

The importance of cultural information in multinational operations: a fragmented case study on UNFICYP

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1. Introduction

In an ever-increasing world, organizations must work together. This is equally true for accountancy firms, industrial companies and retail enterprises. When, on top of that, organizations are faced with shrinking instead of growth, there is an even greater imperative for cooperation and this is the situation that most western armies find themselves in. The decrease of the number of personnel employed in the western defence sector since 1990 can truly be called spectacular. But even before that year there was an unmistakably downward trend. Cooperation, therefore, is the buzz word for the military.

This cooperation in the defence sector happens jointly between the services (e.g. the land and air forces), but to an increasing extent also combined, between units of several countries. The cooperation sometimes assumes very far-going structural forms, as is demonstrated by the formation of the German-Netherlands Corps. Usually, however, international units meet – on a more incidental basis – in exercises, and increasingly also in actual missions. The closing decade of the last century showed that military operations – from peace enforcing to peace support operations – cannot be conducted by an individual country anymore. In an international context military personnel are dependent on each other in the realization of their targets, usually because there is a lack of adequate (personnel) resources to conduct independent action, and sometimes, as in the case of the United States, to strengthen the legitimacy of an operation.

The result is that the military has thoroughly internationalized, making know-how regarding international management from the business sector also applicable to the armed forces. One of those knowledge domains concerns the influence of national cultures on the structure and functioning of international alliances. Research based on insights into cultural differences in multinational companies has established that national armed forces show substantial cultural differences. These differences concern the loyalty of the personnel to the organization, the structure and functioning of the organization, the relation and social distance between the leadership and rank and file, as well as the extent of formalization and rule orientation. In this respect the cultural heterogeneity between national armed forces is at least as great as that in the profit sector.¹ In all likelihood the impact of this cultural heterogeneity is greater in military operations than in structural cooperation in the business sector. This is related to the fact that in military operations the missions and targets are not always so concrete and measurable. Besides, military units always have to keep up a national line of responsibility, the time frames of the operation tend to be rather tight and the sense of urgency is very high, whereas the personnel is constantly rotated.²

At the same time, however, there is also, quite emphatically, something like a supranational military culture. In comparison with profit businesses, military culture in all countries is rather bureaucratic, hierarchic and institutional (i.e. relatively less inclined towards income, career and private life). This means that even before entering a specific multinational force, officers may have undergone vicarious anticipatory and actual socialization to work in such frameworks.³ The consequence of this is that military personnel of different origin can often function with each other without too many problems. Charles Moskos, for instance, found that the most serious tensions during the UNFICYP operation took place between military personnel and the local population, not between personnel of the various contingents.⁴

Apparently there is – according to Moskos – a certain military professionalism that, at least to a certain extent, can surmount national borders and cultural differences.

Up to a certain extent, and this is an important point. In the present article we intend to show how cultural differences, in this case between British and Dutch army personnel, could give rise to such friction that interference by the Dutch Army Staff was deemed necessary. This interference was occasioned by an investigation of the Bureau Lessons Learned, directed at providing cultural information on the British Army.⁵ The intention was to give direct culture guidelines to Dutch personnel on how to improve their contacts with the British. It so happens that the location of this Anglo-Dutch cooperation is Cyprus, and the international framework that of the UNFICYP mission; indeed, the same mission about which Moskos had expressed so much optimism with regard to the effects of an international military professionalism, some 25 years ago.

The build-up of the article is as follows. We begin by describing the nature of the conflict in Cyprus as well as the task and composition of the UN mission there. Subsequently, we will address the Anglo-Dutch cooperation in this mission based on some fragmented research material. In doing so, we will make use of data obtained from interviews with ten Dutch servicemen conducted shortly after their return from deployment on the first rotation. In addition, we have made use of the experiences of two Dutch lieutenants during the second and third rotation respectively, described in a study paper. Moreover, we have had the disposal of material from a survey held among the Dutch contingent during the first rotation. Taken together, these data yield a fairly good impression of the dynamics of the Anglo-Dutch cooperation in Cyprus. A subsequent section gives a description of the intervention by the Bureau Lessons Learned with regard to this cooperation. Finally, there is an observation on the use and necessity of cultural information in multinational military operations.

2. Cyprus and UNFICYP

The nature of the problem in Cyprus goes back a long way.⁶ Cyprus became an independent republic on 16 August 1960. Fairly rapidly it became clear that the interests of both ethnic entities in the island – Turks and Greek-Cypriots – were not easily reconcilable. In the background the two “mother countries” unmistakably played a role. In 1964 the UN Security Council passed resolution 186, which gave birth to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). The mission was intended ‘to use its best efforts to prevent a recurrence of the fighting, and [...] to return to normal conditions’. These normal circumstances were far from returning, certainly when in 1974 a Greek-Cypriot coup favouring union with Greece was followed by a Turkish military intervention, which resulted in the island being divided into a Turkish-Cypriot part in the north and a Greek-Cypriot part in the south. After a cease-fire a buffer zone was established, varying in width between 20 metres and 7 kilometres. The total extent of the cease-fire area amounts to approximately 180 kilometres. As a formal cease-fire has not been agreed upon, annually hundreds of incidents take place in the buffer zone, ranging from the throwing of stones, to shouting of abuses, moving of positions and sometimes real firing incidents. More than once large numbers of civilians are involved, regularly forcing UNFICYP to exercise crowd control. UNFICYP uses a range of means to counter incidents: investigation, negotiations with both parties and also direct troop movements. It tries to keep the military status quo in a more structural way by manning observation posts, and by carrying out foot, mountain bike and mounted patrols. Apart from that, its tasks involve supplying escorts and the carrying out of routine matters such as barrack duty and administrative affairs and the giving of training. At this moment UNFICYP is composed of British, Argentine and Austrian units, each with their own buffer zone. To the Austrian sector Hungarian units and a platoon of Slovenian personnel have been attached. The

total strength of the mission amounts to 1,273 service personnel and 33 police monitors. The British battalion is deployed in the central sector, in which the capital Nicosia is situated. It is in this area that the bulk of the incidents take place, not least because the buffer zone is narrowest in and around the city. Nevertheless, for the British serviceman deployment in Cyprus is very popular: 'a holiday destination in combat kit'.⁷ Since 1998 the Royal Netherlands Army have made a company available to replace part of the British regiment there, for a period of three years. This company is under command of the British sector commander. The Dutch personnel are attached as national platoons in the British order of battle, or have been allocated to platoons that are completely international in composition. During the third rotation Sector 2 has come under Dutch command (with its own HQ). Although UNFICYP is explicitly multinational – the commander being a Nepalese bears witness to this – the binational cooperation with the British is an everyday reality for the Dutch.

3. Anglo-Dutch cooperation

This cooperation is not going very smoothly, in any case not in the beginning. A survey carried out among a sample of 77 Dutch army servicemen who were deployed in Cyprus when the research was conducted, showed that some 60% disagreed with the statement that the cooperation with the British was smooth. Even more pregnant was the fact that more than 85% stated that they did not like the British way of acting. Only a small minority thought that the British soldiers were very skilful, whereas only 50% found that British and Dutch soldiers did get along very well. This cannot have been caused by language; in less than 10% of the cases English was a problem. These data concern the first Dutch detachment, a company of the AirMobile Brigade, deployed in Cyprus from June until December 1998, and they can be made more concrete by means of more elaborate 'stories' of servicemen. To that end we have conducted open interviews with ten servicemen, varying in rank from private to lieutenant, who had likewise all been part of the first Dutch UNFICYP detachment.

From these 'stories' several salient points emerge, mostly related to the relatively great distance between the leadership and the rank and file in the British Army. Earlier research among a great many military academies had already shown that the hierarchical or power distance between the leaders and the led as well as the emphasis on discipline were nowhere greater than in the British Army.⁸ This distance in the army doubtlessly mirrors the strongly stratified British society. The working class in the UK definitively is a working class, much more so than in many other countries, and the British working class culture with its specific characteristics can be found – possibly even somewhat stronger – in the British Army, in particular in what was once so splendidly labeled the 'squaddy syndrome', a working class culture at platoon level.⁹ On top of that the social dynamism of the British class system is not only visible within the platoon, but also in the way the commanders address their subordinates. Privates, junior NCOs and subalterns, have to listen to and obey their superiors inexorably, regardless whether they think the orders sensible or fair. He is punished, who does not obey, usually severely. That is how things are in the British Army.¹⁰ It is not for nothing that the commanders issue orders with the standard addition, 'If not, disciplinary actions will be taken.' A private's direct refusal to comply with a command is going to propel him into one direction only – into the clutches of the Regimental Police.¹¹ It is evident that in the British Army there is steering by coercion, and not so much on the internalization of the logic and necessity of regulations and orders.

It will not come as a surprise that this manner of doing things is alien to the Dutch. The Dutch culture –the 'Dutch approach' if you will – has for centuries been characterized by the three Cs: consensus, consultation and compromise.¹² It is this cultural difference in particular that

has given occasion for what could be called ‘cultural friction’ between Dutch and British military personnel. This friction concerns subordinates – privates - as well as officers and NCOs. A few examples.

A Dutch sergeant comments on customs in the British Army:

It is not the bloke himself, but clearly the British system that irritated, the clear division between privates, officers and NCOs. Especially in that hotel [HQ in Nicosia: the authors] this is noticeable, because you had the separate mess halls and canteens. It was not appreciated at all if you went for a beer with the men you had worked with all day.

A Dutch private on British manners which tend to be rather different from the jovial tone and ‘yes, but-attitude’ of the Dutch:

Yes, the British is quite a different story; especially the gunners; the privates, say, they are normal, but as soon as they are only slightly higher in rank they think they are the world; they yell at the men and if you don't follow their orders you're bound to get trouble.

This is a far cry from what the Dutch are used to. In Dutch units many decisions are taken in consultation, which increases support and ensures that the bulk of the tasks are carried out as comfortably as possible. The other side of the coin is that the Dutch have comments on anything, and that a sort of ‘culture of complaint’ seems to be rife.

The distance between the several layers is also seen in a more operational sense. Providing information to the rank and file is felt to be more important in the Dutch army than in the British. Besides, status and competence issues can come into play more easily in a strongly stratified organization. This is how a second lieutenant of the Dutch company got into trouble:

At a certain moment I had made an order and written down tasks for the battery staff, one level up. We needed transport, but I immediately got my wrist slapped, for I should have written a request; after all I could not give tasks to a higher level. On the paper it had to read ‘request’ and not ‘task’. That major was pretty pissed off about it, so I crossed out ‘task’ and wrote ‘request’. But, no way, that was not good enough: I had to make a new print and have it signed by the captain.

This may seem childish, and it certainly is so in comparison with the dilemmas and conflicts of loyalty that young Dutch platoon commanders have to face when they get caught in between their Dutch subordinates and their British commanders:

I have to say this, ‘Listen, this is how it is’, and the men think and say, ‘The lieutenant is just chinwagging along with the Brits and carries out all their little plans.’ But at a certain moment I try to tell them that this is the way the British want it and that I myself don't agree. But it's difficult to be disloyal to your [British: the authors] commander. Every day you are fighting for your platoon there, but well, it may sound blunt, but in a meeting you try to get your own way in order to get the best for your men out of it.

The following shows that the Dutch servicemen do not fully trust their leaders anymore because of their contacts with the British:

What I thought was very bad of our cadre was that they said things like, 'we are Dutch, and we remain Dutch', but after a time they began to change and show British behaviour. When you said this to a sergeant, he would deny it and say he had remained the same, but that just isn't true.

Internal tensions for young Dutch officers really become great when matters of discipline and punishment come into play:

Their way of punishing is quite different from ours, for we have our military penal and disciplinary law and that is what we use when we punish. We don't make them run a hundred rounds in the hot sun, or what have you. At one time a bloke had accidentally driven his car into a fence. Very stupid, but there was no damage done. Things like that can happen, so this bloke is given a bollocking, and that's the end of the story as far as we're concerned. But then he had to report immediately to the battery commander, and he was completely flattened and abused, and had to pay 500 pounds on the spot. So I went up to the commander and said, 'This is not they way we handle these things. We are under your operational command, but when we punish someone we do this under our own penal system, not by clearing a lot of money straight away.' They could have said: if that is the damage, then we hold you, the Dutch unit as a whole, responsible. That's when the tables were completely turned and they offered their apologies, but only to me, not to that bloke

The collective punishment for offences committed by individuals, too, was something the Dutch found hard to understand.

It's really nonsensical that we are punished each time for something we cannot do anything about. There was the two-can rule [a maximum of two cans of beer per day: the authors]. Because the English got drunk each time, we were not allowed to have anything anymore, although we just stuck to the rules. The Brits got pissed every night and at one time they were punished, but so were we, although we were ready to go every morning, but they weren't. In this way the atmosphere became worse by the day.

The so-called Out of Bounds areas were also difficult to explain to the Dutch servicemen. They are areas, always places of entertainment, where British soldiers are not allowed to come, because in the past excesses like fights, excessive drinking or rapes took place there. Because the Dutch UNFICYP servicemen are under British command, these Out of Bound areas also hold for them.

There are more frictions of a (semi-)juridical nature, in particular about the severity of the punishment, which in Dutch eyes, is often extreme and especially intended to instil fear. This is characteristic for the British 'squaddy culture'. In the British army, soldiers can be made to do their duty through fear of coercive sanctions, based on the application of military law, only.¹³ Occasionally this can lead to a situation in which the Royal Netherlands Military Constabulary, also present in Cyprus, blows the whistle on a Dutch commander, who has gone along with the British system of punishment (doing extra shifts).

Sometimes these punishments are in conflict with Dutch policy on working conditions.

When a person had finished his shift and was entitled to a six-hour rest period, he would get a punishment of a six-hour painting job immediately following his shift. This would mean he'd only have a few hours' sleep. Well, in the Netherlands this is

impossible, of course. When a person gets a punishment shift, it can only be a maximum of three hours prior to or following his shift, taking into account a minimum of six hours' sleep.

Problems of this kind are regularly reported. Thus, there are misunderstandings and disagreements around working with asbestos and caustic substances. In Dutch eyes – and, amongst others, on the basis of Dutch rules and regulations – this kind of activities cannot be conducted without protective measures. The British are more relaxed about it, which gives rise to disagreements and revoking of British orders by Dutch commanders.

As with the divergence of rules and views regarding working conditions, the Rules of Engagement, including firing instructions, are not identical for the British and Dutch troops. Although these differences in phrasing of the instructions for the use of violence (which, incidentally, are minor) have not yet led to any serious problems, it is conceivable that in specific situations they may do just that.¹⁴

A last striking difference between the British and Dutch cultures concerns the difference in value attached to what could be termed external discipline, as expressed in saluting of superiors (also when they are in civilian clothes) and the pomp and circumstance surrounding official occasions. The highlight of outward show for the British is the so-called Medal Parade. There is intensive practising weeks prior to this three-hour drill parade in which the servicemen receive their UN-medal. The result is that during the practice sessions about 100 persons cannot work shifts.

In view of the above, it is not surprising that the success of a mission for a British commander is determined, to use his own words, next to the absence of excesses in breach of discipline, by the success of the Medal Parade and the Regimental Cocktail Party.¹⁵

4. The 'intervention' of the Netherlands Bureau Lessons Learned

The above has clearly shown that a smooth cooperation between the British and Dutch army personnel is not something that goes without saying. Cultural differences, and differences springing from them, of a legal and disciplinary nature, are too great for an easy cooperation. Signals about cultural friction and various concrete incidents occasioned an intervention from the Staff in The Hague. One of the incidents concerned a relationship between a Dutch servicewoman and a higher-ranking British serviceman. The relationship in itself but in particular the difference in rank, proved to be the fuse of the incident, as this situation was unacceptable in British eyes.

The intervention was a low-key operation; it consisted of working visits to the mission area of representatives of the Bureau Lessons Learned, specifically aimed at studying the "cultural issue". It was conducted during UNFICYP-IV, but information regarding UNFICYP-I to III was also included in the investigation. As British and Dutch troops also cooperate in an SFOR-context in Bosnia, there were also working visits and investigations in Banja Luka and Sipovo. On the basis of these visits and investigations a report was written and a host of hints and tips formulated on how to deal with representatives of the British Army.¹⁶ The most important and valuable principle derived from it is: *For a fruitful cooperation it is of the utmost importance that one gets to know one's own culture first, then the other culture and subsequently attempts to find a solution for the cultural differences together.*

The Bureau draws a number of conclusions, which in view of the above, will not come as a surprise. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile to present a number of them briefly here. It is pointed out that, in contrast with the Netherlands, the British Commanding Officer is still very much on a pedestal. He often takes decisions, regardless of the plans and programmes of others. He is used to planning meetings and consultations without taking into account anyone or

anything. It is found that his cadre accepts this kind of behaviour, although not always wholeheartedly. Furthermore, the Bureau Lessons Learned finds that British servicemen often have strictly defined tasks and responsibilities and they will immediately carry out any order they may get without discussion. The checking of the implementation of the orders is not always very consistent among the British, the report says. Hierarchy is much more important for the British than for the Dutch, as is shown in more formal manners with regard to saluting, forms of address and the use of first names. Also the difference is pointed out between the regular soldier and the reservist who seems to be more receptive to suggestions and contradiction.

With regard to everyday routine a number of interesting observations are made. Thus, it appears the British commander manages his staff in a much more direct way, instead of taking decisions on the basis of preliminary work of his staff, as is more usual in the Dutch armed forces. Meetings in the British Army are short, and the chairman has the floor most of the time. Compromises are less common than in the Dutch army and at the same time there is a very open atmosphere; there is no beating about the bush when things go badly and corporals and privates can give their opinions unreservedly in such cases. This observation confirms another aspect of British army culture: craftsmanlike pride among all ranks, leading to a concern to carry out all the core activities central to the military role, which is considered to be 'real soldiering'.¹⁷

The report also points to striking differences with regard to barracks matters. The British stick more to the normal barracks rhythm and during missions abroad they carry on with their normal business, such as courses and training. Officers, NCOs and privates have separate quarters, messes and sanitary facilities and social intercourse between the ranks is generally limited because of this. Apart from that, the report makes mention of a number of peculiarities - at least peculiarities in the eyes of the Dutch: the absence of the ritual coffee drinking during work, common among the Dutch, the ban on smoking in the open air, conservative views on homosexuality, a reluctant acceptance (which is in actual fact no acceptance) of relationships between service personnel on missions, problems with long hair, and in fact with the presence of female soldiers at all. The report states, for example, that the British are very surprised when the Dutch female soldier joins in the conversation, whatever the subject. Dutch humour, directed at playing someone a trick, does not exist in the British army, let alone between the ranks. Conversely, the Dutch are probably incapable of fathoming the typical British humour. The British also have a great sense of history, especially in things military, and of course in particular with regard to their own regiment.

So far the report of the Bureau Lessons Learned. It is as brief as it is clear and the similarity with our own findings regarding the first rotation and those of the two lieutenants during the second and third UNFICYP rotation, respectively, is remarkable. One caveat should be mentioned, however. All observations were made by Dutch people and what has been described says as much about the Dutch as about the British (military) culture. In order to get a complete picture it would be necessary to have the British tell about their cooperation with the Dutch. It is to be expected that they would address the same subjects, and their findings would probably mirror ours.

Apparently we are dealing here with a stubborn phenomenon, which can only be approached by giving it specific attention. The Bureau Lessons Learned tries to do this by supplying a list of hints and tips as an annex to its report. The list is not presented as a regulation, but it is expressly brought to the attention of commanders and we would not withhold the reader some items from it:

- the Dutch and British service personnel should know about each other's cultures and subsequently attempt to find solutions for the differences;

- take into account that a British person higher in rank does not accept contradiction when issuing orders;
- take into account that British service personnel hardly takes initiatives beyond their own tasks;
- show your professionalism, it will speed up integration with the British;
- respect customs and views of a culture other than yours, and never ridicule them;
- operate within your tasks and responsibilities. Do not deal with matters that concern others, as this helpfulness can quickly be explained as subversive;
- be polite when addressing British officers and NCOs;
- go through the (Dutch) hierarchical channels, even when the functionary is not there for the moment; and, finally, probably the most important tip;
- always be yourself, be open and honest.

5. Concluding observations

In an essay on national differences in military cultures¹⁸ it has been suggested that in a cultural and structural respect military organizations go through a development from a coercive bureaucracy to an enabling bureaucracy. In the coercive bureaucracy hierarchy as well as rules and regulations coming from above play an important role. Compliance with the rules and orders is achieved in a coercive way, i.e. with much emphasis on disciplinary measures and punishments. In contrast, in the enabling bureaucracy rules and regulations are also important, but there is more emphasis on internalization, achieving inner conviction of the (effective) rightfulness and (moral and legal) legitimacy of assignments and orders. When the two-can rule is issued, for example, compliance can be enforced with punishment. But it should also be possible to stimulate those to whom it applies to become convinced of themselves of the use and necessity of such a rule. In an enabling bureaucracy it is therefore very important to get rid of bad rules and to steer on good ones, i.e. rules that are accepted by everyone to be inevitable and right. Another difference between good and bad rules is the extent of detail. Bad rules specify everything, whereas good rules function more as frames of reference within which the personnel has room for manoeuvring.

The above mentioned empirical research into 18 military academies has shown that certain national armed forces clearly find themselves on the coercive side of the scale, whereas others display a more enabling bureaucratic military culture.¹⁹ It will not come as a surprise after the above that the British Military Academy in Sandhurst proved to be the academy with the most explicit coercive culture, whereas the Royal Netherlands Military Academy in Breda took up a middle position, with tendencies towards the enabling culture. However fragmented the information presented in the present article may be, the first-hand data of four UNFICYP missions unambiguously confirms the truth of the empirical findings of the military academies research.

At the same time this account has shown the importance of paying attention to the stubborn phenomenon of cultural differences between armed forces. The attention begins with the production of information and this brings us to the over-all theme of this book. The intervention by the Bureau Lessons Learned with regard to the Anglo-Dutch cooperation can be considered as a way to provide cultural information that is extremely relevant for the performance of the multinational military operation in question. If the other side, the British, organized the production of cultural information about the Anglo-Dutch cooperation in the same manner, the chance of optimizing the cooperation would be increased considerably.

But not only must the information be produced, it is equally vital that it is disseminated as well. It is not sufficient to write reports, however interesting in themselves. The information must also be brought across in education and training and during the actual work up for the

mission. In this respect the role of the commander, at all levels, is crucial. If anyone can contribute to the internalization of the rules of conduct it is he. With great force of conviction and especially by setting the example he will have to motivate his people to show the right sort of behaviour with the help of the provided cultural information. General aspects of importance in this respect are: an emphasis on the combined nature of the operation, as well as the equal status of all those concerned, regardless of their nationality; boundary crossing, i.e. attempts to unite, reconcile or transfer knowledge between the various groups by means of emphasising shared experiences, directly asking others about their cultures and comparing the own culture to the other in a neutral or flattering way; and, in general, tolerating ambiguity.²⁰ That is what commanders, active in multinational military operations should do and for which they have to be trained. The importance of fostering their cultural awareness cannot be emphasized enough.

These aspects of multinational leadership do not prevent other contextual or structural matters from playing a part in the effects of culture in multinational military operations. First of all there is the time factor: as is well known, Dutch and British marines have worked together intensively for about twenty years now, reportedly to the satisfaction of all concerned. What we possibly see here are the effects of a strong Marine Corps culture that counters any Anglo-Dutch cultural differences, but more probably it is the longer duration of the cooperation that has brought both cultures closer together. A parallel example of such a successful cooperation is the British field hospital at Sivopo, where the medical staff are equally divided over the two nationalities. Again, it may be the sense of belonging to a certain medical brotherhood that suppresses mutual irritation, although even here, the Dutch have resorted to setting up their own bar. What is striking in the various reports on the Anglo-Dutch cooperation in Cyprus is that, from time to time, it is found that the own unreasonableness (on both sides) is admitted, that sometimes people adapt and quite simply begin to get used to one another. Whenever people work together for a long enough period and cultural differences are not exaggerated, a certain hybridization of cultures tends to emerge. From this perspective it would be a pity if the Anglo-Dutch cooperation in Cyprus came to an end after only three years, as was originally intended.

The second factor is the organizational structure. It seems noble, but in reality it is sometimes a little naive to have people of different origins cooperate with each other just like that. In general this does not improve cohesion and mutual trust, as is clearly shown in military social research going back as far as half a century ago. It can sometimes be more opportune to create an organization-structural separation between the various groups. In this context the remarks of a lieutenant in the first UNFICYP rotation are quite relevant: 'international integration at a level lower than the company is not successful in my view'. This may be somewhat exaggerated, but the organizational structure most certainly is a factor of importance, especially with regard to cultural differences. It was not for nothing that during the transfer of UNFICYP-II to UNFICYP-III one sector (West 2) came under Dutch command in its entirety. And as far as the Anglo-Dutch marine cooperation is concerned, there has always been a separation of lines of command.

Thirdly, the importance of giving attention to the legal differences cannot be emphasized enough. Many of the disagreements and misunderstandings described above are directly related to this aspect. Both partners should be well aware of the differences between the own and other rules and regulations if these misunderstandings and disagreements are to be avoided. As legal rules reflect the views of a society or organization, there is most certainly a relation between cultural and legal information.

Finally, the context in which the multinational operation takes place requires some attention. When there is little tension in a mission and much boredom instead, cultural friction will manifest itself much sooner than when there is a certain risk and a sense of uncertainty for all.²¹ As for this aspect, UNFICYP, with its relatively light and safe character, is perhaps not the most favourable operation with regard to the integration of cultural differences and the forming of cohesion and mutual trust. As said, uncertainty and risk bring people together, but there are also limits there. When the danger is so great that actual fighting comes into play, and, consequently, one's own life is at stake, the tolerance with others diminishes again.²² Possibly the relation between danger and cultural integration can be represented as a U-shape: when there is little danger, there is little integration; when there is some danger and uncertainty, there is integration; when there is much danger, there is again no integration. This relation is very important in an operational sense, but it has not been properly investigated yet. Once again, this last point emphasized as importance of the attention for cultural differences in multinational military operations. Most definitively, on the eve of the formation of a European Rapid Reaction Force this aspect of production and dissemination of information should be high on the agenda of the policy makers. The many victims of acts of violence that will have to be protected by this Force in the future, will be grateful for it.

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Notes

¹ J. Soeters, 'Value orientations in Military Academies; a thirteen-country study', in: *Armed Forces & Society*, 24 (1997): 7-32; J. Soeters & R. Recht, 'Culture and Discipline in Military Academies: an international comparison', in: *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, 26 (1998): 169-189

² E. Elron, B. Shamir & E. Ben-Ari, 'Why don't they fight each other? Cultural diversity and operational unity in multinational forces', in: *Armed Forces & Society*, 26 (1999): 73-97; see also, D. Winslow & P. Everts, 'It's not just a question of muscle: cultural interoperability for NATO', paper for the 50th anniversary of NATO conference, Brussels, May 1999; E. Elron, B. Shamir & E. Ben-Ari, *Cross-cultural differences in the multinational peacekeeping forces: faultlines or seamlines?*, unpublished mimeo, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 2000

³ E. Elron et al., 'Why don't they fight each other', (1999): 85; J. Soeters & R. Recht, 'Culture and Discipline in Military Academies', (1998)

⁴ C.C. Moskos, *Peace Soldiers; the Sociology of a United Nations Military Force*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1976

⁵ It may perhaps come as a surprise that cultural tension may exist between western countries that seem to be so close and have such a long history of cooperation within NATO. However, there are comparable experiences, for instance with regard to Danish-US military cooperation. See: H. Soerensen, *Warriors in peacekeeping operations: points of tension in complex cultural encounters*, unpublished mimeo, Copenhagen, July 1999

⁶ <http://un.org/Depts/DPKO/Missions/unficyp/unficypB.html>. See also: A. James, 'The UN Force in Cyprus', in: *International Affairs*, 1989: 481-500; M. Evriviades & D. Bourantonis, 'Peace-keeping & peacemaking: some lessons from Cyprus', in: *International Peacekeeping*, 4 (1994): 394-412. A recent publication is: C.H. Dodd (ed.), *Cyprus. The need for new perspectives*, Eothon Press, Huntingdon, 1999

⁷ A. Beevor, *Inside the British Army: 278-280*, Corgi Books, Reading, 1991

⁸ J. Soeters, 'Value orientations in military academies', (1997); J. Soeters & R. Recht, 'Culture and Discipline in military academies', (1998). In the following ample use is made of a term

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- paper written by two Dutch lieutenants who have been on a mission to Cyprus: the Lieutenants D. Brink & F. van Rosendaal, *Binational cooperation during UNFICYP-II and UNFICYP-III*, term paper (student thesis), KMA-II, Breda, November 2000
- 9 J. Hockey, *Squaddies. Portrait of a subculture*, University of Exeter Press, Exeter, 1986
- 10 For an interesting inside view on recruitment, discipline and training, see: A. Beevor, *Inside the British Army*: 13-27, Corgi Books, Reading, 1991; A. McNab, *Immediate Action*: 7-32, Corgi Books, Reading, 1995
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