STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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BRIDGING THE CIVIL MILITARY GAP CAPITALIZING ON CRISIS

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JUDITH K. LEMIRE
United States Army

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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by

Judith K. Lemire
U.S. Army

Dr. Marybeth P. Ulrich
Project Advisor

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U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Judith K. Lemire

TITLE: Bridging the Civil Military Gap – Capitalizing on Crisis

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 09 April 2002 PAGES: 42 CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

Researchers have identified a "civil-military gap," an observable cultural distinction between members of the American military and the civilian society from which they are recruited. This gap appears as a political gap, with an increasingly Republican identification of military elites and an experience gap with fewer of the electorate and elected government officials having military experience. When a crisis emerges, such as the September 11th attacks, the apparent outpouring of patriotism and media interest would indicate a desire by the civilian populous to draw closer to the military, creating an opportunity to close or at least narrow this gap. The media are a key player, as they serve as the most visible link between the military and the civilian society that it serves. This paper examines the nature of the civil-military gap, approaches for narrowing that gap, and how the increased interest evident during crisis can be used to implement those suggestions.

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PREFACE

As a liberal officer in an increasingly conservative organization, the civil-military political gap is an especially troubling issue. Having personally experienced political bias, I was not surprised to read the recent statistical analysis confirming what most of us already suspected. Watching the events of September 11, 2001, the heroic response by many Americans, and the coming together of the nation triggered a thought that this horrific tragedy could bring more diverse recruits into the military, possibly serving to counter the political trend. As I conducted my research, however, this thesis proved to be untrue, which led to a deeper discussion of the issues in question and a broadening of the approach to address them.

Along my journey, there are a few individuals who shared their thoughts, perceptions, and guidance. My classmate and a former recruiter, Colonel Tom McCool offered his opinions and a sounding board while helping me understand the US Army Recruiting Command's jargon and policies. Colonel George Reed, one of my instructors, shared his current research and opened my eyes to the possibilities not only in this work but for future studies. Finally, my project advisor, Dr. Marybeth Ulrich, shared her experience and knowledge, entering into a dialogue without which I could not have developed and refined my work. Her suggestion of looking at the use of the media led me in an entirely new direction that quickly became the focal point of my argument. Her academic integrity inspired me to do something greater than simply complete a requirement, and I can not thank her enough for that.

Finally, I need to acknowledge my family who through their support, dialog on issues, community connection, and love insure that my personal civil-military gap remains small.

Judith Lemire
April 5, 2002

BRIDGING THE CIVIL MILITARY GAP:
Capitalizing On Crisis

> We as a nation have not really come to grips with what should be the proper role of uniformed officers in debates about issues that affect the armed services. It is especially problematic in an era of deference to expertise of all sorts in many areas. At a time when fewer and fewer members of government and the electorate have any military experience, how should military officers bring their expertise to public discussions of national security issues? If military officers are made to sit on the sidelines, how can the debate be truly an informed one? And how can we, in our great democracy, ask American women to go out and die if we haven't held an informed debate? In this key sense, the quality of the political debate boosts our military efficiency, our promise to the troops that they will be used wisely and well.
>
> — Thomas E. Ricks, A Soldier's Duty

INTRODUCTION

During the 2000 presidential election, the status of military absentee ballots from the state of Florida became national news. The perception was that these overseas ballots would be predominantly Republican, and therefore liberal rules for accepting these ballots would favor President Bush's chances. The political parties' approach was, in fact, more balanced, with lawyers arguing in favor of greater acceptance of absentee ballots in those precincts where their party dominated rather than assuming that the military source was the bias toward Republicanism.[1] However the perception of this politicization of the military raised questions of the professionalism of our military, especially when compounded by multiple endorsements of many retired flag officers, to include General Colin Powell.

Recent studies indicate that if not an actual, there is at least a perceived gap between the values and beliefs of the military versus the civilian society from which it is recruited.[2] At best, this perception limits future recruitment efforts, as those sharing opposing views are less likely to enlist, thereby furthering the gap. At worst, however, this gap in beliefs could bias the advice given by military advisors to our civilian leaders. The military could lose its credibility as impartial professionals and undermine its role of expert advisor. Although so far only contemplated in fiction, a military mutiny could be the extreme outcome of such a gap.[3]

Most scholars agree that it is in the military's best interest to close this gap between military members and the society from which they come. While recruiting efforts are always ongoing, the majority of Americans remain mostly unaware of the military and only a very few actually ever contemplate serving their nation in this manner.[4] However, during periods of national crisis such as during the Gulf War or post the "9-11" attacks, the military takes a

prominent position. Media coverage focuses on the actions of soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines. These unsolicited endorsements could provide the military with a unique opportunity to help bridge the gap, through increasing the military's presence within the civilian population. However, historical friction between the military and the media hamper the military's ability to increase its dialogue with the American people through the press. So far, the approach to the media in the current crisis appears no different.

This paper first explores the nature of the civil-military gap, possible causes, and potential approaches for bridging it. A look at military-media relations follows in an effort to identify ways of using the media to help connect the military with the American public.

THE HISTORY OF THE CIVIL MILITARY GAP

When one considers the nature of the military vice the civilian society, it is not surprising that the two have developed some distinctions of culture. While the concept of individual freedoms resonates deeply in all Americans, soldiers are expected to subordinate those freedoms to the military discipline necessary to train for, fight, and win the nation's wars. The distrust of such a military dates back to the founding of the nation. In The Federalist Papers, Alexander Hamilton addresses the necessity for a standing army along with the controls he believes will keep them under civilian control.[5]

Consequently, throughout history, the American approach to maintaining a military was to minimize the standing force and mobilize in time of crisis. Following crisis, soldiers returned to their civilian lives. This model changed, however, following World War II with the Cold War. Americans went from a "mobilization force" to a "force in being".[6] Many researchers attempted to extrapolate the inherent cultural differences between the civil and military societies coming to often divergent conclusions. Two of the seminal works from this period were Samuel P. Huntington's The Soldier and the State and Morris Janowitz's The Professional Soldier. Huntington was concerned with the ideological conflict between American liberalism and military security advocating the need for a professional military, maintaining conservative values yet under civilian control, but with great influence and authority on national security policy.[7] Janowitz also argues for a professional military, but advocates the military change in order to be more appreciative of political impacts of military operations. He also identifies a need for military managers as well as leaders, making the military more similar with civilian business while still remaining distinct.[8]

With the advent of the all volunteer force (AVF), debate over the nature of the gap continued. Much was written on the changes in demographic proportionality (especially relating

to minorities and women).[9] Other authors wrote of the competition for recruits leading to the military becoming more like civilian employment.[10] Much like the pre-AVF period, the concerns were: that military isolation would lead to a hostile military; a decline in military effectiveness; and an ineffective use of the military by civilian leadership lacking in military understanding.[11]

The post-Cold War period has led to an increasing debate regarding the civil-military gap. With cries for a "peace-dividend," the need for a standing army again became questionable. The subsequent military draw-down further reduced military opportunities and served to further separate the professional soldier from civilian society. Many studies have been done on the distinct culture of the military. The most complete study was conducted by the Triangle Institute for Security Studies (TISS) between fall 1998 and spring 1999. The results were compiled by Peter D. Feaver and Richard H. Kohn in their 2001 publication Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security.

As in other studies, the TISS study can be defined as two distinct gaps. The first, more evident gap can be termed a political gap – where the military identify themselves disproportionately with the Republican party and strongly conservative values when compared with the civilian society. The second, could be termed an experience gap, as fewer and fewer members of our civilian society either have experience or have association with military members.

The Political Gap: While the idea that the military culture will be distinct from the civilian culture, only recently have researchers identified a strong political bias. Huntington had observed this conservative bent to the military in the 1950s.[12] Current survey data supports the theory that the military "elite", i.e., officers at various stages in their careers who have been identified for advancement, identify with conservative values and have a greater affiliation with the Republican party than a comparable civilian "elite".[13] While a lesser trend is identified in the enlisted population, there is evidence of a "Republicanization" of soldiers who choose to reenlist and enter career status.[14] Further complicating this gap is the identification of the Democratic Party as "anti-military."[15] This politicization extends to views on contentious domestic issues, such as school busing, environmental regulation, abortion, the death penalty, and gun control. Active-duty military views tend to align with those of the Republican party while non-veteran civilians align with the Democratic party.[16]

The Experience Gap: While the political gap seems to receive the majority of the attention, the experience gap is perhaps more pronounced. Fewer and fewer members of the general public have military experience or any connection with the military. The number of elected officials who have served is consistently decreasing. Since 1971, the number of

veterans in the House of Representatives has dropped from over 75 percent to around 25 percent. A similar, albeit smaller decline can be seen in the Senate.[17] This trend will likely increase as more World War II and Korean veterans retire. Even though Congress still has a greater percentage of veterans than the comparable general population and the current representation is higher than most throughout U.S. history, the current level of oversight and management of military operations by Congress mandates a certain level of understanding and experience with military issues.[18]

IMPLICATIONS OF THE GAP

The Political Gap: When the military develops a culture that is distinctly unique from the society at large, the potential impact on military effectiveness grows. First, the ability to attract recruits is linked to the pool of potential recruits who identify with the values of the military. Clearly, a political gap directly affects this area. Current recruitment goals, when compared with surveys of the youth market, show a shortfall between the number of recruits required and the number of eligible youths with a propensity to serve.[19] Additionally, restrictive policies that are considered a military necessity, such as the policy refusing service to open homosexuals, can impact on recruiting access, especially at the college level.[20] Besides increased recruiting challenges, a political gap, taken to an extreme, could lead to a questioning of civilian decisions, possibly leading to outright disobedience. While most agree that U.S. military culture would preclude the likelihood of a military coup, it is possible for leaders to disregard directives or weaken enforcement of those policies in question. Again, the homosexual policy serves as an example. Senior military leaders, to include the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Powell, publicly opposed President Clinton's stated plan to lift the ban on homosexuals.[21] Questions abound regarding the enforcement of the resulting compromise, the "don't ask, don't tell, don't pursue" policy.[22] As further evidence, since this policy was enacted, there has been an increase in the number of homosexuality discharges.[23] While there could be many reasons for this, one explanation is that leaders are not living within the spirit of the policy. This conclusion is supported by the TISS survey, where nearly one fifth of the elite military population surveyed stated they would expect the military to attempt to avoid compliance with orders they disagreed with "some" of the time; with five percent increasing that assessment to "most" or "all" of the time.[24]

The Experience Gap: Much like the political gap, the experience gap touches on the areas of recruitment and the subordination of the military to civilian leadership. With regards to

recruiting, the link between familiarity with the military and propensity to enlist is strong. This is evidenced in the disproportionate number of military family members who choose the military for a career.[25] Recruiters rely heavily on family contacts in order to influence young Americans. With more and more parents and grandparents lacking military service, this connection grows increasingly difficult.[26] As to subordination of the military to civilian rule, the likelihood of a situation arising where civilian policies would garner military resistance increases when the military perceives that the decisions are not founded in an understanding of military culture and capabilities.

A further impact of the experience gap is the reduced ability of civilian leadership to synthesize military inputs into sound policies. As civilian leaders take an increasing role in decisions on military operations, this experience gap could become critical. With respect to Congress, budget oversight is perhaps the most evident example. With very few exceptions, Congress has altered every defense budget sent by the President since 1947.[27] In a review of data during the post-Vietnam era (1971-1991), Congress reduced the administration's procurement budgets by an average of over six percent annually.[28] To assist in the management process, Congressional staffs and budget committees have grown as has the number of reports Congress requires from the Department of Defense (from 36 in 1970 to 719 in 1988).[29] While Congress controls the budget, Presidential decision making can also come into question when the commander in chief lacks military background as former President Clinton did. The change in homosexual policy, addressed above, is one possible example. During his tenure, the debate over the military's role in peacekeeping and nation building flared. During the initial stages of the Bosnia deployment and later in the Kosovo intervention, American military leaders conflicted with administration leaders on force employment issues.[30] While reforms such as the Goldwater-Nichols Act serve to institutionalize military advisors in the national security policy process, final decisions remain with the civilian leaders, who may be more influenced by their civilian advisors, thereby making this experience gap a likely fact in the foreseeable future.

THE SOURCE OF THE GAP

In addition to identifying the gap, researchers have attempted to explain it. Most who have studied the political gap assume that the military mission necessitates a distinct military culture. Still, the politicization seen in the recent TISS study would infer that something greater is at work. Possible causes can lie in either the recruited population (when the military recruits members of the society that are already biased) or can be inculcated in soldiers while they

serve. A further contributor could be the creation of a climate in which individuals without a political bias would choose not to pursue a military career past their initial service obligation. Statistical analysis indicates that both of these factors may be involved.[31]

Recruitment, especially at the officer entry level, does not reflect civilian society. The Army's recruiting effort targets individuals with a "propensity to serve," i.e., those who identify themselves as possible or likely recruits. However, due to the size of the Army's recruiting mission, they must also recruit a portion of those not inclined to serve in order to meet the requirement.[32] To meet recruiting goals, the Army must compete with civilian career opportunities. Advertising campaigns strive to focus on values that will entice the target population. Not surprisingly, those choosing to enlist are likely to identify with the career attributes the enlistees associate with military service. Studies show that those young men who chose to enlist tended to have greater trust in the government and believe the military should play a larger role in policy decisions than others of their year group[33]. While the political affiliation of newly recruited enlisted soldiers has not displayed the same trend toward Republicanism as the officer ranks, those recruits identifying themselves as potential career enlisted or officer candidates do share the Republican identity.[34] As a region, the south tends to be overrepresented, especially for officer accessions. During the Vietnam era, while many universities in the northeast discontinued their Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs, almost three times that number were initiated in southern universities.[35] When combined with a political shift of the south from a traditional Democratic stronghold to a Republican region, the political trend emerges.

Other factors associated with the political shift include the size of the military, the average length of service and the average age of the military member. With the military shrinking from its 1973 level, the resulting force is more officer heavy. Additionally, more of the officers come from the service academies and a disproportionate number of enlistees come from military families.[36] All of these factors correlate with the Republican trend. As increasingly technical specialties within the military require longer periods of training, the force is also staying longer therefore raising the average age, a factor also associated with a more conservative, Republican attitude.[37]

The experience gap, on the surface, is more understandable. With a decline in the size of the military and an all volunteer force, a majority of the population will not serve. However, the gap is not only reflected in numbers of veterans serving in political office but also in the exposure of the civilian population to the military. While military service is perhaps the most direct method by which Americans experience the military, they may also gain knowledge

through academic pursuit, association with the defense industry, and the media. Since the Vietnam era and, more recently, the end of the Cold War, scholars have identified an overall decline in each of these areas. Many universities, in addition to terminating ROTC programs, have failed to hire and/or tenure national security specialists, thereby discouraging work on national security issues.[38] While a large portion of the population remains engaged with military pursuits through the defense industries, the proportion of our gross domestic product dedicated to military materiel has decreased since the end of the Cold War, thereby reducing the military's "presence" in society.[39] Withdrawal of the media from military issues is reflective of the withdrawal of society in general. The 1999 TISS study identified a gap in national security interest clearly correlated to military experience: on the average, those with military experience expressed a "great deal" of interest in national security while those with no military experience expressed only "some" interest.[40] As the media focuses on society's interests, it is not surprising that in a 1995 survey, 74 percent of media respondents agreed that few members of the media were knowledgeable about national defense.[41]

NARROWING THE GAP

While most scholars agree that some distinction between the military and civilian societies is valid, the growing political trend and lack of shared experience could lead to recruiting challenges and less effective national security policies. Therefore it merits addressing solutions. Researchers identifying the sources of the gap discussed above, have also suggested some methods for reducing the gap. While some are policy actions within the military (such as reducing average length of service by allowing entry at higher levels within the organization), many involve increased dialogue between the military and civilian communities. Specific recommendations include broadening the recruiting base, especially through expansion of the ROTC audience, and increased cross-fertilization between the military and the civilian population (especially influential populations such as academia and the media).

While all of the aforementioned studies were done during the post-Cold War period, America has now entered a "post 9-11" phase. The current crisis and Global War on Terrorism add a new dimension to the pursuit of these recommendations. The heightened interest in national security offers a unique opportunity to increase the military presence in society. One common perception is that recruiting will automatically increase with the heightened threat, however, as discussed below, this is not true. Efforts to use the national attitude in this time of crisis to bring the military closer to its civilian source must be deliberate. The media, as the means through which much of this conversation takes place, play a critical role.

THE IMPACT OF CRISIS ON RECRUITMENT

The first recommendation for broadening the political basis of the military lies in recruiting a more diverse population. Assuming that America will not return to a conscripted Army, the military must encourage a broader base of volunteers. A common perception is that in times of crisis, recruitment increases as the public responds to a need for service. Anecdotal evidence certainly supports this. Pictures and images of "the greatest generation" lining up for service during World War II are ingrained in our collective psyche. John F. Kennedy's "ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country" is an oft repeated quote. Much like the praise for the first responders on September 11th and the multi-hour waits in blood donor lines, the American public has a cultural image of rising to the occasion.

With regards to military service, media coverage seems to indicate a positive connection between crises and recruitment. The New York Times tells the story of a "self-described slacker" who was inspired by the terrorist attacks to enlist.[42] *Elle* magazine follows a young woman as she meets the challenges of the Army's basic training. However, despite the increase in these human interest stories, there has been no appreciable rise in recruitment. While the Army has been meeting its recruiting goal, comparing numbers from last year to this year, there is no significant difference in the recruiting results. In fact, there was a slight drop in total recruits in all services from October 2000 to October 2001 (18,778 to 18,717). "Contrary to popular belief, national emergencies such as the September terror attacks don't result in an enlistment spike among young Americans."[43]

Recruiters echo this sentiment. A commercial web site designed to assist individuals in linking with recruiters reported activity more than tripling in the week following the terrorist attacks.[44] The Marines reported the number of phone calls and hits on their web site as increasing more than 400 percent.[45] However while phone calls have increased, actual recruits have not. While many veterans express a desire to return to active duty, there is no great rush for new enlistees. In fact, recruiters grow more concerned that there will be an increase in the number of "dep losses", when those who have already signed fail to show for deployment for training or when those who enlist on a whim reconsider.[46] Rear Admiral George Voelker, commander of the Navy's recruiting office, noted that immediately after the September 11th attacks, many parents withdrew consent previously given for their 17-year old children to join.[47]

The source of this phenomenon rests in part with parents, grandparents, and other older supporters of young recruits. Recruiters target these individuals in an effort to influence the younger generation.[48] When the military is viewed as a maturing environment, parents already inclined towards the military will support their children's enlistment. However, when their safety becomes foremost as in time of war, this support can change. For example, the parents of Private Tonya Bey, the soldier being followed by *Elle* magazine, tried to talk her out of her military plans after September 11th. Her father, a retired first sergeant who served during Desert Storm, will not speak with her.[49] This sentiment is even echoed in popular culture in a Bruce Springsteen recording. In the introduction to the live version of The River, he tells how his father would talk about the military "making a man" out of him, but during the height of the Vietnam War, when it came down to being drafted, his father was relieved when Springsteen failed his physical.[50]

As the military recruits a narrowing sector of the populace, fewer associate with the military, resulting in fewer likely to have a propensity to serve. Thus, recruiting is both a potential cause and a potential victim of the civil-military gap. Crisis alone will not break the cycle by bringing in a diverse population base. However, crisis does offer an opportunity to connect with the American people. Through education on and increased familiarity with the military profession, the population will gain a greater understanding of the military and may be more likely to pursue it as a career option.

THE IMPACT OF CRISIS ON CIVIL-MILITARY DIALOGUE

While crises (short of a return to conscription) do not appear to offer the military an opportunity to expand its demographic base, there is still a distinct, documented rise in interest in military affairs that one can associate with crises. One historian has noted similar increases in interest at universities following the two World Wars, Sputnik, and the end of the Cold War.[51] Similar trends can be seen at the high school level as well. At the annual National Security Briefing for High School Teachers hosted by the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh, more than twice the number of teachers as the year before attended a panel discussion with Army officers from the US Army War College's (USAWC) Current Affairs Panel. Many of the teachers shared that since the terrorist attacks, their students required no motivation to study world affairs.[52]

An increased interest in the military can also be seen in popular culture. Since the attacks, professional athletics have placed increased attention on our soldiers, sailors, and airmen. Military honor guards carry the colors into stadiums; fighter aircraft do fly-bys during

opening ceremonies (no doubt a benefit of them also providing an air cap in support of homeland security); and athletes endorse our military as heroes in public service commercials.[53] A survey of television news coverage of the major networks, comparing two weeks in June 2001 vice October 2001, reported that the percent of time devoted to government, military, and international relations increased from 46 percent to over 80 percent.[54] Two recently released movies, *Black Hawk Down*, the recount of the 1993 deadly battle in Mogadishu, Somalia, and *We Were Soldiers*, the story of the Vietnam battle of Ia Drang, topped box office sales.[55] Ideally, the military could capitalize on this increased interest to provide information and education which, if not a complete solution, would at least serve to lessen the gap. By ensuring a continuing, positive message to the media, the military can increase its presence, with an aim to rekindle an interest in studying national security issues and pursuing the military as a career.

THE MILITARY-MEDIA RELATIONSHIP

While the military uses local outreach programs to reach some audiences, the general public is best reached through the media.[56] Recognizing that this offers one of the best communications channels, Department of the Army public affairs guidance advocates maximum disclosure within appropriate limits, that is with propriety, considering security, and without speculation.[57] However, before this guidance can be put into play, journalists first need access to units and soldiers. Additionally, the military needs credibility in the messages it gives the media. Always points of contention for the press, handling of the media in the Global War on Terrorism is no less controversial.

As technology improves, journalists can connect from more remote locations with quicker speed than ever before. This obviously opens security concerns that did not exist when actions were long concluded before reports could be filed. These concerns, coupled with lingering suspicions of political bias in the media from the Vietnam War, have led to restricted media access during previous conflicts.

Media Policy, Vietnam to Haiti

During the Vietnam War, journalists moved easily on the battlefield. The relatively static nature of the conflict allowed media to travel to a unit, observe day-time actions, and return to file reports. The military often provided the necessary transportation. Security was not a large consideration as reported data was not likely to reach the enemy before tactical operations were

conducted and therefore would not threaten those operations. Impact at the strategic level, however, was not insignificant.

By failing to involve the American public in the war effort, the Johnson administration left a media vacuum. With the advent of near-real time television reporting, visions of the horrors of war invaded our living rooms. Without a strong message from the government, the American people were left to interpret the violence on their own, leaving the perception that this conflict was bloodier than any previous one. This inconsistency between what people could see and the message, or lack thereof, from the government, tended to fuel the peace movement. While the media reporting was predominantly accurate, the impression left with many military leaders was that a biased media influenced public opinion, resulting in the loss of American will. [58] The following exemplifies these thoughts, quoted by Walter Cronkite in his memoirs and attributed to a U.S. Marine Captain as having appeared in Military Review:

> The power and impact of television was the deciding factor in turning American public opinion from one of supporting the U.S. defense of South Vietnam to one of opposing it....
>
> What we need, contrary to the wide-open and unrestricted policies of Vietnam, is not freedom of press, but freedom from the press, more specifically, freedom from the television cameras and its interference.
>
> In the next war, the television cameras must stay home![59]

Even as recently as a 1994 survey conducted by the Freedom Forum First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt University identified this trend as 64 percent of the military respondents believed that news media coverage harmed the war effort (as compared with 17 percent of the media representatives surveyed).[60]

While the Vietnam War experience seriously affected the military's view of the media, the media was also left with a bitter taste. Discrepancies between official reports and the reality on the ground led the press to label the Defense Department briefings "the five o-clock follies."[61] This point was fully brought home when General Westmoreland's 1967 "light at the end of the tunnel" was contrasted by the 1968 surprise of the North Vietnamese Tet-offensive.[62] Walter Cronkite, one of many reporters who publicly favored the war effort early on, describes his own growing disillusionment. His transition culminated in a report on the Tet-offensive, during which he opined that the best we could achieve would be a stalemate.[63]

The 1983 assault into Grenada to accomplish security for American students was done minus the media. The Defense Department made a conscious decision to delay informing the media until after the first day's operations, when they believed the mission would be complete.[64]

When the action was not complete, entry of the media was delayed. In fact, the media was not allowed in until the third day of the operation, at which time the operation was virtually over. The main reasons given to the media for their exclusion were to preserve secrecy and for the safety of the reporters.[65] In addition to leaving the media bitter at being excluded, it did nothing to foster trust between the media and the military. Both Walter Cronkite and John Chancellor, senior anchors for their respective networks, questioned the truth of much of the Reagan administration's information campaign, and echoed a growing concern for a government that would restrict the independent voice of a free press.[66]

Following the media outcry over the press blackout during Grenada, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger appointed a commission led by Major General (Ret) Winant Sidle to address the media's concerns. The panel, meeting in February 1984, reaffirmed the need for cooperation between the military and the media to insure media access to military operations while giving consideration for security and troop safety. The recommendations of the panel included:

incorporate public affairs planning in operational planning;

insure personnel and equipment, to include escort and transportation support for media; consider media's communication requirements;

preestablish and credential press pools, to include means for notification for deployment;

only use press pools when it is the only means possible for allowing access; plan for largest pool possible and transition to full coverage as soon as possible;

establish security guidelines and ground rules; allow media access based on voluntary compliance with guidelines; and

organize meetings between military and media leaders to address issues/concerns.[67]

While neither side was completely satisfied by the report, the military made efforts to implement the findings through the development and exercise of the press pool system during training scenarios.[68] Colin Powell, speaking to the National Defense University in December 1989, within weeks of the Panama invasion, noted that military officers must understand the role of the media. He further advised that "Once you've got all the forces moving and everything's being taken care of by the commanders, turn your attention to television because you can win the battle or lose the war if you don't handle the story right."[69]

Panama and Operation Just Cause in December, 1989 – January, 1990 offered the first real test of the press pool system, and to quote Walter Cronkite, "the Pentagon failed miserably to live up to its own promises."[70] The pool was not organized until it was too late to cover the initial operations, even though many American reporters were already in Panama covering the

political crisis prior to the actual invasion. When reporters were allowed, the pool was too large to be supported, resulting in further difficulties and continuing criticism from the press.[71] While General Powell portrayed these gaffes as failures in planning identifying a need for future improvement, many in the media were again left with a bitter taste as they perceived they were intentionally derailed in their efforts. General Thurman and Lieutenant General Stiner (CINC SOUTHCOM and Joint Task Force for Panama, respectively) were viewed as lacking interest in media access, while many commanders tried to keep the media away from combat operations.[72] Walter Cronkite observed that without independent media confirmation, discrepancies between government information and local reports can not be reconciled, again bringing into doubt the military's credibility.[73]

Coverage policies during Desert Shield/Desert Storm, while attempting to improve upon the Panama coverage, still failed to meet the media's expectations. With improved satellite technology and the advent of full time coverage on the Cable News Network (CNN), this was the first conflict broadcast in real time. The media pool model was used during the initial deployment, but transition was made to the full coverage model within a month. General Norman Schwarzkopf, the commander of the forces in the Persian Gulf, noted that the Saudi government sometimes balked at the presence of the American press. The military actually intervened on the media's behalf to insure continued media access.[74] However, restrictions were in place in order to control the media's impact on the combat forces. To control disruption to units and to insure security and safety, media had to be escorted and limits were placed on the number of correspondents allowed to talk with specific units on a given day.[75] As Desert Storm approached, the military issued a set of guidelines for the media, again designed to insure security and safety. A draft set, issued in December 1990, met with severe media criticism. Although somewhat softened, the final version, published in January 1991, still met with criticism. Complaints include censoring and limits on numbers of reporters allowed to talk with units.[76] Walter Cronkite again expresses deep concern that the lack of reporters forward brings into serious question the veracity of the reports.

> But the most serious restriction, the one that denied us our history, was that which set a limit on the number and movement of correspondents who could visit the troops in the field and accompany them into action. Pools were ...put under such restrictive escort that they could not talk freely to the troops and, most important, were not permitted to join forward forces in General Norman Schwarzkopf's dash across the desert.
>
> There will be official film, but should we be asked to trust a record kept by those most interested in telling only one side of the story? We have again been denied an impartial, uncensored history of our troops in action, in all their glory, with all

their mistakes. The Pentagon in its press relations in the Persian Gulf acted with an arrogance foreign to the democratic system.[77]

Despite the media's complaints, both the military and the American public were satisfied with the coverage.[78] Then Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney stated that the Gulf War was "the best-covered war in history."[79] However, media complaints led to a Department of Defense review, this time resulting in a 1992 Statement of Principles that reaffirmed open and independent reporting, with pools used as the exception, not the rule. Although supportive of access to units, the military retained the right to establish security ground rules. No position was made on censorship, as the military and media disagreed on content (military proposed that media products could be subject to review, while the media proposed that products would not be subject to review).[80]

The lessons learned post-Gulf War regarding planning and access seemed to pay dividends in military actions in Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia. Media had relatively free access in areas where they could travel in relative security without military escorts. Joint Information Bureaus (JIB) assisted correspondents with access to units. Few complaints were made and many media even credited the military effort.[81]

Military-Media Gap

In spite of these recent successes, there still exists a gap somewhat similar to the civil-military gap. The 1994, Freedom Forum survey mentioned above explored cultural differences along with the key conflict areas (censorship and free access). Surprisingly, both military and media tended to agree on such key cultural questions such as the importance of the news media (82 percent of the military respondents and 98 percent of the media surveyed agreed that news media was just as necessary as the military to maintaining freedom).[82] While most military felt that the media harmed the Vietnam war effort (64 percent vice 17 percent for the media respondents), only 24 percent of the military agreed that the news media are "left-wing doves who never want the nation to enter combat" (vice 9 percent of media who agreed). Regarding the military stereotype as the "right-wing hawk", the results were surprisingly similar, with only 5 percent of the media agreeing with this view (and 3 percent of the military respondents agreeing). Still, the military did express a more negative opinion of media motivation (focusing on the negative, sensational stories in an effort to gain readership/viewership, primarily for personal gain). The media had a more negative view of the military's use of taxpayer dollars.[83]

However, results were more dissimilar in the traditional areas of disagreement. On censorship, 55 percent of the military agreed that reporting should be free of censorship but within established guidelines vice 76 percent of the media. Only 2 percent of the military believed that there should be no restrictions on the media vice 18 percent of the media feeling they should be free of restraints. Part of this result could be related to the common military perception mentioned above that the media is out for glory/entertainment vice responsible journalism. Of interest, the one question mentioned that discussed the propensity to disclose sensitive information (in this case airplanes launching from a military installation possibly indicating a secret invasion), 35 percent of the media said they would report it with only 24 percent stating they would withhold the information.[84]

With regards to unit access, only 10 percent of the military surveyed agreed that news media should be able to visit any place they chose within a war zone, compared to 73 percent of the media agreeing. 55 percent of the military felt that the military should approve visits, compared to 23 percent of the media.[85]

The survey also looked at perceptions regarding information credibility. Not surprisingly, the military consistently reported a higher percentage of agreement on questions relating to the accuracy of military reports. Additionally, military felt that secrecy would result predominantly from security concerns, while the media respondents believed that secrecy would be motivated by the military's distrust of the media and the desire to suppress information that would be embarrassing or make the military look bad.[86]

MILITARY-MEDIA DIALOGUE IN OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

Given the historical experience and remaining military-media gap, one should not be surprised that the media coverage of the military action in Afghanistan continues the debate. While there were combat operations within the military operations in Somalia and Kosovo, Operation Enduring Freedom represents the first major combat operations since the Gulf War. With the severity of the 9-11 attacks and the continuing political rhetoric in support of military action, media interest in military operations remains high. However, the ability to integrate the media into operations to fill the reporting void and provide the information needed to bridge both the military-media and civil-military gap has been questioned. Consequently, the military is not getting the positive effect of using its soldiers to tell its story. Additionally, the government is continuing to be viewed as obstructive of media access.

Even before direct military operations began, the media was concerned with government secrecy and censorship. First, the whereabouts of the Vice President were kept from the American public. Then the State Department pressured Voice of America (VOA) to not air an interview with Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar.[87] VOA had always been viewed as a balanced media outreach program that could have been used with credibility to help pitch the American position overseas, in regions where we struggle to be heard.[88] Although this action in and of itself did not impact domestic media, the action caused a suspicious media to question the government's future plans for war coverage.

The media also covered Congress's reaction to information restrictions the administration placed on the lawmakers. In this case, the clampdown was in response to a leak from a classified briefing in which the administration advised Congress of a "100 percent" probability of future terrorist attacks. Media reports additionally noted the withdrawal of information from public domain – items such as Department of Transportation pipeline maps and Environmental Protection Agency chemical and emergency response plans. The Department of Justice was silent on the progress of its investigation, other than to report the number of people detained.[89] In spite of these information restrictions, the public seemed satisfied with the amount of information being given to the media. In a Gallup poll conducted the week prior to the first airstrikes, 88 percent of Americans stated that the administration and the military had been "cooperative enough" in providing information to the media.[90]

The anticipated debate over Defense Department policy with respect to the media began the same week that bombs started dropping in Afghanistan. Perhaps as the media shared some of the angst with the public at large, the early articles displayed a great sensitivity for the security concerns of military operations. From USA Today: "So far, there has been mutual cooperation: The media, fueled by common sense, patriotism, fear of public backlash or all three, have embraced the government's call for discretion." However they were already voicing concern over lack of access – initially limited to daily Pentagon briefings and a press trip to carriers. Although the Pentagon was listening to media concerns and many journalists were initially hopeful of a workable process, they were also calling for a means to gain access to the covert units which would be taking the lead in the conflict.[91]

As the conflict progressed, the anticipated access did not happen. Although reporters were allowed on aircraft carriers, they were restricted from interviewing pilots about their missions. Reporters were not given access to the Special Operations forces in the field. As one reporter noted, in addition to concerns of government filtering of information, another unfortunate effect is that "The real heroes, the people actually fighting, don't get the credit or

recognition they deserve." The same reporter notes the quality of a report from an interview with a Special Forces Captain moved to Germany to recover from injuries, providing great insight into the conflict without disclosing sensitive details.[92] This anecdote reinforces the concept that soldiers can deliver a positive message to Americans through the media when given the opportunity.

The Marines, known for greater media savvy than the other services, did invite small pools of reporters and photographers to their base in Kandahar. However, even these reporters were not allowed to accompany patrols nor given any information of substance on their activities. Although the 10th Mountain Division had a battalion in Uzbekistan since early October, 2001, the lack of widespread coverage of this unit no doubt contributed to a New York Times editorial questioning the relevance of the Army to future warfare.[93] In fact, a Washington Post article from 24 February opened with this observation: "The Marines made headlines in late November when they landed in Afghanistan and secured an airfield southwest of Kandahar, but troops from the Army" 10th Mountain Division actually arrived here first."[94]

Continued restrictions from special forces elements raise continuing concerns from the press. Both USA Today and The Washington Post have reported stories of US and foreign press being detained at gunpoint, either by American soldiers or Afghan troops claiming they are following American directions.[95] One frustrated reporter suggests the following:

> We have no quarrel with reporters and camera crews being barred from accompanying small units of Special Operations Forces into the field in Afghanistan. Experienced reporters know that could pose unacceptable risks to both the troops and reporters. But there are ways for reporters to get stories without endangering anyone. If allowed access, they could get interviews at the Special Operations base camps and check out after-action reports. Not a perfect system – but it would give the public an idea of what the troops did.[96]

While Victoria Clarke, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, reports that almost 500 reporters have been embedded in units, to include Special Operations Forces, this is not reflected in the media outcry nor in the level of coverage seen in the major press.[97]

Limiting access is no doubt reflected in the questioning of credibility of Defense Department reports. The most striking example to date revolved around the Special Forces raid on January 23, 2002. Initially reported as a successful attack on Taliban forces, local Afghans indicated to reporters that this was not the case. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld immediately stated that he would investigate and individuals captured in the attack were immediately released when it became evident that they were not Taliban. However, because Rumsfeld has

asserted that the soldiers involved were not in error as they were responding to being fired upon, the press continues to question his veracity.[98]

The abortive effort to initiate a defense department office on information operations, the Office of Strategic Influence, compounded the credibility gap. On 20 February 2002, the Washington Post reported that the Defense Department was standing up a new office to distribute propaganda with the explicit intent to influence foreign opinion. Although the charter was not finalized, the impression was that this office would plant misinformation. Not surprisingly, there was a rush of print condemning an official office distributing lies followed by a rush of denials from Rumsfeld and the Department of Defense stating that was not the intent of the office. Unable to bridge the gap, the office was dead less than a week later.[99]

ASSESSMENT OF MILITARY-MEDIA DIALOGUE ON THE CIVIL-MILITARY GAP

Although the interest is high, the current level of coverage of our military efforts in the War on Terrorism does not routinely allow for the kind of direct interaction between the media and the military that would provide the credible information the American public seeks. Even assuming that the public has full faith in the reports from Department of Defense and military briefings, stories developed from these sources alone tend to lack the human dimension. Consequently, while Americans may follow the war effort, they are not offered the connection with the soldier essential to gaining a greater understanding of the military culture.

To quote former Army Chief of Staff, General Dennis J. Reimer, "Soldiers are our Credentials".[100] While the media may question the motives of Secretary Rumsfeld or senior military leaders, soldiers are very credible. Allowing media access to these soldiers gives the military the best chance to tell its story. As stated in the Freedom Forum for the First Amendment Center's 1995 report:

> As most journalists and men and women of the military have learned time and again, there is no substitute for face-to-face contact. When reporters live with the troops to cover a story, mutual suspicion and hostility usually evaporate.[101]

While the military trains in peacetime as it wishes to fight when at war, to include inserting media role players in training scenarios, the media does not follow the same model. In general, the media has not found military training in peacetime is exceptionally newsworthy. But with the War on Terrorism comes increased media interest. This gives the military a great opportunity to open itself, both at home and deployed, to media overtures. While some ground rules in the war zone will most likely still be required, the Department of Defense's Principles of

Information remain sound. If, however, the current perceptions of selective if not dishonest reporting continue, it can only serve to further alienate the military from the people it serves.

CONCLUSION

The civil-military gap has two aspects: a political gap reflected in the "Republicanization" of the military, and an experience gap, which is reflected in a lack of knowledge of the military in both the civilian population at large and among civilian leaders. The potential impacts of this gap include difficulties in recruiting, reduction in the credibility of the military advisor within the civilian leadership, civilian decisions on military operations which lack informed military advice, and, in the long term, a potential reduction in the efficacy of civilian control over the military.

One would anticipate some cultural distinctions due to the unique mission of the military. However, when the military is politically distinct from the society it serves, it is problematic. Recent surveys indicate a trend toward "Republicanization" of the military. This trend seems to be reinforcing, as military recruits, both officers and career-oriented enlisted soldiers share the Republican orientation. One possible answer is to increase the diversity of those who enter the military. Short of full mobilization, a change in this demographic would require a change in the propensity of individuals to serve. One perception is that a national security crisis can break this cycle and bring a more diverse population into the service. However, despite this perception, crisis situations such as the 9-11 attack bring the military to the forefront in the American mind but have no measurable impact on recruiting.

A more long-term approach to the expanding civil-military gap is to increase the presence of the military in the society through increased academic and media awareness. Crisis situations do bring a marked increase in media coverage of military operations, thereby offering an opportunity to bridge at least this element of the gap. However, since the Vietnam War, the friction has increased between the military and the media, leaving both somewhat biased against the other. This adversely affects the military's ability to capitalize on the increased interest of the media. Additionally, in at least the initial months of Operation Enduring Freedom, restrictive media policies, especially restricting access to units, has impeded both media and military efforts. The Defense Department Principles of Information offer sound guidelines that are not necessarily being followed fully. In addition to reassessing the military's efforts to include media in deployed theaters, every military installation worldwide should look at ways to connect their soldiers with the media.

As the military presence in society increases, the civilian population will find greater connectivity with the military, making individuals more likely to seek study of national security issues and consider the military as a career. In the long term, this could bring the military demographic closer in line with the civilian society.

WORD COUNT = 8243

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[11] Ibid., 8.

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[14] David R. Segal et al., "Attitudes of Entry-Level Enlisted Personnel: Pro-Military and Politically Mainstreamed," in Soldiers and Civilians, The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security, ed. Peter D. Feaver and Richard H. Kohn (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), 211-212.

[15] Desch, 323.

[16] Desch, 316-317.

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[19] COL Greg Parlier, US Army, "Manning the Army of the Future," briefing slides, Fort Knox, US Army Recruiting Command Program Analysis and Evaluation, 1 May 2000; available from <http://www.usarec.army.mil/hq/spo/Index.htm>; Internet; accessed 15 January 2002.

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[23] Ibid., 243-244.

[24] Paul Gronke and Peter D. Feaver, "Uncertain Confidence: Civilian and Military Attitudes about Civil-Military Relations, " in Soldiers and Civilians, The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security, ed. Peter D. Feaver and Richard H. Kohn (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), 156.

[25] Desch, 299.

[26] COL Thomas McCool, US Army, former recruiting battalion commander, interview by author, 15 January 2002, Carlisle, PA.

[27] Ralph G. Carter, "Budgeting for Defense," in The President, Congress, and the Making of Foreign Policy, ed. Paul E. Peterson (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 165.

[28] Ibid., 168.

[29] Ibid., 172-174.

[30] Eliot A. Cohen, "The Unequal Dialogue: The Theory and Reality of Civil-Military Relations and the Use of Force," in Soldiers and Civilians, The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security, ed. Peter D. Feaver and Richard H. Kohn (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), 456.

[31] No study found directly addressed the issue of climate and its impact on service attitudes. Studies focused on career attitudes but did not directly relate perceived support for or intolerance of political views with career choices. To the extent that this could, in fact, be an additional contributor to the political bias of the military, this would be an area for future research.

[32] Parlier.

[33] Segal, et al., 173, 190, 201.

[34] Ibid., 181.

[35] Desch, 296.

[36] Desch, 299.

[37] Ibid., 300.

[38] Ibid., 307.

[39] James Burk, "The Military's Presence in American Society, 1950-2000," in Soldiers and Civilians, The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security, ed. Peter D. Feaver and Richard H. Kohn (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), 259-260.

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[41] Frank Aukofer and William P. Lawrence, America's Team: The Odd Couple (Nashville: The Freedom Forum First Amendment Center, 1995), 32.

[42] Sara Rimer, "A Self-Described Slacker Decides He's Ready to be a Soldier," The New York Times, 12 November 2001, sec B, p. 1.

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[53] All these were observed during the NFL playoffs aired on both the FOX and CBS networks, January 2002.

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[55] *Black Hawk Down* led in box office sales its first three weekends: "2002 Weekend Domestic Box Office Leaders," available from <http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Theater/6696/Lists/02boxoff.htm>; Internet, accessed 1 April 2002. *We Were Soldiers* topped the box office its first weekend of release: Martin A. Grove, "Box office analysis: Gibson wins weekend war," 3 March 2002, available from <http://www.hollywood.com/news/detail/article/1105734>; Internet, accessed 1 April 2002.

[56] Examples of outreach programs include the CSA requirement for public speaking at the US Army War College and the War College's Current Affairs Panel, which travels to academic and other civilian forums to address national security issues.

[57] Department of the Army, Public Affairs Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures, Army Field Manual 3-61.1 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 1 October 2000), para 6-22.

[58] Harry Summers, On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War (New York: Dell Publishing, 1982), 34, 68.

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[61] Cronkite, 252.

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[71] Colin Powell and Joseph E. Persico, My American Journey (New York: Random House, 1995), 431.

[72] Pilnacek, 30.

[73] Cronkite, 268.

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[75] Pilnacek, 33.

[76] Pilnacek, 37.

[77] Cronkite, 269-270.

[78] Pilnacek, 39.

[79] Aukofer and Lawrence, 10.

[80] Aukofer and Lawrence, 197-198.

[81] Barry E. Willey, "The Military-Media Connection: For Better or For Worse"; available from <http://www-cgsc.army.mil/milrev/English/DecFeb99/willey.htm>; Internet, accessed 8 December 2001; Aukofer and Lawrence, 45.

[82] Aukofer and Lawrence, 29.

[83] Aukofer and Lawrence, 31.

[84] Aukofer and Lawrence, 33. A similar question was asked during a session with both Peter Jennings and Mike Wallace in 1987. In this case, they were asked whether if, having accepted an invitation to go behind enemy lines and finding themselves in an ambush position they would try to warn approaching American soldiers. First, Peter Jennings indicated he would, but after Mike Wallace strongly opposed action on the grounds that the reporter role is to report, rejecting the proposition that there is no higher duty, Jennings changed his position. Stuart Taylor, Jr., "The media, the military, and striking the right balance", National Journal (20 October 2001): 3233-3234 [database on-line]; available from UMI ProQuest, Bell & Howell; accessed 13 February 2002.

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