THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES

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PREFACE

IN many of the new states that have emerged in the recent era of de-colonization the military play a vital role. As a revolutionary force they have contributed to the disintegration of traditional political order; as a stabilizing force they have kept some countries from falling prey to Communist rule; as a modernizing force they have been champions of middle-class aspirations or of popular demands for social change and have provided administrative and technological skills to the civilian sector of countries in which such skills are scarce.

Modern social science has made no serious and sustained effort to study the role of the military in the underdeveloped countries on a comparative basis. We lack a social typology of soldiers. We have little knowledge of the extent to which the military are committed to ideas of industrialization and free political institutions. Data on the social recruitment of officers in various underdeveloped countries are scarce. The relationship between the maintenance of internal order and the needs of national defense varies widely in the new states, but these variations have thus far eluded political theory. The paucity of information on which comparative studies must be based is only one of the reasons for the halting effort of Western social scientists in this area of inquiry. Another reason is a time-honored intellectual bias. From the times of Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer, when sociology became an independent discipline, "militarism" and "militaristic" societies have been criticized as forms of life that are morally inferior to modern industrial society. All too often societies in which the military perform an important political role have been regarded in historical perspective as cruder, more "barbaric" forms of social organization, destined to be replaced as civilization "progressed" by

more liberal and more "rational" social structures. This bias has hampered the dispassionate study of the military profession in Western society by diverting the intellectual curiosity of sociologists to politically less important professions; it has also made sociologists insensitive to the challenging task of contributing to the understanding of the "illiberal" aspects of life in non-Western societies. Most of what sociologists know today about the role of war and the military in Western society they have learned not from their colleagues but from historians, diplomats, and journalists; and the study of the military in modern non-Western society is still in its infancy.

In order to provide a forum for the exchange of information and ideas on militarism, The RAND Corporation sponsored a conference held at Santa Monica in August 1959. This volume is the result of that conference. The papers presented herein focus on military-political developments in some of the newly emergent states of the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa, and in the countries of Latin America. The authors are historians or political scientists who combine an interest in military affairs with a knowledge of a particular area of the world. Their thoughtful and realistic assessments of the contemporary role of the military are a significant contribution to social and political analysis.

Thanks are due to Professor John J. Johnson of Stanford University, the principal editor of the book, to Ciro E. Zoppo and William W. Taylor, both of The RAND Corporation, for reportorial and editorial services respectively, and to Mrs. Joan Culver, who read the proofs and prepared the index.

Hans Speier
Chairman, Research Council
The RAND Corporation

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THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES

INTRODUCTION

BY JOHN J. JOHNSON

IN Central and South America, Africa, and Asia, hundreds of millions of people are struggling desperately to acquire national personalities and to share the social and material advantages that more privileged societies take for granted. Old orders have crumbled or are crumbling. Leaders have turned their backs on ancient obligations and time-honored practices. The masses, who historically lacked the power of sustained indignation, have now served notice that they will no longer be dissuaded from seeking self-expression. Industrialization has been made synonymous with progress, and progress is demanded —by revolution if necessary. Tensions have built up and in some cases have reached sinister proportions. The locus of power has often shifted erratically, but always in favor of the new groups or those elements within established groups that are in the greatest hurry. Those in whose favor the stream of politics is running are convinced that their countries' problems are not exclusively their own, that they must and will have help from the outside.

This volume examines the role of the armed forces in the profound and continuing transformation that much of the world is experiencing. The authors are invariably more concerned with those officers who have used armies for extramilitary purposes than with those who have devoted themselves to preparing for armed combat. In particular they have addressed themselves to the problems of why transitional societies apparently find it easier to create modern armies than most other modern structures, and why armed forces that have not distinguished themselves on any battlefield and that prepare for wars that never

or seldom occur are allotted such a large share of the national income. The basic search throughout, however, is for indications of how politicians in uniform compete with nationalists, state-oriented bureaucrats, and Westernized intellectuals. And when officers seize power from civilians, as they have on innumerable occasions in societies at all stages of development, their charismatic qualities and administrative and organizational skills are scrutinized, among other reasons, for an answer to the question of why military governments have promoted national development and democratic practices in some countries and have been a retarding influence in others.

The reader may be impressed with the similarities in the reasons that the military adduce for becoming involved in civilian affairs in such diverse cultures as those found in the Western Hemisphere, the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. He may also be impressed with the numerous times that the failure of civilian leaders to act relevantly and consistently has paved the way for the military to penetrate civilian institutions. The thoughtful reader who finishes the volume may want to reflect even further than we who wrote it on the many alternatives open to the young revolutionary, modest and egalitarian in spirit, when he becomes a middle-aged militarist, enjoying the perquisites of office, the symbols of status, and the benefits of power.

In addition to the general themes and problems that this broad view of militarism presents, each of the major areas of the developing world has its own contribution to make to a better understanding of the military problem.

Latin America affords unusual opportunities to study militarism in depth since many of the twenty republics have been governed by their armies throughout much of their independent existences, which in most cases date from the early nineteenth century. Every one of these re-

publics teaches a bitter lesson in personalistic control based on military force. Some of the states that have attained a relatively high degree of cultural maturity and have broadened their political bases may serve for the study of the decline of personalism and the rise of militarism on an institutional basis—the junta—or even for the conditions under which militarism may decline.

If Burma, Thailand, and Indonesia may be considered representative of the newly independent nations of Southeast Asia, then that region is probably the best one in which to observe the military as a modernizing and Westernizing influence. Burma and Thailand afford an additional and unusual opportunity for examining the effects of military training on political behavior and values, because their civilian and military bureaucracies come from the same social and economic groups and in many cases from the same families.

In the Middle East, militarism is in full flower, and the roles of the military are as diverse as the countries they dominate. Some armies are of recent origin, progressive, and motivated by nonprofessional incentives. They are concerned for their countries' dignity. They have taken upon themselves the task of giving dynamic impetus to radical change. Others are only gradually divesting themselves of values that were institutionalized far in the past. But whether the armed forces are new, transitional, or traditional, it is abundantly clear that militarism is well entrenched in the Middle East and that a greater effort than most countries can now muster will be needed to dislodge it.

But in the midst of the instability that characterizes the Middle East is newly created and highly stable Israel. It is this country that provides impressive proof that new states, created under relatively favorable conditions, do not have to turn to their armed forces for political, social, and

economic leadership, even when they are surrounded, as Israel is, by neighbors who have submitted to the domination of their armed forces. Israel, then, can serve as a check against hasty generalizations about the role of the military in emerging states.

Sub-Saharan Africa has been largely isolated from major military conflicts during the modern era, and many responsible world leaders are promoting the idea of neutralization of the new African states. But it appears that each of the new sovereign entities will create some type of military establishment, either with the assistance of a single world power or by diversifying its dependency relationships regarding all forms of aid and external involvements. It appears equally certain that the military forces that are formed will be the least developed in the contemporary world. The new states of Sub-Saharan Africa may thus prove to be richly productive laboratories for an analysis of the behavior of leaders of armies without traditions and with limited capabilities as modernizing and stabilizing forces in their relations with civilian officials and civilian institutions.

This volume, as Dr. Speier has pointed out in the Preface, was born of a conference on militarism in the developing states. It was decided to give the contributors a free hand, except that they were requested not to concern themselves with policy-making. Each article bears the stamp of its author's personality, interests, and intellectual orientation. Policy recommendations are kept to a minimum, although the volume contains much from which policy decisions could logically stem.

THE MILITARY IN THE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW STATES

BY EDWARD SHILS*

OF the more than thirty states acquiring sovereignty since the end of the Second World War, the military forces have played an important political role in at least ten. In only a few of the new states did the armed forces, mostly as guerrilla formations, play a significant role in attaining independence. In Israel, Cyprus, and the successor states of Indo-China, guerrilla armies were very important in leading the British and the French to grant independence to these countries. In Indonesia and Burma, the guerrilla forces created during the Japanese occupation played a modest and by no means decisive part in the liberation of their countries from foreign rule. In at least six of the new states, the military, although of no great moment in the attainment of sovereignty, has taken a central position in the political life of the country. Pakistan, Iraq, Sudan, the United Arab Republic, and the Republic of Korea are now under military rule. In Jordan, such security as the monarchy enjoys rests on the army. In Burma, the army insisted on its right to govern for many months; in Indonesia, the army and the President are balanced in a relationship of mutual distrust and dependence; in Lebanon, the army deliberately refrained from participation in the fitful civil war, and ultimately the care of the public weal was taken over by a general. In India, notable among all the new states for the stable subordination of the military to the civil power, one of the major political crises

* Sections of this essay are drawn by the author from his longer study, *Political Development in the New States*, Mouton and Company, The Hague, 1962.

of recent years broke out over the alleged efforts of the Defense Minister to politicize the army. In the Congo, the mutiny in the ranks of the Force Publique shattered the regime, and such internal support as the feeble government of M. Adoula has possessed rests on the tolerance of the fragmentarily reconstituted army.

In Latin America, the armed forces historically have played a role similar to that of the military in many of the new states of Asia and Africa. The older, better-established states of the West and the Communist states disclose a rather different relationship between the military and the civil sectors of the elite. In most of these countries, the military has considerable influence over foreign and defense policy, but it plays very little part in domestic policy or its administration. In the United States and France, respectively, General Eisenhower has held and General de Gaulle now holds the highest position of state, but neither their incumbency nor their administration was the intended result of actions of the armed forces. Even Germany, where the glory of the warrior was more prized than in other Western countries and where the army contributed to the downfall of the Weimar Republic, was never ruled by the army in the way that so many of the new states have been ruled during their brief existence.

How are we to account for this prominence of the military in Asian and African societies where, on the whole, martial accomplishments have not headed the list of public virtues and where, with a few exceptions, the military has not distinguished itself on the battlefield? The ascendancy of the military in the domestic life of these states has been a response to the difficulties which the new states have encountered in their efforts to establish themselves as modern sovereignties. Yet a newly autonomous regime need not inevitably yield, sooner or later, to rule by the military. The fact that it has in the new

states is evidence that there are weaknesses in them which are not compensated by those political institutions which were inherited or established at the moment of independence. These political institutions were mainly parliamentary, more or less democratic, and liberal. Military rule is one of several practicable and apparently stable alternatives when parliamentary, democratic regimes falter. The inherited and the newly engendered obstacles over which these regimes have been stumbling are more determinative than the aspirations of the military elites of these states, although the latter are not unimportant. We shall, therefore, focus our inquiry on the political and intellectual elites of the new states, examining their political skills as well as the inherited culture and social structure which they attempt to govern and transform in their pursuit of modernity.

There are very few states today which do not aspire to modernity. Not all of them, and not all the sectors of their elites, pursue each of the constituent elements of modernity with equal vigor and zeal. Nonetheless, in practically every new state, the drive toward modernity is a major factor in the country's public life. The leaders of both old and new states feel a pressing necessity to espouse policies that will modernize their nations.

Among the elites of the new states, to be "modern" means to be dynamic, concerned with the people, democratic and egalitarian, scientific, economically advanced, sovereign, and influential. The elites must range themselves against the *ancien régime* of landlords, sheikhs, chiefs, rajahs, and grand viziers in both the old and the constitutional forms. Even when they affirm the past of their country, they must stress its adaptability to present needs.

Modernity entails democracy, and democracy in the new states, even where it is not representative, must above all

be egalitarian. To the elites of the new states, modernity therefore entails the dethronement of the rich and the traditionally privileged. It involves breaking up large private estates, especially those which are owned by absentee landlords. It involves universal suffrage, even where the suffrage is exercised through the acclamation of a single-party ticket. It requires breaking the power of traditional interests of chiefs, sultans, and priests; and replacing monarchies by republics, which often maintain a similar concentration of authority. Modernity demands universal public education and equality of access to opportunities for entering into the more influential and better-rewarded positions with which even an egalitarian regime cannot dispense. To be a "modern" democracy implies, according to the prevailing conception in the new states, that the rulers should be answerable to the people for their actions. Where the rulers are not in fact so answerable, through a legislature which is popularly and periodically elected, then they allege that they exercise a stewardship on behalf of the people, and that they are answerable to the collective will—that higher will which is more real than the empirical will of their people.

To be modern is to be scientific. This means, in principle, that a modern state sets it face against such superstitious practices as divination, magic, and astrology as guides in policy-making. The elites usually claim to believe that progress rests on rational technology, and ultimately on scientific knowledge. Hence, progress involves the promotion of scientific research and the utilization of its results for the common good. Education is commonly regarded as one way of diffusing the scientific outlook among the new generation, of breaking the hold of traditional beliefs and of the traditional privileges associated with them.

The proponents of modernity—elites and counterelites—

assert that no country is modern unless it is economically advanced or progressive. To be advanced economically means to be industrialized and to have a high standard of living. No country can aspire to modernity and ignore its economic improvement. All this requires planning, employing economists and statisticians, conducting surveys, controlling the rates of saving and investment, controlling imports and foreign exchange, constructing new factories, building roads and harbors, developing railways, irrigation schemes, fertilizer production, agricultural research, forestry research, etc. These call for modern techniques of administration. To the elites of the new states, modernity seems often to call for the primacy of technology, of a technological outlook, and of persons with technological training. Technology is associated with efficiency in administration and, above all, with honesty. Corruption in administration is a constant preoccupation of counterelites, to whom it is the hallmark of both the old regime and its heirs.

Modernity requires national sovereignty, which, in the minds of its supporters, presupposes the existence of a nation which rules itself through indigenous organs and persons. With or without representative institutions, the modern sovereign state is held to embody the essence of its society. National sovereignty means not only autonomy, but also an influential and respected place as a modern nation on the world stage. The elites are extremely sensitive to their country's status among their neighbors and in the world at large, and particularly to any slights or humiliations.

"Modern" means being Western without depending on the West. The model of modernity is a picture of the West detached in some way from its geographical setting; it permits Soviet Russia and China to affirm ideals with a