, or police officers make policy against crime.

In almost every society, it is likely that the individual personalities to whom the military has this civic duty – a president, for example, or ministers in a government – will be *civilians*. But, this is an accident of language rather than anything else. The important concept here is that the military, individually or in groups, accepts itself that

it is the servant of a nation and a society, of which the state is an agent. It takes orders from the state, and in practice from the government of the day, in the same way that the police do. It follows that, if there is something wrong with civil-military relations, it will be because the military is not prepared to acknowledge this allegiance, and puts itself outside or above the state, arguing that it is better placed to decide on certain questions than those who serve the nation in politics or government.

The essential question is whether the military obeys the state, or whether, in contrast, the military tries to usurp the functions of other parts of the state apparatus. In the latter case, the consequences may not just be serious for civil-military relations, but disastrous for the interests of the state.

In practice, it is likely that the agencies of the state which the military obeys will be staffed wholly or mainly by civilians. But this duty is owed, for example, by an attaché to an ambassador, not because the latter is a civilian, but because he or she represents the state in its entirety for this purpose. In the event of a defence minister being a serving officer (which is quite common in certain parts of the world), the military would, of course, owe obedience to him or her, but in his or her capacity as a minister, not as a serving officer.

The idea that civilian control of the military is necessary, good and efficacious, is so widespread that it has become something of a truism. In the rest of this chapter, four questions will be addressed:

- Does *civilian control* have any real meaning?
- Is it necessarily always a good thing?
- Are there practical ways of bringing it about?
- What benefits does it actually provide?

One American theorist argues that the 'key issue' of civilian control is of "setting limits within which members of the armed forces, and the military as an institution, accept the government's definition of appropriate areas of responsibility."⁷ This is, in fact, what has been described above as *civil control*, ie the government, rather than the military, rules on questions such as these. Similarly, Huntington argues that civilian control (or what is described as "objective civilian control") exists when "a highly professional officer corps stands ready to carry out the wishes of any group which secures legitimate authority within the state."⁸ This is effectively also a definition of civil control, with the added stipulation that the state must be represented by civilians.

However, authors – even the same authors – clearly have something else in mind as well. It is also argued that "[t]he heart of civilian control occurs within the corridors

of government, far removed from the usual ambit of scholars."⁹ In other words, it is not only an institutional question, but also a question of the control of *individual* officers by *individual* civilians. There are, perhaps, three cases where something vaguely like 'control' could be said to exist:

- Ministers are, by definition, the political heads of their departments and can reject any proposal put to them by the military. In a well-run bureaucracy, however (as will be shown later), things should not be allowed to get this far.
- Civilians (including diplomats and officials outside the ministry of defence) can tell the military that a certain proposal is contrary to expressed government policy, and that it should therefore be abandoned. Equally, they may tell the military that, if it is put to ministers they will oppose it, or simply that they judge it unlikely that ministers will like the idea, and it is better forgotten.
- Finally, in most political systems, the permanent head of the ministry (who may be called the secretary, the permanent secretary or the director-general) is responsible to parliament for the use of his or her budget. He or she, or his or her representative, is thus able to refuse sanction of expenditure if it is deemed improper. But, of course, the same individual could also refuse *ministers* sanction for the expenditure.

Apart from these three cases, it is doubtful whether it makes much sense to talk about *civilian* as opposed to *civil* control of the military. This is also helpful in avoiding the common assumption that *civilian control* is the same as *democratic control*; the two can be quite different. Moreover, it depends which civilians are to do the controlling.¹⁰ In Germany between 1933 and 1945, civilian control was the problem, rather than the solution. Stalin, Pol Pot and Saddam Hussein were, or are all civilians. Indeed, there is some evidence that the abuse of the armed forces for widespread atrocities is actually far more common under civilian (albeit undemocratic) regimes. As a whole, the military has a conception of itself which excludes this kind of behaviour, since it contradicts its professional self-image and is bad for morale.

The immediate problem, of course, is the difficulty of deciding what a legitimate government actually is, and who has the right to make such judgements. Westerners, and notably Anglo-Saxons, tend to talk in terms of democracy and the rule of law. Other cultures would regard a government which connived at high levels of unemployment and child poverty as illegitimate. The fact is that the only real test of legitimacy is whether the government in question is accepted as legitimate *by its people*. The key word here is 'accepted', since there have been many regimes which have been unpopular, but are nonetheless tolerated.

Given these complexities, even if civilian control of the military can be defined and is felt to be useful, how can this desirable state of affairs be brought about and maintained? More pertinently, perhaps, how will one know that the military is actually subject to *civil* control? A number of methods have been proposed. They share the general weakness that they address process rather than substance, and effects rather than causes. A typical list includes:

- constitutional constraints;
- social or other ties binding civilians and the military together;
- party political controls;
- restrictions on size; and
- delineation of spheres of responsibility.¹¹

It is clear that there is confusion between *evidence that civil-military relations are good*, on the one hand, which implies the co-operation of the military, and *attempts to coerce the military into behaving acceptably*, which implies the opposite. In turn, this reflects the confusion about the nature of civilian control described earlier. It could be argued that all of these factors, except perhaps the third, are signs, in general, that the military is reconciled to its position and does not wish to challenge it, but, of course, all of these factors, including the third, will only have any effect *if the military is prepared to co-operate*. A few examples may make this clearer.

Many authors have argued that a constitution is the basic document which keeps the military in its place by including among its provisions something which places it firmly under civilian control, usually that of the president. But, in practice, the wording of a constitution or other laws is dictated to some extent by the correlation of political forces at the time. (Clearly, no-one who has written on this subject intends to evoke images of a group of concerned officers thumbing through a constitution trying to work out whether they are allowed to stage a *coup* or not.) But, even when a constitution specifies a satisfactory degree of civilian control, this is meaningless unless the military agrees to abide by the constitution, which means, in turn, that it accepts that its duty is to *civis*, the state, finally implying that intimidatory constitutional provisions are beside the point, anyway. Moreover, military *coups* are often justified (as was Chile's in 1973) by the argument that the government has *itself* violated the constitution, of which the military presents itself as the defender.

A second, and superficially more useful way of coercing the military is that which political dictatorships have often adopted, of building up a parallel force or forces to keep the military under control. The example most frequently cited is that of Germany under Hitler, when the Nazi Party developed a formidable apparatus of oppression answerable only to itself. As a means of controlling the civilian population, this policy was certainly effective. In practice, however, the Nazis failed

to control the German military in any meaningful sense. From 1938 onwards, the army was laying plots to kill Hitler and take power. Although these were an open secret, and very high-level officers were involved, the Nazi apparatus completely failed to discover or prevent them.

What these two examples (and many others like them) have in common is an adversarial assumption that the military at all times *needs* to be controlled, since it will otherwise burst out of its chains and take over. There are certain cases where this may be true (a point returned to below), but the problem is much more complex and subtle. Depending on the overall political situation, the real task is either (or both) of:

- *binding* in the military to society and the civil power, in such a way that they never grow into a separate group with their own agenda, and are, in turn, accepted by civil society as legitimate themselves; and/or
- *demonstrating* in practical and symbolic terms the subordination of the military to the orders of the civil power.

Thus, to take the example of the constitution again, a statement that the president is the head of the armed forces has no prescriptive force unless the armed forces themselves accept this situation. But a statement of this kind is, nevertheless, a helpful reminder and public symbol to both the military and to civil society, of what the relationship between the military and the civil power should be.

In general, there has been far too much concentration on formal and institutional methods of 'control', no doubt because these are easy to understand and document. Yet, as has been suggested, these methods are largely useless, unless the assent of the military is first obtained, in which case they are pointless anyway. Far more effective are *informal* methods of 'control'. These vary greatly between countries, but are especially strong and important in consensus-based societies such as many in Africa and Asia. These methods include:

- interpenetration of the military and civilian élite;
- involvement of civil society in policymaking;
- frequent contacts between the military and civil society groups; and
- military and civilians working together.

These are difficult to document, and may not always be visible, but, as will become apparent in the remainder of this monograph, they are the heart of civil 'control', in the best sense of the term.

Equally, it must be recognised that the nature of relations between the military and the state varies enormously from country to country. In countries with developed

political cultures, problems of civil-military relations are often those of fine-tuning. In countries where this culture is less developed, the problems can be much more fundamental and their resolution can be critical to the future of the country itself. There will be many cases where a civilian government has taken over from a brutal, dictatorial and corrupt military, and is concerned to ensure that a fragile democratic regime stays in place. In this context, 'control' should perhaps be written without the inverted commas, since the objective is actually to try to stop the military from being tempted to regain power. There are a number of techniques which can be employed. They are a mixture of formal and informal, and they are unashamedly drawn from the world of practical politics, rather than from textbooks:

- *Normalisation therapy*: Members of the military are acutely aware that they are members of an international brotherhood which itself has norms and standards. The military of a previously isolated regime will look for acceptance by its equals abroad, and will be disappointed not to get it. Most democratic states place some kind of limitation on contacts with the military of other nations, and a military which has not given up political ambitions will find itself unwelcome and frozen out of the military tourist circuit of staff colleges, conferences and defence trade fairs. Adoption of international norms thus offers considerable *personal* rewards for those who might otherwise be tempted to return to bad ways. In addition, it is important not to overlook the sheer importance of exposure to new ways of doing things which foreign travel and contact with foreigners tend to produce. Quite often, unacceptable behaviour by the military is the product of ignorance and isolation, rather than anything more deep-seated.
- *Doctrine therapy*: As already suggested, a military which has no proper role will often turn to politics instead. A new democratic regime should devote time and effort to defining roles and missions for the military which are more professional, and so exclude politics by implication. Again, contact with other militaries will be helpful here.
- *Patronage*: A government should not have scruples to use the natural ambition of individuals as a weapon. Promotion can and should be restricted to those who demonstrate a commitment to democratic politics. While genuine change at the deepest level will take time, much can be achieved by identifying able and ambitious officers at middle rank, and making it clear to them that their careers have the potential to be glittering, provided they play according to the rules the government sets out.
- *Intelligence*: For the reasons which are given in the discussion of intelligence below, it is not a subject in which the military should dominate. A new democratic regime will need to build up a civilian intelligence capability quickly, not only to infiltrate the military, but also to provide a non-military analytical capability to help the government to avoid domination by military thinking.

The problem of how to deal with a corrupt military is more complex, and will vary to some extent on whether corruption is endemic in society, or whether it is confined to the military, or at least very much worse there. It is unusual for the military to be more corrupt than the norm (usually, it is less so), but it can happen where the military has had its hands on the levers of power for too long. Everyday corruption is best seen as a kind of tax or levy on a society which is unwilling to pay for an adequate level of public service from taxation. Public officials who are underpaid and overworked will often feel justified in accepting bribes as a way of getting back at the system which is cheating them. The first remedy, therefore, is an adequately paid and staffed public sector. This is not to say that salaries need to be as high as in the private sector: few of those who work for the public good expect to be as well-rewarded as those who work for their own enrichment. But, remuneration should not be so much lower that cynicism and corruption set in. The second remedy is not to place temptation in people's way. The privatisation or outsourcing of services, for example, is a bad idea, because it generally leads to corruption. If catering for an officers' mess is carried out by soldiers, then opportunities for corruption are very limited. If it is entrusted to a private company, corruption will almost certainly follow.

There are, of course, goods and services which the state will always have to procure from outside, and major items of defence equipment will often be part of this. At this level, scrutiny and oversight are seldom effective. Greed tends to distort people's perceptions of the risk they are running, and investigators themselves can become simply another target for bribery. A reasonably transparent process will help, of course, but the only long-term answer is to have a procurement system which is complex, lengthy, and involves so many people that, cynically put, no-one could hope to bribe everyone who had an influence on the decision. It also helps if the process flows through a number of committees (with members who have no narrow sectional interest to pursue), and involves representatives from outside the Ministry of Defence.

Civil control and civilian control: Some concluding remarks

Civil control is a valuable concept in that it reminds the public and the military that the latter owes a duty of obedience to the state, which acts as the agent of all citizens in this respect. By contrast, the concept of *civilian control*, popular as it is, adds little in clarity, and indeed confuses the issue in a variety of ways. As a term, it should rather be discarded.

This is true especially in countries where civil-military relations have been poor in the past, and where the military is, in effect, being asked to become used to a less

powerful or influential position than it used to have, even if it is more professionally satisfying in the end. Nothing is more unwise in such a situation than to tell a general that he or she is henceforth going to be subject to 'civilian control'. As was shown, control of individuals by individuals is scarcely practicable. Yet, officers of the South African Defence Force said, in 1993 and 1994, that they were sure that the African National Congress, when it took power, was going to introduce a commissar system, where each officer would have a civilian in a position of power over him or her. (In fairness, the ANC's thinking on defence issues at that time was at an early enough stage that such an impression might have been given.)

Moreover, the word 'control' itself is potentially unhelpful, because it implies a relationship of power and superiority, and evokes, once again, the picture of a rabid military desperate to grasp the reins of power, held back only by some finely judged constitutional phraseology. It is a theme of this monograph that relationships of power and subordination do not work very well: in the end, they encourage resentment, lack of co-operation and circumvention, and may well create exactly those conditions they are designed to avoid. The rest of this monograph is therefore devoted to ways in which the best use can be made of the military's talents.

CHAPTER 3 THE MAKING OF DEFENCE POLICY

It has been suggested above that a key task for a government involved in defence transformation is the construction of a sensible defence policy. In the past, this policy may have been dictated by others, or necessitated by a security environment which has now changed completely. In this chapter, therefore, the organisation and structure of defence policymaking, and the larger context into which it must fit will be considered. The respective roles of civilians and the military in this process are discussed in the next chapter.

The need for a hierarchy

All governments pursue policies of various kinds, and there will be many connections and overlaps between policies in different areas, some designed and some not. Defence policy is, in the end, a component rather than an objective itself, and so is best thought of as a member of a hierarchy of policies which will run along the following line:

- national policy
- foreign policy
- security policy
- defence policy.

Two caveats must immediately be raised:

- Firstly, this dependence on the foreign policy hierarchy is not exclusive. In some countries, defence policy can be partly a subset of domestic policy – in the internal security area, for example – and overall policies on finance and the budget, industry and manpower will obviously have implications for the way in which defence policy is made.
- Secondly, this hierarchy does not only work in one direction. The assets belonging to the military, as well as training and experience, can all influence – and even determine – aspects of foreign and security policy by enabling possible courses of action or not. The size of the military, the budget, the procurement programme and so forth, will all be important considerations in the formulation of other types of policy.

Nonetheless, this hierarchy is helpful as a reminder of the order in which things must happen. If defence policy, especially if made by the military, comes first and is allowed to dominate, then foreign and security policy will be nothing more, in effect, than policies designed, as far as possible, to allow the military to do what it wants with the least damaging consequences. This is pretty much what happened in Germany in the years before 1914, and in Japan before 1941, with results which do not need spelling out in detail. Defence policy is situated towards the bottom of the hierarchy, because it is essentially about *execution*: it is one of the practical ways in which foreign policy is given effect. As long as the ends (foreign policy) determine the means (defence policy), then the relationship is a healthy one.

A few words about Clausewitz

The primacy of political aims in war is the result of a doctrine generally – and rightly – associated with the great Prussian military thinker Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831). Since Clausewitz is very often misunderstood, it may be worth a brief section on what he meant. Clausewitz is popularly supposed to have said that war “is the continuation of politics by other means”, and this has impressed some people as shameful and others as inaccurate. Clausewitz made a number of statements of this general type, but his discussion in Book I of *On war* – the only one to be fully revised – should be taken as definitive. While it is true that part 24 of Book I is headed ‘War is merely the continuation of policy by other means’, he adds that:

“war is not merely an act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse, carried on with other means ... The political object is the goal, war is the means of reaching it, and means can never be considered in isolation from their purpose.”¹²

Two things obscure what this means. The first is language, with English being unusual in having separate words for *policy* – deciding and implementing a plan – and *politics* – the activity carried on by politicians to get power and win votes. Here, a ‘political instrument’ might be better expressed ‘an instrument of the policy of the state’. What Clausewitz is *not* saying is that war is just a continuation of normal political life: today a vote in parliament, tomorrow a press conference, on Wednesday, Russia is invaded. Secondly, Clausewitz speaks from the pre-Nuremberg era, when states could and did contemplate aggressive wars to further their foreign policy goals. It is better, perhaps, to say something like ‘the use of military force’ to avoid confusion today.

Put like this, all that Clausewitz is really saying is that it is pointless to make use of military forces without a wider object in view. The *means* (military forces) must

never be allowed to dictate the ends. The corollary, of course, is that military planning and operations must always be carried out in a wider political context, and that defence policy must always serve the overall policy objectives of the government. Although this seems logical enough, it is surprising how frequently it has been ignored. Usually, the reason is that the military, whose approach to war is necessarily technocratic, has too powerful a voice in what is to be done. It is not enough to declare that there is a larger aim in view before conducting military operations, and it is unlikely that many operations have been launched with *no* idea about what they were intended to achieve. But, there are two important criteria which have to be met before there is any chance of success:

- The measures must be *appropriate*, ie there must be some logical connection between the military action and the political objective.
- There must be an understanding of *how* the one is to affect the other, and some means of measuring progress towards it.

How is this to be done? It takes place at the *operational* level. This lies between the strategy (mainly the concern of politicians) and the tactics (mainly the preserve of the military), and is the hardest to get right, whether in a major war, or in a peacekeeping operation. Failure usually occurs because civilians and military members do not really understand enough of each other’s business to have a sensible conversation, and the two sides become separated from each other: no-one is looking at where military operations and policy objectives actually overlap.

An example of successful operational level practice would be the management of the Vietnam war by the government in Hanoi. There was a clear political goal (unification of the country under Hanoi’s control). This could not be accomplished until the Americans went home, so that had to be achieved first. This implied a long, patient, but low-level military campaign, designed to convince the Americans that they could not win, fought in such a way that it negated, as far as possible, American superiority in numbers and weaponry. It also dictated a policy of the use of force to achieve what were mostly political, rather than military ends, and tactics were developed accordingly. By contrast, the Americans were stuck with ill-defined objectives, a disconnection between political and military policies, and a tactical doctrine which stressed the defeat of the enemy through superior firepower. Once the Americans had left, the emphasis shifted to a conventional war against Saigon.

Defence policy and security policy

At this point, a few words on the relationship between defence policy and security policy may be helpful. As part of its foreign policy, a government will have a series

of relations with states, or groups of states, which have a defence and military component of some kind. The *desire* to join a regional security structure of some kind will be partly political (to heighten profile, or to build a closer relationship), and partly defence-based (to make use of other nations' experience or to achieve concrete security gains, for example). Likewise, the *management* of this membership, once it has been gained, will involve a great deal of work which is partly political and partly military.

Such subjects as these are the preserve of *security policy*. Other examples would include arms control, weapons non-proliferation, peacekeeping, treaties and deployments.

There are also a whole series of subjects, such as joint exercises or the procurement of foreign equipment, where there is a foreign policy dimension that has to be respected. Security policy is best characterised in practice as the area of government policy where both the foreign and defence ministries have a major interest and responsibility.

Take, for example, the first deployment of a new class of ship in an expanding navy. It is necessary to decide which countries the ship will visit, for how long, and what it will do.

Obviously, there are some essentially naval objectives in such a visit, such as gaining operational experience, practicing deployments away from home, and learning how to cope with unfamiliar ports.

There are wider defence objectives as well: getting to know other navies in the region, promoting defence contacts and raising the profile of one's own military forces. There may be valuable public relations and recruiting benefits.

Equally, there will be major foreign policy concerns. Some nations may welcome a visit, others would not. Ambassadors in several countries will be lobbying. The ship's visits might coincide with visits by the president or a trade show.

None of these single sets of arguments is in itself decisive, and the eventual itinerary will be an amalgam of all of them.

Security policy is perhaps the most complex and difficult area of policymaking, and the hardest to undertake successfully. It requires foreign and defence ministries to co-operate closely, and to be reasonably knowledgeable about what the other does.

It requires an outcome which actually makes sense in its own terms, and is not simply the result of splitting the difference. Countries where this kind of co-ordination is a problem (such as those with weak defence ministries) frequently find themselves committed to a position which makes little sense. By contrast, countries where the hierarchy set out above is not respected, and the military has too strong a voice, frequently saddle themselves with policy objectives which cannot be implemented; in that deadly phrase employed by diplomats, 'not negotiable'. This leads to the concept of the 'policy community'.

The policy community

Institutions are bound to disagree with one another from time to time. Any policy which makes sense, and any position which is robust and commands respect, in the absence of a strategic genius, will be the product of more than one hand, in a way which resolves these disagreements. But, this is not to say either that the resulting policy must be a simple compromise, or that it must represent a victory by one institution over another. Nor is it necessarily the result of some complex bargaining process among interest groups.

There are, broadly, two ways in which these disagreements can be resolved, depending on the administrative traditions of the state. In a hierarchical bureaucracy of specialists, with powerful leadership from the top (the kind of bureaucracy which Max Weber assumed was normal), policies will tend not to be discussed outside the immediate hierarchy until they have been agreed to by those at the top. Indeed, in a system where power flows downwards and initiative comes from the top, senior officials often become personally committed to ideas and positions early on. By contrast, in a less hierarchical and more informal bureaucracy, ideas can be road-tested at a lower level first, and the egos of powerful individuals need not be endangered. It is a question, really, of where the inevitable arguments are and when they are resolved. Human nature being what it is, the earlier these issues can be resolved, the easier the process of decision will be. Although elements of the second type of bureaucracy are recommended in practice, that is only because some systems, in practice, seem to work more effectively than others. It is recognised that these characteristics are deeply ingrained in societies: the German system and the Australian system, although each will no doubt change, are unlikely ever to resemble each other closely.

Yet, even in the most apparently hierarchical system – such as many Asian ones – a great deal of informal, lower-level consensus-building actually takes place, which speeds the final decision along. A development of this practice is the *policy*

community, which is defined as *all those with knowledge of the problem and an interest in solving it*. The second element is crucial, since it enables people to step outside of their narrow roles and look for solutions without their egos being engaged. There are, of course, people who have a right to be consulted, or who demand that they are. But, they are not the people who are spoken to privately, and asked: 'What do you think of this as an idea?' or, 'One possible solution might be ...'. To repeat, the further up in a hierarchy positions go before being modified, the sharper will the differences with other hierarchies be. The answer, therefore, is to develop the widest consensus at the lowest level, which is a point returned to in the next chapter.

In practice, policy communities are indispensable to the solution of practical problems, and tend to exist in even the most rigid of structures, whether or not they are openly acknowledged. The less common they are, the more individual ministries or other hierarchies will have a private discussion, uninformed about what other people are thinking, and will take an inflexible position, often without realising that it is very different from the position of others. If political figures are involved, the resulting struggle can become very personal; even if not, the status and dignity of hierarchies can become involved. Decisions made under this system are often bad ones, because compromise has become difficult, and, once the decision is made, there will be clear winners and losers. If this kind of system works at all, it is usually because a strong figure intervenes – often a president – but, of course, this individual is most likely to choose from among several options, rather than to try to find a consensus which serves everybody's interests.

The issue of the proper organisation of departments and ministries interested in defence and security problems is a complex one. It is not really a question of dominance, but a question of management: How are the available resources put together in the most productive way? In turn, of course, this question cannot be divorced from the question of the organisation of the state itself, of which this will be an example.

There are two basic *organisational* models of government co-ordination, and two *procedural* ones. In each case, the distinction is between a 'top-down' and a 'bottom-up' approach. The two organisational variants are:

- a strong central organisation, working for the head of state or government, which can try to initiate policy and involve itself in a degree of detail; and
- a system in which power is distributed mainly to departments, with only a small central institution, which probably only has a co-ordinating role.

As always, these are tendencies rather than absolute types. Most European systems feature a strong central staff of some kind, although its ability to initiate policy, as

opposed to just blocking things it does not like, can be limited. While this system will generally produce a definite answer, this is often only when the president's foreign affairs advisor finally gets this far down in his or her in-tray. The penalty is usually lost time, and an outcome which favours one ministry (usually the foreign ministry) over another. But, the absence of a strong centre creates its own problems, since arguments can often go on for ever. The Japanese system, for example, always takes a long time, because of the need to find consensus between departments, and this reflects the generally distributed nature of power in Japanese society as a whole.

The two procedural variants are:

- a system which makes a clear division between policy, made by the minister and his or her advisors, and execution, undertaken by officials; and
- a system where officials themselves help with the formulation of policy, as well as its implementation.

The first system makes co-ordination between departments rather more difficult, because, until the minister or his or her advisors has spoken, officials can never be sure what line they should propose to others. These things are obviously easier when officials themselves originate policy, since departments can work together on something which they jointly present to ministers.

These variants will greatly affect the mechanics of the way in which policy is made. An extreme case is perhaps that of the United States, whose policymaking system is large and complex, and which finds consensus on many issues difficult. Another complication is that the higher levels of American administration will be sprinkled with political appointments, many of whom are mainly interested in making a reputation for themselves so that they can further their careers when they leave government. The usual American response is to set up a policy co-ordinating committee to produce a compromise position which, like most compromises, is so complex and fragile, that US representatives then have almost no margin for manoeuvring.

Given the inherent complexity of defence and security issues, the large number of interests involved, the degree of control exerted by allies and neighbours, and the difficulty of the co-ordination process, it is reasonable to ask whether there are any steps which can be taken to make the process run more smoothly. There is no doubt that sharp demarcation lines and institutional rivalries cause problems. In many administrative systems, the responsibilities of government departments and even offices within them, are set down in writing, and have the force of law. In this kind of system, it is difficult to share power, and a department – usually the foreign ministry – will, in theory, have charge of security questions. But, in practice, the

help of the defence ministry is going to be needed if sensible policies are to be adopted. One of the weaknesses of a system like this is that important defence decisions, because of their political element, are made by people in the foreign ministry, the cabinet or the president's office. The military will then be given a *fait accompli*, arrived at for political reasons, and asked to make it work.

If there is a solution to this kind of problem, it is to exploit the maximum flexibility which the system will allow. It is helpful if those who work in one department have at least some experience of what other departments do, and some understanding of what their priorities are. It is not necessary to be transformed into a mini-diplomat, or a mini-officer. But, an awareness of how an official's opposite number thinks prevents a dialogue of the hearing-impaired, and increases the trust that, when someone says something which sounds reasonable, but which cannot be verified from own experience, they are probably right. While it is customary for foreign ministries to speak on behalf of the delegation at international meetings, it would be odd indeed if they did not have colleagues from other departments available next to them.

At a more institutional level, it is a good idea, if the system will permit it, for positions on any issue which may involve co-operation between departments to find initial agreement from the bottom up, and preferably among people who already know one another. The alternative, which is separate analyses, followed by negotiations between two or more ministries, tends to result in a victory for the more powerful ministry (or minister), rather than the best idea. Sensible human beings ought to be able to put together a position which makes sense from a variety of angles.

This process is itself assisted if there are a fair number of civilian defence officials. This point will be returned to later, but here it should be stressed that experience suggests that relationships between diplomats and military persons, without intermediaries of some kind, are often difficult. There are officers who are politically aware, and there are diplomats who know something about defence, but probably not enough of each, and seldom in the right place at the right time. Diplomats are members of an international 'free masonry' dedicated to ensure smooth relations between states, who sometimes believe that agreements and good relations between states are really ends in themselves. This, combined with the special language and baroque arrangements under which negotiations take place, make life very difficult for the average officer whose previous job may have been commanding an infantry battalion, where things were somewhat simpler. It is the task of the civilian bureaucrat to understand both sides, and to help in the process of forming consensus. The bureaucrat will be used to working with both sides, and

will tend to deal with the diplomat more easily. Their background and training, as well as the type of work they do, will be more similar, and they can, by taking on the political side of the defence ministry's involvement, leave the military to concentrate on their own areas of expertise.

So far the concentration has been on the idea of a policy community within government. There are many states where this is the norm, and where there is limited interest outside government in defence and security policy. These are often settled states, whose militaries are widely regarded as legitimate. But, there are many other states where the situation is quite different.

For example, there are some states where the constitution provides for the separation of powers, which may give parliament an active role, even if only a negative one (the United States is an extreme example). More generally, electoral systems with proportional representation, which tends to produce coalitions, will generally move the balance of power to parliament, because of the need to secure agreement from the parties and keep the coalition together. There are also states whose recent history of civil-military relations has been poor, or where the military has played too strong a role in politics. In many cases, it will be correct to bring civil society into the policymaking process deliberately as a way of restoring confidence in the military. Finally, there will be states where the military has a mainly internal focus, or where there are major political issues – such as conscription – which are of interest to the general public.

It is doubtful whether there are any general rules about the best way to involve civil society in defence issues. Perhaps the only fundamental one is the need to avoid confusing functions. It is generally right for government to originate proposals, because it has the mandate (and the resources) to do so. If parliament turns itself into a second centre of decisionmaking, the result is frequently chaos and paralysis, since the two can cancel each other out (as in the United States), and nothing gets done. Parliament here represents the interests of the voter, the citizen and the taxpayer, and fulfils its task best when it requires the government, or its officials, to appear before it and give a reasoned explanation of what has been done in its name. This will be discussed further in a later chapter.

CHAPTER 4

THE MILITARY AND THE MANAGEMENT OF DEFENCE

The focus in this chapter moves away from wider issues of co-ordination and government policy to the way in which civilians and the military can work together in the formulation and implementation of defence policy itself. Firstly, the roles and tasks that are appropriate to the military are considered, as well as the influence of different types of government structures and practices. This is one of the most difficult areas of defence transformation, and it has to be recognised that achieving a proper integration of civilian and military functions and personnel will not be easy, and may take time.

In theory, the position is straightforward. In the words of one writer, it is the role of the government to “define appropriate areas of responsibility” for the military to operate in.¹³ But what are these appropriate areas? And how are they defined? Many writers have supposed that all that really matters is that these areas should be as small as possible, thus, in their view, constraining the military as much as possible. But, this seems a strange way to get the best out of an expensive group of individuals whom the community has selected, trained and equipped. The way in which historical and cultural factors affect answers to these questions will be stressed below, but first it is worth setting out a couple of areas where most people agree that the military should not be involved:

- *Wars and alliances*: At the highest strategic level, governments are jealous of their right to declare war and make treaties. Parliaments (even those as strong as the American Congress) can obstruct declarations of war and refuse to ratify treaties, but they do not usually have the right to propose either of them. Far less, therefore, should the military as servants of the state possess the initiative, or even influence in these areas.
- *Finance*: Except under conditions of absolute military control, states are very unlikely to allow the military to decide what the absolute level of defence spending should be. In almost all systems of government, accounting for expenditure (including defence expenditure) has to be done to parliament, because it is parliament which allocates the money to be spent on defence and the taxes which raise it. Generally, spending decisions are political decisions, and permanent officials (not politicians, and certainly not the military) have to defend the *propriety* of the way money was spent. This tends to be the case even

where the military is very powerful. There are certainly cases where the military has had – in power political terms – at least a voice in the setting of the budget. Yet, a simple relationship between military power and defence budgets should not be assumed. It is true, for example, that both Israel and Pakistan spend an unusually high proportion of their national wealth on defence, and it is true that, in both countries (and in rather different ways), the military is very powerful. But in neither case is there a simple cause and effect relationship. Rather, both the power (or influence) of the military, and the size of the defence budget are themselves consequences of the perceived threat from outside. There are no recorded cases of high military influence and high defence budgets in the absence of a threat. (It is, of course, the perception of a threat which makes the military more powerful in the first place.)

Indeed, the relationship between defence budget-setting and military influence is very complex, and may be the opposite of what it appears. Thus, the Japanese government, since 1976, has operated an informal policy of keeping defence spending to 1% of gross domestic product. This is not, however, a means to control the military – which is bound hand and foot already – but a political gesture aimed at domestic and foreign opinion.

Areas of responsibility

If it is accepted that the military will seldom be involved in issues such as declarations of war and defence budgets, how are other areas decided, that are deemed to be 'appropriate' for the military? Part of the problem lies in the way the question itself is formulated, usually because the involvement of the military (or of civilians) is assumed to be *exclusive*. Reasons why this is not possible will be provided later. Writing in an American context, one writer has implied a pattern of "military advice [on] force levels, weapon systems, expenditures, [and of] political, civilian advice as to diplomacy, budget and tax policy and political acceptance."¹⁴ But, no democratic regime could possibly allow so much military influence, even if it was clear what is meant by 'advice'. Equally, there is the valid question put by a South African Defence Force officer in Pretoria in 1994: "If I as a military man tell you I need a piece of equipment, then on what basis do you as a civilian tell me I shouldn't have it?"

This kind of question can be addressed more easily if two principles are kept in mind:

- There are no important questions which are either purely military or purely political.
- Neither civilians nor the military constitute a homogeneous group.

Political and military questions

The requirement to divide issues into piles labelled 'political' and 'military' seems to be a mistake, and does not conform very much to reality. It might be better to say that, *in any question which arises in the formulation or implementation of defence policy, there are some aspects where the skills of the military are needed, and some where the skills of civilians are needed.*

Certainly, attempts in history to divide issues neatly have generally failed, because to give up control of an issue is to reduce power. As a result, there is a contest to define questions as 'political' or 'military', and thereby to increase power. Surely, some questions can be dealt with by the military alone? Not necessarily. Take, for example, a decision to make the selection test for a commando force more lifelike and stringent. Soon after it is introduced, several trainees die in a bad weather exercise. The military, while regretting this, argues that the trainees are being selected for dangerous work. But the trainees have families, and the families have access to local and national politicians and the media, and the minister may thus have a problem. It is doubtful that the minister will be amused by initially hearing of the incident from the media, nor will he or she wish to tell parliament that this is a technical military matter, on which none of them should have a view. A similar problem exists in many countries whose air forces carry out low-level flying training: the military need for training often conflicts with the desire of local residents for peace and quiet.

But, does this mean that every single decision which might possibly have a political dimension must be scrutinised by a minister? Clearly, this would be impossible. The answer lies in abandoning this unworkable distinction between political and military issues, and concentrating rather on *what needs to be done*. In examples like the above, there are basically three activities which are needed:

- The military should be aware that much of what it does has a political dimension, and should make sure that civilian colleagues know what is going on.
- Civilians should consider this political dimension, and warn ministers and get their approval if they think it necessary.
- Civilians should take the lead in helping ministers to explain and defend what has occurred, after being advised, of course, by the military.

Ministers will be a great deal happier to defend a position which they were consulted about in advance.

It is worth pausing for a moment to consider what the civilian role actually is. In particular, there is a need to avoid confusing the role of the *politician* and the role

of the *civilian official*, which are quite different. When the word 'political' is used in this context, it refers to a dimension to the formulation and administration of defence policy which, for example, may:

- involve public money, for which, as was shown, the permanent head of the department is usually responsible;
- attract criticism or presentational problems, nationally or abroad;
- require the consent of parliament or negotiation with other nations; and
- involve negotiation or compromise with other government departments.

With the exception of the first,¹⁵ these are subjects on which ministers (ie *civilian politicians*) are expected to perform in public or among their colleagues, and the skills which are needed to support them are, by and large, skills which *civilian officials* should possess as a result of their aptitude and training. Briefing another government or the media, or negotiating with the finance ministry are not tasks the military is particularly good at, or even necessarily wants to do. It is not, in other words, a question of corraling the military into an area where it can do no harm, but rather of using the resources of the military and civilians to achieve the best result.

The illusion of homogeneity

Although some militaries are more homogeneous than others, and all will tend to put on a united front in the face of outsiders, they are, in fact, as riven by faction and jealousy as most organisations. An example is the tensions which often exist between officers from the combat arms (such as pilots and infantry officers), who will tend to monopolise the top positions, and technical specialists, who feel underappreciated in spite of their greater training and specialist skills. Likewise, because the military profession includes the possibility of combat and violence, its ethos places special emphasis on the development of leadership and trust among those who may be invited to risk their lives together. In such a situation, in peacetime as much as in times of conflict, the temptation is to trust only those who are known, who wear the same uniform, and have even the same speciality.

These tribal tendencies make the very idea of neutral military advice hard to conceive. There are, of course, issues at such a high level of abstraction that general military advice will have some meaning. There are also issues, such as remuneration and conditions of service, where the interests of the various services tend to coincide. But, in general, the more difficult the issue, the harder it is to produce collective advice which means something, and does not simply reflect the balance of power among the military itself.

A couple of examples may illustrate this better. Imagine a littoral state with problems with smuggling and gun-running along its coast. There is a small amount of money to spend on equipment to counter the threat. What is the advice of the military? In practice, something like the following will happen. The navy will argue that fast patrol boats, or corvettes carrying naval helicopters are the answer. The air force will point to the greater endurance and carrying capability of fixed-wing aircraft. The army will argue that it makes more sense to allow the miscreants to land, and pursue them with high-mobility vehicles. Each will have a persuasive argument why it should be in charge of the overall command and control system which will be required. Or consider a request for military advice on the best way of defending a country against the powerful air force of a neighbour. One lobby will argue for strike aircraft to attack the enemy before it can reach the country. Another will argue for a large force of fighters. A third will stress the importance of air defence missiles. A fourth will point out that none of this is any good without a sophisticated radar network. The army, meanwhile, will insist that it should defend its own facilities with its own missiles. (After all, aircraft are complex pieces of equipment which often go wrong, and the weather in this part of the world often makes flying difficult.)

The point here is not simply that factions in the military will seek to advance their own causes, as happens everywhere. It is also that, in most of these cases, there is no single, correct answer anyway. At one extreme, there are propositions which are militarily senseless, and at the other, ideas which command general assent. But, most defence policy questions fall into the large grey area in the middle, where there is no unchallengeable wisdom, and so no hope that something called 'military advice' will arrive neatly packaged and available for immediate use.

If the military is not homogeneous, neither is there something called 'the civilian'. There is a persistent confusion, in writing about civil-military relations, between 'control' by politicians and 'control' by civilians. The former are almost always the latter, but the latter are by no means always the former. Indeed, while one of the tasks of civilian officials may well be to help the government to implement its policies, it may well be the case that they will side more with their military colleagues on certain issues, at least privately. Tensions between politicians and permanent officials can be just as great as between politicians and the military. Even civilian officials are not necessarily all alike. Not only is this self-evidently true at an individual level, it is also true institutionally, because officials are employed to support and defend various positions. In a meeting to discuss a new equipment project, for example, the officials from the defence ministry will be lobbying for the system, those from the industry department will be concerned about the implications for the industrial base, the foreign ministry will be looking at the

international implications, and the finance ministry will support the cheapest solution.

All of this makes the idea of parcelling the work of defence management into packages labelled 'political', to be dealt with by civilians, and 'military' to be dealt with by uniformed officers, ridiculous. The fact is that no system will ever work unless those responsible for it agree to co-operate and make it work. This requires the forging of individual relationships across institutional boundaries, and a willingness to treat those in other disciplines as colleagues rather than enemies.

Officers and bureaucracies

So far in this chapter, generic questions have been considered around the roles which the military can play in the management of defence. But, in practice, this involvement takes place within a defined social and institutional context, which differs, often very substantially, from country to country. In all cases, the military is taken out of its natural habitat, the field or the headquarters, and put down in an alien environment where the rules are made by others. What is this bureaucratic context in which the military officer works? While there are some common features, it was already noted how much the position of the military varies in different societies, for cultural and historical reasons. The same is true of the bureaucracies and government structures within which they work. A few examples are suggested.

The top-down approach

The picture of bureaucracy which has been most influential is that of Max Weber (1864-1920).¹⁶ Weber (who, like most of those who wrote about organisations, had never worked in one) made some valid points about the nature of bureaucracy, notably its essentially rational underpinning, replacing the haphazard systems of rule previously in vogue. But Weber, whether he realised it or not, in practice, was always describing the bureaucracy of Prussia up to 1918. This was a socially exclusive and politically conservative formation, which saw its role as helping to maintain the authoritarian regime of the day, with its loyalty to the King, rather than to the people. In addition, as is clear from Weber's emphasis on administrative regulations and the rigidity of organisation, it was a type of bureaucracy which is very common in certain parts of Europe, but much less so elsewhere. States which practice this kind of administration tend to have:

- a history of political absolutism;

- a heritage of Roman and Napoleonic law; and
- a system of administrative law, laying down legal responsibilities for different elements of the bureaucracy.

This type of system is found in its purest in European states such as France and Germany. Its origin lies in the concept of absolutism, which believed that the monarch held all the powers of the state. In a democratic system, the monarch is simply replaced by the people, but the essential features of the system are not changed. They are:

- explicit and exclusive delegation of powers, often through legislation, to specialist groups;
- a strict distinction between the formulation of policy and its implementation;
- initiative proceeding from the top; and
- low value placed on consensus.

The first of these characteristics involves the concept of *compétence*, a word found, in various forms, in a number of European languages, but not, except by importation, in English. It is hard to translate exactly, but, as its main practical consequence, shows the tendency to package work into self-contained parts, each to be dealt with by a nominated department, and no-one else. There is no greater sin in this kind of system than exceeding one's *compétence*. The second characteristic dictates the structure of bureaucracies of this type. At the top of the department is the minister, who is responsible for the formulation of policy. Yet, even the initiative of ministers is limited in practice. Ministers are assisted by their *cabinets*, another untranslatable word which refers to a group of advisors, including some from outside government, working for the minister personally, and probably leaving when a new minister is appointed. There is a strict distinction between ministers and their *cabinets*, and the permanent officials, whose function is to implement the policies which are handed down to them.

This kind of structure has to work in a more flexible way than is implied by the model above, if anything is to be done. Politics by its very nature involves compromise, and officials are bound to be involved in the formulation of policy in some way, rather than always waiting for inspiration to be handed down from above. This system described here varies somewhat from country to country. In such a system, there are significant obstacles to consensus, because loyalties tend to be vertical, and hierarchies will negotiate with one another almost like sovereign states, as could be expected, given the tradition of the delegation of powers to be exercised by one group alone. As a result, a superior figure (such as a chancellor or president) will often be called in to make a decision, and this decision will most likely be a straight choice between sharply different positions.

How does the military fare in such a structure? Any system based on the exclusive *compétence* principle will tend to make the kind of artificial distinction between political and military issues criticised earlier. The military will therefore be charged with the implementation of defence policy, and will be largely left to get on with it, without a significant civilian input. In some ways, this puts the military in a powerful position, at least formally. But, in practice, it is always subject to being overruled by the *cabinet* and often by the foreign ministry as well. The *cabinet*, which will contain aspiring politicians, academics, journalists, diplomats and others – but probably no military persons – will insist on being involved in any issue which has political overtones, and that includes nearly everything. As a result, reports or recommendations can make their way to the Chief of Defence, only to be rejected by a young journalist recently appointed to the *cabinet*. In addition, the position of the foreign ministry will always be stronger in a system of government which has few civilians working on defence issues. The foreign ministry supplies a large number of members of *cabinets*, not least in ministries of defence, and, except where the military is powerful for other reasons, it would be unusual for them (or their minister) to win a trial of strength with a foreign ministry.

The bottom-up approach

The other main type of government system is roughly the opposite of that described above. It is typical of states without a tradition of Roman or Napoleonic law, even if they share some of the characteristics of the top-down system. For example, Thailand had a tradition of absolutist monarchy which lasted several hundred years longer than that of France, but its system of administration is very different. Likewise, an attachment to procedures should not be confused with legal definitions of activities. In a number of Confucian cultures, for example, ritual and the following of prescribed procedures are extremely important, but this is for social reasons and for tradition rather than as a result of legal requirements. The characteristics of this kind of approach are:

- vagueness of administrative boundaries and widespread consultation on issues of common interest;
- use of permanent officials as originators of policy;
- initiative generally coming from the bottom; and
- high value placed on consensus.

There are more variants of this system than of the top-down one, and they have different origins. One is found in Great Britain, with similarities in a number of northern European nations like the Netherlands and Sweden. Similar systems are also found in many Asian countries as well, although their origins are quite different. What these countries have in common is:

- a pragmatic culture;
- a respect for tradition and convention as much as for written law; and
- a preference for consensus.

The use of 'pragmatic' here is not an Anglo-Saxon value judgement: the word is used in something close to a technical philosophical sense, ie the drawing of conclusions from sense-data, rather than the *a priori* reasoning which is common in top-down systems. Without an extensive legal structure determining everything, ideas will tend to be seen more on their merits. Indeed, a number of these societies (Japan is a good example) draft laws and government documents in such a way that no single definitive interpretation is actually possible, and they can therefore mean different things to different people.

This kind of system tends to work by developing consensus at a low level, and working upwards. As a rule, officials will try to sort out problems at the lowest level possible, and reach consensus before passing the issue upwards. Decisive intervention from above (although easier in some countries than others) is never attractive, since it implies a defeat and loss of face for one group. As a result, in many such systems (especially Asian ones), the role of officials becomes increasingly ceremonial as they become more senior. A ministerial meeting to settle an issue may be treated with great formality and prepared with great thoroughness, but it will be little else, in practice, *but* ceremony, with the arguments having been thoroughly ventilated at a lower level. Societies which value consensus also tend to dislike public conflict, and even where there are disagreements, a 'cool heart' as the Thais call it, is required of all. This kind of system makes rigid distinctions between functions less common, and provides more scope for consultation and consensus between hierarchies. Finally, these systems generally manage without *cabinets*, so officials have the right and the responsibility to propose ideas to ministers, as long, of course, as they are in line with overall policy, or can be presented as such.

The weaknesses of this kind of system are an undue concentration on short-term, *ad hoc* issues, and a constant temptation for sterile managerialism. Top-down systems tend, by their nature, to pursue longer term strategies, whereas bottom-up systems are mainly concerned with tactics, and often move, via a series of sensible, *ad hoc* compromises, to a position which is eventually the opposite of the one they started from.

The position of the military in this type of structure is formally weaker, but practically stronger than in top-down systems. Civilians are often employed in large numbers and in positions of power, but this tends to have the effect of relieving the military of tasks for which it is not best fitted, and making the department as a whole

more effective in fighting its wider political battles. The absence of a *cabinet* increases the influence of the military, in that its interlocutors are the permanent officials, usually defence experts, with whom it normally works.

CHAPTER 5

THE FUNCTIONS, ORGANISATION AND WORKING METHODS OF A MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

No-one who visits or works with a number of defence ministries in different countries can fail to be struck by the very great differences between them. This is strange, since government departments the world over often show many similarities. For example, foreign ministries will generally have regional departments, and departments dealing with general issues. Likewise, finance ministries will have economic policy departments, and departments devoted to curb other ministries' expenditure. But, defence ministries vary enormously in size, scope and organisation. Why is this?

The range of defence functions

The difference is mainly because the range of functions involved in defence is very large – larger than any other area of government – and there is a great deal of variation in the ways in which they are carried out. The following, it is suggested, are the most important defence functions:

- the command and control of operational forces;
- operational planning and exercises;
- the peacetime recruitment, training and administration of military personnel;
- intelligence analysis and sometimes collection;
- formulation of defence policy;
- implementation of defence policy;
- equipment research and development;
- equipment procurement; and
- administration of the organisation itself.

As always, there is some overlap. Two questions need to be asked of each of these functions:

- Should they be *geographically* part of the defence ministry?
- More importantly, are they in any case *organisationally* part of the ministry?

The answers, as always, will partly depend on factors outside the control of those responsible for organisation. Some governments have decided to concentrate

functions in one place to save money. Others have moved functions out of the capital city, also to save money. Small nations have often decided to co-locate all these functions; large nations have often split them. The arguments will be different in each country, and here, as in the remainder of the monograph, the concern is mainly with the options which are available, and not, in general, with making recommendations.

More than any other department of government, the ministry of defence depends for its very *raison d'être* on individuals who do not form part of it – the military personnel in operational units. The most important question to answer, therefore, is where the boundary falls between operational activities on the one hand and administration and training, on the other. There are two basic functions which a government expects the military, individually and collectively, to fulfil. These are:

- planning and conducting operations in pursuit of national interests; and
- advising on defence policy issues.

The first of these is the responsibility of the *national military commander*,¹⁷ the second is the responsibility of the *Chief of Defence*.

The *national military commander* (NMC), as the name implies, is the commander of the armed forces of the nation in war, and the command authority for military operations short of war, such as peacekeeping. He or she will also be responsible for the operational deployment of military units, and for exercises in peacetime. He or she will operate from a *national military headquarters* (NMHQ). In practice, as always, this organisation will differ from country to country. Countries which face a land threat, or which expect to conduct operations just across the border, will probably have a simple organisation of this type. Countries which face no landward threat, or whose military activities are often conducted at a distance, may have several different NMHQs, or they may improvise depending on the circumstances. The important thing, however, is that the function has to exist in some form.

The *Chief of Defence* (CHOD) is the professional head of the national military forces, and also the chief advisor on military affairs to the ministry of defence and the government as a whole. This is a function which is carried out in nearly all defence ministries, although it may be called something different, and even integrated into the role of the NMC. The biggest single reason for the differences in organisation between defence ministries is separation or integration of these two functions. A common pattern is to try to make the same individual and organisation do two jobs.

As has already been indicated, these two functions may be united or separated, for practical reasons, but all those involved with the formation or development of a

ministry need to think through which model they want to adopt. One important factor is the potential for over-control and micro-management when the two functions are united. In the command and control of a military operation away from national territory, there are three levels of control of the forces involved:

- *Strategic*: This refers to the overall political direction and the military policy at the highest level. This will be where ministers are involved.
- *Operational*: At this level, strategic objectives are turned into military ones and operational directives given to the commander. This level involves the military and its civilian advisors.
- *Tactical*: The planning and conduct of the operation itself occur on this level.

The first really takes place in the ministry of defence, while the second has to be undertaken at an operational headquarters, such as the NMHQ. It is quite important to preserve the distinction, and to avoid a situation where ministers and senior military personnel outside the command chain find it possible (and tempting) to involve themselves in operational planning itself. Clearly, ministers will want to be briefed about significant operations their armed forces might be involved in, but they should – and must – not want to involve themselves in the detail. This argues for a geographical separation of some kind between the two functions.

Beyond this, there are certain common sense ways of isolating functions which belong in a ministry of defence. The simplest differentiation is between policy and implementation, although, in practice, this is often more difficult than it sounds, and it depends to some extent also on the national organisation for defence of the country concerned. The real criterion should be *political interest*. To take up the example of flying training again, there are obviously some issues which attract political interest, such as:

- training given to foreign students;
- accidents;
- low-flying; and
- political pressure to accept female pilots.

Ministers will need to be briefed on all of these issues, to make judgements in certain cases and to defend their policies in parliament, and there will therefore have to be civilian and military personnel close to them who are familiar with the issues. Once the policy has been decided, however, in a properly run organisation, its implementation should be left to the air force HQ, which will organise a training programme, and the training organisation itself which will carry it out. Exactly who sits where is less important than the fact that everyone understands the issues which the ministry needs to know about. Thus, a competent system, on learning of an aircraft accident on a training mission, among others, will make sure that the basic

facts are passed to the ministry, so that officials there can brief the minister, and he or she, in turn, can make a statement to the media. The media will want to know things like the name and age of the pilot, how long he or she has been in the air force and why the accident occurred. This, rather than the technical detail, is what the ministry therefore has to be briefed on.

Structure

There are many influences on the structure of a defence ministry, some of them beyond the control of those who should decide what it should be. Before going on to a more detailed examination of these influences, however, the principle of *institutional integrity* should be stressed. This simply means that the institution has to be structured in such a way that it assists in the achievement of its objectives. This sounds obvious – perhaps it is – but it is surprising how frequently it is ignored. Thus, the purpose of an Anglo-Saxon company is to suck wealth from the company's operations, and deposit it in the wallets of the shareholders. In other societies, the company's purpose may be to have the largest market share, the biggest output, or to win prestigious orders. The structure of the company should reflect these objectives. In the case of government, most people would suggest that honesty, fairness and effectiveness are the virtues which would be expected, and the structure will need to reflect this. Thus, it would be very unusual for government to imitate structures from the private sector.

There are many reasons why the principle of institutional integrity can be ignored. A frequent one is outside influence. In many parts of the world, the public service is patterned after the practices of the colonial power, so that many African, South American and Asian nations use either the British, the Spanish or the French model. Sometimes, this is appropriate – the British model works well in Australia and New Zealand, for example – but sometimes there are problems when a colonial legacy is grafted onto a society which has historically functioned in other ways. The Indian defence ministry, for example, was influenced in its early days both by the system inherited from colonial times, and by the recommendations of Lord Ismay, a former British military officer on Mountbatten's staff.¹⁸ The system set up soon had to be changed. In South Africa, the system set up in 1909 was modelled in great detail on the then British War Office, but did not suit the rather different political climate of the country.

Some influences will operate at the level of government generally. For example, there is little point in a defence ministry operating a *cabinet* system (as in France) if the rest of the government does not, or vice versa. In Sweden, the defence ministry

is quite small, but this follows normal practice in the country where many functions are discharged by agencies responsible to parliament. Equally, reorganisation in the public sector tends to be pervasive where it occurs; some nations cast the organisation of their public services in stone, while others chase after every trendy management theory. Indeed, the very concept of a professional, neutral, career bureaucracy may not exist in some countries. A spoils system may operate at the highest levels, or there may be a habit of bringing people from business into government, which obviously has its own dangers and difficulties.

As well as these general limitations, the main restraining factor on freedom of choice in structures will be the extent to which there is a substantial civilian cadre in the ministry. Obviously, if few civilians are employed anyway, then some of the structures that will be described below are in any case not possible. But, if few civilians *are* employed, even if the political will exists to have a large civilian input into policy, it is not a process which can happen overnight, as South Africa has found since 1994. It takes considerable time – years if not decades – to grow a cadre of civilian defence experts who have the confidence of the military and also of the political leadership. The three examples which follow assume that a large civilian cadre is either available or planned.

Parallel structures

This is where the defence function is divided into:

- a defence HQ which deals with technical military issues; and
- a defence ministry, largely staffed by civilians, which handles political and financial issues and supports the minister.

There is a degree of superficial logic to this arrangement, but it seldom works well in practice. Even if the two are located together (as in Norway, one of few where this seems to work), there will be communication problems. Two centres of power will always compete with each other, especially if they work for the same master who, in practice, must choose between their advice. The motivations of a ministry of defence and a defence HQ will be quite different, and often opposed. Moreover, if there are cases – such as India – where proposals have to go from defence HQ to the ministry of defence for approval, this gives the bureaucrats a very powerful position, which the military will resent. In general, initiatives on various subjects will most often come from the military, since it has the technical knowledge, and probably also the greater number of staff officers. The defence ministry, in such circumstances, can often do little more than object or criticise. Unless it has its own military staff, it will not be in a position to generate many ideas about operational concepts or procurement, for example, and, if it *does* have a military component, it

will be seen by defence HQ as a threat and as competition. As a result, there will be a tendency for the two organisations to take up rigid positions, agreed to at a senior level. In such a situation, the minister will be put in the position of having to judge between the advice of his or her secretary and the CHOD or NMC time after time.

Parallel hierarchies

This is where the defence function is divided into:

- a defence HQ which is only responsible for the implementation of policy; and
- a defence ministry in which there are separate military and civilian organisations, arranged by functional area.

For this system to work well, it is important that the responsibilities of each military and civilian division should be *clearly distinguished from one another* to avoid competing hierarchies, second-guessing, and competition. There will be a number of military divisions, reporting ultimately to the CHOD, and a number of civilian divisions reporting to the secretary, dealing with different aspects of the same subject. In practice, the system will be more flexible than it appears. For example, the CHOD may well ask for advice on the handling of some political or bureaucratic issue: this would sensibly come from civilians. In any event, however, what is most important is the working practices which the organisation as a whole uses. There has to be constant contact between the military and civilian staffs, and it should be a fundamental principle of the ministry's operations that *there is a single source of advice to ministers, reflecting both the military and civilian views*. The importance of this cannot be over-emphasised. No matter how violently the civilians and the military may argue at the lower levels, they need to sort out a position between them which they can jointly put to ministers.

Consider, for example, a study into a national contribution to a United Nations peacekeeping deployment. The overall co-ordination will probably fall to the CHOD, but part of the work will have to be done by civilian staffs. A possible distribution of work would be:

- The military works with the NMHQ to draw up a list of available forces and puts together an outline package.
- The military looks at the practicality of transporting the forces where they are needed, and supporting them.
- Civilians and the military instruct embassies abroad to try to discover what other troop contributors are doing.
- Intelligence staffs do a rapid assessment of the situation in the country.

- Civilian and service personnel staffs look at issues of welfare, leave, special pay and so forth.
- Civilians liaise with the foreign ministry (which will want the largest possible force), and the finance ministry (which will want the smallest).
- Civilians consider the wider public relations and political aspects of the operation.
- Civilians consider the financial aspects of the operation.

The final presentation to ministers will be led by the CHOD, but he or she will be supported by civilian colleagues.

An integrated hierarchy

This is where the defence function is divided into:

- a defence HQ which is responsible only for the implementation of policy; and
- a defence ministry in which there are mixed military and civilian organisations, arranged by functional area.

This is the most advanced form of organisation of a defence ministry, and probably the most efficient. But, it does require civilians and military officers to be content to work for each other, which is a little beyond where most bureaucracies would be prepared to go. It should be noted that there is no need for a 50/50 split, or any other kind of prescriptive limitation. In each case, the test should be whether a given job can be done more effectively by a civilian or by a member of the military. In some cases – such as operational planning – most or all of the personnel will be military. In others – such as those responsible for civilian personnel – the opposite will apply. An integrated structure is one which takes the principle of civilians and the military working together *as far as it can sensibly be taken*. There will need to be special arrangements to ensure that each has a reporting line to a senior officer of the same background, and also to make it clear that civilians cannot give military orders, and that, for their part, they are not under military discipline.

An integrated defence staff

Whichever of the above models is chosen, there will be a need for military staff divisions in each service to provide advice on policy and to plan and conduct operations. It was already shown that the military seldom functions as a single bloc,

and that it can be extremely difficult for civilians to get collective, objective military advice, since all institutional and personal characteristics of the military will tend to put obstacles in the way.

Yet, in practice, governments *do* need integrated military advice, and there are basically three ways in which they can get it:

- a chiefs of staff committee with a pro forma chairperson;
- a chief of defence with a small co-ordinating staff; or
- a chief of defence with an integrated defence staff.

The first is the traditional method, still in use in many countries. It relies on consensus, and the chairperson – who may be selected by rotation – will have little personal influence. His or her major role will be to represent the chiefs' views to the political leadership, and to try to find consensus. Inevitably, interservice co-ordination will be poor, and the services are likely to have separate and overlapping equipment programmes. This can be less of a problem when a service is so large that it dwarfs the others, but the system seldom operates well.

The second is a developed version of the first. Here, the CHOD will have a staff of his or her own which does more than arrange meetings. He or she will be charged to look actively for consensus, and will probably be asked to brief the political leadership directly on policy issues. His or her staff will be primarily co-ordinators across the services, on such issues as remuneration and conditions of service, military advice on security policy issues, and similar subjects, where there is a reasonable chance of getting a productive consensus. But, the individual services will largely control their own size and shape, and their own equipment programmes.

The final option has a CHOD at the head of an integrated defence staff (perhaps including civilians), which provides collective advice on military aspects of policy, planning, resource management and equipment (ie the individual services do not give advice directly). However, it is very important that the defence staff should not become just another layer between the service departments or service headquarters, and the political level. This adds nothing. Rather, it should *take over* certain defence functions, which will henceforth only be done collectively, on a multiservice basis. Examples include:

- the military input into defence policy;
- the size and shape of each of the services;
- the defence programme;
- major equipment projects;
- operational planning;

- intelligence; and
- logistics and personnel policy.

The single service staffs, or HQs, do not, of course, lose all of their functions. They remain responsible for, among others:

- the efficiency and operational readiness of the services;
- the implementation of centrally decided policy;
- the management of issues which affect only one service;
- most recruiting and training issues; and
- the generation of lower level operational requirements.

How should an integrated defence staff be structured? There are a number of options, but the main point is to distinguish between *functions which necessarily involve more than one service*, and *functions which are single service, but of interest to all*. For example, arms control is an issue which affects everyone, so its military aspects would probably be handled within a military defence policy department, which would be staffed by officers drawn from every service. But, the air force equipment programme is of interest to everyone as well, partly because of connections to other programmes, but partly also because the resources that the air force wants, need to be balanced with the resources needed by others. A reasonable compromise would be to have the department staffed by air force officers, but for it to report to the CHOD, rather than the chief of the air force. Of course, there will have to be a separate division responsible for pulling together and enforcing a collective military view on equipment priorities: it cannot just be a process of seeking consensus. The CHOD will then be able to present a military view of where overall programme priorities should lie.

In practice, this will not be easy. All institutional and personal forces will tend to work against it. A naval officer, after all, joined to do the best for his or her service, not for the air force, no matter how conscientious he or she may be. And everyone has to please the superior officer who writes his or her progress report.¹⁹ There will therefore be a tendency by the services not to post their best people into a central defence staff, and to try and control them while they are there. There are a number of things which can be done in an attempt to tackle these problems:

- It should be clear that the defence staff is *where the decisions are taken*, so that there is an incentive to post the best people there.
- Service in the defence staff should be a prerequisite for promotion to higher ranks.
- A large civilian presence in the defence staff can help to give it a corporate identity, since the loyalty of civilians is generally much more portable than that of the military.

Working methods

A fair amount has already been said about working methods, both directly and indirectly. The success or failure of a defence ministry will depend, ultimately, on the way in which its staffs decide to work together. Organisation charts are dangerous things (there are none in this monograph), because they conceal everything which is most important. Behind the formal diagrams of power and accountability, lies the virtual organisation – the real, unwritten system by which an organisation actually works. This virtual organisation is essentially a web of social and professional relationships between people. The better and the closer these are, the better the organisation will function. Indeed, it is likely that, if any large organisation was obliged to function exactly, and no more, as is implied in its organogram, then nothing much would get done. So, all of the characteristics described above, all of the relationships between groups and departments, provide only a framework which must be filled in. Organisations are like flowing water: they find their way around obstacles.

The most important characteristic of a successful complex organisation like a defence ministry is *mutual respect*, or, failing that, *mutual tolerance*. The military frequently finds politics off-putting and frustrating, but that is the nature of politics. Politicians have their own objectives; they also have their own problems and their own fears. Most politicians are insecure people – especially those who like to project a façade of total certainty – and are highly sensitive to criticism and unpopularity. Much of the character of politics, in any event, derives from the electorate, whom the politicians are trying to appeal to.

Civilians, if they are wise, will respect military judgement without allowing themselves to be overwhelmed by it. Military officers are almost always experts, with considerable training and experience, and can contribute a great deal to the management of defence. Civilians can make best use of them, however, not by simple acceptance or rejection of their proposals, but by engaging in a dialogue from an informed, but neutral position. Although many military issues are complex, few are so complex that they cannot be explained to the intelligent layperson. Indeed, one of the functions civilians perform is to stand in for the political leadership, the electorate and the taxpayer, in whose name the military proposes to act. Any well-founded proposal from the military should be convincing to a layperson if carefully explained. The argument of military necessity, or the argument that ‘you wouldn’t understand it, you’re only a civilian’, must be resisted. In the long term, anyway, it is doubtful whether such an attitude actually benefits the military. In almost all societies today, the military requires political approval for its plans, and civilians are much better placed to help the military get it – if they are convinced

it is right – than the military itself would be. The two communities must respect the advice which the other gives. An assurance that something is ‘militarily impossible’, or ‘politically unthinkable’, does not have to be accepted absolutely without demur, but ultimately has to be taken, after reasoned discussion, as a professional judgement which must be respected.

Finally, and to illustrate the importance of working methods, an example is set out of two alternative ways, one good and one bad, by which the same objective can be sought within the same institutional framework.

Tungaru has committed a company-size logistic transport unit, and several staff officers to the UN force now operating in Cyprus.²⁰ The commitment is expected to last at least five years, and involves the rotation every six months of the majority of the troops involved. With flights carrying spares and support equipment, VIP visits, leave and compassionate visits, and the need to act as a transit point for other national contingents heading for Cyprus, the existing transport base is working at almost full capacity. In addition, the C-130s are being flown more intensively than usual, and need much more maintenance. The existing air force movement control teams, as well as the maintenance personnel and logistic specialists cannot cope, and other operational tasks are suffering. There is also a major security commitment to cope with, beyond the resources of the air force police.

The chief of the air force writes to the minister of defence to recommend an increase in the size of the force to cope with the new commitments. He proposes to add a new movement control section of about 200 personnel, and about another 100 maintenance and support staff. In addition, a company-strength air base protection force is to be established. All of these personnel, he argues, can be recruited from those recently discharged as part of defence cuts. The minister is furious, since he is being asked to agree to something which implies that he was wrong to reduce the size of the air force in the first place. The army is angry because a similar request on its part was turned down. It offers, however, to provide troops to help with air base security, and questions the viability of a small, infantry-style unit in the air force. The navy renews its offer to take over transport to Cyprus. It believes it can do this more cheaply, and nearly as quickly as by air. News of the argument leaks to the media, and the finance minister writes to suggest the use of leased aircraft and private security firms. There are accusations that the chief of the air force – the first Muslim to hold the post – is trying to build up a counterforce to the mainly Christian army

around the capital. The air force is told that it must make 'better use of existing resources'.

Alternatively, the air staff discuss the problem at low level within the defence ministry. They discover that the army has similar difficulties and decide to make common cause. The civilians' advice is to present the requirement as a temporary one which does not question the government's overall policy. The interior ministry agrees to redeploy one *gendarmerie* company to help with security. A package is put to the cabinet for approval, of several hundred extra personnel in both the army and the air force to be funded from savings made elsewhere, and provided by slowing down the current redundancy programme. The finance minister continues to question the need for what he calls a 'Rolls Royce' level of support – arguing that the troops should be able to catch their own food in the wild – but eventually agrees.

The role of the defence secretary

Irrespective of the exact working methods chosen, any defence ministry structure with a civilian component will have a figure, called variously the secretary, permanent secretary or director-general. This individual will have made a career in the public service (and generally in the defence ministry, for most of the time, at least), and will be the professional head of all the civilian officials in the department.

In this sense, the secretary of the defence ministry is no different from any other head of any other department. His or her functions are similar to a colleague in, say, the trade ministry: they will probably include such things as the co-ordination of policy advice and general management of the department. In many systems of government, it is also normal for the secretary to be accountable to parliament for the expenditure of the department. Whether all the civilian staff work directly for the secretary, or whether they are scattered throughout the department, they perform what is known collectively as the secretariat functions, which are, simply stated, all those functions which are required to support ministers in the running of a *government department*. The obvious ones are:

- handling the budget;
- dealing with parliament;
- dealing with the public;
- dealing with the media;

- dealing and negotiating with other departments; and
- handling defence relations with other countries.

All these functions are not exclusively civilian, but they are all functions where civilians will play the dominant role. Often, however, they will make use of military advice. An example of this interaction may be useful.

The finance minister writes to the defence minister urging that the squadron of C-130 transport aircraft should be disbanded, and that the capability should be provided instead from leased civil aircraft. He argues that significant savings will result. Handling this correspondence is obviously a function of a government department, rather than any other function the ministry may perform, so the overall handling falls to the civilians. They will, in any case, know how to draft a reply from the minister and their use of language and tactics will be effective in fighting battles between departments. The military will be approached for a view on the operational consequences of such a suggestion, and will advise on things such as, for example, the availability of civil aircraft which can land on improvised runways, and the difficulty in supporting them far from home. The civilians, meanwhile, will produce a counterargument on the financial points. A senior civilian official will convert this into a draft for the minister, which the military will be invited to consider. If the draft is inaccurate, the military will seek to correct it, although it will ultimately give way to the civilians on issues of style and structure. The draft will then be submitted to the minister as the collective advice of the department.

In principle, this process is no more complex than in many other government departments. Thus, the health ministry will have medical advisors, the transport ministry will have engineers, and so forth. Administrative public officials who perform secretariat functions will deal with them much as their colleagues in the defence ministry deal with the military officers there. Although there are practical differences in the defence area, both of type and degree, it is helpful to bear this essential similarity of principle in mind.

In particular, it should be clear to all that the secretary is the *head of the department* and, therefore, has a position of authority over the military staff working for him or her. (The CHOD, of course, has other, separate functions). If a military officer is posted to the ministry, he or she is, for this time, a servant of the government, the minister and the secretary. While he or she will continue to come under the military chain of command for remuneration and administration, for other purposes, he or she is a temporary public official. Thus, if such an officer is accused of a security

breach or a corrupt act, the secretary (rather than the CHOD) would investigate, because the officer is working in a department of government. (If the breach was only one of military law, or had occurred some time before when he or she was a field commander, then it might be an issue which the chain of command should consider).

CHAPTER 6 STRATEGY AND INTELLIGENCE

So far, technique and organisation were focused on, but the purpose of any system of defence and security decisionmaking is to set and implement policies. In the next few chapters, some of the subjects for which this needs to be done will be covered.

From what has been discovered so far, it is evident that there are many constraints on the freedom of action of even large states in the framing of defence and security policy. Among smaller states, the room for manoeuvre can be very limited indeed. Taking an average state, its national strategy will essentially be determined by:

- its size and position;
- its allies and neighbours;
- the money available; and
- domestic political factors.

For most nations, overall strategy is largely a process of accommodating the inevitable, and the purpose of defence policy statements and white papers is to provide a reasonably coherent justification of what has been, in most respects, already decided. Moreover, both strategy and posture have a great deal of inertia attached to them, and can take years to change. It is obvious that factors other than simple military potential play a role in the relative freedom to make one's own policy. There are a number of factors which tend to have an inhibiting effect:

- *Formal allies*: Obviously, being a member of an alliance involves giving up some degree of freedom. Where there is a single dominant state – as was the case in both major alliances in the Cold War – this is exacerbated. But, the fact that a nation *is* an ally can rebound in curious ways: a large state may support a small state in quarrels, or condone domestic abuses by it, because that state is an ally, and it is necessary to retain its support.
- *Large neighbours*: Displeasing large neighbours may be difficult, and most small nations living near large ones have to be circumspect in what they do. This is not only a question of sheer size (tiny Finland retained much more independence from the Soviet Union than Mexico did from the United States, although Mexico was much larger). It is also a question of economic strength and political cohesion.

- *Political dominance*: Much of the freedom or independence of a state is actually in the collective mind of its leaders. In practical terms, there is little that the United States can do to stop Japan if the latter wanted to pursue a high-profile independent foreign policy. But, guilt over the World War II has brought the Japanese to such a pitch of political self-castration that they reflexively ask themselves, before anything else: What will the Americans think?²¹ But, dominance is not always of the large over the small, as the political half-nelson testifies in which Israel manages to hold the United States.
- *Economic dominance*: Trading nations will tend to be supportive, or at least neutral, about the foreign and even domestic policies of their major markets. Conversely, the ability to damage the economy, or the currency of another country is a good way of enforcing obedience.
- *Military assets*: This is not just a question of numbers of things and people. Australia, for example, has a national command and control, and a force projection capability of its own, whereas South Korea, whose forces are vastly larger, does not. These do not only provide a national option militarily, but – as the French found in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation – provide a measure of political independence as well.

What is strategy?

The limitations listed above are just limitations. They may indicate what cannot be done, but do not, except in extreme cases, write policy. Even the smallest, weakest and most allied state has a national strategy to define and implement. There will be a variety of questions to answer, of which the following will be some of the first:

- Shall we try to have an all-round capability, or shall we specialise?
- Shall we contribute to UN and other operations?
- Should we consider military alliances, and if so, with whom?
- Should we allow foreign troops to exercise or be stationed here?
- Should we develop nuclear or chemical weapons?
- Should we defend in all directions or only in one?

These questions do not, for the most part, arise as issues of principle: they always arise in the political and strategic context of the day. How should this context and what it means be understood?

On the whole, members of the military are not the best people to make the decision, and there is some evidence that they generally have had it wrong when they have tried to do so. Reliance on the military suffers from a series of institutional weaknesses in the area of strategic analysis, including:

- *Over-quantification*: Being practical people, the military can be overly impressed by military hardware. As a result of the common progression, whereby what can be measured becomes important just *because* it can be measured, quantitative analysis of military power, often of a very crude kind, is a very important feature of the way that states look at each other. While this kind of analysis is often important, the military potential of a state can often be less important in a given situation, than its political situation, its economic strength, or half a dozen other things.
- *Worst-case analysis*: The military tends to exist of professionally cautious individuals, aware that in any war, they, and not the politicians, will be the ones to die, and who will be blamed if it all goes wrong. The military's relative ignorance of politics can lead it to postulate highly improbable scenarios for a combination of enemies, which are, nonetheless, arithmetically frightening.
- *Cost and complexity*: The military will naturally tend to see a response to any strategic problem in practical, military terms. But, military responses are generally expensive, take time to put in place, and involve scarce resources and personnel. By contrast, a political or economic response may be much quicker and cheaper, as well as more appropriate in some circumstances
- *Consequences*: In a state which is too ready to resort to military force, the consequences of its use are often not expected, and may make the situation worse rather than better. Political initiatives can be stopped and reversed much more easily than expeditionary forces, and with less loss of public face.

To be fair, the military is not the only group unsuited to take sole charge of strategic problems. In any bureaucratic and political system, people will naturally latch on to aspects of a problem which they understand, and which enable them to claim ownership of it, thus increasing their own importance and giving them a voice in its solution.²² Indeed, one of the most difficult things for a government to do, is to arrive at a genuine interdisciplinary approach to problems. An example from Tunganu may illustrate the point.²³

The country of Njedi, to the north of Tunganu, has been racked for several years by civil unrest. The outlawed Muslim Welfare Movement has been waging a terrorist campaign against the government, which has responded with a violent campaign of its own. In large-scale fighting around the capital, government forces have suffered many casualties, and there are reports of major units going over to the rebels. The economy is in free fall, and the rule of law has effectively come to an end in some areas. A large number of refugees are now making their way to neighbouring countries, including Tunganu.

The government is divided on how to handle the crisis. Christian politicians are complaining bitterly about the influx of Muslim refugees, and demanding that they be sent back. The (mainly Christian) army believes the border should be heavily reinforced and preparations made against what they see as a likely future conflict with an MWM-led government. They also suggest that Tungaran special forces should be used to help provide military support to the government. The navy and much of the air force are torn between sympathy for co-religionists, and dislike of their militant brand of Islam. The interior minister demands sweeping new powers for the border police and the arrest of Njedan Muslim dissidents now in Tungaru. The finance minister recommends cuts in welfare spending to make Tungaru a less attractive destination for refugees.

The foreign minister, however, reminds the cabinet of the sources of the problem. As part of its 'internationalisation' strategy, the government of Njedi has increased the range of imports allowed. The domestic agricultural sector, previously dominant in the region, has been devastated by imports of cheap wheat and maize and, at the same time, world prices for the cash crops produced by Njedi have collapsed. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has imposed an austerity regime involving large cuts in spending on health, education and employment. Unemployment and poverty have increased enormously. At the same time, the increasing urbanisation of the country and the educational expansion begun by the government have put traditional social and family ties under stress. The MWM, previously an obscure extremist group, has proposed throwing out the IMF, and returning the country to its earlier, protected state. The IMF itself has made further aid contingent upon what it describes as 'firm action' against the rebels.

After discussion, the cabinet accepts that a military response would not be useful, and begins to organise a regional political and economic support package. More police and troops are moved to the frontier, but are ordered to behave carefully. Diplomats try to negotiate local arrangements, which will enable at least some of the refugees to have the confidence to return home. The finance minister suggests that the services of American change management consultants should be secured to work with the tribespeople.

This is a slightly complex and rather abstruse example. Consider, by contrast, a very different type of national security decision: whether a state should develop nuclear, biological or chemical weapons – collectively, weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). There will be many arguments against this. The foreign minister will

remind the government that, like any monopoly, the WMD states and their allies will seek to preserve their positions with threats and perhaps with violence. He or she will also be concerned about the consequences if the country has already signed, for example, the *Chemical Weapons Convention*. The military will often be against it, because such programmes are expensive and can detract from conventional capability. The finance ministry will be worried about the cost. Allies may quietly suggest rewards for not proceeding on this course.

It is the task of a national security bureaucracy to reach a sensible decision on issues of this kind. Sometimes, the kind of negative arguments set out above will be persuasive, especially when the state concerned has a security situation which is relatively benign. But, it will be obvious that, for a small state in a difficult strategic situation with a large and powerful neighbour and unreliable allies, the judgement might well be the opposite. It might be that there is no prospect of ever developing a conventional capability large enough to deter attack. The support of allies in a crisis, or even their displeasure if the state goes ahead with WMD, may turn out not to be worth very much compared to the assurance provided by weapons of this kind. Finally, a skilful state can adopt a policy of 'neither confirm nor deny', and thus exploit the uncertainty that such a situation results in for political profit. Without labouring the point, it is obvious that decisions of this kind are only possible when a wide range of institutions and skills are applied. For the military to be dominant in such debates is as bad as it is for it to be ignored.

Intelligence

It will be obvious from the above that nothing is more fundamental to the development of a national strategy than accurate information and assessments, particularly about the views and likely actions of foreign states. Indeed, there is probably no single capability more valuable to a state than skill in predicting the likely responses of other states to a given course of action. Most wars in history have been the result of miscalculations in this area. A good recent example is the rather naive Iraqi assumption in 1990 that Western support given during the Iran-Iraq war would continue once this war was over. This inevitably leads to the issue of intelligence.

So many myths have been propagated about intelligence – not least by its practitioners – that it would be useful to begin the argument from first principles. In doing this, however, a distinction is made between three *phases* of intelligence work, which are often confused. They are all fairly self-explanatory:

- *Intelligence collection*: This is the *raison d'être* of intelligence organisations, and the best known and understood function. If no intelligence is collected, then

nothing much can be done. In collection is included, however, what is made available by friends and allies.

- *Intelligence analysis*: This is the process of making sense of what was learned, both in its immediate context, and more broadly in terms of what else is known about the subject.
- *Intelligence exploitation*: This is the process of putting intelligence into the hands of those who can make some practical use of it, in the making and implementation of defence and security policy.

Is intelligence necessary?

All states have a legitimate curiosity about one another. In a world which is becoming increasingly interconnected, countries are profoundly affected by what happens elsewhere in the world, both next door and farther away. To conduct a sensible foreign, defence, and even trade and economic policy,²⁴ the answers to questions such as the following, should be known:

- How stable is a neighbour's government?
- Will the regional superpower raise interest rates or devalue its currency?
- Is it true that a neighbour is buying new jet fighters?
- Are foreign troops going to exercise in the region?
- Will a major multinational company be investing in this country or in another?

All governments devote a great deal of effort to the collection of information to enable them to answer questions of this kind. Information comes in a huge variety of forms, including:

- information in a country's media;
- information in international media;
- information in specialist and academic media;
- public statements by governments;
- private statements by governments;
- formal bilateral contacts;
- informal bilateral contacts;
- personal contacts between individuals; and
- confidences passed on by individuals in another government.

The last of these begins to edge into the territory historically claimed by intelligence services, but is, in fact, part of normal business for foreign and other ministries, which may well exchange confidences with personal friends from another country, perhaps because they dislike their own country's position, and, for whatever reason, want to undermine it. But this list (and it could be lengthened) shows the vast range of information available to governments without the need for the *collection* of

intelligence. However, it is most unlikely that a state will expose everything that another might possibly wish to know. All states have secrets, and even the most open are unlikely to tell that, for example, the position of Minister X has been weakened by the latest devaluation, or that General Y is considered dangerously activist, and will probably not be made CHOD after all. Many states also have onerous secrecy laws, and make the discovery of even routine information difficult.

Reference has already been made several times to the need of a state for *information*. In English, the word 'intelligence' has been narrowed in its range of meaning so that, instead of signifying something general like 'news', as it did hundreds of years ago, it now means roughly the same as 'espionage'. (In other languages, for example, French, a single word means both 'intelligence' and 'information'.) It should be clear from what has already been said, however, that *intelligence is only a special form of information*. Thus, *all intelligence is information, but not all information is intelligence*. More specifically, *intelligence collection is the collection of information which a government does not want another to have, in a way which conceals the fact that this has been accessed*. Consequently, intelligence collection is an activity to which attention is not drawn. It may be covert, in the sense of recruiting agents, or it may be simply that it is not stressed to a neighbour that the movements of its air force are monitored.²⁵

Means of collection

For the purposes of this argument, there are two broad tendencies in the collection of intelligence, which will be called the *active* and the *passive*.²⁶ The first involves a conscious decision to take an active role in the gathering of intelligence, and may include the cultivation of agents, surveillance (including illegal overflights), bribery, blackmail and burglary. In general, it involves *people* in some form. The second involves, essentially, the use of technology in a covert fashion, such as communications interception or satellite reconnaissance.

Intelligence collection is divided in this way, because the first category involves *political risk*, and the second, in general, does not. The cultivation of agents, forcible entry and intelligence overflights all have the potential to go wrong, and have, indeed, often done so. In political terms, they would be regarded as unfriendly acts by the recipient power, in a way in which passive electronic surveillance, for example, would not be. This political dimension makes it especially important that the intelligence services of a state are under firm political direction, and that the government as a whole is able to take sensible judgements about whether, if things go wrong, the potential for damage outweighs the potential benefit of the information obtained.

What is clear, however, is that intelligence is complex, expensive and often politically risky. It may be that all that should reasonably be known about a target is readily available, and that it would make more sense to direct efforts at more difficult targets elsewhere. Intelligence collection is never an activity to undertake for its own sake, even though this is often the case.

Targeting

Obviously, there needs to be some discipline involved in the selection of intelligence targets. Collecting intelligence just because it is easy to obtain is pointless. Likewise, intelligence agencies themselves are seldom the best people to decide on priorities. Too often, these priorities will reflect what is currently available, or what is of interest to the agencies themselves. To be effective, the intelligence community of any state will need guidance on:

- the most important targets;
- the permissible methods; and
- questions that must be referred for political approval.

Here, it must be remembered once again, that the collection of intelligence is not an end in itself. It should only be collected if there is a chance that it will make a real contribution to policy.

Any strategy for providing the kind of guidance listed above will need to be agreed upon across the government as a whole. The office of the head of state or government, the foreign ministry and the defence ministry will all need to be involved, but so will the trade ministry and the finance ministry. The questions that will be put to the intelligence community for answers will be fundamentally the questions which interest the government as a whole, and these will necessarily change over time. Intelligence agencies should be, in effect, the suppliers of intelligence to government departments, based on a request and under circumstances where the information cannot be obtained in any other way. No collection work should be carried out – except that which arises spontaneously – which is not justified and agreed to somewhere.²⁷

Making sense

The key test of intelligence is whether it is useful in making and implementing policy. To become useful, it has to be interpreted in a way that makes it so. Because intelligence is only information, it is subject to all the uncertainties of information, and may not be more reliable than a rumour overheard in a bar. History suggests that agents have worked for all kinds of reasons, including the desire to influence

history, to feel important, for revenge and to have lots of money. Even when there is no conscious attempt to mislead, an intelligence report may amount to no more than an account of how source A told officer B that General C had recounted a conversation he had with Minister D about policy towards country E.

A *user* of intelligence in a government ministry needs some method of interpreting and assessing what has been provided to make it useful. This takes place both in the immediate context of the report and also more widely. For example, as an official in the finance ministry, if a person is handed a report which says that a large neighbour, with whom the economy is directly linked, intends to devalue its currency, it would be foolish to react too quickly. Not only will individual views on the report's credibility be formed, based on what is known, but some analysis will also be expected to have been done by the originator. What kind of source is this, and how reliable? Does it square with previous reports from the same source? How well-placed is the person to know, anyway? This is particularly important because of what can be called the *red folder effect*. It seems to be universal for intelligence information to be passed around in strikingly coloured files, often with some ceremony, and usually with important looking, but cryptic words printed on the cover. If these markings mean anything, they refer to the *sensitivity of the methods of collection*, and do not imply anything about *the reliability of the information*. But, the ceremony and secrecy surrounding the distribution of intelligence can result in the information, rather than its origin, impressing the readership the most.

This leads to the heart of the intelligence analysis process. If intelligence is to be useful, then it must not only be put in context piece by piece, but also in terms of what else is known. This can be called an *intelligence assessment*, which is an authoritative statement on an issue, making use of, but not limited to intelligence material. It may be very general (the political stability of a state), or very particular (who will be the next army commander next door?), or very technical and detailed (the output of another nation's armaments industry). It may also be very topical (what are the chances of a *coup* next week?). This assessment is offered for the use of the government as a whole to make decisions. It was noted earlier that there is a need to ensure that *tasking* was done in such a way that the customers received what they wanted. The same is obviously true of *assessments*, which must be requested because there is an information gap somewhere, which intelligence can fill. There may also be recurrent tasks, often technical in nature and continually updated, such as:

- the order of battle and training standards of neighbours;
- exercises conducted by states in a region; and
- arms deliveries to a region.

It was suggested earlier that it is bad practice to have competing streams of political advice going to ministers. The same is true of intelligence, where there should be *only one agreed to assessment*, subscribed to by all. This, in turn, suggests another principle, that *intelligence should not be the product of a single agency*.

An agency which produces an intelligence assessment frequently does so in a *black box* fashion, in other words, there is no clue in the finished product about what kind of intelligence has been used, how much is based on intelligence and how much on other issues. An agency can get an entirely unreasonable reputation for brilliance just by repackaging current wisdom in a bright shiny cover and calling it secret. The position is even worse if more than one agency is involved, since each agency will make similar claims, and decision makers will have to choose between them.

The process of producing a single assessment will not be easy, and will require some administrative machinery. Many countries have found it useful to set up a committee, perhaps in the president's or prime minister's office, charged with producing consensual assessments, and including not only various intelligence agencies, but also representatives of the user departments as well. It is generally helpful if the individuals concerned are seconded from their departments for relatively short periods of time. Here, the usual cautions against drafts produced by a committee have to be remembered: notably, that there is a continual tendency for cautious compromise language. It is often said, with justification, that committee assessments can be too vague to be of use, for example:

There is no unambiguous evidence of Iraqi preparations for an invasion of Kuwait in the near future. However, it would be wrong to rule out the possibility altogether.

Actually the problem is not with the system, as much as with the fragmentary and conflicting nature of the evidence, and the assumption that a *lack* of evidence can itself be significant. 'We don't know' is a reasonable translation of the above, and may well reflect the reality of the situation. But, it remains true that any peer review process, where intelligence experts have to submit evidence and conclusions for comment by others, is likely to produce a better result than the work of a single authority, no matter how skilled.

Why intelligence is not always believed

Although history is full of presumed 'great intelligence failures', it usually turns out that the failure lies with the process of analysis, rather than with a lack of

information. The main failing of analysis has been, quite simply, that those doing it, or those receiving it have been so convinced that they know what the truth is, that they have accepted or rejected intelligence according to these preconceptions: an example of what is called *cognitive dissonance*.

There is, of course, a natural tendency for intelligence agencies to tailor their reports to give their customers what they want to hear. This was spectacularly the case in the Vietnam war, when battalions of analysts, even including the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), which was often sceptical about these things, produced estimates of impending victory for much of the late 1960s.²⁸

In fairness, it must be added that there are certain cases where a forecast, which eventually proves to be accurate, could not have been justified analytically at the time, because of a lack of hard evidence. For example, any respectable process of analysis should have concluded, by about 1987, that something fundamental had changed in the Soviet Union, and that the Cold War was in its terminal stages. But, the fall of the Soviet Union, on the other hand, was unpredictable, precisely because it came about as the result of unforeseeable decisions by a small number of individuals. By 1989, it could perhaps be said that Gorbachev had started a process he could no longer control, but it was impossible to say how it would turn out.

Putting it about

The collection and analysis of intelligence material have been reviewed, and its exploitation must be discussed briefly. Intelligence is pointless if it is not *useful*. There is probably no greater challenge than that of taking intelligence assessments and turning them into useful policy instruments. The essential (if unglamorous) need is for sound liaison and a degree of mutual respect. Relations between intelligence agencies and those with whom they work abroad are often strained: professional diplomats often regard intelligence officers as dangerous cowboys (sometimes, it has to be said, with justification).

Government will generally accept specialist advice if it is couched in a form which is useful and comprehensible. This applies to intelligence advice just as much as it applies to advice from scientists or accountants. Intelligence has to be disseminated promptly, it has to be combined with other information in the form of assessments, and it has to be offered as part of the debate, rather than the whole truth. Most government systems greatly limit the distribution of intelligence material and, while this is no doubt necessary for security reasons, it does make it more difficult to derive the maximum value from it. In

practice, however, the sensitivity surrounding intelligence information is much more a question of the protection of sources and techniques than of the information itself, which may be incomplete or even wrong. There is, in fact, everything to be gained by widespread dissemination of the *essence* of intelligence material.

The involvement of the military

It may seem strange that, in all these pages, little reference was made to the military, and issues which are mostly not relevant to its affairs were discussed. After all, the words 'military' and 'intelligence' are directly linked, are they not?

In fact, they are not. The association is largely an historical one, and partly accidental. For much of history, armies on campaign have collected intelligence about one another's dispositions and whereabouts. As armies became more organised, and nation-states more common, it became more important to collect information, not only about the military power of a potential adversary, but about the terrain which might have to be traversed and the kind of weapons which might have to be faced. As usual, the Prussians were there first, with their foreign armies sections in the general staff. Soon, as warfare became more complicated, there was interest in dockyards and factories, in mobilisation plans and new equipment under development. And, there was a growing, parallel need to know more about the political intentions of other states than they would willingly tell themselves.

Although much of this work was given to the military in the early days, they were always amateurs at it. The careful cultivation of weak individuals, who might, in time, spill secrets, is not a skill necessarily expected of the military. While some nations still entrust much of their intelligence-gathering to the military (such as the French), it is more commonly undertaken by civilian organisations, such as the CIA, or the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS). Indeed, there is a danger (borne out by historical examples) that the military, because of its background and ethos, will tend to take a robust approach to the gathering of intelligence which might gravely embarrass government later. Moreover, the active involvement of the military tends to bias intelligence targeting too much in one direction. In practice, the nation's main concerns about other countries may not be military at all. The hierarchical briefing structure of the military has been found, in practice, not to be very helpful for keeping secrets, nor is the military always politically aware enough to know how best to deploy the information.

With these caveats, then, what should the role of the military in intelligence be? Firstly, it has to be borne in mind that *defence intelligence* exists as a separate

function. Scientists, engineers, economists and so forth, working for the ministry of defence, will be involved in the production of intelligence analysis. In countries where these posts are held by military officers, these officers, perforce, will be heavily involved in areas of study which are related to *defence*, but are not necessarily *military*. Beyond this, there are three broad areas where military expertise, in the narrow sense, can often be extremely useful:

- The military will often operate assets for the collection of intelligence by technical means and, indeed, many of the targets of this kind of attack will be military anyway.
- Defence attachés in different countries are invaluable sources of information about defence and military affairs. Their behaviour – and their use in gathering intelligence – will vary with political relations between the countries concerned, but everything they report will add to the general picture.
- The military will often be of great value in intelligence analysis. It has the best people, for example, to track the movements of senior officers in other countries. They will produce analyses of orders of battle and training patterns in other countries. But, they do not have to be involved in every area of defence. For example, if a large neighbour is building a secret factory, perhaps to produce missiles under licence, military experts will be involved in trying to identify what is produced. But, if information can be obtained from inside the factory, civilian scientists and engineers will be the people to comment on things such as the manufacturing process, the type and provenance of machine tools, and so on.

CHAPTER 7

MILITARY OPERATIONS

After all the strategy and preparation, after all the theory and analysis, comes the moment when force, or the threat of force is to be used. A military which cannot perform well, or a system of command and control which does not function properly, is a waste of money and effort, no matter how neatly it may demonstrate civilian control, or any other theoretical virtues it may possess.

In this chapter, military operations of all types are considered, and two questions, are addressed:

- What roles should be played by the military, the political leadership and others?
- Is the military on operations merely the blind instrument of politicians?

Proper roles

It is not hard to put down, at least in theory, what the roles are of the different actors in military operations, whether in peacekeeping deployments or all-out war:

- At the highest level, that of *strategy*, the *political leadership* should set the overall goals for military operations in political terms. In doing so, they will need to consider, of course, what is practical. In turn, this means that they are advised by their military and civilian officials.
- At the next level, the *operational level*, the political objectives have to be translated into military ones. The *operational commander* should draw up a campaign plan which translates political goals into military ones, but which also takes account of political realities and constraints. He or she will need advice from civilian and military experts in doing this.
- At the *tactical level*, the *force commander* will take his or her military objectives and devise a plan for achieving them, within certain constraints.

Assuming that all this goes according to plan, the military on the ground will deliver a military outcome which will meet the operational objective, which should mean, in turn, that the political objective has been met. Although it is stressed throughout this section, how difficult the above paradigm is in practice, it is important to bear in mind as an ideal to which military operations of any kind should aspire.

Separation and differentiation

In feudal times in most civilisations, the political and military leadership were closely joined: usually in the same person. The ruler would lead his or her forces into battle and, if the fighting was unsuccessful, might be killed, wounded or captured as easily as any of his or her retainers. Aristocrats were almost always military leaders, in their own right or as royal advisors, and there was, indeed, little distinction between political and military issues. The Samurai of Japan, for example, were both military commanders and the Emperor's political advisors.

The increasing complexity and specialisation of war began to undermine this unity. It did not happen everywhere at the same speed, because it was linked, more than anything else, to the spread of new military technologies. As mass armies with modern weapons became the norm from the 19th century onwards, in most parts of the world military commanders, even if they also dabbled in politics, started to become a separate caste, distinguished by professional knowledge and training.

The difference in English between *policy* and *politics* is again of importance. The former has always been a feature of military operations, as long as the political leadership was capable of formulating a strategy. Although politics has always been present to some extent, for example, in the manoeuvrings which frequently took place in royal courts, it is only since the advent of popular democracy that political leaders have had to take into account public attitudes to the use of military force, and public reaction to any failure. Indeed, in the days when territories and provinces were frequently traded among rulers, victory or defeat did not matter very greatly to the average person. An attempt is made in this chapter to distinguish between *policy factors* (the overall strategic and international issues on which the national civilian leadership should take the lead) and *political factors* (which tend to be short-term issues of popularity and presentation).

In a democratic society, or even one where public opinion is represented indirectly, political leaders, if they are to survive, must do popular things. This might involve the use of force in some circumstances, but easy victories over small and powerless enemies are not always possible. It tends to be the political leadership, rather than the military one, which pays the price of an unsuccessful military operation. This leads the politicians, in turn, to demand from the military undertakings it cannot necessarily give, and to interfere in the purely military aspects of the operation. This attitude extends to the actual conduct of the operation as well: the political leader may interfere to veto operations which might involve heavy casualties, for example.

Distance and control

The development of technology has complicated the relationship between policy factors and military factors in a campaign in two ways:

- It has produced massive increases in the size and sophistication of forces, in the distance they can be deployed and the complexity of the operations they can conduct.
- It has also produced a capability for information about the operations of these forces to be transmitted rapidly everywhere in the world.

With the development of modern armies, military operations began to cover such areas of time and space that centralised control was impossible. Even if a political leadership wanted to be with 'the army', it would be, in practice, hundreds of kilometres distant from some of the army's elements, with no chance of communicating with them. Communication technology lagged far behind the technology of mobilisation and deployment, and there was little that the political leadership could do but to wave the troops goodbye, and hope for the best. In the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5, for example, it is unlikely that anyone in Tokyo, still less anyone in St Petersburg, had any idea at all what was going on. From World War I onwards, it became steadily easier for national leaderships to communicate with their commanders, even if the latter were in transit at the time. This imposed a new layer of complexity on military operations, since it required the military leadership in the field to justify and explain what they were doing constantly to an anxious political leadership back home.

One of the most important reasons for this political nervousness was the greatly increased availability of information, through technological advances, to the ordinary person back home. Increasing literacy and the spread of democratic practices in the 19th century gave public opinion a practical force in politics which it had not had before, and at a time when the carnage of battlefields, in the days when the technology of killing had massively outstripped the technology of healing, must have been particularly awful. Thus, reports of the slaughter on the battlefields of Lombardy in 1859, rather than the slaughter itself, were largely responsible for the establishment of the International Committee of the Red Cross in 1864. The technology of news-gathering continues to grow, often in advance of the capability of governments to receive and process information themselves. In recent times, this has often led to the primacy of political factors over policy factors in the national leadership's direction of a war.

The public mind of many nations, while it may be prepared – or even eager – to contemplate death and destruction in the abstract, is often unprepared for the

reality. This may be in the form of its own troops, with names and families, being killed; it may even be the realisation that the enemy, no matter how professionally vilified, also consists of ordinary people. Likewise, coverage of wars and atrocities is often episodic and even random, and the availability of material will usually take precedence over the importance of the event itself. The first televised massacre of a civil war, for example, will generally establish in the popular mind who the heroes and villains are, and it may be extremely difficult for a government to pursue a sensible policy thereafter. Moreover, few people enjoy seeing television footage of atrocities, and the public demand will too often be to *do something* to remove the offending images from the television screen, even if action is itself debatable, and may even make things worse.

Reasons for military operations

Military operations will tend to be launched for one of a fairly small number of reasons, and each of them implies a different relationship between the policy/political factors and the military ones. Some of the most common types of motivations are:

- defence of national territory against attack;
- defence of wider economic and political interests;
- protection of borders and economic assets;
- internal security and counterterrorism;
- playing a part in UN operations; and
- improving the nation's international or regional profile.

The first of these, strictly speaking, does not amount to a motivation, since the only choice a government would have is to surrender or not. Even here, political factors will tend to bulk large. For example, the military may want to withdraw to a more defensible line which would involve giving up the capital, but the government may not allow the military to do so.

As motivations for the use of military force become more complex, and have less to do with national survival, the political constraints on the use of force become greater. What makes sense militarily can easily sabotage the whole operation from a political point of view. In 1982, for example, the Argentinean government recognised that, if its troops inflicted any casualties on the tiny British contingent on the Falklands during the invasion, international – and especially British – reaction might be strong enough to undermine the advantage which had been gained. Similarly, the British decided not to mount any attacks on the Argentine mainland, since, despite the considerable military advantages of destroying aircraft on the

ground, for example, international support for the British cause – limited at best – could well disappear entirely. In each case, short-term military gains had to be subordinated to long-term political advantage.

Something similar happened in the Gulf War. The longer term political aims of the West were essentially limited to securing oil supplies under politically sympathetic regimes. Although the destruction of Iraq and the occupation of Baghdad would have been within the capability of US forces, it would not have helped the primary objective, since the West could not have administered a conquered Iraq, still less determined its future development. Indeed, the destruction of Iraq would have produced, in the eyes of many, a worrying vacuum in the region for Iran to exploit. Likewise, although there was widespread fury in the West at Hussein's disrespectful attitude to his former sponsors, it was decided that his removal by force would be too politically controversial in the region, where political support was required for the prosecution of the war.

As the level of expected violence goes down, so, by an apparent contradiction, the level of policy and political complexity frequently goes up. For example, all nations patrol and protect their air and maritime borders, but the forces which do so are under the strictest possible orders about the use of force. Even military aircraft which violate a country's own airspace, for example, are likely to be shepherded away rather than shot down, because everyone is aware of the violent and far-reaching repercussions which would then follow.

The tendency since the end of the Cold War has been for military forces to be used in what are called 'operations other than war'. These operations are often violent, or occur in violent situations, but the violence is generally sporadic and uncoordinated. Nations have entered many of these conflicts for reasons which are political, rather than as a result of national policy. They are important for many countries in that they demonstrate a continuing utility for their armed forces after the end of the Cold War: this is particularly the case for those countries which over-invested in threat-related concepts at the time. Such operations are also very fashionable and generally uncontroversial, since they have a humanitarian gloss to them. They are, nonetheless, operations which are extremely difficult to carry off successfully, and pose particular problems for co-ordination between the military and political leaderships. The urge to take part is often stronger than the ability to provide the resources. A number of nations, notably in Asia, find such operations a useful way in which to remind others that they are regional or global actors, and gain experience of deployment outside the home country. Even quite sophisticated nations, coming to these operations for the first time, however, find all sorts of logistic, doctrinal and command problems which they did not expect.

Moreover, the military task is often unclear. It usually flows from the political need to *do something*, and while it is frequently called 'peacekeeping', or alternatively 'peace support' or 'peacemaking', there is often, in fact, no peace to keep. A common scenario is that of a multinational force which is despatched into an environment where the various combatants have been persuaded to stop fighting, by threats or bribery or both, and is intended essentially to try and fulfil a political rather than a military objective. This objective may be one or a mixture of the following:

- demonstrate that a nation or group of nations is responding to a crisis;
- demonstrate that an international organisation is responding to a crisis;
- respond to domestic pressure;
- respond to international pressure; and
- gain international attention and credibility.

In singling out selfish and political motives, the idea is not to be cynical, but rather to stress the practical difficulties which arise when (as is common) nations deploy troops abroad for these kinds of reasons. In such a situation, the political objective is often as simple as:

- make sure lots of good publicity result; and
- do not get anyone hurt.

Sometimes, however, motives can be genuinely mixed. Deployments of Japanese forces on UN missions during the 1990s, for example, have certainly done no harm to the nation's ambition to have a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. But, there are wider policy issues as well, to do with showing the Japanese public, as well as other nations, that Japanese troops, in spite of their country's history, can perform a valuable international role.

Operations

The modern tendency to use military forces, in a complex and very political fashion, in operations which are not warlike in any real sense, raises issues of civil-military relations in a very acute form. All modern military commanders have recognised that the political leadership, for good or bad reasons, will place restrictions on the plans they might make and the way they conduct an operation.

Sometimes, this is simply a reflection of the fact that the military, understandably, tends to see its task as fighting, whereas the political leadership will have wider objectives. In fact, military forces, campaigns and victories mean very little *in themselves*. But, the military, preoccupied as it is with technique, and with a

practical and quantitative outlook, is inclined to overlook this fact. The fact is that military victory may lead to political victory, but it just possibly may not.

A good example is the October 1973 Middle East war. The Israelis did not expect an attack, because they did not believe that the Arab nations could win, and assumed that Arab political and military leaders shared this view. As late as July 1973, a number of the most senior generals, when interviewed, were "overwhelmingly optimistic", and thought a decisive victory "inevitable."²⁹ But, the Israelis' military culture was Western in origin, and they thought in terms of military victory alone. The Arabs, likewise, did not expect a conventional military victory (although they would undoubtedly have liked one), but their concept of victory was political, and their objective was to regain a sense of pride after the 1967 defeat and to reclaim some of the territory then lost. Operationally, this involved a move back into the land lost in 1967, such that they held more of this land at the end of the war than at the beginning. Tactically, this meant a defensive posture and lots of anti-armour and anti-aircraft systems. This plan was mostly successful, although the Arabs did not win a military victory in the classic sense. The kind of self-delusion on the part of the Israelis, which brought about this result, is more common in countries where the military has a high status, and where politicians themselves are often former soldiers.

It was argued elsewhere that the process of converting military success into political benefit is complex and difficult, and seldom accomplished in the way intended.³⁰ A fixation on the *means* of success, often found in the military, can be at the expense of forgetting what the *end* is actually supposed to be. This happened to the Americans in a significant way in Vietnam, where technique and the statistical measurement of battlefield success became ends in themselves, and largely took over the debate about the running of the war. No wonder one US general described his army's military doctrine as "more bombs, more shells, more napalm ... 'til the other side gives up."³¹ This is what is often called *attrition warfare*, and is seldom successful unless a smaller and weaker enemy tries to play the same game as well. Attrition warfare is the default mode in the military mindset, whereas politicians, interested in final results rather than transitory victories, and wanting them *now* rather than later, are more open to ideas of *manoeuvre warfare*, which emphasises the achievement of the objective, rather than the destruction of the enemy by firepower. Much of the friction which has existed in the relationship between politicians and the military during operations goes back to this fundamental divergence.

In operations other than war, attrition warfare is especially dangerous. Indeed, once an operation of this type becomes defined as a firepower contest, objectives will almost certainly not be met. In such operations, military defeat, even if it can be accomplished, is unlikely to be enough to cause the opposition to give up, since they will not usually see themselves fighting a military battle, but a political one. Military defeat or heavy casualties may be acceptable, even welcome, if they produce international sympathy. Operations other than war are consequently a severe test of a nation's politico-military decisiontaking apparatus.

As a generic example, a UN multinational force is sent in to supervise elections and protect aid convoys in a country wracked by civil war. The side which was winning (but expects to lose the election) has accepted the UN force grudgingly. Their opponents have welcomed the force. Each side hopes to exploit the presence of the UN for its own purposes. How should a responsible state plan and conduct an operation?

The first thing to bear in mind is that perceptions of what the force is intended to do can be very different, both among those agreeing on the mandate, and among those contributing troops. There may be divided sympathies for the combatants, and a variable degree of willingness to become involved and suffer casualties. The mandate, which will be the outcome of much bargaining and compromise, will reflect this. Domestically, the enthusiasts for *doing something* in some countries may have assumed, without reading the mandate in detail, that more is expected of the force than is actually the case. In such a situation, it is very important that, at the *strategic* level, a nation has its own idea of what it wants to or will help to accomplish. If this is not done, reaction to unexpected events and to 'mission creep' (the tendency for forces to become imperceptibly involved outside the original mandate) will be hesitant and confused.

At the *operational* level, the most important requirement is for thoroughly thought-out *rules of engagement* (ROE). These provide general guidance to the force as a whole about how it should conduct itself, and when violence can be used. ROE themselves are unlikely to be produced by the military alone; they are heavily political, and will reflect many of the same hesitations and differences of view which will have emerged in discussions about the mandate. They are essential because of the potential for disaster and misrepresentation in operations other than war, where the wrong decision by a junior commander can set off an international incident, broadcast around the world. Sometimes, ROE may not make much sense from the military perspective, but a sensible country will make sure that members of the military are involved in the drafting, so that civilians know what is practical and what is not. A simple example would be an ROE which sets out what is to be

done if a force protecting an aid convoy comes under fire. This, in turn, is involved in the complex issue of what kind of escort force to send. If the concept is that the force should retire, if opposed by an armed group, and take its aid convoy home, then a few men in a jeep will be adequate, with orders not to open fire. A company of armoured vehicles turning tail after a few shots could be politically disastrous. Likewise, if muscular ROE are adopted, with the option of fighting through, then adequate forces must be made available to enable this to happen.

Uniquely, perhaps, in operations other than war, the actions of a single soldier can be on the television news that evening, and derail the whole operation. The commander of a national contingent must therefore ensure that, at the *tactical* level, NCOs have a good grasp of the limitations they are working under. While they need to know what the mandate and the ROE say, the important thing is to ensure that they are told, in simple terms which they can commit to memory and recall under stress, exactly what they are to do. (Nations with much experience of these operations have generally learned this lesson the hard way.) In the case of an ROE which allows the force to return fire if attacked, for example, a national contingent may provide each of its soldiers with a card with the following on it, for example:

You may return fire if:

- *you come under armed attack, and*
- *your life or that of a comrade is threatened, and*
- *you can identify without a doubt the source of the attack*

You must

- *fire only single, aimed shots, and*
- *cease firing once you have hit the target*

You must not

- *look for other targets, or*
- *fire if it would endanger bystanders.*

It is part of the professionalism of the soldiers concerned, of course, to be able to maintain discipline under fire, and not shoot back unless authorised to do so. Indeed, the difference between trained troops and irregulars, however brave, is that the former can be ordered *not* to shoot back, even at risk to themselves, with the confidence that they will follow orders.

Military operations and military obedience

So far, the primacy of the political objective has been emphasised, and the importance of the military following orders from politicians, even when they do not represent, militarily, the best course of action. But, the question will inevitably arise whether there are *any* limits to this obedience.

There is no straight answer to this question in the terms in which it is posed. If considered carefully, it will be found to be, in effect, the same as the list of proper roles which were given at the beginning of the chapter. Healthy civil-military relations depend on something like the roles set out above being performed, and this, in turn, means that each actor must confine itself to its own area of expertise. The military should get the job done in a way which is consistent with the policy objectives, and civilians should allow it to do so. When these roles are not respected, proper civil-military relations are violated, but, more importantly, the task will not be carried out properly. Such activities are a constant temptation for politicians during a war or crisis: they know that they will be the first to suffer if anything goes wrong, and they are inclined to fiddle compulsively with things they do not understand. Before the 1962 war with China, for example, Nehru and Menon, the Indian defence minister, “directly supervised the placement of individual brigades, companies and even platoons, as the Chinese and Indian forces engaged in mutual encirclement of isolated outposts.”³² Equally, there are cases where the political leadership has shirked its responsibility, and has allowed, in effect, the military to usurp a political role.

In essence, the system will work best if *the military concentrates on military issues, the politicians on policy issues, and the two both know the difference*. As elsewhere, this is not a case of rigid separation, but rather an awareness of where one's own type of expertise gives way to someone else's. One of the themes of this monograph is that, if the background structure of civil-military relations is sound, then the behaviour of the actors involved will tend to be correct as well. What is much more difficult is to lay down rules which would define when – if at all – the military should decline to follow orders. A few of these hypothetical cases are discussed below, but it should be remembered in each case that the only real solution is to ensure that the system works well in the first place.

Clearly, the political leadership should not give detailed operational and tactical orders to the military. The leadership operates properly at the strategic level. It should not try to make an operational plan, but its civilian advisors should be involved in the work, and the leadership should have the plan presented to them in outline so that they can be sure that it has observed the political limitations they

have placed upon it. But, the leadership must be extremely careful not to try to dictate military aspects of the plan. If a particular unit is chosen for a particular task, then politicians might query its use on political grounds. But, they should never do so on military grounds. Likewise, the leadership should never demand from the military something which it clearly cannot perform. There may be cases where the danger to the nation is so extreme that even hopeless expedients have to be tried, and the military must do its best to deliver. But, it equally has a duty to be honest to its leaders about the chances of success. In the end, the military has a duty to put into effect any operational order of a duly constituted government, despite what it may feel about its chances of success.

There is, finally, the very tangled question of whether all orders given to the military should be obeyed, even if they appear to run counter to moral or ethical principles. In theory, the position is clear enough. A government is bound by the principles it has signed up to. It may not therefore order its troops to carry out operations which violate the *Geneva Conventions*, or other provisions of international law, any more than it can order them to break the domestic law of the land. Indeed, in such a situation, the military would not so much have the right as the *duty* to disobey. In practice, however, the situation is a little more complicated.

The question of ‘military honour’, an excuse sometimes used by the military when it does not want to do something, must be dealt with briefly. Military honour is an elastic concept which has not prevented, in practice, the military in different countries at different times from doing some unspeakable things. If a legitimate government is faced with a general declining to obey legitimate orders on the basis that his or her military honour is thereby impugned, they should sack him or her, and keep on sacking his or her replacement, until a more reasonable one is found. It is true, of course, that individuals have made genuine moral stands on the issue of honour (refusing to take part in massacres, for example), but this is a conclusion to which morality and international law, rather than some abstract sense of honour, are the real pointers.

Practical difficulties arise, however, because almost all military conflicts involve incidents which take place in moral and legal grey areas. For example, it is accepted that, while soldiers who have surrendered are legally protected, the use of force, even lethal force, is permissible to prevent them from escaping. It is also accepted that those who fight without uniforms or are involved in terrorist or guerrilla activity, cannot take for granted that they will get the same protection as soldiers in uniform. Yet, it is obvious that both of these excuses can be – and have been – misused to excuse atrocities and violations of legal norms. Much of the problem arises from the fact that, of course, few orders to commit atrocities are ever put directly in these

terms. Politicians and the wiser senior commanders know better than to have any permanent record of some of the more dubious orders they might give. It is also true that there are certain informal rules of engagement which have operated from time to time in war. Some special cases – mercenaries, snipers, operators of feared weapons like the flame-thrower, and soldiers who have surrendered too late – can be and are sometimes despatched violently even after surrendering.

CHAPTER 8 BUDGETS, PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

It was already stressed that defence policy is largely a series of accommodations to the inevitable, and involves respecting immovable forces where they exist. The greatest of these immovable forces is the availability of money, and an important secondary problem is the inevitable opposition which will arise to spending the money that is made available.

All defence planning is ultimately irrational. This is because it is based on fear: fear of the known, of the unknown, and of one's own weakness. For this reason, there has never been a budget or a force structure big enough for its proponents, and there never will be. Indeed, as with addictive drugs, more money, manpower and equipment feed the appetite rather than sating it. It is not implied by this that all defence planning is conducted irrationally, still less that it should be: indeed, most of the rest of this chapter is devoted to ways in which it can be made more rational. But, it is clear that the process must always eventually be a subjective one. No scientific method of determining force structure has ever been invented, and it would be unwise to expect one. For this reason, what follows is essentially a political and procedural analysis of how budgets and programmes are decided, and how the process can be best carried out, rather than the economic or management-based analysis which is most often seen.

Budgets

Most things start with the availability of money. Indeed, defence planning is often little more than finding the least bad way to use the insufficient money available. There is no logical way of deciding how large the defence budget should be. There is a long-term and widely distributed tendency for defence budgets to take up an average 2-3% of a country's gross domestic product (GDP) over a period of years. Why this is so is not entirely clear, but it does seem that few economies can sustain a level of effort much higher than this for many years before they suffer in some way. The position is complicated, however, by the lack of a standard definition of defence expenditure, other than the NATO one, the fact that the relationship is a dynamic one, between two changing figures, and the existence in

some countries of special funds for defence purchases outside the normal defence budget.

Normally, however, the percentage of GDP is not a factor in determining the size of the defence budget, except as a rhetorical device. Defence budgets, in fact, are usually decided by a political trial of strength, based on the amount spent, or budgeted for in the preceding year, and any special factors which may have intervened. As a result of the defence budget being determined in this way, the resulting programme is much like a very old house: some parts have been modernised and added to, others abandoned halfway through, with no particular overall shape or plan. In turn, the process through which the defence budget is settled is a reflection of the way in which most countries handle public spending decisions, as a trial of strength between finance ministries and spending departments.

In practice, governments have two different and contradictory policies about public spending. On the one hand, governments exist to do things, and they are judged partly on the activities they have carried out. On the other hand, doing things costs money, and governments generally try to avoid spending money. Sometimes, this is for reasons of economic ideology, or to please foreign lenders (or both). Sometimes, it is in the hope that tax cuts can be afforded, or it reflects the wishes of electorates who want decent public services, but are not prepared to pay for them. In theory, the defence budget, like every other, should be assessed on the basis of 'what the nation can afford', but in practice, there is no way of determining what this affordability is. In the end, judgements like this are political, rather than economic, and reflect what is felt to be important by those in power. A generation or more ago, for example, many governments preferred to pay for increased activity and employment rather than to fund high unemployment. Recently, the opposite has more often been true.

The process is complicated by the common fixation today on financial, rather than real outcomes. Because inflation is unpredictable, and largely beyond government control, and because gambling on the currency exchanges can cause wild fluctuations in exchange rates, which enormously alter the costs of imported goods, knowing in advance how much effort the defence budget can actually afford is almost impossible. Moreover, there are often penalties imposed for spending too much, and money not spent has to be returned to the finance ministry at the end of the year in most countries.

As a result, there are essentially two processes occurring at the same time in a defence ministry:

- the construction and implementation of a balanced programme; and
- the struggle to spend as much, but not more, as allowed in the current year.

In general, these two imperatives are in conflict with each other, but the second is much more powerful than the first. It is far more easily quantified, and far more visible than the former, which is essentially a matter of judgement. Moreover, a force structure carries with it many costs from year to year. Not only do equipment projects take some time to complete, but infrastructure tends to be fixed, and armed forces cannot be run on a hire and fire basis to please accountants. While the exact figure will vary from country to country, it would be common for perhaps 75% of defence expenditure to be committed before the financial year even begins. By definition, any cuts which must be made will come from the remaining 25%, and, as the financial year progresses, this figure will reduce sharply. So, the areas which will be chosen where money can be saved are in effect the only areas where this is possible, whether or not the results make sense. Cutting training, recruiting or the provision of spares is unlikely to do any good – or even save any money – in the long run.

A concentration on financial management is therefore bad for a well-organised programme. One is in effect concerned with measuring numbers, the other with doing things. Nonetheless, these are the limitations under which defence planners have to work, and the rest of the chapter is concerned with how to make the best of them. Possible approaches are:

- cost-effectiveness calculations;
- better balance between commitments and resources; and
- improvements to structures and processes.

Inputs and outputs

The concept of 'value for money' is often mentioned at this point, and it is a useful idea to bear in mind, as long as it is not taken too seriously. The concept itself assumes that the amount of money that is spent (the input) is known, and that the results of spending it (the output) are also known. From the examination of alternatives, that with the best input/output ratio, in theory, can be pronounced as the best value for money.

There is little doubt that the idea of trying to relate inputs and outputs is sound, and this has to be the basis for comparative examinations of proposals to spend money. The problems lie in the application.

Lack of knowledge

It is sometimes possible to be fairly sure of the *inputs*. But, any ambitious project, any foreign purchase, or anything which has not been produced yet, always costs

more than expected. Moreover, some cost-savings only show up over long periods of time: a modern aircraft will probably cost three to four times as much to support during its lifetime as it costs to buy. Savings made in one area (by closing a naval base, for example) often show up as costs elsewhere (such as social security payments). Nonetheless, the uncertainties involved in predicting *output* are far greater, since it is impossible to know how equipment will perform until it is actually used.

Financial dominance

It follows from the above that, since cost is not easy to define, and effectiveness is very difficult, 'value for money' is never a precise measure, and may be next to useless. In practice, it is usually hard to prove that the cheapest solution is not the most cost-effective, and this is often the way the decision is taken.

Hidden assumptions

The usual reason for invoking the idea of 'value for money' is to cut costs and reduce staff. Thus, a proposal to hire 5% extra staff to save 10% of the current time to process recruitment applications would not, in practice, be considered 'value for money', whereas a *cut* of 10% in the same staff would be so considered if it only resulted in a 5% increase in the delay. Governments do not produce financial outputs, so the benefits of investment are almost always theoretical,³³ whereas changes in financial inputs are not only very visible, but also politically important.

In spite of these limitations, there are some by-and-large ways of comparing inputs and outputs, which will be returned to later in the chapter.

Commitments and resources

The usual reason for continual crises in a defence programme is an imbalance between commitments and resources. This occurs for one of two main reasons:

- a political desire for a defence posture which cannot be afforded with the money made available; or
- a political desire to hang on to defence roles and tasks which are now not affordable.

Such imbalances will produce periodic crises until they are corrected. Financial measures will not solve the problem – any more than haemophilia can be cured by a bandage – and are likely, in fact, to make it worse. Intelligent use of resources, as

will be discussed later, can ease the problem, but is, once more, not a long-term solution.

There are, of course, powerful incentives to try to take on, or retain roles which cannot be adequately funded. Giving up a presence abroad, or giving up a capability is often politically awkward to do, and there may be powerful regional or international pressure not to do so. Equally, there may be strong political reasons to become involved in a new area of operations, even if the capability is not really there: it is awkward to explain that it is desirable to play a role in UN peacekeeping, but that the country cannot afford to do so. The usual response is to ask the military to do more with less, and what results is a slow degradation of capabilities across the board.

Structures and processes

Successful planners have a clear focus on what they are trying to achieve, followed by a determination that the defence programme should help them achieve it. This sounds obvious, and perhaps it is, but there are any number of countries around the world where force structure has evolved haphazardly and responsively, and where, in consequence, money is not being spent as sensibly as it should be. There are certain countries around the world which, by common consent, produce a great deal of defence capability (output) from a relatively modest input. A selection might include Sweden, Israel and Singapore, where the focus is on a limited range of tasks, which are then adequately funded, an attitude that has brought them a substantial capability in the areas where they need it. By contrast, it is still not clear where the huge amounts of money added to the American defence budget in the 1980s actually went, because much of it was spent haphazardly on programmes which were later cancelled.

The usual method of force planning is by crisis management, and by 'patch and mend'. Busy civilian and military officials spend all their time trying to cope with the latest financial cuts, with the result that, once the blood has dried, nobody really knows where the defence programme itself is going. Financial criteria have triumphed again. Perversely, however, this kind of panic exercise often *increases* costs to the defence budget. Stretching out procurement, for example, a good old standby in situations of this kind, generally increases the total cost of the project over the years.

This traditional method of defence programming might be described as the method of *arbitration*. The various uniformed interest groups will put forward their wish lists,

which will be, in total, much more than the money available. In spite of the posturing, and claims of grave damage to the interests of the nation which will result if a single project is cut, something will have to go to balance the books. But, what is eventually decided will owe more to force of personality and lobbying power than to logic, and there will have to be at least an attempt to apply equal misery to each of the functional areas. Moreover, what will be cut is usually what is possible, rather than desirable. This is, more or less, a recipe for continual problems, since nothing is done, from year to year, to bring the programme itself into better balance.

A better method is to go deep into the structure of the programme itself, and to take away control of its formulation from the services, and give it to the central staffs of the defence ministry. The services will, of course, continue to originate some ideas, but only the central staffs are responsible for putting the requirements into the programme. This will make it much easier to keep commitments and resources in balance with each other.

Assuming that this can be done, the missing ingredient for running a successful defence programme is that *defence policy and force structure must be decided together, and by the same people*. Again, this may seem obvious, but there is a great tendency for the two to be separated from each other. This connection must not only be a general one, it should be imposed at every level of detail. What is needed is a set of planning assumptions, formulated by an interservice staff and their civilian advisors, and agreed to by ministers. Once this document is accepted, it will be circulated with the strict instructions that *everything which is in it must be costed, and nothing which is not in it must be costed*.

One incidental benefit of this type of approach is that it emphasises inconsistencies and duplication between the services. It is quite possible, for example, that both the air force and the navy involve themselves in offshore protection tasks, and that rather more is being spent on these tasks – which may have never been defined and defended against scrutiny – than can really be justified. It is also unlikely that they are fully aware of what the other is doing. A neutral central staff, with a strong civilian component, can test the validity of proposals made. (‘And just how *often*, General, do your aircraft practice over the sea? And how many have you lost that way in the last five years?’)

Once these tasks are agreed to, and the level of effort involved has been assessed, they can be costed, in the knowledge that money is not being spent on anything which has not been fully justified. (There will, of course, be less precision about some costs in the support and training area, but even then, it should be possible to have a good idea of what is going on). At this point, it is reasonably possible to give

approximate costs for maintaining and enhancing areas of capability, which – rather than the size of the specific budget – is what decision makers need to know. It is not possible, after all, to judge whether to move resources from border protection to peacekeeping deployments unless it is known, roughly at least, what is being spent on each.

Choice of weapons

These same considerations apply to the procurement of new systems for the military. Defence equipment is currently so unbelievably expensive that there is no excuse for not having a cool appraisal of what is wanted, and when. This objective, however, is always being obstructed by two fallacies which are found everywhere among those who write operational requirements:

- the follow-on fallacy; and
- the like-for-like fallacy.

The *follow-on fallacy* is that equipment now in service must be replaced by something similar, but better. Often, this is true (a training aircraft has to be replaced by another, for example), but it is not *necessarily* true, and must not be assumed. As the real cost of equipment increases steadily, a full replacement of everything obviously becomes unaffordable, and the usual result is a steady shrinkage in the inventory, and old equipment having to last longer.

The *like-for-like fallacy* is that equipment in the inventory of a potential enemy has to be met with similar equipment in a country's own forces. Once more, this is often true, but there are many cases where, for small nations, in particular, it is often difficult or impossible.

Both of these fallacies are the result of starting in the middle of the argument instead of at the beginning. There are basically three stages which have to be gone through before equipment is selected:

- deciding on the task;
- deciding on the capability to be acquired; and
- deciding on the equipment to be procured.

The *task* will flow from agreed policy and the planning assumptions. The issue of *capability* is much more difficult, and should always begin with the question: ‘Should we continue as we are now, or should we do it some other way?’ For example, if a nation is becoming involved in peacekeeping activities, it may be argued that the air force should replace its current short-range transporters with

longer range ones. But, it may actually be concluded that, given the type of operations envisaged, it would be more sensible to hire ships and aircraft as required.

The process of deciding *how* to carry out a task does not have to be especially complex.³⁴ In a case like the above, questions like the following could be asked:

- How much of the task can the existing aircraft cope with?
- Do the existing aircraft need to be replaced anyway?
- Are there other reasons why larger aircraft might be needed?
- How likely is it that ships/aircraft could be hired and what would it cost?

It will usually be possible to make some by-and-large assessments of the financial and operational implications of each course. It will be immediately apparent that such comparisons can only really be made by a neutral body, since the process would otherwise just be one of competitive lobbying.

Once the *how* is clear, the question of equipment selection must be addressed. This can be dauntingly complex, but is not impossible if approached in a logical way.

The point of departure, clearly, is the requirement. This needs to be realistically drawn, avoiding the over-specification ('gold-plating') which is always a temptation. Committees are a useful way of encouraging this realism, and, as informed but detached observers, committee members and their staffs can test some of the proposals put forward for robustness. ('You say you need a radio that hops frequencies 500 times per second. But they are much more expensive than radios which hop only half as often. Explain what the practical operational difference is.')

Logically, the ideal way to meet a requirement of any kind is to produce it oneself, in facilities under one's control. It is thus possible to get exactly what is required, when it is necessary, and in the appropriate quantities. Protracted and expensive competition can also be avoided, and all the added costs of publicity, marketing, private jets and chairpersons' expenses, all of which have to be paid eventually by the customer. But, few countries can now afford the infrastructure which would be required to do this, and even where it is possible, current political fashion is against it. In practice, except for a few equipment producers, nations have to put up with the vagaries of the market.

What this means, is choosing from among the systems on offer, whether they exactly meet the requirements or not. The number of major producers of defence equipment is reducing,³⁵ and in many areas, the choice of systems gets smaller every year. Moreover, few companies can afford to develop systems especially for

export, and what is therefore offered is frequently of a standard comparable to that used by the exporting nation's own armed forces. Such has been the pace of military technology development over the years that the gap between what producer nations themselves use, and what is suitable for a new nation venturing into a new capability, continues to grow. The natural desire of nations to buy the best they can afford frequently leads to procurement and logistic disasters, as equipment is delivered which is too complex and expensive to maintain.

It is particularly important to keep a sense of proportion about equipment performance. If there is a requirement for a transport aircraft with a range of 1 000 kilometres, then there is no point in paying more for an aircraft with a range of 1 500 kilometres, unless it can really be utilised. It often happens that the military edges gradually into new (and expensive) roles, simply because it has acquired a new capability. It is also often attractive to buy a proven system, even if the capability is less: if the Mk1 positioning system will show a position to within five metres, is it really worth buying the Mk2, still in the design stage, which will reduce the error to one metre? Unless one is going into intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), then the answer is almost certainly no.

In most cases, a nation will be offered a variety of competing products of which the cost and performance will be very different from one another. Choosing between them is hard enough for experienced nations, but for those coming fresh to the task, it can be overwhelming. Some pointers have already been offered, and it may be suitable to bring them together. A possible series of priorities might be to:

- be very sure of the required capability;
- look at various ways of satisfying it;
- not be dazzled by promises of superior performance;
- make sure of the capability of using and training on it;
- pay attention to support and maintenance costs and problems; and
- remember that whatever is bought will have to last for a long time.

There are a variety of ways – some very sophisticated – of comparing the price and performance of equipment. The problem is that, to some extent, these will all depend on *assumptions*. Nothing about the performance of military equipment can ever be certain, but professional judgement can often help to reduce the uncertainty. Broad-order assessments of costs and capabilities are always possible, and some sensible judgements can often be made. If, for example, two anti-tank systems are offered, one of which has greater penetrating power than the other, the first question to ask is: 'Does it make a difference?' If the less powerful system will not defeat the armour of an enemy's tank, then it is a waste of money no matter how cheap it is. If both will do the job, then the cheaper one should be bought. If a radio

set offers superior performance at double the price, it would be fair to try to quantify the performance in some way. It may be hard to be exact, but *either* the performance difference is substantial, in which case it is worth considering, *or* it is not substantial, in which case it should not be considered further. Note that a formal definition of 'substantial' is not needed for this kind of comparison.

So far, operational capability has been focused on and, of course, something that does not work will be a waste of money. But, procurement decisions need to take many other factors into account, and the procurement of defence systems is one way for small states to exercise a great deal of leverage. If a number of systems will meet the requirement, then it is quite reasonable to make the decision on the basis of other factors. These may include:

- offset and licence manufacture;
- financing;
- linked political and industrial benefits; and
- countertrade.

A nation which does not have a strategy covering these factors is weakening its own bargaining position in a market which is now, and will be for some time, biased very much in favour of the purchaser. Of course, integrating all of these factors can be a challenge, and it is not really possible to do it scientifically. Systems for weighting various factors depend, in the end, on subjective judgements. But, a clear and logical process involving all those with an interest, very often points to a clear winner.

CHAPTER 9 THE MILITARY AND SOCIETY

In the days when armies existed to fight the wars of the King, they might have consisted entirely of slaves, criminals and foreign mercenaries. In a democracy, and in any society which is based on the principle of popular sovereignty, this is not acceptable. Military forces have to be, in some senses at least, representative of the society which recruits, pays and deploys them. But, if the principle is clear, the practice is somewhat more complicated, and this chapter is concerned with what, in various ways, the relationship between the military and society should be.

Origins

For obvious practical reasons, the military can never be the precise mathematical reflection of the society from which it comes. Even conscript forces require career officers and NCOs, and those attracted to a military career will not necessarily be any more representative, in the narrow sense, of society, than will aspirant doctors, bankers or musicians. By definition, few pacifists will wish to join, and few of those who, for one reason or another, feel estranged from the general political culture of the country. There are military traditions, military families, and regions which have historically produced soldiers or sailors. There are also minority social, ethnic or religious groups who may feel, for a variety of reasons, that the military is not for them.

Moreover, the military does not necessarily want everyone who wants to join it. Obviously enough, many groups represented in society – habitual criminals, the mentally ill, those with extreme views and prejudices – will tend to be frowned on by any competent organisation, the military among them. But, the military, in general, is looking for individuals with a rather special combination of attributes. Some have already been mentioned, but some of the most problematic are stressed here.

Human beings are not naturally violent. Usually, it requires hysteria, hatred or intoxication to produce high levels of violence. Yet, the military, even if it socialises people into the acceptance of violence, still has to look for those with a basic

tolerance of violence in the first place. While hand-to-hand fighting is not as common as it was, a soldier still has to be willing, if necessary, to run across a field and stick a bayonet in a fellow human being. With most civil violence directed against individuals known to the attacker, the killing of total strangers, with whom one has no personal quarrel, is the norm in war. It is, in fact, far more of a problem for the military to get soldiers to fight, than it is to contain their aggressive influences.

Moreover, everyone who has been on a battlefield has reported that it is a place of terror and chaos, a place from which any normal individual would want to run as quickly as possible. Yet, the military will not function unless individuals can be trained, not merely to stay on the battlefield, but to operate in quite complex and difficult ways on it, and to leave the relative safety of a trench or a building and move, on command, into an environment of greater danger.

As already stressed, the particular contribution of the military is that of *controlled* violence, which is about as removed from the sporadic and *ad hoc* violence of civil society as can be imagined. The military may be ordered, for example, to take casualties without retaliating, to stand for hours under a hail of rocks and bottles without shooting, or to co-operate militarily with a group it has previously tried to kill.

It is true that the training and socialising systems of the military are designed to mould recruits into approved patterns of behaviour. But, it is also true that certain characteristics are sought in soldiers and even more in officers, which are not necessarily better or worse than those in society generally, but are certainly different. It is for this reason that it is not practicable to expect to find a cross-section of society in an infantry platoon. Nor, for that matter, could one necessarily expect to find a cross-section of ethnic or religious groups in the same way. While some societies have, for good reasons, tried to use quotas or other systems to ensure that all ranks are, at least, broadly representative of the societies they serve, it is accepted that the end-result can only be an approximation. In any system based on personal choice, not everyone will want to do everything. But, this does not remove the need for a society to ensure that its military welcomes all those who wish to join, whatever their origins, and then treats them equally once they have. Any other policy will, in the end, weaken support for the military in society as a whole. In other words, there is a distinction to be drawn between the *inherent* differences that will always exist between the average soldier and the average member of society, about which only a limited amount can be done, and the organisation and behaviour of military forces, including their arrangements for recruiting and promoting their personnel.

Attitudes

Much the same is true of the attitudes of the military, although there is one further complication. Everybody understands that the various views and opinions within the military will not necessarily, on average or in total, be the same as those in society at large. On average, for example, the military is more socially conservative than society as a whole. At the same time, it should also be accepted that the *behaviour* of the military should not lead it into conflict with the norms and values of society generally. The difficulty comes when attempts are made to analyse what these values actually are. It would be absurd to argue that, for example, if racial prejudice is very common in society, then the military should also be expected to be racially intolerant. Yet, there is no logical reason why, in a society of that kind, the military should be taught to be racially tolerant instead. That tolerance is better than intolerance is widely thought to be true, especially among educated people, but it remains a subjective judgement.

Indeed, the argument that the military should reflect the values of its society is a dangerously double-edged one, since, if the values of a society are themselves suspect, the military is not likely to be much better. Whatever complaints can be laid against the German military in World War II, failure to reflect the values of its society is one of the few that cannot. The same has happened more recently in the former Yugoslavia and in Central Africa. In each case, it is clear that, while those who did the actual killing may actually have been more willing than their compatriots to perform the deed, they carried out the atrocities with, at least, the tacit approval of the majority of their own communities. Indeed, the evidence suggests that, in most wars, populations will generally support the harshest measures adopted by their governments, and sometimes demand more. This is particularly true in societies which have a concept of war different from the European and American norm of a limited liability organisational struggle. Generally, the worst atrocities have been committed when entire nations or communities have felt themselves in deadly peril from an outside force, and obliged to fight with every means at their disposal, ethical or not.

What is dealt with here, therefore, is the suggestion that the military should not reflect the *actual* values of its society, but rather the values that the society ought to hold. Most people who talk about norms and values are really saying that they would like the military to adopt the same values they would like society as a whole to adopt. The debate is, in other words, prescriptive rather than descriptive. The problem, as already indicated, is that there is no way, apart from subjective judgement, in which some values can be pronounced better or worse than others. Most people believe that their educated, liberal values are superior to other sets

(those of Genghis Khan, for example), but have to recognise that they are incapable of ever proving it. Moreover, there are cases where it can be argued that the military can have values which are superior to those of civil society – honesty in a corrupt society, for example.

Yet, it has to be questioned how much this really matters in practice. The military is, after all, an instrument of the state, and it ought to be required to do what the state wants. This includes not only carrying out the orders of the legitimate government, but also not acting, even privately, in a way which undermines what the legitimate government is trying to do. Even more, the military should not act, individually or collectively, in a way which affronts the values of the society it serves. The most obvious case is that, whether or not the military happens to like the political system it serves, it should refrain from criticising it, not just openly, of course, but also privately to conscripts and others it may influence. A military which is unconvinced of the virtues of democracy, for example, will be a problem, but will not be much of a direct threat as long as it keeps its views to itself, and does not try to impose them on others.

This argument has been presented to various audiences in the past, and sometimes criticised as that of a comfortable middle-class white male from a developed democracy. Surely, it has been argued, there is a need to go further, and implant the norms and values of society in the soldiers themselves, so that they will, if necessary, disobey orders which transgress these values.

It is true that, where the military plays the role of the school of the nation, these issues can be important. In the case of countries with military service, it is arguable that civic education, for example, should form part of the curriculum. But, the fundamental problems remain that there is no objective way of deciding which values are supposed to be taught, and that whatever values are chosen will change in any event over time. The greatest danger, however, lies in trying to offload onto individuals the kind of ethical judgements which really have to be made and implemented by society. Those who advocate the instilling of norms and values are not really saying that a soldier should decide for him or herself what to do in a given, ethically ambiguous situation. They are advocating that the soldier should be taught values (theirs, in fact), which will *determine* what he or she does. After all, it is clear that personal judgement could go either way. A young soldier may be admired who refuses an order to take part in the killing of prisoners, because this conflicts with his or her ethical assumptions. But, logically, there is no difference between this and the situation where a soldier who has been ordered not to harm prisoners nonetheless kills them, because he or she believes it is the right thing to do. In the end, it is unfair and unreasonable to expect young soldiers to act as

independent ethical judges in this way. When the military has acted in an unacceptable fashion, it is usually because there is either something wrong with the state itself, or with civil-military relations, or with the system of command and discipline in the military itself. It is these problems which have to be addressed, not the individual responsibility of the soldier. If the political system is healthy, and civil-military relations are good, then these problems, in general, will not arise. But, if the political system is unhealthy, and civil-military relations are not good, then no amount of harping on individual responsibility is going to help.

All that said, it needs to be remembered that the military, as an institution of the state, is one of the ways in which a government can and should put some of its policies into action. These are not only defence policies; more importantly, they are also policies concerning social, economic and even environmental issues. For example, if a government legislates in an attempt to ensure better treatment for racial or ethnic minorities at work, then it must apply these new rules to its own workforce, including the military. Likewise, greater tolerance of minority sexual orientations may well lead government to pass antidiscriminatory laws, which it must expect the military to obey. Indeed, much of government legislation will have an impact on the military anyway: environmental protection is now a major ingredient in the management of military-owned land, for example.

From time to time, military leaders have objected to some of these policies, often on the grounds that fighting efficiency will be undermined. This has been argued, for example, against the employment of homosexuals and lesbians, and against the widespread employment of women in combat roles. In each case, however, it is likely that what is really at stake in most nations is the masculine (indeed almost macho) image of the military, more than military efficiency. This kind of argument tends to be self-defeating in the long run. If the military does not, at least, make some attempt to adjust to changing social patterns and increased tolerance, then it risks marginalising itself, losing public and political support, and no longer attracting the best people, which can hardly be good for military efficiency either. As already shown, while it cannot be a freeze-frame impression of society as a whole, the military has to be and is reasonably required by governments to be representative in the widest sense.

Images

One reason for the complex nature of the relationship between the military and society is that the military's importance is at least as much symbolic as it is practical. The attitude taken to the military often tells more about the public than about the

military. The military is best seen as the *collective 'id' of a society*. It does the things which the public wish to have done, but would rather not do themselves. It acts out people's fantasies of destruction, and incarnate fears of domination and annihilation. It speaks to that part of human beings which is prepared – even eager – to contemplate violence against those whom are disliked and feared. Militarists give this part a dangerously important place: pacifists refuse to acknowledge it altogether. It is not only violence which is symbolised by the military: organisation and discipline, efficiency and bravery are all deeply ambiguous qualities which the public may approve of or not, depending on circumstances.

Anyone who has been involved in politico-military affairs knows that there is almost no point of contact between the armed forces of the popular imagination, and those which really exist. The factual presentations and careful qualifications are, in practice, largely wasted, and the popular image of the military, largely supplied by an inventive media, by folk memory and their own fears and hopes, is altogether more powerful than the mundane reality. It is likely, indeed, that the image of the military in most societies is largely created by the mass media, and books, newspapers and the cinema further reflect the distorting perspective which each shows. In societies which have large-scale military service, this is less of a problem, although the popular view of the military may not be very current. In countries with professional armed forces, however, the gap between assumptions and reality can be very wide.

These distortions also influence the way entire nations are perceived, and the relations between them. For example, it is common to be told in Asia that the Japanese should not be allowed to take part in peacekeeping operations, since this is (to use the most common formulation) 'like giving chocolate liqueurs to a reformed alcoholic'. The fact that even sensible and well-travelled journalists and government officials say such ridiculous things suggests that what are dealt with here are not the timid and inoffensive self-defence forces, but a folk memory of the Imperial Japanese Army which is more powerful than the present reality. (The same applies, incidentally, in the domestic debate: most Japanese, even though they are bombarded with accurate information about the self-defence forces, still think of them, symbolically, as the blinkered nationalists who brought so much suffering to Japan in the 1930s and 1940s.)

An attempt was made so far in this monograph to give helpful and practical examples of ideas which have worked elsewhere. But, in this case, it is not really possible. Clearly, anyone concerned with defence policy, anyone working with or in the military, and for that matter politicians as well, need to accept that there will always be a gap between the reality of the military and how the public perceives it.

This is also true in many other areas of government: public opinion is seldom well-informed on the economy, health or education, but it is at perhaps its most dangerous in the defence area. Everyone has experience of education, everyone gets ill, most people have a job and act as consumers. But, because the vast majority of the population have little involvement with the military, the gap between theory and practice is probably at its widest here. As a result, it is quite possible that, for example, measures genuinely taken to bring the military closer to some of society's widely accepted norms will be judged as too radical by some, damned as too little by others, and ignored, in any event, by the majority.

Nonetheless, there are some practical steps which any sensible administration takes to explain itself and what it is doing, taking into account the problems alluded to. These include:

- *Keep it simple*: Nuances and qualifications will otherwise be lost. No initiative, no matter how well-intended, will be understood unless it can be summarised in a sentence.
- *Do not expect to convince everyone*: It is impossible to please all of the groups who are addressed. Attempts to promote greater ethnic tolerance in the military, for example, although always a good idea, will be deeply unpopular with some sections of society, and there is little that can be done about it in the short term.
- *Do not worry about it*: Trying to convince everyone, or trying to get every last nuance of policy across is wasted effort.

CHAPTER 10

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

It has already been stressed several times that the military is responsible to the society which employs it and which pays, not only its wages, but all of the many other costs associated with maintaining and developing a defence capability. How the military, and those who make and implement defence policy should be accountable for what they have done, who to, and what this means, are the themes of this final chapter.

Accountable to whom?

Accountability has no meaning in the abstract, and transparency implies an audience of some kind. In theory, it is clear that the population of the country, the taxpayer and the electorate, are all owed an account of what the military has done and what it has been used for, as well as of the making and implementation of the policies which the military helps to put into practice. The difficulty arises, quite obviously, because the public do not have the ability to demand this performance collectively and in their own name. In practice, the function must be left to intermediate political bodies of some kind. Of course, information can be and is made available to the public through the media, and through government publications. But it must never be forgotten that these methods are part of the policy of a government to gain support for its views, and only a fool would expect to find the complete truth in a white paper, or in the speech of a minister to parliament. For reasons which are entirely understandable, such initiatives are part of the information warfare which takes place in every political system. Calculations of military balances and defence spending are intellectual games which any number can play, without any prospect of a definitive answer.

This said, however, a healthy political system is one in which the government of the day feels that it should be open about aspects of defence. There is little doubt that a system in which information is freely available is a better system than one where everything is hidden. The problem is that information warfare is not neutral. Information, of course, is power, and the balance between a government and an

opposition, in or out of parliament, will be greatly affected by how much information a government makes available. The parliamentary opposition, and other groups who differ from the government, naturally want to criticise government policy as effectively as they can and, with luck, even change it. To do this they need access to information, and the more information they have, the more effective they will become, and the more difficult life will be for the government. It follows that the agenda of transparency is not, whatever it may appear, an altruistic one.

There is, in fact, remarkably little public interest in most countries in defence matters in the largest sense. Certain issues, of course, stir up great controversy, but access to information is not one of them. Indeed, most people's experience in government is that a huge volume of mail is received on certain subjects, not *asking* for facts and information, but rather *telling* what the situation is, and alleging that the government, if it takes a different line, is either lying or mistaken. In general, factual information which the government puts out, is ignored or dismissed. Sometimes, this is because the image of the government is poor, and often it is because of an understandable assumption that information put out by the government has been massaged – or at least selected – for political effect. Often, though, it is because the facts of the case do not correspond with the prejudices and assumptions of the critic. In the case of pressure groups and campaigning organisations, the situation is even worse. Their objective is to get publicity for themselves and to advance their cause, and they therefore have a vested interest in ignoring or disparaging information which does not support their case.

The legitimacy of such groups, and any influence they may have, depend essentially on their integrity, and this varies a great deal from group to group. Governments will engage in a dialogue with them, but only if one (or both) of two conditions apply:

- They may be of such a size or significance that they are political players in their own right, and their views have to be taken into account. (They may be closely linked to a political party, for example).
- They may be regarded by government as worthwhile interlocutors in their own right.

The latter case is less common, but can happen, if an organisation meets the following criteria:

- *Knowledge*: It must have a good grasp of the basic facts, unaffected by political or other prejudice.
- *Legitimacy*: It must speak for and represent someone beside itself.
- *Reality*: It must operate in the real world and, where it makes recommendations, they should be capable of being implemented.

The limitations of information

Not only must official information be interpreted by those who issue it in such a way that it reflects well on the government of the day, most of it is ambiguous to start with. Take, for example, an apparently innocent question about an increase in the size of next the year's defence budget. To begin with, this is a political decision, and will be justified politically to different groups in different ways:

- *Supporters* of higher defence spending will be given a robust justification, and be told that this increase reflects the seriousness with which the government is taking the defence of the nation.
- *Opponents* will be offered a much less robust justification, and will be told that, even so, the nation is spending less on defence than some of its neighbours, and that spending in other areas (such as health) has also been increased.

Even in concentrating on factual information, however, there is no simple answer to the question: 'Are you spending more on defence next year?' The following conclusions, for example, could all be true *simultaneously*:

- The government plans to spend more money next year than last year.
- The army is having problems recruiting and several equipment programmes are late. Less money could therefore have been spent last year than will be the case this year.
- If inflation is higher than expected, defence spending could actually fall in real terms next year.
- If the currency continues to devalue, more money will have to be spent on equipment imports, and other parts of the programme will have to be cut.

In such a situation, whether the public believe that a government is being 'transparent', essentially depends on whether, for political reasons, they align themselves with the government or not.

The same general considerations apply to the idea of accountability, which is often a code for greater access and influence by those who wish to criticise and even reverse government policy, but are not currently in power. A careful distinction must be made between the valid and important function of opening up debate and policymaking so that people can see what is going on, on the one hand, and simply enlarging the magic circle of policymaking to include former critics, on the other. It is doubtful whether, in any country today, there is any real public pressure for widespread discussion of defence issues in public. There is, of course, much agitation for this from opposition politicians and interest groups, but this is part of the political process, and is intended to increase the influence of these groups over government policy. It should not be mistaken for *public* interest in greater

accountability, although pressure groups, in particular, are often prone to this confusion.

Of course, there are specific cases where there is a widespread public demand for scrutiny of the behaviour of the armed forces. This is generally related to historically bad behaviour, rather than present policymaking. For example, there is still widespread public anger at the excesses of the South Korean army in the 1980s, and popular demand that the situation should not be allowed to recur. Something similar has happened in South Africa. But, both of these examples relate really to *behaviour*, and express an understandable desire for investigation and punishment of the guilty.

Accountable for what?

Accountability, in spite of what was said, is normally perceived in the abstract, as a type of relationship which exists between the framers and implementers of policy, on the one hand, and various outside groups, on the other. The question of *what* governments should be accountable for is not usually discussed in any depth, partly because demands for accountability tend to come from interest groups whose intention is to secure more influence for themselves. Democracy only works because people are prepared to go along with governments they do not like and did not elect. It presupposes that, if a person has voted for the losing party, he or she nonetheless accepts that the winning party has a mandate, and cannot object if that mandate is put into effect, much though he or she might dislike the policies which result. Of course, some electoral systems have more support and credibility than others, but it is assumed here that a governing party, either individually or in a coalition, has secured more than 50% of the votes at an election.

Under the rules of politics, it is quite legitimate for opponents of the government, whether inside or outside parliament, to attempt to disrupt and even reverse these policies. It is also true that individual policies on which the government was elected may prove to be unpopular or unworkable. There will also be many cases where a policy adopted by the government was not in the manifesto, perhaps because the issue had not arisen by that stage. There is, therefore, no special status to which the policies of the government are entitled. Equally, however, those who are critical of the government cannot claim any special status or higher moral ground just because they are *not* the government, and certainly not just because they use the vocabulary of accountability.

Nonetheless, there are temptations to which governments are prone, and it is important that a system of oversight is in place to deal with them. The main ones

are obvious, and not confined to the defence area, but it may be worth setting them out here:

- *The law*: A government's assessment of whether what it is doing is legal, and in compliance with a constitution is obviously not going to be accepted by all. Courts must have the ability to question and overrule acts of government which are illegal.
- *Administration*: Citizens, and the servants of the government itself, need protection from arbitrary and unfair acts, even if they are not necessarily breaches of written law.
- *Finance*: There must be an independent scrutiny of the way in which government has spent its money, since temptations to abuse it will always be strong.

The role and limitations of parliament

So far, little was said about the role of parliaments in transparency and accountability. The problem here is that, while no-one would argue that parliaments should be excluded from defence decisionmaking altogether, the temptation is to run to the other extreme, and to suggest that 'accountability to parliament', however it is defined, is always and only a good thing. But, the fact is that a parliament reflects the political system of which it is part. Although a system with parliamentary scrutiny is obviously better than one without, the trap should be avoided of assuming that parliament, just because it is parliament, has any automatic claim to moral superiority. The opposite can, in fact, be the case. Politicians want to get elected, and have to please the electorate to do so. In any constituency-based system, this will mean, among others, lobbying for money to be spent locally, and promoting the social and economic interests of the area they represent. This will frequently involve special pleading, and attempts (where the political system allows it) to divert money into their own constituency. Almost by definition, such people are incapable of taking a wider view, and the sum total of a series of narrow views taken by legislators is unlikely to be very edifying.

The most difficult and dangerous examples are where spending money is involved. In a system where, for example, parliamentary committees have to scrutinise the award of major contracts, the scope for corruption is enormous. Sometimes, this may be relatively limited, and amount only to lobbying in favour of a solution which will favour the economic interests of their constituency. But, it may be more than that. It is a fact that, whereas government decisions often involve large numbers of people (and thus an element of safety against corruption), the votes of a committee will be much easier to affect with a clutch of brown envelopes.

At their best, of course, parliaments do an important job, but it should not lie in being a surrogate government, or trying to second-guess government decisions. Later in this chapter, some suggestions are presented on how parliamentary oversight works best in practice.

As above, so below

Having been rather negative up to this point, it is perhaps important to say something more valuable about how transparency and accountability can be made to work. The attitude so far has been critical of some of the most common assumptions in this subject, as it is believed that they emphasise too greatly the element of conflict and control. As suggested elsewhere, a policy of control is not easy, and seldom effective. Indeed, talking to enthusiasts for oversight of different types, it is questionable whether they have sufficiently considered that no system will work in the first place unless there is something in place to oversee. Oversight, in other words, is not an end in itself, but a contribution to an end.

The essential point was made by the alchemist Paracelsus: *As above, so below*. The objective must be to have a system which works well in the first place. A system which is founded on democracy and the rule of the law, in which the military plays a role with which it and others are content, will be a system which is also likely to work well. Of course, this will not remove the requirement for transparency and accountability, but will, in fact, make it rather more effective and useful. This is an important point, because a confrontational style of oversight, which takes the government to be guilty and then seeks out the proof, is actually doomed to fail.

There are two reasons for this:

- It creates an adversary culture, where, instead of oversight being identified with the public interest, its advocates simply become another enemy to be fought.
- Because governments are always more powerful than outside bodies, they will simply hide things they do not want to be seen.

A workable approach to transparency and accountability, in fact, recognises that no amount of oversight can do much to improve a society which is politically deficient in the first place. But, this kind of approach is wrong anyway. The virtues of accountability and transparency are not things which are forced upon a reluctant government by an altruistic group of crusaders, they *are part of what good government should be anyway*. These virtues and similar ones should be practiced by government *because they are right*, not because there is no alternative.

A workable system

One of the themes of this monograph has been that decisions are generally better if a large number of people are involved in them. Indeed, a closed style of personalised decisionmaking is almost a recipe for bad government and bad decisions. A collegiate style of decisionmaking, on the other hand, makes it much more likely that bad ideas will be spotted early. While many of those involved in decisionmaking will necessarily be within the system, those who will pay for the results, and those in whose name the policies are being conducted, deserve a say as well, provided (another theme) that they do not try to *duplicate* what has been done elsewhere. What parliament does, in the defence field as elsewhere, is to represent the citizen, the voter and the taxpayer. The best type of relationship is where the executive is obliged to come to parliament, to expose its thinking and plans, and seek parliament's approval for what it proposes to do. Any sensible plan, sensibly articulated, should receive the support of a sensible parliament or parliamentary committee, although partisanship, especially in an adversarial political system, may make this more difficult. But, the real virtue of parliamentary scrutiny, ironically, is less in enhancing the role of parliament than in obliging the executive to think through its policies, to explain them to non-experts, and to be prepared to defend and even amend them if necessary. The questions that parliamentarians will ask are likely to be close to the concerns of the average voter, and the discipline of having to satisfy such concerns is an extremely healthy one.

The issue of extraparlimentary lobbies is more complex. There is an important difference between non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and academics who produce studies of serious issues, and campaigning organisations seeking to change policies. (Most NGOs will make policy suggestions, of course, but the test is what they *primarily* do). Many NGOs have detailed expertise in particular areas (many, indeed, employ retired officials of various sorts), and can often have a useful role in introducing new ideas and gingering up governments. In turn, they are often useful people for government to speak to. Campaigning organisations, especially those focused on one issue, are really more analogous to political groupings, since they are (to put it crudely) more interested in power and influence than in the objective facts.

One of the greatest temptations of government is towards a kind of omniscient arrogance, which dismisses the views of ordinary people as uninformed, and thus of no interest. The first of these is often true, but is no excuse for the second. Government has, in fact, not only a narrow technical duty to explain and defend its policies, but a much wider duty to explain the facts of a situation with as much objectivity as possible. In the end, the quality of the debate in a country depends more on the attitude of the government than on any other factor.

Information and secrecy

Finally, the question of what kind of sensible policy a government can pursue about defence information has to be asked. Clearly, the general ethos of a country and the development of its political system will have the greatest single influence on policies of this kind, but in every system there are choices to be made. To begin with, everyone would accept that defence information needs to be protected, in certain cases, in ways that are not necessarily true of information about agriculture, or culture. On the other hand, there is ample evidence that too much secrecy actually damages a government's own interests, since information is always required in the public domain, and if nothing official is available the information will simply be invented. Indeed, bad information usually drives out good, in the sense that the popular media and dedicated pressure groups usually tell a story which is much more colourful and attractive than the sober truth, and will thus tend to attract more supporters.

A distinction between two kinds of secrecy is suggested:

- *fundamental secrecy*, which says that everything to do with defence and security is secret and can never be revealed; and
- *incidental security*, which looks at everything on a case-by-case basis, although usually with certain guidelines attached.

In practice, the first of these is usually impossible, because it is impossible to keep *everything* secret. Moreover, many such systems wind up devaluing the concept of secrecy; when everything is secret, in effect, nothing is secret. Any competent intelligence service will be able to tell quite a lot from information which is, in practice, impossible to keep out of the public domain.

Many of the areas where secrecy is justified will be obvious, and will not vary greatly, but one area which will be different from country to country is the degree to which parliament and outside agencies are brought in. It is hard to generalise on the basis of different experiences, but it does seem that, if a legislature or an outside organisation is approached on a sensible and adult basis, then it is likely to take confidences seriously, and protect the information it is given. (This is not surprising when human psychology is taken into account: most people would prefer to be part of an in-group rather than of an out-group).

Some of the kinds of information which require protection are not necessarily obvious. Personnel records may contain secrets which it is not fair, after many years, to reveal (they may even be inaccurate). Much commercial information, for example, to do with equipment purchases, is extremely sensitive and needs

protection. There is information which other governments have asked to be protected, and there is the kind of frank advice to ministers which would be very embarrassing if it were to be revealed: assessments of the objectives and negotiating positions of other nations, for example.

There will always be those who believe that governments, just because they are governments, necessarily have something to hide. The conspiracy-minded, holders of strong views on any subject and single-issue campaigners will be deliberately unsatisfied with whatever information the government puts out, because their working assumptions require them to be so. But, accepting, here as elsewhere, that all of the people cannot be pleased all of the time, there are actually strong practical advantages for a government in adopting a policy which is seen to be sensible, maximising what can be released, and making it clear why certain things cannot. Partly, the issue is one of attitude as much as anything else. A government which makes an effort to be as open as possible, and provides sensible explanations when it cannot be, is likely to find favour with most people. But to argue that, as did one apocryphal British official, 'if it is in an official file it is an official secret', is not only silly, but in the last analysis self-defeating.

If the relationship between the military and society is complex in any event, then the relationship between society and the military *as it is thought to be* will therefore be even more problematic. Yet, it is the appearance, rather than the reality which is important here, as is usually the case in politics, and the appearance itself is not a unitary thing, but varies from group to group and person to person, according to their hopes, fears and experiences.

NOTES

- 1 S E Finer, *The man on horseback: The role of the military in politics*, Pall Mall Press, London, 1962, p 6.
- 2 S P Huntington, *The soldier and the state: The theory and practice of civil-military relations*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1957, p 90.
- 3 Ibid, p 7.
- 4 F Fukuyama, *Trust: The social virtues and the creation of prosperity*, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1995.
- 5 Finer, op cit, p 7.
- 6 This is an American formulation. The German army practiced the same idea very successfully in two wars as *Auftragstaktik*.
- 7 C E Welch Jr, Civilian control of the military: Myth and reality, in C E Welch Jr (ed), *Civilian control of the military: Theory and cases from developing countries*, State of New York Press, Albany, 1976, p 2.
- 8 Huntington, op cit, p 84.
- 9 Welch, op cit, p 9.
- 10 Huntington, op cit, p 81.
- 11 Welch, op cit, pp 6-34.
- 12 C von Clausewitz, *On war* (translated and edited by M Howard & P Paret), Princeton University Press, 1976, Princeton, p 99.
- 13 Welch, op cit, p 2.
- 14 H Millis, Reorganization, in H Millis, with H Mansfield & H Stein, *Arms and the state*, Twentieth Century Fund, New York, 1958.
- 15 Although ministers will still, of course, have to present the defence budget to parliament and, in many cases, secure agreement for individual programmes within it.
- 16 M Weber, Bureaucracy, originally published as Part III, Chapter 6 of his epic *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*. There is an English translation in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, (translated and edited) with an introduction by H H Gerth & C Wright Mills, Routledge, London, 1991, pp 196-244.
- 12 The concern is here with military functions. Many constitutions make the president the head of the armed forces, but this is a way of underlining that the political leadership should have

the final say on issues of war and peace, not a description of a day-to-day command relationship.

- 18 C Smith, *India's ad hoc arsenal: Direction or drift in defence policy*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1994, p 65.
- 19 As an extremely bright officer said some years ago, about a report which a committee we both sat on had produced: "I agree with the conclusions, but please don't issue it until my Annual Report has been done"!
- 20 More information on Tungaru appears in Appendix I.
- 21 Not only the Americans. What some in Japan have derided as "the politics of masochism" is the biggest single influence on relations with China, for example.
- 22 Unless the problem is clearly insoluble, in which case there will be competition to avoid it. Yet, even problems which are, in the last resort, insoluble – such as drug-trafficking – can attract interest as a short-term way of boosting one's credibility and budget.
- 23 See Appendix 1.
- 24 I have deliberately excluded consideration of the collection of domestic intelligence from this chapter, since this is a monograph about civil-military relations. The military has no business involving itself in domestic intelligence collection.
- 25 Although a state may well, of course, decide to use its intelligence services to keep discreet channels open to a neighbour with whom its formal dealings are very circumscribed. In such circumstances, the other side must be at least aware of your own organisations' existence.
- 26 I am not employing the technical vocabulary of HUMINT (human intelligence) or SIGINT (signals intelligence) here, because I am more concerned with political than with technical distinctions.
- 27 In all of this, I am making the assumption that a country's intelligence agencies are under such a degree of control that rational planning like this is possible. This is not always the case, and agencies may work to different masters with different agendas.
- 28 To be fair, another problem was the tendency, noted earlier, to elevate what can be measured above what cannot. The Americans thought they were fighting an attrition war (the Vietnamese did not), and so their assessments were bound to be as flawed as their strategy, since they were measuring the wrong thing. See, for example, L Cable, *Unholy grail: The US and the wars in Vietnam 1965-8*, Routledge, London, 1991.
- 29 A Perlmutter, *Politics and the military in Israel 1967-77*, Frank Cass, London, 1978, p 94.
- 30 See D Chuter, Triumph of the will? Or, why surrender is not always inevitable, *Review of International Studies* 23, 1997, pp 381-400.
- 31 Cited by D M Shafer, *Deadly paradigms: The failure of US counterinsurgency policy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1988, p 244.
- 32 S P Cohen, *The Indian Army: Its contribution to the development of a nation*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1990, p 176.
- 33 Almost, because energy efficient measures, for example, do save money in the long term,

- 34 An example from the files of the Tungaran ministry of defence is given in Appendix III.
- 35 Although a number of new nations (Israel, South Africa, Singapore and Korea) are establishing themselves in certain niches.

APPENDIX 1

TUNGARU

Tungaru was formerly part of German North-East Africa. After 1918, it was handed to the British government under a League of Nations mandate. In 1940, Italian troops invaded Tungaru, and the current defence force traces its origins back to the levies raised by the British before the Italians were expelled in 1942, and the various guerrilla bands which sprang up behind Italian lines. After the war, the territory continued to be administered by the British until independence in 1956. Although the British controlled the country for some years, few British personnel were in the country, other than soldiers and administrators, and the British influence declined sharply after they left.

Tungaru has a population of 22 million people, of which some 40% are Muslim (mainly in the north), and 45% Christian (mainly in the south). There are also smaller Jewish and Hindu communities. On the whole, relations between the various communities since independence have been good, but this has been achieved by a careful and laborious balancing act. The major communities are themselves divided into several factions, and there are eight main political parties, generally drawing support on both a regional and religious basis. All Tungan governments are coalitions, and they must include at least one major Muslim political party if the prime minister is a Christian, and vice versa, as well as one party from a smaller ethnic group. The Christians were traditionally landowners and farmers, in the fertile south of the country. The Muslims were stronger in the towns, and have dominated the professions and the media, as well as providing most of the country's limited number of scientists and engineers. Although census returns are not completely reliable, indications are that the Muslim population is increasing slightly faster than the Christian population and, by 2005, will be about to overtake it.

The Tungan Defence Force (TDF) is some 120 000 strong, and is well-trained, although most of its equipment is now out of date. Traditionally, it was dominated by the Christian aristocracy, who provided the officers, and still make up the majority of the infantry and cavalry commanders. As the army has become more technically oriented, Muslims have joined in greater numbers, but have tended to be concentrated in the support and technical areas. The small navy has always been largely Muslim, drawing on the tradition of seafaring and trading with the Gulf,

which was strong in the north of the country. The air force, which is increasing in size, is split roughly 50/50 between the two main communities.

As with Tungan public life generally, the command of the TDF is carefully managed to satisfy all communities. By convention, the army chief is a Christian and the navy chief a Muslim. The air force post is rotational. The army chief is also the *de facto* national military commander in war, although he has little authority over the other two services in peacetime. The chairperson of the Service Chiefs Committee is also rotational, although he only has a small staff. The defence secretary is, in theory, appointed on ability alone but, in practice, the post is usually rotational. Below the top level, however, both military and civilian posts are usually awarded on merit, provided a broad balance is maintained. Jews and Hindus rarely serve in the armed forces, but they are keen, nonetheless, that no single community should dominate them.

The TDF is composed as follows:

Army 80 000

- 2 infantry divisions (1 infantry, 1 mechanised brigades)
- 1 mechanised division (2 mechanised, 1 infantry brigade)
- 1 artillery brigade
- 1 para-commando battalion
- 21 local defence battalions
- about 90 M-48 tanks
- about 150 Panhard armoured cars
- about 200 M-113 antipersonnel carriers
- 36 artillery pieces (mainly 105mm)
- Some TOW and Stinger missiles

Navy 20 000

- 2 frigates (ex-Dutch)
- 2 Corvettes
- 4 missile patrol boats (with Exocet)
- 12 fast patrol boats
- 4 mine warfare ships
- 2 amphibious support ships

Air force 20 000

- 2 fighter squadrons (with F-5)
- 3 fighter/ground attack squadrons (with F-5 and Mirage F-1)
- 2 ground-attack squadrons (with Alpha Jet)

- 1 reconnaissance squadron (with Defender)
- 1 maritime patrol squadron (with Atlantique)
- 1 strategic transport squadron (with C-130)
- 2 tactical transport/VIP squadrons (various types)
- 2 attack helicopter squadrons (with UH-1)
- 2 support helicopter squadrons (with Super Puma)

Military service is currently 15 months, although 70% of the Navy and 75% of the air force, consist of professionals. Defence spending in the current year is about US \$1.2 billion.

The training standards of the TDF are regarded as good, and it has carried out a number of successful peacekeeping deployments in Africa and elsewhere.

Regional issues

Tungan forces were involved in fighting against both Ethiopia and Somalia in the confused conflicts of the 1970s, and acquitted themselves well. There were inconclusive skirmishes with neighbouring Njedi in 1984 and 1986. Military relations with Kenya and Uganda are close, but not very substantial. The TDF is a sizeable force in regional terms, and causes some nervousness among Tungan's neighbours. Tungan has always played a major role in defence and security discussions in the Organisation for African Unity (OAU), and has recently become one of Africa's major suppliers of peacekeeping forces, including Rwanda (1 infantry battalion and logistic troops), Bosnia (1 mechanised battalion and 1 engineer regiment), and Cyprus (1 engineer company). The TDF trains a number of officers from neighbouring states, and has good defence relations with Britain, France, Australia and both India and Pakistan. With the resolution of the Ogaden conflict, there are increasing calls for the TDF to be scaled down and made less potent.

Organisation and policymaking

Until 1968, there were separate headquarters for the army and navy, and a secretary's department concerned mainly with finance. In 1969, the air force became a separate service, and a ministry of defence was formed from the secretary's department and a new defence staff headed by the CDF. The ministry of defence was, very weak, however, and confined itself mainly to scrutinising suggestions for spending money. The three chiefs retained their right of direct access to the prime minister.

In 1977, as Tungaru began to be involved in fighting on its borders, two significant changes were made:

- The army commander was also appointed national military commander designate in the event of war.
- A service chiefs committee was formed, chaired by the CDF, to make recommendations.

However, except for short periods of time, Tungaru was not at war, and operations had to be carried out by consultation between army and air headquarters, which were some distance away.

As things currently stand, the defence structure consists of:

- the defence committee of the cabinet;
- the defence minister's committee (including the chiefs and the secretary); and
- the service chiefs committee (SCC) on which the secretary sits.

The SCC is supported by a defence staff which has gained more influence since the 1970s, but whose main job is still to broker consensus among the three services. Since 1985, however, the CDF has had the right to present proposals directly to the minister, and several have done so. The secretariat has worked hard to make links with the defence staff, and the secretary and the CDF can, if they agree on something, often get it accepted by the minister. The navy and the air force are strongly opposed to a strengthened defence staff, because they feel that their interests would be swamped by the weight of numbers. Their position, however, is becoming harder to defend as multiservice operations become the norm.

Civil-military relations

On independence, the government passed into the hands of a group of nationalist politicians who had been close to the British. With discreet help, and possibly funding from outside, the Tungaran Peoples Party (TPP) won the 1956 election. The new prime minister, Dr Tekondi, was popular at first, but soon became resented by the non-Christian groups for his arbitrary policies. In June 1959, he suspended the constitution and made himself life president. At that stage, the defence force was just being organised, and tried to stay out of the conflict. However, in January 1960, several high-ranking Muslim officers were arrested on charges of treason, and it was feared that the army might split. In an historic move, the army and navy commanders agreed to intervene. Tekondi and some of his immediate supporters were arrested and shot, and free elections were called for December 1960. Since the military intervention, Tungaru has been a stable, multiparty democracy. The

Tekondi affair added greatly to the confidence and prestige of the defence force, not least because a Christian army commander had helped to overthrow a Christian dictator. The 1962 constitution sets out the tasks of the defence force as "the defence of the liberty, national interests, territorial integrity and Constitution of Tungaru", although successive CDFs have stressed that they do not interpret this as a licence to interfere in politics. All TDF recruits are, however, taught that the defence force "saved the nation" in 1960. Implicit in this, is the thought that they might need to do so again.

Political system

Tungaru has a unicameral parliamentary system elected by a regional list system every five years. The president, elected by parliament, usually serves a single term of five to seven years. He has largely ceremonial functions, but is the titular head of the armed forces. (By convention, the president is usually a senior politician from the Hindu or Jewish communities). The president is responsible for choosing the prime minister, but on the basis ordinarily of appealing to the leader of the largest party first. The president has the power to dissolve parliament against the wishes of the prime minister, although this has never happened in practice.

Government in Tungaru is very devolved, with only defence, foreign affairs and economic and trade policy being decided at national level. This involves the TDF in dealings with many local political figures, who may themselves be from opposition parties at national level. Political loyalties are still very tied up with clan and regional affiliation, and an informal spoils system operates at both local and national level. Ministers will generally try to channel expenditure to their region, or failing that, their community, and the existing defence estate is probably not in the right place on cost-effectiveness grounds. There is a degree of corruption at local and national level. The bureaucracy is underpaid and understaffed, and a market-led system has grown up where priority in certain cases is based on willingness to pay.

Current issues

The current government, elected in 1999, has said that it intends to reduce the size of the TDF to 100 000 over the next five years. In return, some new equipment will be purchased to improve the TDF's capability. No firm decision has been taken on the future size of the defence budget, but it is likely to decline in real terms. A defence review process has just begun, but is making very slow progress. There are several reasons for this:

- Each service has produced its own proposals, which would give it more resources and new tasks. The ministry of defence is trying to broker a compromise, but the services are a long way apart. Ministers are aware that decisions about the future of each service will also be seen by the various communities as political statements, and have asked the services to reach a conclusion on their own: they are unwilling to exert themselves.
- The services have been asked to look at the possibility of ending conscription and moving to a volunteer force. The navy and air force have said that they might be prepared to consider this, but the army is very reluctant. It has said that it does not believe that it will be able to attract the standard of recruits it needs, especially in the combat arms, unless pay is substantially increased. But, the finance ministry is arguing for low rates of pay, given that 20% unemployment exists already. In addition, many are worried that the traditional school of the nation function performed by the army may be in jeopardy, and that the large infrastructure works programme carried out by the army, mainly using conscripts, will have to be reduced or stopped entirely.
- In spite of high unemployment, there is a national shortage of skills, and many of the brighter young people are emigrating. The TDF has always been a major provider of technical education (five out of seven of the nation's technical colleges are military-run), and there is concern that a smaller defence force could result in large reductions in civilian training.
- The army has been considering plans for the use of female recruits in the (previously all-male) TDF. Initially, they would not be used in combat roles. However, this proposal has been heavily criticised by conservative political and religious leaders in the country. The minister of defence is undecided about what to do.

APPENDIX 2

NJEDI

When the British ran the former German North-East Africa from 1920 to 1956, Tunganu and Njedi were known as the Federation of Tunganu and Njedeland. The two territories became independent as separate countries, and it was frequently claimed (though the British denied it) that this was done to create an artificial Christian majority in Tunganu: 85% of Njedi's population is Muslim. In practice, there are very close linguistic, cultural and religious links between Tunganu and its neighbour to the north-east.

The population of Njedi is some eight million people, and the main occupation is still agriculture. The territory had been self-sufficient in food, and exported some cereal products, but the World Bank persuaded the government, soon after independence in 1961, to move to a policy of cultivating cash crops for export. In the mid-1970s, world prices of these crops plummeted, and the country effectively became bankrupt. After several years of turbulence and increasing poverty, culminating in a widespread famine in 1978, a shadowy group of officers known as the Council of Ten seized power. They instituted a siege economy, and cut off most contact with the outside world. Their ideology was a curious mix of nationalism, anti-colonialism and traditionalism, expressed in a Marxist-influenced vocabulary. Their main platform, apart from economic self-sufficiency, was a union with Tunganu under Njedan leadership. They claimed (with some truth) that the Njedan capital of Tomu had been the heart of the old Kingdom of Tunganu in the 18th century. They also claimed that what they called the 'International Zionist Conspiracy', centred on the City of London, had conspired to dismember the country since that time.

The Popular Fighting Forces of Njedi (PFFN) were rapidly increased in size, and benefited from the delivery of much weaponry (mainly Soviet). The sources of these arms are still unclear, but probably include Libya. East German instructors are believed to have been active in the country, and some modernisation of the equipment may have been carried out by South African companies in the mid-1980s. The task of the PFFN was given as the "liberation of the province of Tunganu from the Zionist yoke of the City of London." In spite of much rhetoric, there was no full-scale fighting between the two countries, although there were serious clashes on the border in 1984 and 1986. The PFFN forces showed considerable

bravery, but were technically no match for the Tunganans. According to prisoners, they had been told to expect to find British, American and Israeli troops fighting on the Tungan side.

Eventually, international isolation and the bizarre behaviour of the regime took their toll. In 1989, a group of moderate officers seized power, and the Council of Ten and many of their supporters were summarily executed. In return for international loans, the new government introduced what it described as 'realistic' economic policies, including the opening of the economy to cheap foreign food imports and massive cuts in welfare and education. Islamic fundamentalism had never been a problem in the past, but, under the stimulus of increasing poverty and desperation, the previously obscure Islamic Welfare Movement (IWM) began to gain significant support. The government reacted by banning the IWM, and imprisoning those who supported its policies. Many army units defected to the IWM, and its forces eventually occupied Tomu in May 1996. The new Islamic Republic of Njedi stated that it desired only good relations with its neighbours, and it repudiated the previous government's claims to Tungan territory. Accusations that it was covertly supporting Islamic fundamentalists inside Tungan were indignantly denied.

In June 1977, the Njeda armed forces consisted of:

Army 170 000 (350 000 reserves)

- 6 armoured divisions (2 armoured, 1 mechanised brigades)
- 2 mechanised divisions (2 mechanised, 1 infantry brigades)
- 4 artillery divisions
- 2 special forces brigades
- 12 infantry divisions (mobilisation only)
- some 300 M-48, T-54/55 tanks
- some 400 BTR/BMP M-113 infantry vehicles
- some 200 artillery pieces
- some TOW, AT-3, RPG-7 missiles

Air force 35 000 (including 12 000 air defence command)

- 6 fighter squadrons with MiG 15/17
- 2 fighter/ground attack squadrons with Mirage F-1
- 2 transport squadrons with C-130, An-12
- 2 helicopter transport squadrons (various types)
- 3 air defence brigades with various guns, SA-6 and SA-8 missiles (all static).

Note: At least some of the equipment listed above is believed to be non-operational for lack of spares and qualified personnel. The standard of training, especially in the army, is extremely variable.

APPENDIX 3 AN EXAMPLE OF FORCE IMPROVEMENT

For some time, the Tungan Defence Force has been worried about the Njeda superiority in tanks and armoured personnel carriers. It is feared that an attack on short-notice could seize large areas of the country before the TDF could respond. The army has been developing a plan to purchase 150 refurbished M-60 tanks from the US to help reduce what it sees as an unacceptable capability gap.

The central staffs are not enthusiastic. The total package, including spares, ammunition and training, will cost at least US \$250 million, which is far more than the amount of money available. The army hopes to keep the M-48 tanks as a reserve, so new crews will have to be trained and separate logistics systems set up. The two tanks will use ammunition of different calibres. The secretary and the chairperson of the service chiefs committee have commissioned some further research, against a budget of US \$100 million.

They begin with the threat. The only plausible Njeda objective is to take and hold the Tungan capital, Lomi. There is only one road by which the invaders can enter, and the terrain on either side is not particularly suitable for armoured warfare: most of it is hilly farmland. Only within about 25 kilometres of the capital itself does the terrain flatten out, but the TDF intends to stop invaders well before that point. The Department of Military Intelligence (DMI) assesses that any Njeda attack would come in overwhelming force on one axis, with only limited diversionary attacks elsewhere. The attack would have to make such rapid progress down the main road that the TDF did not have time to deploy. If surprise was not possible, or if the momentum of the attack was to falter, then the attack would be very likely to fail. The DMI believe that the Njeda army, assessed as well-motivated but not well-trained, would not be able to sustain casualties of more than 30-35% of the attacking forces.

Individually, the TDF's tanks are a match for the Njedans, and their crews are better trained. The first issue is thus what needs to be done to the tanks themselves. In firepower and mobility, they are as good, if not better, than the opposition. They are, however, vulnerable to anti-tank missile fire if they should try to stage a counterattack. After some analysis, it is agreed that the most sensible improvements are:

- cheap bolt-on armour packs to reduce vulnerability to missiles; and
- an improved fire-control system to allow faster engagements and a capability at night and in bad weather.

These two improvements amount to some US \$35 million.

The main aim is to slow the Njeda forces down from the moment they cross the border. Scatterable mines are the most suitable option, but they are ruled out for political reasons. Nonetheless, the TDF makes various preparations to slow the advance down, for example, by wiring bridges for demolition. Artillery units in the forward area are provided with new anti-tank rounds, and the infantry is issued with more TOW missiles. These improvements amount to some US \$25 million.

Exercises have shown that, in the hilly country near the border, helicopters are particularly useful and very hard to detect. Extra TOW missiles are provided, as well as communications equipment to enable the helicopters to be directly tasked by forward observers. Some extra weapons are also provided for the Alpha Jet force. These improvements cost some US \$35 million. Finally, the DMI assesses that the Njeda forces have great difficulty conducting night operations, and would try not to do so. The TDF therefore invests in night vision goggles for helicopter and aircraft pilots, and for its para-commando battalion.

A series of exercises, based on estimated single-shot kill probabilities (SSKPs) are carried out, using a commercial spreadsheet programme, and various force mixes are tried. At one end, the finance ministry's suggestion of concentrating on missiles alone is rejected. Although this would save money, the groundholding troops would be overwhelmed by the Njeda artillery forces, and turned to hamburger before they could open fire. They would also have no capability to retake the ground. At the other end, proposals to buy more combat helicopters are shown not to be such good value. Although exact numbers of systems to be purchased in this way cannot be definitely established, the indications are clear enough that orders for commercially sensible numbers, within the US \$100 million budget, can be placed with confidence.

APPENDIX 4

AN EXAMPLE OF INTELLIGENCE TARGETING

The day after the Islamic Welfare Movement (IWM) took power in Njedi, a working group of the prime minister's intelligence co-ordination staff (PICS) met to discuss information needs. As well as the PICS secretariat, the foreign and defence ministries' regional experts, the foreign intelligence and technical intelligence services, the DMI, the interior ministry and the deputy head of mission from the Tungan embassy in Tomu attended the meeting. It was decided that the Tungan government urgently needed advice on the following issues:

- the composition of the new government, and the backgrounds of its leading figures;
- the stability of the new government and the prospects for its survival;
- support for the new government in the armed forces, the bureaucracy and the police, as well as possible sources of opposition; and
- the international orientation of the new government, in particular, its likely future policy towards Tungan.

This requirement would be met in three ways:

- an immediate analysis, based on the latest information, to be produced within 72 hours;
- a further assessment, with the help of new intelligence, to be produced within 28 days; and
- quarterly updates until further notice, as well as the production of assessments on topical issues.

The *immediate analysis* would be based on the latest existing information supplied by the foreign and defence ministries and the embassy, supplemented by topical intelligence reports. The intelligence agencies were tasked as given below.

The *Foreign Intelligence Service* was responsible for:

- penetrating the new government and its embassies abroad;
- keeping watch on the activities of the Njeda intelligence services overseas; and
- providing intelligence on the attitudes of other governments to the new regime.

The *Technical Intelligence Service* was responsible for:

- monitoring of Njedan diplomatic communications to and from Tomu;
- helping to identify any changes in the deployment or organisation of the Njedan armed forces; and
- providing intelligence on the attitudes of other governments to the new regime.

The *Department of Military Intelligence* was responsible for:

- tracking and analysing personnel changes in the Njedan armed forces;
- producing an assessment of their operational capability to be updated regularly; and
- monitoring the military contacts between the new regime and other governments through overseas attachés.

The *Ministry of the Interior* was responsible for:

- monitoring the activities of Njedan intelligence officers in Tungaru; and
- comparing notes on these activities with friendly governments.

RECENT ISS PUBLICATIONS

TACKLING SMALL ARMS IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION AND THE HORN OF AFRICA: STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF SUBREGIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Compiled by Andrew McLean – Published by Institute for Security Studies, 2000

This report demonstrates the impressive recent progress in developing a programme to tackle the proliferation and illicit trafficking of small arms in the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa. It consists of the proceedings of a meeting of senior police officers, government officials, representatives of subregional organisations and non-governmental organisations in Dar es Salaam on 7-8 May 2000. It contains interesting new information about the priorities of governments and subregional organisations. It also includes a series of detailed proposals for the implementation of the *Nairobi Declaration* and the draft subregional action programme. It adds to the debate on the action required to combat the proliferation and illicit trafficking of small arms in the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa.



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Eric G Berman and Katie E Sams – Published by the UNIDIR and the ISS, 2000

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GOVERNING ARMS: THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN EXPERIENCE

Edited by Virginia Gamba – Published by the Institute for Security Studies, 2000

This book consists of published contributions by the Arms Management Programme. Section I presents the co-operative model devised by AMP, based on three types of action to stop the illicit small arms trade and contain proliferation. The subsequent sections are devoted to one of the model categories. Section II deals with preventing small arms proliferation and contains contributions on disarmament and illicit trafficking. Section III deals with the management of small arms proliferation and considers illicit trade, and SADC's rationalisation of the model to contain and reduce the arms scourge in Southern Africa. Section IV addresses the resolution of small arms proliferation, considering the impact of arms on societies, voluntary weapons collection programmes and the evolution of a co-operative approach. Section V demonstrates the possible application of the model in other regions.





ATTACKS ON FARMS AND SMALLHOLDINGS: AN EVALUATION OF THE RURAL PROTECTION PLAN – by Martin Schönteich & Jonny Steinberg
Published by the Institute for Security Studies, 2000

The incidence of violent crime on farms and smallholdings in South Africa is a cause of concern. The seriousness of continued attacks against the farming community, and the urgency to confront the issue, led to a rural safety summit in October 1998 to formulate a comprehensive strategy to deal with the problem. A resolution passed at the summit was to conduct research on the probable causes and motives for attacks on the farming community, and the effectiveness of the rural protection plan. The project was undertaken in the Wierdabrug, Piet Retief and KwaZulu-Natal Midlands areas. This book will assist the security forces, agricultural organisations, and farmers and smallholders to understand the phenomenon of attacks on farms and smallholdings. The research results will also enable the security forces to improve weaknesses in the rural protection plan.

URBAN SAFETY • SAFETY FOR ALL – Edited by Sarah Meek
Published by the Institute for Security Studies, 1999

This publication is the final report of the International Conference for Crime Prevention Partnerships to Build Community Safety, *Urban Safety – Safety for All* held in Johannesburg, South Africa, 26-30 October 1998. It brought together practitioners for discussions on topics with as much importance in South Africa as elsewhere. The conference was designed to focus on practical steps for successful crime reduction. The commonality of experiences across regions in preventing and reducing crime was remarkable. This book aims to contribute to solutions to the problems of reducing crime and to portray the powerful ways in which communities, local and national government and the departments within the criminal justice system can work together. The emphasis throughout is on partnerships, and how, by working together, people can bring about change. This report should be a useful addition to the emerging literature on crime prevention.



SPECIAL REPORT ON VICTIM EMPOWERMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA – VICTIM EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME (VEP)

Edited by Lala Camerer and Suzette Kolze – Published by the ISS and the Dept of Welfare, 1998

In June 1998, the national conference on victim empowerment symbolised a turn in the stakes for South Africa's crime victims who have largely been ignored. This Special Report is divided into those focused on policy and practice, and workshop proceedings; and the Guide for Policy Makers on the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power. Section 2 consists of a number of the United Nations 1985 *Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power*. The *Declaration* was translated into practice in the *Handbook on Justice for Victims of Crime* and a *Guide to Policy Makers*. South African experts contributed to both these ground-breaking documents and the *Guide for Policy Makers*, which was presented to the UN Crime Commission in Vienna in April 1998.

ACT AGAINST CHILD SOLDIERS IN AFRICA: A READER

Editors: Elizabeth Bennett, Virginia Gamba and Deirdre van der Merwe –Published by the ISS, 2000

This book has been compiled to commemorate the work done by Elizabeth Bennett as head of the Act Project at the ISS, 1997-1999. The first section includes an overview of the problem, the trauma that children exposed to brutal wars is subjected to and an incisive case study of two communities in Uganda that have suffered as a result of the abduction of young children for use in combat or as sex slaves. Section two contains articles previously published as ISS Monographs (1998 and 1999). Section three contains photographs that Liz collected for exhibition purposes. Section four is a reproduction of the *interACT* newsletters. With calls to stop the use of children in war and conflict, it is hoped that this volume will continue the quest of one person who cared about the plight of those who are too young, too inexperienced, too vulnerable, too traumatised and too exposed to take care of themselves.



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