CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN AN AGE OF TERROR

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ABSTRACT

The age of terror poses a series of challenges to the orthodox model of Western civil-military relations. This paper investigates three particular challenges: the changing security environment, issues relating to the use of force, and issues relating to the role of Western militaries in the reconstruction of weak and failed states. The changing security environment is characterised by the semi-permanent focus on the current War on Terror, a condition that takes us outside the current paradigm of threat environments. Issues relating to the use of force are characterised by the practical and political difficulties in bringing military power to bear against transnational terrorist structures. Counter-terrorism is essentially a form of limited warfare, and as such will provide frequent opportunities for civilians and militaries to rehearse their different perspectives on the utility of force. Issues of reconstruction are characterised by Western militaries' role expansion, inviting new concerns about whether Western militaries are in fact being dragged in the direction of 'new professionalism'. The paper argues that in relation to each of these challenges we should expect an increase in civil-military tensions in Western societies. It further asserts that the cumulative impact of those heightened tensions across all three areas may be of such a magnitude as to drive Western societies towards new models of military organisation and civil-military affairs.

CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN AN AGE OF TERROR*

During the heady years of the Cold War, the study of civil-military relations was something of a boutique industry in academia. Even in the United States, where the fires of debate burned hottest, civil-military issues generally failed to engage popular interest amongst broader Western populations. Those populations gravitated naturally to the larger and more ominous security issues of war and death, nuclear weapons and arms control. Since the quickening of the public's security pulse in the post-September 11 security environment, a similar phenomenon has taken place. The issues of terrorism, war and the doctrine of preemption have dominated the high ground of the public agenda, and the special problems for civil-military relations in the current security environment have been relegated to the lower ground of public attention. To those of us with particular interests in the area of civil-military relations, that level of public complacency is disheartening, and not least because it understates the importance of civil-military relations for the successful prosecution of the War on Terror, and even for the cohesion and stability of our own society. So I am delighted that the Fulbright Commission has thrown its support behind this symposium. And I am both pleased and honoured to be presenting on this topic here today.

The question of civil-military relations in the age of terror forms the focus for this paper. At a time when the War on Terror has heightened debate about the appropriate intersection of power and liberty it is more relevant than ever to re-examine the core precepts of the civil-military relationship. In so doing, I want to reaffirm some of the traditional verities of civil-military relations. But I will also venture to suggest that Western civil-military relations cannot be static when transformational changes are already under way in the nature of warfare itself. Because this topic is large, I will constrain my investigation of it to three core areas which I believe the War on Terror obliges us to reconsider: the changing security environment, issues surrounding the use of force, and the civil-military interface associated with reconstruction in failed and weak

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states. In each of those key areas I shall argue that the War on Terror poses novel and sustained challenges for us:

- it requires us to counter a threat that is both transnational and asymmetrical;
- it places the different approaches of civilian and military elites towards the use of force at the centre of the civil-military agenda;
- and it stretches our understanding of the appropriate roles and missions for Western militaries into the difficult area of 'new professionalism'.

What special problems arise from the challenge of terrorism? The largest — by far — concerns an accurate understanding of the nature of the challenge. The phenomenon of terrorism is still poorly understood. Within academia, and particularly within the security studies field, the subdiscipline is worryingly underconceptualised (Crenshaw 2004: 77), in large part because of the traditional focus of security analysis upon adversaries endowed with large material power. So we do not yet possess robust academic models for — amongst other things — separating the permissive causes of terrorism from the immediate causes, nor for understanding the process of transnational incitement, nor for predicting the displacement and substitution effects on terrorists' targeting strategies that result from greater focusing of counter-terrorist efforts on one particular location or mode of attack (Crenshaw 2000).

But in the post-September 11 world, there has been a broader acceptance of transnational terrorist groups as durable war-making units, and not merely as transient distractions from the real great-power focus of strategy (Jenkins 2004). That emergence occurred because of the phenomenon that Joseph Nye called 'the privatisation of war' (Nye 2002): the empowerment of individuals and small groups by technological diffusion. Seeing terrorists as war-makers is important to our understanding of the contemporary strategic order, but we need to be careful about what we do with this perception. Terrorism itself cannot fully be addressed merely through military responses. True, military coercive power can be brought to bear on non-state actors (Byman, Waxman and Larsen 1999: 107-126). And the application of that instrument to the terrorism problem seems to be a necessary part of 'managing' the problem. But the War on Terror is as much about

politics, economics and ideology as it is about conflict, and the long-term task of political leaders is to strike an appropriate balance in their use of a range of policy instruments so as to reduce the influence and capacities of terrorist structures (Cronin 2004). What does all this mean for the future course of civil-military relations?

The three 'ages'

By way of introduction, I want to begin by sketching out three distinct 'ages' of modern Western civil-military relations. The first 'age' is essentially the age of civil-military relations during the era of 'total war': broadly that time from the impact of the industrial revolution upon the Napoleonic model of warfare until the end of WWII. In essence, that age begins with the American Civil War, and spans a period of about eighty years from, say, 1860-1945. The second 'age' was the age of the Cold War, and covers a span from about 1946-1990. The third 'age' dates from about 1990, and covers that period during which Western militaries have increasingly been pulled towards operations other than war (OOTW). The War on Terror is unmistakably a part of this latest age, albeit with some special refinements.

I am aware that there are elements of imprecision in this 'three ages' categorisation, in particular in relation to the first age. That age was the period when industry forced specialisation onto Western militaries, and so pulled them into a decisively different direction from earlier times when the infantryman was the dominant figure (Wool 1968). It was this age that witnessed the growth of the professional officer corps, the element upon which Samuel Huntington places so much reliance in his classical work, *The Soldier and the State*. Professionalism, according to Huntington, was characterized by three factors: expertise, social responsibility and corporate identity. The expertise was that related to the 'management' of mass violence, and it is this claim that Western militaries have continued to make in the decades since the end of WWII.

Strikingly, Eliot Cohen's book, *Supreme Command*, makes a plausible case that even during this first age, professionalism in the management of violence might not have been

a unique skill acquired solely by military practitioners. Western civilian statesmen, argues Cohen, were often capable of mastering the ‘expertise’ associated with mass warfare, and their doing so frequently contributed significantly to the achieving of victory during wars. (Abraham Lincoln, Georges Clemenceau, Winston Churchill and David Ben-Gurion are the case studies for Cohen’s theory, and only the last of those might be thought of as ‘outside’ the first age of Western civil-military relations.)

A convincing claim for military professionalism based upon unique knowledge gets harder to sustain during the second age of civil-military relations. This is the age of the Cold War, and it is an age characterised essentially by doctrines of deterrence, ‘limited war’, and the non-use of force. During this period, civilians were typically the principal shapers of both strategy and ‘war’. Theories of deterrence, containment and alliance management usually had little to do with military expertise, and much more to do with the elaboration of conceptual intrigue, such as Herman Kahn’s escalation ladder. The ‘wizards of Armageddon’, as Fred Kaplan called them, were civilians — like Bernard Brodie, Thomas Schelling, and Alain Enthoven — and not officers (Kaplan 1983). Their claims to dominance came not from a mastery of matters military, but from the application of theories and quantitiative analyses to issues of strategy. Indeed, as Alain Enthoven is reputed to have once told a ranking military officer, ‘General, I have fought just as many nuclear wars as you have’ (Kaplan 1983: 254). In essence, during the second age, civil-military relations began to drift away from the notion of special military expertise.

Paradoxically, that drift was occurring at just the time that high-technology weaponry was becoming more prevalent in Western arsenals requiring a particular sort of technical specialization, making battlefields more complex and the punishment of mistakes upon those battlefields more important in determining conflict outcomes (Biddle 1998). This expertise was, however, less the management of violence than the management of technology, or at least, the management of complexity. Managing complexity is a genuine skill, and good militaries still nurture their capacities in this regard; but it is not a skill unique to the military profession.

During the third age, the post-Cold War era, civil-military relations drifted still further away from the concept of military expertise. Gulf War I showed that Western militaries had stolen a march upon their rivals in terms of conventional capabilities. But it also introduced a decade in which security threats evolved into a new pattern of strategic heterogeneity. The 1990s were characterised by the use of force for humanitarian intervention rather than for the waging of great power war; for the protection of indirect rather than vital interests. Humanitarian missions took on the flavour of social welfare operations. Sometimes those were robust welfare operations, to be sure. The mandate for the intervention force in East Timor, for example, was of a nature that permitted the force to fire on people disobeying the mandate. But such interventions still bore relatively little resemblance to either the major wars of the first age, or the static, non-interventionist force postures of the second age.

Military missions during the third age began to look much more like OOTW, and civil affairs work — such as restoring war-torn infrastructure, providing military assistance to elections or logistical support for relief missions — became a larger fraction of the typical operation (Holmes 1997). But in those sorts of operations, military claims to a unique professional expertise are diluted (Cook 2002; Hasskamp 1998), and the requirement for militaries to work as part of a larger team alongside civilian agencies is increased. Civilian inputs have a larger place in such operations and relevant competencies are more generously spread amongst a community that might have little direct knowledge of, or experience in, the military's core skill of the management of violence. In the Australian context, the Children Overboard incident during 2001 is a good case in point, and the Senate committee's report on a 'certain maritime incident' is a useful indicator of the particular challenges confronting participants in *Operation Relex*.

In direct comparison to the first age, and perhaps even to the second age, the idea of the functional separation of military and civilians began to falter in the third age, and ideas of closer inter-relatedness between the two segments of Western society began to strengthen. Some academics began to speculate about a 'unified' theory of civil-military

relations, within which the military officer could complement his civilian counterpart as 'adviser, expert, commander and partner' (Bland 1999). Ironically, this vision of functional partnership occurred during an era when many critics were concerned about a widening 'gap' between Western military and civilian cultures (Feaver and Kohn 2001; Holsti 1998; Ricks 1997; Cohen 2000). Those critics asserted that the rise of the all-volunteer force in Western societies had in fact served as a distancing mechanism between the civilian and military worlds, reducing the opportunities for acquiring military experience amongst civilians and reducing the cadre of military officers who would seek an alternative career path beyond the military.

During the 1990s, two things happened: firstly, civilian leaderships became less interested in security and war, and secondly, militaries actually saw force again being used after a prolonged period during which the n on-use of force had been dominant. But militaries chafed under a pattern of restrictive mandates setting ambiguous objectives and obscure rules of engagement in complex interventionist scenarios. And as a direct consequence of the first effect, security courses floundered at Western universities. Increasing numbers of university students went off to do MBAs and IT courses, hoping to find jobs and lives in the globalised worlds of Wall Street and Silicon Valley. In the United States, Richard Betts felt obliged to write a major article defending the continued teaching of the strategic studies discipline (Betts 1997).

So what did September 11 create? It galvanised civilian leadership throughout the Western world, and engaged them in the security predicaments of a new age. Civilians, in short, came back to the idea that strategic studies was a discipline worthy of intellectual endeavour. Moreover, September 11 signaled a refocusing of Western military capabilities towards the threat posed by that most worrying of non-state actors, the transnational terrorist group. An important element of that refocusing was a greater degree of liberation from the restrictive mandates typical of UN-authorised missions. On its face, September 11 seems to have signaled an important watershed in security. But, at least so far, it has done rather less to change the central terms of the third civil-military age than we might imagine.

Since September 11 2001, Western militaries have undoubtedly returned to the use of force, and indeed to the use of force in manners — if not quantities — suggestive of the robust military engagements of the first age of civil-military relations. But those 'uses of force' have at times stretched our understanding of what it means to use military force at all. Military capacities to 'manage' small-group terrorist violence have been the source of considerable dispute. Western militaries had never been built to 'manage violence' on that scale, but to address the threat of inter-state war, 'trinitarian war' as some have called it. Western military capacities can be brought to bear on a non-state actor. But those militaries were not designed to address the peculiarities of the transnational terrorist challenge, which have both an internal and an external dimension.

The changing security environment

Academic theorists have speculated for some time that the shape of the security environment could have a profound effect upon the nature of civil-military relations. The best model in that regard is the one provided by Michael Desch, in his excellent book, *Civilian Control of the Military: The Changing Security Environment*. The thrust of Desch's work was an attempt to show that civil-military relations were closely related to the idiosyncrasies of the security environment within which they were nurtured. That environment shaped the levels of engagement of civil and military leaders, and their relative perceptions of priorities, focus, and the need for cooperative endeavor. When external security threats were high and internal security threats low, argued Desch, civil-military relations encountered their most favourable environment. Where the opposite condition held – external security threats were low and internal security threats high – conditions for smooth civil-military relations were at their least favourable. In the intermediate environments – where threats from both sources were high, or threats from both were low – conditions for sound civil-military relations were mixed and uncertain.

Desch has shown us that security environments do shape civil-military relations. He has not shown us, in particular, how the War on Terror will shape them. In some important

respects, the age of terror takes us outside the neat categories of the Desch model. Terrorism obliges us to confront a threat that has both internal and external dimensions, and is indeed transnational in its reach and character. In Desch's model, external and internal threats are different threats, but in the War on Terror they might well be the same threat. That offers some prospect for diminishing the tension between internal and external policy choices that the Desch model would predict. But there's a worrying element to that interconnectivity of internal and external threat profiles, because it suggests that neither dimension of the threat, external or internal, can be addressed singly.

In the almost three years since September 2001, Western policy-makers have taken to heart the new threats to homeland security, and money and resources have flowed to law enforcement agencies, intelligence agencies and defence forces in an attempt to offset those threats. In terms of the particular threat environments outlined above, the current age is perhaps most like one of Desch's intermediate conditions. But analysts might well argue about whether the external and internal threats were either both high or both low, and insofar as either applies, we should accept that we are facing an environment in which civil-military relations will probably not run as smoothly as they did during the Cold War. In an environment where threats are not easily distinguishable and separable, indeed where external and internal threats mesh and intertwine, the prospects are high for a loss of focus, and for contention over the priorities of security policy and for where force might appropriately be brought to bear.

But the security environment is changing not just in relation to the threat profiles confronting Western societies. It is changing too in relation to the breakdown of political consensus within our societies about what counts as a threat and how threats should be addressed. In Australia, for example, recent years have seen the waning of bipartisanship on the basic tenets of foreign and security policy. That sharper edge of partisan debate has helped to ensure a ready audience for dissenting opinions, including those emanating from military sources, amongst the media and at the parliamentary level. The relatively high level of public interest in the relatively low level of 'gossint' being retailed by Lt Col Collins about the operations of the Defence Intelligence Organisation is a case in

point. Nor is this phenomenon confined to Australia. Jon Rosenwasser has pointed to a similar trend in the United States, where civilian officials and military officers are now drawn more frequently into contests of 'bureaucratic gamemanship' in order to win approval for policy decisions by the US Congress (Rosenwasser 2002: 247-248). Indeed, in many Western countries a similar effect can probably be found.

That fracturing of opinion within civilian policy-makers is worrying. Divided civilian principals, coupled with a declining level of military expertise within the civilian policy-making elite, have previously been identified as the preconditions for military preferences to prevail (Gibson and Snider 1999: 200). Australia certainly has the divided principals; and arguably, it also has a declining level of military expertise amongst its civilian policy-makers. Almost all Western countries have been struggling with the emergence of some form of 'gap' between the military and civilian worlds for at least a decade, and it is difficult to imagine that Australia is immune from such a condition.

In practice, what might this changing security environment mean? The obvious answer is that we should expect one or more of the following trends

- an increased fissuring of civil and military preferences as to the 'proper' running of the WOT
- a greater tendency to rehearse those differences in public fora, and
- increased disputes about the level of military 'professionalism' that can actually be brought to bear on terrorism as a problem.

The use of force

In recent years some security thinkers have pointed to a phenomenon that they have labeled the 'emptying battlefield' (Cohen 1996: 44; Toffler and Toffler 1993). The emptying battlefield is not exactly the good news that peace advocates might believe it to be. What it advertises, in fact, is that 'wars' are now increasingly being fought off battlefields; that they are 'societal' in their scope and make-up, asymmetrical in their nature, and permanent in their durability (Jenkins 2004). This transformation in the

nature of war is bad news for Western militaries trained to prevail upon the complex inter-state battlefield. Indeed, it raises the prospect that the age of Napoleonic war, even Westphalian war, may be drawing to a close. That prospect might be intellectually satisfying to Martin van Creveld, Kalevi Holsti and the Fourth-Generation Warfare school, amongst others. But it appears to herald an era when the bulk of what we understand as 'war' will be fought in conditions where civilians are both the principal combatants and the principal victims (Holsti 1996: 40). And it signals a much larger role for weak-actor security threats that we might have imagined only a decade or so ago.

What is the nature of terrorism and what are the specific threats that the terrorists bring to us? September 11 shows that we have passed the point at which terrorism was merely a glorified criminal problem. Rather, terrorists meet Carl von Clausewitz's classic test of warfare, by waging violence as a continuation of a political agenda. True, they practise a form of demassified war. But that from of warfare reflects many of the broad trends of recent warfare: the emptying out of the battlefield, the loss of the front line, the loss of the distinction between combatants and non-combatants. Terrorists wage a war of agility where mass is itself a disadvantage. It is also a form of warfare where the operational tempo is slow. Ariel Merari has previously described terrorism as a stultified form of war, stultified indeed precisely because of the need for operations to be covert (Merari 1999). And as Timothy Hoyt has observed, 'terrorists do not engage in continuous combat, in linear combat, or (in most cases) in sequential attacks', obliging Western militaries to rethink concepts such as 'continuity, pursuit and the culminating point of victory' (Hoyt 2004: 162-3).

Counter-terrorism is, in fact, a multi-faceted thing: it draws upon resources, capabilities and skills spread across the military, the law enforcement agencies, and the economic, the social and the political worlds. Force, or at least force in the sense that Western militaries have classically understood that term, is not used as easily as we would like, and constrained by a series of practical and political difficulties. Countering terrorists requires us to wage war a particular way, by manhunts as much as by classic operational campaigns. Indeed, using military power against terrorism requires us to be acutely

sensitive to the limitations of such use, when Western militaries have traditionally felt most comfortable waging relatively unlimited wars (Hoyt 2004: 166).

Why is this relevant? Because recent research shows that — at least in the United States — non-veteran civilians differ from veteran civilians and military elites in important ways in their views on the use of force. The work of Peter Feaver and Christopher Gelpi points to differing views on the utility of force, when resort to force is appropriate and how force should be used (Feaver and Gelpi 2004). How and where do those groups vary? From the research, non-veteran civilians are more ready to resort to the use of force than are veterans and military elites: and this split is the basis of what is called the 'chicken-hawk' phenomenon in the United States. Secondly, non-veteran civilians are more likely than veterans or military officers to use force in smaller, graduated packages. The second group tends to favour more decisive use of force once a decision to resort to force has been taken. And thirdly, non-veteran civilians are more likely than military elites and veterans to deploy military forces under ambiguous mandates and restrictive conditions. Militaries tend to favour mandates that do not tie their hands. In brief then, veterans and military elites are not drawn naturally towards a dynamic of proactivism in strategic policy, nor towards 'graduated' war, nor to ambiguity and complexity in military tasking.

True, Feaver and Gelpi acknowledge that these differences are not new: indeed, they can be traced across the broad scope of 200 years within the US polity. So why are we worrying about them now? The answer to that question must be that we are now in a security environment when the opportunities for difference are at their peak: strategic proactivism seems likely to be a dominant strategic doctrine, the graduated application of force seems to be a virtual standard of modern missions, and restrictive mandates and rules of engagement seem to stretch indefinitely into the murky future. As a consequence, we should expect civil-military debates about the use of force to occupy a central part of future security discussion, or at least a much more central part of that discussion than they have for some decades. Indeed, we should expect to see this factor

provide the grounds for the regular rehearsal of civil-military differences during a prolonged War on Terror.

Feaver and Gelpi's work tends to support a model devised by Christopher Gibson and Don Snider, which suggested that in any division of the functions and responsibilities of civilian and military officials, an area of tension would most likely exist with the overlapping area of joint responsibility (Gibson and Snider 1999: 195). With civilians responsible for national strategy, resources and political objectives, and military officials responsible for military doctrine and tactics, training, military objectives and warfighting, the area of overlap and tension would naturally focus on military roles and missions and rules of engagement. Central to the areas of disagreement were 'issues of national strategy and the use of military force' (Gibson and Snider 1999: 195).

So far, no research equivalent to Feaver and Gelpi's has been undertaken in the Australian context. So a claim that the observations fit this environment is only speculative. But at the level of initial observation, there is a ring of truth to their findings. And if that is so, then we should expect to see those arguments over future use of force take shape in contests between disgruntled militaries, whose natural approach of cautious engagement is not heeded, and civilian policy-makers impelled by policies of proactive engagement. Indeed, it might already be possible to interpret the recent behaviour of Andrew Wilkie within this broader context. Wilkie is an ex-Army officer, who resigned from the Office of National Assessments claiming that intelligence evidence had been politicised in order to justify the resort to war against Iraq.

Clearly, the War on Terrorism may excite the differences in civilian and military views about the use of force at a range of levels. The features of terrorism as a form of warfare that were discussed above make the application of force challenging. Even if we are to restrict our use of force to those cases of terrorism that seem to us most threatening — the group that David Rapoport calls 'fourth-wave' terrorists (Rapoport 2004) — the nature of the threat that they pose to us cannot easily be addressed solely at the military level. That's because the threat they pose is not just to our physical safety, but to the dominant

place of the secular, post-enlightment state in the international order. Addressing the challenge will require adapting our state-based structures to cope with a non-state threat, and balancing our responses across a range of instruments.

For although much has changed in relation to ideas about the use of force since September 11, 2001, counter-terrorism is a still primarily a form of OOTW. Like other OOTW, it requires our militaries to work in close cooperation with civilian agencies and partners. And as Frederick Kagan argues in his article 'War and Aftermath', it requires us to wage war in a specific way, putting aside our fascination with mere tactical brilliance and being sensitive to the strategic spill-overs from our high-technology victories (Kagan 2004). Most of all, the WOT demands presence; and that is bad news to Western militaries that have been progressively starved of personnel by demographic change and a host of other contributory factors: the difficulties of the military way of life, poor retention of military personnel; and a critical media focus on the military justice system. Instead, we have been 'contracting out' the military's job, in direct parallel to the waning of the concept of citizenship and the rising of the concepts of careerism, globalization and cosmopolitanism.

Of course, the final point about the proactive use of force is the traditional issue of achieving strategic victory. As Martha Crenshaw asks (Crenshaw 2004: 88), what do we after the preemptive war is fought and won? At this point, it is appropriate to turn to the third issue-area related to political stabilization and reconstruction.

Political stabilization. reconstruction and civil-military relations

Western militaries are subject to civilian oversight and a restricted area of professionalism: expertise, social responsibility and corporateness are each defined in a manner that makes sense to the role of militaries in Western societies. In those societies, Western militaries are externally oriented and play almost no domestic role in social and political activities. They are 'professional' in the sense identified by Samuel Huntington. Claude Welch and Rebecca Schiff are amongst those academics who have argued that the

Huntington version of civil-military relations is, in fact, quintessentially Western. By contrast, students of civil-military relations in the developing world start from an assumption that militaries are central to the political life of those societies. In such circumstances, militaries are national institutions surrounded by few competitors and weak civilian partners. Their central role springs from both the military's own organisational cohesion and the relative weakness of civilian 'power centres' within the society.

This is a point that Huntington endorses in his work, *Political Order in Changing Societies.* There he observed that militaries that over-reach themselves are seldom impelled to do so by factors internal to the military institution itself. Rather, their over-reaching is the product of civilian failure: the weakness of civilian institutions and the thinness of mechanisms available to civilian leaders to redress their problems in some other form:

> 'the most important causes of military intervention in politics are not military but political, and reflect not the social and organisational characteristics of the military establishment, but the political and institutional structure of the society' (Huntington 1968: 194)

Militaries which take up the mantle of political and social responsibilities differ in important ways from their traditional Western counterparts. Alfred Stepan did the bulk of his civil-military research on Latin America, and he argued over 30 years ago that regional militaries there were driven by pressures of internal security towards role expansion. What counted as professionalism in Western militaries, argued Stepan, was inappropriate for Latin American militaries. There, militaries were pulled by the comparative weakness of civilian institutions towards an expansion of their roles; towards what Stepan termed 'new professionalism', in which they would be obliged to take on more of the skills of the administrator, the politician and the economist (Stepan 1973).

So what happens when Western coalition forces over-run a 'weak actor' and attempt to 'reconstruct' the political order within that actor. The first thing they will find is that

their own role is expansive, and not merely because they are an occupying power, much as Western armies were in the defeated 'strong actors' of Germany and Japan after WWII. Further, this role expansion is something different from what we usually call 'mission creep': the most visible recent manifestation of which was the tendency during the 1990s of UN-deployed forces to be asked to expand their mandates without any commensurate increase in capabilities to pick up their new tasks. Rather, it seems as though something akin to a 'chameleon effect' takes place when Western militaries are deployed into weak states. The coalition forces begin to take on some of the accepted 'political and social role' that was a feature of the indigenous military force.

Dana Priest relates numerous instances of such role expansion in her book, *The Mission*. Western militaries, she found, were burdened during the 1990s by a series of new missions and challenges imposed upon them by civilians who found at hand a capacity they thought applicable to the problems of the post-Cold War order: the capacity of Western military competence. That competence was asked to reinvent itself and tackle a new set of difficulties. American soldiers in Bosnia found themselves approached by women's collective wanting sewing machines, and by civil community leaders wanting them to assist with problems of law and order. Indeed, in a range of missions in the 1990s, American military personnel found themselves as advisers to a range of governments. After the US intervention in Haiti, for example, US military personnel found themselves 'advising' 12 government ministries. (Holmes 1997: 8).

This expanded role has not been confined to the United States. Australian forces have also deployed into this field. Even at the recent Senate Estimates Committee hearing investigating what the Australian Defence Organisation knew about abuses at Abu Ghraib, a Defence Department official pointed to the important role that ADF personnel had been playing in advising the Central Provisional Authority on a range of issues. Those issues included 'helping develop new financial governance arrangements, on interfacing with the economic and other policy advisers within the CPA, which is the de facto government there, on the rule of law and on improvement to detention systems in the civil stream, not the military stream necessarily' (Pezzullo 2004: 40). This is an

interesting list, which — also interestingly — drew absolutely no comment from Australian parliamentarians. They obviously did not think it odd that the ADF should have advisory responsibilities in policy areas in which the military plays no role domestically in Australia.

Perhaps the list isn't odd. In reality, Western militaries are increasingly being tasked with responsibilities for reconstruction, asked to assist in the building of pluralistic civil societies where none have ever existed before. But should we be tasking them with reconstruction? In a recent issue of *Parameters*, Nadia Schadlow argued persuasively that Western political elites have thought wrongly about reconstruction, tending to see it as a 'post-war' activity, something that occurs after the fighting ceases (Schadlow 2003). She asserted that this view was fundamentally flawed: that reconstruction and war occur side by side, since only the continued presence of a security force can deliver the stability necessary for reconstruction to occur at all. This is an engaging point, which might actually be made not just about the difficulties confronting the coalition in Iraq, but more broadly about the limitation of the Clausewitzian model of war. Astute judges of history observe that few occasions exist where battles have truly been 'decisive'; that battlefield victories have been translated into broader strategic victory only rarely (Bond 1996).

But do we want Western armies to be vehicles for reconstruction? Indeed, can they be vehicles for reconstruction? We would be wise to note at least some elements of caution in relation to the conceptual bravery of such a plan. There would be something of a great historical irony in such tasking. For decades we have been urging the military forces of developing countries away from the course of 'new professionalism' and toward the strictures of Huntington's 'old professionalism' (Alagappa 2001a; Alagappa 2001b). It would seem odd if Western armies were now moving — even slightly — in the other direction. Is Samuel Huntington's 'professional' Western military of the 1950s starting to give ground in the face of the mission requirements of a new security environment?

If Western militaries are moving into role expansion in the new security environment, it will be more important than ever for them to nurture the unified software of civil-military

relations that Douglas Bland talks of: the software that makes civilian control of the military more than a set of hardware and depends upon the willing contribution of top military leaders to assist in the implementation of sound civilian control. Indeed, such role expansion might even have important ramifications for how we think about the structure of our military forces. If assistance with reconstruction is going to be a central theme in future missions — and the idea itself is far from ridiculous — then we might have to revisit the whole issue of what kind of military unit can best tackle that sort of task. Such a unit might well have blend of personnel and skills, and perhaps even a direct civilian sub-component which optimizes its capacities in regard to such tasking.

Concluding thoughts

What are the implications for Western civil-military relations of the three issues canvassed here? Each individual problem — the changing security environment, the use of force, and the military's role in reconstruction — has the potential to damage our current model of civil-military relations. Taken together, I think they have the gravitational pull to draw us into new models of civil-military relations. I am reinforced in that belief by a judgment that the current condition will not be transitory. Were we to accept that the War on Terror was going to be a short-term phenomenon, a brief interlude in the classical focus of Western militaries before a return to 'war proper' as we might term it, then our concerns might not be so great. But the evidence is exactly the reverse: that the War on Terror will approach a condition of semi-permanence (Jenkins 2004). If that is true, then we look forward to an indefinite future of a transformed security environment. Within that environment, divisions over the proper focus of military power will become more routine. So too will arguments between civilian and military leaderships over the proper role of force. Adding to those divisions will be a set of differences over the heightened role for militaries in social reconstruction in failed or defeated states.

If this new condition does draw us towards new models of civil-military relations, what might those models look like? At their core, those models must still contain reflect sound

conceptions of civilian control. Western democratic societies are attracted to notions of civilian control for deep reasons, and the deepest reason of all is to allow the *de jure* authority in our society to maintain control over the *de facto* power afforded by weaponry and military competence. At the basis of civilian control lies a division between military power and authoritative decision-making: we control military forces by allowing those forces to take no decisions for themselves about when, where, why and how they might be used (Kohn 1997).

Conceptually, are we approaching the end of 'separatism', and heading back towards notions of 'societal war'? The traditions of civil-military relations that the West has developed have a distinctly Napoleonic ring to them; where military and civilians are different and separate things. This was the idea that lay at the centre of Samuel Huntington's idea about the rise of the professional officer corps in the Western militaries during the nineteenth century. The Napoleonic system of warfare might well have enshrined trinitarianism, where armies fought on behalf of states which represented peoples, but the Westphalian system of international relations more broadly has seen the state as the only legitimate wielder of force, and armies have traditionally worn the uniforms and regalia of their state authority. That concept lies at the core of separatism. If trinitarian warfare is breaking down, so too are civil-military relations.

What conceptual basis are Western civil-military relations to have? Traditionally, the concept of professionalism has served as an important marker in deciding the boundaries. But that concept has never been especially strong, and it is weakening in the face of a changing security environment, and the rise of new missions (Feaver 2003). It is possible that we are seeing, both short-term in Iraq today, and longer term in relation to the 'three ages' of Western civil-military relations sketched above, a drift away from an idea that military professionalism is simply about the management of violence. In short, the historical era in which it was appropriate to deploy instruments of coercion optimised to address the problem of great-power violence may be drawing to a close. If so, this signals an important shift in Western civil-military patterns, the full implications of which we are only starting to explore.

As the concept of Western military professionalism has begun to weaken, some academics have begun to speculate about a new 'partnership' arrangement between civilians and militaries (Bland 1999) ; others have attempted to reformulate the relationships on the basis that militaries, even skilled, and well-trained militaries are still only society's 'armed servants' (Feaver 2003). What is clear is that the subject of civil-military relations has now returned with a vengeance to the halls of academia. In large part that is because transformational changes are afoot in the nature of war, and it would be facile to believe that civil-military relationships can be divorced from those changes. We are witnessing deep slippage in the symmetry of war. As the symmetry slips so too do all the edifices created on the foundation of symmetry, from the shape of our militaries to the weaponry they deploy to the laws of war and the treatment of prisoners.

Whatever new models of civil-military relations we are drawn towards must satisfy two tests. First, they must satisfy the test of civilian control, because such control is a *sine qua non* of a democratic society (Kohn 1997). Parallel to the growth of military competence in handling new security threats must be a growth in civilian mastery of the tasks and procedures central to the WOT; and arguably such mastery lies at the heart of on-going civilian control. That means that we must think harder and deeper not just about our militaries but about maximizing the capacities of the mechanisms that control them.

And secondly, they must permit us to deploy a military structured to meet the threat, the principal roles and missions of which are accurately focused on our principal security concerns. It seems likely that we shall be obliged to redesign our militaries in future, and the likely configuration of that redesign would seem to be one that places a greater stress upon cooperative civilian-military interactions at the coal-face of security. Civilian groups will probably move in and out of various aspects of military cooperation, as need dictates. That will make it harder for us to retain a military at all that works on the basis of hierarchy and discipline, and more imperative than ever that we ensure that the central principles of civilian control over our militaries are in good basic health.

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