# THE MILITARY

"The war to end all wars." "Peace in our time." Such hopeful pronouncements have become ironic epitaphs to the 20th century's longing for concord among nations. Two global conflagrations followed by a 45-year standoff between lethally armed superpowers cannot help but temper the optimism that came with the ending of the Cold War. As the superpowers turn swords into plowshares, we turn our attention to a matter that looms constant behind the drama of war and peace: the intimate—and some would say fateful—connections between the state and the military. From
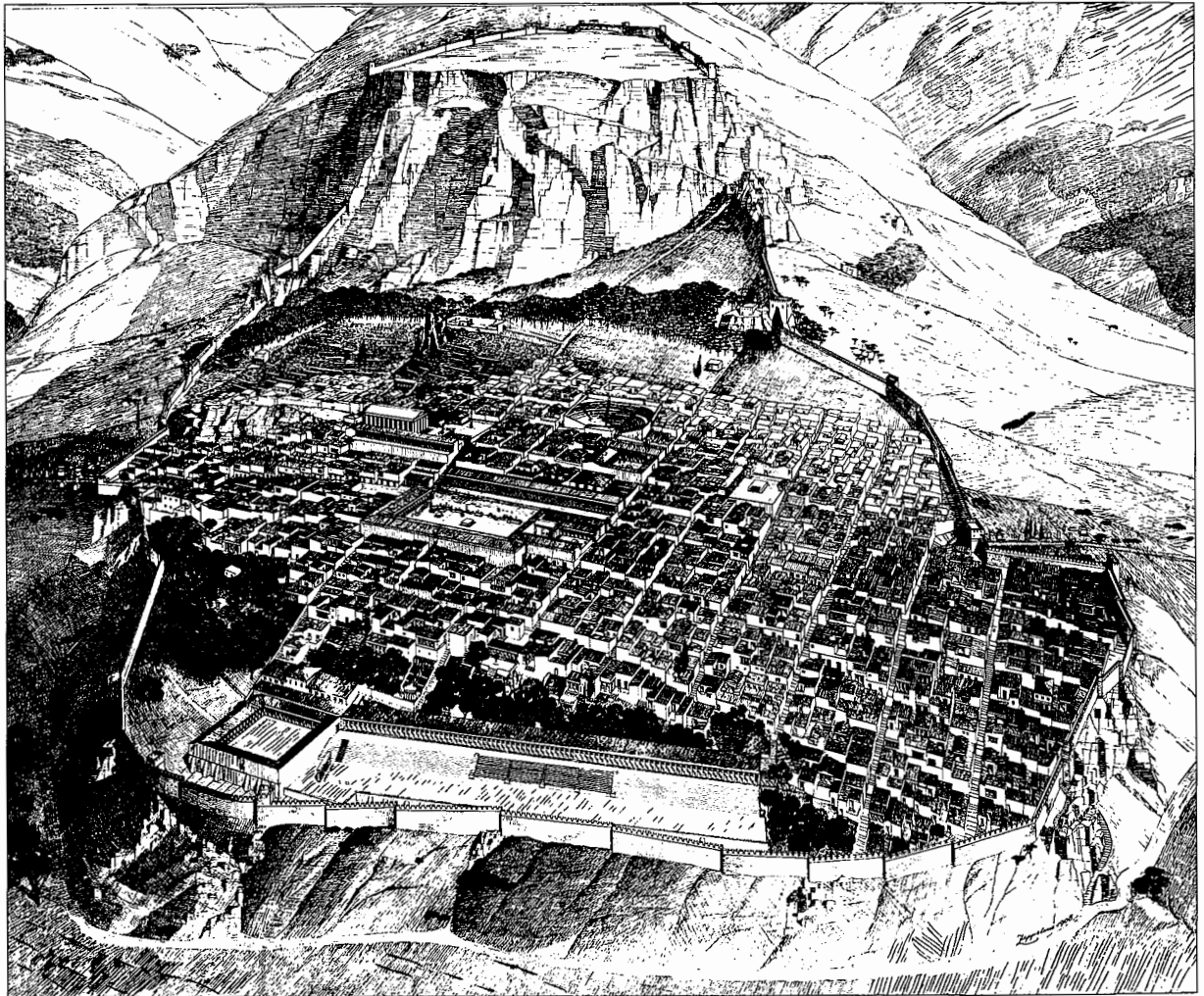
An artist's conception of the ancient Greek polis of Priene. In addition to the walls, prominent features include the stadium, the marketplace, the temple, and the theater.

AND SOCIETY

the Greek *polis* up through the modern nation-state, martial imperatives have provided nations not only with an urgent reason for being and a basis for civic loyalty but also with a model for political and social organization. Paul Rahe and Charles Townshend provide background to William James's question: Can nations find a moral equivalent of war? And Charles Moskos ponders the fate of America's military, now being transformed from a citizens' army into a social laboratory where debates over gender roles and the acceptance of open homosexuality are expected to be resolved.

THE MARTIAL REPUBLICS
OF CLASSICAL GREECE

by Paul A. Rahe

At the turn of this century, the Irish-American journalist Finley Peter Dunne wrote a column of political and social satire for a Chicago newspaper. On one occasion, he touched on the ancient world, attributing the following observation to his character, the sage of Halsted Street, Mr. Dooley:

> I know histhry isn't thrue, Hinnissy, because it ain't like what I see ivry day in Halsted Sthreet. If any wan comes along with a histhry iv Greece or Rome that'll show me th' people fightin', gettin' dhrunk, makin' love, gettin' marrid, owin' th' grocery man an' bein' without hard-coal, I'll believe they was a Greece or Rome, but not befure. Historyans is like doctors. They are always lookin' f'r symptoms. Thos iv them that writes about their own times examines th' tongue an' feels th' pulse 'an makes a wrong dygnosis. Th' other kind iv histhry is a postmortem examination. It tells ye what a country died iv. But I'd like to know what it lived iv.

Mr. Dooley's complaint deserves mention because it reflects with great precision the difficulty faced by modern historians of antiquity and by their readers as well. Like Mr. Dooley, we are eager to know more about ancient domestic life—and not only about family quarrels, drinking bouts, love, marriage, and the never-ending struggle to make ends meet. But on these and related matters, we have very little reliable information. Indeed, what Mr. Dooley could see every day on Halsted Street in Chicago are the very things the ancients took great care to hide from one another—and ultimately from us.

The dearth of evidence regarding the private sphere does nothing to assuage our curiosity, but it may in itself be revealing. We may not be able to say what the Greek cities that flourished in the epoch stretching roughly from the eighth to the fourth centuries B.C. died of, but the relative silence of our informants regarding domestic affairs suggests that the citizens of the fully

autonomous *polis* lived for something outside civilian life, a condition that Mr. Dooley and the residents of Halsted Street would have had trouble comprehending.

In their fundamental principles, modern liberal democracy and the ancient Greek *polis* stand radically opposed. The ancient city gave primacy not to the household and its attendant economic concerns but to politics and war. It was a republic oriented less toward the protection of rights than toward the promotion of virtue—first, by its very nature and, second, by its need to survive. Its cohesion was not and could not be a mere function of incessant negotiation and calculated compromise; it was and had to be bound together by a profound sense of moral purpose and common struggle.

One of America's Founding Fathers, Alexander Hamilton, captured the difference between the two regimes succinctly when he wrote in *The Federalist*, "The industrious habits of the people of the present day, absorbed in the pursuits of gain, and devoted to the improvements of agriculture and commerce are incompatible with the condition of a nation of soldiers, which was the true condition of the people of those [ancient Greek] republics." Hamilton's point is a simple one: The modern citizen is a civilian—a bourgeois family man or woman whose ancient counterpart was a warrior. Commerce defines the terms on which life is lived in modern, liberal polities. The ordinary citizen may not be a merchant himself, but the concerns of trade and industry regulate his labor with respect to time and govern the relations that unite him with his compatriots. By contrast, commerce was peripheral to the ancient economy. The ordinary Greek was a more or less self-sufficient peasant proprietor, and he needed his fellow citizens as unpaid bodyguards against the city's slaves and for the defense of his family and land against foreigners far more than he needed them for any exchange of services and goods.

In antiquity, the model for political relations was not the contract but kinship. The ancient city was, like the household, a ritual community of human beings sharing in the flesh of animals sacrificed, then cooked at a common hearth. The citizens were bound together by the myth of common ancestry and linked by a veneration of the gods and the heroes of the land. The *polis* was not and could not be the household writ large, but as Plato makes clear in *The Republic*, this is what it tried to be. The city was not a circle of friends, but as both Plato and Aristotle imply, this is what it strove to become. The citizens were not tied to one another by a web of compromise. They were, as Augustine puts it, "united by concord regarding loved things held in common."

This fundamental like-mindedness was itself sustained by that steadfast adherence to tradition (*mos maiorum*) and that pious veneration of the ancestral (*ta patria*) which the common civic rituals and legends were intended to foster. "The *polis* teaches the man." So wrote Simonides, the well-traveled poet from Iulis on Ceos. And when the Cyclops of Euripides' satyr play wants to know the identity of Odysseus and his companions, he asks whence they have sailed, where they were born, and what *polis* was responsible for their education

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(*paideia*). As long as the citizens were relatively isolated from outside influence, it mattered little, if at all, that the religious beliefs and rites of a particular city were irrational and incoherent. What mattered most was that the beliefs and rites peculiar to that city inspired in the citizens the unshakable conviction that they belonged to one another. And where it was difficult if not impossible to engender so profound a sense of fellow-feeling, as in colonies that drew their citizens from more than one metropolis, civil strife (*stasis*) was all too often the consequence. Put simply, the political community in antiquity was animated by a passion for the particular. The patriotism that gave it life was not a patriotism of universal principles, such as those enshrined in the Declaration of Independence, but a religion of blood and of soil.

Of course, the *polis* came into being in the first place because of the need for common defense. The word itself appears to be derived from an Indo-European term employed to designate the high place or citadel to which the residents of a district ordinarily retreated when subject to attack. But that high place was more than just a refuge. Even in the narrow, pristine sense of the word, the *polis* was also an enclosure sacred to the gods who lived within the city's walls. Thus, when a city pondered the establishment of a colony, it was customary for the founder (*oikistes*) to consult the oracle of Apollo at Delphi regarding the site. The failure to seek or a decision to ignore the advice of the god was thought likely to be fatal to the entire enterprise. In fact, the act of establishing a new community was itself an elaborate religious rite specified in detail by the laws. And in keeping with the divine origin and character of the new *polis*, the citizen designated as *oikistes* could expect to be buried with all solemnity in the central marketplace (*agora*), to be worshipped as a demigod and divine protector of the *polis* from the moment of his decease, and to be honored thereafter in an annual festival complete with public sacrifices and athletic games.

The political community's sense of common endeavor was grounded in its particular *patrioi nomoi*—its ancestral customs, rites, and laws. These practices and institutions distinguished a city from similar communities and defined it even more effectively than the boundaries of the civic territory (*chora*) itself. If forced to abandon its *chora*, a *polis* could nonetheless retain its identity. The sage Heraclitus took this for granted when he wrote that "the people must fight for the *nomos* as if for the walls of the *polis*." When a Greek city went to war, the citizens battled not just to expand their dominion and to protect their wives, children, and land; they fought also to defend their *patrioi nomoi* and the entire way of life which these embodied.

This spirit carried over into the conduct of foreign affairs. Even where military cooperation was the only end sought, the Greeks tended to invest any confederacy they joined with moral and even religious foundations. This is why cities that formed such a connection often adopted each other's gods, founded a common festival, or sent delegations to share in each other's principal rites. In 428 B.C., when the Mytilenians were intent on securing aid from Sparta and its allies, they couched their request in terms that would find favor. "We recognize," they remarked, "that no friendship between private individuals will ever be firm and no community among cities will ever come to anything unless the parties involved are persuaded of each other's virtue and are otherwise similar in their ways: For disparate deeds arise from

discrepancies in judgment."

Fifty-one years before, in a time of like trouble, the Spartans' Athenian rivals resorted to similar rhetoric. On the eve of the Battle of Plataea, the Spartans expressed fear that the citizens of Athens, their allies of the moment, would come to terms with the Persians. In response, the Athenians mentioned two reasons why they could not conceive of abandoning the struggle against the Mede. First, they explained, it was their duty to avenge the burning of their temples and the destruction of the images of their gods. "Then," they added, "there is that which makes us Hellenes—the blood and the tongue that we share, the shrines of the gods and the sacrifices we hold in common, and the likeness in manners and in ways. It would not be proper for the Athenians to be traitors to these." In neither case was the presence of a shared enemy deemed adequate. Though separated by half a century, the two speeches were in accord: The only secure foundation for alliance was a common way of life.

The conviction so firmly stated by the Mytilenians and the Athenians contributed in a variety of ways to the actual making of policy. Cities with a common origin and extremely similar *nomoi* rarely went to war. The ordinary Greek colony, for example, generally had customs, rites, and laws closely akin to those of the mother city. Even when the two were fully autonomous, they usually maintained close ties, and the colony was expected to defer in most matters to the metropolis and to send a delegation with gifts of symbolic import to join in celebrating the principal festival of that community. The failure of a colony to perform what were seen as its moral obligations was deemed shocking in the extreme, and it could give rise to a bitterness that might easily overshadow the cold calcula-

tion of interests. As the historian Thucydides makes abundantly clear, one cannot make sense of the origins of the Peloponnesian War (431–404 B.C.) without paying close attention to the deep-seated anger that shaped the Corinthians' policy towards their renegade colonists the Corcyraeans.

The forceful response that the Spartan expression of distrust elicited from the Athenians in 479 B.C. deserves a second glance. The great struggle against Persia did in fact bring home to the Hellenes all that they held in common—the blood and the tongue that they shared, the shrines of the gods and the public sacrifices, and their similarity in manners and ways. It was natural in the aftermath of that war, particularly when the Great King of Persia started once again to meddle in Hellenic affairs, for some Greeks to begin to argue that wars within Hellas were not properly wars at all but examples of civil strife and, as such, reprehensible. But though such arguments were made, they had very little effect.

If the Greeks were nonetheless inclined to make war on each other, it was at least in part because the disparate communities were never sufficiently similar in manners and in morals. What brought the citizens of a particular *polis* together set them apart from others; what united them as a people set them in opposition to outsiders. They held their land at the expense of slaves and foreigners, and they pursued the way of life peculiar to them in defiance of notions elsewhere accepted. When in Plato's *Republic* Polemarchus ("war-leader") defines justice as "doing good to friends and harm to enemies," he is merely reasserting on the personal level the grim civic ethic suggested by his name. In ancient Greece, patriotism went hand in hand with xenophobia. If "civil strife is not to thunder in the city," Aeschylus's divine chorus warns the Athenians, the citizens "must return joy for joy in a spirit of common love—and they

must hate with a single heart."

The implications of all of this were not lost on the American Founding Fathers. Perhaps because of his own experience as a soldier, Alexander Hamilton recognized the warlike demeanor of the ancient agricultural republics more clearly than many who have come after, and this recognition played no small role in determining his adherence to James Madison's bold project of refashioning the disparate American states into an extended commercial republic. When confronted by the arguments of those who believed that no viable republic could be constructed on so vast a territory, Hamilton retorted that the American states were themselves already too large. Those who took such arguments seriously would have to choose between embracing monarchy and dividing the states "into an infinity of little, jealous, clashing, tumultuous commonwealths, the wretched nurseries of unceasing discord, and the miserable objects of universal pity or contempt."

On more than one occasion, the Greeks were forced to choose between the alternatives posed by Hamilton, and in all but the most difficult of circumstances most, if not all, preferred the jealousy, the tumult, the unceasing discord, and the excitement of life in the fully autonomous *polis* to the relative tranquillity promised in exchange for their absorption into a great empire. In considering the character of the *polis*, we must never lose sight of the permanence of conflict that afflicted Greek life. The ordinary Hellene would have nodded his approval of the opinion attributed by Plato to the lawgiver of Crete: "What most men call peace, he held to be only a name; in truth, for everyone, there exists by nature at all times an undeclared war among all the cities." Such was the human condition in Greece, where political freedom took pre-

cedence over commodious living.

Because the ancient city was a brotherhood of warriors and not an association of merchants, the principal task of legislation was the promotion of public-spiritedness and not the regulation of competing economic interests. It is revealing that, in Plato's *Republic*, a discussion of the best regime rapidly turns into a dialogue on character formation. Unfortunately, even under the best of circumstances, the nurturing of civic virtue was a difficult undertaking—one that called for the deliberate shaping of the citizens' passions and opinions. Even when everything has been done to ensure that the citizens have the same interests, there remains a tension between private inclination and public duty, between individual self-interest and the common good that is impossible fully to resolve. Death and pain are the greatest obstacles: They bring a man back upon himself, reminding him that when he suffers, he suffers alone. As a consequence, the quality which Plato and Aristotle called civic or political courage is rare: It is not by instinct that a man is willing to lay down his life for his fellow citizens. He must be made to forget the ineradicable loneliness of death. The fostering of courage, self-sacrifice, and devotion to the common good requires artifice, and this is why Plato's discussion of character formation rapidly turns into a dialogue on poetry and its chief subject: man's relations with the gods.

Even the most skeptical of the Greeks acknowledged the religious roots of that "reverence and justice" that served as the "regulators of cities" and the "bonds uniting" the citizens "in friendship." In Critias's satyr play *The Sisyphus*, the protagonist has occasion to discuss the origins of that cooperative capacity that makes political life possible. "There was a time," he notes, "when the life of human

beings was without order and like that of a hunted animal: the servant of force. At that time, there was neither prize for the noble nor punishment for the wicked. And then human beings, so it seems to me, established laws in order that justice might be a tyrant and hold arrogance as a slave, exacting punishment if anyone stepped out of line." This stratagem worked well in most regards, but it was of limited effectiveness in one decisive respect—for "though the laws prevented human beings from committing acts of violence in the full light of day, men did so in secret." It required "a real man, sharp and clever in judgment," to find a remedy for this deficiency; when he finally appeared, he "invented for mortals dread of the gods, so that there would be something to terrify the wicked even when they acted, spoke, or thought entirely in secret." Critias's Sisyphus was by no means alone in making this assertion. In one fashion or another, Aristotle, Isocrates, Polybius, Diodorus, Strabo, Quintus Mucius Scaevola, Marcus Terentius Varro, and Marcus Tullius Cicero all echo his claim.

The skepticism voiced by these luminaries was foreign to the ordinary Greek, but the political importance that these men ascribed to religion was not. The *polis* had a civic religion, and that religion was one of the chief sources of its unity and morale. For the Greeks, the gods were a constant presence. The Olympians might be thought to stand above the fray, but the gods and heroes of the land were taken to be the city's protectors, sharing in its glory and suffering its reverses. In Greece as well as in Rome, it was commonly believed that no town could be captured prior to the departure of its patron deities. For this reason, some cities chained their gods down, and it was an event of profound political importance when a citizen managed to discover abroad and remove to a final resting place within the territory of his own *polis* the bones of a hero. Securing and maintaining divine favor was vital. As a consequence, propitiation of the gods could never be simply a private matter; piety was a public duty.

Just as the piety of the citizens was thought to protect the city, so also their misdeeds could threaten its survival. Indeed, the whole community might be made to suffer for the sins of a single man. Pindar compares divine vengeance to "a fire on a mountainside: though begotten of a single seed, it removes a great forest entirely from sight." As a consequence, men were unwilling to take ship with an individual deemed guilty of offending the gods, and cities found it necessary to expel or even execute the impious and those who had polluted the community by murder, manslaughter, or some other infraction.

Just as patriotism required piety, so piety demanded patriotism. Treason was more than a political act, at least as politics is narrowly defined in modern times. The man who turned coat or simply abandoned his city in time of crisis betrayed not just his fellow citizens; he betrayed the gods as well. This explains why one peripatetic writer chose to list "offenses against the fatherland" under the category of "impiety." It also explains why the law of Athens equated treason with the robbing of temples. The Athenians dealt with the two crimes in a single statute that called not just for the guilty party's execution but also for the confiscation of his property and a denial to him of burial in his native soil.

To reinforce the conviction that the gods required of citizens a total devotion to the common good, the ancient cities resorted to the administering of oaths. Fortunately for us, an Athenian orator took the trouble to explain in detail the logic of this practice to the members of a jury. "The oath is the force holding the democracy to-

gether," he observed. "Our regime is composed of three elements: the magistrate, the juryman, and the private individual. Each of these is required to give his pledge, and quite rightly so. For many have deceived human beings and escaped notice, not only by eluding immediate dangers but also by remaining unpunished for their crimes through the rest of the time allotted to them. But no oath-breaker escapes divine notice; no man of this sort can avoid the vengeance that the gods exact. Even if a perjurer manages to escape retribution himself, his children and his entire family will fall upon great misfortunes." This religious understanding guided civic policy throughout all of Hellas.

Except during an emergency, it was probably not the norm for a community to exact from all of its citizens at once a pledge of their loyalty. It was common within the Greek cities to make provision for the military training of the young. Ordinarily, it seems to have been deemed sufficient that these youths be called upon to swear once and for all at the time of their initiation into manhood that they would stake their lives to protect the community, their fellow citizens, and the institutions they held in common.

The demands placed on the ordinary Greek soldier, or hoplite, and the moral support afforded him in his moment of trial went far beyond anything imagined by the average soldier today. As Aristotle emphasizes, mutual acquaintanceship was one of the features that distinguished the Greek *polis* from a nation. If the *polis* was to function properly, he suggests, it had to be "easily surveyed" so that the citizens might know each other's characters. Most of the cities were small towns, and in only a few did the citizen body exceed a few thousand. There was little, if any privacy, and the citizen's entire existence was bound up with his participation in the religious and political affairs of the community. The Greek soldier was well-known to the men around him. He had spent the better part of his leisure time in their company: When not in the fields, he would leave the household to his wife and loiter about the blacksmith's shop, the palaestra, the gymnasium, or the marketplace, discussing politics and personalities, testing his strength and his wit against the qualities of his contemporaries, and watching the boys as they grew up. He lived for those hours when, freed from the necessity of labor, he could exercise the faculties—both moral and intellectual— that distinguished him from a beast of burden and defined him as a man. When deprived of reputation, he was deprived of nearly everything that really mattered. In classical Greece, the absence of a distinction between state and society was as much a practical as a theoretical matter: It meant that the citizen lived most of his life in the public eye, subject to the scrutiny of his compatriots and dependent on their regard. To be identified as a draft evader, accused of breaking ranks, or branded a coward and, in consequence, to be shunned or deprived of one's political rights could easily be a fate worse than death.

In time of war, the Greek citizen could not escape combat. No allowance was made for conscientious objection, there were no desk jobs, and slaves and metics performed whatever support functions the hoplite could not perform for himself. More often than not, he was fighting near his home in defense of his children and his land. And even when he was posted abroad, he was acutely aware that the city's safety and his family's welfare depended on the outcome of the struggle.

On the field of battle, this foot soldier would be posted alongside his fellow citizens as they advanced, shoulder to shoul-

der, marching in step—in some communities, to the tune of a flute. The phalanx was generally eight men deep, and it extended as far as the numbers and the terrain permitted. There was no place to hide. Ancient battles took place on open terrain, and this infantryman's behavior under stress would be visible to many, if not to all. For success, the modern army depends on the courage of the minority of men who actually fire their guns. The Greek phalanx depended on the effort of every man. The strength of this chain of men was no greater than that of its weakest link, for it took a breach at only one point for the formation to collapse. As a result, the behavior of a single hoplite could sometimes spell the difference between victory and rout. The man who betrayed his fellows, leaving them to die by breaking ranks, would not soon be forgiven and could never be forgotten. In a sense, he had spent his entire life preparing for this one moment of truth.

The process of preparation for that moment of truth required a great deal of time and effort. Toil undertaken for the sake of profit might be regarded as shameful, but toil undertaken for the sake of good order and victory in battle was honorable, and its avoidance was a source of unending shame. This fact explains the centrality of athletics in ancient Greek life. If the wealthy young men of the town spent their idle hours at the palaestra and the gymnasium, it was not simply or even chiefly because they were driven by narcissism. Indeed, their primary concerns

were public, not private. In a tyranny such as the one established by Aristodemus at Cumae on the northern marches of Italy's Magna Graecia, there was to be no public sphere, and it might therefore seem prudent and even appropriate for the despot to do what he could to suppress the noble and manly disposition of the young by closing the gymnasiums and banning the practice of arms, by draping the young boys of the town in finery and keeping them out of the hot sun, and finally by sending them off, their long hair curled, adorned with flowers, and doused with perfume, to study with the dance masters and the players of flutes. But where the public sphere survived, this would never do. Republics needed real men, and citizens with the leisure in which to ready themselves for the ordeal of battle were expected to do so. "It is necessary," as Montesquieu observes, "to look on the Greeks as a society of athletes and warriors."

The historian Herodotus hammers away at the need for toil with particular vehemence. The manner in which he turns his description of the Battle of Lade into a parable is a case in point. In 499 B.C., the Greeks who inhabited the coastal communities of Asia Minor and the islands of the eastern Aegean had joined together in rebellion against their royal master, the Great King of Persia. A few years later, they sent naval contingents to the island of Lade, which lay off Miletus, the largest and most prosperous of the coastal towns. There, the rebels intended to make a concerted effort to prevent the Phoenician fleet of the Mede

from regaining control of the sea and putting an end to their revolt. Upon the arrival of the various contingents, Dionysius of Phocaea reportedly addressed them in the following fashion: "Men of Ionia, our affairs—whether we are to be free men or slaves (and fugitive slaves at that)—stand balanced on a razor's edge. If, for the time being, you are willing to subject yourselves to hard work, you will have to submit to toil on the spot, but you shall be able to overcome those opposed to you and so go free. If, however, you prefer softness and disorder, I have no hope that you can avoid paying to the king the penalty for your revolt."

The Ionians initially took Dionysius's advice. According to Herodotus, they toiled for seven days from dawn to dusk, rowing their ships and practicing maneuvers under the Phocaean's direction. But because the men of the islands and coast were soft and unaccustomed to toil, many among them soon became ill, and in due course the rowers wearied of hardship and rebelled. Then they labored no more but instead erected tents on the island and took shelter there from the harsh rays of the sun. The Ionians paid dearly for their weakness. The Persian generals had promised to pardon any among the rebels who turned coat, and as a consequence of the rowers' indolence and insubordination the Samian generals became persuaded that the cause was hopeless and elected to accept the king's offer. Thus, just as the battle began, the contingent from Samos—followed quickly by the triremes from Lesbos—sailed off, leaving the remaining Ionians to certain defeat. He-

rodotus might have added that these men got precisely what they deserved, but he had no need to spell out his point.

Needless to say, toil, endurance, and good order were no less necessary for those destined to engage in combat on land. When Xenophon singles out farming as a profession likely to prepare men for war, he has more in mind than the fact that those who cultivate the soil have an interest in its defense. "The earth," his Socrates remarks, "supplies good things in abundance, but she does not allow them to be taken by the soft but accustoms men to endure the wintry cold and summer's heat. In exercising those who work with their own hands, she adds to their strength, and she makes men of those who, in farming, take pains, getting them up early and forcing them to march about with great vigor. For in the country as in the town, the tasks most fitting to the time must be done in season." Xenophon's Ischomachus even asserts that agriculture teaches generalship, noting that victory generally depends less on cleverness than on the thoroughness, diligence, and care exhibited by the sort of men who have learned from long experience the necessity of taking precautions.

Courage, strength, endurance, and diligence were vital, but they were not the only virtues demanded of the citizen-warrior in classical times. In certain crucial respects, the hoplite was quite unlike the heroes of *The Iliad*. He and his opponents fought not on their own but in formation. Therefore,

he could not afford to be a berserker, driven by rage to run amok among the enemy host, for he could not break ranks to charge the enemy line without doing himself and his own side great harm. To achieve victory, the hoplite and his comrades had to display what the Greeks called *sophrosune*—the moderation and self-restraint expected of a man required to cooperate with others in both peace and war. Consequently, in considering the education to which young Greeks were customarily subjected, one would err in dwelling on athletic contests and military maneuvers to the exclusion of all else, for Greek boys were expected to toil at music as well. In fact, to judge by the remarks made by the greatest of the ancient philosophers, the study of music played a vital role in giving a young man the psychological preparation he needed for the assumption of his duties as a citizen and soldier. In Plato's *Republic*, the interlocutors of Socrates take it for granted that education consists of gymnastic exercise and musical training. Initially, Socrates treats exercise at the gymnasium as a hardening of the body. But as the argument unfolds, he introduces another, more important consideration—the effect of that hardening on the soul, and the danger that guardians subjected to gymnastic training alone will be savage toward one another and toward their fellow citizens as well. Poetry set to music he presents as an instrument capable of moderating and harmonizing—in short, of civilizing—the all-important quality of spiritedness.

In *The Laws*, Plato's Athenian Stranger takes a similar tack, arguing at length and with considerable psychological insight that participation in choral singing and dancing can habituate the young and the not so young to take pleasure in that which is good and to feel loathing and disgust when presented with that which is not.

Even Aristotle thought such pursuits an antidote to the savagery bred of the ancient city's obsessive preoccupation with war. In fact, like his mentor, he was persuaded that a *polis* devoted to music and the arts would be a far healthier and saner polity than a community dedicated to conquest and imperial rule and consequently riven by political ambition and strife.

One of the more telling indications of the degree to which the warrior ethos permeated every aspect of Greek life is the prevalence of pederasty throughout Hellas. No ancient author gives us a full and detailed report of the conventions that guided Greek behavior in the various cities, and the surviving plays, courtroom harangues, philosophical dialogues, and vase representations that throw light on the elaborate code of homosexual courtship pertain chiefly to Athens. But though the evidence is fragmentary, the general pattern is clear: The Greeks seem to have practiced pederasty as a rite of passage marking a boy's transition to manhood and his initiation into the band of citizen-soldiers. And even where wooing adolescent boys was the fashion only among men of leisure, pederasty was conceived of by its many proponents as a reinforcement of those ties of mutual acquaintanceship that were universally recognized as the foundation of civil courage.

The pattern is evident in Ephorus's description of prevailing practice in the region of Greece where the *polis* as a religious and military community governed by constitutional forms seems first to have emerged. In Crete, the younger boys attended the men's mess with their fathers. Under the direction of the warden associated with that mess, those slightly older learned their letters, memorized the songs prescribed by the laws, and tested their strength against one another and against

those associated with other messes. When the boys turned 17, the most distinguished among them gathered their less well-born contemporaries into herds, each collecting as large a personal following as possible. Fed at public expense and subject to their recruiter's father, they practiced hunting, participated in footraces, and—at appointed times—joined in battle against rival herds, marching in formation to the cadence of the flute and the lyre. This period of apprenticeship reached completion when a man of distinguished family took as

land that the custom spread to the remainder of Greece. Concerning the other Hellenic cities we are less well informed, but all that we do know suggests that pederasty elsewhere served precisely the same function. Hunting, which was everywhere considered a form of training for war, and homosexual courtship appear to have been as closely connected in Athens as they were on Crete. On Thera, sodomy seems to have been linked with rituals honoring Apollo Delphinios and marking the boy's transition to manhood. At Thebes, when the be-

A vase painting dating from the 5th century B.C. depicts Greek soldiers, or hoplites, running forward in the close phalanx formation.

his beloved the boy who had gathered the herd in the first place.

This ritual abduction marked the first stage in the process by which an aristocratic boy and his followers were prepared for initiation into manhood. Together, they were forcibly withdrawn from the community of ephebes, and for a transitional period they slipped off to the wilds. When they came back, they immediately took wives and joined the community of men.

Pederasty was evidently one of the central institutions of the martial communities of Crete, and it was probably from this is-

loved one was enrolled as a man, his lover conferred on him the hoplite panoply; in fourth-century Elis, as well as in Thebes, the couple would fight as a pair in the ranks. "It is the part of a prudent general," Onasander would later remark, to encourage his heavy infantrymen to take risks on behalf of those alongside them in the battle line by stationing "brothers next to brothers, friends next to friends, and lovers next to the boys they love."

Classical Hellas encompassed an array of independent communities stretching from the east coast of the Black Sea to the

far reaches of the western Mediterranean. Language, literature, religion, culture, republican institutions, proximity to the sea, and diminutive size—these common characteristics made the ancient *poleis* much alike and very different at the same time. The last on this list of characteristics may well be the most important. Smallness in size gives rise to familiarity, and familiarity breeds contempt in more than one way. The defense of familiarity requires xenophobia, since all outside contact is a threat to the integrity of the community. The *polis* was akin to a party of zealots, and Alexander Hamilton was right when, in *The Federalist*, he described Hellas as "an infinity of little, jealous, clashing, tumultuous commonwealths." There was variety enough in the local circumstances and traditions of these apparently similar communities to set them incessantly at odds. And, strange to tell, the unity of the Greek world owed much to this very variety and to the conflicts it engendered. Radical particularity makes for a certain uniformity. Athenaeus, a Greek who wrote in the third century A.D., rightly made no distinction among *poleis* when he wrote that "the men of olden times thought courage the greatest of the political virtues," and what he had to say was as true for Rome as it was for the republics of Greece. Even where the institutions of the various cities were structurally different, the constant threat of war made them functionally similar.

As a type of community, the *polis* rested on its citizen militia and fell only when that militia was overwhelmed. The modern distinction between soldier and civilian did not pertain in the classical republics, and when that distinction emerged and the professional soldier became a figure of genuine importance—initially in Greece in the age of Philip of Macedon (359–36 B.C.) and

Alexander the Great (336–23 B.C.), and again later at Rome in the time of Marius, Sulla, Pompey, and Caesar—freedom's existence became quite tenuous. Even where the city survived and retained a modicum of local autonomy, it did so on the sufferance of monarchs.

Something of the sort also could be said regarding the quasi-autonomous urban republics of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. As Machiavelli makes clear in his *Art of War*, their failure to establish a militia capable of securing their defense rendered their retention of liberty largely a matter of chance. Indeed, it was only with the rise of popular armies at the time of the French Revolution that modern republicanism gained more than a foothold on the European continent. The degree to which the modern, democratic nation-state owes its solidarity, its sense of identity, and even its existence to the threat and experience of war cannot be overestimated. To date, at least, no lawgiver or state-builder has discovered what William James once termed a "moral equivalent of war."

Modern republicanism may be at odds with its ancient prototype in many particulars. But until such a moral equivalent has been discovered and deployed in practical, political form, Mr. Dooley's preoccupation with what could be seen every day on Halsted Street will render him and those similarly focused on domestic affairs as incapable of making a correct diagnosis of the modern condition as they are of understanding the history of ancient Greece and Rome. In the absence of a pacific equivalent of war, the breach between modernity and antiquity will remain incomplete and the martial republicanism of the classical Greeks will still be with us in one, crucial regard.

MILITARISM AND MODERN SOCIETY

by Charles Townshend

Un soldat de la liberté
Quand il est par elle exalté
Vaut mieux à lui seul que cent esclaves
 —Theodore Rousseau, 1793

[A soldier of liberty, exalted by her, is worth more than a hundred slaves]

In 1793, Year I of the French Republic, the town of St. Quentin in Picardy changed the name of one of its streets from rue Ste. Catherine to rue Grenadier Malfuson. Malfuson was a "soldier of liberty," one of the volunteers of 1792, who had died in battle around Lille. To name a street after one of the *menu peuple*, the people of no importance, was in 18th-century France a truly astonishing, revolutionary gesture. Critics of the Revolution might contend that it was an empty one, but its symbolic force cannot be easily set aside. Alongside thousands of parallel happenings, local, national, and international, it gave form to a general sense of decisive transition. The mobilization of the people for war seemed to lie at the heart of this epochal change. It promised a wholly new relationship between armed
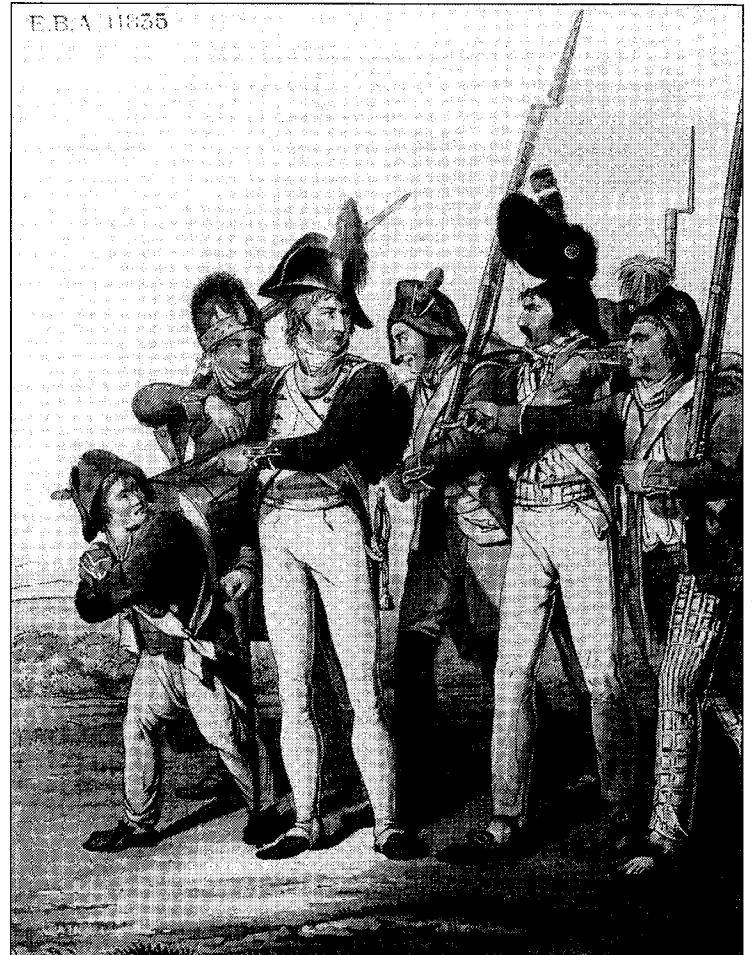
Infantrymen of the French republican army around 1793, when the order for mass conscription, the levée en masse, was issued.

forces and societies: "democracy in arms" in the shape of huge "citizen armies" raised by universal military service.

The link between modern society and large-scale armed forces has, since the French Revolution, seemed plain, but it has never been straightforward. Indeed, to many it has always seemed paradoxical, if not actually perverse. Modernization has been thought of as a comprehensive, final shift, driven by industrialization and signaled by the triumph of secularization, literacy, and democracy—in short, the civic culture. Amidst this progress, war was seen by most 19th-century liberals as a barbaric survival, doomed to eventual extinction. According to this view, democratizing the institutions of war, above all, armies, should have been a prelude to their fairly rapid disappearance. William Gladstone, who served as his nation's prime minister four times between 1868 and 1894, voiced the dominant English view tersely when he insisted that "a standing army can never be turned into a moral institution." His countryman, Richard Cobden, leading spirit of the 19th-century "Manchester School" of free-market economists, held that unless universal disarmament was achieved, military establishments would cripple the economy. There could be "no necessary or logical end to their increase, for the progress of scientific knowledge will lead to constant increase of expenditure. There is no limit but the limit of taxation."

In more optimistic moods, progressives hoped that the liberalization of political institutions would lay to rest the ancient specter of militarism. But Cobden's most pessimistic prediction was borne out. Armies simply grew larger and more expensive (and taxation went beyond any limit Cobden could have imagined), while war became more comprehensive and destructive. And the phenomenon of Napoleon Bonaparte—"la révolution, c'est moi"—seemed to drive the stake of militarism into the heart of the liberal transformation. Napoleon's adventurism added a modern twist, "Bonapartism," to the ancient threat of military domination under classical labels such as praetorianism and Caesarism. Its impact—melodramatically etched by Beethoven furiously eliminating his dedication to Napoleon from the *Eroica* symphony—was all the greater because of the aesthetic power of the pristine myth of popular mobilization that preceded it. The sense of liberation generated by the early victories of the French revolutionary armies reached beyond France itself. The psychological turning point was the militarily indecisive engagement (often called a cannonade rather than a battle) at Valmy in September 1792, when the Austrian and Prussian armies, confronted by the massed French forces, abandoned their march on Paris and their attempt to restore the French monarchy. One of the civilian spectators, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe—not only the outstanding German writer of modern times but also the administrator of a small city-state—told his countrymen: "From this place and this time forth commences a new era in the history of the world."

Valmy was proof that ordinary people could make up in commitment what they lacked in experience. It was followed in 1793 by the transcendent emblem of the revolutionary struggle, the decree of the *levée en masse* (mass rising):

From this moment until the enemy is driven from the territory of the Republic, all French people are permanently

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requisitioned for the service of the armies. The young men will go to battle; married men will forge arms and transport provisions; women will make tents and clothing, and serve in the hospitals; children will shred old linen for bandages; old men will be carried to public places to arouse the courage of the fighters [*guerriers*], and preach hatred of kings and the unity of the Republic.

Modern scholarship has established that this manifesto was rhetorical rather than programmatic. It did not bring in universal or compulsory military service, and it proved erratic in operation. But whether or not its actual result was to raise half a million troops—the figures have been long disputed—its moral effect was profound. It gave French generals, and their opponents, an awesome sense of the Revolution's strength and purpose. With the immense resources thus conjured up, war was prosecuted with frightening energy. It was not that the French armies won all their battles—they did not—but that they did not slow down between them. They harried their enemies with alarming relentlessness.

This energy was sensed at every level, from the skirmish line upward. Soldiers of liberty were not merely more numerous but could fight in free, fluid formations more dynamic than the drill-book patterns of the old despotism. Self-discipline and high morale did away with the need for brutal punishments and tight control. Indeed, the salient characteristic of the revolutionary troops was their self-respect, mirrored by the respect accorded to them by their communities and commemorated in countless popular festivals and songs. This luminous myth was further highlighted by the contrast between the natural forces unleashed by the *levée* and the artificial forces of the dynastic states. It was brought most sharply into focus in Prussia, where the disastrous military defeats of 1806 at Jena and Auerstädt by Napoleon's forces was

blamed on the failure of the rigid system perfected by Frederick the Great, the paragon of enlightened despots. Control of the Prussian army passed—temporarily at least—into the hands of reformers like General Gerhard von Scharnhorst and his assistant Karl von Clausewitz, a uniquely thoughtful writer on war, who insisted that however small a state might be, it must defend itself to the last ditch, "or one would conclude that its soul is dead."

What was thought to be happening in the revolutionary epoch was not quite a "military revolution" in the sense proposed by the historian Michael Roberts, who argued that military changes in 17th-century Europe catalyzed the emergence of the modern state. Other historians have suggested that while the general trend of professionalization was unmistakable, the changes identified by Roberts were too diffuse to be properly called a revolution. The growth in the size of armies, for instance, though impressive, was erratic; weapons remained simple and unchanged for generations through the time of Napoleon; even the formations adopted by the revolutionary armies have been shown to be less novel than was once thought. The truly revolutionary technical changes were to come later, in the 19th century. Ultimately, the creation of railways and the invention of smokeless explosives accompanied by quick-firing rifled guns transformed the entire face—and the cost—of war. But the depersonalization of combat, which gradually became a salient feature of modern war, undoubtedly began with the changes Roberts identified.

The ultimate transformation of war was accelerated by the deeper shift that the French Revolution triggered: a shift on the social, rather than the administrative, plane; a revolution of attitudes and expectations. European armies of the old regime,

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Workers at a munitions factory. The widespread mobilization of industry and society to support the military effort marked the American Civil War as one of the first truly modern and "total" wars.

ment at the Battle of Fontenoy, "que Messieurs les ennemis tirent les premiers"—that his respected opponents should fire first. The soldiers whose bodies he gallantly offered as targets were drawn from the opposite end of society, coerced into enlistment either directly, or more often indirectly, by hardship, and kept in the ranks by iron discipline. For all the splendor of their clothing, war was not decorous for battle casualties and, far outnumbering these, victims of disease. It was grim enough, too, for those civilians who found themselves in the path of the armies. But those paths were restricted. In a crucial sense war remained limited in scope and aspiration. Rulers tried to avoid bankrupting themselves, and did not aim to overthrow one another or to liberate the subjects of their foes.

The Revolution removed these limits. It removed the aristocracy with tremendous public drama, and though the peasantry remained the backbone of the rank and file, the belief that armies should (and in some sense did) represent the whole of society became dominant. The Prussian reformers aimed above all to incorporate the middle class into the army, and did this through the creation of a short-service reserve, the *Landwehr*. In the expedient of the local-defense *Landsturm* they even—briefly—armed the people. The mass mobilization announced by the *levée*

however big they became, had operated on the margins of society. Their officer class drew its self-image directly from the role of the feudal nobility as the sole bearers of arms. Its code of honor derived from a notion of service to the crown under universal Christian laws of war. It was remarkably cosmopolitan. Perhaps the most vivid image of 18th-century war was the invitation issued by the commander of a French regi-

en masse brought forth a radical notion of war, identified by Clausewitz as "absolute war." The sheer scale of the new armies, and the participation that produced it, were both underpinned by ideology—the commitment to the complete overthrow of the enemy, without compromise, whatever the cost. As Lazare Carnot, the "organizer of victory" on the Committee of Public Safety in 1793, stridently insisted, "War is a violent condition. One should make it *à l'outrance* or go home .... We must exterminate, exterminate to the bitter end!" This was the mental armament for total war.

Such intensity was too strenuous to be sustained for very long. Writing his masterpiece *On War* in the 1820s, Clausewitz recognized that not all future wars would be so close to the absolute as those of his time, though he shrewdly pointed out that "once barriers—which in a sense consist only in man's ignorance of the possible—are torn down, they are not easily set up again." The myth of the risen people retained its electrifying potential. During the 19th century, population growth, urbanization, and industrialization ensured that the people bulked ever larger. But this evolution could prove conservative. Armies in particular showed a tendency to revert to type: The French volunteers of 1792–93 stayed on to become hardened professionals, the kind commemorated by Alfred de Vigny in his autobiographical tales *Servitude et Grandeur Militaires* (*The Military Condition*, 1835), whose elegiac tone resembles that of the most popular German soldier's song, "Ich hatt' ein Kamerad" ("I Had a Comrade").

In the end, the Napoleonic wars were won by professional armies, notwithstanding the efforts of Spanish guerrillas, Russian partisans, and the Prussian *Landwehr*. The soldiers who fought those wars were no longer called "warriors," except by rhet-

oricians or satirists; their modern title (*soldat*, literally "one who is paid") better expressed their relation to the state. At the same time the cosmic horizons of the first citizen armies shrank to the bounds of the "nation in arms." Once French soldiers had sung without hypocrisy, "Du salut de notre patrie/Depend celui de l'Univers" (upon the safety of our country depends that of the universe), and the German nationalists who mobilized against them did so in the cosmopolitan spirit of Herder and Goethe. But the xenophobic propensity of nationalism was to give a new shape and lease on life to militarism.

Was it possible, in fact, to have a great conscript army that was free of militarism? The answer depended on what militarism was taken to mean. A variety of formal meanings has been assigned to this protean concept since it was coined sometime in the early 19th century as a characterization of the Napoleonic system. It was given wide currency by the anarchist philosopher Pierre-Joseph Proudhon in the 1860s to describe the outlook which saw war as the most exalted human activity, and its impact was amplified by the sociologist Herbert Spencer in the 1880s under his more cumbersome label "the militant type of society." Such militancy involved the "close binding of society into a whole" and fostered a special kind of people, who "must have patriotism which regards the triumph of their society as the supreme end of action; they must possess the loyalty whence flows obedience to authority; and that they may be obedient they must have abundant faith." Though this looked like a vision of ancient Sparta—with a sideswipe at contemporary Prussia—it would come to seem all too relevant to the modern "Western" democracies in the century of total war. For though Spencer held that the "industrial" type of society would prove stronger than the "militant," he failed to foresee how

deeply industrial change would enlarge and entrench the military machine.

Seventy years later, in his striking work *Military Organization and Society*, the sociologist Stanislav Andreski listed six distinct usages of the word *militarism*. In a bid for analytical precision, he proposed several terms, such as *militancy, militarization, militocracy,* and *militolatry,* as separate components of militarism. But he had limited success, thanks in part to the ingrained public resistance to scholarly neologism. In this case, it may be that the special resonance of the term *militarism* depends on its imprecision. It represents a vague dread, the possibility that the violent side of human nature might at any time gain the ascendant. On this plane, militarism is not a structural arrangement, not even military intervention, or the "preponderance of the military in the state," to use Andreski's general formulation, but the spillage of military values into society at large. From the liberal point of view, such enlargement of influence is instinctively regarded as contamination, and the greatest danger arises when, as in Germany during World War I, it comes to be seen as healthy. ("Militarism implies that we do not just cherish and uphold our Army because we are impelled by rational calculations," declared the eminent German theologian Ernst Troeltsch in November 1914, "but also because we feel an irresistible compulsion within our hearts to love it.")

Ultimately, therefore, militarism remained a negative concept implying a sharp difference between military and civilian values. The great conscript armies of the 19th-century nation-states might accordingly be forces for good or evil, depending on whether they were animated by a civil or a military spirit. America was believed to have preserved itself from the dangers of militarism inherent in the vast mo-

bilization of a war of national survival, but its situation was unique and transient. Germany, by contrast, felt itself to be under permanent siege, actual or potential: exactly the situation pinpointed in the Victorian political theorem that the level of liberty in any country is inversely proportional to the level of external threat. German liberals were only too aware of the way in which the history of Prussian militarism impinged on the present, and the constitutional crisis in Prussia after 1859, which brought Bismarck to power, was in essence a struggle for the soul of the state.

Although liberals accepted that Prussia needed a great army and an effective system of conscription, they resisted the royal demand that the period of service be increased from two to three years, believing that this extra year would bring a shift from liberalism to militarism, and turn Prussia into a "barracks state" even more rigid than that of Frederick the Great. The liberals lost that struggle, and the army went on to win Bismarck's wars, to increase its prestige and autonomy as a "state within the state," and eventually, in the latter part of World War I, to furnish the textbook example of full-blown militarism.

But even had the liberals succeeded in retaining the two-year service period, it is not clear that they could have kept militarism in check. In his study *Militarism* (1898), Guglielmo Ferrero noted that soldiers occupied the most important positions in the German official world: Civil ministries were directed by generals, even though officers on active service had no vote. "Bismarck was originally a doctor of law, who had only fulfilled the ordinary period of military service, and yet, when it was wished to consecrate his high position in the State, he had to be made a general; and in a general's uniform he was wont to make his appearances in the *Reichstag*."

The constitutional historian Otto Hintze remarked in 1906 that "militarism pervades our political system and public life today, generally in a very decisive way." He added the telling observation that "even Social Democracy, which in principle is against everything connected with militarism, not only owes to it the discipline on which its party organization largely rests, but also in its ideal for the future it has unconsciously adopted a good measure of the coercion of the individual by the community, which comes from the Prussian military state." The underlying reason, as the outbreak of war in 1914 would finally show, was the power of nationalism. Modern conscript armies were symbiotically linked with nationalism, whether as product or producer. Nationalism itself was a liberal cause in the early 19th century; its champions expected that free nations would live in peace (since all wars were, they believed, caused by the dynastic rivalries of oppressive monarchs). But even at the "springtide of nations," the failed revolutions of 1848, nationalism's authoritarian face was becoming visible. Germany, for instance, could only ensure its own security by denying self-determination to the Poles of the strategically vital Posen region. By the end of the century the paranoid nature of nationalism was increasingly marked; nations feared rather than loved. The liberal dream of international harmony was giving way to "social Darwinism," the belief that nations, like species, were involved in a struggle for survival—not against a hostile nature but against hostile neighbors. The nation-in-arms was thus an oppressive agenda. Historian Peter Paret has posed the question whether "a policy as coercive as conscription can express the enthusiasm of those to whom it is applied." As Paret insists, from the levée en masse onward, all systems of universal military service were managerial devices. Popular enthusiasm and spontane-

ity were outweighed by "the coercive and didactic features of conscription."

For this reason there was always something dubious in the rhetoric, heard most commonly in France but also in Italy and other countries, of the conscript army as "the school of the nation." This phrase first appeared in Paris in the summer of 1793, where its ideological meaning was very clear. It became a political agenda in many parts of Europe during the next century: The Hungarian Honved, for instance, was deliberately revived on an old model after the Austro-Hungarian compromise of 1867 to promote Magyar supremacy in the "crownlands of St. Stephen"; the newly unified Italian army of 1861 had the conscious mission of creating the sense of national unity (Italianitá) that had proved so distressingly weak among the people at large. In the 1890s the idea became the vehicle by which France's most public military thinker, Marshal Louis-Hubert-Gonzalve Lyautey, established his intellectual reputation. In two articles in the leading French quarterly review, Lyautey asserted the capacity of the army to reconcile the political, social, and religious divisions of the nation. He argued that in the colonies, the army was actually the principal agent of civilization, and that it could play the same constructive part in domestic life—but for the manifest inadequacy of the military service system.

What appeared to Lyautey as inadequacy in fact represented the outcome of a long public debate about the nature of military obligation and reflected a persistent French reluctance to embrace the supposedly democratic principle of universality. The institution of the first-line reserve, the Garde Mobile, under the military service law of 1868 was emblematic of this: The spiritual descendant of the revolutionary National Guard was to provide 15 days'

A British recruitment poster from World War I.

training per year to all those Frenchmen—
the great majority—who avoided service
with the line army, but their training was
guaranteed to be strictly segregated, to pro-
tect them from contact with the regular
troops. For the army to have become a true
school of the nation required the kind of
superheated patriotism that emerged only
in the tense years before the outbreak of
war in 1914. This patriotism may have been
democratic in its way, but what the army
then recreated was far removed from its
liberal origins, and it had a much narrower
purpose. The real "school of the nation"
that followed was the Battle of Verdun, that
debilitating victory from which Marshal Pé-
tain drew those deeply conservative con-
clusions about the French nation that were
later to shape the Vichy regime.

The two world wars brought home the
prodigious implications of the "nation in
arms." The stupefying scale and protrac-
tion of the first sprang from the combina-

tion of almost limitless "manpower"—a
distinctive modern coinage—with the tech-
nical advances of the late 19th century. Bat-
tles became unrecognizable, and unwinna-
ble, as such. (At the 1914 version of Valmy,
there were no civilian spectators, aside
from involuntary victims; Goethe would by
then have been a *Landwehr* officer.) Ma-
neuver was replaced by attrition. The only
possible adaptive response was "total war,"
in which formal military organizations
melted into the cauldron of a society fight-
ing for its life. Even states protected by tra-
ditions of deep-seated and deliberate resis-
tance to military control—such as
Britain—could not fully uphold the princi-
ple of civilian supremacy in such an emer-
gency. Others, Germany above all, suc-
cumbed to a virtual military dictatorship
that cast a shadow far beyond the formal
cessation of international hostilities.

It was not so much the visible structures
of military control, formidable though

these were in the wartime practice and postwar writings of Field-Marshal Erich von Ludendorff, as the invisible sense of community and purpose that animated the paramilitary movements that burgeoned in Germany after the war. While hundreds of thousands enlisted in militias (*Wehrverbände*) of all political hues, the profoundly influential writings of Ernst Junger insisted that uniforms and marches were not the point; the real need was not for "warriors who sleep in bourgeois bedrooms," but to preserve and extend the *Schutzengrabengemeinschaft* (community of the trenches) in peacetime. The result was a paramilitarism that, in the words of the modern German historian Volker Berghahn, "pervaded virtually all aspects of German political life." And though Germany was plainly an extreme case, the phenomenon has spread throughout the 20th-century world.

In the Western states too, the impact of total war went beyond the constitutional sphere of civil-military relations and the classical liberal problem of resisting military power. It largely dissolved the distinction between military and civilian values on which that resistance had been grounded. In a sense, the maintenance of civilian supremacy became an empty formula, even in a state with such a long-nurtured liberal self-image as Britain. Under the 1914 Defence of the Realm Act, the government took powers of a kind that had never been exercised except under martial law. From the classical liberal standpoint, the fact that these powers were wielded by civilians was immaterial—the powers were derived from military logic. The contours of that logic could be read in the barely concealed contempt of many military officers for party politics and the "frocks" who managed them, and even more startlingly on the Left, as in the assertion of the Fabian socialist R. H. Tawney that

The soldier at the front expects from the civilian and from the government a sense of obedience to duty and an enforcement of discipline as severe and as exacting as that to which he is himself accustomed. The call of duty should be imposed on all alike.

A parallel shift took place in America, where the Sedition Act of 1918 conferred a dizzying power of control over public utterance. (One conservative critic, Robert Nisbet, later charged that "the West's first real experience with totalitarianism—political absolutism extended into every possi-

"Through work to victory! Through victory to peace!" announces a German poster of 1917.

ble area of culture and society...with a kind of terror always waiting in the wings—came with the American war state under Woodrow Wilson.") The corrosive potential of such emergency powers was

quite obvious, and some traditionalists were puzzled by the absence of protest against them. While the leading academic study of the liberal states' adaptation to total war, Clinton Rossiter's *Constitutional Dictatorship* (1947), came to the conclusion that essential democratic values had come through unscathed, it is possible to doubt this. The overwhelming public enthusiasm for the "war effort" may rather have shifted the very standards by which constitutional propriety was judged. In British political culture, for instance, "liberty of the subject" lost its prominence in the vocabulary of self-definition.

The realization that modern militarism may be generically more complex than its simpler predecessors, and thus harder to identify or to control, was vividly brought forth by Alfred Vagts in his *History of Militarism: Civilian and Military* (1937). His most brilliant insight challenged the standard idea that militarism was simply an expression of war-mindedness (a view propounded in the first edition of the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* in 1930, and perpetuated, it must be noted, in the second edition 40 years later). For Vagts, the distinctive modern development was the relative autonomy of armies, which he labeled "narcissism." Modern mass armies, whose function bulks as large in peace as in war, "dream that they exist for themselves alone." They create a militarism which has no strict military purpose. Vagts distinguished armies "maintained in a military way," which is functionally straightforward and "scientific in its essential qualities," from those maintained in a "militaristic way." The latter generate "a vast array of customs, interests, prestige, actions and thought ... transcending the true military purposes." Societies connived in this "militarism of moods and opinions" by coming to admire soldiers not merely in

wartime, which is reasonable enough, but in peacetime as well. Though his principal targets were Germany and Japan, Vagts thought that the Western democracies were no longer immune to such militarism.

He found its origins in the "resurgent emotionalism" of the Romantic period, which in his view smothered the old rational distaste for the soldier as a drilled murderer. Romanticization met the need to disguise the drabness of modernization of both war and society. Vagts added the fruitful perception that the attitude of the "modern masses" toward militarism was contradictory: As individuals they might dislike military service, but as a collectivity they came to love the sense of power that great armies generated. Though his masses were sociologically a rather crude aggregation, his qualitative judgment was echoed in Andreski's blunt linkage of "military participation ratio" (MPR) with "ferocity of warfare." Addressing the question whether conscription had, or could have, promoted democracy, Andreski also tried to establish a distinction between "bellicosity" and "ferocity," arguing that the extension of military service in itself neither blunted nor sharpened bellicosity—that is, the propensity toward war—but that it was definitely "conducive to greater ferocity in war" once begun.

Andreski's use of the word "ferocity" seems to contain both statistical scale and moral enormity, both of which have been all too much in evidence in this century. His implicit equation of the "cannibalistic feasts" of "tribes in arms" with, say, the strategic bombing campaign of World War II, may look rather extravagant; yet his view that "where war is the prerogative of nobles, we find it usually regulated by a code of honour" provides an important perspective. If we substitute a more neutral word like "intensity" for "ferocity," the ar-

gument about the consequences of the professionalization of armies comes into clearer focus. It was most sharply drawn by the Yale political scientist Harold Lasswell in 1941. Lasswell argued that "the military men who dominate a modern technical society will be very different from the officers of history and tradition." Their domination would follow precisely from the fact that total war compelled "those who direct the violence operations... to consider the entire gamut of problems that arise in living together under modern conditions." Thus modern military officers were developing "skills that we have traditionally accepted as part of civilian management." These would enable them to create what he called the "garrison state," of which the pioneering model was, of course, Germany. Writing at the time of the German invasion of Russia, Lasswell's outlook was pessimistic: He saw no necessary reason why militarism should succumb to civilianism, "the multivalued orientation of a society in which violent coercion is deglamorized as an end in itself, and is perceived as a regrettable concession to the persistence of variables whose magnitudes we have not yet been able to control without paying what appears to be an excessive cost in terms of such autonomy as is possible under the cloud of chronic peril."

This analysis rested, evidently, on the idea that there was something new about the nature of modern peril—"the socialization of danger." It was in his view, universal and chronic. Lasswell went so far as to suggest that the military elite would manufacture such peril if need be, though when he reconsidered his 1941 essay 20 years later he did not take the view that the Cold War was such an artifact. He was able to transfer the threat of the garrison state easily enough from Nazi Germany to the USSR. Robert Nisbet, in *The Twilight*

of Authority (1975), also took the "military socialism" of the Soviet Union and China to be one of the principal reasons for what he feared to be "the likelihood of militarization of Western countries" in the near future. The other was terrorism. It was, he warned, "impossible to conceive of liberal, representative democracy continuing," with its crippling endowment of due process, if terror increased in the next decade at the rate of the last.

Terrorism, certainly, represents a "socialization of danger" as absolute as total war, and though the urgency of these warnings may seem to have been blunted by the dissolution of military socialism and the apparent containment of terrorism, Nisbet's assault on militarism, from a classical conservative standpoint, provides a remarkable index of the change that had occurred during the century. He saw "the lure of military society" as a primary corrosive agent in the "twilight of authority." This was critical for the West, where "more sheer thought has been given to war and its values than anywhere else in world history." For "there is nothing so constrictive of freedom, of creativeness, and of genuine individuality as the military in its relation to culture.... As soon as the special character of military power begins to envelop a population, its functions, roles, and traditional authorities, a kind of suffocation of mind in the cultural sphere begins." The depth of Nisbet's pessimism was a result of his conviction that the root of modern societies' vulnerability to militarism lay in Roman law itself. The intensity of 20th-century total war was a comparatively superficial problem, though he bitterly indicted the American intelligentsia for succumbing so eagerly to what an English philosopher in 1915 called "the spiritual peace that war brings." For Nisbet, this psychic mobilization of the "home front" was worse than the simple longings of the soldiery—"I felt

more of a martial atmosphere, more pressure of war-values, while on the faculty at Berkeley from 1939 to 1942 than I was to feel during the next three years out in the Pacific as an enlisted soldier."

Such perceptions are still unorthodox in liberal democratic societies, whose military systems are normally perceived, as they were treated in Samuel Huntington's famous study of civil-military relations *The Soldier and the State* (1957), as professional organizations akin to medicine and the law. Indeed, one important school of thought concerning military organizations in the Third World regarded them as primary agents of progress. (Huntington argued arrestingly that "the middle class makes its debut on the political scene not in the frock of the merchant but in the epaulettes of the colonel.") Has the benign scenario in fact displaced the malign vision of modern militarism? The dramatic incidence of military intervention in politics charted in S. E. Finer's *The Man on Horseback*—an incidence that looked to be mounting between the first edition of that book in 1961 and its updating in 1975, just after the coup in Portugal—seems now to be falling. The public prestige of armed forces in the developed world, though transiently enhanced by spectacular enterprises like the wars against Argentina and Iraq, has been more routinely eroded by guerrilla quagmires, which have forced armies into quasi-policing roles in which they reap the maximum public odium for the minimum recognizable military achievement. Yet it is just here that the liberal states remain vulnerable to the blurring of civil and military functions. Nisbet's warning about the long-term effect of counterterrorist measures remains a forceful one because states have few options in responding to vi-

olence. Terrorist strategy is founded on the fact that terrorist violence can neither be ignored nor effectively countered by normal processes of law. It is a deliberate attempt to provoke a military response that will itself undermine the legitimacy of the state. The greatest danger is not that this strategy will work—in the sense intended by the revolutionaries—but that it will ultimately erode the traditional defenses against the establishment of a security state, producing the kind of vast enlargement of Kafka's *Castle* suggested in Heinrich Boll's novel of contemporary Germany, *The Safety Net* (1982).

We may, however, justifiably hope that the deep entrenchment in the plural democracies of the principles of civilianism, and of civilian control of the military, will ward off any threat of open military government. The potential of mass armies to act as beneficial social institutions remains important, even if it is likely to be viewed less optimistically than in the headier days of liberal enthusiasm. Rhetoric aside, the function of universal military service as an integrative experience is important; the problem has always been that only small neutral states, such as Switzerland, have ever been able to apply it consistently. The need for big field forces, rather than a local defense militia, is what makes most armies—in peacetime—burdensome and divisive. If there is to be a "peace dividend," it should perhaps be sought in civilianizing the principle of universal service. To do that, some end would need to be found to replace the "spiritual peace" of war and the glamor of combat, which, alas, has always guaranteed the ultimate prestige of the military life, however stultifying its daily routines. A different struggle for survival, perhaps that to save the planet, might just become such an end.

FROM CITIZENS' ARMY
TO SOCIAL LABORATORY

by Charles Moskos

These are uncertain times for the armed forces of the United States. How could they not be? With the Cold War over, the very foundations of our thinking about national security have undergone profound changes. Short of a terrible accident, the likelihood of a nuclear war between major powers is slim. Indeed, wars among any major powers appear unlikely, though terrorism and internal wars triggered by ethnic and religious animosities will be with us for some time, if not forever. More to the point, nonmilitary threats—economic competitiveness, environmental pollution, and crime—have now moved to the fore of our national-security preoccupations.

Of course, no serious observer sees the imminent end of warfare. Clausewitz's dictum about war being the extension of politics by other means remains in the back of any thinking person's mind. Nevertheless, we are witnessing the dawn of an era in which war between major powers is rejected as the principal, much less inevitable, means of resolving conflict. At the same time, the citizens of the United States, like those of other advanced industrial nations, are increasingly reluctant to become engaged in uncertain, protracted wars in parts of the world where no vital interests appear to be at stake. In the absence of traditional threats, political support for military spending has slowly given way to expectations of a "peace dividend" for domestic social expenditures—a phenomenon that is as pronounced in Moscow as it is in Washington.

In this most unprecedented of historical epochs, we are also seeing important changes in the relations between the military and American society, changes that have been under way for at least two decades but that are now being accelerated by the end of the Cold War. Among these, perhaps the most consequential is the demise of military service as a widely shared coming-of-age experience for American males. Another change, more diffuse in shape and possible consequences, is a redefinition of the military's role in society. Once thought of as the institution through which citizens—at least male citizens—discharged their basic civic obligation, the military is now coming to be seen as a large and potent laboratory for social experimentation. Such changes and others are part of a larger movement, a trend toward what I call the postmodern military.

Postmodernism is not one of those words that tend to win friends or influence people, at least outside the academy. Indeed, its overuse by the tenured classes makes it seem, variously, pretentious, empty, or imprecise. That said, the concept has its uses. From its humble origins as the name of an architectural style blending whimsy, pastiche, and playful historical allusion, it has been generalized into an all-

embracing theory of society. Simply put, this theory posits a world in which the old verities are thrown into question, social institutions become weak or permeable, and uncertainty everywhere reigns.

In matters military as well as cultural, the adjective postmodern implies a modern precursor. In America, as in most of the Western world, the military acquired its distinctively modern form with the rise of the nation-state in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, reaching a kind of zenith during the two world wars of this century. The modern military was distinguished by two conditions. The first was sharp, clear distinctions between military and civilian structures. The second was universal male conscription. Both conditions allowed military leaders to stress the more traditional martial virtues, the virtues of combat. Some fraying of the modern military occurred during the last decades of the Cold War with the rise of a military establishment driven as much by technical and information imperatives as by those of the trenches. Still, the modern military remained recognizable, in form and mission, right up to collapse of the Soviet Union.

Since then—and particularly since the end of the Persian Gulf War in March 1991—American armed forces have been deployed in more than 20 different operations, few of which had traditional military objectives. The list includes two operations related to the Gulf War: the multinational Operation Provide Comfort in Kurdistan and Operation Southern Watch in southern Iraq. The American military has taken part in Operation Sea Angel for flood relief in Bangladesh, in the rescue of civilians following the volcano eruptions of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines and of Mount

Etna in Italy, in drug interdiction along U.S. borders as well as in Latin America, in a domestic mission to restore order after the Los Angeles riot, and in disaster relief following hurricanes in Florida and Hawaii. The United States has also joined other nations in rescuing foreign nationals in Zaire and it is now spearheading relief efforts in Somalia. To the success of most of these operations, administrative and logistical skills, not to mention health-care and social-work skills, were far more important than tactical insight, marksmanship, or courage under fire.

To be sure, Western militaries have performed nonmilitary roles in times past, but what is different about these post-Cold War missions is their frequency and multinational character. Although it may be hard to imagine a U.S. soldier becoming misty-eyed about duty served under the aegis of the United Nations or the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the move toward multinational forces will gain momentum. The next step may well be the formation of a genuine international army with its own recruitment and promotion systems, as outlined in the 1991 "Agenda for Peace" written by United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

In the postmodern setting, the legitimacy of conscription has progressively weakened. The draft has either been abolished—as it was in the United States in 1973 and 10 years earlier in the United Kingdom—or severely cut back, as in various European countries during the last 15 years. The political forces pushing for an end to conscription, though unlikely bedfellows, constitute a formidable bloc. They in-

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clude traditional peace organizations, assorted religious groups, political radicals who dislike the military establishment, libertarian conservatives, policy specialists who seek to transfer military spending to social programs, young people imbued with individualism and materialism, and

conflict, and they prepared for it. Each colony formed its own militia on the principle that fundamental liberties entailed individual responsibilities. The militia, it must be stressed, was not a voluntary force. Every able-bodied man was obliged to possess arms and to train periodically. And every

The new army: Troops of the 24th Infantry await orders after arriving in Saudi Arabia in August 1990 as part of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.
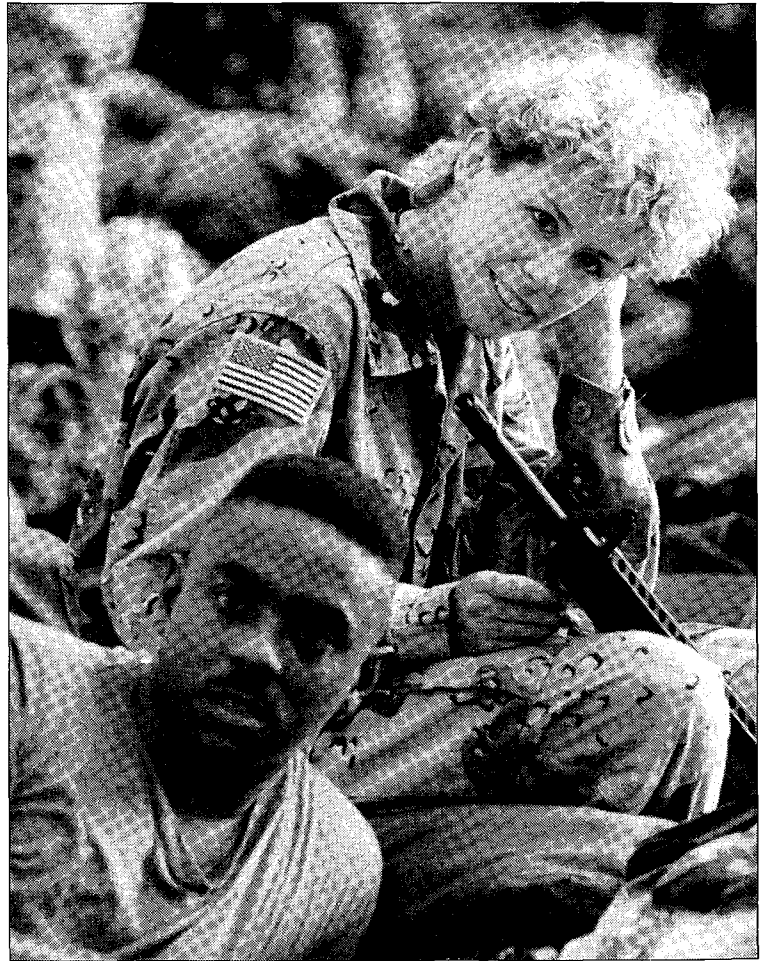
even some military leaders.

In America specifically, the abandonment of conscription jeopardizes the nation's dual-military tradition, one-half of which—and truly its heart—is the citizen soldiery. This institution antedates the Revolutionary War. The first colonists came to the shores of the New World anticipating

such man was subject to call-up when military needs dictated.

The military requirements of the Revolutionary War led to the creation of America's first professional army. This force remained small because of Americans' deep distrust of a standing army, but it marked the beginning of America's dual-military

tradition. Henceforth, a citizen soldiery of varying sizes was balanced by a permanent and professional force. Large forces consisting of short-term volunteers, draftees, or draft-induced volunteers came into being during the Civil War and World War I. But it was World War II that shaped our most recent understanding of military service.

In 1939, 340,000 men were serving in the U.S. military. By June 1941—six months before Pearl Harbor—American mobilization was well under way. America's first peacetime draft raised U.S. military strength to 1.8 million men. Shortly after it entered the war, the United States raised the largest military force in the nation's history. At war's end, more than 12 million people were in uniform.

By 1946, the number of servicemen had shrunk to three million. The draft was suspended in 1947, and the number of active-duty military personnel fell to 1.5 million. The draft was resumed in 1948, as the Cold War heated up, and though the Korean War never resulted in total mobilization, there were some 3.7 million Americans in uniform in 1952. During the ensuing decade, America's military posture was based on "nuclear deterrence" and large troop deployments abroad, notably in Europe and Korea. Between 1955 and 1965, the number of people in uniform hovered around 2.5 million, more than during any other peacetime period in American history.

A clear conception of the place of military service in American society survived from early in World War II right up to the beginning of the Vietnam War. According to this view, service in the military, and particularly the army, was almost a rite of passage for most American males. Eight out of 10 age-eligible men served during World War II, the highest ratio in U.S. history. From the Korean War through the early 1960s, about half of all men coming of age

served in the armed forces. But the proportion began to fall—to roughly four out of 10—during the Vietnam War, as the children of privilege found ways to avoid service in an unpopular and ill-defined military quagmire. Since the suspension of the draft in 1973, only about one in five eligible males has been entering the military. And when the post–Cold War "drawdown" to the projected base force of 1.6 million is reached in 1995 (though it will likely be smaller), the proportion of young men serving will be down to one in 10, if that.

The changing social composition of the military—evident first in the Vietnam War—became even more obvious during the first decade of the all-volunteer force, when the military began to draw disproportionately from among racial minorities, particularly blacks and Hispanics, and from lower socioeconomic groups. By 1979, 40 percent of army recruits were members of minorities, and half of the white entrants were high-school dropouts. This shift in social makeup corresponded with a tendency on the part of Defense Department policymakers to redefine military service as an attractive career option rather than the fulfillment of a citizen's obligation.

Perhaps the best example of the loosening hold of the military experience in the United States is seen in the changing background of America's political leaders. For at least the first three decades after World War II, military service (or at least a very good reason for having missed it) was practically a requirement for elective office. The unpopularity of the Vietnam War and the termination of the draft both chipped away at this attitude. In 1982 the proportion of veterans fell below half in Congress for the first time since before Pearl Harbor. And as the Vietnam War generation replaced the World War II cohort, it brought with it a highly ambivalent view of military service.

Not surprisingly, this view reflected the electorate's changed attitude toward the importance of military experience to service in elective office. In 1988, the nomination of Senator Dan Quayle as a candidate for vice president created a stir because of his avoidance of active duty in the Vietnam War. In 1992, Governor Bill Clinton, who not only avoided all forms of duty but protested against the war, was elected to the nation's highest office.

The changed composition of the military and new attitudes toward military service raise the inevitable question: What has been lost? The answer is simple. Universal military service was the one way in which a significant number of Americans discharged a civic obligation to their nation. If this fact is obvious, its significance has been obscured by a political culture that ignores the importance of individual obligations while virtually enshrining individual rights—possibly to the detriment of our civic health. Universal military service did something else: It brought together millions of Americans who otherwise would have lived their lives in relative social and geographic isolation. No other institution has accomplished such an intermingling of diverse classes, races, and ethnic groups.

The racial dimension of this social intermingling—the integration of the armed forces and the impressive record of African-Americans in the services—is often cited as the great success story of the American military. Unfortunately, many people forget that this success came only at the end of what is in fact a rather ugly story, one that too faithfully reflects the larger national tragedy of racism. Until relatively recent years, African-Americans were a group resolutely excluded from equal participation in the armed forces. Even though they have taken part in all of America's wars, from colonial times to the present, they have usually done so under unfavorable and of-

ten humiliating circumstances, typically serving in all-black units with white commanders. And though they have served bravely, they often received less than glowing reviews from condescending, unsympathetic white officers. (By contrast, black units that served directly under the French in World War I received high praise from their commanders.)

The plight of blacks in uniform did not even begin to change until World War II. On the eve of that global struggle, there were only five black officers in the entire American military, and three of them were chaplains. Black soldiers during the war continued to serve in segregated units, performing mainly menial labor. Strife between black and white soldiers was common. Despite these conditions, blacks proved themselves when given the chance—none more so than the all-black 99th Fighter Squadron, whose performance in combat over Italy won the highest plaudits of the previously skeptical commander of U.S. tactical air forces.

In December 1944, during the Battle of the Bulge, African-American soldiers were finally given the chance to prove that segregation was not only unjust but militarily inefficient. Desperately short of combat troops, Lt. General John C. H. Lee, General Eisenhower's deputy for logistics, asked for black volunteers to fill the thinned-out ranks of white combat units. The soldiers who stepped forward performed exceptionally well in battle, gaining the respect of the white soldiers they fought next to and the high regard of the white officers under whom they served. Notably, there was none of the hostility that usually existed between white officers and black soldiers in the all-black units and none of the fighting that often broke out between whites and blacks in segregated units.

The unqualified success of this small ex-

A segregated unit of African-American troops in World War I constructing a railway line from Brest to the front.

periment in racial integration was cited after the war to support arguments for integrating the military. Those arguments prevailed in 1948, when President Harry S. Truman abolished segregation in the military. Little happened at first, but when the Korean War erupted manpower requirements in the field led to many instances of ad hoc integration. By 1955, two years after the end of the Korean War, the last remnants of military Jim Crow were gone.

Integration alone did not bring an end to the problem of race in the military. Between the wars in Korea and Vietnam, African-Americans made up about 11 percent of the enlisted ranks but less than three percent of the officer grades. Racial tensions mounted dangerously during the Vietnam War, the outcome of both real and perceived discrimination in the military and of spillover from the racial and political turmoil in society at large. Even after the war

and the termination of the draft, there were frequent outbursts of hostility between blacks and whites in the all-volunteer force.

Thanks to decisions made by the military leadership in that "time of troubles," things have changed markedly for the better. Today, in terms of black achievement and a general level of interracial harmony, few civilian institutions approach the army. In 1992, blacks made up 30 percent of the enlisted force, over a third of the senior noncommissioned officers, 12 percent of the officer corps, and six percent of the generals. General Colin L. Powell became chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1989, the first African-American to head the American military. The army is still no racial utopia. Beneath the cross-race bantering, an edge of tension often lurks. Still, the races do get along remarkably well. Under the grueling conditions of the Gulf War, for example, not one racial incident was brought to the attention of the military police. Certainly the racial climate is more positive than that found on most college campuses today.

What has made the military in so many ways the vanguard of racial progress? I suggest three factors. The first is a level playing field, dramatized most starkly by basic training. For many black youths from impoverished backgrounds, basic training is the first test at which they can outshine Americans coming from more advantaged backgrounds.

The second factor is the absolute commitment of the military leadership to nondiscrimination, regardless of race. One sign of this commitment is the use of an "equal-opportunity box" in officer evaluation reports. While such a box may not eradicate

deep prejudices, it alters outward behavior, for any noted display of racism will prevent an officer's promotion. Just as effective have been guidelines for promotion boards—"goals" that are supposed to approximate the minority representation in the eligible pool. If this looks like a quota by another name, one should note that the number of blacks promoted from captain to major, a virtual prerequisite for a full military career, is usually below goal. (The most plausible explanation for this is that about half of all black officers are products of historically black colleges, where a disproportionate number of more recent graduates fail to acquire the writing or communication skills necessary for promotion to staff jobs.) By contrast, promotions through colonel and general ranks come far closer to meeting goals. Significantly, the military has avoided the adoption of two promotion lists, one for blacks and one for whites.

While the army's system satisfies neither the pro- nor anti-quota viewpoints, it works.

Third, the armed forces developed an equal-opportunity educational program of unparalleled excellence. Courses with specially trained instructors were established throughout the training system during the time of racial troubles in the 1970s, and these courses stressed not who was at fault but what could be done. Mandatory race-relations courses sent a strong signal to black soldiers that the military was serious about equal opportunity.

The attractions of the military to African-Americans are worth pondering. To begin with, blacks find that there are enough other African-Americans in the military to provide a sense of social comfort and professional support. Just as important, though, they know that they are not in a "black-only" institution. They ap-

Blacks and whites served together in this U.S. Marine unit during the Korean War.

preciate the fact that the military provides uplift in the form of discipline, direction, and fairly meted-out rewards—and does so without the stigma of a social uplift program. The justification of the military remains—at least to date—national defense, not welfare or social engineering.

One cannot exaggerate the importance of this last point in evaluating the lessons of recent black success in the military. For the driving force behind formal and actual integration of the armed forces was *not* social improvement or racial benevolence but necessity (notably manpower shortages in World War II and the Korean War) and the belated recognition of the military superiority of an integrated force to a segregated one. Put another way, it was the imperative of military effectiveness that led to equal opportunity, not the imperative of equal opportunity that led to greater military effectiveness. Overlooking this fact, political leaders and scholars have come to think of the military as a social laboratory, in which charged debates over gender roles and homosexuality and national service can not only be addressed but possibly resolved. This lack of clarity about the military's primary function is indeed a cardinal characteristic of the postmodern military. It is also potentially harmful to the long-term security interests of the nation.

The issue of women in the military— and particularly in fighting roles—is important. Recent history sets the stage of the current controversy.

When World War II broke out, the only women in the armed services were nurses. By the end of World War II, some 350,000 women had served in the various female auxiliary corps of the armed forces, performing duties that ranged from shuttling aircraft across the Atlantic to breaking enemy secret codes. Following the war, a two-percent ceiling on the number of women in the military was set, and most women served in administrative, clerical, and health-care jobs. This situation remained basically unchanged until the advent of the all-volunteer force in 1973. Finding it difficult to recruit more than a few good men, the military allowed good women to fill the ranks. Today, women make up about 12 percent of the total armed forces.

Both before and after the draft was abolished, a number of important gender barriers within the military began to fall. Women entered the Reserve Officer Training Corps on civilian college campuses in 1972. Female cadets were accepted by the service academies in 1976. (Today, about one in seven academy entrants is a woman.) Congress abolished the separate women's auxiliary corps in 1978, and women were given virtually all assignments except direct combat roles. This meant that they were excluded from infantry, armored, and artillery units on land, from warships at sea, and from bombers and fighter planes in the air.

The combat exclusion rule, already opposed by feminist leaders and many women officers, came under renewed attack in the wake of the Gulf War. The performance of the some 35,000 women who served in that conflict received high praise from both the media and Pentagon officials. But surveys of soldiers who served in the Persian Gulf yield a murkier picture. Forty-five percent of those who were in mixed-gender units reported that "sexual activity had a negative impact" on unit morale. Over half rated women's performance as fair or poor, while only three percent gave such ratings to men. Nevertheless, almost as a direct result of the Gulf War, Congress lifted the ban on women in combat planes, even though service regulations effectively kept the ban in place.

The usual response to a thorny social impasse is a presidential commission, and,

true to form, one was established late in 1991: the President's Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Military. The 15-member panel (on which I served) took up three areas of consideration. The first was primarily factual. What, for example, were women's physical capabilities, and what would be the cost of modifying equipment or quarters to accommodate a woman's size or need for privacy?

A trickier area concerned questions of how mixed-gender groups would perform in combat. Here definitive answers are harder to come by, because apart from the defense of the homeland, no military force has ever used women in combat roles. Just as difficult to determine were matters related to the last area of concern: culture and values.

In addition to hearing opposing arguments, the commission sponsored a poll to determine whether the American public was willing to accept women in combat roles for the sake of equal opportunity. The answer that the Roper Organization came up with was a qualified yes. Three findings deserve mention. First, the public was split pretty much down the middle on the question of whether the combat-exclusion rule should be lifted. A large majority favored giving women the option to volunteer for combat arms, as long as no woman was ever compelled to assume a combat role. Second, most people believed that women already served in combat roles. Third, most respondents were more concerned with family status than with gender limitations. Three-quarters opposed mothers serving in combat; 43 percent felt the same way about fathers doing so.

By contrast with the general public, army women are much more wary about women in combat roles. One 1992 survey found that only four percent of enlisted women and 11 percent of female officers said they would volunteer for combat. But like the larger population, most military women favored a voluntary option.

The same survey disclosed that almost all army women—by a margin of 15 to one—opposed the adoption of uniform physical standards for men and women. Ironically, it was in support of such standards that two opposed groups within the policy community were rapidly coming to a consensus. Feminists supported it because of its egalitarian purity. Conservatives liked it because they believed it would reduce the number of women in the military across the board. Focusing on a strength definition of capability, both groups scanted the social and psychological problems that would likely arise with men and women fighting together in life-or-death situations.

Feminists and female senior officers do come together on the question of the *categorical* exclusion of women from direct combat roles. They believe that such exclusion is a limit on full citizenship. More recently, opponents of the exclusion rule, notably Representative Patricia Schroeder (D.-Colo.) of the House Armed Services Committee, have argued that if women were included in combat roles, sexual harassment would decline. But according to the 1992 survey of army women cited above, most respondents think the opposite is true—that sexual harassment would increase if women served in combat units. And in fact sexual harassment is far more common in the Coast Guard, the only service with no gender restrictions, than in any of the other services, at least as measured by reported incidents at the respective service academies.

Less dogmatic opponents of the exclusion rule favor trial programs, which on the surface sounds reasonable. Trial programs are not the same as combat, but they would tell us more than we now know. Yet even the most carefully prepared trials would

not address the biggest question: Should every woman soldier be made to take on the same combat liability that every male soldier does?

If the need arises, any male soldier, whether clerk-typist or mechanic, may be assigned to combat. True equality should mean that women soldiers incur the same liability. To allow women, but not men, the option of entering or not entering combat is not a realistic policy. As well as causing resentment among men, it would be hard to defend in a court of law. To allow both sexes to choose whether or not to go into combat would be the end of an effective military. Honesty requires that anti-ban advocates state openly that they want to put all female soldiers at the same combat risk—or that they do not.

By a one-vote margin last November, the presidential commission arrived at a surprisingly conservative recommendation: While approving of women's service on most warships (except submarines and amphibious vessels), it advised keeping women out of combat planes and ground combat units. President Bill Clinton has said that he will take the recommendation under consideration, but debate will surely continue before the matter is settled.

The vexed issue of homosexuals in the armed forces draws the postmodern military into another heated social controversy. And some of the solutions proposed would present just as great a problem to the military's combat effectiveness as do those proposed in the gender arena.

Again, some historical background. Up to World War II, the military treated homosexuality as a criminal act, punishable by imprisonment. During the war, however, service leaders came to adopt a psychiatric explanation of homosexuality: Discovered gays were either "treated" in hospitals or

given discharges "without honor." From the 1950s through the 1970s, gays—defined almost always as people who had engaged in homosexual activity—were discharged under less than honorable circumstances. In 1982, in an effort to bring about a more uniform policy, the Department of Defense issued new guidelines that for all practical purposes made stated sexual orientation, rather than behavior (unless it was overt), the defining quality of homosexuality. The policy stipulated that a service member who declared that he or she was gay would receive an honorable discharge if his or her record was otherwise unsullied. However, if a gay service member was caught in a compromising situation, he or she might receive a less than honorable discharge.

The exclusion of homosexuals from the military has come under intense criticism not only from gay-rights groups but from civil libertarians and champions of equal opportunity. The 1992 Democratic platform pledged to remove the gay ban. And a threshold was crossed when the 102nd Congress introduced House Resolution 271, which called for the Department of Defense to rescind the ban. Editorials in the national press and sympathetic television accounts of gays in the military have added pressure to abolish the restriction.

Public-opinion polls show that the number of Americans favoring the admission of gays into the armed forces has been creeping upward. By 1992, about two-thirds of those surveyed favored abolishing the ban. Support for repeal is strongest among women and whites, and weakest among males and minorities. Without question, the growing support for ending the ban reflects a generally more tolerant attitude among the general public, but it may also be a sign of how distant most of the citizenry has become from the realities of military service.
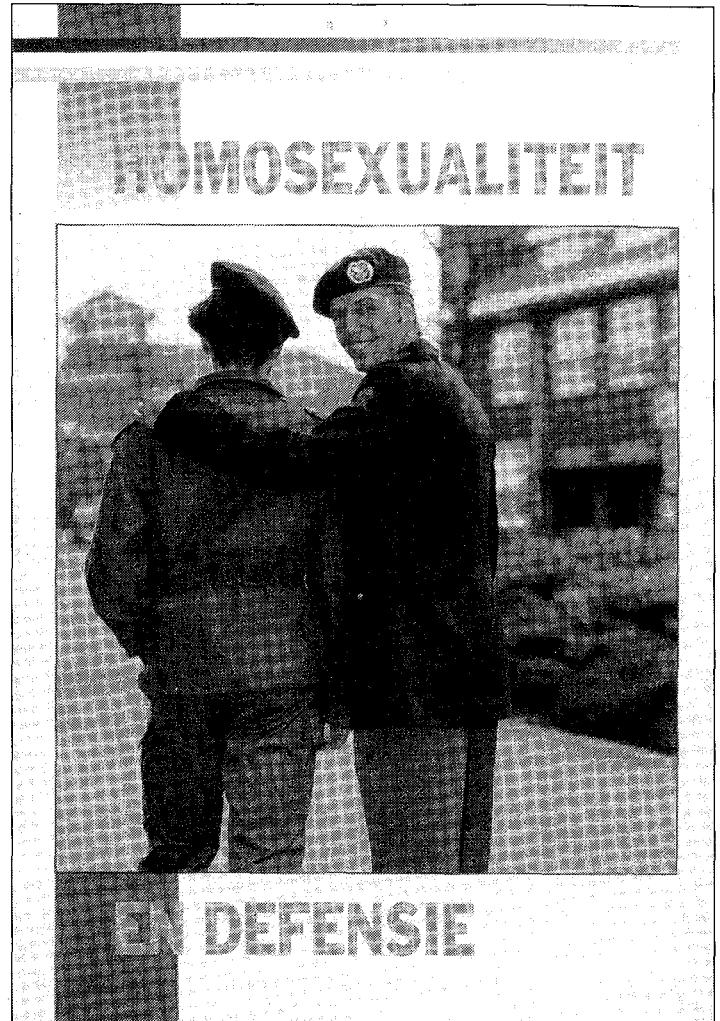
Certainly, some of the reasons for ex-

cluding gays do not stand up to scrutiny. The argument that homosexuals are susceptible to blackmail is illogical. (If there were no ban, a gay service member could not be manipulated by the threat of exposure.) No evidence exists that homosexuals, under present rules, have been greater security risks than anyone else. Furthermore, no one can prove that homosexuals are any less effective than heterosexuals as soldiers, sailors, airmen, or marines.

What is at issue today, however, is whether or not *declared* gays should be allowed to serve in the military. This is different from the question of tolerating the service of discreet homosexuals in uniform (though with some 1,000 gays being discharged each year, it is clear that not all are discreet). To condone discreet homosexuality in the services while opposing the official acceptance of declared homosexuals is to set

This photograph appears on the cover of a brochure issued by the Dutch military to promote tolerance of homosexuality in the ranks. According to studies, one out of 10 Dutch service members is gay.

oneself up for the charge of hypocrisy. And it probably does no good to say that a little hypocrisy may be the only thing that allows imperfect institutions to function in an imperfect world.

Whatever is done, policymakers should think twice before they invoke a misleading analogy between the dynamics of racial integration in the military and the proposed acceptance of overt homosexuality. Racial integration increased military efficiency;

the acceptance of declared homosexuals will likely have the opposite effect, at least for a time. In a letter to General Powell last year, Representative Schroeder invoked the race analogy. His response was direct:

> Skin color is a benign, non-behavioral characteristic. Sexual orientation is perhaps the most profound of human behavioral characteristics. Comparison of the two is a convenient but invalid argument. I believe the privacy rights of all Americans in uniform have to be considered,

especially since those rights are often infringed upon by conditions of military service.

At the very least, the lifting of the ban will create a controversy over the issue of privacy, which in turn could make recruitment (particularly among minorities) even more difficult than it is today. Just as most men and women dislike being stripped of all privacy before the opposite sex, so most heterosexual men and women dislike being exposed to homosexuals of their own sex. The solution of creating separate living quarters would be not only impractical but an invitation to derision, abuse, and deep division within the ranks.

There is also the problem of morale and group cohesion. Voicing the conservative position, David Hackworth, a highly decorated veteran who writes on military affairs for *Newsweek*, acknowledges that equal-rights arguments are eloquent and theoretically persuasive. The only problem, he insists, is that the military is like no other institution. "One doesn't need to be a field marshal to understand that sex between service members undermines those critical factors that produce discipline, military orders, spirit, and combat effectiveness."

Foes of the ban point to the acceptance of homosexuals in the armed forces of such countries as the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, and Israel. In the Netherlands, an alleged 10 percent of the military is gay (though nine out of 10, studies say, remain undeclared), and a four-day seminar stressing sensitivity toward minorities, including gays, is mandatory in all Dutch services. Harmony is said to reign throughout the tolerant ranks of the Dutch army.
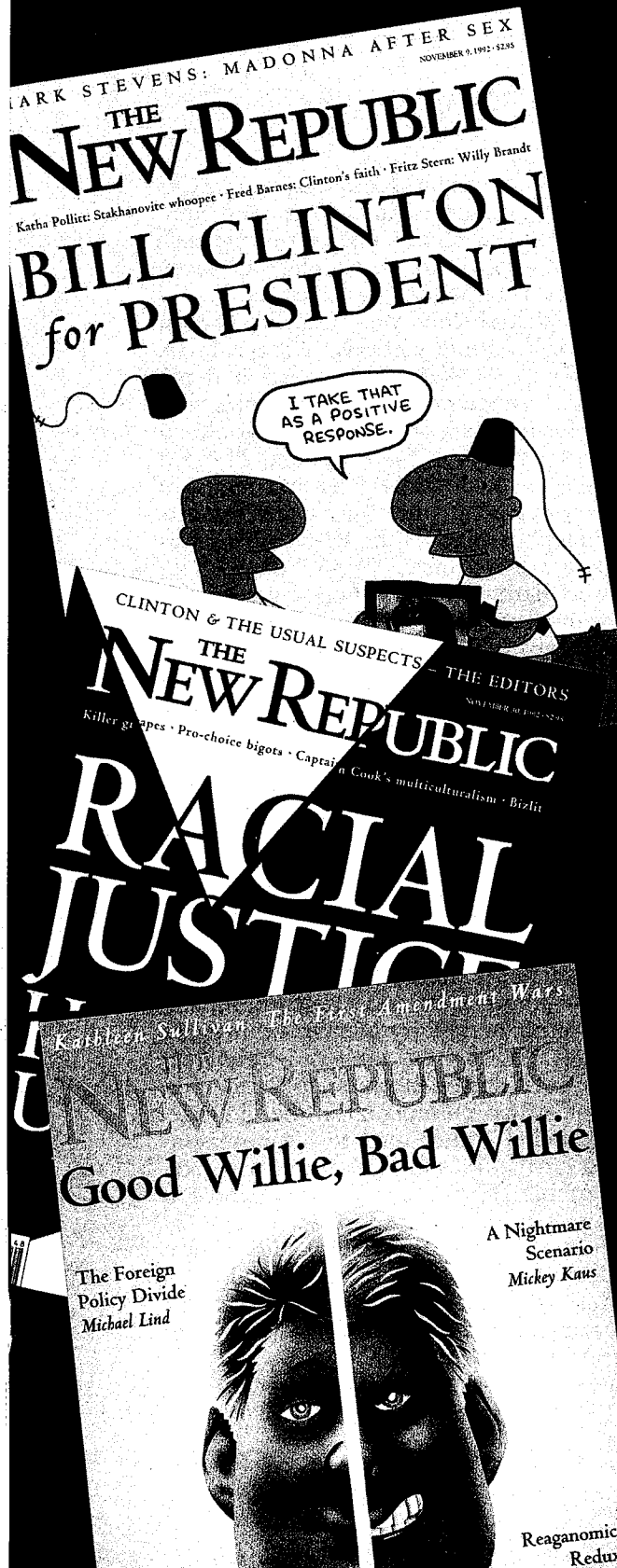
Those who object to the validity of national comparisons charge that the Dutch and Scandinavian cultures are far more progressive and tolerant than is main-stream American culture. Furthermore, they say, neither the Dutch nor Scandinavian armies have been in the thick of combat in recent decades. These objections are partially invalidated by the example of Israel's military, which inducts declared homosexuals. Israel is a conservative society, and its troops are among the most combat-seasoned in the world. Yet while it is true that gays in Israel are expected to fulfill their military obligation, it is also true that they receive de facto special treatment. For example, gays are excluded from elite combat units, and most sleep at their own homes rather than in barracks.

It is likely that the United States will soon follow the example of these and other nations and rescind the gay ban, despite widespread resistance within the U.S. military. One can of course argue that the United States now has such a decisive strategic advantage over any potential enemy that it can well afford to advance the cause of equal opportunity at possible cost to military effectiveness. Still, such a risk must be acknowledged.

Because we live at a time when the combat mission of the armed forces appears to be of secondary importance, it is easy for citizens and their leaders to assume that the military can function like any other private or public organization. But we must face certain realities if we accept this assumption. We must decide, for one, whether we will be willing to restore compulsory national service if dropping the gay ban makes recruitment even more difficult than it now is. (Most nations without such a ban do have obligatory national service, the military being an option in many cases.) Unless such realities are faced, we can only hope that our postmodern military never has to face the uncivil reality of war.