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SOCIALLY REPRESENTATIVE ARMED FORCES: A DEMOGRAPHIC IMPERATIVE

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The riots in suburban Paris in 2005 and 2007 were emblematic of a particular kind of challenge confronting the security sector in the twenty-first century: Caucasian law-enforcement officers confronting Arab and African youth. Similarly, in expeditionary missions such as Afghanistan, the composition of the local population looks nothing like the fairly homogeneous expeditionary forces that are drawn largely from advanced industrialized democracies. This raises the core puzzle of this chapter: security and defence organizations tend to be relatively unrepresentative of the societies they ostensibly serve. Why is that? One might be tempted to assert that diversity is good; consequently, these organizations should "get with the program" and simply recruit more broadly. That sort of normative stance is misleading. It presumes that diversity is good for diversity's sake. Moreover, it makes primordial assumptions about identity. Rather than starting out with controversial assumptions, the lack of heterogeneity makes one curious: are the institutions per se resistant to diversity? If so, why? Are unrepresented or under-represented groups of the population even interested in joining?

Defence organizations are unique public institutions. On the one hand, they are subject to the societal imperative: the social forces, ideologies, and institutions that are dominant within society. On the other hand, they are unique with respect to the *functional* imperative: they have been set aside from society for the particular purpose of defending democratic values

and the democratic way of life against external threats (cf. Huntington 1957). This mission imposes unique constraints on defence and security institutions because we would hardly want attempts at "social engineering" to undermine their operational effectiveness.

At the same time, though, there is something deeply troubling about any organization, let alone a public sector organization, that is unrepresentative of the society it serves. This is especially true for democratic societies that tout freedom, equality, and justice as their core and subsidiary values. Supposedly those values translate into equality of opportunity. Yet this is a case of "Do as I say, not as I do," because governments and their bureaucracies tend to be surprisingly unrepresentative of the populations they claim to serve. Arguably, there are limits on the extent to which an organization can be unrepresentative of the society it serves before it undermines its legitimacy and ability to carry out its objectives. This holds especially true for the armed forces as they serve populations at home and abroad.

Some excellent comparative sociological research on the cultural diversity in the armed forces has already been done (Soeters and Van der Meulen 1999 and 2007; Soeters and Manigart 2008). However, since these are not methodologically independent observations, that is, the conditions are contingent on time and space, such research is limited in terms of the conclusions we might infer about vectors of diffusion of cultural diversity. Moreover, what actually constitutes *culture*? The meaning that is commonly ascribed to the term today dates back to its appropriation by anthropologists in the nineteenth century, which, following Merton, functionally equates culture with values. Yet, diversity transcends culture thus conceived. While ethnicity is commonly thought of in terms of culture, that does not hold for women and sexual minorities, for instance. Insofar as women and sexual minorities constitute anthropological communities at all, they are quite different from ethnocultural ones. Is it even meaningful to refer to a part of the population that makes up half the planet as having an identifiable "culture"? Similarly, women and racialized minorities (the United Nations' official term for what were formerly known as visible minorities) are, by and large, readily distinguishable, whereas sexual minorities are not. Racialized minorities are further subject to be broken down into at least three different categories, which are distinguished by the claims that each group levels against the state: national minorities (who were present at a state's founding), immigrant minorities (who arrived after the state was founded), and Aboriginals (who were present when a state was founded, but who are usually excluded from the public sphere) (Kymlicka 1995). It would be misleading to subsume these qualitatively different groups under the label *cultural*. Furthermore, one runs the risk of misattributing to culture what may actually turn out to be socio-economic alienation, thereby unnecessarily complicating the situation by reifying identity cleavage; not all that glitters

is gold. Although the two can admittedly be difficult to disentangle as causal variables, David Mason (2003) has incisively shown elsewhere that socio-economic disadvantage readily masks as cultural marginalization.

Ergo, this chapter is concerned with diversity writ large. Its objective is to explore the limits and possibilities of diversity by subjecting propositions about distant and proximate causes of non-representation or under-representation in the security and defence sector to empirical scrutiny. Its overarching concern is not the way diversity plays out in different countries. It takes an interdisciplinary approach, considering the way in which issues of diversity affect security and defence, and the case for (and against) diversity. It aims to facilitate a more informed debate on issues of diversity in the security sector. On the one hand, there is a need to tread carefully while being sensitive to the unique constraints and mission security of defence organizations. On the other hand, it is about time that propositions about diversity in the armed forces be weighed more carefully against the evidence.

Initially, the chapter lays out the core objections to diversity as commonly articulated by those who work in defence and security. These must be taken as legitimate concerns, especially by academics and others who have not themselves "walked a mile in my boots." Much of the rest of the conclusion shows that, empirically, these concerns are actually far more nuanced than critics assert and that there are a number of reasons for which it is futile to resist diversity. Demographic trends are causing diversity to grow exponentially at home and abroad. Far from being mutually exclusive as posited by the critics, the compound effect of tightening labour markets, increasingly shallow recruit pools, declining recruit cohorts, and the rapid rise in the salience of non-kinetic skills to mission success makes diversity a complement to the functional imperative.

Aside from the demographic imperative for diversity as a functional complement to security and defence, several other factors militate against institutional resistance to diversity. First, the diffusion of diversity as a national and international norm is making institutional aberration from that norm ever more apparent and subject to scrutiny. The transfer of international norms is critical here, not only because they supersede jurisdictional sovereignty, which makes them difficult to dismiss, but also because their most fervent advocates are advanced industrialized democracies. Their legitimacy is thus closely tied to their practice by those who defend them: you need to practise what you preach. Second, shallower recruit pools and tightening labour markets are precipitating an economic imperative whereby the costs associated with failing to recruit more broadly and diversely are rapidly outpacing any benefits that may be reaped from institutional homogeneity. Third, populations in democratic societies, through their governments, expect their institutions of state to manifest society and its values. Failure to diversify thus puts the defence and security sector increasingly at odds with the society

it serves, which has the potential to hamper its societal legitimacy and ability to implement government policy and, in turn, undermines the institution's functional imperative. Fourth, societal and governmental expectations as well as the diffusion of norms manifest themselves in a legal-constitutional imperative. Diversity in the security and defence sector has often been the result of legal decisions, political decisions, or both. Aggrieved individuals challenge the status quo, with the result that other institutions impose solutions on the profession of arms. Since one of the hallmarks of a profession is the autonomy it enjoys in regulating itself by setting its own standards and expectations, outside intervention calls into question the professional status that the armed forces and law enforcement enjoy. Every such legal and political imposition opens the door just a little bit wider to having outsiders tell the military and the police how to do their job. An institution that regards itself as being set aside for a special purpose will want to relinquish as little latitude over its internal affairs to outsiders as possible. Yet legal and political decisions on how defence and security organizations are to deal with diversity amount to just that, so it is in their institutional interest to adapt proactively. All the evidence suggests that being reactionary only forestalls the inevitable while severely constraining the institution's latitude to adapt in the way it sees fit.

The compound effect of these demographic, economic, societal, legal-constitutional, and political imperatives in support of the argument of seeing diversity as complementing the functional imperative follows a paradigm shift: diversity is not a "problem" that somehow needs to be "managed"; rather, as society becomes more diverse, the pressure for institutions to adapt will only increase. Instead of a management paradigm with its integrationist undertones, the conversation to be had is one of mutual accommodation. There must be some give and take on both sides. The defence and security sector has little choice but to be more accommodating. It has to identify which integrationist aspects of the institution are indispensable to its ability to carry out its mandate and mission and which aspects are malleable and open to adaptation without compromising the functional imperative. Conversely, individuals who join cannot expect the institution to relinquish those aspects of its identity and culture that are integral to its raison d'être.

Diversity in the security sector is the ultimate litmus test of just how free, equal, and fair a democratic society really is. If security and defence organizations have as their purpose to defend democratic values in the form of a free, equal, and just way of life, then all members of society should have a stake in securing their defence. The citizen soldier is the ultimate manifestation of loyalty. Groups that are not represented, are under-represented, or even deliberately excluded risk being relegated to a lower status of citizenship at best, and to a fifth pillar at worst. Greater diversity in the security and defence sector, then, is perhaps the single

most important means of turning diversity from a security problem – as it is widely perceived – into a solution.

DIVERSITY: ASSET OR LIABILITY?

Two core objections are commonly levelled against diversity in the armed forces: (1) diversity undermines cohesion and thus the organization's functional imperative, and (2) minorities are not interested in joining the armed forces anyway. Both objections must be taken seriously. After all, members of the armed forces sign up for unlimited liability. It is the only (public) institution in democracies that requires this level of commitment from its members. In a democracy, members of all other public and security institutions have the right to refuse to engage in situations that they feel might pose a threat to their personal safety. Not so with the armed forces (and, to a lesser extent, security forces). To the contrary, members of the armed forces are professional managers of violence. One tool to this end is that they are trained to kill, or risk being killed. Ergo, members of the armed forces have signed up for a job where their lives are on the line. It is in the very nature of their line of work to minimize risk to their life and to optimize their chances of survival. Actually, such a risk calculus is part and parcel of human nature, except that their line of work happens to amplify this aspect of human nature. Law-enforcement officers and soldiers are, after all, human beings.

The work with which they are tasked requires them to act in groups (albeit of varying size and firepower). Groups face problems of collective action. One aspect of ensuring the functional imperative is thus to minimize these problems through both training and – as is apparent by the institutional resistance to diversity (an issue to which I shall return below) – recruitment. Selection and training are key mechanisms to strengthening cohesion.

Cohesion of the force is key to survival: the better the force's cohesion, the lower its transaction costs and the better its capacity to fulfill the functional imperative. Survival is, of course, the ultimate key to the functional imperative; by definition, a dead soldier cannot complete her or his mission. Given the compound effect of both human nature and their job, it should come as no surprise, then, that members of the armed forces and law enforcement are apprehensive about anything and anyone that might possibly threaten cohesion.

This explains (at least partially) why institutional reluctance to change is so pervasive in the areas of defence and security. Change may lower transaction costs, but, in the short term, it may actually raise them. Hence the institution's inherent conservatism: insofar as change is necessary, it should be organic and gradual. The fact that armed forces have been reluctant to recruit more diversely is part of their institutional culture,

for diversity per se is equated with change. Rather than treating human beings as equals by their very nature, some feel that differences matter (whether perceived or real), such as phenotype, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and disabilities. Of course, social identity theory posits that apprehension about the "other" is itself part of human nature. As Konrad Lorenz (1966) and others have observed, human survival hinges on a collective existence. Psychologists refer to this as the dialectic between *in-group* and *out-group*. Survival is a function of lowering transaction costs among members of the group. The ability to communicate is one important mechanism for lowering transaction costs, but there are other, more implicit, mechanisms, such as customs and religion. In this regard, we can actually think of defence and security as quintessentially primitive institutions, possibly the most primitive of all public institutions; they lead a tribal existence.

Anthropologically, the modern euphemism for this tribal existence is *a profession*. Professions distinguish themselves by the autonomy accorded to them in setting their standards and in administering and managing themselves collectively. Yet, because of its mandate, the profession of arms arguably enjoys a greater degree of autonomy than does any other profession. Samuel Huntington (1957) famously argued, that the military is an organization set apart for a special purpose and, for that reason, must be spared from outside interference. Ultimately, this is the very definition of a profession.

The profession of arms also happens to set itself apart through a greater emphasis on cohesion than any other profession. In essence, cohesion is part and parcel of the profession. Diversity is perceived to threaten cohesion, thereby risking undermining the profession as a whole, its ability to carry out its functional imperative, and consequently its relative autonomy. Ergo, the armed forces define themselves by their homogeneity. Diversity versus cohesion is perceived as a threat to the *profession* of arms.

The evidence does not support the claim that diversity – as understood by the profession of arms – threatens cohesion. The link is the result of a confusion of categories. Anthropologists distinguish between two neologisms, *emic* and *etic*. These categories refer to different kinds of data concerning human behaviour. An emic account is a description of a behaviour or belief in terms that are meaningful to the actor; in other words, it is an insider's perspective. By contrast, an etic account is a description of a behaviour or belief by an observer as applied to other cultures; it is the perspective of a self-conscious outsider and endeavours to be neutral or objective. This distinction matters because members of the armed forces clearly believe that diversity may have a detrimental impact on cohesion.

What turns out to matter in the view of members of the armed forces is actually quite different from what they *believe* to matter. Once they have been deployed in the field, it turns out that phenotype, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and so forth are largely irrelevant (Irwin 2009; Moradi

and Miller 2010). What counts is no different than what matters in any other job: whether someone gets the job done, whether someone whines and complains, whether someone is good at what he or she does, whether someone is risk averse, and so forth. But the facts get in the way of a good story. The misconception about the relationship between diversity and cohesion is a classic case of making what is measurable matter rather than identifying what matters and making it measurable. Phenotype, religion, and gender are relatively easy to measure; getting the job done, by contrast, is far less so because of its intrinsically subjective and qualitative characteristics. In short, there is no evidence to suggest that difference per se is a threat to the functional imperative – at least not the kind of difference that the armed forces commonly associate with diversity.

Analogous field research in business administration and management of the impact a culturally diverse workforce has on organizational performance, shows that diversity adds value and contributes to the organization's competitive advantage (for example, Richard 2000). Racial and gender diversity has been shown to correlate positively with financial performance (Erhardt, Werbel, and Shrader 2003). Notwithstanding the complexity of the relationship between diversity and performance (Blau 1977), the impact of diversity on performance has been shown to be either positive or neutral (depending on the conditions and context). The onus, then, is on the skeptics to prove their case, because reversing the burden of proof provides ample evidence to the contrary. Frederick the Great had already realized the positive effects of diversity and of recruiting the best talent as broadly as possible when he warmly welcomed the Huguenots. Similar examples from military history abound.

The other ubiquitous objection to diversity in the armed forces is that minorities do not want to join. First, the fact that minorities do join belies that claim. Survey research does show a disproportionately lower rate of interest in the armed forces among non-traditional populations (women, after all, are not a minority!) than among Caucasian males. Van den Berg and Richardson's (2009) study finds there to be any number of reasons to account for this result, including immigrants' negative perceptions and the low standing of the security sector in their country of origin; an occupational desire to join one of the professions (and failure to recognize the armed forces as such); parents' disproportionate influence over their children's choices; conservative family values that prize geographical proximity (whereas the armed forces have bases across the country, usually away from urban areas where much of the diverse recruit pool is concentrated, and deploy far afield); and unfamiliarity with the organization. Insofar as respondents express interest in the armed forces, the research nonetheless reveals a serious disconnect: the level of interest vastly surpasses minorities' actual representation in the armed forces. Far from inferring that non-traditional populations are disinterested, the more

appropriate question to ask is why some people are more prone to sign up and stay in than others are. Answers to this question are to be sought with the institution, its culture and its recruitment, retention, promotion, and remuneration practices. They make a point of showing that there are difficult and complex questions, many of which warrant much greater attention in the literature than researchers have thus far accorded them. In sum, the blanket assertion that minorities have no interest in joining is patently false and belies empirical evidence to the contrary.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC ECONOMY OF SECURITY AND DEFENCE

Rarely can analysts claim to be documenting new phenomena. Population aging, however, provides a revolutionary variable. Never before has humanity witnessed such dramatic, widespread aging among the world's most industrialized and powerful democracies. Two long-term demographic trends coincide to produce population aging: decreasing fertility rates and increasing life expectancy. Fertility rates refer to the average number of children born per woman in a given country. For a state to sustain its population (assuming zero net immigration), fertility levels must exceed about 2.1 children per woman.

Today the United States is the only developed great power that comes close to meeting this requirement. The proportion of the population that resides in advanced industrialized democracies is on the wane. It was 24 percent in 1980, but, as table 2.1 shows, between today and 2050 it is projected to erode at the pace of about 1 percent a decade – diminishing from 18 percent at the turn of the millennium to 13 percent by 2050. Owing to declining and below-replacement fertility, the deck of the world's most populous countries is being shuffled like never before (see table 2.2). Due to steep declines in fertility rates over the past century and substantial increases in longevity, allied democracies are aging at unprecedented rates and to an unprecedented extent. As table 2.3 illustrates, the diffusion of the demographic decline is remarkable.

These projections are very unlikely to be wrong. And the trends are largely irreversible. The reason for this certainty is simple: the elderly of the future are already born. Anyone over the age of forty-one in 2050 has already been born in 2010! Absent some global natural disaster, disease pandemic, or other worldwide calamity, the number of people in the world who are over sixty-five will grow exponentially over the coming decades. Even in democracies with comparatively good demographic prospects such as Canada, the proportion of that cohort is projected to double by 2040.

These developments and shifts from high to low birth and death rates are a function of the demographic transition (as depicted in figure 2.1). In pre-industrial society, both the crude birth rate and the crude death

rate are high and essentially balance each other; as a result, population size remains largely constant. This stage has now been surpassed by almost all countries and population groups. Most developing countries are in stage two or three. In stage two, improvements in public health and food supply cause death rates to drop and life expectancy to rise. At this stage, fertility exceeds mortality, and longevity rises; consequently, countries experience a large increase in population. In stage three, natural increase levels off as the differential between fertility and mortality begins to narrow. By stage four, sometimes known as the second demographic transition, fertility drops below replacement level and is exceeded by mortality; this leads initially to slowing population growth and eventually to declining population.

TABLE 2.1
Population by continent, in millions and proportion, 2000–2050

Year	World	Asia	Africa	Europe	Latin America	North America	Oceania
2000	6,115	3,698 (60.5%)	819 (13.4%)	727 (11.9%)	521 (8.5%)	319 (5.2%)	31 (0.5%)
2005	6,512	3,937 (60.5%)	921 (14.1%)	729 (11.2%)	557 (8.6%)	335 (5.1%)	34 (0.5%)
2010	6,909	4,167 (60.3%)	1,033 (15.0%)	733 (10.6%)	589 (8.5%)	352 (5.1%)	35 (0.5%)
2015	7,302	4,391 (60.1%)	1,153 (15.8%)	734 (10.1%)	618 (8.5%)	368 (5.0%)	38 (0.5%)
2020	7,675	4,596 (59.9%)	1,276 (16.6%)	733 (9.6%)	646 (8.4%)	383 (5.0%)	40 (0.5%)
2025	8,012	4,773 (59.6%)	1,400 (17.5%)	729 (9.1%)	670 (8.4%)	398 (5.0%)	43 (0.5%)
2030	8,309	4,917 (59.2%)	1,524 (18.3%)	723 (8.7%)	690 (8.3%)	410 (4.9%)	45 (0.5%)
2035	8,571	5,032 (58.7%)	1,647 (19.2%)	716 (8.4%)	706 (8.2%)	421 (4.9%)	46 (0.5%)
2040	8,801	5,125 (58.2%)	1,770 (20.1%)	708 (8.0%)	718 (8.2%)	431 (4.9%)	48 (0.5%)
2045	8,996	5,193 (57.7%)	1,887 (21.0%)	700 (7.8%)	726 (8.1%)	440 (4.9%)	50 (0.6%)
2050	9,150	5,231 (57.2%)	1,998 (21.8%)	691 (7.6%)	729 (8.0%)	448 (4.9%)	51 (0.6%)

Source: UN World Population Prospects (2008) estimates and medium variant projections.

TABLE 2.2
Largest countries ranked by population size, 1950, 2005, and 2050

| Ranking	1950	2005	2050
1	China	China	India
2	India	India	China
3	United States	United States	United States
4	Russian Federation	Indonesia	Indonesia
5	Japan	Brazil	Pakistan
6	Indonesia	Pakistan	Nigeria
7	Germany	Bangladesh	Bangladesh
8	Brazil	Russian Federation	Brazil
9	United Kingdom	Nigeria	Ethiopia
10	Italy	Japan	DR Congo
11	Bangladesh	Mexico	Philippines
12	France	Vietnam	Mexico
		(14) Germany	(18) Japan
		(20) France	(26) Germany
		(21) UK	(27) France
		(23) Italy	(32) UK
			(39) Italy

Source: Adapted from Jackson and Howe (2008); future rankings for select developed countries that are projected to fall below twelfth place are indicated in parentheses.

TABLE 2.3
Countries projected to have declining populations, by period of the onset of decline, 1981–2045

Already declining	Onset of decline: 2009–2029	Onset of decline: 2030–2050
Hungary (1981)	Italy (2010)	Azerbaijan (2030)
Bulgaria (1986)	Slovakia (2011)	Denmark (2031)
Estonia (1990)	Bosnia and Herzegovina (2011)	Belgium (2031)
Georgia (1990)	Greece (2014)	Thailand (2033)
Latvia (1990)	Serbia (2014)	North Korea (2035)
Armenia (1991)	Portugal (2016)	Singapore (2035)
Romania (1991)	Cuba (2018)	Netherlands (2037)
Lithuania (1992)	Macedonia (2018)	Switzerland (2040)
Ukraine (1992)	Spain (2019)	United Kingdom (2044)
Moldova (1993)	Taiwan (2019)	Puerto Rico (2044)
Belarus (1994)	South Korea (2020)	Kazakhstan (2045)
Russian Federation (1994)	Austria (2024)	
Czech Republic (1995)	Finland (2027)	
Poland (1997)	China (2029)	
Germany (2006)		
Japan (2008)		
Croatia (2008)		
Slovenia (2008)		

Source: Adapted from Jackson and Howe (2008); excludes countries with populations less than 1 million.

FIGURE 2.1
The demographic transition
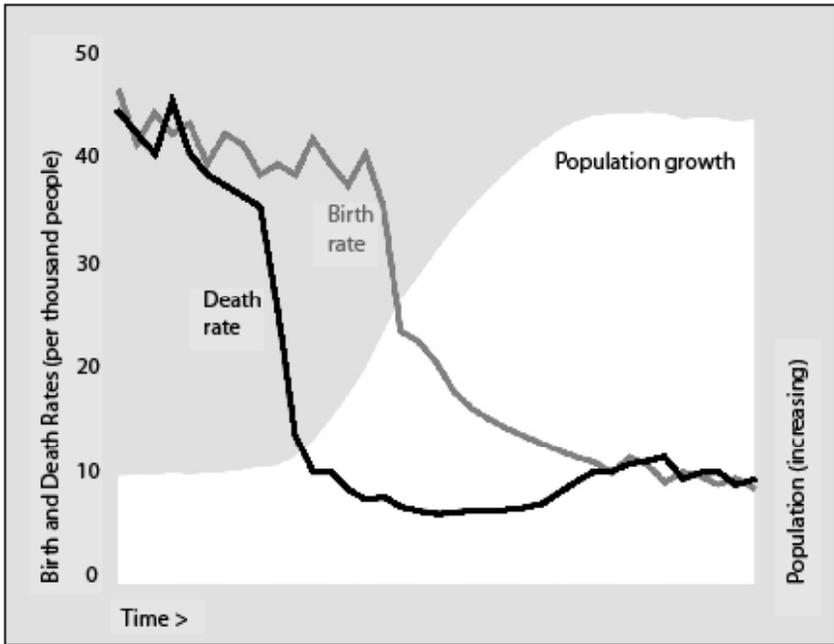
Note: This pictorial representation of the demographic transition shows that as death rates decline, followed later by a decline in birth rates, populations grow rapidly but eventually plateau at a relatively stable level, presuming no further drastic changes in mortality or fertility.
*Source*: Leahy et al. (2007, 17).

The same model can be applied not only to countries but also to population groups. The West's European and European-settler populations (as well as some others such as Russia's, Japan's, and soon China's) have all reached the stage where fertility is below replacement level and the crude death rate exceeds the crude birth rate. Yet immigration as well as above-average total fertility rates among some racialized minorities, immigrant groups, and indigenous populations moderate an otherwise precipitous population decline across mature democracies.

Owing to immigration, the proportion of the foreign-born population – Caucasian and otherwise – across industrialized democracies is on the rise (currently peaking at around 20 percent in Australia, Canada, and Switzerland, for instance). Non-Caucasian immigrant populations tend to have above-average total fertility rates; consequently, their population structure is younger than that of the traditional Caucasian population. Similarly, in countries with national minority populations, such as African-Americans and Hispanics in the United States, these population groups often register above-average fertility. Indigenous groups, finally, have

some of the highest fertility rates in the world. The greater a population's total fertility rate, the greater its proportion of women of child-bearing age, which, in turn, explains and sustains an excess in the crude birth rate over the crude death rate. This development hails two salient consequences for security and defence recruitment. First, the proportion of the recruit cohort relative to the population as a whole starts to wane (although the actual cohort size may continue to expand for a while yet). Second, within the recruit cohort the proportion of the Caucasian cohort contracts while the proportion of the non-Caucasian cohort expands.

The Canadian experience is telling here. Figure 2.2 depicts the growing extent to which Canada's population identifies with an origin other than English, French, or Canadian. By 2011, below-replacement rates of fertility and the immigration of allophones – immigrants who employ neither official language (English or French) as their vernacular – will have reduced francophones to 14 percent of the Canadian population and anglophones to 47 percent, with the remaining 39 percent of the population comprising people who do not identify as anglophone, francophone, or Canadian. Concomitantly, the proportion of Canada's population that identifies as visible minorities is rising sharply, from 11.2 percent in 1996 to 16.2 percent in 2006, for example. At current recruitment patterns, the rate at which the Canadian armed forces' composition will continue to diverge from the ethno-demographic composition of Canadian society will actually accelerate.

FIGURE 2.2
Population of Canada reporting at least one ethnic origin other than British, French, or Canadian, 1986, 1991, and 1996 censuses
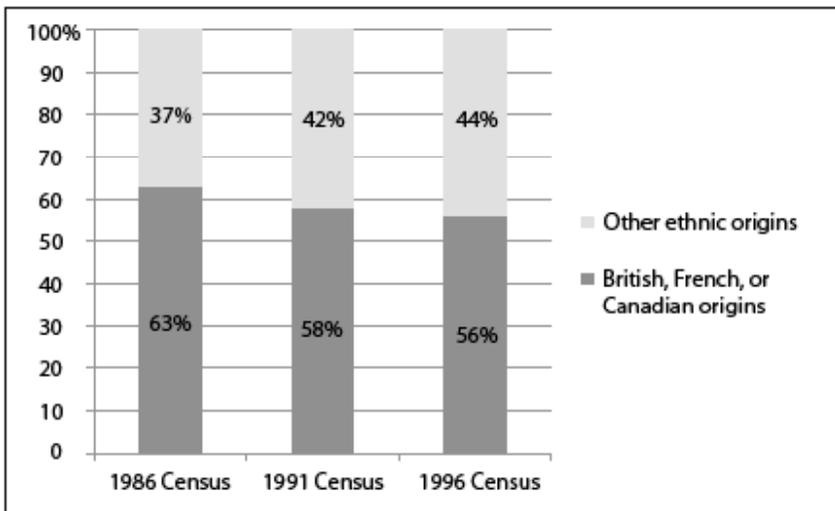
Source: Canada. Department of Citizenship and Immigration (2002).

This trend poses a challenge for the Canadian armed forces' legislated mandate to sustain itself as a genuinely bilingual institution. With the proportion of francophones on the wane due to low fertility, the fastest-growing French-speaking population is found among visible minorities. Far from being mutually exclusive, the Canadian Forces' bilingualism and diversity mandates are thus complementary; bilingualism becomes a function of diversity.

Demographically, then, recruitment to defence and security forces can depend ever more heavily on a shrinking Caucasian cohort or they can recruit more broadly from the population as a whole. However, a number of variables intervene that militate against the former option. In the 1998 Strategic Defence Review White Paper, the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defence refers to the business case for diversity: the opportunity cost of not recruiting more broadly from the recruitment cohort is growing exponentially. Maintaining and optimizing the armed forces' functional imperative suggests maximizing value for money and recruiting the best talent possible. Failure to recruit more diversely leads to suboptimal outcomes on both counts. Moreover, it has negative implications for the institution's functional imperative.

THE FUNCTIONAL IMPERATIVE

As populations age, the proportion (and eventually the size) of the youth cohort shrinks. In and of itself, this development is not yet problematic, because the armed forces can compensate to some extent by substituting capital for labour. Of course, this is precisely what is happening in contemporary fourth- and fifth-generation warfare (Moskos, Williams, and Segal 1999, chapter 1). However, substituting capital for labour requires ever more highly qualified, trained, and skilled operators. Morris Janowitz (1960) anticipated this development in his observation that military organizations are becoming less distinct and looking increasingly like any other large, bureaucratic, technologically advanced organization. This development is theorized further in Moskos's institutional and occupational thesis (1977), which posits the military moving from an institutional to an occupational format that is driven by self-interest and a free market. As a result, security and defence organizations are now competing for the same limited talent pool of highly qualified personnel. In the post-industrial economy, demand for this labour pool grows exponentially (Bell 1973); consequently, demand outstrips supply, and the differential between demand and supply widens. The pressure on salaries rises as a result. To meet demand, the private sector enjoys greater latitude in adjusting salaries than does the public sector. Public-sector remuneration thus becomes less attractive. Under these conditions, armed forces must recruit the best talent available and as broadly as possible to harness the best return on scarce funds. The lower the quality of recruited personnel,

the more the armed forces have to invest in training up and educating up that individual, thus imposing an unnecessary strain on scarce resources.

The matter of resources becomes apparent during the new missions of peace enforcement, stabilization, and counter-insurgency. Successful conduct of such missions requires a high degree of civil-military cooperation in the form of civil affairs and psychological operations. The expansion of civil-affairs and psychological-operations units in recent years testifies to this claim. Under these conditions soft, non-kinetic skills, such as linguistic competence, religious practice, and familiarity with local customs, are proving indispensable to mission success (Leuprecht 2005).

Yet there is an even more straightforward argument for greater diversity among the troops who are being deployed abroad. For the most part, they are being sent abroad to help diverse groups cohabit. If ethnic cleavages are a major source of conflict in the world and if one of the premises of intervention is to have competing ethnic groups cooperate, then the intervening countries and their forces need to practise what they preach and model that to people on the ground. As many law-enforcement organizations have come to know, a diverse organization is a good way to model intercultural cooperation.

With the ease of communication and the diaspora of communities across the globe, even people in the most far-flung places on the planet know (given that they are likely to have seen American television at some point) that the states represented by the intervening forces are heterogeneous, having enacted legislation to protect people from discrimination on the one hand, while encouraging diversity and pluralism to flourish on the other hand. So, when the deployed security and defence forces look suspiciously homogeneous, that is bound to raise eyebrows amongst the locals. If nothing else, it risks leaving a bad neo-colonial aftertaste in their mouth.

THE CITIZEN SOLDIER

The armed forces like to think of themselves as turning citizens into soldiers, but they play just as important a role in turning soldiers into citizens. Through their training regimes, armed forces have an unparalleled capacity to generate uniformity. The institution socializes them into its predominant norms, it is able to train for a high degree of uniformity in responding to specific situations, and it has to teach soldiers a common vernacular to ensure that they understand the commands given. France is the quintessential example of a nation that was built by the institutions of the state, "turning peasants into Frenchmen" (Weber 1976; Brubaker 1992; Bobbitt 2003; Weil 2008). Faced with drawing on an increasingly diverse society, armed forces are (as Dandeker and Mason's chapter in this volume suggests) relearning that task.

In light of the aforementioned labour market trends, the armed forces will also end up taking on a greater role in facilitating social mobility.

The bridging hypothesis initially posited the armed forces as a bridge from adolescence to adult life (Browning, Lopreate, and Poston 1973). It has since been refined to argue that minorities are particularly likely to benefit from military service as a bridge to enhanced opportunities in life (Gade, Lakhani, and Kimmel 1991). The armed forces especially, but also the police, like other administrative institutions of government, have long been essential to facilitating social mobility through equality of opportunity.

When testing the bridging hypothesis in the US context during the Vietnam War, for example, Shields (1980 and 1981) found that the burden of conscription fell disproportionately on young African-Americans. Armed forces have a propensity for recruiting disproportionately from the lower quintiles of the population. Owing to demographic change, the character of that economic strata is changing. While in the United States African-Americans and Hispanics continue to predominate in that strata, in much of the rest of the democratic world it is increasingly populated by racialized minorities. Therefore, much of the rest of the democratic world is facing recruitment dynamics that are starting to approximate those in the United States – but without the US approach to diversity. President Truman's proactive policy with respect to mainstreaming African-Americans in the US armed forces inadvertently mitigated the recruitment problems that the armed services would have faced otherwise as the result of declining fertility among the United States' Caucasian population.

Had the armed forces opted to recruit ever more aggressively among the shrinking Caucasian cohort, the costs of doing so would have climbed exponentially. Both the cohort itself and its representation among the socio-economic strata from which the armed forces tend to draw disproportionately are on the wane. In its stead, it is being populated by racialized minorities. So, the business case for recruiting more diversely is twofold. On the one hand, the proportion of racialized minorities among the recruit cohort is growing; on the other hand, so is their representation among the socio-economic strata from which the armed forces tend to recruit. The US military is more diverse not because of race and diversity per se but because racialized minorities have always made up a greater proportion of the armed services' traditional recruit pool in the United States than they have in just about any other advanced democracy.

Greater involvement by minority groups in the armed forces will also help to legitimate the institution, its missions, and government policy. As missions become more difficult and controversial, the armed forces stand to benefit from building as broad a base of support among the electorate as possible. The same holds true for a government looking to legitimize its policies. When a key institution of the government is unrepresentative of the population it serves, chances are that the population will have an

ambivalent relationship with that institution. Funding for the armed forces is one concrete example. Defence tops the list of spending in democracies (along with health care and education). Yet, the prevalence of an ideology that Huntington's 1957 study refers to as "antimilitaristic liberalism" explains why armed forces find themselves notoriously underfunded. Failure to reflect their country's population better can only hurt the armed forces' case for more resources.

Similarly, democratic governments like to portray themselves as representing the people. To this end they enact both negative rights legislation to protect citizens from discrimination of various sorts and positive rights legislation to rectify past wrongs and proactively increase the representation of under-represented groups. Why, then, are governmental bureaucracies consistently among the least representative institutions in democratic societies? And among these national institutions, the security and defence sector is usually even less representative of the population as a whole than is the rest of government. This is an inherent contradiction for all democratic governments: they claim to govern societies that allegedly prize equality of opportunity, yet they themselves trail the curve.

This is not an abstract normative or moral claim. There is ample evidence that armed forces are not in tune with societal expectations on diversity issues. Human rights commissions and the European Court of Human Rights have been instrumental in opening or improving access to the armed forces in countries such as Canada, Italy, and the United Kingdom. Gender has figured particularly prominently in these decisions, but gays and racial minorities have benefited as well. In other words, courts in democratic countries have clearly established a societal, legal, and constitutional regime in favour of diversity in the armed forces, and they have decided that this imperative supersedes any possibly adverse effects that these injunctions might have on the armed forces' functional imperative. This leaves the armed forces with only two choices in the diversity debate: be proactive or learn to live with courts and other bodies telling the armed forces what to do about diversity.

Unlike other national institutions, the armed forces benefit from a stringent hierarchy that facilitates the prompt execution of decisions, irrespective of how popular they may be with members. As a result of this hierarchy the government arguably has greater control over the armed forces than over any other national institution and should thus, in theory at least, be able to implement its decisions quickly. The precedent set by President Truman suggests that once a decision with respect to diversity has been taken, the armed forces have the capacity to implement it quickly. Of course, the concerns raised at the time were similar to those being raised about diversity today (cf. Huntington 1957). Nowadays, however, no one thinks of African-Americans as having compromised the functional imperative. Quite to the contrary, some of the country's most distinguished military leaders are African-Americans.

Truman's decision may actually not be all that instructive. African-Americans and Hispanics in the United States are a special type of minority group. Hispanics are a national minority of sorts, although their presence had historically been limited to specific swathes of the country. African-Americans, however, are not really a national minority in the classic sense, nor are they an immigrant minority (see Kymlicka 1995, chapter 1). Whereas Americans are unlikely to question an African-American's loyalty to the United States, the same does not obtain in many other advanced industrialized democracies where minorities are regularly regarded as a potential fifth column. So it should come as no surprise that Truman's decision could be implemented with relative ease.

CONCLUSION

Advanced industrialized democracies have been subject to a demographic transition that is engendering unprecedented changes in population size as well as composition. The extent to which their populations are aging is historically unequalled. This apparent demographic decline and its alleged implications are well documented (for example, Eberstadt 2009; Jackson and Howe 2008). However, populations within countries are not aging uniformly. As a matter of fact, the differentials are considerable. Whereas in most mature democracies the fertility among Caucasians has been below replacement levels (about 2.1 children per woman) for decades, fertility among racialized minorities, immigrants, and indigenous groups remains not only strong and sustainable but, in the case of indigenous groups, is consistently among the highest in the world.

Yet, looking at most armed forces, one would be hard pressed to notice. The face of Western society may be undergoing dramatic change, but the armed and security forces stand out as a relative bastion of homogeneity. There are three puzzles here. First, why is this the case? Second, why is this observation fairly consistent across advanced industrialized countries, the same countries that tout freedom, equality, and justice as their core values and that talk up human rights? And, third, why have change and reform in the defence and security sector been so elusive? These puzzles are being dealt with in a research project, the results of which are beyond the scope of this chapter. Suffice it to observe that the cleavage of composition between armed and security forces on the one hand and the societies from which they are drawn on the other hand is growing.

The problem persists on at least three levels: demography, function, and legitimacy. First, demographic projections show a sustained trajectory towards greater diversity. As a result of population aging, the pool of potential recruits relative to the population as a whole is becoming shallower. The overall trend, however, is marked by considerable distortions: the Caucasian cohort is declining disproportionately while the

cohort of racialized minorities, immigrant groups, and indigenous peoples is expanding rapidly owing to both higher fertility rates and sustained immigration. Moreover, population aging is projected to precipitate a tightening labour market with growing competition for a contracting talent pool.

Second, were armed and security forces not to step up recruitment from that cohort, they are bound to face increasingly suboptimal human resources outcomes with detrimental implications for their functional imperative. Furthermore, both the locations where expeditionary forces are being deployed and the nature of missions to which civil affairs and psychological operations are integral necessitate soft skills as a force multiplier.

Third, if the core purpose of armed and security forces in mature democracies includes defending the democratic way of life and the core values that underpin it, then should security and armed forces not practise those same values? Ironically, the same governments that legislate and preach employment equity and equal opportunity are remarkably poor at reflecting diversity. So this issue is not limited to the defence and security sector. Rather, it affects government as a whole: how can a government and its security sector be deemed legitimate when the government is perceived as merely paying lip service to equality of opportunity and when public institutions are increasingly unrepresentative of society at large? Might an unrepresentative security sector and public make it increasingly difficult to legitimize government policy? Whether they be in the United States of President Truman, the British Empire, or the French Republic of Jules Ferry, the armed forces have long been integral to nation-building. At the same time, though, politically unstable and economically impoverished countries tend to have homogeneous security forces as a hallmark. Of course, this is hardly a causal relationship, but it does provide food for thought: what prospect does a widening gap between representation in the defence and security sector on the one hand and demographic developments in society at large on the other hand hold out for the future of democracy?

The basic premise of this chapter has been that notions of the functional imperative of the armed forces and of the citizen soldier, far from being at odds, are but different sides of the same coin. Military officers tend to claim that their job is to defend democracy, not to practise it. The evidence, however, invites a different conclusion: the defence of democracy is inexorably linked to its practice.

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