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The Art of Being a Soldier-Diplomat ~ From an Implicit Role to an Explicit Function

by Francis Clermont

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Introduction¹

The aim of this article is to demonstrate the ways and the means for the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) to further pursue the ongoing transformation process of the Non-Commissioned Members Professional Development (NCM PD) system that commenced at the turn of the 21st Century. More precisely, this article will demonstrate the necessity for the institution to further develop and incorporate more cognitive, intellectual, and communication skills and competencies in its common and fundamental PD training and education system to reflect the nature of the tasks CAF members are called upon to carry out as professional soldiers.

To achieve this objective, we shall first look at the origins of the conceptual framework that have led to the modern soldier's diplomatic characteristics and attributes, which will be defined. Then, the article will highlight examples from foreign operations

where intellectual and communicative skills proved to be key for mission success, examples that should also serve as lessons learned for future endeavours in the context of NCM PD transformation and progress. Finally, the article will identify pitfalls to avoid, as well as potential paths relevant to the future of NCM PD.

The Soldier-Diplomat

A deployed soldier carries the diplomatic characteristics of the state he represents. In other words, the soldier embodies the will and executive actions of a state aimed at another state or non-state actor. In order to achieve such an objective, he/she is to be granted the capacity of acting either as a peacekeeper or as a warrior. As a diplomatic tool, the soldier must be equipped accordingly, and must have the appropriate assets and aptitudes in order to fulfill such functions and to properly execute the strategic intent to fruition. This is a *sine qua non* condition that the military institution has the responsibility to fulfill.

The addition of the word 'diplomat,' both as noun and adjective, is used here to better understand and fully define the function of the soldier in the context of a current and future battlespace



deployment, and in addition to traditional tactical training, training with respect to the skills and qualities other than those related to the use of force. According to these authors: “Tact, diplomacy, and quiet reasoning when negotiating or mediating between the contestants [...] are the weapons of the peacekeepers trade [...]” In this vein, the authors consider that it is equally important that soldiers receive the necessary information so that they understand the root of a given conflict and the human relations involved.

In 1993, Rudolph C. Barnes wrote an article entitled “Military Legitimacy and the Diplomat Warrior,”⁴ which was published in the journal, *Small Wars and Insurgencies*. He placed emphasis upon the concept of the warrior-diplomat in order to illustrate the strategic importance of the new role of the soldier. According to Barnes, military members who have significant contacts with the local population should be as much diplomats as they are warriors. To achieve this, the soldiers must comply with the culture of the host nation, its customs, and its policies. However, Barnes’ objective was limited to avoiding the negative impact of ‘bad press’ that awaits the troops in an era of globalized communications.

that is characterized by conditions of vulnerability, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA), and that fall into the categories of Fourth-Generation Warfare (4GWF), Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW), and Asymmetric Warfare.² To these contextual characteristics must be added the fact these modern operations are themselves integrated into the broader paradigm of non-traditional and decentralized structures of military command and control that the terms Comprehensive Approach, Whole of Government Approach, and Joint Interagency Intergovernmental and Multilateral Environments (JIIME) encapsulate.

The intention of the soldier-diplomat concept is not to distort the role of the soldier or that of the diplomat, nor does it wish to replace one with the other. Also, far be it to promote gunboat diplomacy... ‘Diplomat’ serves as a reminder of the inherent and intrinsic characteristic of the soldier’s duties as a member of the profession of arms, and, consequentially, the required skills she/he must master in order to fully achieve those duties. Unfortunately, such functions have remained implicit for far too long because they are often forgotten or voluntarily ignored. The ‘diplomat’ attribute therefore allows to better define and grasp this specific political-communicational function and the corollary and necessary skills, knowledge, and aptitudes the soldier must possess under current modern warfare conditions, an operational environment influenced by technological, sociological, and political factors. Throughout this article, such skills refer to contact-skills, ‘soft-skills,’ cultural intelligence, intellectual capacity, communication, negotiation and mediation skills, language skills, cognitive skills, and so on.

“The intention of the soldier-diplomat concept is not to distort the role of the soldier or that of the diplomat, nor does it wish to replace one with the other.”

Origins of the Conceptual Framework

In 1974, Rikhye, Harbottle, and Egge, in their book, *The Thin Blue Line. International Peacekeeping and Its Future*,³ highlighted how important it is for soldiers of all ranks working as peacekeepers to receive, as part of their preparation for

Canadian Lieutenant-Colonel (ret’d) David Last contributes to setting the foundation of this new approach to soldiering and soft skills, a dimension overlooked, if not rejected for a long time by the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) institution and its traditionalist elite. In *Theory, Doctrine and Practice of Conflict De-escalation in Peacekeeping Operations*,⁵ published in 1997 by The Lester B. Pearson Canadian International Peacekeeping Centre, Professor Last underlined the importance of communication skills in various operations, a lesson learned through more than 50 years of experience Canada has gained in peace operations. Specifically, Professor Last speaks of “Combat skills vs. Contact skills.”

In 1999, US General Charles C. Krulak wrote a short but influential article entitled, *The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War*.⁶ Following the general’s canonical Three Block War concept (simultaneous tactical operations passing from humanitarian operations, to peace operations and to war fighting), and his observation that soldiers from lower ranks at the tactical level will be given more-and-more command responsibilities, and will therefore be required to take consequential actions within the strategic and political realms, I submit that we should extrapolate and extend his idea by including all Non-Commissioned Members (NCMs) from all trades and environments, not just marines or corporals, as Krulak does. The inclusiveness of his concept,

shaking as it does the foundation of a *doxa* that has the officer corps on one side, and the NCM corps on the other, is, in many ways, innovative, and it demonstrates a clearer understanding of the modern challenges with which armies are now faced.

In the post-Somalia inquiry context, and, with it, the institutional shock that followed, the CAF, in order to fill the gaps identified regarding the professional development system of the NCMs, laid the foundations of a major revision, modernization, and transformation of this system, as well as some of its doctrine.

In 2002, more than 50 years after Canada's first peacekeeping operation, and five years after the government forced its hand in the wake of the Somalia Inquiry Commission, the CAF published its first peace operations doctrine.⁷ Indeed, the commission's report noted that training was inadequate because it was solely based upon combat.

The training plan for Operation *Cordon* did not adequately provide for sufficient and appropriate training in relation to several non-combat skills that are essential for peacekeeping, including the nature of UN peacekeeping and the role of the peacekeeper; the Law of Armed Conflict, including arrest and detention procedures; training in use of force policies, including mission-specific rules of engagement; conflict resolution, and negotiation skills development; inter-cultural relations and the culture, history, and politics of the environment; and psychological preparation and stress management. The failure of the training plan to provide adequately for these non-combat skills arose primarily from the lack of any doctrine recognizing the need for such training, and the lack of supporting training materials and standards.⁸

In 2003, the CAF published *Duty with Honour*, a foundational and doctrinal publication that defines the Canadian profession of arms. For the first time in CAF history, this core document defines and codifies the military profession, and it sets the theoretical basis of future NCM PD.

As military operations have become more complex in recent years, the body of professional knowledge that must be imparted through professional development has expanded beyond traditional areas of study (e.g., history and international affairs) to include many other disciplines not previously regarded as relevant to military operations. Tactical competencies and individual and collective warfighting skills remain the bedrock of military expertise but are not enough in themselves to

define that expertise. Military professionals today require the abilities not only of the soldier warrior, but also of the soldier diplomat *and the soldier scholar*.⁹

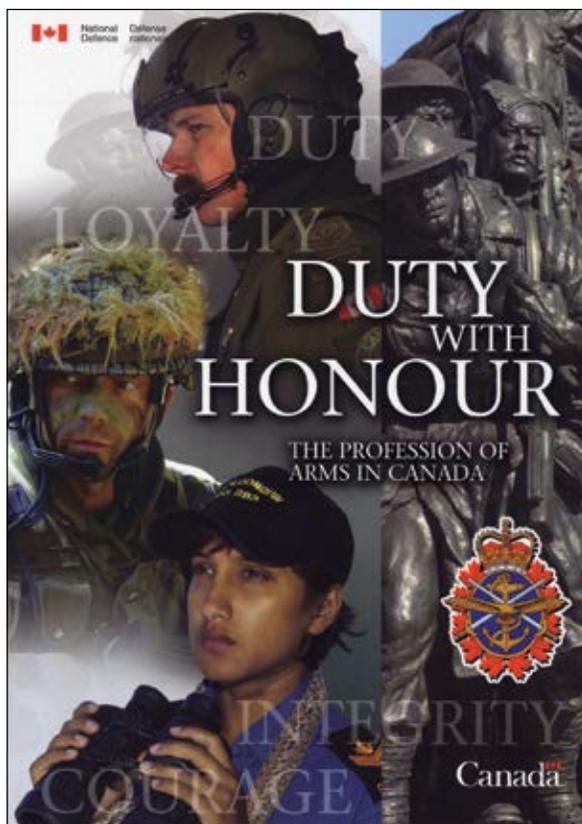
The same year *Duty with Honour* was published, the CAF Directorate of Land Strategic Concepts emphasized the importance of establishing a new conceptual framework consistent with the "battle space of the future," and the three-block war. As the study underlined, some of these blocks are "...diametrically opposed, demanding a totally different suite of skills and ability. In essence, the complex new battlespace will require that soldiers become warrior diplomats."¹⁰

Also worth mentioning are the enlightening works of Deborah Goodwin of Britain's Sandhurst Royal Military Academy. In her book, *The Military and Negotiation. The Role of the Soldier-Diplomat*,¹¹ published in 2006, the author explored *the context* and *the process* of military tactical-level negotiation under which soldiers operate, and how soldiers must be trained accordingly. Based upon decades of experience gained by the international community in the

peacekeeping business, Goodwin's research helps to better understand and appreciate the new enhanced role of the soldier within 'modern' operational contexts. It is within such dynamics that, as the author suggests, we come to understand the importance for the soldier to have cultural sensitivity and to master communication and interpersonal skills, attributes that ultimately allow the soldier to have the capacity to adapt to contextual characteristics specific to modern foreign military expeditions.

In 2006, the Canadian Forces Leadership Institute published *The Professional Development Framework: Generating Effectiveness in Canadian Forces Leadership*. This technical report explains *how* and *why* the professional military is transiting from a Warrior + technician mode to a Warrior + Technician + Researcher + Diplomat mode, a shift that highlights the importance of cognitive skills for the 21st Century soldier, and even more so

for the military leader-manager. Based upon American psychologist Stephen Zaccaro's work, the leadership components, synthesized into five interconnected domains and elements, allow a better understanding and measuring of the significance of intellectual aptitudes for the modern soldier and their necessary institutionalization into the CAF Leader Development Framework. Of the five required skills/domains for modern leaders the report highlights, three of them are of particular interest: 1) Functional expertise and knowledge; 2) Intelligence and reasoning ability; and 3) 'abilities' in human relations, such as communication, negotiation, influence, and understanding.¹²





and collective war fighting skills that have traditionally defined the soldier as a warrior will be broadened to include the ‘soldier as a diplomat,’ and ‘the soldier as a scholar.’”¹³

In 2009, the Center for International Cooperation at the University of New York published a work entitled, *Robust Peacekeeping: The politics of Force*. Two of the authors wrote:

Fifteen years ago, peacekeeping was doctrinally and operationally segregated from war-fighting by major powers, perhaps to protect peacekeeping from association with war-fighting, perhaps to protect the war-fighter’s ethos or skills from being weakened by rapid or frequent exposure to the

more restrained world of peacekeeping. Today, however, key major power doctrines, including those of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and India, give peacekeeping a place on a continuous spectrum of tension that has war-fighting at the other end.¹⁴

In 2007, the CAF Directorate of Land Strategic Concepts published a study pertaining to the force employment concept for a 15-year outlook, which advocated the need for transformation with regard to soldering. “To meet the demands of full spectrum engagement, the Land Force will produce a soldier with a broader body of knowledge and skills. Tactical competencies and individual



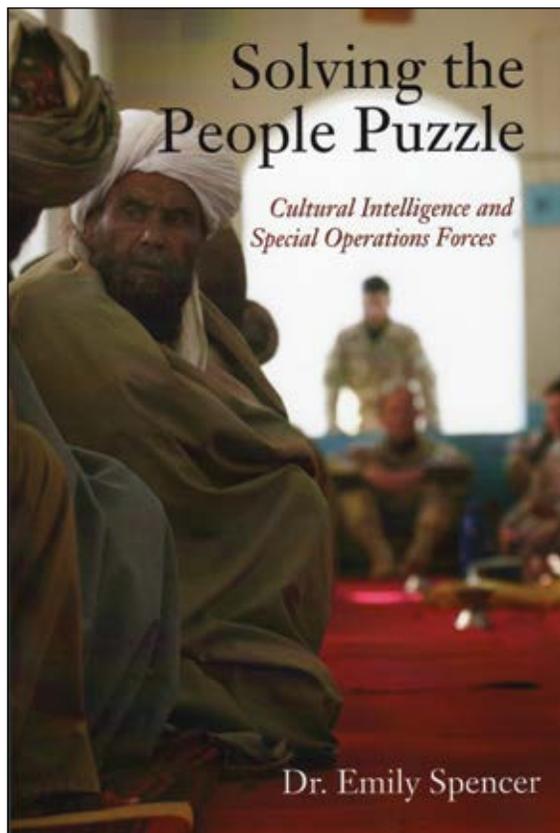
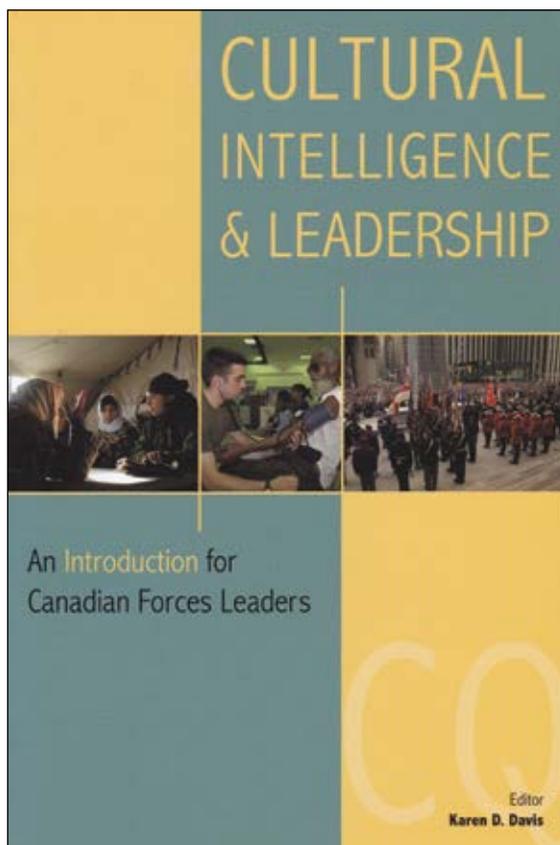
Master Warrant Officer Adam Corbett sits in front of a group of soldiers from the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces during an exercise in the Sierra Leone jungle, 28 April 2007.

However, the authors raised a most relevant note of caution:

It is not at all clear, however, that soldiers are collectively capable of doing as much role-shifting, and as rapidly, as doctrine now seems to require. One could envisage such adaptation in a thirty-four-year-old Special Forces sergeant with fifteen years of experience and special education and training in winning local support for his campaign. One has more trouble seeing it in a nineteen-year-old line infantryman with a high school education and at most a year of field experience of any sort under his belt.¹⁵

In 2010, documents published by the Canadian Defence Academy (CDA) pertaining to cultural intelligence, negotiation skills, and soft-skills enriched this relatively new field of research. The Non-Commissioned Members Professional Development Centre (NCMPDC), renamed the Chief Warrant Officer Osside Profession of Arms Institute in 2014, produced a video entitled *The Art of Being a Soldier-Diplomat. The Experience of Canadian Non-Commissioned Members in Cyprus*.¹⁶ Using Operation *Snowgoose* as a case study, the aim of this pedagogical tool was to demonstrate the existence of traditional tactical level diplomacy tasks and other required communicational skills Canadian NCMs have had to accomplish when on mission, even though such tasks were informal. More precisely, the thesis was that notwithstanding the nature of operations in which NCMs are called upon to serve, years of experience have brought to light the fact that contact skills and soft skills are important to master in order for them to achieve their tasks.

During the same period, CDA published *Cultural Intelligence and Leadership, An Introduction for Canadian Forces Leaders*.¹⁷ Furthermore, a research associate with the Canadian Special Operations Forces Battle Laboratory, and an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the Royal Military College of Canada, Dr. Emily J. Spencer, wrote: *Solving the People Puzzle: Cultural Intelligence and Special Operations Forces*.¹⁸



An examination of the evolution of literature pertaining to soft skills seems to indicate a slow but continuous change in military philosophy and doctrine over recent decades in regard to the importance of the cognitive dimension of the soldier's attributes, and the corollary tool set he/she must be given. It also allows one to better analyze how those in key positions related to the defence and security of states have perceived changes in the strategic environment, how they have responded to these changes, and how they have integrated or *not* integrated, the lessons of past operations, especially peace operations and counterinsurgency operations.

Lessons Learned from Past and Current Operations

At the tactical level, military leaders often need to interact with local populations and local leaders. Whether they are master corporals, sergeants, or warrant officers, they are likely to come into contact with the local populations and their leaders, as well as with other key stakeholders, such as NGOs and representatives of governmental organizations and departments. They will be required to influence a given situation, and to lay the foundation of conditions supporting the objectives of a given mission.

However, this interactive context between soldiers and the local populations, involving non-traditional tasks, is hardly new. In contemporary times, such tasks were visible from the onset of peacekeeping missions conducted in the aftermath of the Second World War. From Egypt to Timor, Bosnia, Cyprus, Haiti, and Afghanistan, soldiers have long had the experience of interacting with local populations as well as with their military and civilian leaders. For example, some U.S. NCOs that were deployed in Iraq could have been called upon to act as the mayor of a village. In Afghanistan, Canadian NCMs negotiated with tribal leaders, while others trained members of the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police. Such interactions will likely only increase over the coming decades within the context and nature of contemporary armed conflicts.



Canadian service personnel assisting orphans in Haiti, 29 January 2010.

In February 2011, the *National Post* published an article, “Crossing the language divide in Afghanistan.”¹⁹ We learn from it that PPCLI Master Corporal Grove learned the Pashto language on his own initiative, and he did this during three rotations within the International Assistance Force (ISAF).

At nights, the soldier studied in his bunk. He spent his free time with Afghan army members and police officers, drinking chai tea and teaching them English in exchange for new Pashto phrases he carefully printed in a dog-eared notebook [...]. By the end of his 2008 tour, the member of the PPCLI, 1st Battalion, could converse. But it wasn’t until he returned to Edmonton that his studies took off. Grove bought a computer program and sought out local Afghans to talk with. He watched Pashto videos on YouTube and covered the subtitles with his hands. He’d never learned a second language before, no classes in high school, and had no previous interest [...].

Master Corporal Grove explained the intention behind his initiative: “I didn’t follow any learning pattern, and military-wise there is no language training. They give us an afternoon, here and there, but it’s for the basics, like greetings or ‘Stop or I’ll shoot.’ There was no real program in place, so I did my own thing.” As Grove recalled, “For one of us to speak like them, it immediately gets us in the door. [...] In hindsight, it’s a simple thing [...]. It’s a sign of respect to learn someone else’s language.”

At first glance, this article piques our curiosity, and we think: “What an exemplary soldier, self-taught and sensitive to another’s culture and language.” But what the article also reveals is that the

professional development and training system did not provide him with all the tools he needed in order for him to fully perform his tasks.

Another example from which many lessons can be learned is the experience of the Second Battalion of the Royal Vingt-deuxième Régiment Battle Group (2 R22eR BG) in 2009 in the context of the counterinsurgency operations it led in the Dand and Panjaway Districts of Afghanistan. The team demonstrated innovation through its implementation of the Advance Counter-insurgency Team (ACT), also known as the ‘village approach.’

This innovative yet *ad hoc* approach was a ‘first’ for all NATO contingents since 2001-2002. Its objective was to *come closer to* and to *integrate* the local population. In doing so, the battle group changed the concept of force protection and the building of fortresses with wide defensive perimeters that projected a negative message to the local population. To achieve this, the officer command team had to agree to delegate and decentralize leadership to NCMs in order to give them greater flexibility and speed of action. This approach raised the status of NCMs to become the pillars of these particular operations.

As noted by Major Bolduc and Captain Vachon, officers serving with the 2nd Battalion R22eR Battle Group in 2009 in Afghanistan, in their lessons learned report published in 2010: “There were enormous leadership and change-management challenges for leaders at all levels when it came to turning the combat mentality into the COIN philosophy.”²⁰ As underlined by Captain Jeremie Verville, an officer serving in Company “A” of the 2 R22eR BG in the village of Belandey, such an experience met resistance at first, because “...it was contrary to the basic principles that we had been learning for a long time.”²¹ This statement and

observation is corroborated by soldiers of the 2 R22eR BG, who remember that the objective was to bring the local population to the forefront, which had the effect of exposing members of the company to risks, a principle that, according to them, "...is counter-intuitive for all soldiers. Nobody trains like that. It's always safety, safety, safety. Our training does not take into account the relations and communications dimensions."²²

Vachon and Bolduc concluded their report by underlying the fact that "...particular attention must be placed on pre-deployment training in order to promote and implement the basic COIN principles [...] with the help of specialized COIN operations training (that is linguistic, cultural, sociological, anthropological, historical, and so on)." They go on to say that "[...] it is important that we adjust the current curriculum so that it reflects the actual level of our soldiers' knowledge and skills, particularly in relation to our junior and non-commissioned officers."²³

On 28 September 2010, Radio-Canada's *Le Téléjournal* featured members of the R22eR training in Wainwright while they getting ready to be deployed in Afghanistan. This would be the last Canadian battalion to participate in a CAF combat mission in Afghanistan.

Master Corporal Lavallée of Company "C" admitted to the feature's reporter that with the new strategy consisting of integrating and living among the local population, it is not something he expected to do as a soldier. "Today," he said, "this is an integral part of basic soldiering. One must know how to negotiate, to have social skills, and to easily connect with people." As the journalist concluded, "...the soldiers themselves are becoming actual diplomats."²⁴

Pitfalls to Avoid and Ways Ahead

Past operational experience, as previously highlighted, should serve as insight for future operations and should indicate some appropriate paths to achieve mission success.

In order to not repeat past errors, the institution must take advantage of the lessons provided by decades of practice in peace operations and for which Canada has long been one of the global figureheads. Peace operations have helped shed light upon essential non-combat duties involving communication and cognitive skills, which, in parallel to the traditional tasks involving physical strength, are essential for the modern soldier.



Map of Afghan tribal distribution

17 Wing Publishing Office Winnipeg



Warrant Officer Tim Aleman talks with a village elder during a patrol in the Pashmul North District outside FOB Wilson in Afghanistan, 17 January 2009.



Then-Brigadier-General David Fraser (center) touring Canadian and Allied forces in the Panjwaii District of Afghanistan, 15 September 2006.

As previously mentioned, the training of Canadian soldiers deployed to Afghanistan left little room for cultural and language training and education, as well as for learning negotiation, mediation, and conflict resolution techniques. A mere few hours in the six-month deployment buildup were dedicated to the history, cultures, and languages found in the region. According to soldiers that have been deployed to Afghanistan, case studies and scenarios are implausible, such as the image of white Canadian-born actors who play the role of a ‘bad Taliban.’ This manner of training discredits the original purpose of the exercise, and it undermines any similar initiative.

Canadian Major-General David Fraser, who commanded the southern region of Afghanistan in 2006, remembers having underestimated the cultural factors. “I was looking at the wrong map. I needed to look at the *tribal* map, not the *geographic* map.”²⁵ He and his team, as he recalled, “...spent more time talking about non-kinetic goals than kinetics. Soldiers must be ready to pull the trigger, but more importantly, they must be ready to sit, pull out their pen and act in order to commit to the projects that the village elders wish we carry out. [...] The broader the education and training we can give our young soldiers, the better prepared we can make them for the unknown.”²⁶

In 2009, American General Stanley A. McChrystal, then-ISAF Commander, criticized the mission for its lack of cultural intelligence, a concern that others, such as Generals David Petraeus and Michael Flynn, would address after McChrystal.²⁷ As General McChrystal wrote in the sub-title of his 2009 *Counterinsurgency Guidance*, a troop directive he issued in the midst of numerous criticisms following the killing of many Afghan civilians by American armed forces,



DVIDS 282437

General Stanley McChrystal conversing with a district governor during a visit to Helmand province, 20 May 2010.

“Protecting the population is the mission. The conflict will be won by persuading the population, not by destroying the enemy.”²⁸

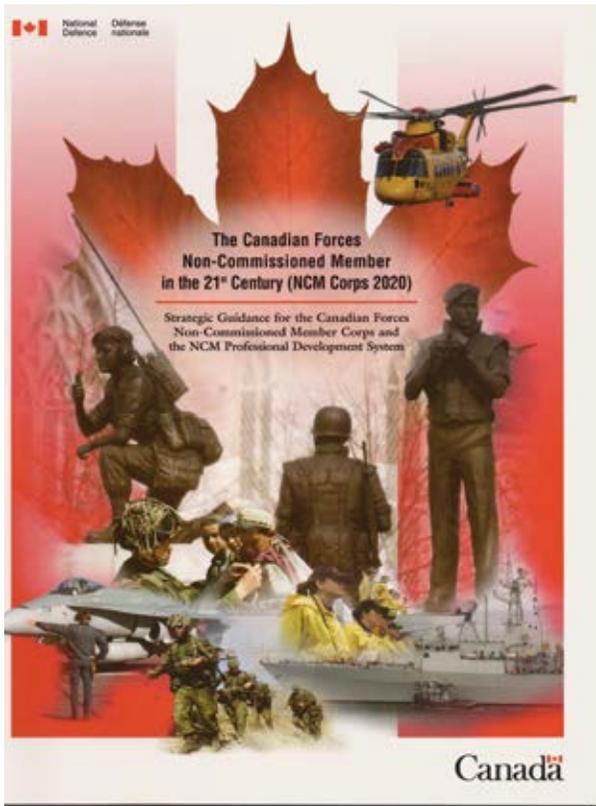
The problem rests in the nature of the skills and competencies that are required. ‘Soft’ skills involve patience and a slow pace, which is in contradiction with the traditional basic training provided to soldiers that places emphasis upon speed of execution. The very terms designating the preparatory phase before soldiers take part in an operation are also quite evocative: The English term ‘build-up,’ and even more expressively, the French term ‘montée en puissance’ reflect the *character*, if not the *main intention*, of military training, namely, to develop a force capable of fighting and one possessing a rapid reaction capability. Starting from this traditional concept, the PD system needs to add and emphasize the *cognitive* dimension to the necessary preparation phase.

Evidence demonstrates that special attention should be paid to what is done in the spheres of peace operations, COIN, intelligence, information and psychological operations, civil-military cooperation, Special Forces, and also to what other governmental departments are doing in the field of cultural intelligence, for example, the Canadian Foreign Service Institute Centre for Intercultural Learning. A possible path could also be to extend the Peace Operations Support Centre’s expertise to all CAF members. Such resources and expertise should be considered by the CAF for future changes to be made in its PD system.

What is being done by the Allied forces in this realm could also be an avenue worthy of consideration. For example, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) use two highly-interesting tools as part of their pre-deployment training program known as the *Regional Expertise Qualification Program-AFPAK Course*,²⁹ which is intended for operators deploying to Afghanistan. The first tool is a 200-page manual on the geography of Afghanistan and Pakistan, Pashto language, history, culture, and so on. The other tool is *Army 360 Afghanistan*,³⁰ an interactive Cultural Simulation training movie that develops the candidate’s cultural intelligence, and requires making decisions throughout the various scenarios so that the effectiveness of actions and their scope at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels may be measured. Detailed, comprehensive interactive and specific resources such as these could be developed for different theatres of operation.

The Future of NCM Professional Development

In the aftermath of the Somalia crisis, as previously described, the CAF published *NCM Corps 2020*³¹ in 2002, a document supplemental to *Defence Strategy 2020*, a broader strategic framework document published in 1999, which aimed at transforming defence planning and decision-making.³² A consequence of this transformation process was the creation in 2003 of the Non-Commissioned Members Professional Development



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Centre (NCMPDC). Under the authority of the Canadian Defence Academy, the Centre is the training and education hub for all NCM leaders. The organization, now called the *Profession of Arms Institute-Chief Warrant Officer Robert Osside*, has the mandate to provide education and training in the fields of social sciences to warrant officers, master warrant officers, chief warrant officers, and their navy equivalents in order for them to develop and improve their intellectual and critical thinking skills. Totalling 12 to 14 weeks, these courses, that fall under levels 3-to-5 on the Developmental Periods progression scale, are obligatory leadership qualifications for warrant officer, master warrant officer, and chief warrant officer positions.³³

During recent decades, as exemplified by the previous works this article has highlighted, research indicates that communication and cognitive skills are increasingly seen as a quintessential asset in the modern soldier's 'tool box' in the Fourth Generation Warfare (4GWF) context. Unfortunately, research and observation also seem to indicate a rather constant and common weakness in such an approach to NCM education. It seems to be less about soldiers as a whole being identified as requiring such skills, but rather as being trade specific and idiomatic to the infantry, and, even more so, to special operations forces and to counterinsurgency operations. Consequently, this delineation impacts the CAF's training, the instruction and the education system whereby the teachings of such skills and knowledge have yet to find their full mark. The existing systemic and organic overlap between the political and the military spheres has yet to find its necessary corollary in the CAF's PD system.

On a continuous spectrum of training and education, starting at the very basic developmental periods given to all soldiers (DP 1), to the highest training and education levels of the system (DP5), courses, *such as* and not *limited to* anthropology, psychology, communication, sociology, and management courses, in addition

to those currently offered, should be systematically taught to all soldiers of all trades and environments, if deemed practicable. By doing so, it would allow to better develop members' cognitive capacities, their cultural awareness skills, their cultural intelligence, and their general communication aptitudes throughout their careers.

Conclusion

The current context of modern armed conflicts and the future security environment require the NCM PD system, along with the individual and group training and instruction systems, to put greater emphasis upon 'soft power' and 'soft skills' in order to complement the weight of 'hard power' and combat skills. Without minimizing the fundamental importance of developing warrior skills in soldiers, it should, however, be put into perspective in light of the increased importance attributed to the cognitive skills of the soldier.

Once the preserve of officers, negotiation, mediation, and resolution of military conflicts at the tactical level are functions that NCMs have been exercising for a long time, although on an *ad hoc* basis and in an implicit way. Such functions should be recognized and formalized as part of the NCMs core skills and, consequentially, part of their education and training. By doing so, it could also help the evolving concept of 'command team' to grow stronger, for if orders travel 'from the top down,' ultimately, tactical decisions and executions rest in the hands of the section-NCMs, in essence, the on-site tactical commanders.

If the CAF wishes to have soldiers that are well-armed physically and intellectually, the institution will have to pursue even further the transformation process of its PD system, not only to its individual and battalion pre-deployment and buildup training programs, or to the elite corps of its special forces, but also by developing a common systematic approach, a core curriculum that incorporates in-depth cognitive skills, starting at the lowest developmental periods.

Future investigations and research might also find that the development and perfection of such skills for the NCMs are quintessential, not only for them to better accomplish their operational and tactical tasks, but these skills will also be key for them to better fulfill their administrative and bureaucratic functions, duties that, contrary to typical tactical and military tasks, they will be asked to accomplish during the majority of their military careers. Finally, the mastering of such skills and professional assets could prove to be quite useful when transferred and applied to civilian careers, if and when it applies.

The ethical goal conveyed by the concept of soldier-diplomat will be achieved only once it has passed the conceptual stage and when the institution has fully recognized and accepted the new professional functions to be passed on to its NCMs. In this sense, the soldier-diplomat becomes instrumental for mission success. To achieve such shift of paradigm in any meaningful way, the institution will have to instill substantial change in its *doxa* and its *habitus* in regard to the education of its members, especially the NCM corps. Only then will changes be fully institutionalized and incorporated into a modern and adapted PD system, and, consequently, be of critical importance for the resolution of conflict in a manner that is in accordance with Canadian values and interests, as well as with the CAF's ethos. Only then will the art of being a soldier-diplomat pass from an *implicit role* to an *explicit function*.





DND photo IS2010-3019-14 by Corporal Shilo Adamson

Petty Officer 1st Class Cavel Shebib of the Royal Canadian Battle Group discusses various topics with local villagers during a patrol through their village in the Panjwa'i District, 21 September 2010.

NOTES

- The author wishes to thank M. Robert Lummack, teacher at the *Profession of Arms Institute-Chief Warrant Officer Osside*, for his time, comments and insight.
- For sake of clarity, this article will be generally using the concept of *Fourth Generation Warfare* (4GW) as the encompassing notion referring to post Second World War military operations.
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- Future Force. Concepts for Future Army Capabilities*, (Kingston, ON: Directorate of Land Strategic Concepts, 2003), p. 69.
- Deborah Goodwin, *The Military and Negotiation, The Role of the Soldier-Diplomat*, (New York: Frank Cass, 2005), p. 243.
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