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## The Nature of Military Organizations and Their

### Impact on National Strategy- Lecture 5

#### Introduction:

--The Purpose of this lecture and the assigned readings is to see if we can develop any insights into military preferences and behavior that would affect military doctrine and National Strategy, by looking at Military Organizations through the prism of "Organization Theory", i.e. viewing the Military as a "Uniformed Bureaucracy".

--"Organization Theory" represent the not very well distilled "wisdom" that management theorists and practitioners, as well as scholars in the field of political science have generated about how large, modern, private and public organizations function, and why?

--I have found this approach extremely useful in my own work, and much of what I have to say is stated somewhat differently in my book, relevant pages assigned.

--Military personnel naturally resist being categorized as "bureaucrats" and are more likely to stress their role as "warriors", the very antithesis of bureaucrats. Nevertheless, it is through the process of bureaucratization that modern military organizations have achieved their rather astonishing capabilities, not merely of doing violence, but of doing in at great distances, at high levels of intensity, in (by historical standards) a rather high degree of comfort, and even safety (ie remarkable medical capabilities)

B. MAX WEBER, the great German Sociologist of the late 19th and early 20th century was one of the first modern thinkers to systematically address the nature and causes of bureaucracy. His insights remain valid and useful . THE CHARACTERISTICS OF BUREAUCRACY ARE:

1. "the principle of fixed and official jurisdictional areas"
  - a.) "regular activities" needed to achieve org.-al. purposes are distributed in a fixed way as duties
  - b.) authority to give commands to carry out these duties is distributed in a stable way, along with means to enforce, <sup>both</sup> positive and negative
  - c.) Methodical provision for regular and continuous fulfillment of duties
2. A firmly ordered system of super- and subordination, i.e. a chain of command,
3. Management based on written documents and <sup>hence</sup> ~~materially~~ records, therefore internal communication, a history, a memory, "learning" through experience etc. (incremental)
4. Thorough and expert training
5. No part-timers or hobbyists
6. Management follows general rules, which are ~~in~~ somewhat stable, , comprehensive, and can be learned--so How to run the show can be learned, leaders can be made rather than "born"

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- C. Again according to Max Weber, the "Advantages" of bureaucracy are, (and here he waxes poetic; if you want to read some of this for yourselves, pick up From Max Weber, ed Gerth and Mills, essay entitled "Bureaucracy")

"THE DECISIVE REASON FOR THE ADVANCE OF BUREAUCRATIC ORGANIZATION HAS ALWAYS BEEN ITS PURELY TECHNICAL SUPERIORITY OVER ANY OTHER FORM OF ORGANIZATION. THE FULLY DEVELOPED BUREAUCRATIC MECHANISM COMPARES WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS EXACTLY AS DOES THE MACHINE WITH THE NON-MECHANICAL MODES OF PRODUCTION"

"PRECISION, SPEED, UNAMBIGUITY, KNOWLEDGE OF THE FILES, CONTINUITY, DISCRETION, UNITY, STRICT SUBORDINATION, REDUCTION OF FRICTION, AND OF MATERIAL AND PERSONAL COSTS--THESE ARE RAISED TO THE OPTIMUM POINT IN THE STRICTLY BUREAUCRATIC ADMINISTRATION...

AND LATER

BUREAUCRATIZATION OFFERS ABOVE ALL THE OPTIMUM POSSIBILITY FOR CARRYING THROUGH THE PRINCIPLE OF SPECIALIZING ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS ACCORDING TO PURELY OBJECTIVE CONSIDERATIONS. INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCES ARE ALLOCATED TO FUNCTIONARIES WHO HAVE SPECIALIZED TRAINING AND WHO BY CONSTANT PRACTICE LEARN MORE AND MORE."

- D. The "Causes" of Bureaucracy (AGAIN ACCORDING TO WEBER) *(more or less)*
- a) an increase in the size or scope of the "problem"
  - b) growth in public means of communication (waterways, canals, rr, roads, telephone, telegraph) i.e. commons that require constant up-keep and daily management or scheduling
  - c) technological changes that themselves require concentration of means, i.e. weapons become too expensive for a single person to own, or are dependent on constant resupply, such as guns
  - d) any sort of competition
  - e) *As a permissive condition - a money economy - that allows constant long term payment, in a form that is readily negotiable so that the recipient does not have a 2nd career in barter.*

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II. The "Bureaucratization" ("professionalization") of Armed Forces 1650-1900  
--Occurred in two waves A.) Professionalization B) Development of a core  
military management system: The General Staff, most famous and successful  
(at war) the Prussian or German General Staff

A. The 30 YEARS War to the Napoleonic Wars

1. MAJOR TRANSFORMATION

- a) From mercenary soldiers and officers, hired and paid only when combat appeared imminent or was underway; to standing armies paid all the time, peace and war, in service of one sovereign (still often many foreigners)
- b) From civilian, craft artillery-men, also hired more or less as mercenaries, to professional long service artillerymen
- c) From a relative "mob" scene, to systems of tactics and command
- d) From ill-organized, undisciplined plunder as the main mode of supply, to professional civilian and military commissaires, intendants, or commissars-- specialists in collecting taxes, stocking magazines with food and ammo, and acquiring horses and other livestock at home; doing the same for the army when it was abroad (i.e. organized "plunder" or "extraction") and ensuring some minimal amount of supplies flowing from the rear to the troops in the field.

*debasers  
currencies*

Howard p. 37; Montross, p. 285

2. CAUSES OF THE TRANSFORMATION IN WAR ie Professional Armies

- a) As Weber says, the money economy. The first standing army appears in Holland, around the end of the 16th century, armies of Maurice of Nassau, fighting for the independence of the provinces vs the Spanish occupiers. He could keep this army, train and drill it in relatively sophisticated, tactics, control it in the field, even get it to do dirty work, like the digging of siege warfare, by paying them regularly. Dutch

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commercial success as seaborne traders provided the cash.

- b) The centralization of the means of war, two subsidiary causes
- Modern weaponry, as noted earlier, needed certain replenishment that could not easily be improvised in the field by individual soldiers-- especially gunpowder for matchlocks and cannon, lead cast into bullets, grapeshot, and cannon balls, the slowmatch itself, tons of which was burned. thus some standing system for buying this stuff and getting it to the troops had to be developed
  - As the 30 Years war proceeded, the extent of devastation in the countryside and the dependence on plunder for food, forage, and horses, further and further retarded the mobility and cohesion of armies. Those who were clever enough to organize some regular means of supply from magazines prospered on the battlefield. The French seem to have been the first to work this out.
- c) The complexity of battlefield activity grew, with the number, types and complexity of the technology deployed. Trying to coordinate cavalry, pike, matchlock, and artillery was no joke, particularly given the complexity of operating the matchlock. A high premium would be attached to having a system for organizing these forces on the battlefield, and employing them, and practicing the methods in peace. Also on writing all this down, and communicating to new officers.
- d) The competition bred first by the 30 years war , but more generally sustained at the international level afterwards by the failure of Habsburgs/Catholic coalition to force the Protestants and the French into a single empire, led to the spread of these innovations. If one state arrived at an

innovation in one area that seemed effective, others usually learned about it quickly and copied it in order to avoid defeat in the next round. The competition even extended to the bureaucratization of the rest of the state apparatus, since this apparatus, especially that of tax collection, allowed the state to hire more soldiers, and to wage war more effectively. It is this dynamic that accounts for the relative sameness of Continental states by the early 18th century and their armies.

B. From the Napoleonic Wars to World War I: The Rise of the General Staff

1. An intensification of all the changes talked about earlier
  - a) The gradual replacement of the great captain, Napoleon or Wellington, aided by a relatively informal circle of personally selected advisors and sub-commanders, by a small permanent staff dedicated not only to training "great captains" but to applying the division of labor to all the myriad details and activities that the great captain had formerly carried more or less in his head or hip pocket.

2. Causes of the Development of the General Staff

(Irvine, 1938)

- a) First the extensive building of new highways, canals, bridges, and by the mid-19th century railroads. Accelerated military movement directly and by easing supply.
- b) Progress of "cartographical science and technique" allowed the preparation of much more precise maps, the lack of which had always handicapped military operations (Talk about terrain and tactics, and critical power importance)
- c) The invention of the division in the late 18th century

The division created a lot of little "combined" arms formations  
A French invention. So a "big" army could be divided into a  
lot of little armies, each with its own artillery, infantry, cavalry  
and thus capable of operating independently

d.) Increase in size of armed forces, made possible by the  
professional revolution earlier; the improvement of  
state bureaucracy, the ~~of~~ industrial revolution,  
the communications revolution, and NATIONALISM

3. The character and tasks of the General Staff

a) because of speed, mobility, size, and tactical subdivision  
of armies, War became something to be conducted on a

MAP. Thus:

--General Staffs made military maps, in painstaking detail

-- " " " set up a system of upward communication of  
tactical information to the commander--written

--General staffs set up a system for writing and communicating  
orders and information to the far flung "division" commanders

\_\_General staffs trained specialist to do all this work

--And because of the complexity, scope, and uncertainty, associated

with making war on such a large scale, General Staffs tended

to work the problem of preparing geographical information,

and making war plans, IN PEACETIME-- indeed writing the

orders and developing the timetables in advance for as many

contingencies as seemed plausible. MOREOVER, it appears that

the longer the period of peace, especially given continuing

change in the technology of war and the size of armies, the

more these plans took on a life of their own-- The greater

the commitment of the staffs to ensuring that their "great plans"

could or would be brought off as written.