

## Theoretical Foundations of Defense Management: In Particular Militarization of Humanitarian Aid

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Why are there not more theories in defense management? Since my last editorial on Military Humanitarianism in Afghanistan I have been wondering why there are not more theoretical approaches being developed in defense management and in particular in the militarization of humanitarian assistance and the collaborative efforts of civil-military contributions. A unified theory of Civil-Military relations was written by Douglas Bland in 1999 [1]. Since Afghanistan and the new Counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine much literature has appeared on collaboration and challenges. Further humanitarian management and in particular recent interest in civil-military cluster approaches in humanitarian logistics has gained much attention in the humanitarian agencies and the academic literature.

Most western nations have changed military doctrine to incorporate humanitarian assistance and civil-military relationships. Very little theoretical foundation is available and thus the call (as was called for in 1999) is for greater efforts to find a comprehensive theoretical base.

Further research is required into military and civil laws. The challenges of law, justice and politics all increase the complexity of the legal processes and the collaborative management theoretical applications. Expertise is particularly needed in military doctrinal and the legal basis of operations. The international law and its relationship to host nation's domestic law as well as the operation militaries and their national laws all interlink to the developed frameworks of international military and humanitarian laws.

Similarly defense management is a complex broad topic that includes specialized management subjects of human resource, organizational behavior, financial, procurement, logistical, strategic theories that can and have been adopted by military organizations. The typology of defense management contributions need to include the orthodox domestic defense management theory acceptable to any given nation. Given the dynamics of theoretical development innovative domestic theoretical additions and adaptations will emerge. Also perhaps given the nature of the topic radical theoretical additions and acceptance of theoretical frameworks will occur. Nevertheless any theory will comprise of a narrow or broad applicability as well as content ranging between the concrete and relative abstractness.

The gap between theory and practice in this complex arena seems to be an ever widening concern. This gap can be reduced through better communications between the theorists and practitioners and/or through closer collaborations between scholars and practitioners. Another approach is to investigate 'better' research design. None of these approaches address the underlying premises associated with scientific rationality within which most management theories have been developed. It a coherent theory is build on pragmatic traditions then deductive modeling from top-down and even inductive bottom-up theorizing can develop a broad application of a theoretical base. Working on the pragmatic approach a few different military approaches to humanitarian assistance is provided.

The Austrian Forces Disaster Relief Unit (AFDRU) has been established for over twenty years and is an urban search and rescue and disaster relief unit (USAR) operating within the Austrian Federal

Army. Its domestic and global operations typically operate within OCHA and the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group.

The AFDRU's key roles are search and rescue, detection, decontamination, and water purification. The unit stands on 10 hours notice and is self sufficient for two weeks operations.

The Danish Navy dedicates its second squadron to foreign affairs including protection forces, disaster relief operations and non-combatant evacuation operations.

The Indian Armed Forces (IAF) is the core of the Indian government's response capacity and tends to be the first responders in a major disaster. The Disaster Management Act, 2005, made statutory provisions for the constitution of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) unit for the specialized response to natural and man-made disasters. Within the NDRF there are eight battalions of central paramilitary forces – two battalions each from: Border Security Force, Indo-Tibetan Border Policy, Central Industrial Security Force and Central Reserve Police Force; all of which form a specialist response team for disaster response.

The Japanese Self-Defense Force (JSDF) is committed to the core function of protecting its sovereign territory and maintains a very small force. It restricted its operations to within Japan until the UN Peacekeeping Cooperation Law in 1992 which enabled the JSDF to contribute to peace keeping globally. Its first humanitarian mission was into Iraq in 2004. It has since been involved in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations in Mozambique, Indonesia, Iraq, Nepal, Somali and Haiti. Nevertheless the sentiment is still opposed to global mobilization and in 2008 the Japanese Parliament discussed the establishment of a permanent law allowing the JSDF to be involved in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations outside Japan. This was rejected.

The Austrian key roles are very task specific, the Danish roles are broad, and the Indian military role is quite dominant whilst the Japanese military role is at the opposite end of the spectrum.

Given these exceptionally different civil military relations the quest for a globally acceptable defense management theory relating

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to military involvement in humanitarian aid delivery is daunting. It is suggested that a broadly applicable and relatively abstract theory might be a start.

#### **Reference**

1. Bland D (1999) A Unified Theory of Civil-Military Relations. *Armed Forces & Society* 26: 7-26.