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Leadership and Institutional Reform in Consensual Democracies: Dutch and Swedish Defence Organizations after the Cold War

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Citation

Noll, J. E. (2005, April 7). *Leadership and Institutional Reform in Consensual Democracies: Dutch and Swedish Defence Organizations after the Cold War*. Cuvillier Verlag, Gottingen. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/2306>

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Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Leadership and Institutional Reform in Consensual Democracies
Dutch and Swedish Defence Organizations after the Cold War

Proefschrift
ter verkrijging van
de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
op gezag van de Rector Magnificus Dr. D.D. Breimer,
hoogleraar in de faculteit der Wiskunde en
Natuurwetenschappen en die der Geneeskunde,
volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties
te verdedigen op donderdag 7 april 2005
klokke 16.15 uur

door

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geboren te Oberhausen, Duitsland
in 1967

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Editing: Christina Mercken (Xina text and support)

Cover-photo's from the private collection of Henk Geldermans and Lennart Nilsson

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To my parents
(Meinen Eltern)

Acknowledgements

My friends and colleagues from the Crisis Research Centre Leiden University and the Crisis and Reform project showed to me that although writing a dissertation is a lonely challenge it can be alleviated by a great team setting. Thank you Arjen, Celesta, Fleur, Liesbet, Martijn, Martijn, Sander, Sandra, Sanneke. During my time in Leiden I also gained a lot from the contact with my other colleagues, not only in a professional way. I would like to thank in particular Willeke van Heyningen, Torsten Selck, Jantine Oldersma and Gerard Breeman. The institutional crisis and reform project was supported by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) with my project (project number 41560014) being just a small part of the research. More studies about crisis and reform will follow soon. I explicitly want to thank NWO.

At an early stage of my research Willeke van Brouwershaven provided me with good ideas. Karl Haltiner shared his quantitative data-set about conscription in Europe with me. I also would like to thank all my interviewees who spend some of their precious time helping me with my research. Almost all are listed at the end of this study, yet some of them preferred to stay anonymous. In Sweden the following people helped me at an earlier stage of my research with their valuable comments and suggestions: Alise Weibull, Karin Lindgren, Bengt Sundelius, Britta Eriksson, Daniel Norlander, Ebbe Blomgren, Mr. Hassel, Magnus Edin, Erik Björkman, Jan Sigfridsson, Johan Lohthigius, Olle Sandhaag, Sven Rune Frid, Thomas Denk and Birgitta Rydén.

This study gained from the help and hospitality by the Swedish Defense College and the Crisis Management Research and Training group (CRISMART). Two months in Stockholm flew by due to my friend and colleague Dan Hansén, who offered me shelter and many hilarious and enjoyable moments. Alise Weibull supported my research with many discussions, suggestions, and above all warm hospitality. During the end-stage of this study, when I really needed a place to hide and write *Els Geldermans* and Peter Dekker offered me their home and Gerald Monterie and Anne Geerlings their lovely summer-cottage.

I owe special gratitude to my family and kin. In particular my wife and my daughters faced many critical periods during my dissertation struggle. When the academic community is talking and writing about leadership and crisis management it often neglects that the real crisis managers (and leaders!) are our families. Recent comparative studies show that it is still rather exceptional for children from a German working class family to receive a university degree let alone a Ph.D. I am one of the lucky few. This is why I will dedicate this book to my mother and my late father. They gave me the necessary support and my mother is/my father was the living examples for social-democratic values that hopefully will guide me through the rest of my life. Vielen lieben Dank.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The end of the Cold War

The fall of the Berlin Wall marked the beginning of the end of the Cold War.¹ Soon, by 3 October 1990, both Germanys re-united and the Eastern defence organisation, the Warsaw Pact, ceased to exist. The unsuccessful 'coup d'état' of conservative forces in the Soviet Union during the winter of 1991/92 marked the definite end of the country's world power, leaving the United States of America as the sole superpower. Some considered this to be the end of history with Western values prevailing, and the definite proof of the supremacy of liberal democracies.² However, one important institution, which had guaranteed the Western world the security it needed to develop in prosperity during the Cold War, now faced growing problems: the armed forces.

Practically overnight most of the Western European defence sectors, with their Cold War structures, became seemingly obsolete. The Cold War strategies were no longer suitable in the world of the 1990s, now that their basis, the antagonism of the two superpowers, had vanished. Territorial defence strategies and large territorial armies with heavy equipment, whether in the German lowlands, the Scandinavian Polar Regions, or the Eastern flanks of the Anatolian highlands, were especially subject to increasing criticism. Where they had once contributed to the success of the West, being a necessary condition to territorial defence, they had now become obsolete and, above all, too expensive. The costs of the Cold War had after all been considerable: 'It consumed national wealth, by giving rise to large and costly defence establishments ...'³

Change to armed forces is rather common, but the pace of change since 1989 had been extraordinary. Most armed forces in the Western world had faced serious downsizing. Moreover, 'the main challenge for the armed forces is that changes stemming from the external strategic context and domestic society are not occurring sequentially but simultaneously. Adjusting to both the international and domestic sources of change involves the difficult task of reconstructing the organisation structures, equipment, doctrine and cultural ethos, which were inherited from the past'.⁴ The policy output of most Western defence sectors no longer fitted the demands of the changing environment or the expectations of society. Thus their legitimacy was undermined and they faced an institutional crisis.

However, new - or during the Cold War overlooked - conflicts flared up, and it was these conflicts that had guided most military adaptations in Western Europe. Peacekeeping and peace enforcing became as important as conventional territorial defence tasks. Due to domestic pressure and pressure from their (security) environment most Western European countries made similar choices when it came to the restructuring of their armed forces: downsizing and the change from invasion forces to forces with crisis management capacities. There were, and are, however, major differences in the way these forces were manned. For example, Germany and the Scandinavian countries chose to uphold the system of military conscription, while France, Spain, and the Netherlands abandoned it.⁵ The question arises why some Western European countries abolished military conscription after the Cold War and why some did not.

1.2 Defence policy and conscription after the Cold War

An answer to the empirical question might be found by looking at the transitions from mass army to 'force-in-being' that many Western armed forces underwent. The American sociologist Burk argues that external reasons lay at the base of the changes most armed forces underwent after World War II, that is from 'mass armed forces' to 'forces-in-being'. The term of mass armed forces refers to large standing armies, as they existed until the end of World War II. After 1945, those armies were transformed into 'forces-in-being'. This means that only a selection of soldiers was active and that a large part of the organisation consisted of units that could be mobilised in case of a threat.

Van Doorn distinguishes three meanings of the term mass armies. Firstly, 'mass army' refers to the large-scale forces of the nineteenth century governing military operations. The increase of size, up to one million soldiers under Napoleon, contributed to the nationalisation and democratisation of the military. 'The 'levee en masse' of the French Revolution was continued in the system of general conscription which gave rise to the concept of 'Volk in Waffen' (nation in arms). The mass army is therefore quite rightly seen in relation to the draft.'⁶ Secondly, 'mass army' can refer to an army 'with a highly undifferentiated and homogeneous composition.'⁷ Thirdly, 'mass' in the sense that mass armies played a role in the appearance of mass societies, refers to the capability of a society to mobilise 'their members for large scale collective objectives.'⁸

There are differences between nations in the extent and ways they convert their mass armies to forces-in-being, especially with concern to the abolition or maintenance of military conscription. These differences can be explained by national factors such as national traditions about the military's 'place' in society and prevailing patterns of national integration.⁹ Important factors for abandoning conscription might also be the combination of the geo-strategic position of a country with the financial burden of all-volunteer forces and social inequity between those who serve and those who are exempt.¹⁰ Klein (1998) indicates the importance of alternative service or weapon-free service for conscious objectors in some societies. As Burk already assumed 'ending conscription is not a necessary outcome of the decline of mass armed forces.'¹¹ The reason to abandon conscription obviously depends on national paths.

In order to explain differences between Western countries in dealing with the conscription issue after the Cold War, the Swiss sociologist Karl Haltiner points to the so-called conscription ratio. This is the 'percentage of conscripts compared with the total of a country's regulars without reserves'.¹² In his opinion, it is wrong just to look at the presence or absence of conscription. It is more important to look at the conscription ratio in order to understand incremental changes, which will lead - in the end - to abolition (Figure 1).

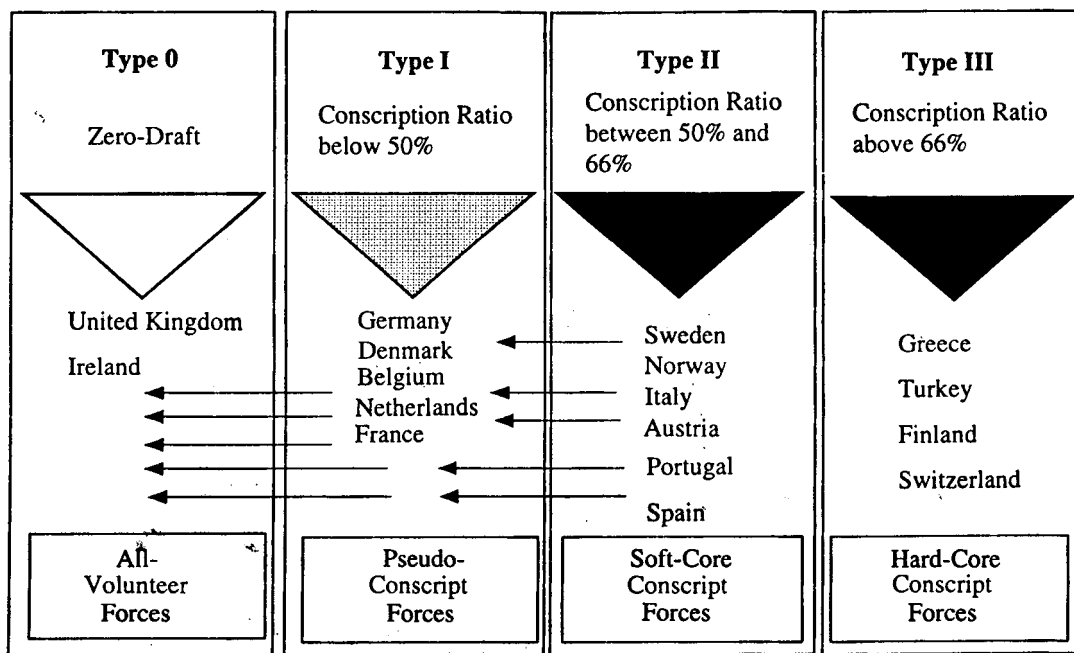


Figure 1: A typology of Force Structures and Expected Changes (Haltiner 1998: 18)

Looking at the conscript ratio, Haltiner differentiates between four types of armed forces:

- Type 0. These forces are purely all-volunteer forces, like the Anglo-Saxon states;
- Type 1. In these forces less than 50% are conscripts. This is why they are called pseudo-conscript forces. This type fosters the unequal burden-sharing of the young men within a nation. Only a minority of every year-class is obliged to serve;
- Type 2. More than half, but less than 66% of the armed forces are filled with conscripts;
- Type 3. Above 66% of all soldiers are conscripts. Regulars and volunteers, often short contracted, have overall cadre or technical functions.

The arrows indicate changes that had already materialised after 1989 or were to be expected.

Haltiner's analysis is valuable for overcoming the dichotomy trap of conscription. Purely differentiating between the sheer existence and absence of conscription leads to unreliable conclusions about the future of conscription. The declining conscript ratio is an important indicator for an incremental process towards the abolition of conscription in many countries. By pointing to the gradations, a first step is set to explain differences in content and speed of national changes of the conscript system.

1.3 The conscription puzzle

Haltiner's innovative analysis refers to social and political pressure for the abolition of conscription. According to him these pressures rise due to the fact that 'conscription is only practised selectively and not universally'¹³ in many type I and type II countries. In other words, due to the increasing inequality of selective draft, conscription will face a growing loss of legitimacy in the countries where it still exists. The author concludes that the choice to uphold or abandon military conscription depends on 'the combination of being a member of a defence alliance and being far from a direct national military threat and participating frequently in international missions.'¹⁴ This last point in particular seems to be of importance, since it is common procedure in all Western democracies that conscripts are not obliged to serve in crisis-management missions.

As valuable as Haltiner's explanation is, it does not tell us anything about the actual policymaking processes within the respective defence sectors, the more he does not elaborate this hypothesis in his article further. Moreover, his approach implies that he does not look at the complex processes within which policymaking in Western democracies takes place, relying instead on a few structural explanations.¹⁵ These structural constraints, such as military threat and being a member of a defence alliance, do not automatically induce or prevent policy and organisational changes. Nor does the increasing loss of an institution's legitimacy automatically lead to pressure on the government by social actors. We therefore must open the 'black-box' of the policy process in order to understand why and how states with conscription respond differently to the same international changes. In particular, we have to focus on the behaviour of policy actors within (inter)national structures.

Since both 'agency and structure are ... the defining components for the understanding of human interaction within a society and of the explanation of social phenomena,'¹⁶ policy outcomes can only be understood by analysing actors' choices, their willingness to choose, within the possibilities the structures provide. In the end, we still do not know for certain how we have to study the political and administrative processes that led to the abolition or maintenance of military conscription in Western Europe after the Cold War. But knowledge about those processes does tell us more about pivotal questions regarding the extent, form and timing of abolition: why did some countries transform conscription while others abolished, and why did some change policy soon after the Cold War while others did not?

This study argues that the post-Cold War changes in Western European defence sectors have to be understood as a consequence of the critical junctures in the security environment of a country. The threats and opportunities those episodes in a sector's history offer to the political, military and societal actors within a country might help to alter the status quo. Crises can break open a path that would otherwise have been closed for policy change, yet whether or not the conscript system is actually changed depends on the policymakers' choices. Although Haltiner admits that the end of the Cold War was important, he only offers partial explanations: 'Strategic and military goal bound factors such as the end of the Cold War and new missions for the armed forces (peace keeping, peace enforcement) seem to be of more importance for the recent changes of force structures in Western Europe [than socio-economic modernisation].'¹⁷ Furthermore, he introduces the tool with which incremental processes towards change in conscription can be recognised, but neglects to go deeper and describe those processes. Are there

dominant actors in these countries, who managed to influence different outcomes? Is conscription a routine or non-political policy issue or can we see political and bureaucratic struggles about this societal institution that had influenced the relation between the citizens and the state for centuries? To answer those questions, the black box of defence policymaking after the Cold War needs to be opened.

This study takes a closer look at two cases from Haltiner's analysis to show that there might be more than structural constraints to national defence policy and that analysing the policy process in greater detail offers a more adequate and precise understanding of how and why states responded to the end of the Cold War in this domain. The study investigates the role of leadership in instigating or opposing reform efforts. It uses a functional approach to leadership and applies it to Sweden and the Netherlands. These cases mark two distinctly different modes of adaptation to the changed environment with regards to conscription within Haltiner's typology stated in Figure 1.¹⁸ In short, the key empirical question of this study is: Why did the Netherlands abandon conscription soon after the Cold War and why did Sweden not do so?

In the past, defence policy and the defence organisation as such had been undeservedly neglected in the study of public administration.¹⁹ Mayer & Khademian claim that scholars neglect defence policy because they do not find it representative for policymaking in general. The authors conclude, however, that defence policy is not merely an extension of foreign policy. Decisions taken in defence policy also influence national policy. In the past, political scientists concentrated on disarmament and polemological questions.²⁰ Furthermore, they described changes of defence policy from a historical perspective.²¹ Especially within Dutch public administration studies only few academic studies have opened the black box of political-administrative defence decision-making, using relevant political and administrative theories. Van Brouwershaven, for example, describes the strategic management at the Dutch Ministry of Defence during turbulent times²² and Van den Hoogen deals with the defence budget decision-making.²³

This study will contribute to the rich sociological tradition of armed forces research by bringing the insights of policy research to the attention of scholars studying civil-military relations. The origins of large-scale policy changes in the 1990s within the stable defence sectors of the Cold War deserve a widespread attention by many different academic disciplines. By paying attention to those changes this study hopes to contribute to an important debate in political and administrative studies about the origins and processes of large-scale reforms in Western policy sectors in general. Unravelling the conscription puzzle in the Netherlands and Sweden serves as an example for the complexity of reforms and policy change in consensual democracies and the role of leadership in those processes. The key theoretical question of this study is, how similarities and differences between the Dutch and Swedish cases can be explained by patterns of leadership in the defence policy sectors of both countries. That is why in the following chapter a theoretical framework will be developed, which takes account of structural constraints, yet emphasises the key role of strategic choices made by policy makers in leadership positions.

1.4 Some methodological considerations

Comparing two countries with regard to the outcome means it is necessary to select cases on the dependent variable. That is a rather tricky strategy. King, Keohane & Verba emphasise that while following such a strategy one has to avoid falling into three common pitfalls. Firstly, *dependent variables should be dependent*.²⁴ This study wants to study policy processes with regard to conscription after the Cold War, as an example for leadership in reforms and in order to explain differential outcomes. Conscription is closely connected to larger reform processes, i.e. downsizing, restructuring, and reformulating the use of the national armed forces; yet it is unlikely that countries choose to reform their armed forces because their first intention is to abandon conscription. Throughout the centuries, conscription had been dependent on governments' choices in foreign and defence policy; however, it had never been the aim. This study considers the environment of national defence policy and leadership actions to be the independent variables explaining variation in national outcomes.

Secondly, *do not select observations based on the dependent variable so that the dependent variable is constant*.²⁵ Sweden and the Netherlands differ on the outcome. While the Netherlands in 1993 chose to postpone the draft, in Sweden conscripts are still drafted while this study is being written. At the same time, in respect to some of the possible explanatory variables, e.g. with regard to their institutional structures for public policymaking, both countries are often considered most similar cases.²⁶ The causes responsible for the different outcomes are expected to pertain to the people, organisation and their interactions in post-Cold War defence policymaking processes in both countries. In particular, this study will try to ascertain to what extent and in which way political and bureaucratic leadership has affected the policy process and outcomes regarding the future of conscription.

Thirdly, *choose a dependent variable that represents the variation we wish to explain*.²⁷ In other words, 'we need the entire range of variation in the dependent variable to be a possible outcome of the experiment of the outcome in order to obtain an unbiased estimate of the impact of the explanatory variables'.²⁸ Due to previous quantitative research, a broad range of variety had been established. As is shown in Figure 1, the variety of outcomes is broader than the mere absence or presence of conscription. Haltiner points to four types of outcome. Type 0 and Type III incorporate cases where we saw almost no change at all after the Cold war. They are static. What is more interesting to our research - remember, this study does not only try to explain differences in outcome, but particularly leadership in reform - are countries where conscription underwent different degrees of change, which are found in Types I and II. The Netherlands and Sweden are examples of countries in transition from Type II to Type I (Sweden) and Type I to Type 0 (Netherlands). Moreover, and this will challenge Haltiner's explanation, though Sweden is no official member of a defence alliance, it contributes to military crisis management operations, which are considered to be influential on a country's choice to abandon conscription. In this sense, Sweden can also be considered a crucial case, used to establish causal inference that cannot be provided by rough quantitative research.

In both countries, documents in the archives of the Ministries of Defence and the national archives have been analysed. Together with official documents, such as the Defence White Papers, and a media analysis, they contributed to the triangulation of data,

which increased the reliability of this study. The media analysis mainly served as a historical source. In both countries more than 40 interviews with decision makers, civil servants and soldiers were conducted. These interviews provided a more in-depth analysis than mere document analysis might provide. Where possible, already existing studies have been used to support empirical evidence. All these efforts contribute to as complete a picture as possible of the policy processes in both countries. This process tracing, or historical analysis, enables us to establish causal relations.²⁹ The author is, however, aware of the fact that the small number of cases aggravates causal inference about the possible influence of leadership in defence reforms in Sweden and the Netherlands. Nonetheless, it is possible to show or to reject that leadership, at least partially, contributed to the outcome in both countries.

1.5 Overview of the book

In chapter 2 the theoretical arguments will be developed. Challenging the hypothesis that crisis leads to reform, insights of crisis and reforming literature are used to establish causal relations: when and under what conditions can crisis lead to reform? The actors' behaviour during an institutional crisis is one of the important identified explanations. Crucial questions concern the strategies of these actors, whether they are reforming or conserving, and the amount of room they had to manoeuvre while striving for change within consensual democracies. In chapter 3 the theory is operationalised in order to test empirics.

For both cases, the Netherlands and Sweden, the historical, empirical and analytical chapters are structured similarly. In chapters 4 and 7 the history of conscription in the Netherlands respectively Sweden will be described. Until World War II many parallels can be found between both countries, where the armed forces and conscription were often used subjects during conservative and liberal struggles for power in foreign and defence policy. This is why the period from the 19th century to the Great War receives special attention in both chapters. Other important episodes in both countries for the development of the armed forces and conscription in particular were the inter-bellum and the Cold War period.

The empirical chapters (5 and 8) start at the end of the Cold War. First, the respective structures of the defence policy sectors are described. Following that the post-Cold War conscription policymaking process in both countries is depicted. The cases differ in time and in the number of actors involved. While in the Netherlands the process took place within four years, the Swedish process is still going on while this study is being finished. Because of this, the structures of the two empirical chapters differ.

The analytical chapters (6 and 9) have a similar structure. After a short introduction, the main actors, their strategies and the respective outcomes in both cases are described. When describing the actor's calculations and the leadership opportunities a limitation to the crucial actors is necessary. Central to both chapters is the analysis of three stages within a reforming or stabilizing process: *Why* do leaders reform, *how* do they reform and what is the *outcome* in terms of *policy change* and *crisis management effectiveness*?

The concluding chapter 10 parallels the structure of the analytical chapters, yet it directly compares the processes in both countries offering a theoretical discussion of lead-

ership in crisis and reform in consensual democracies such as Sweden and the Netherlands.

Notes

¹ Hogan 1992: 1

² Fukuyama 1991

³ Mearsheimer 1990: 52

⁴ Dandeker 1999:3

⁵ To be more precise, the Netherlands postponed drafting the conscripted young men, which is a crucial distinction in the policy process described in the empirical chapter.

⁶ Van Doorn 1975: 54

⁷ Van Doorn 1975: 54

⁸ Van Doorn 1975: 55

⁹ Burk 1992: 56, compare Van Doorn 1975: 56

¹⁰ Van den Doel 1992b: 7

¹¹ Haltiner 1998c: 58

¹² Haltiner 1998c: 43

¹³ Haltiner 1998c: 58

¹⁴ Haltiner 1998c: 60

¹⁵ Haltiner 1998c: 60

¹⁶ Friedman & Starr 1997: 3

¹⁷ Haltiner 1998c: 60

¹⁸ Note: type 0 and III are no examples for change of conscription after the Cold War since they are static.

¹⁹ Mayer & Khademian 1996

²⁰ See Bomert & De Lange 1992. Compare also the critic by Mayer & Khaddemian 1996

²¹ Brouwer & Mengens 1994

²² Van Brouwershaven 1999

²³ Van den Hoogen 1987, 1990

²⁴ King, Keohane & Verba 1994: 107

²⁵ King, Keohane & Verba 1994: 108

²⁶ Compare in depth the methodological chapter 3

²⁷ King, Keohane & Verba 1994: 108

²⁸ King, Keohane & Verba 1994: 109

²⁹ King, Keohane & Verba 1994 85-87; compare also Mahoney 2003: 363-365

Chapter 2: Crisis and change in policy sectors: the role of leadership

2.1 Institutional crisis: a window for reform?

The stability of Western democracies and the incremental nature of their policy dynamics have been the subject of much research in Political Science and Public Administration. In recent years, more attention has been paid to the notion of change of and within state institutions. Indeed, it has been observed that ‘institutional change and institutional reform are hot on the agenda of Political Science and Public Administration’.¹ A key question that has emerged is how to explain the occurrence of reform within seemingly stable institutions or sectors. Many existing explanatory tools, i.e. (neo-) institutional theories, fall short in explaining those changes, since they tend to focus on explaining continuity.²

As far as defence is concerned, there exists a broad variety of literature about military change and the change of armed forces. As the Dutch historian Blom puts it: ‘In general, one can say that defeated armies do two things: analysing and reorganising. By the way: winning teams tend to do the same, yet, they are not so keen on reorganising – never change a winning team’.³ Wars often lay bare the weak spots of a nation’s defence. Yet, there are many explanations for military changes other than wars.

Generally speaking, it seems that technical innovation often triggers changes in armed forces.⁴ Rosen considers talented soldiers, time, and information to be at the base of those innovations, but less so civilian leaders. However, technical innovation falls short in explaining armed forces’ changes after the Cold War in the Netherlands and Sweden, where - at least in the case of the Netherlands - the decision to postpone the draft came too soon after the end of the Cold War to let revolutionary technical innovation be a main cause for this. Societal and political forces catalyse military change. Often ideas or interests lead to those changes, like the late 19th century naval change in Great Britain, where social upheaval led to ‘the construction of cultural images of state and war’.⁵

Cortell & Peterson point to the role of individuals in processes of change. It is state officials, who ‘decide when and how to seek change in existing institutional configurations’.⁶ U.S. President Truman, for example, overcame conservative resistance in reformulating the American defence strategy after the Second World War. While conservatives feared the end of United States isolationism, a high defence budget, and the rising of a garrison state, the post-war American president prolonged and extended America’s world supremacy.⁷ Moreover, the changing nature of threat alone does not account for military change, it is civilian leadership that appears to be important in guiding militaries towards new missions.⁸

Change in armed forces’ tasks, innovation, and reduction cannot fully solve the conscription puzzle. For example, Burk asserts that: ‘in an era of the force-in-being, when the technological requirements of war seem to dictate establishing a professional voluntary force, whether citizens have a military obligation depends rather more on the presence of border and constitutional crisis which threaten the nation or, in the absence of these, on the exigencies of electoral politics and the opportunities to gain which a par-

ticular policy position might provide.’⁹ Burk’s explanation points to two important factors: external or internal state crisis and domestic political calculations by state actors, but he does not elaborate much on their specific nature and role. We need to turn to other scholars of policy change to obtain a sharp insight.

From crisis to reform?

An important explanation for non-incremental change in otherwise deeply institutionalised policy domains is the so-called crisis-reform thesis. In this explanation, institutions, which are normally in stable equilibrium, are destabilised by crisis and face critical junctures that may open up strategic choice opportunities that otherwise are foreclosed. Krasner calls this ‘punctuated equilibria’.¹⁰ The original notion of ‘punctuated equilibrium’ in evolutionary biology, which is formulated for the most part by Stephen J. Gould, finds causes for interruption of the stable evolutionary process outside the system e.g. meteorites, volcanic explosions or solar fluctuations. Translated to the world of governance, this suggests that changes from outside the institution can be, among other things, electoral changes, government cutbacks, technological changes or a changing balance of power.¹¹ It is through those critical episodes in an institution’s life that non-incremental change can be initiated. These critical junctures can develop and destabilise existing equilibria, which in turn lead to change.¹² In this study the term institutional crisis will be used. A policy sector is in crisis ‘when its institutional structure experiences a relatively strong decline in (followed by unusually low levels of) legitimacy’.¹³ A sector is defined here as ‘an institutional field of actors, rules and practices associated with state efforts to address a particular category of social issues and problems’.¹⁴

However persuasive this line of thought might be, it is doubtful that crises *always* lead to change or that change can *only* be initiated by crises. Cortell & Peterson (1999) formulate two critiques of punctuated equilibrium explanations. To start with, the crisis-reform thesis does explain ‘most visible episodes of state formation and transformation’ (p. 178) but overlooks the cumulative effect of more incremental institutional changes, which are more probable than drastic changes in an institutional life.¹⁵ The second critical observation regarding the notion of ‘punctuated equilibrium’ concerns the understated role of individuals in processes of change. Major changes do not just ‘happen’, not even in the chaos of crisis. It is state officials who ‘decide when and how to seek change in existing institutional configurations’ (p. 179). Interruptions from outside or inside sectors trigger an intensified search for solutions, including plans for new policies or major reorganisations that wait for the ‘right’ moment to be launched.

2.2 Managing institutional crisis: strategies and outcomes

If not every reform is the result of a crisis,¹⁶ the opposite holds true as well: not every crisis leads to reform. It is argued here that the outcomes of crises are contingent upon the strategies political and administrative leaders choose to adopt in a crisis.¹⁷ Reforms are defined here as ‘deliberate and sustained attempts at non-incremental change in the substance and process of government’.¹⁸ Military change is closely connected to this.

Farrell and Terriff define it as ‘change in the goals, actual strategies, and/or structure of a military organization.’¹⁹

Four ideal-typical outcomes of an institutional crisis can be discerned: reform, unintended change, disillusion and restoration (Table 1). This typology assumes that key policy makers face a strategic choice during a crisis, i.e. whether to try to uphold or change the status quo – the key policy principles and institutional structures – of the policy sector. Furthermore, it also assumes that policy makers do not control the outcomes of their efforts. There may be a big gap between design, implementation, and effects, due to the volatile context of crisis, the behaviour of other stakeholders in the sector, and so on. Hence, the typology looks at both intended and unintended consequences of crisis management strategies.

	Crisis Management orientation	
Crisis Outcome	<i>Reformist</i>	<i>Conservative</i>
Reform	Reform	Unintended change
No Reform	Disillusion	Restoration

Table 1: Crisis response strategies and outcomes: alternative sectoral futures (based on: Boin & ‘t Hart 2000, Boin & Otten 2000)

Reform. In the top left box the reform strategy initiated by leaders turns out to be effective. Trust in and legitimacy of the sector is (re-) established by introducing new structures and/or a change of the basic ideas – the paradigm – on which the policy of the sector is grounded.

The economical reforms in Australia from 1983 on are an example of successful reform. A continuing recession, high unemployment figures, and an annual inflation of 11% and a current account deficit above AUS\$ 6 billion indicated a deep economical crisis.²⁰ Reasons, amongst others, were the reliance of the Australian economy on traditional farming products, which faced an ever growing protectionism in the EU and the United States; low production of highly competitive, high-tech products; and a high tariff barrier to protect its weak economy.²¹ At the same time, the growing welfare state and the costs stemming from that put even more pressure on Australia’s national economy. When in the election night, 5 March 1983, the new Prime Minister-elect and his designated treasurer Keating found out that the deficit would be almost AUS\$ 10 billion, they knew that his labour government would not be able to implement Keynesian economic policies to perfect the welfare state.²² Prime Minister Hawke and the treasurer managed to reform the Australian economy and welfare state, by making use of the strong momentum of crisis feeling, created in the days that followed the election night. Among others, they replaced the system of an adversarial bargaining structure with a neo corporatist pact. Due to that arrangement, the Australian economy became internationally competitive; inflation could be cut and it was possible to trade higher wages for new jobs. Those reforming efforts not only led to a stronger and more stable economy, but also to five election victories in a row. By showing resolve to the crisis in combination with the positive outcome, Prime Minister Hawke showed economic superiority to his political opponents.²³

Many authors point to the fact that it is not sure if and for how long changes persist and can withstand the ‘normalising’ thrust of daily routines in large administrative or-

ganisations.²⁴ Another problem is that it is difficult to evaluate those reforms and their implications. This, however, is beyond the aim of this paper.

Unintended change. Crisis managers may try to re-establish trust in the old structures, but the sector may eventually end up being reformed. Since this study defines reforms as intended, the term 'unintended reform' would be a contradiction in itself. Yet, if managers choose a conservative strategy but the outcome is a change of the paradigm of the sector, this is a third order change. This sort of change under conservative strategy is most likely due to influences from outside the organisation e.g. parliamentary inquiry or media pressure during the process, or this may be due to amplification effects of seemingly minor changes.

In the beginning of the 1990s the Netherlands faced unprecedented escapes from secured prisons, cell shortage and a growing uncomfortable feeling in society with regard to criminality. Although dramatic, these escapes could be seen as normal incidents in prison sectors.²⁵ People try to escape; otherwise it would be a boarding school. Yet, the high frequency of the incidents and their dramatic nature - using helicopters and knotted sheets out of windows - in combination with the public opinion, put strong pressure on the sector. Within a short time the sector faced three reforms that were unthinkable before the public and political attention: one Supermax prison (instead of four), where all heavy criminals are imprisoned, was established and the sector let go of the policy of one person per cell. The most radical change, however, was the presentation of a new White Paper, which announced a new policy of toughening up the penal system. What in the first place appeared to be (intended) incremental changes, in the end turned out to be unintended third order changes, since effective changes became permanent and spontaneous measures were afterwards upgraded.²⁶

Disillusion. When an intended reform fails, the sector faces disillusionment. The intended reform did not re-establish trust and confidence in the sector and its legitimacy. Political and civil servant leaders proved their inability to cope with the crisis. Often, the professional future of these actors is at stake with their reform plans, and when these plans go awry, they may be forced to leave. The leaders asked the followers to trust them and due to the failure - often according to public opinion, which is expressed by mass media - they seemed to have abused that trust. 'Ill-guided reform efforts may actually enhance uncertainty and conflict between stakeholders or even induce chaos in policy implementation ...'.²⁷ This process of disillusion can trigger the next institutional crisis.

Boin & 't Hart refer to the criminal justice sector in Belgium, where a series of crisis mismanagement by the sector authorities led to a loss of legitimacy of the sector. It started in the 1980s, when a violent gang terrorised supermarkets. Though justice never managed to catch the members, it had been without structural implications for the sector. In 1985 it turned out that the drama in the Brussels' Heizel stadium - tens of supporters were killed during a European soccer final - could not have been prevented, because of the rivalry between different police forces. A few years later, the French-speaking socialist in Liège, Andre Cools, was murdered; his murder was never solved. The crisis in the Belgian criminal justice sector reached its climax with the capture of the child molester Marc Dutroux. During the investigation and even after the arrest of Dutroux, 'the system showed a dramatic lack of competence and learning capability'.²⁸ After an early release from prison after being convicted for child rape, Dutroux turned out to be a recidivist. The police failed to catch him in first instance, though they

searched his home but failed to find two missing girls in a custom-built cell in his house. After his capture, Dutroux managed to escape and was only caught after a dramatic car chase. Contrary to what one might expect with regard to those incidents, the sector authorities and the government refused to reform. Even after hundreds of thousands of citizens marched in organised protests, major reforms still mainly exist in blueprint.²⁹

Restoration. In this type of situation, political and administrative leaders who choose a conservative approach, manage the crisis successfully by restoring legitimacy of the sector within its old structures and its existing policy paradigm.

A case in point may be the restoration of the Dutch crime-fighting sector. After a severe institutional crisis, with huge media attention, two resigned ministers and parliamentary inquiries, the sector restored its legitimacy through incremental changes made by the political and administrative leaders. '[T]he changes made were limited to improving the implementation of criminal policy; they did not touch upon the substance of penal law, nor did they call into question organizational principles of the criminal justice system.'³⁰

In reality it is possible that only parts of the sector are reformed whereas other parts persist, or that reform in some parts of an organisation, institution or sector produce spin-offs, which lead to unintended or far-reaching changes in other parts. Whatever the outcomes of institutional crises and their reform struggles will be, those cannot be understood unless one takes a closer look at the strategic choices that senior policy makers within the government make soon after a crisis manifests itself.

Process of crisis management

There are two ideal-typical approaches to crisis that have been discerned, i.e. reformist and conservative:

'A reformist approach is aimed at re-balancing or re-designing the institutional features of the policy sector in order to ensure a new 'fit' with the changed environment. This is essentially an approach of structural adaptation, because the sector authorities attempt to modify processes and structures in order to bridge the performance gap and restore faith in the sector. A conservative approach aims to maintain the institutional essence in the face of change (Terry 1995). The core idea is that incremental improvement rather than radical redesign of existing processes and structures will best enhance the sector's performance.'³¹

Taking a closer look at crisis management helps to open the black box of the policy process, after a crisis in a policy sector has manifested itself. In other words: the course and outcome of the crisis management process is considered to be crucial for the direction a sector takes under pressure. In times of turmoil, deterministic constraints loosen up and it is up to the actors to make use of the 'window of opportunity'. Structures influence or might predispose actors within a sector to think about reforms. Yet, the tacti-

cal and strategic relations between these actors and the influence and steering ability of some of them, are influential on reform courses.³²

In recent years, deterministic views on the relation between crisis and reform gave way to more actor oriented studies.³³ It is strategies by different actors, which might be of explanatory value either as an intervening variable, or by enforcing crisis dynamics. Especially the notion of institutional leadership came more to the fore. Can organisational leaders 'master the process of institutionalisation – to a degree where we can speak of institutional design or re-design – in the face of massive and pervasive constraints'?³⁴ Studies by Wilson (1989), Boin (2001), 't Hart (2000), 't Hart & Gustavsson (2002), and Goldfinch & 't Hart (2003) show that leaders at least sometimes can and do have influence on a policy sector's future, not merely by coincidence, but in deliberate and intended ways. In addition those studies suggest that the institutional history of the sector has some bearing on the strategies of the leaders.³⁵ This study wants to build on the studies referred to above. It will show that structures and path dependency are necessary conditions for a sector's future when facing institutional crisis, but that both are not sufficient to explain crisis outcomes. Actors, to be more specific *leaders*, are important intervening variables. They therefore deserve more attention in literature aimed at explaining crisis policy processes in public sectors. The question then is how leaders might reform a sector or manage to preserve its structure and organisational integrity. The answer is found in the concepts of reformist and conserving leadership.

2.3 Institutional crisis management as a leadership challenge

Why policy makers reform or conserve conscription

The key important intervening variable between 'crisis' and 'reform' that will be examined in this study is the behaviour of key policymaking actors. According to Cortell & Peterson (1999) 'agent's' perceptions, preferences and calculations mediate between a window of opportunity and structural change' (p. 188). They suggest that four factors can lead officials to make use of environmental changes and strive for domestic structural change. Firstly, policy officials are agents of change if their perceptions are influenced by the environmental conditions i.e. the triggers. It is important that the officials recognise that not acting – in this case not altering the institution – might raise costs and would worsen the problem. Secondly, policy officials are influenced by political calculations. The authors identify two different conditions under which policy makers initiate institutional change: on the one hand they 'seek structural reform the more secure they are in their positions and the longer the time horizon before they will be held accountable for their actions' (p. 188). On the other hand, and this seems quite the opposite, they act in the hope to improve their weak political (power) position. Thirdly, ideology is an important source for the will to act. It is important that actors have 'well-formed views on the needed reform' (189). Views they often ventilated in election campaigns and which brought them into office in first place. The last explanation Cortell & Peterson point at, is the 'policy maker's position within the institutional structure. That is,

existing institutions help define actor's preferences for change'.³⁶ In other words, policy makers are path-dependent in their choices.

Translated to analytical tools for empirical research we can formulate hypotheses for each of the four factors, for taking and avoiding action:

- 1) The higher the subjective crisis awareness of the policy makers, the higher the likelihood that they initiate reforms. On the contrary, reformulated for conservative leadership, the lower the crisis awareness of the policy makers, the higher the likelihood that they adopt a conservative approach.
- 2) The stronger the leaders' position within the system and the longer it takes before they are held responsible for their actions, the higher the likelihood that they initiate reforms. For the conservative leader it can be said, that the weaker the positions of the leaders and the shorter it they are held responsible for their actions, the higher the likelihood for conserving strategies.
- 3) The more policy makers are convinced of the need to change, the higher the likelihood of reforms. The opposite holds true for conserving strategies: the more policy makers are convinced for the need to conserve, the higher the likelihood for conserving strategies.
- 4) The higher the expected gains (or the smaller the expected damage) for the political position of the policy makers and the organisation of which they are part, the more they will commit themselves to reforms. On the contrary, it can be said that the lower the expected gains (or the larger the expected damage) for the political position of the policy makers and the organisation, the more they will commit themselves to conserving strategies.

2.4 Leadership orientation: reformist versus conserving crisis management strategies

Reformist leadership

The notion of reformist leadership helps to open the black box of institutional changes. It is the link between a critical moment of an institution or sector and its (supposed) rescue. The public opinion often asks for drastic changes when a sector loses its legitimacy, and the strong and convincing leader is the personification of that change. In other words, reformist leaders are the actors who make use of the 'windows of opportunity for reform'.³⁷ It is important to notice, however, that leadership can function only as an intervening variable, which makes use of the situation. '... [S]uccessful reformists

amplify critical situational attributes and exploit their institutional positions to affect the content and course of reform struggle.³⁸

The outcome of crises also depends on the institutional context within which leaders act. It is therefore wise for the reformist leader not to enforce changes at all costs. Reforming leadership is a political and administrative craft that asks for strategic behaviour and a good portion of political sensitivity. Alliances have to be made, political opponents have to be outflanked and public support has to be gained.

The will to initiate change is important. Without a strong conviction that reforms are necessary, it becomes difficult to initiate and to carry them through in a political and organisational environment where many actors are bound to be hostile to change. Often not only the external environment has to be convinced. Resistance may come from the inside, too. Resistance from operational agencies or ideological struggles within the sector may frustrate the plans of the lone reformer, who often starts with high hopes and loses heart during the long 'march through the institutions'. Five hypotheses for successful reformist leadership have been postulated by Goldfinch & 't Hart (2003) and 't Hart & Gustavsson (2002). The successful reformer combines communication and coalition building skills. The first three hypotheses are concerned with the communication skills of the leaders.

Hypothesis 1: The more dramatically reformist leaders portray current events or issues as a serious and acute crisis, the higher the likelihood of reform success.

Crises and critical events have to be used by reformist leadership in order to initiate change by making clear that only (drastic) reforms can lead out of the crisis. By discrediting the old structures as inadequate in solving current problems, leaders appeal to the inner feelings of insecurity in their followers.³⁹ They verbally de-institutionalise the sector, if necessary even by constructing a crisis.⁴⁰

An example is the already mentioned Australian Prime Minister-elect Hawke and his designated treasurer Keating in 1983. During his electoral victory celebration Hawke received a telephone call from the secretary of the Treasury, Stone. He requested a meeting for the next day. In this meeting he told Hawke and Keating that the budget deficit was not A\$6 billion, as published by the previous government, but around A\$ 9.6 billion. Through this shocking news it immediately became clear to the new leaders that their planned and promised changes in economic policy, i.e. the introduction of a more Keynesian policy, were off. Still they managed to use the crisis to transform Australian economic policy for the next decade. 'After some debate, they decided to devalue the Australian dollar with 10%. Waving the treasury document [Stone's report, JEN] in front of all the TV cameras at the dramatic announcement two days later, and by consistently coming back to it in the months and years to come, they succeeded in thoroughly discrediting the Liberals' claim to be naturally superior in managing the economy and maintaining fiscal responsibility'.⁴¹

Hypothesis 2: Successful reformers form a cohesive unit, committed to demonstrating leadership in the pursuit of major policy and institutional changes as a way out of a crisis.

After the first step, the de-institutionalisation, reformist leaders need to take control of the process – i.e. take the lead - by offering the solution. They have to come with a clear vision, to convince followers and to prevent the opposition taking over. 't Hart & Gustavsson (2002) point to the concept of political will: 'reformist leadership requires a clear sense of vision, and the ability to espouse a deliberately partisan view of the direction that policy should take.'⁴²

However, successful reformist leaders should prevent themselves from becoming owner of the problem. Offering complete solutions at the beginning of the reform-process bears the danger of over-commitment. It seems that partnership formation for reform enhances reforming success. Not solely the chief executive or most senior policy maker, but combinations of important actors, who are influential in the sector or organisation, stand a better chance. They are referred to as political tandems or 'small-scale, hardcore coalitions of reformers.'⁴³ Those tandems are not restricted to political couples *or* tandems of civil servants. On the contrary, the combination of senior policy makers and senior civil servants enlarge reforming success. Both have the chance to gain support in their respective arenas, viz. political and ministerial.⁴⁴

A good example is again provided by the Australian experience of Hawke and Keating with the combination of de-institutionalisation through threatening language and offering an alternative by devaluating their currency and introducing new economic plans. 't Hart (1999) shows that they already worked on deregulation of the financial system, when they came into office. Without their ability to communicate those plans, it would have been difficult - or even impossible - to overcome the strong opposition to reform that existed in Australia.

Hypothesis 3: If reformers develop and employ strategies targeted at persuading their political environment that the proposed changes are both desirable and inevitable, as well as practically feasible, they are more likely to be successful.

The best plans are useless if leaders are not able to sell them to the stakeholders and the public. Reforming leaders have to convince the other actors that they have a good plan and persuade them to follow. Moreover, those plans are not only good, but the best! In order to communicate that, leaders might exaggerate the advantages of the options and play down concurring policy options.

During the process of re-unification Helmut Kohl promised his fellow countrymen 'blühende Landschaften' (flourishing landscapes). If they would elect him in the 1990 election campaign, he would ensure that the re-unification would be conducted without raising taxes. This was a promise to the Western part of the country. He promised the East-Germans that nobody would suffer from the re-unification. Instead, everybody would gain from the healthy economy.⁴⁵

Gaining public support for reforms by persuasive rhetoric is insufficient to overcome resistance. It is important, too, to build coalitions and control the process within the decision arenas. This might involve careful calibration of reform packages to muster support. Two hypotheses can be formulated that address this dimension of reformist institutional crisis management:

Hypothesis 4: Successful reformist leaders manage to secure early support of implementing actors for their crisis response strategy.

Public support is necessary but not sufficient. Reforming leaders have to strive for support within the Parliament and/or from bureaucratic and societal ‘veto-players’. Often reforms are announced in White Papers or laws. Often, however, the political process does not end with the approval of the official policy. Opponents and critics still try to influence the outcome of the process during the implementation. Successful reformers secure early support, since other actors can help the reformers when (political) obstacles arise.

All German chancellors, from Adenauer to Kohl, faced similar institutional constraints. Yet, it is interesting to see, how different they reacted to crises. All chancellors had their own inner circles of advisors, the so-called ‘kitchen cabinet’. Those advisors often had more influence than any minister of the official cabinet. Yet, during the heydays of terrorism in the 1970s, Helmut Schmidt had chosen to incorporate the opposition in the decision-making process. Helmut Kohl, the leader of the opposition party CDU, joined the most important decision-making consultations. By doing this, Schmidt not only had more influence on concurring policy-options, but he enlarged the legitimacy of his choices, as well⁴⁶.

Hypothesis 5: The tighter the leadership’s control over the crisis management process, the higher the likelihood of reform success.

‘t Hart & Gustavsson (2002) point to the importance of ‘procedural’ leadership. Leaders can use their institutional powers to steer the crisis management process in their preferred directions. They can do so by making use of their ability to set the agenda, by selecting people in key positions (especially commissions), and by controlling the flow of information.

After the Cold War, the Dutch Minister of Defence presented a White Paper in 1991. It was full of insecurities and conservative views, which show that the makers mainly thought in Cold War terms. Many people from the defence organisation and foreign affairs worked on the paper and influenced the outcome. Traditionally the Commander of the Army was highly involved in the process. As the environment was changing rapidly, the Minister was forced to re-write the paper within two years. Yet, for the writing of this White Paper, in which more severe cuts and downsizing were to be announced and the obligation for conscripts to enlist was virtually suspended, the minister opted for a very small and close circle. Only a few close assistants and military worked on it. This meant that any possible points of conflict - especially with the army, which had not been included in this process as much as it had been in the 1991 policy process - were excluded by selection.

Conserving leadership

Reformist leadership is a rare phenomenon in Western democratic politics. This is not just because of the many obstacles that reformists face, including the dispersal of veto powers within the system.⁴⁷ Organisational inertia and national sentiments contribute to

the delay of the decline of mass armies.⁴⁸ Often politicians and civil servants tend to be conservative in their actions. Those actors will not initiate changes without perceiving the need. Even if there seems to be a publicly or politically indicated need for change, some actors will try to stick to the old structures for as long as possible. In a comparative case analysis, Boin et al. (2001) show that in four out of five cases, crisis managers initially will adapt a conserving strategy when facing an institutional crisis. A possible explanation lies in the basic nature of an institutional crisis that threatens the normal way in which things are done. Two behaviours appear to be important. On the one hand crisis managers will try to blame the threatening situation before they try to change the structures.⁴⁹ On the other hand '[t]he centralization reflex of bureaucratic organizations [endows]... political-administrative elites with special authority to preserve what is.'⁵⁰

Terry introduces the term 'administrative conservatorship'. This refers to 'the willingness of administrative elites, out of traditional loyalty and moral principles, to preserve authority and distribution of power with regard to the propriety of an institution's existence, its functional niche, and its collective institutional goals. ... [It] is concerned with the preservation of institutional integrity.'⁵¹ A sector or institution can change; indeed it must from time to time, but not at any price. The administrator has to protect the integrity of the institution, that is, 'the completeness, wholeness, soundness, and persistence of administrative processes, value commitments, and unifying principles that determine an institution's distinctive competence.'⁵²

It is in this sense that the conservation of the integrated organisation developed because of leadership practices. According to Selznick and Kaufman, institutions evolve by leaders applying 'integrative techniques.'⁵³ Terry's theory helps to understand the preservation and protection by leadership of the institution once it exists, whether executed by the same or different leaders. Conserving leadership has to protect the institutional paradigm, preventing a third order change.

Although Terry has proposed a normative theory, designed with the American constitutional situation in mind, this study modifies it to enhance our empirical understanding of the role of leadership in fostering and blocking institutional changes in general. Contrary to Schon's (1970) notion of 'dynamic conservatism', where the structures of the social system resist change, it is leadership within the sector preventing change. There is, however, the possibility of (incremental) change within certain boundaries:

'Change and innovation sought by the administrative conservator is ... to respond to new forces and demands in the environment and to preserve an institution's integrity. This type of change is equivalent to the Burkean notion of reform. The change and innovation initiated by the administrative conservator is guided by a fidelity to the institutions' values and unifying principles.'⁵⁴

Two different styles of conservative leadership can be distinguished: initiating and protecting. According to Terry, these styles mark the end of a continuum (Figure 2).

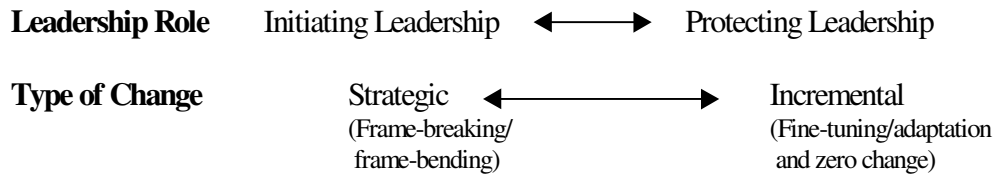


Figure 2: A continuum of leadership roles performed by administrative conservator and corresponding types of change. Source: Terry 1995: 63

Initiating Leadership. Terry distinguishes between two types of strategic changes i.e. ‘frame-breaking’ and ‘frame-bending’. The first are changes initiated in response to a threat of the institution’s integrity. ‘These changes require a radical break from an institution’s established conduct.’⁵⁵ These changes are revolutionary and, according to Terry, because of that reason hard to implement, due to a larger number of external constraints.⁵⁶ The threat can come from inside or outside the organisation and may be unforeseen. This distinguishes them from the latter, frame-bending changes, which are also made in response to external occurrences. Yet, these events are foreseeable; leaders can prepare their response strategy. The crucial difference between frame-bending and frame-breaking changes lies in the fact that the former do not require a drastic departure from existing structures or policy paradigms.

Protecting Leadership marks the other end of Terry’s continuum of conserving leadership. Intended change here is incremental or even zero. Incremental changes ‘are designed to increase efficiency and co-ordination of institutional functions and processes as well as to reinforce values, beliefs, and myths [= fine tuning]’.⁵⁷ On the other hand, incremental changes can be adaptive, made in order to react to external events. Yet, these changes are only minor and aim to improve slightly existing task-performance, without revolutionising or abandoning it.

A good example for protecting leadership is the case of the Dutch top civil servant Docters van Leeuwen, head of the Dutch national secret service in the beginning of the 1990s. In the aftermath of the end of the Warsaw Pact, the legitimacy of the service came under severe pressure as a result of a negative report about the functioning of the service and the so-called Gladio-affair⁵⁸. Yet, headed by Docters van Leeuwen, who was supported by the Minister of Interior, the service regained legitimacy and even a broader task description. The head of the service reorganised the service and practiced a new openness that had been unprecedented. Nobody demanded the dissolution of the service anymore.⁵⁹ Docters van Leeuwen managed to balance the delicate relation between responding to the demands of the organisation’s environment and protecting the organisation’s autonomy and values.⁶⁰

Terry’s theory is primarily normative. Yet, it is possible to formulate certain testable hypotheses in accordance with Terry, which constitute a partial inversion of the hypotheses on reformist leadership formulated above.

Hypothesis 6: The more conserving leaders succeed to define the situation as a non-recurring, exogenous incident, the higher their chances of preserving the institutional status quo.

Protecting leadership is, indeed, different from the reforming leader who re-structures the sector and tries to introduce new ideas, on which the sector's policy is based. In order to protect the sector from reform, the conserving leaders follow different strategies than the reforming leaders do. The conservers convince the sector, and in particular its environment, that the problems of the sector are temporary and that the roots of the problems lie outside the sector. While reforming leaders emphasise that the causes for crises are endogenous and structural, conserving leaders manage to show causes for crises outside the organisation or sector, which are incidental.

Hypothesis 7: Successful conserving leaders form a cohesive unit, committed to prevent major policy and institutional changes.

Stakeholders and media - the public opinion - turn themselves against a sector in crisis and ask for accountability by institutional or sectorial leaders. Old incidents are re-interpreted in the light of 'new' evidences. Conserving leadership calms the situation by following de-politicisation strategies leading attention away from structural changes. One strategy might be soothing the tensions between environmental changes and an existing policy by slightly adapting the latter.⁶¹ This is easier the more the old structures have proven their value and the more the sector is resilient. Tandems of leadership or coalitions of conservers enlarge the success of conserving strategies. A navigator or lieutenant can be of great help to the helmsman in sharing work, responsibility, and in convincing different publics.

Hypothesis 8: The more conserving leaders succeed to persuade their political environment of the undesirability and unfeasibility of reform in the sector, the higher the likelihood of persistence of the status quo.

To prevent changes, conserving leadership will develop a 'rhetoric of reaction'.⁶² Just stating that changes are undesirable is not convincing. The possible consequences of reform have to be framed as a threat to the sector, its stakeholders and their future. Therefore, the leader will persuade his followers that reform has to be avoided.

Until now, the three hypotheses on conserving leadership were mirror images of the hypotheses on reforming leadership. For the remaining hypotheses on support and procedural control, the differences between the two types of leadership behaviour are not that obvious. Conserving leadership needs support, too. Conserving leadership has to control the process, too. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that there may be differences between the two leadership types in reaching those aims.

Hypothesis 9: The greater the conserving leadership's ability to secure the support of implementing actors for its strategy, the higher the likelihood of persistence of the status quo.

Hypothesis 10: The tighter the leadership's control over the crisis management process, the higher the likelihood of conserving success.

Since conserving leadership tries to restore the legitimacy of the old institutional structure of the sector, it is important to prevent criticism as much as possible. Conserving

leadership cannot succeed if it tries to prevent reforms by mere delay and obstruction. On the contrary, leaders have to point to the proven values and gains of the sector, and they have to solicit support from actors who incorporate this success and help to restore the legitimacy of the sector.

Conserving leadership controls the process of conservation to restore legitimacy of the sector. It prevents commissions or other actors from coming up with reform plans that have a fair chance of success. It is necessary for the leaders to influence the composition of commissions, decision forums, appointing allies to strategic positions within the chain of policy process or setting the agenda to enlarge the chance of conserving structures and paradigm of the sector. Note that those are the same tactics that reforming leaders use. So, hypothesis five, formulated at the reforming leadership section, does not discriminate between reforming and conserving leadership. We need to know, however, if the leader - conserving or reforming - is able to control the process following institutional crises. Leadership is after all about leading. And controlling the process is an important instrument. Therefore, hypothesis five needs to be considered in empirical testing of the theory, too.

2.5 Leadership style: active versus passive leadership

Whether it is about conserving or reforming leadership, until now this study hypothesised leadership as active: leaders define situations or control processes and strive for coalitions. Terry states that '[f]rom an institutional perspective, administrative conservatism is an active and dynamic process of strengthening and preserving an institution's special capabilities, its proficiency, and thereby its integrity so that it may perform a desired social function.'⁶³

It is, however, arguable if this activism is the only feasible road to achieving one's aims as a leader during a crisis. Depending on the severity of the crisis, the animosity of the institutional environment and the existence of veto-players within and outside the sector, the political space to manoeuvre for leaders might be more or less limited. In addition, sometimes leaders do not take the lead in crisis management, but deliberately choose to let other actors do their bidding. More reasons can be added, such as bureau-politics or the relative power position of an actor within the sector. To rephrase James Davis Barber, whose famous study 'The Presidential Character' pronounced the active-passive distinction in the analysis of political leadership styles: 'activist [leadership] may run smack into a brick wall of resistance, then pull back and wait for a better moment. On the other hand, [leadership which sees itself] as a quiet caretaker may not try to exploit even the most favourable power situation.'⁶⁴

This study is not about the analysis or prediction of leaders' political actions with the help of political-psychological techniques.⁶⁵ This study uses a functional approach to leadership, which should not be confused with the rather popular notions of psychological traits of leaders or their personal style.⁶⁶ Moreover, it is not about United States' presidents but about political, bureaucratic, and military leadership in consensual democracies. The outcome of the leadership's process depends on the constant interaction between the leaders with each other and their leadership environment. It is a dynamic process during which leaders may change their styles, depending on the situation.⁶⁷

The concept of leadership in this study lies in the tradition of Greenstein's interactive method, further elaborated by Elgie: '[it] implies that political leaders operate within an environment which will both structure their behaviour and constrain their freedom of action. At the same time, it also implies that political leaders do have the opportunity to shape the environment in which they operate, so giving them potential to leave their mark upon the system.'⁶⁸

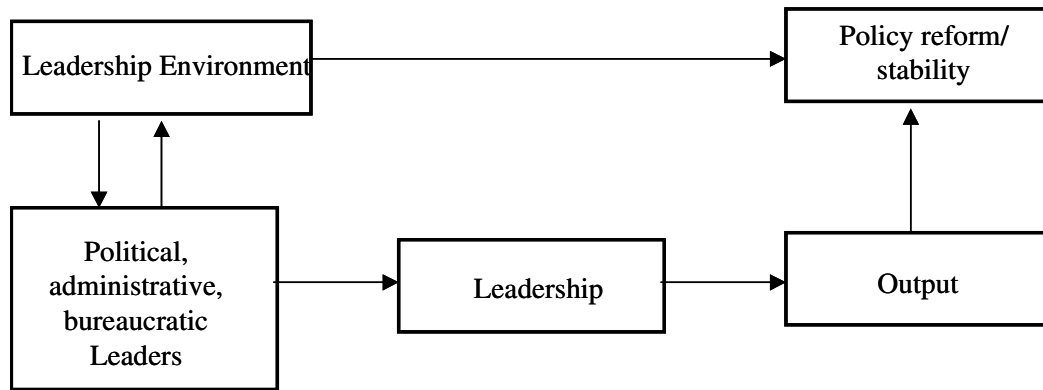


Figure 3: Leadership and its environment

Figure 3 shows the interactive method adapted to this study. The policy outcome, policy reform or stability, depends on the subtle relation between the different leaders within the sector with each other and their environment. Does the leader lead or is he led by his institutional environment? At which moments is the one or the other more important for the direction that the policy process takes? Or, more precisely, when is the leader actively taking the lead and when is he passive within the system? The degree of leadership and its success determines the environment's possibility to influence the outcome. Therefore this study will concentrate on three stages within the reforming or stabilizing process: *Why* do leaders reform, *how* do they reform and what is the *outcome* in terms of *policy change* and *crisis management effectiveness*?

Crisis management in context: Policymaking and leadership in consensual and Westminster democracies

The theories central to this study, i.e., conserving leadership by Terry and reforming leadership by 't Hart,⁶⁹ were developed by using insights of policy processes in majoritarian or Westminster democracies. While Terry elaborated his normative theory within the American bureaucratic system, 't Hart tested his theory on the large economical and fiscal reforms in Australia of the 1980s. But Sweden and the Netherlands, the cases central to this study, are so called consensual democracies. The question arises whether these theories are also applicable to these two countries and if so, under which conditions.

't Hart admitted that the reforming leadership style described in the propositions 1-5 fitted the Australian system with its one-party government, strong institutional position of the prime minister and a dominant position of the state in some policy sectors.⁷⁰ He

already pointed to possible constraints to active leadership in consensual policy systems, where strong leadership often bears negative connotations. With regard to the Netherlands he stated: ‘Where institutional rules spread influence due to checks and balances in political culture fosters reluctance against leaders, an other leadership style [than in Australia] is necessary’.⁷¹

Indeed, at first sight the possibilities for leadership in consensual democracies seem limited the ‘hindrance powers’ seem stronger than those in Westminster style political systems. Lijphart distinguishes ten differences between majoritarian and consensus democracies spread over two dimensions. They are listed in Table 2 and illustrate some of the relative freedom or constraints leadership might face in the respective democracies.

	Westminster democracy	Consensus democracy
Executive-party dimension	Concentration of executive power in single-party majority cabinets	Executive power-sharing in broad multiparty coalitions
	Executive-legislative relationships in which the executive is dominant	Executive-legislative balance of power
	Two-party system	Multiparty system
	Majoritarian and disproportional electoral system	Proportional representation
	Pluralist interest group systems with free-for-all competition among groups	Coordinated and ‘corporatist’ interest group systems aimed at compromise and consultation
Federal-unitary dimension	Unitary and centralized government	Federal and decentralised government
	Concentration of legislative power in a unicameral legislature	Division of legislative power between two equally strong but differently constituted houses
	Flexible constitutions that can be amended by simple majorities	Rigid constitutions that can be changed only by extraordinary majorities
	Legislatures have the final word on the constitutionality of their own legislation	Laws are subject to a judicial review of their constitutionality by supreme or constitutional courts
	Central banks that are dependent on the executive	Independent central banks

Table 2: Differences between Westminster and consensus democracies (Lijphart 1999: 3-4)

Although the Netherlands and Sweden are not pure consensual democracies, they score relatively low on the executive-party dimension and can be considered consensual democracies on this dimension. Sweden has a multiparty system with a dominant social democratic party.⁷² During the 1990s governing with minority governments was the practice, the government therefore had to solicit the support of different actors, often

depending on the policy issue. Sweden scores average on the executive-legislative balance of power. This indicates that the parliamentary government (in contrast to presidential governments) has an average duration.⁷³ The country has a proportional representation with list proportional representation; the voters vote on a party list and the seats are allocated according to the percentage of the votes in the whole country.⁷⁴ Yet, the election system also fosters regionalism. The members of parliament are chosen in 29 different constituencies, who take the effects of their decisions on their home region into account. It is a very corporatist country.⁷⁵

The Netherlands has a multiparty system without a dominant party.⁷⁶ It has a long tradition of coalitional governments. The country is a parliamentary democracy, with an average executive dominance.⁷⁷ Like Sweden it has a list proportional representation⁷⁸ with a clear dominance of parliamentarians from the highly industrialised region called the 'Randstad', which includes the four largest cities of the country. The Netherlands is a corporatist country as well.⁷⁹

According to Lijphart, Sweden has a lower degree of consensus on the federal-unitary dimension than the Netherlands.⁸⁰ In contrast to the Netherlands, considered semi-federal with medium-strength bicameralism, Sweden is a unitary and decentralised country with one chamber.⁸¹ Moreover, Sweden has a very flexible constitution that can be changed with ordinary majority and that knows a weak judicial review of the laws, while in the Netherlands a two-thirds majority is required and no judicial review exists.⁸²

In their six-country times four-sector study about success and failure in public governance, Bovens et al. hypothesised the Netherlands as a '(c)onsociational system where neocorporatist bargaining (the 'polder model') has combined institutional endurance with flexible policy style.'⁸³ In their opinion Sweden is a 'corporatist, unitary system with strong social engineering ethos, long viewed as the paradigm 'welfare state' faced with economic recession later than most other European countries.'⁸⁴ The authors hypothesised both countries as strongly consensual with a moderately proactive (Netherlands) and strongly proactive (Sweden) policy style.⁸⁵

Following Richardson, Bovens et al. define a policy style 'as a more or less stable pattern of policymaking that arises from the interaction between a government's approach to problem solving and the relationships between government and other actors in the policy process.'⁸⁶ Proactive means that a government is considered able to foresee and anticipate social problems before they manifest themselves in a critical way. In the reactive approach to problem solving, on the other hand, the state only acts when problems have already manifested themselves. The aim of their actions is then to reduce the urgency of the problem. This view is based on a so-called realist philosophy, where the policy maker's abilities are bounded by 'laissez-fair' ideology, all-encompassing uncertainty about the causes of social problems, organisational complexity and value conflicts.⁸⁷

The second dimension, besides style, is the state's autonomy towards other social actors. Central to this dimension is the question whether the state is able to impose its policy upon the other actors or not. At one end of the continuum one finds the strong executive that dominates the process. Decisions are sanctioned politically by a legislature that operates independently from interest groups.⁸⁸ The other end of the continuum marks the consensus type of policymaking: 'institutionalised *concertation* [consultation] between state and various social actors who in effect possess veto powers.'⁸⁹ Keeping

Bovens' et al. conclusion in mind, i.e., that policy styles can differ depending on the policy area⁹⁰ and that 'the consensual element of the policy style explanation does appear to reveal a good deal about the way government is able to perform its tasks',⁹¹ this study uses the concept of style and state's autonomy as an analytical tool (Figure 4).

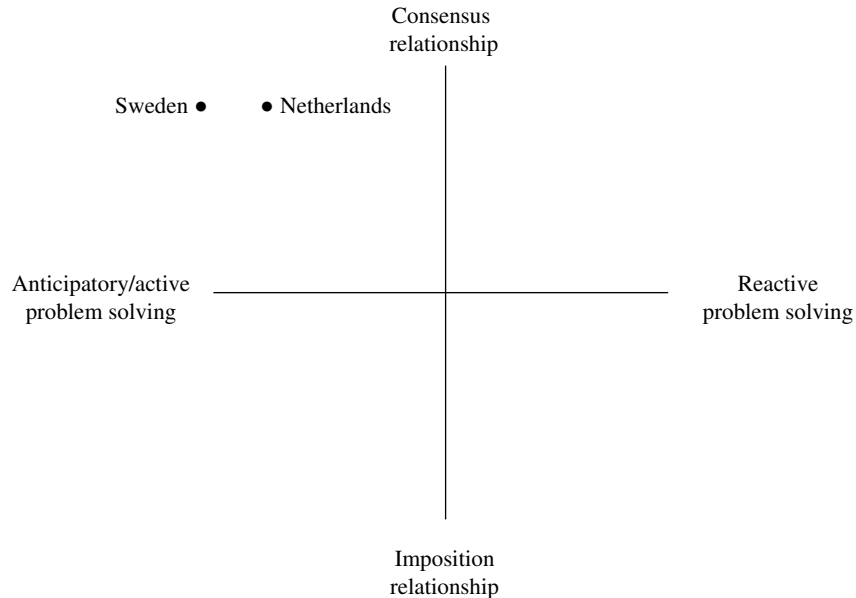


Figure 4: Country selection and hypothesised national policy styles. Bovens et al. 2001: 16, 19

Although consensual politics may limit leadership's space to manoeuvre, the active problem solving style in the Netherlands and Sweden might encourages leaders to strive for change. The relation between leadership and its environment is influenced by the needs of the society and the institutional structures.⁹² Consensus democracies offer room for dispersed leadership, where formal leadership responsibilities are compartmentalised among the ministers.⁹³ Yet, it is expected that, in the cases under study, the actual strategies and actions of reforming and conserving leaders will differ from those in majoritarian type democracies.⁹⁴ The differences between the political systems are related to the different types and styles of leaders in policy change.

In the case of the Netherlands, the Prime Minister as 'primus-inter-pares' is constitutionally much weaker than many of his counterparts in Westminster-type systems. He has little influence on setting the agenda and he 'lacks the formal powers to give instructions to ministers, to dismiss ministers, or even to reshuffle the government.'⁹⁵ Furthermore, the lack of a spoils system in any form brings ministers into office with little political assistance and a high dependency on the civil service. Other constraints imbedded in the political system are the electoral system, which promotes coalitional governments and, due to decentralisation tendencies, is a hindrance power to active leadership ubiquitous.⁹⁶

The Swedish system entails similar though somewhat less stringent constraints. The prime minister is more powerful than his Dutch colleague, the more he is also party leader. Party leaders in Sweden are closely involved in every stage of the government formation. The prime minister directly appoints the other ministers of the cabinet and the power of the single ministers is restricted (by and large) to collective decision mak-

ing of the cabinet. An important factor complicating leadership in Sweden is the strong will of the political actors to seek broad consensus for policies deemed important to the small neutral state's survival, particularly in defence and foreign affairs.

Systemic constraints in combination with reluctance by the population for power executed single handed, leads to the fact that leadership in consensual democracies might often be exercised by a variety of public servants, whether civil or political. Though this study starts from the analysis of the formal organisational, institutional leaders, this focus is by no means exclusive. This study concentrates on the level of political decision-makers, their parliamentary counterparts and civil servants who might turn formal leader postings into institutional leadership. Above all, it wants to emphasise the passive side of leadership, a leadership style that is expected in consensual democracies.

Combining *types* of leadership, i.e. conserving vs. reforming, with *styles* of leadership, i.e. passive vs. active, leads to a two-dimensional typology of institutional leadership (Figure 5).

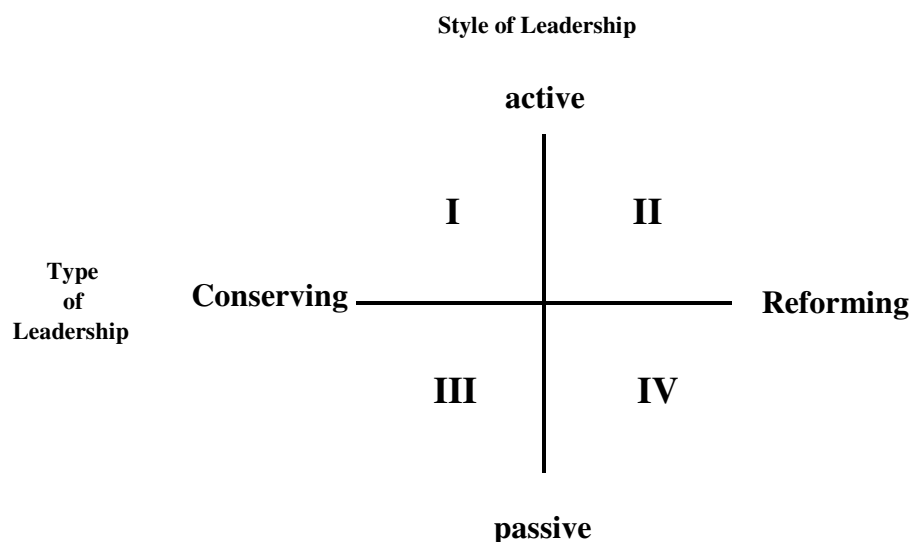


Figure 5: Leadership types and styles

- (I) *Active-conserving leadership*. This resembles the leadership style presented in hypotheses six to ten. Following Terry's notion of conserving leadership, the leaders actively try to de-politicise the situation by convincing the environment of the incidental character of the crisis. They persuade their environment that the old structures had proven their values and that changes are undesirable and unfeasible. Dynamically they are striving for coalitions to conserve what is. Again, different from Schon (1971), this is dynamic leadership not 'dynamic conservatism' of the structures.
- (II) *Active-reforming leadership*. This is the type of leadership studied by 't Hart (2000), 't Hart & Gustavsson (2002), and Goldfinch & 't Hart (2003). Making use of the window of opportunity to change by dramatically portraying events, showing resolve and actively striving for strategic support. Goldfinch & 't Hart explicitly state 'that Westminster systems [might be] more conducive to nonincremental reforms because of their ability to produce major political pendulum

swings in government, although in many cases federal structures encourage and sometimes force a degree of compromise and negotiation in policy change.⁹⁷ The British system, which is the prototype of the Westminster system,⁹⁸ is considered to be more advantageous to reforming leadership than most western democracies. The institutional setting is favouring leaders who want to change policy on a basis of an individual political vision,⁹⁹ which is an important element of Goldfinch & 't Hart's theory.¹⁰⁰

- (III) *Passive-conserving leadership*. This might be a leadership style that is often found in consensual democracies. In those systems, negotiation rather than strong resolve is more rule than exception. Institutional crisis might open the window to change by weakening or taking away structural constraints, but that does not mean that leadership can now be exercised in an institutional and political vacuum, or, that all actors want to exploit the situation. Other actors make use of the window of opportunity, most of the time with opposite aims and leaders will not change, cannot change, have no well-defined plans and the skills to conserve. In short, they fail to exercise leadership. Moreover, moral and ideological constraints can prevent actors from making use of critical situations, where often policy seeking is confused with office seeking. This also holds true for the fourth and last type.
- (IV) *Passive-reforming leadership*. Leadership in consensual democracies is different from the Westminster model. Coalition governments are the rule rather than the exception. Active leadership can lead to unrest and political instability. It is wise to reform through consensus and leaders tend to govern with a 'steady hand'. This expression of Germany's Chancellor Schröder refers to the avoidance of action that leads to fears and commotion within the population, leading in fact to the opposite effect of (intended) reforms. The rules of the game encourage back room strategies, where negotiations take place in small circles, rather than in large arenas. Commissions serve to find consensus since leadership in public often makes politicians suspect. Leaders act wisely by waiting to see which way the wind blows. They first have to fathom common ground, before explaining their strategy in public, whether reforming or conserving. Procedural skills seem more important than rhetorical tricks. Those who know how the system works and those who make use of the institutional abilities enlarge their chances for success. As Moon hypothesised: 'Innovative leadership in systems with many institutional vetoes seems hard, simply because of the need to mobilize diverse political forces and to either capture or win support from a range of institutions and interests.'¹⁰¹ Yet, passive-reforming leadership is more than substantive and procedural managerialism, though those are the skills needed. It is one of the few possibilities in Western consensual democracies to exercise innovative, successful leadership in overcoming structural constraints.

This study maintains an even-handed approach. However, institutional characteristics of Swedish and Dutch political systems might be more conducive to passive than to active political leadership styles.

Notes

- ¹ 't Hart 1999: 3
- ² Thelen & Steinmo 1994
- ³ "In het algemeen kan men denk ik zeggen dat verslagen legers vooral twee dingen doen: analyseren en reorganiseren. Overwinnende legers hebben overigens de neiging hetzelfde te doen, zij het dat de neiging tot reorganiseren meestal geringer is – never change a winning team..." (Blom 1990: 47)
- ⁴ Rosen 1991: 252-255; Smith 1999: 299
- ⁵ Rhodes 1999: 71
- ⁶ Cortell & Peterson 1999: 179
- ⁷ Hogan 1998
- ⁸ Avant and Lebovic 2002
- ⁹ Burk 1992: 55
- ¹⁰ Krasner 1984
- ¹¹ Keeler 1993, Cortell & Peterson 1999
- ¹² Baumgartner & Jones 1993
- ¹³ Boin & 't Hart 2000: 13
- ¹⁴ Boin & 't Hart 2000: 11
- ¹⁵ cf. Lindblom 1979
- ¹⁶ Cortell & Peterson 1999
- ¹⁷ Boin & 't Hart 2000, Boin & Otten 2000
- ¹⁸ Goldfinch and 't Hart 2003: 3
- ¹⁹ Farrell & Terriff 2002: 5. Students of military change will notice that the word 'reform' is seldom used in the literature. The term appears to be value loaded, since Western literature on military change almost unanimously reserve it for changes in the defence sector of the former Warsaw Pact states.
- ²⁰ 't Hart & Gustavsson 2002: 156
- ²¹ 't Hart & Gustavsson 2002: 156
- ²² 't Hart & Gustavsson 2002: 145-146
- ²³ Boin & 't Hart 2000, Goldfinch & 't Hart 2003
- ²⁴ Boin & Otten 1996, Caiden 1991, Wright 1997
- ²⁵ Boin & Resodihardjo 2000
- ²⁶ Boin & Resodihardjo 2000
- ²⁷ Boin & 't Hart 2000: 22
- ²⁸ Boin & 't Hart 2000: 23
- ²⁹ Boin & 't Hart 2000: 23-24
- ³⁰ Boin et al. 2001: 7 [nb: A. Boin, S. Dekker, P. 't Hart Managing Institutional Crisis: Restoration and Reform in the Dutch Criminal Justice Sector, Paper presented at the PATNET Conference Leiden 2001]
- ³¹ Boin & 't Hart 2000: 21
- ³² 't Hart & Gustavsson 2002
- ³³ Cortell & Peterson 1999
- ³⁴ Boin & 't Hart 2000: 25
- ³⁵ Boin & 't Hart 2000: 26
- ³⁶ Cortell & Peterson 1999: 189
- ³⁷ Kingdon 1984, Keeler 1993
- ³⁸ 't Hart 1999: 7
- ³⁹ Edelman 1971, 't Hart 2000
- ⁴⁰ Kuipers 2004: 205-207
- ⁴¹ 't Hart 1999: 2
- ⁴² 't Hart & Gustavsson 2002: 151. Following with this Moon's concept, Moon 1995
- ⁴³ 't Hart & Gustavsson 2002: 151-152
- ⁴⁴ Sometimes and in certain policy sectors, it is better to incorporate other stakeholders in the process of problem solving. By offering too detailed solutions at the beginning of the process, leaders can be held accountable too easily for failure. It is better to stimulate (and steer indirectly) the process of solution finding and leave it in the hands of stakeholders within the sector. Van Dijk and Snellen 2001

- ⁴⁵ 't Hart 2000
- ⁴⁶ When confronted with the choice of exchanging a hostage against a few terrorists, the crisis staff chose to let Germany not be blackmailed. In the end the hostage was murdered
- ⁴⁷ 't Hart 2000
- ⁴⁸ Kelleher in Haltiner 1998 armed force & S: 9
- ⁴⁹ Suchman 1995; Boin et al. 2001
- ⁵⁰ Boin et al 2001: 11
- ⁵¹ Terry 1995: 26
- ⁵² Terry 1995: 27
- ⁵³ Boin 1998: 10
- ⁵⁴ Terry 1995: 61
- ⁵⁵ Terry 1995: 62
- ⁵⁶ Terry 1995: 62. (E.g. laws regulations, rules, interest groups, legislative committees)
- ⁵⁷ Terry 1995: 63
- ⁵⁸ Gladio refers to the Dutch answer to SPETZNATS. The main problem was that throughout decades, the responsible ministers had not informed consecutive cabinets and parliamentarians about the existence of the secret sabotage and intelligence network.
- ⁵⁹ 't Hart & Ten Hooven 2004: 74-75
- ⁶⁰ 't Hart & Ten Hooven 2004: 94-95
- ⁶¹ 't Hart & Ten Hooven 2004: 97
- ⁶² Hirschman 1991
- ⁶³ Terry 1995: 25
- ⁶⁴ Barber 1972: 8-9
- ⁶⁵ Others performed that see Winter 1974, Hermann1977
- ⁶⁶ Boin 1998: 10, 49
- ⁶⁷ See for a critique on the static character of Barbers typology Elgie 1995: 11-12
- ⁶⁸ Elgie 1995: 8
- ⁶⁹ Terry 1995, 't Hart 2000
- ⁷⁰ 't Hart 2000: 62
- ⁷¹ 't Hart 2000: 62 'Daar waar de institutionele spelregels via checks en balances invloed spreiden en de politieke cultuur wantrouwen tegenover leiderfiguren voedt, is een andere stijl van leiderschap nodig.'
- ⁷² Lijphart 1999: 67
- ⁷³ Lijphart 1999: 116, 138
- ⁷⁴ Lijphart 1999: 145, 147
- ⁷⁵ Lijphart 1999: 181-183
- ⁷⁶ Lijphart 1999: 67
- ⁷⁷ Lijphart 1999: 132
- ⁷⁸ Lijphart 1999: 145
- ⁷⁹ Lijphart 1999:183
- ⁸⁰ Lijphart 1999: 248
- ⁸¹ Lijphart 1999: 189, 212
- ⁸² Lijphart 1999: 220, 226. The requirements for a constitutional change in the Netherlands are even more rigid. This will be described in 5.9.
- ⁸³ Bovens et al. 2001: 19
- ⁸⁴ Bovens et al. 2001: 19
- ⁸⁵ Bovens et al. 2001: 19
- ⁸⁶ Bovens et al. 2001: 15
- ⁸⁷ Bovens et al. 2001: 15-16
- ⁸⁸ Bovens et al. 2001: 16
- ⁸⁹ Bovens et al. 2001: 16
- ⁹⁰ Bovens et al. 2001: 647
- ⁹¹ Bovens et al. 2001: 649
- ⁹² Elgie 1995: 13
- ⁹³ Compare for that Elgie 1995 for the example of Germany

⁹⁴ As in Lijphart 1999, this study uses the terms majoritarian and Westminster democracies interchangeably 'to refer to a general model of democracy.' (p. 9)

⁹⁵ Timmermans & Andeweg 2000: 381

⁹⁶ All 't Hart 2000: 62-63

⁹⁷ Goldfinch & 't Hart 2003: 266

⁹⁸ Lijphart 1999: 9

⁹⁹ Moon 1995: 19

¹⁰⁰ Compare also Goldfinch & 't Hart 2003: 238-239. The authors 'translate' Moon's concept of 'political will' to their theory.

¹⁰¹ Moon 1995: 20

Chapter 3: Research design and methods

3.1 Studying leadership in action

Studying leadership in consensus democracies is navigating between ideological schools and different sciences. The concepts of leaders and leadership are studied, among others, in history, sociology, economy, psychology and political science. This not only implies that every science developed its own image of leadership, but that those images are difficult to combine. Rost refers to a thousand different and often contradicting definitions of leadership.¹ The different perspectives on leadership depend on the tradition and the branch of the scientists who investigate this phenomenon.

Most of the studies concentrate on the single powerful leader. The political-psychological analyses by Hermann or Winter are only a few examples of how science tries to shed light on the motives of presidents as an engine for their political ambitions.² However, it is difficult to incorporate the political and societal context in studies on leadership. Students of leadership writing biographical studies and concentrating on the 'great men' run the risk of overlooking structural constraints to the single leader. Moreover, it is tempting to talk about influence while it is difficult to establish causal relations within complex multi-actor systems, which most policy sectors in consensual democracies are. On the other hand, in the last decennia there have been several political leaders who – according to (neo-Marxist) structural tradition – should either not exist or not play a prominent role. Examples of this are the German Chancellors Helmut Kohl during the German re-unification and Willy Brandt with his famous East-policy, or Michael Gorbachev with the Soviet glasnost.

This study considers leadership as a function that is necessary to give direction to the members in society, to ensure enduring social cohesion and cooperation.³ According to 't Hart, leadership fulfils crucial tasks within politics and society: community building, simplification and setting norms. All three are an expression of political leadership and pattern breaking, taking crucial decisions and taking responsibility, which in turn are all three part of administrative leadership.⁴ A third form of leadership that is considered to be important in the subject of this study is bureaucratic leadership. In consensual democracies where political responsibility of representative elected politicians is crucial, the normative political and public administrative science often ignores the sheer existence of bureaucratic leadership. It is however open to question, why only a handful of politicians – the Minister and the Junior-Ministers – might exercise leadership in complex policy sectors, while senior civil servants with their expertise and profound knowledge of the sector, its stakeholders and environment, might only patiently follow. Whether desirable or not, the possibility that bureaucratic leadership exists has to be tested in empirics. Therefore, the object of this study is not only the single powerful leader, but it also includes other actors who might exercise conserving or reforming leadership.

This study also emphasises an aspect of military leadership that differs from common perspectives. An incredible amount of literature exists about military leadership on

the battlefield or about the military role of leader in education, training and economical management. Yet, little is known about military leaders as policy makers, especially in times of non-military crises, when they are expected to re-legitimise the sector in the political and bureaucratic trenches. What are their plans and strategies to reach their aims? Do they actively strive for support from influential actors, such as parliamentarians, civil servants and politicians? In short, this boils down to the question whether military leaders merely function in their own organisation, or whether they exercise leadership in the whole sector. In particular, in Western democracies it is interesting to know what the limits of military leadership are. How small or wide is the room to manoeuvre between political loyalty and loyalty to the organisation?

As already indicated in chapter 2, leadership does not operate within a vacuum, but in relation to its environment. Moreover, this study is not about proving leadership as the sole cause for policy change or reform. In the empirical chapters, decision structures and political features of regimes - which have proven their importance for policy change in former studies,⁵ - will be presented, too. The concept of leadership as it is used in this study will serve to fill a gap that structural explanations cannot fill or can fill only very roughly.⁶ This study will try to determine how plausible leadership is for the outcome of the defence policy processes in Sweden and the Netherlands after the Cold War, without neglecting the importance of other factors, which, however, cannot be elaborately empirically tested in this study.⁷ In short, this study will show that who leads matters and how predominant leaders will deal with political constraints in similar environments in different ways.⁸

In the remainder of this chapter the operationalisation of the relevant hypotheses will be elaborated on. First, however, the methodological choices will be elucidated: why conduct a comparative case study and why compare the Netherlands and Sweden?

3.2 A comparative case study

To study the role of leadership in institutional reform we will use the comparative case study method. In addition to the already indicated pitfalls in the introduction, several methodological demands that have to be taken into account need to be pointed out, especially when working with few cases where the independent variables exceed those cases to such a degree that it is impossible to draw statistical valid inference.⁹ It is therefore important to emphasise that case studies are more analytical generalisations than statistical ones. Case studies deepen and generalise theories, which in turn build on earlier empirical studies.¹⁰ In this study we will test the theories of reforming and conserving leadership by 't Hart respectively Terry as presented in the foregoing chapter.

We are using the method of most similar system design and process tracing to guarantee more valid causal inference. It is important to underscore that in this study we want to accentuate the causal strength of one variable, i.e. leadership. However, we are aware that many more factors contribute to the outcome, i.e. whether or not maintaining a certain form of military conscription. We want to show to what extent leadership contributes to this outcome.¹¹

The *most similar system design* resembles to a great extent the method of difference by Przewoski and Teune's, following J.S. Mill's demand for valid experimental designs.¹² The method serves social sciences, especially historical researchers, who cannot

rely on experimental designs, to eliminate potential *sufficient* causes. With the method of difference 'the outcome is present in some cases and not present in others. Hence, any hypothesised cause that is shared by all the cases cannot by itself be sufficient for the outcome, since not all cases with the hypothesised cause experience the outcome of interest.'¹³

In Sweden and the Netherlands we have different outcomes with regard to conscription.¹⁴ Whereas the Netherlands postponed the draft in 1993, Sweden is still drafting soldiers for military service. In many ways Sweden and the Netherlands are similar. Both are Western democracies with an advanced economy, high welfare state provisions and a high level of technological development. In addition, both are consensus democracies with well-defined corporatist structures.

The countries differ largely in their ways of (defence) policymaking. While the Netherlands have a plural society which - on the political level - is often expressed in oversized cabinets, the Swedish non plural society¹⁵ often brings minority governments to the fore. Another important difference is the question of alliance. While the Netherlands is a member of NATO, Sweden has for centuries been relying on its own ability to defend the country. It is expected that the domestic political system and international constraints provide different opportunities for reforming or conserving leadership within the defence sectors in both countries.

The Dutch defence policymaking process is less formalised than the Swedish, especially during the beginning of the 1990s when the ministry changed from a matrix to a corporate business structure. The Minister of Defence has the ability to include or exclude actors in his organisation during different stages of a policy process. However, he depends on the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who is responsible for the foreign and security policy parts of the Defence White Papers.

In the Swedish system more (political) actors are involved in the defence policymaking process and often they have to strive for consensus. Defence policymaking is highly formalised and often exercised by minority governments (at least during the studied period). In different stages many political, military and societal actors are officially involved in the process, having the opportunity to comment on defence policy plans by writing a dissenting opinion that is formally referred to in governmental propositions.¹⁶

To show the relation between the dependent and independent variable, we use the method of *process tracing*. Process tracing aims at identifying the causal mechanics linking those variables and 'avoid mistaking a spurious correlation for a causal association.'¹⁷ This important tool to comparative historical analysis with small-N establishes causal paths between variables by linking consecutive variables together. Or, as Tarrow states, it is 'to connect the phases of the policy process and enable the investigator to identify the reasons for a particular kind of decision through the dynamics of events.'¹⁸ This method is valuable to the institutional perspective we are using, which strives for a comprehensive approach. Rather than focussing only on the single powerful leader, we try to identify relations between actors and their domestic and – where necessary – international institutional environment.

In this study the policy process will be reconstructed not only in chronological order, but more importantly, also in causal relations.¹⁹ Focus was given to policy decisions (papers, parliamentary debates), on the actors that might have been influential in this decision-making and on how this relates to the outcomes in both countries. By us-

ing parliamentary documents, documents from the archives of the different ministries, armed forces, and commissions, newspaper archives and interviews, an effort was made to show as exact a (non) relation as possible between the hypothesised dependent and independent variables.

However, there still remains a certain validity problem. Not all documents were archived or available for research. Some actors refused to be interviewed or had already passed away and even if they cooperated, sometimes it still was difficult to show which actor reflected reality (in cases where all other relevant documents were missing), in particular when actors were contradicting each other. Some relations that were hypothesised could not have been traced. The question that will remain is whether those relations were not existent at all or whether practical research problems prevented the writer from establishing those relations.

Though logical reconstruction seems to provide an outcome to this problem, traditional problems of actor centred research could still not have been solved in this research. The first example of this is the power and influence of certain actors and anticipation by others to this influence. In particular when interviewing military actors and when reconstructing the policy process within the military organisation, it was not always clear if actors had anticipated the (presumed) leaders' preferences or if they used the influence of their superiors as an 'excuse'. Secondly, more often than not, there might be doubts about the origins of policy plans. In large-scale 'garbage can' organisations in particular, it is difficult to show which actors dominated the (internal) processes of policy formulation. This may even be more difficult to establish the longer ago the process took place. An important 'handicap' for the Dutch researcher is the directive that personal policy papers of crucial actors in the defence sector are not available to the public.

Those problems are associated with the general problems in leadership research we already referred to above (leadership does matter). Instead of trying to prove the leadership's influence on the outcome, an effort will be made to establish causal relations, by eliminating concurring or flawed explanations, of which leadership is a plausible element. In terms of policy tracing, an attempt will be made to eliminate spurious correlations. The small-N, however, does not allow for generalisations to other cases, which is a limitation to this study. Conclusions that might be drawn, if empirical evidence allows this, are not applicable to other cases. Yet, it is expected, that the empirical evidence and the theoretical explanations will guide future research on defence policy changes, reforms in policy sectors, and leadership in Western democracies.

3.3 Operationalisation

This section is devoted to the actual methods for the collection and interpretation of data used in the empirical investigation. A crucial step here is the operationalisation of the theoretical concepts put forward in the three clusters of theory development as described in sections 3 to 5 of chapter 2. Each cluster will be dealt with separately below.

What is important to note here, is that studying the policymaking behaviour of more or less contemporary political and particularly bureaucratic leaders in an empirically rigorous fashion is a challenging task, for which no methodological panacea has been found by any of the scholars working in this area.²⁰ Indeed, leadership analysis at large

has produced a plethora of methods to grasp various aspects of a leader's personality, world view and generic leadership style²¹, but this is much less the case for the actual process of leading on concrete policy issues.

Moreover, there are many constraints on data availability when one is studying contemporary leaders: minutes of crucial meetings are not yet available, nor are the internal memos and confidential documentation. Interviewees working with or under leaders are much less likely to be candid when talking about incumbent leaders than about past leaders. And in the dominant logic of the relations between politics and bureaucracy, top civil servants (including military leaders) are supposed to remain invisible to outside researchers as much as possible.

With not too much to go on as far as pre-existing operationalisations of key variables and easy access to data sources is concerned, an effort will be made to establish and find plausible indicators in this study for the variables at stake. Let us first turn to the first cluster of hypotheses concerning leader's motives to reform and conserve.

Why policy makers reform or conserve conscription

As stated in section 2.3, the four propositions on leader motives refer to the subjective crisis awareness of the policy makers, their political calculus, their conviction about the need to change and their institutional position. The key independent variables in these propositions are stated below. The dependent variable, e.g. inclination to take a reformist or conserving approach in response to an institutional crisis, will be measured by proxy. We shall confine ourselves to those high level political and bureaucratic officials who have actually displayed conserving or reformist behaviour, as defined below and as became evident from the reconstruction of the course of events in both cases. There is, of course, an important distinction between motivation to behave and actual behaviour. There may well have been actors in the two cases that wanted to take a proactive reformist or conserving stance, but did not have the institutional position to do so, or otherwise felt constrained to act upon their inclination. While acknowledging this important difference, it is all but impossible for an outside, post-hoc researcher to maintain and 'measure' this distinction. For each of the independent variables, one or several indicators have been developed:

- Leader's crisis awareness. Policy maker's crisis awareness can be measured by the felt threat potential of the external task environment and of the political environment. In other words: to which extent do leaders think and show to the public that doing nothing might worsen the situation? To measure this public statements by the leaders have to be analysed in order to understand whether they referred to or were concerned about both financial costs and non-financial implications, if an institution would not be changed.
- Political calculus of the expected gains and damages. Translated to empirical reality we have to examine the size of the coalition majority and the period during which the political business cycle leaders initiate change. It is assumed that a larger majority produces more stable governments and because of this, policy makers will have more room to manoeuvre. In addition, following Cortell & Peterson's hypothesis that elites might be more likely to reform the longer it takes before they are held ac-

countable,²² an indicator will be the duration between the date of policy change and important elections. There rests the problem of transferability of this hypothesis and its related operationalisation to non-political leaders. Remember, this study also concentrates on bureaucratic and military leaders. To them political accountability, measured in majorities and timing within the political business cycle is less applicable. A good indicator for those non-political actors might be a career calculus. In how far are those actors convinced that reforming or conserving the sector will serve their personal career planning?

- Inner convictions regarding necessity of change. What are the ideas, the ideological points of reference for the leader? What role do defence and conscription play in this ideology? Did the leader have 'well-formed views on the needed reform'²³ or did he want to maintain the status quo? It is not only important that leaders express their inner convictions in public, but also that their actions do not contradict them. Preferably those statements should date back preliminarily to the reform period by the policy makers, whether in speeches, media, or election programs, or evidence might be found by interviewing close political and civil servant assistants.
- Institutional position of the leaders. Since financial indicators tend to be good indicators for political effects, empirical questions to test this hypothesis will concern the calculated effects of reforms on the budgets of the defence and the different parts of the armed forces. The more that leaders lose their financial sources in the policy process, the weaker their institutional position will be. In addition, one can ask what the relative autonomy of the sector is in the reform proposals. Do sectorial leaders have great autonomy; do they have to arrange policy with other political leaders, such as the Minister of Foreign Affairs or the Prime Minister, or does reforming or conserving the institution help the leaders improve their position?

How leaders reform or conserve conscription

In 2.3 hypotheses have been formulated. It appears that sets of hypotheses can be formed, since the theories about conserving and reforming leadership are closely connected. These are summed up in Table 3.

Dimension	Set	Reforming	Conserving
Communication	I.	1) The more dramatically reformist leaders portray current events or issues as serious and acute crisis, the higher the likelihood of reform success.	6) The more conserving leaders succeed to define the situation as a non-recurring, exogenous incident, the higher their chances of preserving the institutional status quo.
	II.	2) If reform leaders gather together allies to form a cohesive team in support of important changes, prospects for success are enhanced.	7) Successful conserving leaders form a cohesive unit, committed to prevent major policy and institutional changes.
	III.	3) If reformers develop and employ strategies targeted at persuading their political environment that the proposed changes are both desirable and inevitable, as well as practically feasible, they are more likely to be successful.	8) The more conserving leaders succeed to persuade their political environment of the undesirability and unfeasibility of reform in the sector, the higher the likelihood of persistence of the status quo.
Coalition	IV.	4) Successful reformist leaders manage to secure early support of implementing actors for their crisis response strategy.	9) The greater the conserving leadership's ability to secure the support of implementing actors for its strategy, the higher the likelihood of persistence of the status quo.
	V.	5) The tighter the leadership's control over the crisis management process, the higher the likelihood of reform success.	10) The tighter the leadership's control over the crisis management process, the higher the likelihood of conserving success.

Table 3: Sets of hypotheses

Translated into empirical testing, the following operationalisation of the hypotheses will be used:

- Problem definition. The operational question is, whether the situation will be framed by the leaders as a threat to the sector that needs to be resolved by reforms, or – quite the opposite – whether they ensure the public that either the situation is non-recurring, or that changes in the sector would be wrong. The rhetoric of the policy makers in the sector will be analysed. Do they depict the situation as a crisis threatening the sector, or do they play down the situation? The more that leaders share the definition, the more likely it prevails. It is, additionally, hypothesised that reforming actors who are not associated with the order they deinstitutionalise are more likely to succeed. For the operation that means that actors relatively new to the sector might have a higher chance of convincing their environment.

- Committed leadership. Whatever the definition of the situation is, whether threatening or non-recurring, the conclusions that leaders draw from their definitions are what is important. The leaders have to offer a solution to take the lead. For the analysis, it is important to know how motivated they are, both internally and externally. The question is, whether the resolve leaders offer is merely lip service or a clear sense of vision. To find this out, actions and rhetoric of policy makers have to be tested on congruency. In addition, analysis is needed of whether the reformers form a cohesive unit or whether they tried to change the system single-handedly.
- Leadership's persuasion tactics. Whether reforming or conserving, leadership has to offer ways out of a crisis. Three indicators can be used to test the hypotheses of leadership's ability to persuade the public. Firstly, if the leader promises resolve or simply proposes slight adaptations to structures that have proven their value in the past, his plans should be clearly stated. It is therefore necessary that the leaders present one well-defined specific plan. Secondly, how do they present the plan; which channels do they choose to convince relevant actors? Thirdly, how useful are the arguments? What is the pattern of argumentation? How good are they compared to the opponents' arguments? Hirschman²⁴ provides us with good research tools, especially for identifying conservative strategies, which should not be confused with conserving leadership. While the latter tries to prevent far-reaching changes of the sector, because the leaders are convinced of the values, beliefs, and integrity of the sector, the conservative strategies try to prevent changes as an aim in itself. They are veto-players rather than conservers and display hindrance power rather than leaders responding to the environment's demands. Writing about 'The Rhetoric of Reaction' Hirschman distinguishes three reactive-reactionary theses.²⁵ First, the perversity thesis, where reactionary rhetoric points to the fact that possible changes to improve a situation are actually intensifying the condition one is trying to improve. Secondly, the futility thesis, where actors underscore that the intended changes will make no difference to the situation. Finally, the jeopardy thesis, pointing at rhetoric that underscores the negative consequences of change by pointing at the fact that reform measures endanger important and precious achievements of the past.²⁶ Opposite this rather negative annotated conservative strategy is 't Hart's positive look on successful reforming leadership. According to him, reforming leaders are more successful the more they intensively argue that their reform proposals are more inevitable, desirable, and feasible than alternative competing plans.²⁷
- Building broad support. Different from set II, this set of hypotheses is about soliciting support *by* leadership teams within sector and organisation. Together the leaders have already formulated the tactics and strategies. This stage is about actively convincing other actors who are important during the implementation phase to agree on those plans, since many successful policy outputs in the past were frustrated in the implementation phase by the actors who felt neglected in the policymaking phase. There is not much empirical research guiding this part of the study. Yet, it is supposed that leaders are gaining support top-down: consecutively at the political official top of the sector/ministry, other relevant ministries, and the executive parts, in this case the armed forces.
- Controlling the process. The best strategies are useless if the leaders are not able to steer the outcomes. Procedural leadership is very important during the whole process. 't Hart & Gustavsson (2002) point to the importance of 'procedural' leadership..

From zero-change to abolition of conscription: policy outcomes operationalised

	Degrees of change	Characteristics
No or moderate change of prevailing policy	0. No change	Policy remains the same as before (zero-decision)
	I. Adjustment change	Degree of the effort in the chosen basic instrument is increasing or decreasing and/or the degree of the receiver changes. Analytic or routine consecutive changes. Change is led by technical expertise. The overarching policy goals and instruments remain the same, i.e. what is done, how it is done and the motive for why it is done remains the same.
	II. Instrumental change	Change in the range of instruments used (new and/or others), level of engagement and degree of the expressed effect. Less frequent (than the adjustment change) and the change happens rather as a response to dissatisfaction with old policy than as a reaction to new events. The change is led by people within the bureaucracy. What is done and how it is done changes whereas the aim or the goal for the reason remains unchanged.
Substantial change of prevailing policy	III. Problem and/or goal change	The initial problem or goal for which the policy was designed is changed or obsolete. The aim in itself changes. The same characteristics as before change (above) plus statements and actions that are incompatible with earlier goals or problem definitions, alternatively openly announced but prior goals have been changed or that policy is missing (new goal).
	IV. Paradigmatic change of procedures	A significant shift of a power centre for policy. Change is led by politicians, who share the control over policy in addition to the normal policy setting.
	V. Paradigm shift	Dramatic change in both, word and deed, which often have an international aspect. Accumulation of anomalies, experimenting with new policy forms and policy failures. Changes often touch upon different policy areas and their underlying hierarchy of the goal and basic instruments. The basic goals and assumptions about the cause and effect can no longer be seen as a given. Changes led by politicians.

Table 4: Characteristics for the six possible results of the dependent variable; source Lindgren 2003: 36 (Translation D. Hansén and JEN)

The leaders have to use their institutional powers to steer the policymaking process. The best way to do so is by making use of their ability to set the agenda, to select people in key positions including commissions, and to control the flux of information. Questions to be asked are: what is the structure of the policy sector? Is it an open or more closed sector, with fewer actors from outside? Has the sector been structured very hierarchically, or does it consist of horizontal networks of equal actors? It is important to analyse which procedural obstructions opponents, or veto-players, can use to slow down or even prevent the reform process. Factors, amongst others, are the judicial aspects of the reform process and the political and institutional formal and informal rules, like the power of Parliament in a dual system. Finally, not only parliamentary power can thwart reforms, governmental structure can do this as well. Especially in coalition governments, powerful opponents within the administration are able to block/prevent, influence, or take over reform plans

Reforms - in this study defined as deliberate and sustained attempts at non-incremental change in the substance and process of government²⁸ - mark only one extreme of a broad range of policy outcomes aimed at fostering or preventing change. Lindgren (2003) gives a comprehensive and exhaustive overview of six characteristics of foreign policy change (Table 4) based on the works of Herman (1990), Hall (1993), and completed with thoughts by Visser & Hemerijck (1997), Sylvan & Voss (1998), and Wallenstein (2002). In this section, those ideas will be translated to changes in defence policy. Since our study concentrates on the decision making process and less on the implementation process, it is important to note that the possible changes in this study focus on the policy output and less on its outcome. Especially since some of the processes are still going on while writing this study - i.e. the handling of the conscription issue in Sweden - we could only give indications of or prospects for policy outcomes in the long run.

The most far-reaching reform within the defence sector would be a *paradigm shift*. For example, for the armed forces after the Cold war that could mean the change away from a territorial defence towards crisis management forces, which are actually sent abroad. The old paradigm of the territorial defence had lost its legitimacy with the disappearance of a large and threatening enemy. The process is accompanied by a change of basic instruments - in our study the abolition of conscription - and is led by the political leaders in the sector and it is not just a case for the senior military.

A *paradigmatic change of procedures* is a lesser reform, yet still far-reaching for the organisation and the sector. Politicians lead it. The shift of the policy power centre is not so much within the sector, which means that it is still the Minister of Defence who takes the lead, but more a shift within the organisation as such. For the post-Cold War forces it is expected that the Army and its leaders who were powerful actors in the territorial defence concept might lose influence. The (organisational) policy is much more influenced by branches suited for the new tasks. The instrument - in this study: conscription - loses its importance for these new tasks, yet the last step - abolition - is not taken.

Again at a lower level, but still within the substantial change of the prevailing policy, is the *problem and/or goal change*. The territorial defence of the Cold War, in particular in the German lowlands, could lose its legitimacy with the German re-unification and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. A change of the armed forces was to be expected. The defence doctrine, certain (heavy) material, and - as far as conscription is

concerned – large quantities of soldiers are incompatible with the new goals that have to be defined.

The last three possible outcomes of the policy processes within the Swedish and Dutch policy sectors since 1990 are not reforms, but no or moderate changes of the prevailing policy. The most far-reaching are instrumental changes. For example, in this study this could be a new doctrine – which is traditionally an important task for military leaders – that is still aimed at territorial defence. Rosen points to the fact that ‘[c]hanges in the formal doctrine of a military organisation [may] leave the essential workings of the organisation unaltered.’²⁹ Important for this category is that the changes are not connected to the changes in the external security environment, but more initiated by dissatisfaction with (in this example) the old doctrine. As far as the subject of this study is concerned, not so much abolition of conscription or a change in the laws can be expected, but rather changes in the rules of physical and psychological examination. Those latter are important tools to steer the quality and quantity of the draftees. This is also closely connected to possible *adjustment changes*. The complete organisation of defence and its aims remain the same (deterrence with large forces and heavy armament), yet certain branches of the forces have been modernised or lost their purpose because of technical innovations. With this, it is not so much the quantity of draftees that is changing, but their quality (talent and military training). For example, a new, modern autonomous artillery howitzer needs better technically skilled, but less strong soldiers. The last possible outcome of the policy processes in Sweden and the Netherlands after the Cold War is *no change* at all.

Notes

¹ Rost in Elgie 1995: 2

² E.g., Hermann 1977, 1996, Winter 1973, 1991

³ ‘t Hart 2000: 18

⁴ ‘t Hart & Ten Hooven 2004: 37

⁵ Compare East, Salmor & Hermann 1978

⁶ Compare Hagan’s (2001: 6) explanation of the importance of decision-making in international relations. We referred in chapter 1 for example to the lack of Haltiner’s (1998) quantitative analysis to explain differences in timing of changes in conscription.

⁷ Compare also East, Salmor & Hermann 1978: 22-24

⁸ Hermann et al 2001: 84

⁹ King, Keohane & Verba: 118f.

¹⁰ Haverland 1998: 32

¹¹ Compare Boin 1998: 80-81

¹² Mahoney 2003: 341; Haverland 1998:31

¹³ Mahoney 2003: 342

¹⁴ At least, so it seemed at the time the cases were selected. After closer analysis they turned out to be much more similar. While the Netherlands postponed the draft, Sweden nowadays only drafts those who want to serve, a form of voluntary service based on draft. Yet, the basic idea behind the organisation of defence is – at least on paper – different in both countries. This will become clearer in the analysis chapters (6 and 9) and the concluding chapter 10.

¹⁵ Lijphart 1984: 63

¹⁶ The defence policymaking in both countries will be elaborated in depth at the end of both historical chapters.

- ¹⁷ Mahoney 2003: 363 referring to George and McKeown 1985
- ¹⁸ Tarrow 1995: 472 quoted in Haverland 1998: 32-33
- ¹⁹ Redundancies or not chronological lines cannot always be avoided, in particular when following an institutional approach.
- ²⁰ See, e.g. the rather fuzzy empirical strategy of Kingdon's classical book, Kingdon, 1995; or see the almost complete neglect of methodological considerations in Moon, 1995 and Goldfinch and 't Hart, 2003
- ²¹ E.g. Blondel 1980, Elgie 1995, Burns 1978
- ²² Cortell & Peterson 1999: 188
- ²³ Cortell & Peterson 1999: 189
- ²⁴ Hirschman 1991
- ²⁵ Hirschman 1991
- ²⁶ Edelman 1991: 7
- ²⁷ 't Hart 2000
- ²⁸ Goldfinch and 't Hart 2003: 3
- ²⁹ Rosen quoted in Farrell & Terriff 2002: 4-5

Chapter 4: The History of Conscription in the Netherlands and the structure of the defence sector

4.1 Introduction

After the French Revolution in 1789 and the occupation of the Netherlands by France (1795-1812), conscription in the Netherlands had closely been related to nation building and to the question who was commanding the army: the King or the Parliament? This was not only important for the internal struggle about the organisation of the army, cadre-militia or all voluntary forces, but also for the use of the army. Was it only intended for the defence of the country's borders or was it also an expeditionary army fighting abroad?

Conscription had never been popular among those who had to serve. It used to be a provision of cheap labour and it made the build-up of large forces possible. To the citizen, conscription was a form of natural taxation. Therefore, establishing the duration of training and conscription had been a matter of weighing up the armed forces' needs for trained, dedicated soldiers against the citizens' will to contribute to the country's security or the government's ambitions.

This chapter describes the development of conscription in the Netherlands. It covers almost two centuries of the development from partial to general conscription and the political struggle for authority over the armed forces. In addition it discusses the development of the army, since both conscription and the organisation of the army (without navy and air force) are intertwined. Knowledge about the past of the draft serves the understanding about the abolition of conscription after the Cold War. It is not only about path dependency, but also about the utilisation of the institution and the political calculus of the regents throughout the centuries. In conclusion the chapter presents the political system, the structure of the sector at the end of the Cold War and the formal leaders within defence and foreign policy in the Netherlands.

4.2 King William I

The Union of Utrecht of 1579 marked the starting point of conscription in the Netherlands only in a theoretical sense. The citizen soldiery and militias were not under the command of a central government but formed a layer between the government and the population. The citizen soldiery was in that sense an institute of the class society.¹ Until 1795 the con-federal state deployed professional and mercenary armies. It is therefore wrong to backdate military conscription in the Netherlands prior to the Napoleonic era. In addition, it had only been the French administrative system, which made a bureaucratic registration possible. Conscription means that all men of a country within a certain age are registered by the government. The words enlisted and enrolled resemble the practice of conscription.

As in most European countries, the French revolution marked the starting point of modern conscription in the Netherlands, too. When the revolution started, mass enrolment was a non-issue, however. On the contrary, as became obvious from the warnings of the Frenchman Guibert. In line with the revolutionary tradition he admitted the population's right to arm itself in its struggle against the tyrannical government, but he rejected the use of that popular army in the struggle outside the country's borders. That was, according to Guibert, the prerogative of the King and his professional army.²

This conservative view changed with the appearance of the radical Jacobins. The reformer of the French army, Carnot, claimed that – 'Tout citoyen est né soldat' – every citizen was born a soldier.³ To serve the country was, according to the ideology of the revolution, an important task of the citizen. With the appearance of Napoleon, the French view on conscription fulfilled two more functions. On the one hand, a mass army could spread the ideals of the revolution all over Europe. On the other hand, those who were part of the huge Napoleonic expansionist army could not agitate at home. This was one more reason to introduce conscription in the occupied Netherlands.

After the annexation of the Netherlands by France in 1810 and the end of the French occupation in 1814 almost 30000 Dutch men were called to arms. They served in Napoleon's expeditionary army, which was also important to the emperor's tactics. Only by using the fighting potential of young men in the occupied countries, could the expansionist machinery roll on, militarily and financially. This form of warfare was incredibly expensive. In the end, it not only bankrupted France, but it also was a financial warning to the reactionary rulers of the post-Napoleonic era.

There was only one problem: 'Since the national government discovered the people's armament as a means to form an army, it will not abandon it. That holds true for the French revolutionist regime, that holds true for Bonaparte and that holds even true for the monarchs of the Restoration, including our own King William I'.⁴ It should be therefore no surprise that, with the appearance of the monarchy in the Netherlands in 1813, conscription did not disappear.

The Dutch military historian Amersfoort points to the addictive nature of the military draft, since it provides the state with large numbers of cheap soldiers. Amersfoort continued that 'even the conservatives considered conscription to be an instrument for strengthening the emotional relation between government and citizens'.⁵ However, the German historian Frevert shows that - with regard to Prussia - this argument often contained a circular reasoning: 'The state appealed to the patriotism of the subjects, in particular the higher classes, but assumed at the same time that this patriotism was shaped by the military service'.⁶ Considering the often ambiguous relation of the Dutch with conscription, it is reasonable to assume that this argument also holds true for the Kingdom of the Netherlands. In the beginning of the 19th century, the King also used the military to gain loyalty and support within the country.

In view of the developments of the post-Napoleonic era, a fostered and strengthened patriotism made sense. Since 1795 the country had been a centralised state for the first time and after the withdrawal of the French after Napoleon's defeat, the country got a King (1813) and it was united with Belgium, after the congress of Vienna in 1815. The creation of an army was part of the nation-building concept of the young monarchy.

Yet, the inability to attract sufficient highly educated citizens to the armed forces did not mean that the Dutch population was anti-militaristic. It was more non-militaristic, or

indifferent.⁷ It took the Netherlands until the end of the 19th century to change that relationship, which will be described in the historical description in the parts to follow.

The young monarchy of 1813 needed a strong defence to reinforce the power of the weak King. With special regard to his position on the continent, the King was convinced that he needed an army of 50,000 men to support the allied powers against Napoleon. This was consistent with the demands of the allies, especially the English. The Dutch had to have enough fighting power to delay possible French expansions to the Northern parts of Europe, for as long a time as necessary for the English army to land on the continent and turn back the intruder.⁸

The King aimed at a force's structure of the pre-revolutionary era with a large professional army, only obeying the King's orders. However, conscription was the only realistic and affordable possibility to man the army. Many mercenaries had been incorporated in Napoleon's army and had fallen in Russia; to a large extent the Dutch conscripts drafted by the French emperor had become prisoners of war, spread all over Europe.⁹ Compulsory service to the country became very unpopular after the French occupation. It was for that reason that the King emphasised that every comparison between the conscription of the French and his new 'volksbewapening' (people armament) was wrong. To support his argument the King came up with cosmetic measures. All men between the age of 17 and 50 should only be called up to arms for the defence of the countryside, the so-called 'landstorm' (regional protection force). This 'landstorm' would provide the recruitment pool for the country's militia. Its members would be selected by ballot. After having been selected by ballot, the person would still have the chance to have himself replaced by a so-called 'remplaçant' (substitute). The 'landstorm' in that form lasted for a short time only, or, to be more precise, it existed only partially.¹⁰ The main forces, the standing army that could also be deployed abroad, would be manned by professional soldiers.

With the introduction of the militia laws on 27 February 1815, two parallel armies took shape: the voluntary army and the militia, manned with conscripts. Yet, this system did not last long either; especially the manning of the voluntary army still proved to be a problem. By the autumn of 1815 the King therefore announced a reorganisation of the system. This reorganisation showed that the influence of the Parliament on the armed forces was still weak, since it had no to say on the militia under arms. An additional result of this reorganisation was the merging of voluntary recruits with the drafted conscripts; something the opposition of the Parliament could have prevented in the beginning of 1815.¹¹

From 1817 onwards, the Second Chamber increasingly resisted the King's army plans, above all as a result of his financial policy.¹² The standing army as the prerogative of the King and his intention to see the army as an instrument of foreign policy imposed the liberal attitude to consider conscription as an effective counterbalance to the King's power.¹³ Eventually, all reorganisations led to a cadre-militia army in the Netherlands from 1820 onwards, with voluntary serving soldiers forming the commissioned and non-commissioned cadre and conscripts. This formed a compromise between the King and Parliament. It also led to a heavier burden for the conscripts who had to fulfil military service. This mix of the army's composition also led to an expanded influence of the Parliaments on the use of the army. The Basic Law of 1815 gave them the right to prevent the use of conscripts beyond the country's borders. With the disappearance of a clear distinction between the units, that right was expanded.

In the period 1813-1828 there was a clear shift from the size of the standing army to the militia. With the advantage of having less difficulty to find volunteers, this shift led to financial savings, since a conscript army that will grow during wartime is cheaper than large standing forces.¹⁴ The reorganisation, which also had the aim of merging the armies of the Southern parts of the Netherlands (the later Belgium) with those of the North, led to a shift of the share of conscripts in the total army. While in 1814 the standing army with its 37,026 men had a share of 62,8% of the army compared to the number of 21,920 (37,2%) conscripts, the latter contingent was clearly larger by 1819. In that year there were 83,858 conscripts, (74,3% of the army's size) compared to 28,960 soldiers of the standing army (25,7%).¹⁵ Those are the figures in a wartime situation. During peacetime, the change in these figures would be less over five years, as Table 5 shows.

	1814		1819	
	Size	%	Size	%
Standing Army	37 026	62,8	28 960	58
Militia	21 920	37,2	20 964	42
Total	58 946	100	49 924	100

Table 5: Present size autumn 1814 and 1819. Source: Amersfoort 1988: 90

Yet, the liberal opposition, which influenced the acceptance of conscription within large parts of the wealthier citizenry until the end of the 19th century, had made some important gains. Since the armed forces had no use for every soldier of each year-class, those who needed to be drafted had to be selected by ballot. Yet, Parliament stipulated that those who were selected had the possibility to switch numbers with potential recruits with a higher number. As well as the previously mentioned replacement procedure, the number switching had now been introduced. This meant that the Netherlands now neither had a general nor a personal army service.¹⁶

This substitute system was one of the reasons why conscription in the Netherlands caused social difficulties. Especially the rich had the possibility of buying themselves out of the service when, someone less wealthy (often men with no chance of a job) was willing to take up arms for money. This 'scum of society' had no high reputation among the militia.¹⁷ Also, a person who had drawn an unlucky number could buy someone else's number, which figured so high on the role that actual service duty was improbable. This substitute system and the number sweeping led to an unequal representation of the social classes in the armed forces.¹⁸

Amersfoort also points to the political - ideological factors. According to him the left-wing liberals had always maintained a tense relationship with the armed forces. They preferred a people's army that served for a short period only or – even better – not at all.¹⁹ 'The liberal of 1848 had only little interest in the army, expected the growing economical relations between the countries would decrease the chance for war, and distrusted the army as a reactionary instrument and toy in the hands of the King.'²⁰

During the 19th century the conservatives and subsequently also the right-wing liberals dominated the perception of the armed forces. According to them, only a professional army could be a real army. Conscripts received too short a military training and education to be dedicated soldiers. In short: the King and his followers wanted to copy

the structures and strategies of the neighbouring countries. However, that was incompatible with the population's perception of the armed forces²¹. People did not feel the necessity for strong armed forces. In addition to that the Dutch Parliament developed the tendency to keep the costs and the individual burden of the forces low. Yet, in the 19th century the reasons could not so much be found in the anti-militaristic attitude of Parliament, as in the struggle for power between the King and Parliament throughout that century, in which conscription had been such an important feature. 'The liberals demanded a voice, which had to be settled by defence laws, while the King and the military establishment - supported by the anti-liberal forces in Parliament -, saw defence as their exclusive domain. They even refused to discuss any changes.'²² With the change of the power-structure on the continent in the second half of the 19th century by the Prussian expansion and the French refusal to no longer adhere to the demands of the restoration of 1815, the structure of the armed forces and the role of conscription changed once again and with it, the liberal influence on defence. The creation of the German Empire disturbed the continental balance of power, which, among others, fed the need for larger armed forces.

4.3 Neutrality till World War II

Taking the size and territorial position of the Netherlands into consideration, this country had no other choice than to stay out of the struggles on the European continent. Neutrality became the most important weapon of the Dutch foreign and defence policy. It came along with a revision of the country's defence and its conscript system.

The conservatives won the struggle about the tactical future of the army at the beginning of the second half of the 19th century. Though technical innovations, especially the improvement of the artillery, had case some serious doubts on the system of fortifications, the conservatives wanted to proceed with building and maintaining the existing defence constructions.²³ Along with the use of inundation, which was the weapon with a long tradition in the country with its relatively small army and technical defence possibilities, the conservative militaries adhered to and planned for the static warfare. Though in decades to come this planning turned out to be outdated, it was understandable in the light of the defensive army, trying to prevent aggressors intruding the country. It also fitted the idea that a possible aggressor would always aim at areas of vital importance for the country's economy and administration.

Around that time, it became obvious that there was still a contrast between the supporters of a standing army, manned with professionals, and those who supported the militia, manned with conscripts. The conservatives succeeded in 1861 when new militia laws were made. By defining the main parts of the army as a standing army, they emphasised the authority of the King over the forces. The militia contingent, under the authority of the Parliament, had been defined as a supplement to this army.²⁴ The law became necessary after the reform of the Constitution in 1848 when it was found that the historical structures of the armed forces conflicted with the constitutional demands. The Dutch military historian Bevaart emphasised that one of the central problems had been the mix of standing (= professional) army and militia (= conscripts), a problem that has already been described earlier.²⁵

Apart from the political and constitutional law implications, the militia law of 19 August 1861 also defined the organisation of conscription and the implications and burden for the individual conscript. Here, the struggle between the conservatives and liberals became obvious. Once again the choice was between a long basic training that transformed citizens into soldiers - to the conservatives a minimum of two years had been imperative -²⁶ and between an individual minimal service duty, an option supported by the liberals. In the end, the law stipulated the maximum number of the militia army to 55,000. In consequence, with a conscription period of five years, the annual maximum draft had been set to 11,000 men.²⁷ The organisation of the draft, however, had been performed according to liberal demands.²⁸

Taking into account that a regular year-class contained 33,000 young men, the maximum limit of 11,000, with 7,500 at first, would have been less than one third of every school year. By 1861 almost half of every levy had been exempted from service for different reasons and the rest still had the possibility to hire a replacement or to change places in the enrolment list that had been complied as a result of the ballot. Approximately 13,7% of the 1861 militia had been replaced and 14,7% had changed their enrolment number.²⁹ This system survived the militia laws of 1861 because of the resistance of the liberals, but also of the conservatives, Catholics and independent members in the Chamber. The first basic training had been set to a maximum of one year and an annual refresher training of maximally six weeks for the following four years. The drafting age had been set at twenty.³⁰ Those figures, however, were only barely achieved during the 1870s.³¹ Moreover, the obligation to serve in the citizen soldiery had been added to the duty to serve in the militia. Introduced in 1814, these local units have existed until 1907. They fulfilled police tasks, while resorting under the Home Office. Only in case of war would the citizen soldiers be deployed as a reserve to the regular army.³²

From royal to parliamentary armed forces

By the second half of the 19th century, while the traditional army structure and defence strategies were more or less continued, Prussia established itself as a hegemonic power in the heart of Europe. Within ten years, Prussia led three huge military campaigns³³ that exposed the shortcomings of the Dutch defence, even though the country itself was not involved in anyone of them. Like in most European states, the successes of the Prussian conscript army impressed the Dutch conservative military and politicians.

Before the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, the Netherlands had already declared their neutrality. While England guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium, as established in the treaty of 1839, because of the strategic importance of the port of Antwerp, they did not guarantee neutrality to the Dutch.³⁴ This forced the Dutch government to mobilise its army and navy, in order to maintain neutrality. While the mobilisation of the individual was progressing well - almost 29,500 soldiers on leave were registered - the defence organisation was showing a number of considerable material, organisational, and juridical shortcomings.³⁵ The liberals, who were in power, modernised the armed forces. A more rigorous conscript system was administered together with an increase of the defence budget.³⁶

There were also societal reasons for the changes in the conscript system. More and more people considered the replacement allowing system as socially unfair. An additional reason was the bad quality of the replacements, which was deemed problematic by the military and the politicians. Bevaart distinguishes four lines of arguments in favour of personal conscription between 1839 and 1874. As well as two military arguments (keeping up strong armed forces and guaranteeing qualitatively good soldiers), a social argument (replacement is inequitable), and a military-sociological argument (the army has to regain its prestige) can be put forward.³⁷

It took almost 30 years of political struggle until the replacement system and ballot number gave way to a system of personal conscription. The personal draft became law in 1898. As from that time the Netherlands deployed a personal conscription system but still not a general conscription.³⁸

In 1901 two laws were passed to abolish various exemptions, which would lay the grounds for the modernisation of the army in accordance with the latest technical and tactical demands: viz. the militia law and the civil defence law. The militia law set the figure for annually drafted conscripts to 17,500. Of this figure, 12,300 men had to train the full period of eighteen months (mounted arms), respectively eight and a half months (not mounted). The rest, 5,200 men, would be drafted to a short-term training period of four months. The total conscription period was set to eight years and after that period the soldier had to join the civil defence for another seven years. The civil defence law also determined the end of the citizen soldiery. It is interesting to note that the so-called 'four-month-servers' were mainly deployed to guard the empty garrisons during the winter period, when those men who had served for eight and a half months had left.³⁹

The different laws of the turn of the century, which concerned the structure of the army and conscription, opened the way to a field army of four divisions with more than 80,000 men. The total number after mobilisation would have been around 200,000 men.⁴⁰ However, the laws had some shortcomings too. The influx of higher educated, wealthier men exposed the military to more critical comments. Especially the discipline system, created for the lower layers of society who usually had been drafted in the impersonal drafting system, was no longer suitable.⁴¹

With the new militia law of 1912, most of the earlier problems had been solved. Those laws, known as Colijn's laws, set the yearly contingent to 23,000. The short-term training of four months for those who had been pre-trained had been abolished and for certain groups the eight and a half months' training had been shortened by two months. The number of those who had to serve for a long period had been set to 4,000, with the possibility of replacement. The physical demands had been increased, so that the surplus of those capable of serving would diminish.⁴² In addition to this law, the 1913 laws for the civil defence and the regional protection force (Landstorm) were passed. All in all, the combined laws made it possible that the Dutch army could theoretically mobilise up to 367,000 men.⁴³

This was an impressive figure at the eve of the First World War and in the years 1914-1918, the country was in fact able to mobilise 200,000 soldiers who were reasonably trained and modernly equipped.⁴⁴ However, during that period it became obvious that an incoherent relation existed between the duties of the citizens and their rights. The process of having been called up and living in barracks for four years with hardly any distractions, led to unrest among the citizens in the army, who in their hearts were more civilian than dedicated soldier. In part the renewal of both conscription and society

in order to meet the demands of the new middle-class emancipation can be considered a result of the experiences during the war.⁴⁵

War fatigue and military economics

The First World War showed the cruelty of battle, with its 'mass slaughters in the trenches' and the newly introduced weapons like airplanes, gas, tanks and heavy artillery.⁴⁶ The new army laws of 1922 had been made under the impression of the cruelty of war and financial and social-economical problems.⁴⁷ The struggle between the necessity for modernising the wartime organisation (the mass army had been characteristic for the First World War), and the socio-economical and financial limits, had once again determined the outcome of the military reforms in the beginning of the 1920s. The peacetime army should be relatively small, but well equipped and trained. In case of war, it should have the capability to grow from 200,000 to 250,000 men, who would serve in eight smaller divisions. To enlarge the mobility of the army, a light brigade had been formed. Though the inundation line still existed, the fortifications lost their military use.⁴⁸

The manning of the new army had been guaranteed by the new conscription law of 1922, which was an amalgam of compromises to please the societal will. The annual draft would consist of 19,500 men instead of 23,000. That resembled around one third of an annual cohort. Those, who had been selected by ballot, had to serve fifteen years, resulting in a relatively old field army.⁴⁹ On the other hand, the duration of the first basic training was reduced from eight and a half months to five and a half months and the short-term training was reinstated for those with pre-training experience. These men had to serve for a period of six weeks, which was a concession to the confessional and left-liberal parties.⁵⁰

The intention of the government and the military was that the shorter period for the first basic training could be compensated by a more intensified training and refresher sessions. Amersfoort & Hoffenaar point to several shortcomings of the 1922 system, which combined with the economics of the next decade led to a weaker army and therefore weaker a defence than intended. Some of these shortcomings were, amongst others things, the imbalanced burden-sharing and a short first training, but also a small and relatively old professional cadre. Due to organisational changes, the possibility of rehearsal training and refresher sessions also diminished.⁵¹ When in May 1940, the Dutch troops could not resist the attacks of the German army, it became clear that the catching up in training and equipment material for the Dutch military in the second half of the 1930's had come too late.

Summary

Looking back on the history of conscription in the Netherlands from Napoleon to World War II, some changes and some constant factors can be identified. Throughout 125 years, only a small part of the male population was obliged to serve, most of the time around one third of an annual cohort. While the conservatives, especially the King, saw the conscript system only as a means to fill the ranks in times when a large army was

needed, the (liberal) opposition tried to have larger parts of the forces manned with short-term serving conscripts, in order to maintain influence on those forces. Yet, in the eyes of the opposition, the individual burden of the citizen and the share of the professional volunteers had to be kept low. It was therefore not only a constitutional struggle, but also a struggle about the quality of the forces: well-trained forces serving for a longer period versus a large short trained contingent with training over a short period. During the 19th century, this contrast influenced the structure of the military organisation and the prestige of conscription.

By the second half of the 19th century, the thinking about conscription had changed in a positive manner, especially in conservative circles. Still sceptic, the King and the conservatives followed the signs of the times, i.e., the successes of the Prussian conscript-army. At the same time, the liberal and confessional opposition in Parliament gained more and more influence over the budget and the army laws. While losing the struggle over the militia laws in 1861, the opposition put its print on the army building in 1901 for decades to come and shortly before and after the First World War. It can be concluded that the King and the conservatives treated conscription as a stepchild, only accepted because it came with the possibility of building up large forces. The moment they started to love it, around 1870, the child had grown up and gotten engaged with the bourgeois who never let it go.

Yet, the marriage between the bourgeois and conscription was a marriage of convenience. In 1901, conscription became personal, for all classes, but since only a small part actually had to serve, it still was not a general conscription. Shortly before the First World War, the quality and size of the Dutch troops was very good, with over 200,000 men in the mobilised army. The changes of the late 19th century and the 1912 militia law showed effect. After World War I, however, this advantage was not continued. Economy rather than naivety, and the will to limit the individual burden of conscription to just a small group, led to the fact that consecutive governments saved on equipment and refresher training. As a result, the armed forces were less trained and relatively old, when on 10 May 1940 a supremely equipped and trained enemy crossed the border.

4.4 Conscription and the Dutch defence: the initial post-war years

While the experiences of May 1940 influenced the reconstruction of the armed forces, and in particular the conclusion that neutrality did not prevent occupation⁵², the military operations in Indonesia after 1945 and especially the Cold War accelerated that reforming process.

The sending of conscripts to Indonesia marked a new era in the defence system: for the first time conscripts fought outside the metropolitan territory. The experiences of the Second World War and the growing Western alliance during the Cold War, on the other hand, facilitated the acceptance and popularity of the armed forces and conscription. The Netherlands forged strong economic and military connections with the United States and Western Europe. That step was also inspired by the fear that the democratic societal structure was threatened by communism.⁵³

It was not obvious that conscripts had to fight during the police actions in Indonesia from 1946-1948. According to Dutch law, they were allowed to participate only on a voluntary base. However, the first conscripts of the 1st and 2nd Division were sent

abroad on the legal base of a Royal Decree issued on 22 June 1944. This Royal Decree stated that conscripts could be sent to every place in the world where the enemies of the Kingdom had to be fought.⁵⁴ Afterwards, the Dutch Parliament approved this cabinet decision. By the end of 1946, the voluntary serving clause had been completely deleted from the law.

Since large parts of the armed forces were used in the struggle against decolonisation, whereby the country was concentrating on Indonesia with plenty of personnel, it delayed the build-up of the armed forces at home. After 1949, when Indonesia became independent, the Netherlands demonstrated a strong dedication to their British and American allies and after some pressure by those allies, they were willing to invest large sums in their defence and in the defence structure of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). During the late 1940s and early 1950s there had been some clashes about the guns vs. butter question between politicians and the military though. The country had to be rebuilt and there was not enough money to have high investments both in infrastructure, industrialisation and housing and in the armed forces.

The Korea crisis from 1950 till 1953, however, marked an important turning point in Dutch defence. The defence budget was set to 1,5 billion Guilders (compared to 800mln in the first post-war years).⁵⁵ The perceived higher threat from the Soviet Union led to the demand by politicians and the military that the standing units be kept in readiness.⁵⁶ This decision had direct implications for conscription: the annual contingent of a levy was set to 42,000 men, with a basic training period of 20 months (24 months for the specialists), in order to provide one division. In 1954 and 1957 the size of these standing units was even expanded to a second division after recurring international tensions and recommendations of the NATO council.⁵⁷

The Dutch defence sector developed steadily. Defence was rebuilt according to the demands of a modern home defence within the structures of the Western Alliance, NATO. These demands often required a lot from the people and the organisation, such as the stationing of parts of the army in Northern Germany during the 1960s.⁵⁸ Regularly the organisation of the ministry was changed to improve the management of the forces⁵⁹, but the largest part of the fighting and supporting units was structured according to NATO's needs and plans.

The security policy faced some major changes with the introduction of NATO's flexible response in the 1960s and the decision to station cruise missiles in the Netherlands led to a huge protest in the beginning of the 1980s. However by and large the main task remained unchanged. For forty years the most important task of the Dutch armed forces had been the common allied defence against the enemy from the east.

4.5 Dutch conscription during the Cold War years

During the Cold War, almost 2,000,000 young men were drafted. The active duty varied from 14 months, around the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall, up to 24 months, during international tensions in the 1960s. The exact period of service and the physical and material circumstances of the conscripts varied, however. It was a pendulum, sometimes swinging into the direction of contribution to international demands under the pressure

of international political and military tensions and sometimes the pendulum swung in the direction of interior political calculus, societal protest, and economics.

As already mentioned, during the 1950s the hot phase of the Cold War led to the creation of standing forces in readiness. The implications for conscription consisted not only of a prolongation of the basic training period up to twenty months for the majority of the conscripts, but also a change in the training system as such. The recruits received an individual training of four months and afterwards they were placed in already existing units. That guaranteed a steady high level of standing units, with the disadvantage of not being always optimally attuned.⁶⁰ This measure provoked societal resistance against the extraordinary long burden. Due to the individual training, it proved possible to reduce the real basic training to eighteen months, with a prolongation of the refresher period.⁶¹

During the second half of the 20th century societal protest against the military burden, but also against the disciplinary system and military rules, was repeatedly raised. Often the answer had been a broad political, military or mixed committee trying to find solutions, pleasing recruits and society, but enabling the continuation of large Cold War forces. Sometimes, however, the solution of a problem had been induced the other way around, as in the case of the foundation of the conscript unions.

First conscription commissions after the war

In 1958-1959 Lieutenant General (ret.) Baron van Voorst tot Voorst led an interdepartmental commission, which advised on the issue of the duration of the actual period of service, taking into consideration any NATO obligations and societal effects of that period of service. The commission concluded that the actual period of service could be reduced if the share of voluntary service personnel would be enlarged. However, it acknowledged budgetary problems to implement those plans.⁶² At that time, conscripts had filled many postings that were originally to be filled by professionals. During the entire first half of the 1960s, the shortage of personnel had been considerable. Yet, the large organisation needed soldiers, conscripts and professionals in order to keep up its fighting-power. One solution was the introduction of professional short-term contracts. Other possibilities were a leaner organisation, a new training and remanning system, based on entire units and – as a consequence – a new mobilisation system.⁶³

Due to the post-war baby boom, more young men were available for active duty than had been required, starting with the 1966 draft. By the end of 1963 the Commission 'Dienstplichtvoorzieningen' (military service facilities) started to look for a solution for this problem. In 1966 the commission recommended the reduction of the actual period of service to sixteen months, starting in 1967. It also introduced the term 'extraordinary conscript', referring to the surplus conscripts.⁶⁴

With regard to conscription, the year 1966 had been important for another reason. On 4 August 1966 the first conscript union, the 'Association of Conscript Militaries' (VVDM), had been founded. A rather small incident of unfair treatment of a soldier led to the foundation of the VVDM. In years to come the association, and since the 1970s another conscript union, AVNM, repeatedly channelled protests of conscripted soldiers. They strived for improvements of the conscripts' circumstances: better payment, better serving conditions and they questioned disciplinary punishment and military tradition.⁶⁵

The foundation of the VVDM was closely connected to the societal changes of the 1960s. It marked the penetration of the armed forces by the civil society.

Conscription and social change

At the end of the 1960s, the institution of conscription had been questioned for the first time in the political arena. Reasons had been the large size of the levies and consequently the growing unequal burden-sharing between those who had to serve and those who had been excluded. Other arguments had been the emancipation of the conscripts and the ineffectiveness of the system, where conscripts followed a relatively long training with only short military gains.⁶⁶ From 1968 until 1976, the commission on conscription policy (Peijnenburg-commission) worked on further improvements of the recommendations of the 1966 commission. The commission also had to analyse if it might be possible to come up with an alternative national service to meet the negative implications of the unequal burden-sharing as a result of the surplus of conscripts. The committee advised to maintain the conscript system, because of the difficult labour market and the need for standing forces in readiness.⁶⁷ Many proposals were realised, such as the introduction of a new medical examination system to decrease the surplus of young men and the lowering of the drafting age from 18 to 17 years.⁶⁸

During the work of the Peijnenburg-commission, another commission was created. In 1971 the Van Rijckevorstel commission had a much broader assignment. Its task was to analyse the Dutch defence and her share in NATO, taking into consideration the growing gap between financial resources and necessary modernisation. It advised, among other things, that given the modern weapon systems and the technical skills needed, an all-volunteer army would be preferable. Yet, the Commission admitted that there was hardly any room for that plan. A commercial consultant suggested introducing a system with variable periods of service as a starting point towards all-volunteer armed forces. It appeared, however, that in years to come even the social democratic Minister of Defence, H. Vredeling, was unable to introduce that system. Yet, in the Defence White Paper 1974 he promised to reduce the active period of serve from sixteen to twelve months. A first step was taken in 1976, when the period decreased from sixteen to fourteen months. It would take fourteen years to reach the next step, when in 1990, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Minister of Defence announced a period of service of twelve months.

The Mommersteeg commission of 1975 had been the most far-reaching commission, at least with regard to its assignment. That committee had the task to examine if it was feasible and possible to introduce all-volunteer armed forces. But when the committee came with its conclusion in 1978 it was divided. A minority rejected a professional army because of societal reasons. The majority was in favour of abolition of conscription, but thought that it was not possible or very risky to introduce an all-volunteer force. Two huge problems came to the fore: the financing of those forces and the anticipated low recruitment figures. There had always been a strategic necessity of conscription. According to the committee, only conscription could have guaranteed the manning of the huge territorial army necessary for the NATO defence along the Iron Curtain. Conscription had not only been important for the active units, but it was also important in the army's reserve concept. Huge parts of the territorial forces' hardware had been

stored and only in the case of an emergency would those units have been filled with soldiers of the reserve. It was therefore very expensive to have large professional forces.⁶⁹

The last committee worth noting is the committee ‘Serving in the Future’ (1978-80). That committee came up with a rough plan for a mixed army of conscripts and volunteers and a varied set of active periods of service. Yet, the then Minister of Defence, P.B.R. De Geus, concluded that - taking into consideration the findings of all committees - no system existed that could meet all the personnel and financial demands and that was better suited than the actual system.⁷⁰

Commission	Period	Task	Advice
Van Voorst tot Voorst	1958-1959	Duration service period.	Reduction only if the voluntary part could be enlarged
Military Service Facilities	1963-1966	Strategies to cope with the baby boom surplus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of service period to 16 months • Extraordinary conscripts (surplus not needed)
Peijnenburg	1968-1976	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further improvements previous commission • Alternative duty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain conscript system • New medical examination system • Drafting age from 18 to 17 years
Van Rijckevorstel	1971-1973	Analyse Dutch defence and its part in NATO	All-volunteer armed forces favourable
Mommersteeg	1975-1978	Feasibility and possibility of all volunteer armed forces	Minor advice (pro conscription), major advice pro abolition, but: financing and expected low budget figures
Serving in the Future	1978-1980		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed armed forces • Variety of periods of service

Table 6: Overview of Dutch conscription commissions during the Cold War

Legitimacy of conscription in society

The military and conscription in the Netherlands had never been more accepted than during the Cold War. The historical analysis until 1945 shows that military and conscription had always had a difficult stance in society. Those institutions had never been that important to the citizenry and they tried to serve as short a period as possible. Conscription had also held a difficult position in the country with regards to ideology. The liberals and the ideological left opposed it as a power instrument in the hands of the King/State and for almost a century the conservatives had considered conscripts amateurs. Add to that the successful neutrality during World War I and permanent cuts on the defence budget making the low acceptance of conscription a fact.

During the Cold War, however, the military and the conscription system gained support.

	63	64	68	74	78	82	83	84	85	86	88	89	90	91
Necessary & nec. Evil	93	83	82	86	88	82	79	77	82	77	71	66	80	65
Necessary	59	48	47	45	51	52	47	42	48	44	38	38	39	42
Necessary evil	34	35	35	41	37	30	32	35	34	33	33	28	41	23
Hardly necessary	3	5	6	8	8	9	10	10	7	11	11	16	10	18
Unnecessary	3	7	6	6	3	9	9	6	8	9	10	11	5	10
No opinion	1	5	6	0	1	0	2	6	3	3	9	7	5	7

Table 7: Necessity of Armed Forces, 1963 – 1991 in %, Source: Everts 1992: 38

The acceptance of the armed forces from the 1960s until 1991 was always around 80%. There had been a slight negative trend in the 1980s, but during the Gulf War 1990/91 after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the acceptance increased again, but only for a short moment. The reasons for that trend during the 1980s might be the result of the fact that the fear of a large-scale war between NATO and Warsaw Pact diminished.⁷¹ Another reason could be the broad discussions on the NATO double strategy of the late 1970s, early 1980s and the huge protests against the placing of cruise missiles in the Netherlands. Overall, the existence of armed forces was supported by a broad majority of the population.

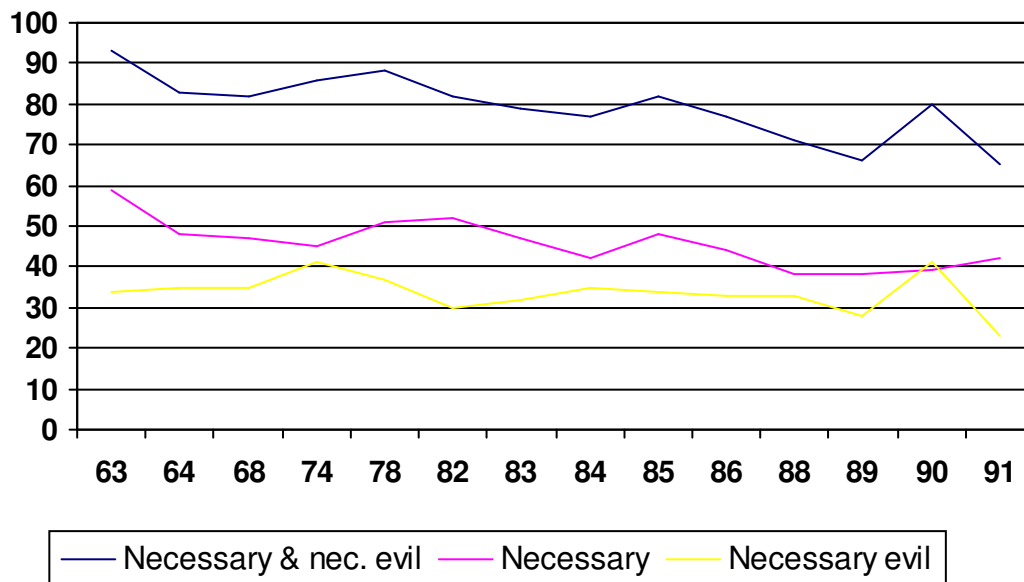


Figure 6: Necessity of Armed Forces, 1963 – 1991 in % (graphical version of Table 7)

It is difficult to translate the acceptance of the armed forces to the legitimacy of conscription, especially because opinion polls on that issue were held less frequently. In 1974, when asked to react to the statement 'A professional army is more preferable than

armed forces with conscripts', 71% of the population supported the statement. After reformulating the statement in a more neutral way, the polls of 1976 showed that 55% supported armed forces with conscripts, whereas 32% preferred an all-volunteer army. Everts provides two possible explanations. On the one hand the change in opinion was due to the change in questioning, on the other hand it could be because of the discussions on that issue.⁷² See for that last point the history of Dutch committees and the history of the conscripts' unions (both above).

Although there have been several committees and two, more or less progressive, unions for conscripts during the Cold War, conscription had not been abandoned. As stated above, the reasons were various. Firstly, the strategic necessity to man the active and reserve units demanded a conscript system that also served to fill the reserve pool. Secondly, the conscript unions never actively strived for abolition of conscription. On the contrary, they turned out to be supporters of the system, mainly because of the democratic control of and the good relation with society by the armed forces. The focus of the unions had been the improvement of the quality of active duty and of the social circumstances for conscripts.

Taking also into consideration the relative support of conscription by the population, it can be concluded that neither interior political necessity nor external security developments urged policy makers to abolish conscription in the Netherlands until 1990. Even at the beginning of the 1990s it had been far from obvious that conscription in the Netherlands would be sacrificed on the altar of large post Cold War changes.

Notes

¹ Amersfoort 1996: 9

² Amersfoort 1996: 9

³ Sommer 2000

⁴ Amersfoort 1996: 12, translation JEN

⁵ Amersfoort 1996: 12. After a painful defeat against the French conscript army in 1806 even the Prussians changed their opinion. The military reformers Scharnhorst and Gneisenau worked as from that moment on a blueprint for a Prussian army that incorporated conscripts, who before that time were considered amateurs.

⁶ Frevert 2001: 35 'Man appellierte an den Patriotismus der Untertanen, vor allem der 'höheren Stände', ging aber zugleich davon aus, dass jener Patriotismus erst durch den Militärdienst geformt und geprägt würde' (translation JEN)

⁷ Klinkert 1993

⁸ Compare Amersfoort 1988: 58f., Amersfoort 1992: 191

⁹ Amersfoort 1988: 57

¹⁰ Amersfoort 1992: 195

¹¹ Amersfoort 1992: 196-198. In 1816 the period of services had been as follows: Those men who personally served out their service had been drafted for two and a half months. In the following three years they had to attend annual refresher training of one month, during the large army spring manoeuvres. Those who had been selected by ballot to the standing army had to serve 14,5 months and one annual one month of refresher during the next three years. The rest of those drafted to the standing army had to serve for five years. (Amersfoort 1988: 78)

¹² Amersfoort 1992: 198

¹³ Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992

- ¹⁴ Amersfoort 1988: 88 and 90
- ¹⁵ Amersfoort 1988: 89
- ¹⁶ Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992
- ¹⁷ Amersfoort 1988: 69f.
- ¹⁸ For example, between 1885 and 1897 the number of number changes and replacements was around 20% (Van Roon 1994: 621)
- ¹⁹ Amersfoort 1996: 14
- ²⁰ Te Velde 1992: 41/42, translation JEN
- ²¹ Amersfoort 1996: 14-15
- ²² Bevaart 1993: 547
- ²³ Bevaart 1993: 179
- ²⁴ Bevaart 1993: 202
- ²⁵ Bevaart 1993: 183
- ²⁶ Bevaart 1993: 201
- ²⁷ Bevaart 1993: 195
- ²⁸ Bevaart 1993: 195
- ²⁹ Bevaart 1993: 197
- ³⁰ Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992
- ³¹ Bevaart 1993: 201
- ³² Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992
- ³³ In 1864 against Denmark, in 1866 against Austria, and in 1870/71 against France.
- ³⁴ Bevaart 1993
- ³⁵ Bevaart 1993: 460
- ³⁶ Bevaart 1993: 467
- ³⁷ Bevaart 1993: 508f.
- ³⁸ Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992
- ³⁹ Klinkert 1992: 223, Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992
- ⁴⁰ Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992
- ⁴¹ Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992
- ⁴² Klinkert 1992: 383
- ⁴³ Klinkert 1992: 383
- ⁴⁴ Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992
- ⁴⁵ Amersfoort 1995: 16f
- ⁴⁶ Bijkerk 1995: 90f.
- ⁴⁷ Bijkerk 1995: 91
- ⁴⁸ All data: Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992
- ⁴⁹ Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992
- ⁵⁰ Bijkerk 1995: 94
- ⁵¹ Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992
- ⁵² Janssen & Fernhout 1990, in 50jaar
- ⁵³ Kersten 1992: 22
- ⁵⁴ Hoffenaar & Schoenmaker 1994: 29
- ⁵⁵ De Geus 1998: 56 and 65
- ⁵⁶ Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992
- ⁵⁷ "Het dienstplichtvraagstuk door de decennia heen" Directie Dienstplichtzaken, Centraal Archiefvondst – Ministerie van Defensie (CAD-MvD), Archief Commissie Dienstplicht, Deel I, Map 2-4
- ⁵⁸ De Geus 1998
- ⁵⁹ Van Brouwershaven 1999
- ⁶⁰ Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992
- ⁶¹ "Het dienstplichtvraagstuk door de decennia heen" Directie Dienstplichtzaken, CAD-MvD, Archief Commissie Dienstplicht, Deel I, Map 2-4
- ⁶² "Het dienstplichtvraagstuk door de decennia heen" Directie Dienstplichtzaken, CAD-MvD, Archief Commissie Dienstplicht, Deel I, Map 2-4
- ⁶³ Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992

- ⁶⁴ “Het dienstplichtvraagstuk door de decennia heen” Directie Dienstplichtzaken, CAD-MvD, Archief Commissie Dienstplicht, Deel I, Map 2-4
- ⁶⁵ Kors 1996
- ⁶⁶ Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992
- ⁶⁷ Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992
- ⁶⁸ “Het dienstplichtvraagstuk door de decennia heen” Directie Dienstplichtzaken, CAD-MvD, Archief Commissie Dienstplicht, Deel I, Map 2-4
- ⁶⁹ “Het dienstplichtvraagstuk door de decennia heen” Directie Dienstplichtzaken, CAD-MvD, Archief Commissie Dienstplicht, Deel I, Map 2-4 and Amersfoort & Hoffenaar 1992.
- ⁷⁰ “Het dienstplichtvraagstuk door de decennia heen” Directie Dienstplichtzaken, Commissie Meijer, Deel I, Map 2-4
- ⁷¹ Everts 1992
- ⁷² Everts 1992: 44-45

Chapter 5: Leadership in postponement of the draft

5.1 Introduction

Conscription in the Netherlands still exists. It is the draft, which has been postponed. This is not only a legal distinction, but also an important compromise at the end of a policy process of two years. The road to the postponement of the draft and the accompanying ‘de facto’ abolition of military service had been paved with resistance by influential political and bureaucratic stakeholders, such as the Minister of Foreign Affairs H. van den Broek and the Army Commander, General M.J. Wilmink. While both had a prominent role in the formulation of the Defence White Paper 1991, due to their experience and ensuing institutional power position, the new Minister of Defence, R. Ter Beek, grew in office over the years. This will be shown in the sections to come.

The analysis in this chapter eludes the sparse public discussion, the parliamentary debates, and the actions of the formal leaders and other important stakeholders in the Dutch defence sector. It is important to focus on those actors within the Dutch defence sector at the beginning of the 1990s in order to answer the question, why the Netherlands abandoned the draft so soon after the Cold War. This is why in the next section the structure of the sector will be presented.

5.2 Dutch defence politics

This section will explain the Dutch defence policymaking at the beginning of the 1990s. This is necessary for a better understanding of the empirical chapter. Furthermore, it will illustrate the changes in the organisation of the ministry and the ensuing changes in the development of Dutch defence policy at the beginning of the 1990s.

On 7 November 1989, the third cabinet of the Christian Democrat R. Lubbers came into office. It was a coalition government consisting of Christian Democrats (CDA) and Social Democrats (PvdA). With 35,3% of the votes for the CDA and 31,9% of the votes for the PvdA, the governmental parties held 103 of the 150 seats in Parliament (the Second Chamber/Tweede Kamer).

Several actors were involved in the defence policymaking in the Netherlands. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Van den Broek, and Defence, Ter Beek, and the Junior Minister of Defence, B.J.M. van Voorst tot Voorst, were responsible for the official Policy White Paper 1991. The Minister of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the chapters on foreign and security policies. The Minister of Defence and the Junior Minister are responsible for the organisation of defence within their respective portfolios. The portfolios are not fixed, but can change, depending on political necessity, personal preferences of the politicians at the ministry, and coalition demands.

Several parts of the Ministry of Defence would be involved in the defence policy planning process. First, and most importantly, political deliberation would take place on Monday morning.¹ Participants would be the Minister and Junior Minister, the Secretary

General, the Chief of the Defence Staff, the Directors-General of Procurements, Personnel, Economies and Finances, the Director of Policy Affairs, the Director of Information and the Director of Legal Affairs.²

Starting with the Defence White Paper 1991 the ministerial deliberation would be a tool to prepare defence policy. Its members were the Secretary General M. Patijn (chairman), the Chief of the Defence Staff General P.J. de Graaff, the Commanders-in-Chief, and the Directors-General.³ Yet, decisions were taken in the Defence Council. From 1989 until 1993 its members were the political top of the ministry, the Secretary General, the Chief of the Defence Staff, the Commanders-in-Chief, the Commander of the Military Police, the Directors for Policy Affairs, Information, and Juridical Affairs, and the Directors-General, plus some extraordinary members. The defence council, however, became less important in the period between 1989 and 1993. According to the Minister it was a 'big, bureaucratic company without an exchange of ideas.'⁴

The decision making within the organisation was complicated by the organisational model and the relations between the political, bureaucratic, and functional military lines. Until 1992 the ministry had been organised according to the so-called matrix structure. In 1976 this structure had been replaced by the so-called three pillars structure, in which navy, air force, and army each had their own Junior Minister. The matrix structure was expected to be more flexible and above all, efficient. Yet, it turned out to be ineffective, since the different actors at central level and at the different branches of the armed forces could not reach an agreement on their share of authority. Due to that fact, the bureaucracy increased and the decision making slowed down.⁵

With the concern - or line-staff - structure the army, navy, air force (and military police) were no longer part of the central organisation. They were, however, more involved in the policymaking process due to the ministerial deliberation (above). With the concern structure the Commanders-in-Chief gained more responsibility. The restructuring towards the concern structure started in 1992 and it ended in 1993.⁶ This means that it coincides with the period of analysis of this study. In relation to either matrix or concern structure, both De Graaff and Van Brouwershaven pointed to the fact that the Minister of Defence Ter Beek (1989-1994), generally tended to avoid doing direct business with the Commanders-in-Chief in the organisation.⁷ This will be elaborated more deeply in the empirical parts and the analysis.

The highest soldier within both organisational forms was the Chief of the Defence Staff. The function had been introduced in 1976 and one of the reasons was the felt necessity by the politicians at the ministry to centralise defence policy.⁸ The relation between the Chief of the Defence Staff and the Commanders-in-Chief within the matrix organisation was in fact a temporary solution:

- The Commanders-in-Chief were as *Chiefs of Staff* responsible for the operational policy of their respective parts of the armed forces. They reported via the Secretary General and the Chief of the Defence Staff to the Minister.
- The Commanders-in-Chief were at the same time *Commanders-in-Chief* of their part of the armed forces. In this function they were responsible for the operational use of their part and they reported directly to the Minister.⁹

Therefore, in military matters, the Chief of the Defence Staff served purely as military advisor to the Minister and the Junior Minister and he was not part of the line organisation.

However, with the organisational change towards a new structure the role of the Chief of the Defence Staff also changed. Due to international changes, the Dutch defence organisation had to be more flexible to be able to react with the right resources. The Commanders-in-Chief gained more power, since they became the sole commanders of their section of the armed forces. The functional directors became subordinated to the Commander-in-Chief and the councils of the respective sections stopped being influential.¹⁰

The Chief of the Defence Staff was given the right to formulate a vision for the future and the test and exploration of new tasks for the armed forces as an additional task. In addition he became the senior advisor for operational policies, but his operational responsibility was restricted to peace operations. Those rights were given to the Chief of the Defence Staff in February 1992.¹¹ The direct chain of command between the Minister and the Commanders-in-Chief continued to exist, while the relation between the Commanders-in-Chief and the Chief of the Defence Staff was not hierarchical. This situation began to change in 1995, which is beyond the analysis of this study. The new structure had several implications for policymaking in general. In the empirical chapter we will see which implications the changing structure of the Ministry would have for conscription.

5.3 Rethinking defence policy: the 1991 White Paper

In the campaign for the parliamentary elections in 1989, defence and conscription were no issues in the Netherlands.¹² In addition, the issue of conscription seldom reached the news. Neither politicians nor the public were interested in the subject. From April 1989 until the end of that year, only fifteen articles had been published in the national newspapers about conscription. Only three of the authors were in favour of abolition, the rest argued that military service had to become more attractive and that the unequal burden-sharing of 35% has to be soothed. However, in the light of the upheaval of the world order, the newly formed Dutch cabinet of Christian Democrats and Social Democrats that had come into office on November 7th 1989, just two days before the fall of the Berlin Wall, had to react to the new situation. Foreign and defence policy were back on the political agenda, as was conscription.

Right in the beginning of the year 1990, the first sustained publicity about the future of conscription appeared¹³. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the public and political interest in the issue grew. On 25 January 1990 the national newspaper *NRC-Handelsblad* reported that the coalition parties, CDA and PvdA, intended to reduce the active period of service from fourteen months to twelve months. Less than two months later the CDA politician, A.B.M. Frinking MP, who was a retired commissioned officer and one of the defence specialists of his party parliamentary group, published an article in the *Volkskrant*, another national newspaper, in which he demanded the abolition of conscription.¹⁴ His main argument was that the armed forces would reduce in size and that therefore the unequal burden-sharing between those who had to serve and those who did not would grow increasingly.

After the publication of this article, the discussion not only took place in the media, but was also put on the political agenda.¹⁵ More and more politicians and (former) soldiers contributed to the media stream, by stating arguments in favour or against conscription. Already in March 1990 a former high-ranking officer had pointed to calculations supporting the argument that it would be difficult to recruit enough volunteers. This was supported by another argument: ‘Abolition of conscription? Volunteers do not guarantee quality’, this was the headline of a contribution by Army General (ret.) and former Chief of the Defence Staff, G.L.J. Huyser.¹⁶ Though the publication was in a minor daily newspaper, it is worth noting. Later on the general with his outspoken opinion became, as member of a commission investigating the future of conscription, one of the actors in the decision process towards the postponement of the draft.

Throughout the years 1990 until 1992, the supporters of conscription wrote that the societal commitment of the armed forces could only be guaranteed with conscripts.¹⁷ The opponents of conscription argued that this commitment was not necessary anymore or that it was also guaranteed with volunteer forces.¹⁸ To some writers, conscription was a service to society, which could even be extended to women¹⁹, whereas others thought of the conscript system as a barbarian system.²⁰ It is interesting to note that the pros and cons did not depend on political or societal backgrounds. And even among the soldiers, whether conscripts or not, no unanimity could be found.²¹

In the articles concerned the authors, mainly people involved in the sector, not only pointed to the unequal burden-sharing of those who actually had to serve, around 35% of the male population, but more and more they pointed to the fact that conscription was no longer necessary in the case of smaller armed forces. Even the Junior Minister of Defence as well as an influential Defence spokesman of one of the governmental parties, Frinking from the Christian Democrats (CDA), gave their opinion on the subject. While the Junior Minister, Van Voorst tot Voorst, had been in favour of conscription, because of societal reasons, the Member of Parliament was against it, because of the – already mentioned – unequal burden-sharing.²²

At the same time, a broad consensus grew on shortening the active period of service for conscripts. During the last years of the Cold War Dutch conscripts had to serve for fourteen months. By the end of 1990 it became obvious that the period of service would be reduced to twelve months. In fact, this had been the implementation of a recommendation of the Mommersteeg-commission. Yet, another issue was put forward repeatedly: the possibility of yet another state commission that should advise the government on the issue of military conscription. It took until 1991 before the opinion of the Minister of Defence on conscription and a possible commission became known to the public. It was in January of that year when the first concept of the new Defence White Paper leaked to the public. The Minister, Ter Beek, was in favour of conscription and he planned to install a commission, which would advise him on the future of conscription. The Minister of Defence was in this sense one of the few who supported the conscript system in public.²³ Moreover, he remained a supporter for a long time, mainly because of his social democratic background.²⁴ The rest of the public opinion seemed to be in favour of abolition. Even the editorial of a traditional pro conscription newspaper, the Christian Conservative *Trouw*, argued in April 1991 that it would be time for abolition, because of the military technical innovations and the unequal burden-sharing.²⁵

On March 10th 1991 the Minister of Foreign Affairs –responsible for the foreign policy and security analysis – and the Minister of Defence presented the new Defence

White Paper. For the sake of argumentation in this report, it is important to concentrate on three topics of the Defence White Paper: the new security policy, the reform of the Royal Army and, indeed, conscription.

Security policy and military reforms. While the break-up of the Warsaw Pact fed the hope for eternal peace, different conflicts or events came to the fore, which made clear that defence was not solely yesterday's issue. The invasion of Kuwait by Iraq and economical problems in the Soviet Union put their mark on a future Dutch army. While the Ministers of Foreign Policy and Defence welcomed the end of the conflict between the East and West, they still pointed to the danger of the military potential of the Soviet Union and the political and economical instability in that country. They concluded that fostering the political dialogue and cooperation was important, yet, that 'the security policy of the government and the allies aims at maintaining an adequate defence ...'.²⁶

In addition to the traditional NATO deterrence task of the armed forces, new operations outside the NATO treaty area took place. The defence of the alliance remained the first task. Because the time of preparation in case of an emergency increased from six months to two years, depending on different threat scenarios, it seemed a reduction of the active and reserve parts of the forces would be possible. Consequently, three out of ten army corps brigades were dissolved and the remaining brigades would become logistically independent in anticipation of a future multi-national army corps. Two brigades would be transformed to one airborne and one light-armoured brigade. Interesting for this study is also the announcement of the structure change of the ministry of Defence from a matrix organisation to a concern (or integrated management) structure, referred to in the beginning of this chapter.²⁷

Though the security situation required prepared forces, cutbacks were in order. In particular the Army had to reduce its personnel, most of them conscripts: up to 20% between 1991 and 1995. The Air Force was expected to have almost 35% fewer conscripts. This may seem a lot, but with 4,195 conscripts it was not as huge a change for the Air Force structure as for the army with its 41,122 draftees. In terms of *Conscript Ratio*, 'defined as the percentage of conscripts compared to the total of a country's regulars without reserve'²⁸, we find that a total of 44,77% are conscripts. For the regular armed services this figure differs: 63% army (40,500 out of 64,100), 8% navy (1m400 out of 16,000), and 21,9% air force (3,500 out of 16,000).²⁹

Conscription. The restructuring of the armed forces had implications for the conscript system. About one-third of the chapter on personnel policy has been reserved for that subject. Notwithstanding a reduction of the drafted personnel up to one-fifth, the Minister of Defence showed no intention of abolishing conscription. Although he recognised the 'unequal distribution of conscription ratio' (Dutch Defence White Paper 1991: 40), three arguments were central to his decision. Firstly, conscription 'creates a link between the armed forces and society'. Close to this argument is the second one that the throughput of young men provides the military with a conscious feeling of what is happening in society. The third and most important reason was that conscription guarantees well-educated personnel. The Minister of Defence recognised that conscription had to become more attractive. Therefore he announced the creation of a commission that would consider a reform of Dutch conscription. Abolition was not mentioned as an option.

The 1991 Defence White Paper represented a first cautious step in the direction of modelling the armed forces according to 'détente', yet with a conservative security definition. Insecurity about the prospects of political developments in Russia prevailed, as did the will to put the defence of the alliance first. Therefore, the White Paper saw only little chance for extensive reductions of the armed forces.

Van Brouwershaven identifies three factors why the White Paper only indicated small strategic changes: (1) the international environment changed so quickly that long-term planning was useless; (2) as a result 'conservative forces inside and outside the armed forces managed to restrict the changes to cuts in the existing tasks'. (3) The defence organisation was not used to fundamental change after 40 years of (static) Cold War.³⁰ With 'conservative forces', she referred to the dominant Minister Van den Broek who was politically superior to Ter Beek³¹ and the military top of the army: 'together with Van den Broek they had been convinced that they should be careful with the initiated changes'.³² This had direct implications for conscription, since only large forces (either in readiness or cadre) could guarantee an adequate territorial defence and only conscription could guarantee those large forces.

1991 White Paper and conscription in the parliamentary debate

When on June 10th 1991 the standing defence commission of the Dutch Parliament debated the White Paper 1991, the discussion about conscription took a different direction than officially intended by the Minister of Defence. First, it appeared that the Minister of Foreign Affairs tried to take the credits for the paper and the political responsibility. When confronted with further cuts in the defence budget the Minister of Foreign Affairs threatened to withdraw the Defence White Paper:

'Mister Van Traa (Labour): Is the Minister of Foreign Affairs saying that he resigns if there is another reduction of even one more cent?

Minister Van den Broek: Who says that?

Mister Van Traa (Labour): You are saying that it is almost unacceptable and that the limit has been reached. Let us bring that back to normal proportions.

Minister Van den Broek: Allow me to use my own words. One thing should be clear: the Defence White Paper will be withdrawn if you demand further cuts. I guess you know, what that means for the future of the cabinet.

Minister Ter Beek: I am responsible for what happens with the White Paper in the first place.

Mister Weisglas (VVD [chairman of the commission, JEN]): May I know who of the both ministers talked on behalf of the government during the last thirty seconds? It would be useful to know, at five minutes to eleven p.m.,³³

Van den Broek immediately de-escalated the situation by supporting the Defence Minister's statement. At the same time he emphasized that further cutbacks would thwart the

implementation of the White Paper, 'as repeatedly talked about with the Minister of Defence.'³⁴

Secondly, during the same meeting, two members of both government parties i.e., the Christian Democratic (CDA) MP, G. Koffeman, and the Labour (PvdA) MP, H. Vos, put forward a motion, which influenced the task of the future commission on conscription. The defence spokesmen of those parties considered it an odd procedure to let the commission think about the future of Dutch conscription without giving it room to think about abolition. That is why CDA and PvdA requested the minister to change the task of the commission: at first it should analyse the future of conscription, whether or not to uphold it, before thinking about any instrumental reforms or technical adaptations. And they restricted the time of investigation to one year.

The MP's engaged in the drafting of that motion had several reasons to put it forward. Large parts of the CDA distrusted the cabinet. According to the CDA members in Parliament the cabinet was too much inclined to cut back the defence budget. By sticking to conscription, the army would unequally gain more financial resources than the navy and the air force.³⁵ As early as the 1980s, Frinking regarded the system of conscription as outdated. He had introduced a parliamentary motion in 1988, which softened the cabinet's decision of the 1950s that allowed conscripts to be sent all over the world.³⁶ To him abolition was necessary mainly because of the unequal burden-sharing. A second important reason was the bad treatment of the highly educated conscripts. In the eyes of Frinking they were abused in a mass army instead of efforts being made to develop their potential. The reasons were different again for the Labour MP's. They distrusted the military and had been supporting conscription for a longer time than the CDA, due to the societal imbedding of the armed forces, its broad representation of society, and the strategic necessity during the era of mass armies (= Cold War). Yet, they had their doubts and for this reason demanded a closer look. M. Zijlstra MP (PvdA) admitted more than ten years later that the CDA had taken the lead in the discussion.³⁷

It is worth noting that Parliament demanded that the minister produce an evaluation of the White Paper within two years, given the hectic international political developments. That revaluation, which later was named the Priorities White Paper, and its preparation turned out to be very influential on the ministers' course of action on conscription. Moreover he had learned one important lesson from the realisation of the White Paper 1991: many people working on a White Paper means little influence for the minister. For this reason he limited the participants in the Priorities White Paper. Only a close inner circle was actively concerned, while the armed forces mainly served as supplier of facts and figures.³⁸

To Ter Beek the evaluation offered an outspoken chance to put his fingerprint on the future of the armed forces and to correct the White Paper of 1991, when he was less influential and when he realised the dual role of the Commanders-in-Chief as advisors to the Minister and as advocates of the interests of their respective organisation.³⁹ Furthermore he had some serious problems with the Dutch decision to send troops to the 1990/91 Gulf War.⁴⁰ However, at that moment, the summer of 1991, conscription was not an issue to the Minister of Defence. The commission served to wait and see from where the wind blew.⁴¹ He was pragmatic: he did not lose any sleep over the subject and he 'contracted the problem out' to the commission.⁴²

How important the Priority Paper was for conscription in the Netherlands became obvious in March 1992 when the commission had reached its half way stage and the

Minister gave a sensational speech. Before addressing this, the commission, its operating procedure and its outcome will be discussed.

5.4 The commission on conscription: the beginning

On September 30th 1991, the Minister of Defence installed the commission of conscription, also called the Meijer-commission (after its chairman). The Minister of Defence actively influenced the choice of commission members.

The first brainstorm sessions on a future commission on conscription took place as early as 1990. By the end of that year, the Director General Personnel W.J.M. Bunnik wrote a note to the Minister, the Secretary General Patijn, and the Director Policy Affairs D. Barth. That note was not more than a preliminary draft of a future commission on the future of conscription, putting some thoughts on paper uttered on 3 December 1990 in a meeting of these senior policy makers. The Director General Personnel ended that note with a personal remark stating that he preferred a broader task for the commission. The commission should not only consider the organisation of conscription, but also if it would be desirable and/or necessary to stick to conscription after the actual planning period, taking into consideration the unequal burden-sharing by the unhappy few who got drafted, the costs, and the adequate supply of new personnel.⁴³

The plans for the formation of the commission took a more concrete form around April 1991. The first names circulated around May 1991.⁴⁴ From that shortlist of 13 names, three persons would take place in the commission in the end: W. Meijer, the chairman of the commission to be and a political and personal friend of the Minister; J.J.C. Voorhoeve, conservative (VVD) and director of an influential think tank for foreign affairs, the Netherlands Institute for International Relations (Clingendael), and the already mentioned retired Army General Huyser, who at that moment was, among other things, working as a columnist for several regional newspapers. While the task of the commission became more concrete after the parliamentary debates on the Defence White Paper 1991, the creation of the commission took a little longer.

The Minister discussed the potential of other members of the commission with the chairman to be. The social democrat Meijer was junior secretary for Culture, Recreation and Social Work in the Den Uyl cabinet (1973-1977), MP from 1977-1988, from 1981-1982 he was chairman of the PvdA parliamentary group. From 1988 until 1992 Meijer was the Queen's Commissioner of the province Drenthe. During the entire work of the commission he stayed in that position. Also engaged in the formation – though at different stages – were the Secretary General of the ministry, Patijn, the Director 'Algemene Beleidszaken' (Policy Matters), Barth, the Director General Personnel, Bunnik, a number of senior civil servants, one important ideological thinker of the PvdA, B. Peper, and Prime Minister Lubbers.⁴⁵ He was consulted, because the Minister of Defence needed some recommendations on a CDA member, who might join the commission.⁴⁶ There had to be a representative in the commission of the four largest parties to guarantee the political backing of the result. Yet, it had to be small to prevent a time-consuming process and to make it more 'manageable'.⁴⁷

In the end, they presented seven members, who were chosen according to their political and/or professional background. Four politicians from the largest parties, who did not belong to the political leadership of their parties, a retired general, a civil servant

from the department and a social scientist. It seemed that the choice of the scientist took the most time, because the one who had been the first choice, withdrew. After having fulfilled a similar task for another state commission, this person preferred not to advise the central government for the time being.⁴⁸ Table 8 shows the final composition of the commission.

Due to the parliamentary motion, mentioned above, the commission had a dual assignment. On the one hand, it had to investigate the desirability and feasibility of abolition of conscription and on the other hand, it had to come up with concrete suggestions of how a future conscription should be organised in case of non-abolition. Consequently, the commission followed the so-called ‘maintenance track’ and the ‘abolition track’.

Name	Party	Other relevant function
W. Meijer, chairman	Labour Party	CvK Drenthe
Mrs. G. Montfrans-Hartman	Christian Democratic Appel	Mayor Katwijk, Chairman commission 4/5 May
M. Jager	Liberal – D’66	Mayor Wageningen
J.J.C. Voorhoeve	Liberal – VVD	Director Netherlands Institute for International Relations (Clingendael)
G.L.J. Huyser		Army General (ret.), former Chief of the Defence Staff
P. Lehning		Professor of Social Science
L.V. Mazel, secretary		Deputy Secretary General ministry of Defence

Table 8: Members of the commission on Conscription 1991

The Minister referred to this double task in the installation speech on 30 September 1991. After a short survey on the history of conscription and the subsequent preceding commissions on conscription, the minister denoted the ‘drastic international developments’ and the ‘intensive discussion about the societal implications of conscription’, which had called for this special commission. The Minister pointed to the fact that the acceptance of the institute of conscription was no long a matter of course because of the unequal burden-sharing. On the other hand, he continued, we were faced by the problems of the societal embedding of the armed forces, which was guaranteed by conscription, and the military necessity. The Minister was referring here to the army-building and mobilisation system.

Minister Ter Beek emphasised that the Defence White Paper 1991 elaborated on the future tasks for the armed forces and that those tasks were not subject to the commission’s analysis. Yet, he continued – and this is worth noting in-depth, because later on it appeared to have influenced the commission’s work – ‘[i]t is obvious that the acceptance of conscription in society is influenced by the perception of the international security situation and the related ideas about the task of the armed forces. The international security situation develops and changes very rapidly. The commission has to be aware of those developments, because its advice has needs to be supported by a careful interpretation of those developments.’ The Minister continued that even if the commission would advise the abolishing of conscription, he had to look into this in great depth. Even if he would decide to follow such advice, the abolition process would take years in order not to endanger the functioning of the armed forces. He concluded, that he by no

means wished to impose on the commission how they should conduct their analysis; 'the members of the commission have all their own political, societal, and administrative background . . . Furthermore the assignment of the commission would guarantee its independent position, which is a necessary condition for an unprejudiced judgement.'⁴⁹

The chairman of the commission, Meijer, underscored most of the Minister's issues in his reply. Meijer observed that the limitation of the investigation time to one year made it necessary to set priorities. His priorities were: does the commission find that conscription in its actual form should be abolished? If yes – what should replace it and when should that happen? If not – which changes have to be made to meet the criticism about the actual conscription system? Can the period of service be shortened?⁵⁰ The chairman acknowledged that he could neither answer any of those questions at that moment, nor could he do so without the approval of the commission. He admitted that there had been several commissions on the subject in the past, but he emphasised that '... I think that we probably have to take a step further than our predecessors did. Since World War II, conscription as societal duty has never before been such a fundamental subject for debate as it is at present.'⁵¹

For the commission's routine the double track meant that the members of the commission had to ask questions in both directions during their interviews with experts and stakeholders and while visiting several army garrisons, where they talked to commanders and conscripts. The commission also engaged a consulting company 'Research voor Beleid' (Policy Research) – specialised in governmental advice – which conducted an analysis of the labour market. Furthermore, the commission made use of the expertise of the army to calculate different models of how a future army might look. There was intensive contact between the army command and the commission to discuss those models at length, because the army would carry the main burden of abolition of conscription. This will be discussed later on.

A few weeks after the installation of the Meijer-commission, one of the headlines of the *Telegraaf*, a conservative newspaper very popular among the military, stated that the end of conscription was nearby, since a majority of the Dutch Parliament expected abolition within five years. It was Vos, initiator of the parliamentary motion that influenced the commission's work, who declared that his party, PvdA, no longer explicitly excluded the possibility of abolition. An important argument was the recruitment of short-term volunteers, who guaranteed the exchange/relation between the armed forces and society, an important issue for the Social Democrats. Hans Hillen (CDA) emphasised, according to the same article, the unequal burden-sharing and the professionalisation of the military, which could not be met with short-term conscription. His colleague, S. van Heemskerck (VVD) added to this the issue of arising planning insecurity if conscripts would be part of units deployed for international crisis management.⁵² This was one of the implications of a parliamentary motion by Frinking (CDA) who in 1988 had demanded that sending conscripts outside the NATO-area could only take place on a voluntary base. With this motion, he had weakened the government's ability to send conscripts abroad, which had been possible since the colonial wars in Indonesia after the Second World War.⁵³ The final headline of 1991 concerning conscription was that one of the 'unions' for conscripts, the 'Algemene Vakbond voor Nederlandse Militairen' (General Union for Dutch Military – AVNM), had changed its opinion in favour of abolition, while the other conscript's union, the 'Vereniging Voor Dienstplichtige Mili-

tairen' (Federation for Conscripted Military – VVDM), was still in favour of conscription.⁵⁴

After 363 days, on September 28th 1992, the commission gave its advice. It was – unlike most commissions on conscription before – unanimous: it recommended against abolishing conscription. It became obvious that at that moment the political stream and the work of the commission had drifted apart: a political majority started to support abolition. Before going into this further in part 5.6, the commission's work will be discussed in the next section.

5.5 The commission at work

Though it seemed that the majority of the commission was in favour of conscription, the members agreed on an open and above all pragmatic attitude. 'They were looking for common ground and suggestions.'⁵⁵ Yet, towards the end some members had the impression that the will to find consensus eventually led to hasty conclusions.⁵⁶ At an early stage, already in spring 1991, the top of the ministry of Defence had set the outlines of the future work of the commission. They had in general followed the motion of the Parliament. In first orientation sessions, Meijer agreed on the lines set out.⁵⁷ The commission did the same in its first session.

The commission collected arguments in favour and against conscription by placing advertisements in newspapers and by conducting an analysis of literature on the subject. Yet, it did not use those arguments to deduce any recommendations. In the commission's opinion the arguments were in balance. In a later comment on the commission's report, two members of the staff of the Chief Defence Staff concluded that this collection of arguments presented no highlight of scientific research. The arguments were not representative for a distinctive population and it was not clear who used which argument.⁵⁸

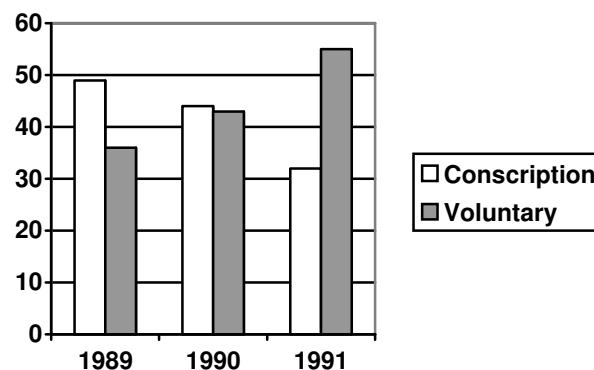


Figure 7: Conscription or voluntary forces? Source: Commissie Dienstplicht 1992: 31

The opinion poll (Figure 7) assigned to the 'Stichting Maatschappij en Krijgsmacht' (Foundation for Society and Armed Forces – SMK) and conducted by a professional Dutch bureau for opinion research, 'Nederlands Instituut voor Publieke Opinie' (Dutch

Institute for Public Opinion – NIPO) was scientifically sounder. The poll exposed that within two years the public opinion on conscription had changed drastically: While in 1989 49% of the population was in favour of a defence force with conscripts (36% was pro voluntary forces), only 32% was in favour of conscription in 1991, while 55% of the Dutch population wanted an all-voluntary army.⁵⁹

*Respondents and advisors to the commission*⁶⁰

Contrary to former commissions on conscription the Meijer-commission chose to ask the opinion of only a few experts. The official reason for that was the limited investigation time. One of those experts was the ‘Maatschappelijke Raad voor de Krijgsmacht’ (Societal Council for the Armed Forces – MRK). This Council was composed of a broad variety of societal and political groups and was advising the Minister of Defence. It recommended, in a report to the commission, to abolish conscription, on the condition that there would be enough volunteers. Until such time the quality of military service had to be improved.

Two other organizations, which contributed to the commission’s work, were the two unions for volunteer armed forces personnel, i.e., the ‘Algemene Federatie voor Militair Personeel’ (General Federation of Military Personnel – AFMP) and the ‘Koninklijk Nederlandse Vereniging voor Reserve Officieren’ (Royal Society of Dutch Reserve Officers – KNVRO). The first organisation was in favour of abolition, because the argument that conscription guaranteed a positive relation between armed forces and society was outdated. The latter organisation was in favour of conscription because in their opinion they found reserve-personnel important, acting as ambassadors of the armed forces. Without conscription there would be fewer people available for the reserve-forces.

The trade unions for conscript personnel (AVNM and VVDM) had the same message to the commission. The latter changed its opinion just shortly before the commission questioned it. At management level, however, the AVNM had decided to strive for abolition as early as the summer of 1990. They did not emphasise in public though that due to tactical reasons, abolition of conscription should be used to reach short-term aims in the improvement of the quality of conscription and to get the active period of service reduced.⁶¹ During the interview with the commission, the AVNM was in favour of abolition, because the advantages of conscription, like learning Russian or getting management experience, were only applicable to a few conscripts. The VVDM observed that a key function of conscription, i.e. the democratisation of the armed forces, would be taken over by other organisations.

Civil and military leaders

On 29 January 1992 the commission interviewed the commander of the First Army Corps, General Van der Vlis, who became the Chief of (Defence) Staff in May 1992.⁶² He was in strong favour of conscription. Yet, the report itself referred to none of his reasons. The report only stated the commander’s view on conditions to conscription. To Van der Vlis, the actual period of service should not be reduced to nine months, which

had been one possible option to make the service more attractive, because that was too short a period for training. The conscripts would be trained for their actual tasks. However, for real-life missions they should get extra preparation time, obligatory in other (professional) armies. Another important point of the commander of the First Army Corps was the difficulty that young men have to become soldiers. Most of them, however, were enjoying their time after a short habituation period. Just a small number of conscripts, approximately 10%, had difficulties adapting to the circumstances, but, Van der Vlis added '[m]any of those boys would have had the same difficulties elsewhere'.⁶³

The commander's way of thinking about conscription contrasted sharply with the experiences of the almost 300 conscripts, who the members of the commission talked to during visits of garrisons in the Netherlands and Northern-Germany. Those conscripts were mainly in favour of abolition. This impression was supported by scientific research, conducted by the commission. In this research 1,649 conscripts and 1000 men aged 27 to 32 years were asked for their opinion. Around two-thirds of them were against conscription.⁶⁴ The main reasons were boredom, low salary and the interruption of their civil career.

One important respondent was the Minister of Defence. This had been a rather odd procedure. As the initiator of the commission, who clearly defined the tasks of the commission, any further contact with the commission could have been interpreted as political interference and consequently as endangering the independence of the commission. He appeared before the commission in June 1992, after an invitation by the chairman. The invitation came shortly after the Minister held a speech on his view on the future of the armed forces. In this speech, held on March 31st 1992 at the 'Nederlands Genootschap voor Internationale Zaken' (The Netherlands Society for International Affairs – NGIZ), he defined the security situation as substantially different from the one stated in the White Paper 1991. Due to recent events, mainly the decline of the Soviet empire and the changes of NATO tasks, he concluded that the army might be reduced drastically. He also suggested in his speech, which in the remainder of this study will be referred to as NGIZ-speech, that the future of conscription was unsure. The speech will be discussed in detail in 5.6.

Change and friction

Just one month before that speech, the commission had an expert meeting on the current foreign and security policy situation at the Netherlands Institute of International Affairs, where Voorhoeve was the director. In that session, most people concluded that times were changing, however, at the same time it was felt that the situation was still too insecure to reduce the armed forces drastically, which would have implications for the future armed forces. As long as there were still strategic threats to NATO and Dutch territory, abolition of conscription was not possible. In this sense, the outcome of that meeting contrasted with the view of the Minister of Defence in his speech on 31st March.

The chairman of the commission had phoned the Minister on the evening of 31 March and blamed him for not taking the commission seriously. He stated in a letter the next day, that it seemed that the White Paper 1991 was no longer the point of departure for the future armed forces and that the future reforms would be very drastic. That, Meijer continued, was in sharp contrast to the terms of reference of the commission, i.e. the

Defence White Paper 1991. The commission asked the Minister to come and explain what the basis for the commissions work ought to be exactly: 'The [...] explanations in your speech endanger the continuation of the commission's work. After all, until now the commission based its work on terms of reference, which by now are apparently outdated, without having any views on the implications of our work with regards to your newly chosen objectives. In order to continue its work, the commission urgently needs to know – as soon as possible – which terms of reference it should use'.⁶⁵

On June 18th 1992 the Minister explained to the commission that the security situation had changed and that the future tasks of the armed forces were to be dual. On the one hand they would function as crisis-reaction-forces and on the other hand they would have to fulfil their classical strategic task as guardians of the integrity of the NATO-area. As a consequence, the future armed forces would need three different types of units: crisis-reaction-forces, territorial deterrence forces, and forces prepared for a strategic conflict.⁶⁶ The Minister then referred to two models for future armed forces, as designed by the Royal Army: the maintenance model and the abolition model. The Army had designed those models on behalf of the commission, since the commission itself was small and it therefore had to consult experts. Both models will be presented later on in this study in more detail, when the process within the army will be presented. Important at this point is the following quotation of the Minister before the commission: 'I want to emphasise that those models are by no means definite versions. Within the department further research will be conducted. So far I have not yet formed any opinion, nor have I indicated any preferences.'⁶⁷ The Minister proposed a 'begeleidingsgroep' (support group) to improve communications between the ministry and the commission. However, that group was never used.⁶⁸

The commission acknowledged the changed security situation and the fact that this touched upon its core task: conscription. For this reason the commission organised the orientation session at the Netherlands Institute for International Relations, mentioned before. Together with speeches of the Minister of Foreign Affairs⁶⁹ and the NGIZ-speech of the Minister of Defence and in addition to his subsequent appearance before the commission on 18 June 1992, the commission thought that it had enough information on the governmental security definition, without anticipating the ensuing revaluation of the Defence White Paper. This was important since the definition of the security situation was the responsibility of the government and explicitly not that of the commission.

One important study on behalf of the commission was the analysis of the Dutch labour market by the institute 'Research voor Beleid' (Research for Policy). Departing from the abolition model, 'Research voor Beleid' concluded that it would be difficult to recruit the required 13,500 volunteers, of which 10,000 would be needed for the army. In particular the recruitment of highly qualified personnel - around 75% of the newcomers would have to meet that demand - would be difficult in times of economic prosperity. The commission concluded that given the macro-economical and social-political figures, volunteer armed forces would be difficult to achieve.⁷⁰

The report

All members of the commission participated in drafting the report. Repeatedly the members discussed different versions and changed them, sometimes completely when necessary.⁷¹ The commission concluded in its report that the world had not become safer since the end of the Cold War and that the commission had to consider an insecure future. The future tasks of the armed forces would be dual. Firstly, quickly deployable and professional units would be necessary for dealing with smaller conflicts and relief skills had to be guaranteed. Secondly, the possibility of a large-scale conflict was small and it would be sufficient to have units kept in readiness and to train them on demand.

Though the commission underscored the negative implications of unequal burden-sharing, it came with it's the unanimous advice that – at least in the nearby future – conscription could not be abolished. The considerations for that advice were:

- 1) The commission is convinced that the Dutch armed forces should be capable and available for the maintenance of the international order based on law. That can be done with a larger, better-organised and therefore more efficient crisis management capacity embedded in the armed forces.
- 2) Because of the uncertainties in the security situation, the commission underscores the necessity of a mobilisation component that can be deployed to a considerable war capability. And further '[t]he model of the professional army incorporates a drastic reduction in the peacetime organisation, while the mobilisation component will be divided almost in half. The commission considers this one of the important disadvantages of the model for a professional army.'⁷²
- 3) The analysis of the employment market shows that it is especially difficult to recruit persons with a higher education. The commission doubts that the armed forces are able to compete on the employment market in the short run.
- 4) The commission thinks that the Constitution has to be changed in case of abolition. Even when only the draft would be postponed, the adaptation of the Conscription appears to be the only way. The expected procedures would be very time consuming, which in turn would frustrate the demands of a short transition period towards an all-volunteer force.
- 5) Conscription is important for the societal support of the armed forces.

The commission wrote: 'The considerations prevent the commission from advising the abolition of conscription. The commission concludes that it is necessary to maintain conscription. The reasons for conscription to exist are unchanged according to the commission, yet the manner in which the armed forces exist are organised, however, should be reconsidered. [...] The commission concludes therefore that a drastic reform of conscription is necessary'.⁷³

Though in the end the conclusion of the report was unanimous, some members had their doubts if they should recommend maintaining conscription.⁷⁴ Yet, they did not express their doubts at the end of the process and did not formulate a minority (dissenting) opinion. The reason was that all commission members could underscore the report for different reasons. Voorhoeve had been satisfied with the recommendation in the conclusions of the report to change the constitution, which, according to the advice of constitutional lawyers, was crucial to abolish conscription in the future.⁷⁵ Van Montfrans, who had a rather critical attitude towards the military and conscription, supported the conclusion because of the international situation, thereby following the line of Van den Broek. However, she too was glad with the implicit recommendation of the report that eventually, when the international situation would be more predictable, abolition might be an option.⁷⁶ Those who had their doubts about the continuation of conscription also agreed on the final conclusion because of the expected negative recruiting figures stated in the report by the external advisor 'Research voor Beleid'.⁷⁷ Jager, who was a strong supporter of conscription, admitted that this recommendation had been a gesture towards the political resistance and the fact that the commission foresaw the financial and employment market problems for large armed forces.⁷⁸ General (ret.) Huyser followed his strict line of conserving until the end of the commission's work. He admitted that he had few contacts with the military top, but that they could hardly have influenced him since most of them followed the same line: conscription.⁷⁹

Political reactions to the report

A few days before the presentation, the first conclusions were leaked to the press. The largest newspaper *Telegraaf* quoted spokesmen of both trade unions for conscripts, who rejected the decision of the committee to stick to the conscription, though reduced to nine months.⁸⁰ The weekly opinion paper *Vrij Nederland* printed a large article on 26 September 1992 about the 'still secret advice', foreseeing that Ter Beek would face hard times if he would follow the advice not to abolish conscription. On the day itself almost all political parties rejected the commission's conclusion instantaneously. Within half an hour after the presentation, the defence expert of the CDA, Hillen, declared that the report was to be rejected. He and most of his colleagues demanded an end to military conscription.⁸¹ He knew, as a seasoned politician, that every weakness in his criticism would be in favour of the pro-conscription faction. For this reason he opposed the report fiercely, without even knowing it in detail.⁸² He had based his criticism both on the leaked conclusions of the report and on confidential information from members of the commission.⁸³ Until today supporters and opponents mutually blame each other for that leak.⁸⁴

Even the Social Democrats rejected the conclusions of the report. They left no illusions when talking to Meijer a few days before the presentation of the report. It seemed that the chairman of the commission had asked his political friends how the report might be received. Two defence specialists of the PvdA in Parliament, Zijlstra and Vos, told him that they had changed their opinion, because of the unequal burden-sharing and the uncertainty of filling the crisis management units and that they therefore would not support the conclusion of the report.⁸⁵

As from Monday 29 September 1992 all national and a few local newspapers wrote about the report and its presentation. Most articles stuck to the facts of the report but stressed the broad rejection of its conclusions by Parliament and the possible problems Minister Ter Beek could face⁸⁶. A few comments pro (again Huyser) and con conscription and even an interview with the chairman of the committee were printed on that day. In that interview Meijer underscored the important conclusions of his committee: 'no professional army that is unwanted, because you cannot get enough volunteers, and, Europe is not that safe' (*Volkskrant* 29-9-1992). It is interesting to note that even the national newspaper *Trouw* – traditional a supporter of conscription – argued in its editorial pro abolition, since the security situation was not as dangerous as the committee had written to justify conscription. Ter Beek was quoted that the report would strongly influence his opinion on the subject and that he would present a conclusion in December 1992⁸⁷.

Still, it took the social democratic Minister more than two months until he publicly announced the decision to change the forces into all-volunteer forces. In the next three sections the actions of the Minister and his advisors and the tactics of the military will be described and this empirical chapter will be concluded with an analysis of the media stream between 1989 and 1992.

5.6 The Minister changes his mind

The previous section highlighted the preferences of the political environment of the Minister of Defence. Though there had been different opinions, even within political parties about the future of conscription, the defence spokesmen of the governmental parties preferred abolition. This became obvious shortly after the presentation of the report of the Meijer-commission. That commission, composed of all relevant parliamentary parties, recommended keeping military conscription and the draft. Now that we know the preferences of the institutional environment of the political and military leaders, it is important to focus on their own preferences. In the next sections, the preferences with regard to the draft of the Minister of Defence and his closest assistants will be described. Part 5.7 will concentrate on the military leaders.

Keeping conscription low on the agenda

From late 1989 until March 1992, the Minister and the Junior Minister of Defence seldom projected their opinion about the subject in public. Their sparse comments on conscription were always pro conscription.⁸⁸ The Minister repeatedly defended the arguments of the White Paper 1991 and accredited his opinion to his social-democratic conviction. To him conscription was a service to society by young men from all social strata. Or, as he wrote in his memoirs: 'There are rights in our country, but duties, too. This is important to me and at that time I believed that the general conscription was just, since it made no difference between the son of a worker and the son of the chairman of the board'.⁸⁹ It was important to the Minister that a future commission on conscription should think about reforms, but not necessarily about complete abolition.

In the 1991 Defence White Paper the passage about the commission was not very explicit on the possibility of abandoning conscription. The abolition of conscription had not been high on the Minister's agenda. The commission served as an instrument to gain time and to see which way the wind would blow. The Minister also hoped that the commission might come up with strong arguments in favour of conscription. Another important reason lay in the politically delicate nature of abolition. Some political friends advised the Minister to establish the commission because such far-reaching decisions needed a broad political and societal consensus.⁹⁰

The NGIZ speech of March 31st, 1992

A few months after the (unsuccessful) 'coup d'état' in the Soviet Union, Ter Beek held the aforementioned speech before the Netherlands Society for International Affairs (NGIZ), in Hotel Babylon in The Hague. In this speech the Minister for the first time presented his analysis of the new security situation and its possible implications for the future armed forces. In his opinion, the security situation had changed more than most people had expected one year earlier, when the Defence White Paper 1991 had been presented. Ter Beek summed up four changes that could influence future armed forces. Firstly, and most important, due to the decline of the Soviet Union, the threat of its forces invading the West had almost disappeared. Secondly, the Minister pointed to the changes in NATO since the summit in London (July 1990) and the summit of Rome (December 1991). The political character of the alliance had become more important, as had become its support for the states of the former Warsaw Pact. The Minister expected the NATO to change even more. Thirdly, the European component on security had become more important and fourthly, the United Nations and its peace operations had increased in importance. The Minister summed up the implications of those changes for the Dutch armed forces in ten points.

In the first nine points the Minister expressed the necessity for a smaller army. It should be more flexible for use in territorial defence and for peace-operations outside any NATO area. Furthermore, a future army, embedded in the alliance always acting together with other international forces, should consider increased task specialisation. That implied, that in the long run, every country in the alliance should be specialised in one or more combat and support units, e.g. transport and logistics, or artillery, or military engineering, instead of trying to have all military units in one national army. In this way, every country could do what it was best at, and at the same time reduce forces and save money. According to the Ministers' opinion that specialisation would not be possible in the short term. However, the Netherlands had to discuss complementary tasks with its allies. In the tenth point of his speech, the Minister referred to conscription. He referred to the work of the commission and stated that it had been its job to think about the future of conscription in the light of the revolutionary changing security situation. He stated that although abolition would be a radical and far-reaching decision, conscription itself was just a means, not an aim.⁹¹ It is interesting to note that the draft stated that the Minister 'took abolition seriously into account'. Just minutes before the speech he toned that down into 'he might have to take abolition into account.'⁹²

The timing and content of the Minister's speech were remarkable. The definition of the security situation is the task of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, as has been men-

tioned before in the White Paper 1991 description. The Minister of Defence, however, had not consulted his colleague, Van den Broek, about this speech. He wanted to avoid any interference with his plans. At the same time it was customary within the cabinet to inform the responsible Minister. The Minister of Defence and his assistants came up with a tactical move. They printed the speech with double line spacing so that it covered 45 pages and they faxed it to the ministry of Foreign Affairs just hours before the Minister addressed the NGIZ. His colleague had no chance to prevent or modify the speech. One of the few people outside the inner circle who received the speech seemed to be the CDA defence expert Frinking. Ter Beek: 'We were together in one coalition, it seemed convenient to me ... Passing the speech to Frinking was a tactical, political game.'⁹³

A controversial speech: political reactions

The next day, the Minister of Foreign Affairs wrote a letter to his colleague of the ministry of Defence. In the letter, the Minister stated fiercely that his ministry received the speech just hours before it had been delivered, 'while it already had been in possession of some of the members of the parliamentary defence commission. I consider this an odd procedure for a speech containing 75% matters of foreign affairs.'⁹⁴ For Van den Broek this speech had been another sign that the Minister of Defence had his own agenda, from which Van den Broek had been excluded.⁹⁵ He emphasised in an interview that 'it would have been better if the Minister of Defence would not have taken him by surprise. It would have been more prudent if I had received the speech in time'.⁹⁶

It took over a week before Van den Broek rebutted Ter Beek in public. The Minister of Foreign Affairs had believed for a long time that the threat potential from the Soviet Union was still high and that only large and comprehensive Dutch forces would guarantee protection.⁹⁷ 'I am pointing to the fact,' the Minister of Foreign Affairs said in an interview 'that the speech of Relus [ter Beek, JEN] is emphasising the role of the army in peace operations too much. He says that all future material in the armed forces and its structure has to be suited for peace operations. Yet, I wonder: what will happen with the classical defence tasks?'⁹⁸ Van den Broek continued to point to the large Russian army of 1,3 million men and its nuclear arms. In combination with the unstable situation in the follow-up states of the former Soviet Union, this represented a high threat potential. The Minister of Foreign Affairs showed his concern about a Dutch solo mission and emphasised repeatedly that any reform of the Dutch armed forces, which was inevitable, could only take place within the future defence concept of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

This was closely connected to another important reason for Van den Broek's resistance to Ter Beek's plans. An all-volunteer army would be smaller. As a consequence there would have to be a change of the army structures: no army corps and that would mean less impact within international organisations. According to ministry of Defence officials, several senior policy makers of the ministry of Foreign Affairs were afraid that NATO would not take the Netherlands seriously anymore and that they would be regarded as of equal military importance as Luxembourg.⁹⁹ A letter of Van den Broek of 6 April 1992 supports this valuation. The Minister of Foreign Affairs reacted more elaborately to Ter Beek's NGIZ speech in this letter. The tone resembled the abovementioned

interview in the *Volkskrant* of 11 April. However, Van den Broek much more emphasised the future role of Dutch defence within the alliance: 'To what extent will there be a structure in the future that is suited for 'traditional' large-scale combat operations? We cannot seriously expect from our allied friends that they have to carry the burden of defending our soil, while the Netherlands restrict themselves to operations with a peacekeeping nature.'¹⁰⁰

There were more reactions by stakeholders in the sector. A few days after the NGIZ-speech, several interest groups reacted to the speech in the newspapers. The VVDM, acknowledged that abolition of conscription made them obsolete, but that in principle they were not against abolition.¹⁰¹ The Association of Professional Soldiers accused the Minister of having made plans without consulting them and of only communicating with the military through the media.¹⁰² Even the top of the military had no clue what Ter Beek would say. The Commander-in-Chief of the Army Wilmink was furious when he heard of the speech. Neither he nor the Chief of the Defence Staff, De Graaff, had been informed.¹⁰³ Yet, they did not complain in public.

On 4 April 1992, the Minister gave an interview to the *Volkskrant*. In that interview, he defended his speech and talked about the future of conscription. While he stated on the one hand that he did not want to anticipate the conclusions of the Meijer-commission, he acknowledged on the other hand that in the 'near future' the Netherlands would have a professional army. The reasons he stated for this were the following: the unequal burden-sharing of those who actually had to serve and the availability for peace missions.¹⁰⁴ Two days before that interview and on the day of the interview comments of the former CDS, General Huyser, were published in two regional papers. While in New York, doing research for the Meijer-commission of which he was a member, he blamed the Minister of Defence of confusing the military with the boy scouts.¹⁰⁵ According to the General, the Minister used the wrong arguments for abolition. General Huyser concluded that the 'abolition of conscription did not depend on the tasks of the armed forces'.

One of the reasons for Ter Beek to present his speech without prior consultation is a previous experience with the drafting of the White Paper 1991. To Ter Beek the NGIZ speech 1992 was his keynote speech.¹⁰⁶ With that speech he wanted to set the parameters for a new defence policy. That is why he initiated the date and place to give his speech.¹⁰⁷ The items in that speech formed the route along which the evaluation paper, later to be titled 'Priorities Paper', should run. That paper was expected in the beginning of 1993. The Minister had tried to do the same before, on his way to the Defence White Paper 1991 with the so-called 'terms of reference letter'.¹⁰⁸ In that letter, the Minister had wanted to outline the plans for a future army. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, however, resisted the content of the letter, when he got hold of it. After political negotiations at the highest level, between the coalition leaders, the Prime Minister Lubbers and the vice Prime Minister, his coalition ally Kok, the letter was held back. Ter Beek never wanted to face such a situation again.¹⁰⁹

A second reason why the timing was striking was that the speech was held during the heydays of the Meijer-commission. It had already been indicated that the chairman of the commission was not amused and had asked Ter Beek to talk to the commission. Ter Beek tuned his speech when following the invitation. Even when asked directly, he denied that he wanted conscription to be abolished.¹¹⁰ It is interesting to note that in-between the speech and Ter Beek's appearance before the commission, he had changed

his mind, as he afterwards admits and as the already referred to interview in the *Volkskrant* of 4 April indicated. Still he was supporter of conscription, but pragmatic reasons seemed to change his opinion:

Two days after Ter Beek held his NGIZ speech, the commander of the army, General Wilmink, went to the Minister to tell him that the army was unable to provide a medical company for a UN mission in Cambodia. The problem was not the equipment or the companies - the Dutch army had several of those - but the difficulty was the manning of the company for a longer period than half a year. The army was unable to find enough volunteers for the mission and conscripts could not be ordered to go abroad. Maybe it was possible to send a first group, but who would relieve the soldiers after six months? According to the Minister of Defence it was on this 2nd of April 1992 that he reached the conclusion that only a volunteer army could prevent those problems.¹¹¹

His closest assistant on the ministry, Barth, also referred to that day when thinking of his change of opinion. He was deeply impressed by the situation, when Ter Beek asked his Director of General Policy Affairs (DAB) to come into his office while the Minister was talking to the General. Barth acknowledged, however, that once he had changed his mind he did not strive openly for abolition; he did not want to be perceived to be lobbying: 'For me it was no Saul turning into Paul situation,' he stated ten years later.¹¹²

It seems that the relation between the Minister and Barth was very close. Apart from the fact that the DAB was the head of a very influential political directorate, there was another reason for that close relationship. Just a few weeks before Ter Beek's predecessor, F. Bolkestein (VVD), had handed over the ministry to Ter Beek, he had appointed his political friend Patijn as the new Secretary General of the ministry. This was a very unusual procedure in Dutch politics. It was absolutely 'not done' and due to this Patijn had a weak position at the ministry and a poor relationship with Ter Beek.¹¹³

The origins of the NGIZ speech

The NGIZ-speech had been far-reaching and important. It marked a shift in how the political level of the ministry of Defence thought about the future of the armed forces. It marked a change from conscription as an independent policy item to just a part of the larger restructuring plans, the Priorities Paper. Confrontations with the Foreign Minister and the military could be expected. Considering this and knowing that at the moment of publication of the speech the Minister and his closest advisor, Barth, were still not convinced enough to abolish conscription, it is important to trace in-depth the origins of the speech.

Minister of Defence Ter Beek wanted to address the sector with a keynote speech. Amongst others it was his spokesman, Bert Kreemers, who belonged to the inner circle of the Minister, who had recommended holding a major political speech. The Minister would need a forum to communicate his plans about the future armed forces and to regain a better institutional position with regard to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Instead of waiting for an invitation by the rather prestigious NGIZ organisation, Kreemers asked the chairman of the NGIZ if he would be interested in a keynote speech which would pay off for both, the Minister of Defence and the organisation.¹¹⁴

The author of the speech was Jacques de Winter, deputy director at DAB who was known as a very intelligent and independent mind, who was never seen at any receptions or other potential lobby events.¹¹⁵ De Winter worked at home on that speech for one week. In retrospect, this speech was one of the most important speeches he wrote during his career.¹¹⁶ Although he regularly consulted Ter Beek and Barth¹¹⁷, he was given a lot of freedom to state his views. To De Winter, the events since November 1989 were representing a major shift. In his opinion, many people talked about it, but did not think about it. De Winter did. He formulated the future of the armed forces and their possible assignments in ten points.¹¹⁸

Ter Beek and Barth acknowledged ten years later that De Winter was more advanced in his thinking and planning than they had been.¹¹⁹ Barth and De Winter often discussed the issue of conscription, since Barth was an emotional and traditional supporter of conscription, whereas De Winter opposed that institution from a technical and pragmatic point of view: 'Endless talks, endless models ... everything had been done to convince people like me.'¹²⁰ Though they differed on the subject in the first place, Barth was rather proud of the speech, since it was an important product of his directorate.¹²¹

Discussions held about conscription at DAB were not only a bi-lateral affair between the Director and his deputy. In September 1991, when the commission started its work, the mood at the ministry of Defence had not been pro abolition. De Winter remembered the situation ten years later as being emotionally pro conscription. According to him, many civil servants simply did not understand the changes.¹²² Yet, especially at the political directorate DAB, people often talked about the subject. And there, the atmosphere was sometimes emotional as well, not only during the staff meetings, but also at Monday morning coffee when the issue was frequently discussed.¹²³

Ter Beek was reluctant to plead in public for the abolition of conscription. That became obvious in the toned down reference to conscription in his NGIZ speech, his diplomatic phrase in the *Volkskrant* interview of 4 April 1992, and his appearance before the commission as described earlier. According to the Chief Defence Staff (CDS), Van der Vlis, the Minister had still been positive about conscription in June. He had told his chief military advisor that he would prefer a mixed model, with the armed forces partly manned with volunteers for peace operations and partly with conscripts for traditional deterrence tasks, as a fair solution for the future.¹²⁴ The Minister in turn appreciated the opinion of the CDS, but admitted that he did not follow all of his advice. Sometimes, in particular with regard to conscription, he did not want to listen to all the generals anymore with their repetitive, old arguments: 'I knew their arguments. [...] I was astonished myself that I dared to resist those generals, but after that long time at the ministry [two and a half year, JEN] I knew a lot [...] The generals had to realise that times had changed.'¹²⁵

De Winter's memo

After the presentation of the Meijer-report De Winter again played an important role. The Friday before the presentation, the only commissioned officer at the DAB, Marine Colonel D.C.L. Schoonoord, received parts of that report. His superior, Barth, requested that he prepare a presentation on the report for the upcoming Monday morning meeting at the DAB. In that presentation Schoonoord emphasised two weak spots in the report:

the funding of the plans for the 'New conscription' and the half-hearted plans themselves.¹²⁶

After the presentation, Schoonoord received the order to rewrite his presentation as a memo for the Minister. De Winter joined the drafting process and finished it in his critical and eloquent style. Since the memo was only meant for the Director of Policy Affairs and the Minister, the deputy director wrote a very open memo without any reservations. De Winter and Schoonoord literally crushed the report of the commission on conscription. In their opinion the report was using a 'worst-case scenario' when describing the actual security situation.¹²⁷ The commission had completely ignored the NGIZ speech of the Minister and the explanatory memorandum to the defence budget of 1993. The commission had functioned as a mouthpiece of one part of the armed forces, the army, since it only concentrated on the maintenance model, calculated by that same army.¹²⁸

When talking on the phone to Barth, who was abroad, De Winter asked if he should distribute the note among the small group working on the so-called Defence Priorities White Paper. Somewhat to De Winter's surprise¹²⁹, his superior agreed, though hesitantly, and De Winter sent his memo to the members of the steering commission for the Defence Priorities Paper via the Secretary General of the ministry.¹³⁰ While already reading the memo, the Secretary General quickly understood its political dimension.¹³¹ In an unprecedented move, he recalled all copies of the memo on procedural grounds. Unfortunately to him, it proved almost impossible to retrieve all copies. Within a short period of time, the five original copies of the memo were copied and almost magically multiplied. When the Secretary General received the original copies back all the staples had been removed. A military police's investigation counted 117 copies that had been made in very short time. And two of those copies had disappeared: they had found their way to the press.¹³² It is almost certain that the De Winter-memo accelerated the process towards postponing the draft.

When director Barth saw the headlines soon after his arrival at Schiphol Airport, it was too late. The news had already reached the chairman of the commission, Meijer. Meijer was very upset and wrote a letter to the Minister in which he rejected every criticism on the commission. He emphasised that he and his colleagues worked strictly according to their assignment. Even during the Minister's talk with the commission in May and June 1992, he had not given the commission the impression that it should change or even postpone its mandate. If members of the ministry disagreed on the points of departure of the commissions' task, those members should have spoken out before. Meijer concluded that the commission rejected the criticism since the results of its work were judged on a not-given task, with non-provided facts because of tactics that lay beyond the influence of the commission.¹³³

Two days later, the Minister replied that he only could answer briefly, since his ministry was working on an elaborate answer to the report of the commission. This answer would be used for the cabinet meeting. The Minister denied that he had been vague when he talked to the commission. According to him, the commission had not applied his analysis of the security situation. Instead, it had relied on its self-organised meeting at the Netherlands Institute of Foreign Affairs (described above, JEN) and two speeches held by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Minister of Defence regretted the leaking of the De Winter-memo; yet, it was just one opinion among others at the ministry, which contributed to the general policy discourse within the ministry.¹³⁴

Headlines stated that the civilian leadership at the ministry was convinced that a professional army was within reach.¹³⁵ The coverage on conscription got a new impetus and was revived. Two clear streams could be separated. On the one hand were the opponents of conscription who rejected the conclusions of the commissions and pointed to the difficult situation the Minister of Defence was in. According to them the Minister had committed himself to the commission, yet he faced strong political opposition¹³⁶. On the other hand were the supporters of conscription, who launched the proposal of 'social draft': social service to society, which everybody was obliged to fulfil. A prominent representative on that view was the party leader of the CDA in Parliament, L.C. Brinkman.¹³⁷ Two days later, his own party and Parliament colleague, Hillen, demanded – together with a PvdA politician – a clear statement of Ter Beek on the subject. The latter example was typical for the public discussion on the subject which leads to the conclusion that there was no clear-cut majority pro or con conscription. The fault lines even ran through parties and parliamentary groups.

Abolition announced

On 1st November 1992 the Minister of Defence announced – for the first time to a broader public – that conscription in the Netherlands was going to be abolished.¹³⁸ This occurred during the so-called 'Battle at Leusden', an internal policy conference of the ministry with the Minister and the Junior Minister of Defence, the Secretary-General, the Chief of the Defence Staff, the Directors-General Personnel and Economy and Finances, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and both coordinators of the steering committee for the Priorities White Paper. The meeting took place in a restaurant near Amersfoort.¹³⁹

The last two speakers that day were the Junior Minister and the Minister. The Junior Minister, Van Voorst tot Voorst, said that as far as he was concerned the conscription could be abolished. The Minister knew that Van Voorst tot Voorst would say: both men had talked about Van Voorst tot Voorst's contribution during the car trip to the meeting – and he looked relieved. Now it would be easier for him to announce his decision.¹⁴⁰ That decision still took some of the military by surprise. General Van der Vlis, the Chief of the Defence Staff, had not expected this. He went by the words spoken by the Minister in June. Apart from that, he did not talk to the Minister about the subject during the rest of the summer.¹⁴¹

On 1st of November 1992 the Chief of the Defence Staff realised that the matter of abolition had been decided. It was his colleague Hans Couzy, commander of the army since September 1992, who would make headlines in connection with the abolition. But before turning to this, the action of the military forces will be described chronologically.

5.7 Military leaders and the conscription issue

It is wrong to talk about 'the military forces' when analysing the process that led to the abolition of conscription in the Netherlands. Actually, it was foremost the Army that was concerned about the implications of abolition. Already at an early stage, around the creation of the Defence White Paper 1991, the navy and air force restrained from any

comment when it came to the subject. To those parts of the Armed Forces conscription was not vital, since conscripts manned only a small part of their respective organisations. Even during two important conferences about the Priorities Paper, on 13 May and 10 June 1992, they stayed out of the discussion about an army reform and the future of conscription. After all, every reduction of the Army plus new tasks out of the NATO-area could only be positive for their organisations. For this reason, only the Army and the defence staff will be taken into consideration in this part of the report.

When the Meijer-commission was established, it was obvious that the army would be most concerned when it came to matters of conscription. It was therefore not unusual that a former Army General, Huyser, became a member of that commission. He was not only an expert for the security analysis, but he was also an expert on army-matters.

The commission visited several garrisons, where they talked to hundreds of young conscripts and their superiors. The commission visited these places and talked to the soldiers to get an impression from the people who were directly involved and not only through books or senior officers. The commission needed the assistance of the army organisation for the visitations and interviews with 300 men and a large-scale opinion poll among 1500 men. Fifty army-places were appointed and were informed by the Director Personnel of the army. The latter urged the commanders of the different units to co-operate with the commission, '... because of the huge importance of the research of the commission.'¹⁴²

The commission's importance for the army also became obvious in the appointment of the Deputy Commander of the Army, General Couzy, who became Commander of the Army in September 1992, as liaison for the commission. His commander, General Wilmink, had appointed him to provide the commission with figures and models. The models were calculated by the staff-officers of the Deputy Commander and contained different scenarios for a future army. In January and March 1992 the General presented two models as serious options, the so-called maintenance model, model 3, and the abolition model, model 2. Those models were refined and represented during two conferences for the preparation of the Priorities White Paper to the Minister and the Chief of the Defence Staff on 13 May and 10 June 1992.¹⁴³

Modelling the future armed forces

The commission formulated the conditions for the models. The figures and numbers concerning the restructuring and reduction of the army as stated in the Defence White Paper served as point of departure, with up to 20% reductions of conscripts between 1991 and 1995. The same holds true for the financial resources. The models were to be calculated until 2001. For the army, the commission expected that 75% of the soldiers replacing conscripts would serve for two years and 25% would serve for four years (so called temporary professional soldiers - BBT). The volunteers should meet certain levels of education (not explicitly stated). These were the parameters the army had to use in all calculations.

When calculating the models, the Army added five conditions to the existing five of the commission:

1. They expected to have 23,000 positions for conscripts in 1996 and 18,000 in 2001;
2. They expected that 100% of the BBT would serve for two years, 25% of those would prolong their contract;
3. The basic military education had to be increased two to six months, since the BBT soldiers had to function immediately in their position;
4. After the service the BBTs' would have to serve twice in their active service time in the mobile reserve;
5. The average costs will be 59,000,- guilders per soldier.

Taking all conditions into consideration, the army came up with a requirement need of 9,200 recruits per year in case of abolition. A figure that was difficult to achieve, according to the labour market analysis of the appointed bureau 'Research voor Beleid' (described above).

	Model 3- Maintenance		Model 2 - Abolition	
Army Corps	Yes		No	
Division	2 (1 prepared/active and 1 mobilised)		1 (partially prepared/active)	
Crisis management	Quick deployment		Quick deployment, less capacity to relieve	
Bottleneck	Financial		Operational	
Yearly figures	Without conscript cadre	With conscript cadre	Recruiting 10000 PLC	Recruiting 5000 PLC
(Forced) leavers	5.000	3.500	6.500	9.500
Recruitment	5.000	3.500	10.000	5.000
Costs personnel*	+ 100	+ 100	+ 400	- 500
Costs social frame*	1.200	850	1.600	2.300
Conscripts	17.000	20.000		
Peacetime org.	46.000	47.000	43.500	29.000
Wartime org.	110.000	110.000	94.000	***

Table 9: Models compared. Sources: Answer Couzy to commission.¹⁴⁴ Introduction of the Minister of Defence for meeting with commission 18-06-1992,¹⁴⁵ note Reitsma 30-9-92.¹⁴⁶ PLC = Professionals with limited contracts (BBT = Beroeps Bepaalde Tijd); * In million guilders; ** their question mark

According to the calculations, the abolition model had more negative side effects than the maintenance model. Note the question mark in Table 9. One important uncertainty factor for the army had always been the recruitment of professional forces.¹⁴⁷ It appeared that for those calculations, the staff of the deputy commander of the army had used so many limiting conditions, that they could not come up with any attractive model without conscription. The limiting conditions seemed to be used in anticipation of the wishes of the Commander of the Army, General Wilmink. He was such a strong proponent of conscription that nobody dared to oppose his opinion.¹⁴⁸ One respondent stated: 'If the Commander in Chief of the Army has a dominant point of view, this penetrates the organisation.'¹⁴⁹

In spring 1992¹⁵⁰, one general in the staff of the army commander was convinced that giving some serious thought to the abolition of conscription was not so bad after all. General J.W. Brinkman was one of the 'young Turks' – young generals, like the Deputy Chief Defence Staff, Van den Breemen or the Army General R. Reitsma – whose roots were not so strongly connected with the Cold War as those of the Chiefs and Commanders. Brinkman, who was Deputy Chief Planning, was convinced that his commander was too stubborn when it came to the subject of conscription. Brinkman wrote a note to General Wilmink. In that note he stated that it would be difficult to uphold conscription. He stated up three reasons. Firstly, Brinkman pointed to the fundamental and structural change of the strategic military situation in Europe. Now the old threat 'close to home' had disappeared, conscription had become obsolete. Secondly, Brinkman argued that society's support for conscription was in decline. Thirdly, he wondered whether conscription would still be effective from a management point of view. He demonstrated that the calculated mix model led to differences in payment and that it would be disputable if the long military preparation periods for the conscript part would still be valid. Brinkman was afraid that the army staff would not give enough thought to the possibility of an all-voluntary army, although the process would lead ultimately in that direction. The actual models 2 and 3 were too short sighted and they would cause too many negative effects in the long run, if abolition would be a fact.

Brinkman presented the note to his direct superior Couzy, Director Operations, who recommended destroying it. Couzy saw the points of the note, but said: 'if you think that General Wilmink will change his opinion due to your note, you are naive. I know exactly what will happen: you will both quarrel. You're already fighting with General Wilmink. What exactly do you want?'¹⁵¹ Yet, Brinkman took it to his commander to open his eyes. General Wilmink reacted fiercely. He was so furious that from that moment on no one in the organisation dared to talk about the end of conscription either in public or to the Commander.¹⁵² It seemed that Wilmink feared that, once concrete plans for an all-volunteer army would exist, those plans would be implemented.¹⁵³ The Commander himself stated ten years later that he took this stand because he did not want any discussion as long as the Meijer-commission had been engaged. Furthermore, to Wilmink it was important that the Army had sufficient qualified personnel to fulfil its tasks.¹⁵⁴ At times, General Wilmink even pointed his subordinates to the fact that they should think and act more in favour of conscription. He repeatedly thought that Couzy was too honest to the commission. The General had answered every question of the commission quite openly, without always keeping the army's interests in mind.¹⁵⁵

One of the effects was that even potential collaborators, like the Defence Staff, knew that Wilmink opposed abolition very strongly, but sometimes they found it difficult to find out what the exact plans of the Commander in Chief of the Army really were. 'The army had been a sealed book' to the Defence Staff¹⁵⁶

The commander of the army was not the only strong supporter of conscription; the Chief Defence Staff was one too. Like his colleague, he committed himself to all models in favour of conscription. Whether it concerned a mixed model with one part of the forces for out-of-area tasks and one part for territorial defence, or a model that was closer to the existing situation. During the second conference, 10th June 1992, Wilmink presented the mixed model (model 3a). Van der Vlis was positive about the model and the Minister noticed that he, too, was a supporter of that model (see above). Van der

Vlis was a supporter of conscription because of the quality of the personnel and because he considered an all-volunteer force alien to the Netherlands.¹⁵⁷

The General talked about a lot of other issues that had to be discussed in the Priorities Paper with the top of the ministry, but not about conscription.¹⁵⁸ Van der Vlis admitted that the process took place without him: 'it was a political process, I was a military officer, and so I didn't do anything. There were others who did it.'¹⁵⁹ In his opinion he was unable to turn the pro-abolition stream. He was convinced that it had something to do with the *Nederland Inc.*, a phrase for Dutch pragmatism. The political stream was so dominant that a soldier had no possibility to stop it.¹⁶⁰

November 1st 1992, when the minister declared himself an abolitionist, was a very difficult day for Van der Vlis. Asked why he did not resign that day, he answered: 'to me the abolition was unpleasant. I explicitly opposed it. Yet, at that moment I had been Chief of the Defence Staff for just six months and there was a Priorities Paper to come. So, I concluded that resigning at that moment would be ineffective.'¹⁶¹

Contrary to General Van der Vlis, General Couzy had already expected the abolition, not at least because of his work for the commission.¹⁶² During the November conference in 1992, he immediately told the Minister that he needed five years to change the army into an all-volunteer force. The Minister did not want to discuss the issue with the General, since he was already convinced of that time schedule. "Don't preach to the converted" he replied to his Army Commander-in-Chief.¹⁶³ Yet, Couzy thought that he had to inform his organisation. He used the national newspaper *NRC* as a medium. In an article on 10 November he wrote that the Minister had decided to abolish the conscription and that the organisation would need five years for the transition process.

Neither the Minister nor his Secretary General was amused. The Minister wanted to talk about the issue three days later in the cabinet, and now Couzy's timing frustrated his own agenda. The Secretary General wanted to stop the publication, but Couzy refused using the argument that he wrote nothing in his article that was different from the Minister's opinion. In his view it was just supporting the Minister's policy.¹⁶⁴ The Secretary General of the ministry Patijn even forced Couzy to sign a declaration of loyalty, stating that he would not interfere in political matters.

The incident was once more proof to Couzy that the Minister was not interested in his opinion. He often felt that he had no direct access to the Minister and that the Minister's door was often closed for him.¹⁶⁵ The incident showed once more that the relationship between the political leadership and the Army Command was poor when it came to this paper's issue: conscription.

5.8 Cabinet politics

It seems that the Dutch cabinet had only twice explicitly discussed the issue of conscription, when the Defence White Papers 1991 and 1993 had been discussed.¹⁶⁶ Most ministers are so busy with their own portfolio that there is scarcely any discussion on the portfolio of the colleagues. Any likely differences are overcome on the level of civil servants and only if that does not work, is the issue put on the cabinets' agenda, as are important policy issues.

The conscription issue had been mentioned, for example, during a cabinet meeting held in the summer of 1991, when the conditions for the conscription commission had

been discussed. It was no hard-fought dispute, more a wish of some of the persons present, that the task of the conscription-commission should be extended to the issue of social conscription. That was a popular item, in particular among Christian Democratic politicians.¹⁶⁷ As early as 6 November 1990 Prime Minister Lubbers and the director of the 'Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau' (Social Cultural Planning Office – SCP), Van der Staay, talked about the armed forces and social conscription. On 19 December 1990 the director wrote a note to the Prime Minister, in which he stated that it was difficult to make a choice in favour of either military or social conscription purely based on financial calculations.¹⁶⁸ When the Meijer-commission accomplished its work, the aforementioned report found its way into the commission's files, as did a conclusion of several reports or talks on the subject.

In the end the issue of social conscription, also called civic duty, found its way into the annexe of the report as a reflection of the Social and Cultural Planning Office of the Netherlands. With it came the recommendation of the commission to start a broader investigation on the subject.¹⁶⁹ However, with the rejection of the report, that idea disappeared from the agenda as well, though the Prime Minister brought it up one last time: during the cabinet meeting on 13 November 1992.

A letter to the cabinet

The minister of Defence wrote a letter for that meeting that was a first draft of the Defence Priority White Paper 1993. After a short introduction, the letter stated: 'In anticipation of the White Paper we outline the future armed forces. Central to those outlines is our proposal to abandon – de facto – the draft and the related administrative procedures and to come gradually to all-volunteer armed forces. The conscription as such will not be abandoned. It may be that the draft needs to be re-activated in case of a renewed military threat. It is therefore necessary to continue the registration of young men, but not to have them medically, physically, and mentally examined. The plans will have severe implications for the Royal Army'.¹⁷⁰

The Minister referred to the two models calculated by the army (referred to in the section on the armed forces, above). He briefly emphasised the similarities of the two models and continued with the criteria necessary for a good judgement in favour of one of those models: were there enough guarantees that the army could be sent out of a NATO area? How many conscripts would be part of the army and would this be socially acceptable? Could enough personnel be recruited for all-volunteer armed forces? What were the financial implications of both models?

He continued that three considerations supported his choice for the all-volunteer model. He first referred to the usability of an army partially manned by conscripts. In that scenario he pointed to two flaws in the design. The training time was too short for conscripts, in particular if conscription would be brought down to nine months, and the problem of voluntary service abroad by conscripts. Though there were no constitutional limitations for the use of conscripts abroad, the Parliament – more or less – forced the government to accept that conscripts can refuse to go at the last moment. The suggestions of the Meijer-commission, to ask the conscripts to voluntarily go abroad at an early stage, during the medical examinations and the actual draft, offered no solution. Since such a 'declaration of willingness' would not be binding and could therefore not

be enforced. Even if it could be enforced, there was no guarantee that enough conscripts would volunteer, and – more importantly – even if they would, their training would be too short to use them in military demanding situations. It referred to the (aforementioned) Frinking motion of 1988. This motion hampered a probable Dutch participation in the Balkans, where an international solution under the United Nations flag was increasingly considered as an option.

The second consideration was the societal acceptance of conscription. The Minister estimated that, in view of the declining figures of the acceptance since the 1950s, the acceptance of conscription would reach an all-time low of 27% by 2000. Reducing the actual period of service to nine months, together with the decline of a levy to 90,000 men, of whom only 18,000 would have to serve, would not stop the loss of legitimacy. Yet, there would only partially be a conscript army, since the ratio volunteers-conscripts would fall to 39% in 2000, compared to 63% in 1990. Adding to the argument that the maintenance model with its mix of conscripts and volunteers would lead to a two-class army, where the volunteers would do the dangerous peace-enforcing, while the conscripts would do the less risky peace-keeping and humanitarian jobs, he stated the legitimacy would decline even further. According to the Minister a percentage below 27% would have been acceptable during the Cold War, but not in times when the Dutch territory was not endangered directly. He referred also to the unasked reaction of the Societal Council for the Armed Forces (MRK) on the Meijer-commission's report, which supported his argument.¹⁷¹

The last consideration the Minister referred to was the cost. Further reductions of costs would make it difficult to uphold an army where only 15,600 positions would be filled by conscripts and where, at the same time, minimal standards for crisis management had to be met.¹⁷² It had become obvious in the cabinet meeting one week before, on 6 November 1992, that further reductions had to be made. The cabinet agreed on further cuts in the general 1993 budget of 2,75 billion guilders. The Defence budget had to be cut too,¹⁷³ originally by 667 million guilders, but after Ter Beek's threat to resign, the figure was brought back to 380 million guilders.¹⁷⁴

The Minister admitted that there would be some insecurity¹⁷⁵ regarding the recruitment of volunteers, but he rejected the conclusions of the Meijer-commission, that the armed forces would be unable to recruit enough professional soldiers. According to Ter Beek, the commission had put too much emphasis on actual circumstances in its calculations, had assumed an unchanged policy, and a specific size of the forces. The Minister estimated that the army needed to recruit 6,000 volunteers per year.¹⁷⁶ He continued that the difficulties in recruiting new personnel could be overcome by more flexible employment contracts and a more effective recruiting policy. If necessary, the primary and secondary working conditions had to be improved. The Minister concluded with some thoughts about the imminent transition period. He appealed to his colleagues to approve his plans, also because of the need of clear signals towards the military personnel.

As already indicated in the operationalisation sections of this study, the minutes of cabinet meetings in the Netherlands remain classified for 25 years. For that reason, it is almost impossible to give an exact account of the actual debate within cabinet meetings. Yet, it seems that at least Lubbers and Van den Broek were still arguing against abolition.¹⁷⁷ It is, however, difficult to reconstruct the quality of their arguments or the commitment within their argumentation.

After the cabinet meeting of 13 November 1992 Prime Minister Lubbers said that the cabinet had not taken any decision, but he indicated that the cabinet was considering a gradual abolition.¹⁷⁸ It was a 'de facto' abolition, since the conscripts would not be drafted anymore, as the Dutch newspaper *De Volkskrant* already knew on 19 November 1992. That it was not a 'de jure' abolition was due to the difficulty of changing the constitution and the last resistance against abolition. Not the least in Parliament.

During the debate about the defence budget 1993, on 26 November 1992, Defence Minister Ter Beek repeated most of the arguments he had already put forward in the cabinet meeting of 13 November 1992. The Minister recognised that there were still open questions with regard to a possible change of the Dutch constitution. He promised to put that question forward to the 'Raad van State' (the Council of the State), the highest law-making advise body.¹⁷⁹

A second point that came to the fore during this debate was the criticism NATO might have on the Dutch plans to downsize and to 'de facto' abolish conscription. This, together with the de-prioritisation of the common defence, might endanger the classical deterrence and defence capabilities of the alliance. The opposition parties VVD and D'66 asked for an extra debate to discuss the criticism by NATO and by the soldier unions as reported in the media. The debate took place on 14 December 1992. This debate, however, had been de-politicised by a meeting between Ter Beek and the Secretary General of NATO, Wörner, whereby the Dutch Minister had been able to convince the Secretary General that an extra brigade should be retained.¹⁸⁰ However, afterwards, it seemed that the criticism by NATO, especially on postponing the draft, had not been so harsh as the media coverage and the reactions by the oppositional parties might have suggested.¹⁸¹ There is reason to believe that the opponents of abolition had slightly exaggerated the criticism by NATO.¹⁸²

One week after the cabinet decided to change towards all-volunteer forces, the Meijer-commission, which still worked on some minor issues concerning the draft, resigned. It was newsworthy, yet of no high importance. Once the decision had been made to postpone the draft, the issue seldom reached the news. Even the final lawmaking procedure and some constitutional quarrels about the issue, whether to change the Constitution or not, was barely news anymore. In general, it is difficult to prove a causal relation between news coverage and public opinion or political stream. In the case of conscription in the Netherlands, it appears that the news followed the events in politics. The peaks in the news coverage were around important political moments, such as the March 1992 speech of the Minister of Defence and the presentation of the report of the Meijer-commission. It is difficult, too, to decide exactly at which moment certain issues were placed on the agenda. Conscription in the Netherlands was a recurring issue in the news. This often concerned former members of the army, whether or not conscripts, who commented pro or con abolition, mainly because of personal experiences. There seems to be one exception. Many respondents, who were interviewed for this study, could remember the first article by Frinking MP (above) from March 1990 that put the issue on the political agenda. Though societal, military and political representatives expressed their opinions on the subject in the papers, it is fair to state that the discussion about conscription was not a public hot issue.

5.9 Priorities White Paper and conscription in Parliament

The making of the Priorities White Paper

Due to the fast changes within the security environment of the Netherlands, the Dutch Parliament, during the consultations about the Defence White Paper on 10 June 1991, approved a motion that obliged the government to evaluate this Paper within two years. The first preparations of this evaluation paper had started as early as November 1991. It would exceed the range of this study to elaborate in depth on the subject, yet it is necessary to give at least a short overview of the process and the main results of that Paper, since the drafting of the Paper and the conscription issue are closely connected.

In contrast to the White Paper 1991 the evaluation had taken place in small circles. The Defence Minister was very influential this time, not in the last place by taking the lead with his (already discussed) NGIZ speech. Another contributing factor to the influence of the Minister was the minor role of the defence council, a deliberate choice by Ter Beek. While influential during the making of the White Paper 1991, this council had been marginalised during the evaluation, where small ad-hoc circles were more important.¹⁸³ Different from the first plans, the evaluation did not become part of the explanatory memorandum to the defence budget, but a White Paper in its own right, called Priorities White Paper in a later stage. Ter Beek stated the work of the Meijer-commission, which lasted until the end of September 1992, as an important reason for this.¹⁸⁴

Being well-seasoned by his experiences during the making of the White Paper 1991 - the defence council had turned out to be a debating club that slowed down decision-making - the Minister of Defence appointed a small steering commission with two coordinators. One coordinator was Van den Breemen, Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff, and the other was Barth, Director Policy Affairs and close bureaucratic advisor of the Minister. Van den Breemen turned out to be an influential actor, the more so in May 1992 when the Chief of the Defence Staff, General De Graaff, retired. Van der Vlis, who needed some time to settle in his job, succeeded him. The other members of the steering commission were the political top of the ministry, the Secretary General and the Chief of the Defence Staff. The functional directors and the Commanders-in-Chief of the different forces had been consulted face-to-face by Ter Beek only when necessary. Working with confidants and in small circles – even with parliamentarians – became the preferred style of the Defence Minister.¹⁸⁵

The Priorities White Paper

On 12 January 1993 the Minister of Defence Ter Beek and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, P. Kooijmans - since January 1 1993 the successor of Van den Broek - presented the Priority Defence White Paper 1993. In this paper, they announced that 'the government had decided to 'de facto' abolish the draft or to postpone it...'¹⁸⁶ The government decided in this way against the recommendations of the Meijer-commission. Though it

acknowledged the importance and gravity of the idealistic arguments pro conscription, it argued that several practical and pragmatic considerations had been decisive:¹⁸⁷

- Professional armed forces would facilitate the operational use of the army. The conscript training system with its soldiers partially on leave and partially training within the unit would not be suited for crisis management.
- Conscripts could only be sent outside the NATO area for crisis management tasks on a voluntary base.
- Due to downsizing of the armed forces and the ongoing transition from tasks traditionally fulfilled by conscripts towards professional soldiers, a process already started years before, the percentage of conscripts compared to the annual levy would decline below the limit acceptable to the government.
- Considering the data available, the government would expect to recruit sufficient volunteers.
- A conscript army could be larger, yet, in the long run this would be at the expense of necessary modernisation investments.

The government planned the transition from conscript to all-volunteer forces to be finished by 1 January 1998, a period of almost five years.

Apart from conscription, this evaluation was about setting priorities for the future armed forces within a changed security environment. Other important issues were:

- A security analysis. The most important conclusion was that a large-scale conflict could not be excluded, but that new security risks came to the fore, in particular small-scale conflicts in the (Middle)-East.
- Shift of tasks. Due to the new forms of conflicts, the tasks of the armed forces had to shift from a merely territorial defence to crisis management.¹⁸⁸
- International cooperation. Due to the downsizing several brigades became obsolete, which in turn jeopardised the army corps structure. This would only make sense with sufficient brigades. This is why the Dutch forces have strived for more international cooperation, like the German/Dutch army corps.¹⁸⁹

Postponing the draft vs. abolishing conscription

One of the recurring issues in the debate on conscription was the necessary change of the Dutch constitution. The legal experts quarrelled whether the Constitution was allowing abolition of conscription with or without change. Even the possibility of having the draft postponed had been subject to legal debates. For a long time, it looked that this administrative procedure needed constitutional revision, too. A change of Constitution, however, is complicated in the Netherlands. It requires a qualified majority in Parliament, which has to be dissolved and then needs to agree on the change after new elec-

tions. It is not only procedurally complicated but it is also considered a tool, which should be used wisely.

As early as the first internal policy papers and advice, the civil servants and legal advisors of the ministry of Defence were convinced that a change of constitution was necessary to abandon conscription. Even the formula 'postponing the draft' requested constitutional clarification. Introduced to convince the last sceptics and opponents, it also served for many reformers as a tool with which to arrive at all-volunteer forces, without complicated constitutional debates.¹⁹⁰

However, the political calculation that achievement of postponement might be reached in an easier way seemed to be thwarted by a legal advice of the Council of State of 29 April 1993. As part of the law making process, the Council had given advice after a request by the government. This, in turn followed the advice of the Meijer-commission, which recommended in its report to request the Council of State to formulate an advice, in case conscription might be abandoned in the future.¹⁹¹ It concentrated solely on the question if the draft could be abandoned or postponed, not conscription and military duty as such. The council concluded that the plans of the government were incompatible with the constitutional article 98.1 stating: 'Armed forces exist for the protection of the state's interests. They consist of voluntarily serving personnel and conscripts.'¹⁹² Therefore, the council recommended a change of the constitution, politically the least feasible option.

Reasons were amongst others:

- 1) In view of the dual character of the expression '... for the protection of the state's interests', i.e. on the one hand, security for the state, on the other hand, duty for the citizen, the binding element for the citizen is not decisive when answering the question if abandoning or postponing the draft is compatible with the constitution.¹⁹³ In other words: the state's interests come first.
- 2) Conscripts, parallel to volunteers, have continuously been part of the armed forces since the introduction of constitutional rule in 1887. It therefore never presented a discrepancy between reality and constitutional rules.¹⁹⁴
- 3) The council concludes that the phrase '... consisting of ...' ordains the use of conscripts in the armed forces. In other words: a 'de jure' abandoning or postponement of the draft leads to a 'de facto' abandoning of conscription. This is against the constitution.¹⁹⁵

Therefore, the council concluded that a constitutional change would be necessary. It would pass the issue on to the Second Chamber, i.e. the legislator.

Legislative consultations

On 13 and 17 May 1993, the Parliamentary Defence Commission debated about the Priority White Paper.¹⁹⁶ In this debate the Minister of Defence indicated that the government was willing to prepare a change of the constitution regarding the planned aban-

doning or postponement of the draft, as recommended by the Council of the State. The exact content of the proposal had yet to be decided: whether to solely change the binding character of article 98.1, which states that the Dutch armed forces have to have conscripts, or to go for a broader change of the constitution.¹⁹⁷ The Minister urged the commission (and thus Parliament) not to delay the debate until the cabinet reached a conclusion, since postponing the draft was an important part of the Priority White Paper. He even threatened to resign, if a delay meant that a decision would not be taken before autumn.¹⁹⁸ In the end, the commission decided to postpone its own debate until 17 May 1993 in order to digest the exact content of the advice of the Council of State.

The debate on 17 May already indicated that the decision, taken by the government and demanded by a majority of Parliament, was still difficult to decide and implement. The Minister was not in favour of the suggestion of some parliamentarians to abolish conscription and re-activate it a few years later, if the recruiting figures would not meet the demand. This, the Minister said, would contribute to uncertainty within the armed forces.¹⁹⁹

There were reasonable doubts if the Minister's move - to follow the advice of the Council of State - had been the right one, not only in Parliament, but also among constitutional experts. This constitutional discussion had been part of the debate since the recommendation by the Meijer-commission of a constitutional change.²⁰⁰ The fact, however, that the Minister of Defence put the issue to the Council of State did not necessarily mean that he had to follow its advice. The constitutional expert E. Jurgens (MP PvdA) even blamed the Minister for having no backbone. According to Jurgens the advice was biased, since it put too much emphasis on the situation of one hundred years ago, when article 98.1 had been added. Above all, Jurgens continued, it is only an *advice* from the Council. 'Don't forget that the legislation, government and parliament determine the interpretation of the constitution. ... If the majority of cabinet and Parliament considers the abolition of the draft not contradicting the constitution, than this explanation is decisive.'²⁰¹

In the end Ter Beek received broad support for his Priority White paper, though at first it seemed that the coalition partner CDA wanted to play a hard game about a fifth brigade in readiness.²⁰² Above all: Ter Beek succeeded to get broad support by Parliament to strive for the abolition or postponement of the draft by starting a (time consuming) constitutional change according to the advice of the Council of State. One commentator analysed it correctly, when he stated: 'to Ter Beek the advice of the Council of State that for the abolition of the draft the constitution had to be changed might come as a blessing, since a constitutional change is very time consuming ...'²⁰³

In the end, the constitution was changed on 10 July 1995 and 29 March 1996. The government followed the advice of the Council of State and changed, amongst others, article 98 into: '1. The armed forces shall consist of volunteers and may also include conscripts. 2. Compulsory military service and the power to defer the call-up to active service shall be regulated by Act of Parliament.'²⁰⁴ With this phrase the imperative of having conscripts had been removed. When the debate on the Priority White Paper in May 1993 took place, Ter Beek indeed gained time and political peace that enabled him to gain wide support for his broad reform of the Dutch armed forces of which the postponement of the draft was an important part.

Notes

- ¹ Compare De Graaff 2002: 15
- ² De Graaff 2002: 15
- ³ De Graaff 2002: 15
- ⁴ De Graaff 2002: 15; compare also Van Brouwershaven 1999: 303-305
- ⁵ De Graaff 2002: 7
- ⁶ All Van Brouwershaven 1999: 318-319
- ⁷ De Graaff 2002: 15-16, Brouwershaven 1999: 209
- ⁸ ‘Van wankel evenwicht naar versterkte defensieorganisatie. Advies van de Adviescommissie Opperbevelhebberschap’ Den Haag, 19 april 2002, hier Deel A ‘Een verkenning van de ontwikkeling, ...’ pag 2
- ⁹ hier Deel A ‘Een verkenning van de ontwikkeling, ...’ pag 3
- ¹⁰ hier Deel A ‘Een verkenning van de ontwikkeling, ...’ pag 4
- ¹¹ hier Deel A ‘Een verkenning van de ontwikkeling, ...’ pag 4
- ¹² The election programs of most of the parliamentary parties scarcely mentioned the subject. Their view on the subject was commonplace, often at the end of the program. Social, financial, and environmental issues prevailed.
- ¹³ Before that time, articles, often written by active serving conscripts or scientists, had been published periodically in the media about the abolition of conscription without triggering a public debate.
- ¹⁴ ‘Inkrimping van de krijgsmacht maakt dienstplicht overbodig’, *Volkskrant* 15-03-1990
- ¹⁵ Actually, many respondents remembered that article as a starting point for the political debate.
- ¹⁶ ‘Dienstplicht opheffen? Vrijwilligers garanderen geen kwaliteit’, *Vrije Volk* 12-04-1990
- ¹⁷ ‘Dienstplicht moet leger verbinden met samenleving’ *Volkskrant* 02-05-1990, ex-chairman of the VVDM, Robert Zaal
- ¹⁸ ‘Bij demilitarisering Europa past afschaffing dienstplicht’, *Trouw* 05-07-1990, Andree van Es (MP, Groen Links (Green Left) and Tom van der Lee (assistant to the parliamentary fraction of Groen Links)
- ¹⁹ ‘Vrouwen maken Dienstplicht zinvoller’ *Trouw* 17-02-1990
- ²⁰ Rick van der Ploeg in *Volkskrant* 02-05-1990
- ²¹ ‘Onze jongens. Dienstplichtigen willen geen beroepsleger’ *Elsevier* 03-02-1990, ‘Ruim helpt beroeps-militairen voor afschaffing dienstplicht’, *Nederlands Dagblad* 25-04-1990
- ²² Staatssecretaris in *Trouw* 30-01-1990, Ton Frinking in *Volkskrant* 30-03-1990
- ²³ ‘Ter Beek houdt voorlopig vast aan dienstplicht’ *Volkskrant* 23-01-1991
- ²⁴ ‘Ter Beek: Dienstplicht hoort bij sociaal-democratie’, *Trouw* 08-06-1991
- ²⁵ ‘Denken over DP (1) en (2)’, *Trouw* 12-04-1991
- ²⁶ Dutch Defence White Paper 1991: 9
- ²⁷ Brouwershaven 1999: 141
- ²⁸ Haltiner 1998: 6 [Armed forces and society]
- ²⁹ All figures 1991, Dataset Haltiner 1998 [not published]; ‘The Conscript Ratio indicates the degree of which the armed forces recruit their conscripts or volunteers, respectively, and is thus of central importance for the characterisation of the organisational structure of the military organisation’, Haltiner 1998: 6, Armed Forces and Society
- ³⁰ Van Brouwershaven 1999: 171
- ³¹ Van Brouwershaven 1999: 159
- ³² Van Brouwershaven 1999: 163
- ³³ Vaste commissie voor defensie, 10 juni 1991, UCV 51, p. 51-70, my translation: “De heer Van Traa (PvdA): Wil de minister van Buitenlandse Zaken nu zeggen, dat hij zijn portefeuille op tafel legt, als er nog een cent af gaat? Minister Van den Broek: Wie praat daarover? De heer Van Traa (PvdA): U zegt dat het bijna onaanvaardbaar is geworden en dat dat absoluut niet meer kan. Laten wij het even terugbrengen tot de normale proporties. Minister Van den Broek: Gun mij mijn eigen taalgebruik. Eén ding staat vast: de Defensienota wordt ingetrokken bij verdergaande bezuinigingen. Wat dat voor het kabinet kan betekenen, kunt u wel raden. Minister Ter Beek: Voor wat er met Je Defensienota gebeurt, ben ik natuurlijk in de eerste plaats verantwoordelijk! De heer Weisglas (VVD): Mag ik even

- weten wie van de twee bewindslieden in de laatste halve minuut namens de regering heeft gesproken?
Dat lijkt mij nuttig te weten, zo vijf voor elf 's avonds.
- ³⁴ Vaste commissie voor defensie, 10 juni 1991, UCV 51, p. 51-70
- ³⁵ Interview Hillen
- ³⁶ See for that the historical analysis above
- ³⁷ Interview Zijlstra
- ³⁸ Brouwershaven 1999
- ³⁹ Interview Kreemers
- ⁴⁰ Compare for the political difficulties Lucardie, Nieboer & Noomen 1991: 43
- ⁴¹ Interview Ter Beek
- ⁴² Interview Zijlstra
- ⁴³ Aantekening voor minister, CAD-MvD, Archief Commissie Dienstplicht deel I, map 1-7, d.d. 8 December 1990
- ⁴⁴ Aantekening voor minister, CAD-MvD, Archief Commissie Dienstplicht deel I, map 1-8, d.d. 7 May 1991
- ⁴⁵ Handwritten notes by members of the ministry (CAD-MvD, Archief Commissie Dienstplicht Deel I map 1-10) and interview Mazel.
- ⁴⁶ Interview Ter Beek
- ⁴⁷ Aantekening bestemd voor de minister, CAD-MvD Archief Commissie Dienstplicht deel I, map 1-8, d.d. 17 April 1991. Quotation mark in original.
- ⁴⁸ Aantekening bestemd voor de minister, CAD-MvD Archief Commissie Dienstplicht deel I, map 1-10, 27 August 1991
- ⁴⁹ All: Toespraak van de minister van Defensie ter gelegenheid van de instelling van de Commissie Dienstplicht, 30 September 1991, p. 3-10. Page 6 (legervormingssysteem en mobilisatiesysteem) and on page 7, my translation of: "Het is echter evident dat de maatschappelijke aanvaarding van de dienstplicht in de samenleving wordt beïnvloed door de perceptie van de internationale veiligheidssituatie en door het daaraan gekoppelde beeld over de taakstelling van de krijgsmacht. De ontwikkelingen in de internationale veiligheidssituatie voltrekken zich nu razendsnel. Dat vraagt van de commissie een open oog hiervoor, want haar advies zal ook geschraagd moeten zijn door een zorgvuldige interpretatie van deze ontwikkelingen". CAD-MvD, Archief Commissie Dienstplicht, d.d. 30-09-1991
- ⁵⁰ Toespraak van de heer W. Meijer, voorzitter van de Commissie Dienstplicht, bij de installatie van de Commissie op 30 september 1991, p. 1-2, CAD-MvD, deel 1, Map 1-3, Archief Commissie Dienstplicht, d.d. 30-09-1991
- ⁵¹ Meijer speech 30 September 1991, p. 6, my translation: '... denk ik dat ik dat wij een wellicht beslissende stap verder dienen te gaan dan onze voorgangers. Sinds de Tweede Wereldoorlog heeft in ons land de dienstplicht als maatschappelijke plicht nog nooit zó fundamenteel ter discussie gestaan.' CAD-MvD, Archief Commissie Dienstplicht, d.d. 30-09-1991
- ⁵² 'Dienstplicht bestaat niet lang meer. Kamer voorziet afschaffen binnen 5 jaar' *Telegraaf* 27-11-1991
- ⁵³ Compare Chapter 4:
- ⁵⁴ 'Soldatenbonden niet eens over dienstplicht,' *Trouw* 04-12-1991
- ⁵⁵ Interview Van Montfrans, compare also interview Jager; minutes of the commission, CAD-MvD, Archief Commissie Dienstplicht Deel I Map 1-10
- ⁵⁶ Interview Voorhoeve
- ⁵⁷ Compare: Letter deputy Secretary General to Minister and Junior Minister, 7 May 1991 [CAD-MvD, Archief Commissie Dienstplicht Deel I Map 1-8, d.d. 20 June 1991] (here changes according to motion Parliament 10 June) [CAD-MvD, MinDef dossier D90/291-5], Letter Secretary General to Meijer, [CAD-MvD, MinDef dossier D90/291-5, d.d. 3 July 1991]; Minutes conversation Secretary General, deputy Secretary General and chairman of commission to be, [CAD-MvD, Archief Commissie Dienstplicht Deel I Map 1-8, d.d. 10 July 1991]
- ⁵⁸ Schoonoord and De Wijk 1994
- ⁵⁹ This research will be presented elaborately in the appendix
- ⁶⁰ The commission placed an advertisement in the 'Staatscourant' (Government Gazette) and different magazines of the armed forces asking the public for its opinion about conscription. Besides from different individuals it received written reactions from the MRK, AFMP and KNVRO. Additionally they

- interviewed the Commander of the 1st Army Corps and the Commander of the Corps Marines on January 29th and 30th 1992, with representatives of the AVNM and VVDM on 14th May 1992 and the members of the commission visited several garrisons and interviewed up to 300 conscripts about their opinion. Additionally the commission contracted an opinion poll out among 1649 active serving conscripts and 1000 men between 27 and 32 years of which one half had served and one did not. Compare for that the report of the commission, pp.28-39
- ⁶¹ Compare the 'Afdelings-Bestuursvergaderingen' in April and May 1990. Archives of the AVNM: AB-vergadering 26 April 1990 (AB/90/049), AB-vergadering 31 Mei 1990 (AB/90/058), Archives of the International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam
- ⁶² The commission also talked to the commander of the Corps Marines, who answered that it is of no importance for his organisation whether to uphold conscription, since only few units were filled with conscripts.
- ⁶³ Report Commissie Dienstplicht 1992: 36
- ⁶⁴ Report Commissie Dienstplicht 1992: 39f.
- ⁶⁵ CAD-MvD, Archief Commissie Dienstplicht Deel 1 map 9, 7^e vergadering, d.d. 1 april 1992, my translation: 'De nadere toelichting in uw speech brengt de voortzetting van de werkzaamheden van de commissie in de problemen. Immers, de commissie heeft zich tot dusver gebaseerd op kennelijk inmiddels achterhaalde uitgangspunten, zonder inzicht te hebben in de consequenties van uw thans gekozen doelstelling. Teneinde haar werkzaamheden te kunnen voortzetten heeft de commissie dringend behoefte om op korte termijn te vernemen welke uitgangspunten zij daarbij dient te hanteren.'
- ⁶⁶ Handout voor de minister, CAD-MvD, Ministerie van Defensie, DS, dossier 92/315, p. 3f.
- ⁶⁷ Handout voor de minister, CAD-MvD, Ministerie van Defensie, DS, dossier 92/315, p. 6-7. Original text: "Ik wil benadrukken dat de modellen niet als definitief moeten worden beschouwd. Binnen het departement vindt nog altijd nader onderzoek plaats. Ik heb dan ook nog geen standpunten ingenomen of voorkeuren aangegeven."
- ⁶⁸ Van Brouwershaven 1999: 203
- ⁶⁹ 10 April 1992, the speech was not available, yet in the part A controversial speech: political reactions several newspaper articles will be quoted from that day including an interview in which the Minister of Foreign Affairs states his opinion.
- ⁷⁰ Rapport commissie-Meijer plus achtergrondbundel
- ⁷¹ Compare minutes 11th session of commission (CAD-MvD, Archief Commissie Dienstplicht, Vergaderingen deel 1, map 11 (11^e vergadering))
- ⁷² Report Commissie Dienstplicht, page 130
- ⁷³ Report Commissie Dienstplicht, p. 130-131, translation JEN
- ⁷⁴ Interview Voorhoeve
- ⁷⁵ Interview Voorhoeve
- ⁷⁶ Interview Van Montfrans
- ⁷⁷ Interview Huyser
- ⁷⁸ Interview Jager
- ⁷⁹ Interview Huyser
- ⁸⁰ *Telegraaf* 22-09-1992 'Commissie wil niet van dp af. Advies Meijer: 9 maanden dienen. Soldaten: Zonde'
- ⁸¹ Though there had obviously been no clear unanimity within the CDA parliamentary group. Hillen and Frinking seemed to have taken action without prior consultations of the whole group. Anonymous interview
- ⁸² Interview Hillen
- ⁸³ 'De dienstplicht blijft en wordt negen maanden. Geheim advies', *Vrij Nederland* 26-09-1992
- ⁸⁴ Interview Mazel
- ⁸⁵ Interviews with Frinking and Zijlstra
- ⁸⁶ *Volkscrant* 29-9-1992: 'Ruime kamermeerderheid blijft voor afschaffing dienstplicht'; *Algemeen Dagblad* 29-9-1992: 'Bezwaren tegen afschaffing dienstplicht snijden geen hout'; *Trouw*: 'Dienstplicht moet leuker gemaakt'
- ⁸⁷ 'Bezwaren tegen afschaffing dienstplicht snijden geen hout', *Algemeen Dagblad* 29-9-1992
- ⁸⁸ See above

- ⁸⁹ Ter Beek 1996: 135, my translation: 'Er zijn rechten in ons land, maar ook plichten. Dat weegt zwaar voor mij en toen geloofde ik in de onverdraagbare juistheid van de algemene dienstplicht, die geen onderscheid maakt tussen de zoon van een arbeider en de zoon van een president directeur.' Compare also: 'Ter Beek: Dienstplicht hoort bij sociaal-democratie', *Trouw* 08-06-1991
- ⁹⁰ Interview Ter Beek and CAD-MvD, Ministerie van Defensie nummer 3614/91, d.d. 03-09-1991 Nota bestemd voor departementaal beraad plus 'Concept Taakstelling en Plan van Aanpak' Commissie Dienstplicht
- ⁹¹ Speech Ter Beek 31-3-1992: 37
- ⁹² Ter Beek 1996, interview Ter Beek, Speech Ter Beek 31-3-1992: 42
- ⁹³ Interview Ter Beek
- ⁹⁴ Letter Van den Broek to Ter Beek 01-04-1992, quoted in De Graaff 2002: 12
- ⁹⁵ Letter Van den Broek to Ter Beek 01-04-1992. Van den Broek also referred to Ter Beek's actions without prior notice concerning new instructions for military attachés, self-appointed visits in foreign countries neglecting diplomatic rules and military visits abroad without allowing diplomats to join the delegation.
- ⁹⁶ Interview in *Vrij Nederland*, quoted in 'Van den Broek neemt afstand van Ter Beek' *NRC* 10-04-1992
- ⁹⁷ 'Van den Broek neemt afstand van analyse Ter Beek' *Volkskrant* 11-04-1992; 'Van den Broek geeft Ter Beek veeg uit de pan' *Algemeen Dagblad* 11-04-1992
- ⁹⁸ 'Van den Broek zet de binnenhelm alvast op' *Volkskrant* 11-04-1992
- ⁹⁹ Interviews Hilderink, De Wijk
- ¹⁰⁰ Letter Van den Broek to Ter Beek 06-04-1992, p. 3-4
- ¹⁰¹ 'Einde dienstplicht betekent ook het einde van de VVDM. Bond niet tegen afschaffing' *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden* 03-04-1992
- ¹⁰² "'Wij zijn bij inkrimping een makkelijk doel.'" Officieren woedend op minister Ter Beek' *Haagsche Courant* 02-04-1992
- ¹⁰³ Interviews Couzy, Van der Vlis, Wilmink
- ¹⁰⁴ "'Ik heb de redelijkheid aan mijn zijde, de argumenten'". Ter Beek waarschuwt tegen optimisme over snelheid en kostenbesparing van afslanking defensieapparaat' *Volkskrant* 04-04-1992
- ¹⁰⁵ 'Oud-chef defensiestaf veegt vloer aan met plan Ter Beek' *Utrechts Nieuwsblad* 04-04-1992; 'Meneer Ter Beek, de krijgsmacht is geen padvinderij' *Leeuwaarder Courant* 06-04-1992
- ¹⁰⁶ Interview Ter Beek
- ¹⁰⁷ Interview Kreemers
- ¹⁰⁸ The Dutch term is 'Uitgangspuntenbrief'
- ¹⁰⁹ Interview Ter Beek
- ¹¹⁰ Interview Jager
- ¹¹¹ Ter Beek 1996, interview Ter Beek. This story appears to be a myth. Whether it is true or not, fact is that Ter Beek must have changed his opinion after April 2nd and before November 1st 1992. The most probable date for a definite change seems to be at the end of September 1992.
- ¹¹² Interview Barth
- ¹¹³ Anonymous interview, Ter Beek 1996, compare also De Graaff 2002: 19f.
- ¹¹⁴ All interview Kreemers
- ¹¹⁵ Interview Couzy
- ¹¹⁶ Interview De Winter
- ¹¹⁷ The memories of the three actors are not synchronised on that point. Ter Beek and Barth thought that they met more often, De Winter can only recollect one meeting
- ¹¹⁸ He was fond of using ten points. Once he used nine points in a speech for his former boss De Ruyter in the 1980s, who told him that it would be nicer to use ten. Using points instead of a coherent text was a rhetoric device. According to De Winter it made writing easier.
- ¹¹⁹ Interview Barth
- ¹²⁰ Interview Barth
- ¹²¹ Interviews De Winter and Barth
- ¹²² Interview De Winter
- ¹²³ Anonymous interview
- ¹²⁴ Interview Van der Vlis

- ¹²⁵ Interview Ter Beek
- ¹²⁶ Interview Schoonoord
- ¹²⁷ De Winter 1992: 3
- ¹²⁸ De Winter 1992: 4. Indeed, in the explanatory memorandum, from 15 September 1992, the minister stated, that the world changed more quickly and more dramatically than was foreseen in the Defence White Paper 1991. He recognised that he could not ignore the Meijer-commissions' report to come, yet, that there were some broad orientations serving as a guide for the evaluation of the Defence White Paper 1991, similar to the NGIZ speech. Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 1992-1993, 22800 hoofdstuk X, nr. 1
- ¹²⁹ Interview De Winter
- ¹³⁰ I.e., the Minister, the Junior Minister, the Secretary General, the Chief Defence Staff, one of the co-ordinators of the Priority Paper, General Van den Breemen (also Vice Chief Defence Staff), and the other co-ordinator of the Priority Paper - Barth.
- ¹³¹ Interview Barth
- ¹³² It is, indeed, interesting to know who leaked the note-De Winter. An investigation by the military police a few days later could not find out exactly who did it, yet there are guesses that it was a supporter of abolition. However, no evidence whatsoever could be found for that.
- ¹³³ Letter to the Minister, CAD-MvD, Ministerie van Defensie DS dossier S 92/315, omslag C215, d.d. 6 oktober 1992. '... [D]e commissie heeft haar taak vervuld op basis van informatie van het ministerie. Zij heeft erop vertrouwd dat die informatie correct is. Het kan niet zo zijn dat de commissie wordt verweten geen rekening te hebben gehouden met gegevens die haar niet bekend zijn gesteld. ... Als er nu onderdelen van het ministerie van mening zijn dat hun visie of belangen onvoldoende door de commissie zijn meegewogen, zou het dienstig zijn geweest wanneer dit eerder, bv. via de door u ingestelde begeleidingsgroep zou zijn gebeurd. De commissie acht toetsing van haar resultaat aan een niet gegeven opdracht met niet aan haar verstrekte gegevens door middel van niet door haar gemaakte keuzes op zijn minst onjuist. De commissie rekent erop dat u een en ander recht zult zetten ...'.
- ¹³⁴ The Minister's reply to Meijer, CAD-MvD, Ministerie van Defensie DS dossier S 92/315, omslag C215, d.d. 8 oktober 1992
- ¹³⁵ 'Advies tegen handhaving dienstplicht. Kritiek ambtenaren defensie' *NRC* 3-10-1992
- ¹³⁶ 'Ter Beek heeft al behoorlijk spijt van steun aan commissie-Meijer' *Volkskrant* 5-10-1992
- ¹³⁷ *Trouw* 3-10-1992
- ¹³⁸ Technically speaking the conscription was never abandoned. It still exists, yet, the conscripts are not drafted.
- ¹³⁹ Van Brouwershaven 1999: 207
- ¹⁴⁰ Interview Van Voorst tot Voorst
- ¹⁴¹ Interview Van der Vlis. The Minister doubts that version. On 3rd September 1992 he was at the home of General Van der Vlis for a dinner with General Huyser, member of the commission: during that dinner the Minister discussed with Huyser about the work of the commission. The Minister argued that the commission did not take up a clear position. According to the Minister's memory General Van der Vlis should have known the Minister's opinion. Huyser remembered that the Minister said 'Seen from a political point of view, for me the abolition of conscription is a fact.'
- ¹⁴² CAD-MvD, Semistatische Archieven, Centrale Dienst Personeel en Organisatie (CDPO), Circulaire BLS nr. KL 16929/C d.d. 16-03-1992 inzake onderzoek door de Commissie Dienstplicht
- ¹⁴³ The Navy and Air Force calculated models, too. Taking into account the reasons stated above, those models will be not presented here. Model 1 was based on the status quo with large armed forces with conscripts. (Van Brouwershaven 1999: 215) It was obviously not a real option, since it was not really discussed as an option.
- ¹⁴⁴ CAD-MvD, Semistatische Archieven, DOKL kab/5533/51.21, d.d. 9 juni 1992
- ¹⁴⁵ CAD-MvD, Ministerie van Defensie DS dossier 92/315
- ¹⁴⁶ CAD-MvD, Semistatische Archieven, CDPO, KL 17.322/2-P., d.d. 12 oktober 1992
- ¹⁴⁷ Interview Wilmink
- ¹⁴⁸ Couzy 1996, Van Brouwershaven 1999, interview Couzy
- ¹⁴⁹ Interview Reitsma

- ¹⁵⁰ The exact date is not certain. The document is without a date, but in it the General refers to an upcoming conference on 10th June 1992 (in castle Oud Wassenaar). That dates the document probably to mid May, begin June.
- ¹⁵¹ Interview Couzy
- ¹⁵² Couzy 1996, interview Couzy
- ¹⁵³ Interview Brinkman. Yet, Van Brouwershaven points to a similar strategy during the making of the 1991 Defence White Paper, though the reasons had been slightly different: they 'did not publish voluntarily the internal calculated negative scenarios or reduction plans, since they did not believe in free thinking 1999: 163
- ¹⁵⁴ Interview Wilmink
- ¹⁵⁵ Interview Couzy. That Couzy was open and interested is supported by members of the commission (Montfrans).
- ¹⁵⁶ Interview Hilderink
- ¹⁵⁷ Interview Van der Vlis
- ¹⁵⁸ Interview Van der Vlis
- ¹⁵⁹ Interview Van der Vlis. Van der Vlis forgot someone: his deputy Van den Breemen. Some respondents emphasised that the marine was pro abolition and that he had a double agenda. There is, however, no evidence for that
- ¹⁶⁰ Interview Van der Vlis. Van der Vlis was so much convinced of the conscription that in September 1992 he still praised every model that included conscription. While preparing a conference in that month, he wrote a note in which he summed up the advantages and disadvantages of two models, one with and the other without conscripts, for future peace operations. In that note, which was based on a note of Couzy, the model without conscripts was described only in negative terms (CAD-MvD, Archief legeraad 1945-1994 inventarisnummer 933)
- ¹⁶¹ Interview Van der Vlis. The general resigned two years later, when another cutback of the defence budget was unacceptable to him.
- ¹⁶² Interviews Couzy, Van der Vlis
- ¹⁶³ Ter Beek 1996
- ¹⁶⁴ Letter Couzy to Minister 10 November 1992
- ¹⁶⁵ Couzy 1996
- ¹⁶⁶ Interview Van Voorst tot Voorst
- ¹⁶⁷ The Christian Democrat Party Leader in Parliament, Elco Brinkman, and the Christian Democratic Prime Minister, Ruud Lubbers, were known as great supporters of it. Both put the item repeatedly on the political and public agenda. Even after the report of the Meijer-commission, it seemed that they did not give up. Interview Frinking.
- ¹⁶⁸ CAD-MvD, Commissie Dienstplicht deel 2, map S-2, U.90.612, d.d. 19 december 1990
- ¹⁶⁹ Recommendation 8 of the Meijer-commission's report, Report Commissie Dienstplicht p. 132
- ¹⁷⁰ CAD-MvD, DS dossier S92/315, nr. D178/92/30415 d.d. 11 november 1992, my translation: 'Vooruitlopend op deze nota schetsen wij in deze brief de contouren van de krijgsmacht van de toekomst. Centraal staat ons voorstel de opkomstplicht en de daarbij behorende administratieve procedures feitelijk af te schaffen en geleidelijk een kleinere vrijwilligerskrijgsmacht in het leven te roepen. De dienstplicht als zodanig wordt niet afgeschaft. Overwogen zou kunnen worden in geval van een herleving van een grote militaire dreiging de opkomstplicht weer in te voeren. In verband hiermee zal in ieder geval de inschrijving van potentiële dienstplichtigen gehandhaafd blijven. Een en ander heeft vooral ingrijpende gevolgen voor de Koninklijke landmacht.'
- ¹⁷¹ The MRK was quoted in the commission's report, too, and it still made guarantees for sufficient recruitment a precondition for abolition. Yet, it rejected most of the Meijer-commission's recommendations in its own reaction to the report from November 1992.
- ¹⁷² CAD-MvD, DS dossier S92/315, nr. D178/92/30415, d.d. 11 november 1992, p. 4-11
- ¹⁷³ 'Vooral Defensie, Onderwijs en VROM gaan bezuinigen' *Volkskrant* 09-11-1992
- ¹⁷⁴ 'Ter Beek dreigde met aftreden. Verzet leidt tot aanpassing snoeiplan Kok' *Telegraaf* 09-11-1992
- ¹⁷⁵ Onzekerheidsmarges
- ¹⁷⁶ The Meijer-commission estimated 10.000
- ¹⁷⁷ Anonymous interview

- ¹⁷⁸ ‘Bezuinigingen basis voor keuze van beroepsleger’ *NRC* 14-11-1992; ‘Kabinet wil van dienstplicht af’ *Financieel Dagblad* 16-11-1992
- ¹⁷⁹ Enkele elementen voor het antwoord van de minister van Defensie ... bij de behandeling van de defensiebegroting voor het jaar 1993 in de Tweede Kamer, 26 november 1992 (CAD-MvD, Archief Commissie Uitzendingen, MvD Defensie Crisis- en Beheersingscentrum (DCBC))
- ¹⁸⁰ Van Brouwershaven 1999: 220
- ¹⁸¹ Interview Folmer
- ¹⁸² Anonymous interview, Van Voorst tot Voorst
- ¹⁸³ Van Brouwershaven 1999: 181f. The members of the council were: the Minister and Junior Minister of Defence, Secretary General, Chief of the Defence Staff, the functional Directors General, the Commanders-in-Chief of Army, Navy and Air Force, the Directors Policy Affairs, Juridical Affairs, and Information, and a representative of the ministry of Defence.
- ¹⁸⁴ Van Brouwershaven 1999: 197
- ¹⁸⁵ Van Brouwershaven 1999: 209f., also interview De Wijk, anonymous interview
- ¹⁸⁶ Prioriteitennota, Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 1992-1993, 22 975, nr. 2, p. 24
- ¹⁸⁷ Prioriteitennota, Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 1992-1993, 22 975, nr. 2, p. 23-24
- ¹⁸⁸ Prioriteitennota, Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 1992-1993, 22 975, nr. 2, p. 3
- ¹⁸⁹ In the Priority White Paper the government wrote that it was striving for this bi-national corps (p. 4). In March 1993 the Germany and the Netherlands signed the contracts, but this was after the publication of the Priority White Paper by the end of January. Compare Van Brouwershaven 1999: 222
- ¹⁹⁰ Interviews Schoonoord, Mazel
- ¹⁹¹ ‘Naar dienstplicht nieuwe stijl.’ Advies Commissie Dienstplicht 1992: 132. Interesting to note: the government followed the advice, yet it restricted the investigation to the abandoning or postponement of the draft. When on 13 May 1993 the parliamentary defence commission debated the issue, everybody was (wrongfully) convinced that the government followed the original advice.
- ¹⁹² Constitution, translation JEN
- ¹⁹³ Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 1992-1993, 22 975, A, p. 5
- ¹⁹⁴ Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 1992-1993, 22 975, A, p. 6
- ¹⁹⁵ Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 1992-1993, 22 975, A, p. 8
- ¹⁹⁶ As a preparation, the Minister of Defence already answered written questions of the Parliament by the beginning of April of the same year. This part will concentrate on the verbal debate and refers, when necessary, to the written questions and answers.
- ¹⁹⁷ The minister had not been concrete about the exact meaning of that. Vaste Commissie voor defensie. Prioriteitennota defensie. 13 mei 1993, 27-6
- ¹⁹⁸ May 13th 1993, UCV 27, page 6, compare also ‘Grondwetswijziging nodig in verband met schrappen dienstplicht’ *Trouw* 15-05-1993
- ¹⁹⁹ ‘Dienstplicht half afschaffen kan niet’, *Trouw* 18-05-1993
- ²⁰⁰ Compare ‘Grondwet staat volgens jurist afschaffen van dienstplicht toe’ *Volkskrant* 21-10-1992; ‘Grondwet staat afschaffing dienstplicht toe’, *NRC* 03-11-1992
- ²⁰¹ ‘Jurgens verwijt Ter Beek gebrek aan ruggengraat’, *Apeldoornse Courant* 14-5-1993
- ²⁰² ‘Ter Beek voelt niet voor parate vijfde brigade’, *Volkskrant* 18-05-1993; ‘Dienstplicht half afschaffen kan niet’, *Trouw* 18-05-1993
- ²⁰³ ‘Hervorming defensie wordt passen en meten’, *Volkskrant* 13-05-1993
- ²⁰⁴ Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 1994-1995, 24245, nr. 2, p. 3

Chapter 6: Explaining the postponement of the draft: hidden-hand leadership and policy change in Dutch defence policy

6.1 Introduction

The postponement of the draft in the Netherlands marked a major change in the policy paradigm and the organisational structure of the defence sector. After almost two centuries of military conscription, the parliamentary decision in May 1993 to postpone the draft marked the 'de facto abolition' of conscription. Technically, every young man in the Netherlands is still conscripted, but no one is summoned to serve. The fact that the armed forces of the Netherlands only consist of professional soldiers signifies a non-incremental change in the substance and process of defence policy. The interesting question here is to what extent these changes were the result of deliberate and sustained attempts of the key actors in the sector. In other words: to what extent did leadership shape the reform process and its outcomes? And which type and which style of leadership marked the defence policy process in the Netherlands after the Cold War?

The process towards this decision to postpone the draft has been described in the foregoing chapter. This chapter will try to test the theory of leadership in an institutional crisis by analysing the case. Firstly, the outcomes will be discussed in terms of the degree of change entailed, i.e. in defence strategy, in the structure of the armed forces, and in the role of conscription. Section 6.3 will analyse the reasons why various policy makers chose to reform or conserve the key tenets of the existing conscription system. Key terms are crisis perceptions, the institutional position of leaders, inner convictions regarding the necessity of change, and their political calculus of the gains and losses associated with attempts to change or stabilise policy. Next, the actual behaviour of the policymakers will be analysed. How did they aim to foster or prevent policy change? The ten hypotheses regarding reformist and conserving leadership will guide this section of the analysis. After having distinguished the different types of leaders in the Dutch defence sector, it is important to analyse their style. The theoretical section of this study questioned the active styles of leadership advocated by 't Hart (reforming) and Terry (conserving). While acknowledging that the active type of leadership might be successful in Westminster type democracies, the current case casts some doubts about its efficacy in consensual democracies with multi-party dualistic governance styles of governing. These structural constraints might force leaders to pursue more surreptitious and consensual tactics.

6.2 Setting the stage: actors, strategies and outcomes

Policy outcomes

After the conserving Defence White Paper of 1991, which indicated ‘business as usual but with lesser means’, the Defence Priorities Review of 1993 marked a *paradigm change* in the goals and procedures of the Dutch armed forces. It not only announced further downsizing of the armed forces but a fundamental change of the tasks of the armed forces: from territorial, Cold War forces to forces capable of international crisis management.¹ In addition the paper emphasised the growing importance of closer international military cooperation. As a consequence of the restructuring and downsizing, the Dutch armed forces could not fulfil all tasks by themselves. One of the implications had been the establishment of the 1st German Dutch Army Corps, in which the only Dutch Army Corps had been completely incorporated.

With the paradigm change in the defence organisation came a *paradigmatic change of procedures*. The abolition of conscription would have been a ‘de facto’ and ‘de jure’ *paradigm change*, yet the postponement of the draft was a *paradigmatic change of procedures* within the organisation. It is important to note that there is an obvious causal relation: because of the necessity to downsize and the change of the task, conscription had been postponed. The empirical chapter 5 indicated the decisive influence of the different leaders and their choices on the outcome.

In crisis management terms, the reformers managed to restore the legitimacy of the sector by abandoning the draft and with this the ‘de facto’ compulsory military service. The growing inequality - with only a small number of an annual year-school drafted - and the decision by many actors that conscription was not the only tool to guarantee democratic forces, contributed to the mounting loss of legitimacy of the institution of conscription.

Actors and strategies

Three different types of leaders are of interest for our analysis: political, bureaucratic and military. Those leaders followed different strategies, i.e. conserving or reforming, during the policy change in the Dutch defence sector. The key political leader was Defence Minister Ter Beek. Starting as a defender of conscription and following a conservative strategy regarding conscription at the beginning of 1991, he began to follow a reforming course with regard to the structure of the Dutch defence sector in March 1992. By the end of September 1992 he came out in favour of reforming the conscription policy as well. Two top civil servants at the Ministry of Defence from the directorate Policy Affairs, Barth and De Winter, gave input and shape to Ter Beek’s reforms of the armed forces. Barth followed his minister in the characteristic fashion of a traditional, loyal civil servant. De Winter personified a different type of civil servant: also loyal, but with a more proactive style.

On the senior military level, four generals were most involved in the policy process. They took different positions regarding the conscription issue and followed different

strategies. The Chief of the Defence Staff, Van der Vlis, and the Commander-in-Chief of the army, Wilmink, had been supporters of conscription and followed conserving strategies to prevent its abolition. During spring 1992, General Brinkman tried to change the conservative tactics by launching a policy paper favouring a restructured army of the all-volunteer kind. The fourth general was Couzy, Deputy Chief of the army and the army's liaison to the Meijer-commission. Starting out as a defender of conscription, he at least was willing to think about its abolition. During the process he became caught between the demands of his superior (Wilmink) to remain loyal to army traditions and therefore to conscription, and the political willingness to contemplate far-reaching reforms.

One actor took on a less active role towards the policy outcome than might have been expected. Minister of Foreign Affairs Van den Broek, who was influential during the security analysis in 1991, soon disappeared to the background during the process towards the postponement of the draft. His role was only marginal, since he was too far removed from the conscription issue to exercise leadership, though he sometimes tried to put his conserving mark on the process of armed forces restructuring.

What about the Members of Parliament and the members of the commission? Some of them were highly visible during the process either as entrepreneurs during different moments in the process, such as Frinking, who put the issue on the political agenda at the beginning of 1990, or Vos and Koffeman, who influenced the course of the Meijer-commission with their motion during the 1991 Defence White Paper debate. However, none of them were in an organisational position to exercise enduring and/or decisive leadership within the sector.

Meijer and his committee played a special role in the process. Given its mandate, the members of the conscription committee had the ability to influence the outcome. They gathered all relevant information, had official and unofficial contacts with all relevant political, bureaucratic and military actors, and moreover, Meijer had been a political friend of Ter Beek. In short: either the whole committee or at least individual members were in a position to exercise leadership. At the beginning of their work, the committee agreed to remain as open as possible, though the majority of individual members had a clear opinion on the issue. In the end, the committee presented its unanimous recommendation not to abandon conscription. Yet, several members indicated afterwards that they had in fact had a dissenting opinion but had chosen not to push the matter to the hilt. Throughout the analysis the role of the members of the committee will be incorporated. When possible, it will be indicated if, when, and how they exercised leadership.

The puzzle

Though small countries within world economics are known as rapid reformers, which adapt rather fast to changes within their environment,² it is astonishing that a country like the Netherlands almost completely changed the tasks and the structure of the armed forces within a period of four years. In particular since the changes took place in peacetime. We already referred to Blom,³ who acknowledged the willingness to incur change

in defeated forces, but pointed out less readiness in successful ones: never change a winning team.

So, the first question that puzzles us is the speed of the change. We doubt the conclusion of Haltiner⁴ that countries in an alliance have room to abolish conscription, since the Netherlands had obligations towards their allied partners. An alliance in this sense is more a constraint for reform than a catalyst. This was a recurring issue in this case, when some leaders tried to prevent change by pointing to the ongoing debate within NATO about the strategic future of the alliance. The second puzzle is the changing majorities in this particular case. In the beginning of 1992, there was no majority in Dutch politics for a comprehensive change within the defence sector and especially for abolition of conscription. How then did this majority come about?

The last puzzle, which is central to our study, is why and how leadership within the sector crystallised. While there is evidence that until the summer of 1991 the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the military, in particular the Army seniors, influenced the policy process, as from the autumn of 1991, their influence on the process diminished. Who then did exercise leadership within the defence sector? Who was influential in the making of the Priorities Review 1993? And, how can we explain the change? Those are the questions central to the analysis.

6.3 Leadership opportunities and actors' calculations

Leader's crisis perceptions

Immediately after the Cold War, few actors and stakeholders in the defence sector felt the urge to drastically change the defence organisation. Abolition of conscription was not on anyone's agenda at that time. The 1991 Defence White Paper's security analysis foresaw only size reductions, but the tasks, structure and personnel policy were largely left in tact. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and the top of the armed forces were important in defining the security analysis.⁵ The Minister of Defence, Ter Beek, was less visible, as were his advisors. He was new to the sector, having been a foreign affairs spokesman of his party and less versed in defence matters.⁶ The White Paper did acknowledge that in consideration of the changes in the international environment, an advisory committee on conscription had to be established to recommend ways to consolidate the legitimacy of conscription within Dutch society.⁷

During the debate about the White Paper 1991, various Members of Parliament of the coalition parties requested the mandate of the committee be broadened. Firstly, it should analyse whether or not conscription should be upheld at all, before making recommendations for an organisational change. Their reasons for advocating a broader mandate for the committee had nothing to do with the perception of a need to reform in view of any sort of crisis. They were merely concerned about the unbalanced size of the army, air force and navy, the unequal burdens put upon the few young men serving, the use of conscripts for crisis management and the tedious service for those who had to serve.⁸

At a later stage of the process, when wholesale abolition of conscription became a possibility, some key policy makers became convinced that far-reaching changes were necessary. Yet, neither De Winter, General Brinkman, nor – at a later stage – the political leadership of the Ministry of Defence indicated that doing nothing would lead to or intensify an institutional crisis of the Dutch defence sector. The opponents of abolition indicated that downsizing the armed forces – a key corollary of abolition – would seem to ignore the continued threat potential of the Soviet Union (Van den Broek) or would be negative for the organisation (Wilmink, Van der Vlis).

The process does not support the hypothesis that actors initiate change because of high crisis awareness. Initially, many actors had thought that a change in the paradigm of the Dutch defence policy, i.e. territorial defence, or a change in the armed forces as such, i.e. downsizing and abandoning the corps' structure, and/or the abolition of conscription, would jeopardise national security. Yet, from 1992 on, some key actors, like the parliamentary defence spokesmen of the coalition parties and De Winter and later on Barth at the Ministry of Defence, changed their perceptions. However, those changes and the presentation of those changed perceptions were less radical than crisis studies would predict. The political and bureaucratic leaders sensed that in the light of the international changes the direct military threat disappeared, but they emphasised that 'security risks resulting from tensions and conflicts in various regions must still be given serious consideration.'⁹ The top of the Ministry of Defence saw the crisis coming from another direction. With imminent cuts of 1,1 billion guilders, they were aware that the changes toward flexible and mobile forces must be carried on.¹⁰ Seen in this light, it was rather a crisis of the organisation than the national security crisis many opponents of change tried to claim.

Political calculus of expected gains and losses

The Dutch case supports the hypothesis that it is the actors' calculus of the expected gains and damage that entails reforms. The conserving actors were convinced of the negative effects that strategy change, downsizing and abolition would bring to the armed forces. The reforming actors waited with concrete proposals to abolish conscription until majorities had been clear and Ter Beek held a strong position with regard to military and political opponents of abolition.

In theory, the coalition parties CDA and PvdA had a solid majority in Parliament to push through reforms, even more than the two third majority necessary for constitutional changes that might be required.¹¹ Yet, although the coalition parties held 103 of the 150 seats in Parliament from the start of the policy process until autumn 1992, the abolition of conscription split the coalition parties, even internally. There were opponents and supporters of conscription across all parties. When the issue was finally decided upon in Parliament, there was a broad majority agreeing on the postponement of the draft.

One explanation for this decision might be found in the hypothesised timing of the issue within the election cycle. The decision to postpone the draft was taken almost two and a half years after the first election and almost one and a half year before the upcoming elections. Within the election cycle of four years, it seems that this was an ideal moment for major reforms. The newcomer into office, Ter Beek, had had enough time

to be institutionalised in the sector. Additionally, the time to the next elections was long enough for the issue not to be influential for elections. However, since the issue had not been controversial in public, this factor was less important. Moreover, there was no empirical evidence – either in written minutes or acknowledged by the interviewed actors – that any consideration of this type had been influential for the decision to postpone the draft.

More important for the conservative actors were the *international* political calculations, not considered in Cortell & Peterson's theory.¹² In the spring of 1992 the Minister of Foreign Affairs still considered the Soviet Union a serious threat to Dutch national security. To him, every change in the strategy and size of the Dutch armed forces would endanger the defence potential of the country.¹³ Although this is more interesting for the first hypothesis (the environmental condition), it is mentioned here, because it was closely connected to Van den Broek's second consideration. By downsizing the Dutch armed forces unilaterally, the Netherlands would place themselves outside NATO: 'We cannot seriously expect from our allied friends that they have to carry the burden of defending our soil, while the Netherlands restrict themselves to operations with a peacekeeping nature.'¹⁴ Van den Broek sensed that the Netherlands would lose influence and prestige on an international scale if there would be changes in the strategy, size, and conscription of the Dutch defence system.

The considerations of the conservative military leaders tended to be similar, though political calculations might not have been as important to them. To Wilmink the expected damage seemed to be larger than to Van der Vlis. In the army commander's eyes, downsizing the Armed Forces would have specifically meant downsizing the Army. The commander thought that it was difficult to fulfil the Army's tasks with a downsized organisation and probably less qualified personnel.¹⁵ Additionally this in turn would have shifted the relative importance of the army in relation to navy and air force, since its size would have been cut down relatively more than that of the other two.¹⁶ To Van der Vlis, as Chief of the Defence Staff, the relative size of the army was a less important point. Yet, he feared for the quality of the organisation in general. To Van der Vlis conscription was something he did not think about a lot. To him: 'it was a political process, I was a military officer, and so I didn't do anything.'¹⁷ It seems unlikely that for Van der Vlis any political calculus, neither for him nor for the organisation, was of any importance. Van der Vlis simply was a-political.

Quite the opposite calculus can be found among the reformist leaders Ter Beek, Barth and De Winter. For the two civil servants the political equation was probably less important than for the politician Ter Beek. Barth was proud that a major speech like the NGIZ-speech came from his directorate. However, most of the time he acted as a loyal civil servant, i.e. supporting the minister above and beyond any personal views and gains at stake.¹⁸ This will be elaborated further on in this chapter. De Winter was more of a partisan actor, advancing the position of his unit in the bureau political struggle between Policy Affairs and the Defence Staff. To him it was important to take the lead in the discussion toward the restructuring of the armed forces and with that the abolition of conscription, since the rest of the policy makers and military did nothing. In his opinion, many people talked about it, but they did not think about it.¹⁹

The most explicit calculus about the expected political gains and losses can be found, not surprisingly, with Ter Beek. In the beginning of the process, during the making of the Defence White Paper 1991, there was no military or political necessity for the

Minister of Defence to put the issue on the agenda. By referring in the White Paper to an advisory committee on conscription, he scored threefold: firstly, abolition was a non-issue; secondly, in case it might become important, he signalled that he was looking for broad consensus; thirdly, he gained time by keeping the issue off the political agenda. The political gains for the minister by taking any clear position with regard to conscription had been vague for a long time. Even in spring 1992, when he set the first outlines for the Priority White Paper and on 18 June 1992 when talking to the Meijer-commission, the political gains for Ter Beek with regard to conscription had been too diffuse to announce reform. So far as the restructuring of the armed forces had been concerned and with regard to the security re-definition, which he presented, political calculus can be found. However, not in the way that domestic political calculation can be reduced to elections and majorities. Political calculus was set more broadly and very strongly intertwined with the fourth hypothesis about the policy makers' position. That became obvious, not in the least, in the NGIZ speech intended to strengthen the position of the Minister and Ministry of Defence regarding foreign affairs and this was only possible because Ter Beek had room to manoeuvre without considering a possible collapse of the coalition.

Still, the political gains (again, political gains as more than just regarding elections) for the Minister of Defence were not obvious with regard to conscription. It took until the presentation of the Meijer-commission report for the minister to express his view. When it became evident that a large parliamentary majority would at least support the postponement of the draft, Ter Beek publicly became a member of the camp of abolition supporters. Many respondents underscored that this was always one of Ter Beek's greatest political assets: to sense exactly the political climate and to gain from it by first seeing where the majorities were.²⁰

Inner convictions regarding necessity of change

During the first years after the fall of the Berlin Wall none of the key actors felt the urge to abolish conscription, but some of them changed their minds later on. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991, De Winter became convinced that the military capabilities of the Soviet Union no longer posed a serious threat. In his opinion, this gave room to change the tasks of the defence organisation, from the defence of Western Europe to crisis management. Central to the re-organisation should be the idea of task-specialisation, which would enable the Dutch armed forces to downsize and thus to abolish conscription.²¹

It appears that Barth and Ter Beek successively changed their opinion as well. Ter Beek refers in his memoirs to 2 April 1992, when Wilmink told him about the difficulty of finding sufficient manpower for relieving the medical battalion in Cambodia.²² Barth refers to the same occasion as an eye opener.²³

At the end of March, Ter Beek deemed it not the right moment to announce abolition, which became obvious in his last-minute change to the NGIZ speech: from 'taking abolition seriously into account' to 'that I *may* have to take abolition into account'.²⁴ In the first case he would have portrayed himself as actively striving for abolition, in the latter abolition was presented as something that appeared to have been forced upon him. Even before the commission in June 1992 the minister showed increasing doubt about

the need to maintain conscription; yet, he did not make any commitment about abolition.²⁵ It may well be that he already had changed his opinion in the beginning of April 1992²⁶, or later in September 1992 after his visit to the Dutch contingent in Cambodia²⁷. Most likely however, Ter Beek remained ambivalent, not in the least because his support for conscription throughout the years had been unequivocal.

During the whole process, the military leaders Wilmink and Van der Vlis remained convinced that abolition was undesirable and unfeasible. Important reasons might have been the relative decline of the army organisation compared to the navy and air force, the dubious prospects of recruiting qualified personnel and – connected to this – the fear that the Army would have been no longer able to fulfil its tasks. Van der Vlis felt that there should be only a partially change because of the quality of recruits and the international security situation. In addition, he felt that the introduction of professional forces ran against the Dutch defence system's key structures and traditions. Yet, he was aware that new tasks for the Dutch forces were going to come. That is why he preferred the mix-model with professional units for crisis management tasks and conscript units for territorial defence.

The hypothesis that a strong personal conviction is necessary for leaders to adopt reforming strategies finds only partial support. There is a clear distinction between reforming and conserving actors in the Dutch case. The conserving actors kept their strong conviction that change was unfeasible, whereas the reformist actors changed their conviction towards the necessity for change, after changes in the security structures, i.e. the perceived decline of the Soviet military capabilities to invade NATO soil. At least one important leader, Ter Beek, probably kept his doubts throughout the process. While being more and more convinced that abolition was useful and feasible, his old social-democratic commitment to conscription pulled him in the opposite direction for quite some time after 2 April 1992. Nevertheless, in the end, Ter Beek was one of the major forces behind the postponement of the draft. In summary, the Dutch case study suggests that a strong conviction might be a useful leadership asset, yet it seems neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for successful reform or conservation.

Institutional position of the leaders

Besides political calculations, formal and informal institutional positions of the leaders appear to have been important. Within the foreign and security policy field, Minister of Foreign Affairs Van den Broek held a strong position. He was experienced and responsible for foreign policy and security strategy. Hence one might expect him to be influential within the defence sector as well. Yet, the Minister of Foreign Affairs seemed to play a minor role in the policy process towards the abolition of conscription. The political and administrative leaders at the ministry of Defence framed the issue more as an *organisational* sectorial defence issue than as a *strategic security policy* issue, as explained in 6.2. In other words, although the Minister of Foreign affairs might have the formal position to influence the *direction* of Dutch defence policy, he has no formal institutional influence on the *organisation* of its military implementation. This is the prerogative of the Minister of Defence. Moreover, in 1993 Van den Broek became a commissioner of the European Union. His interest in national defence matters at the end of 1992 was probably less than at the beginning of the year, plus his own party was one

of the driving forces pro abolition. This strengthened the institutional position of the Minister of Defence.

To Ter Beek the drafting of the Priority White Paper 1993 offered the possibility to articulate his hitherto diffuse political vision for the sector. The double task of the committee, which the parliamentary commission had demanded, was in fact a favourable move for Ter Beek. He came out in favour of major changes in defence policy, a new armed forces structure necessary to implement these changes, and therefore also an abolition of conscription. Another institutional advantage was the change of generations at the top of the armed forces. The new Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces (May 1992) and the new Commander-in-Chief of the Army (September 1992) had to conform to the Minister of Defence and not vice versa.²⁸

The empirical evidence also relates to the possible importance and influence of the bureaucratic and military leaders. As stated in chapter 3, organisational positions and relations to other important actors are relevant tools for leaders, too. As far as the top of the ministry is concerned, it can be said that those civil servants advocating reform, i.e. Barth and De Winter, had a relatively strong position within the ministry. Both were experienced civil servants at the Policy Affairs Directorate of the ministry, which was a section Ter Beek held in high esteem at the expense of other top level civil servants including the Secretary-General, Patijn. He had only little support from the minister and only little experience at the ministry as such, having been catapulted into office in the autumn of 1989 by a predecessor of Ter Beek.²⁹ This lack of experience was not compensated by the support of the Deputy Secretary General, Mazel, who became engaged in the Meijer-commission, and therefore was less available for daily ministerial duties.

The position of the military leaders within their branches was, however, different from those civil servants, since they generally enjoyed a strong position. The Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Wilmink, and the Chief of the Defence Staff, have hierarchical authority, which is one of the core elements of the military system of order and obedience. Van der Vlis became Chief of the Defence Staff in May 1992. Within the Ministry of Defence and the defence organisation, the formal position of the Chief of Defence Staff was relatively weak: no hierarchical relation existed between him and the Commanders-in-Chief.³⁰ Yet within his staff he was the military authority and no open discussion about conscription took place.³¹

The Commander-in-Chief of the Army was formally a strong actor within the Dutch defence. General Brinkman - one of the few among the army leaders who was in the main positively inclined towards abolition - had a less senior position, being subordinated to army chief Wilmink. This made any solo-action impossible and a simple order prevented him from further action. The same holds true for the then deputy army chief Couzy. On the one hand, he had to be loyal to Wilmink, his direct superior. On the other hand, he felt the necessity to answer the questions of the committee openly.³² In fact, Couzy occupied a strategic position due to his role as liaison between the armed forces and the Meijer-commission, though he complained that he had no rapport with Ter Beek, whose 'door was closed to him'.³³

While institutionally strong in their own organisation and thus acting with authority vis-à-vis the Meijer-commission, Van der Vlis and Wilmink were less visible in the larger political arena of defence policy with regard to the conscription issue. In particular, with regard to the civil and political actors their contact appears negligible. They refrained from active lobbying work. Wilmink, because he thought that any action

might open the box of Pandora of abolition and Van der Vlis, because he felt he was a soldier and not a politician. From 1992 on, the position of representatives of the army towards the minister became increasingly difficult. One important reason was that by then Ter Beek had become more self-assured and felt that he 'knew the arguments of the generals'.³⁴ Secondly, the closest military advisors and confidants to the minister had been marines, who represented the thrust towards the modern expeditionary forces and who traditionally were less attached to conscription.³⁵ Thirdly, and this is an important factor in civil-military relations, military hierarchy and authority simply do not work closely with civilians and politicians. It requires more informal connections to gain influence. Wilmink probably relied too much on a successful outcome of the Meijer-commission and Van der Vlis deliberately declined to take any political action. This puts definite limits on their political effectiveness.

The recurring decline of the defence budget was an obvious problem for the organisation and the Minister of Defence. Cashing in on the peace-dividend after the Cold War led to a constant decline of the defence budget, with the army as main 'victim'. These forces had to incur cuts, mainly on procurement but above all on troops. Ter Beek managed to soften cuts by the end of 1992, 380 million guilders instead of 667 million, by threatening to resign and at the expense of conscription. Those cuts, together with abolition, meant a decline of the army's relative power position, compared to the other two sections, navy and air force. Hillen, MP, indicated that one of the reasons he strived for abolition was that he did not want the army to suffer less in disproportion to the other two sections.

The budget formed a structural factor that had the potential to limit the actor's room to manoeuvre, but during the policy process towards abolition/postponement there was no sign of a weak minister. On the contrary, when extra cuts had to be made, by November 1992, Ter Beek was stronger than ever before. With regard to the army it can be said that the navy and air force wisely refrained from any active participation in the abolition debate, but there is no evidence that actors in the process regarded the army, or its Commander-in-Chief, as less powerful.

The hypothesis about institutional position finds strong support. The weak actors within the sector, i.e. the army generals, and within the organisation, i.e. the Minister of Foreign Affairs, followed conserving strategies. All strong leaders, i.e. Barth, De Winter, and later in the process Ter Beek, followed reforming strategies.

The Dutch case supports Cortell & Peterson's assumption that '... agents' perceptions, preferences and calculations mediate between a window of opportunity and structural change.'³⁶ Agents play a role once a crisis manifests itself. Yet certain nuances must be added regarding the different assumptions by Cortell & Peterson as stated in the theoretical chapter. Firstly, it appears that almost all four hypotheses are useful to explain *why* policy makers follow a *conserving* strategy. Actors do not reform if they do not sense a crisis. Additionally, it can be said that actors follow a conserving strategy if they feel that reform would lead to a crisis. Secondly, the reforming efforts had indeed been conducted during an optimal moment within the electoral cycle, which was another assumption by Cortell & Peterson. Yet, it is questionable how important this is, if the subject is not disputed by a political majority and/or broad public, as it was in the Dutch case. The author's assumption that actors who are weak in the political system can make use of a crisis to enlarge their power base in the sector, finds more support. Within the

hierarchical military organisation, however, this is a non-option. Thirdly, the inner conviction to change is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition. A strong inner conviction can *prevent* change, but even a weaker inner conviction can lie at the base of an actor's behaviour towards change. The fact that conviction is not static, underscores the importance for change of the combination of the second – slightly adapted – hypothesis (expected gains and damage) and the fourth (policy maker's position). In the Dutch case this had been an important factor for the actors who strived for change. It appears that reforming actors have to wait for a second (micro) window or the right institutional moment to launch their plans *within* the window of opportunity opened by an institutional crisis. This second window, or window within a window, was, in the Dutch case, the failed 'coup d'état' in the Soviet Union and the disappearance of its military threat. The reformers within the army were hindered by their position within the hierarchical organisation, the more so when they were not at the top of this organisation. On the other hand, the institutional setting influenced the reformers' perceptions at the top of the Ministry of Defence, whether they were politicians or civil servants. They had a weak political and organisational environment, partially because of the shift of generations, partially because of the minister's possibility to exclude certain veto-players, i.e. the defence council. We will discuss this more extensively in the next section.

The Dutch conscription case supports the results of recent crisis management research in the Netherlands. The common reflex of crisis managers is first to try and fix the damaged sector within its structures. Policy makers are reluctant reformers. Only when the circumstances provide pressure and opportunity, will they use reform-oriented strategies.³⁷ Having found evidence for *why* leaders reform or prevent change, it is time to turn to *how* leaders tried to reform or conserve conscription policy and if they indeed made a difference.

6.4 Reformist and conserving leadership: dissecting the process

Set I: Defining the situation

With German re-unification and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, Dutch defence policy makers soon acknowledged the necessity of a new Defence White Paper. Yet, although it acknowledged the large changes in the security environment of the Netherlands, it's the paper's main conclusion was that the armed forces could be reduced, but only down to a level that would guarantee the territorial defence, since the threat by the Soviet Union was still existent. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and the top of the armed forces took the lead in this redefinition. This definition did not match the parliamentary majorities' view of the situation. The governmental parties' defence spokesmen in particular demanded a re-evaluation of the situation within two years and they demanded that a future conscription committee should also analyse the possibility of conscription abolishment. From that moment on, two different streams in Dutch defence policy would exist: the commission's definition, which was in line with the army's leaders and the Minister of Foreign affairs, and the line of the top of the Ministry of Defence.

On the sector level, the conserving leaders regarded further cuts as a threat to the organisation. Wilmink talked about his fear that the army would be 'closed during reconstruction'. The reforming actors on the other hand emphasised the necessity of smaller forces, pointing to the vanishing security threat and the changing character of NATO and the EU. No reference to a crisis of the organisation could be found. On the contrary, the reformers emphasised the chances for task-specialisation and international cooperation.

It is difficult to conclude to which degree Ter Beek had a better opportunity in convincing his environment because he was new to the sector. What does find support in empirics is that those leaders who had been engaged to the sector for a longer period of time, had growing difficulties in convincing their environment about the necessity of conserving the structures. The more the 'détente' became obvious, the more the old leaders were associated with the Cold War that was gone. After the change of generations, the new leaders in the sector had less difficulty uniting with Ter Beek and implementing his plans.

Set II: Committed leadership teams

During the process towards postponement of the draft there were several moments when actors had the chance to show commitment to their political convictions. Firstly, during the making of the Defence White Paper 1991, when there were differences between the responsible ministers about some parts of the security analysis, i.e. the threat from the Soviet Union and the wish of Van den Broek that there should be some form of guarantee that cut backs would be retracted if the international security situation might worsen. Van Brouwershaven (1999) showed that the Minister of Foreign Affairs played quite an important role in the making of the Defence White Paper 1991, and that Ter Beek had to make compromises, but there is no evidence that Ter Beek played a tough game. It almost seems that he used the process towards the White Paper 1991 to gain knowledge of the sector and the key actors within it. Furthermore, conscription was an important issue in the White Paper, but not abolition as such. The leaders in the sector had the same understanding about the continuation of conscription.

Ter Beek displayed a similar 'lack' of commitment during the standing defence committee's session about the Defence White Paper on 10 June 1991. When Van den Broek threatened with a political crisis, i.e. withdrawal of the White Paper, Ter Beek objected to that interference with his portfolio, but he did not prevent the commission from changing the committee's tasks. The commission demanded that the committee should investigate abolition, too, and that there had to be an evaluation of the Defence White Paper within two years.

As far as conscription was concerned, Ter Beek had presented himself for a long time as a supporter.³⁸ His views changed during the years to come. Together with a few civil servants at his ministry (Barth and De Winter), he began to commit himself more and more to large reforms of the defence organisation and slowly but surely to the abolition of conscription. The reforming trio, however, avoided every over-commitment to the latter. Or, as Barth put it: 'For me it was no Saul turning into Paul situation'³⁹ especially not in public. There was no public statement found by him. While the NGIZ speech at the end of March 1992 stood for very ambitious reforms of the Dutch armed

forces, the Minister of Defence avoided the demand for abolition of conscription in the same speech. Even five days later, in a *Volkskrant* interview, he chose very diplomatic (vague) formulations, giving the impression that 'in the near future' the Netherlands would have a professional army, without stating that he was the one who was striving for that.

In the months to come Ter Beek and his inner circle of departmental advisors began to push major reforms in the defence sector at large, including abolition. The leaked De Winter- memo by the beginning of October 1992 was one highlight in the discussion. The next came on 1 November when Ter Beek announced to the military that he wanted to change to all-volunteer forces, and by mid November, when he announced it to the cabinet and in the parliamentary budget debate. The presentation of the Priority White Paper at the end of January 1993 and the discussion about this in May were the next moments when Ter Beek showed commitment. During this period Ter Beek repeatedly threatened to leave office if the implementation of the Priorities White Paper would be delayed. This announcement came at the time when yet another report was leaked, the advice by the Council of State about constitutional changes to abolish the draft.⁴⁰

All those moments have been recapitulated to show one thing: the moments when Ter Beek was committing himself in public were carefully selected. Those were the moments when he announced major reforms of the armed forces⁴¹ and when he was sure of having sufficient political support.⁴² Additionally, conscription changed from an isolated policy issue and became part of the larger reforms as planned in the Priority White Paper. This had consequences for the reforming teams around Ter Beek.

The minister had one small team around him, including Barth and De Winter. It turned out to be a successful combination: Ter Beek as seasoned politician, De Winter as strategist, and Barth a close confidante of the minister.⁴³ In a next layer of advice, a larger group gathered around the minister: the Priority White Paper's steering committee, with Van der Vlis and, as writer, his deputy, Van den Breemen. In addition, the minister talked to other actors personally, especially the Commanders-in-Chief, when they seemed to be necessary in the process.⁴⁴

Among the military top officials the situation was quite different. Wilmink committed himself so strongly to conscription that he hardly left any possibility for his staff to anticipate a future different to the one the Commander-in-Chief of the Army had in mind. At the scarce moments when Wilmink's subordinates at least wanted to do some thinking aloud about abolition, he forbade it emphatically (Brinkmans' note) or he emphasised to Couzy that he should be more loyal towards the army.

Van der Vlis held a somewhat different position. On the one hand, he had been engaged in the making of the Priority White Paper. To that end he was part of the reforming team of the minister and he worked closely with his own staff, including the strategic important actor Van den Breemen. Yet, when it came to conscription, the Chief of the Defence Staff omitted to make use of this potential in his staff, or to strive actively for influencing the minister. As already indicated in the foregoing chapter, conscription was no subject of discussion in his staff since his staff knew how Wilmink thought about the subject, nor did he discuss it with others. He was well aware of the fact that over-commitment, i.e. threatening to resign if conscription would be abolished, was of little use: '... I concluded that resignation at that moment would be ineffective. Nobody would have followed me.'⁴⁵

This part shows two interesting things. Firstly, the (successful) reforming leaders rarely committed themselves until a politically auspicious moment. The conservative leaders obviously over-committed themselves.⁴⁶ Secondly, the reforming leaders collaborated closely, while those who wanted to conserve conscription did not try to form a leadership team, but instead tried to rely on partners outside their own organisation, i.e. the committee. The committee in the end turned out to be a weak actor.

The Dutch case supports the assumption of 't Hart that over-commitment to a particular policy position is a liability for a reforming leader. By being too convinced of their ideas, leaders overlook political signals and fail to contemplate alternative futures, which they do not like regardless of their probability. More importantly, those leaders were more solo than team players. The latter, however, is a prerequisite for successfully fighting the multiple front line battles in the political trenches of consensus democracies.

Set III: Leadership persuasion tactics

In the Dutch case, having a clearly stated goal at the right moment was decisive for the outcome. During the whole policy process, the reformers had a clear vision and a plan, at least as far as the Priority White Paper (Defence Priorities Review) was concerned. Conscription slowly became part of those reforms. The first plan was the NGIZ speech, when Ter Beek, fed by Barth and De Winter, for the first time drew an outline of the future of the armed forces.

The conserving leaders had no clear formula until 30 September 1992, the day the Meijer-commission presented its report. The main argument of the report was that the evolving security situation did not warrant further reductions of the armed forces and that therefore larger armed forces were needed. Those larger forces needed a certain yearly amount of recruits, which could not be guaranteed in a situation with all-volunteer forces. The recruiting argument was essential. Even six months later, when debating the Priority White Paper, supporters and opponents of abolition underscored this problem. However, the underlying argument that large forces were still needed formed a weak spot. This became obvious, not in the least in the leaked De Winter-memo, where he literally crushed this argument by blaming the committee of exploiting a 'worst case scenario'. De Winter's memo helped to weaken the report of the committee, as MP Hillen's criticism had done shortly after the presentation of the report.

Little resistance and counterarguments could be found against the Priority White Paper with the postponement of the draft as one of its cornerstones. Instead of articulating a convincing defence of the status quo, the opponents of abolition of conscription used negative, political arguments to prevent change. They used the role of blunt veto actors instead of exercising conserving leadership. Van den Broek used what Hirshman (1992) would call perversity and jeopardy arguments as a reaction to the NGIZ speech. Downsizing the armed forces would make the Netherlands more insecure. Above all, a Dutch solo-action would jeopardize the precious relation to NATO, as he stated in his letter of 6 April 1992: 'To what extent will there be a structure in the future that is suited for 'traditional' large-scale combat operations. We cannot seriously expect from our allied friends that they have to carry the burden of defending our soil, while the Netherlands restrict themselves to operations with a peacekeeping nature.'⁴⁷

The Meijer-commission's report took a similar line. Largely following the army view, the committee saw no room for abolition because of the expected recruiting problems. There is reason to believe that the army exaggerated those problems. To the five conditions the committee set for the evaluation of the various models for the future organisation of recruitment, the army added another five, which emphasised the negative implications of a strictly professional force. Models that might have supported abolition were simply 'not done'. The committee followed those models, which – by the way – were classified until the presentation of the report. So, maybe those models had been used for internal discussions at the ministry or at the different staffs, but they had not been used to convince the public.

The conserving actors initially had a good point, yet after the changes in the Soviet Union it became difficult to defend this conservative vision. Though it is difficult to measure the influence of the NGIZ speech, it probably contributed to an opinion change in the security and defence communities and in the political arena. Remarkably, however, neither the reforming leaders nor the conserving leaders actively solicited broad public support. Yet, more and more people, especially the parliamentarians, were convinced that the security situation had changed and that major reforms, as stated in the Priority White Paper, could be implemented. One important tactic that contributed to that had been the depoliticisation approach of Ter Beek, who avoided tough debates by keeping conscription off the agenda until the plans for the future armed forces were at an advanced stage. And when the next political hurdle had to be taken – the difficult constitutional change – he took it from the political into the judicial arena and, in fact, kept this on ice until 1995, when the implementation of the Priority White Paper was well under way. The process towards the postponement of the draft had already become irreversible and Ter Beek himself had left office and had become governor of the Dutch province of Drenthe.

The Dutch case shows that not only the quality of the arguments is of importance, but also their timing. Arguments that found broad support today can be futile tomorrow.⁴⁸ In the Dutch case this depended on the changed (perception of the) security environment and the ability of the reforming leaders to depoliticise difficult subjects. This will be elaborated further in the following sections, where leadership by building coalitions will be analysed.

Set IV: Building broad support

The assumption is that once reformers or conservers have made their plans, they actively strive for support from other relevant actors. The Dutch case shows that during the process only small coalitions were formed. No 'grand coalition' in favour of or against conscription was ever brought about.

The most, highly visible actor at the ministry, who debated pro abolition of conscription internally and who tried to convince the rest of the senior echelons, was De Winter. 'Endless and endless arguing to convince people like me', remembered his direct superior Barth.⁴⁹ At the same time, at least two members of the Defence Staff, closely involved in the making of the Priority Paper, were also supporters of abolition: R. De Wijk (as writer) and the Deputy Chief Defence Staff, Van den Breemen (as one of the coordinators).⁵⁰ There is no evidence there was such broad and repeated discus-

sion about conscription in the Defence Staff as there was at Policy Affairs.⁵¹ Moreover, no evidence could be found for deliberate coalition building between these two staffs. De Winter, De Wijk, and Van den Breemen, but also Hilderink (deputy chief of policy planning at the Defence Staff) and Barth regularly worked closely together, not only on the Priority Paper.⁵² Though some of them emphasised that there had always been tensions between the directorate Policy Affairs and the Defence Staff⁵³, they had a similar aim: the change from old armed forces to new, modern ones. It was no coincidence that these people were thinking about the future of Dutch defence. All held posts where this commitment was obligatory, but none of them strived for a large, visible coalition towards abolition.

There is no evidence that Van der Vlis and Wilmink actively lobbied for their conserving vision. They had regular contacts with important actors, like the minister or members of the committee, but no strategy for coalition building could be identified in the source materials. Both actually relied on their position within their own part of the organisation. For contacts outside the organisation there were others; for the army Couzy as liaison to the committee, for the Defence Staff: Van den Breemen and De Wijk. Wilmink indicated repeatedly that Couzy should show more loyalty to the army when talking to the committee. Van der Vlis admitted that he was not political. Instead of joining the political game that is played at the Ministry of Defence, he remained more outside The Hague.

How about the relation between the minister and the top of the military? In contrast to the reformist hypothesis, the minister did not manage to secure early support from the implementing actors, in particular the army leadership. Nor vice versa did the military leaders show much zeal or will to commit the minister to their position. On the contrary, at certain moments the minister bypassed his chief military advisors when it came to conscription, or he sent them diffuse signals. After all, in May 1992 the minister gave the impression that he considered the mixed model a good solution, and he did not even talk with Van der Vlis about the subject until September. Additionally, in the most crucial month, i.e. November 1992, when Ter Beek informed the military top about his decision *and* when he had to win the cabinet in favour of abolition, he had a tense relation with Couzy. In spite of this, Van der Vlis and Couzy both loyally implemented the announced changes.

Set V: Controlling the process

The Dutch case shows that procedural leadership was exercised at different stages in different arenas. Some actors played in all arenas, like Ter Beek; others had limited space to manoeuvre, such as the members of the committee, or Couzy; or they restricted themselves, like Van der Vlis and Wilmink.

Some restrictions to the actors are determined by the hierarchical culture of the defence sector. Some of those who wanted to think about a future without conscription were easily muted by their superiors: Brinkman and partially Couzy. But two other procedural barriers, common to defence, also disadvantaged the military leaders: loyalty and secrecy. While securing the survival of the state in wartime by obliging the troops to obey their superiors' orders, loyalty in daily, (bureau)political routine turned out to be counterproductive. 'Loyalty is the backbone of the military organisation. If the chief is

indicating that it is over, it is over⁵⁴ was an important reason for General Brinkman not to think of an alternative future of the army without conscription.

Loyalty played an important role not only in military-military relations, but in civil-military relations, too. Couzy succeeded Wilmink as Commander-in-Chief of the Army on 1 September 1992. Once Couzy had been freed from the hierarchical constraints during his liaison tasks for the committee, he dared to play the game with the same weapons as the political actors did, i.e. in the media. When Ter Beek took the decision to inform the cabinet about his plans to abandon conscription, Couzy wrote about those plans in a national newspaper and asked for smooth reform in order not to scare off the army's civil and military personnel. Here, however, he touched upon a sensitive issue in the Netherlands. What are the boundaries within which civil servants can act? Moreover, what are the rules for the military?

During Wilmink's tenure he had the same problem when Wilmink reminded him to be loyal to the army when talking to the committee. This brings us to the second limitation of the term loyalty: loyal to whom? Especially senior military officers with tasks on the borderline between military management and political management are torn by different loyalties: to the organisational values and interests and to their political superior or the political system as a whole.⁵⁵

The second self-imposed limitation to successful procedural leadership for the military leaders was the culture of secrecy. All models and calculations used for the conscription committee had been stamped: 'Confidential'. Although this is not a high classification, the military leaders were limited in their ability to make use of those plans when soliciting for support outside the committee. Though there might have been informal consultations where they used some of the figures, when addressing a broad public they only supported their arguments with generalities, not hard facts and figures. In fact, Wilmink seldom talked about the issue in public. One of those scarce moments was when he left office on 1 September 1992, but even then, in his farewell speech, he only marginally committed himself to the issue.⁵⁶

The Meijer-commission had more procedural opportunities. Within the framework set by the minister and the parliamentary motions, they had the ability to interrogate whomever they wanted and they could use all available sources. On the one hand, the committee made use of this ability, by engaging scientific advisors for the labour market study, by organising a conference for the security analysis and by talking to many societal and military representatives. On the other hand, when it came to the crucial information of modelling the future armed forces, they limited their own source of information and relied on the army's calculations for all calculations of the need for recruits.⁵⁷ This in turn gave the army more power and control. It was Couzy and his staff modelling the *demands* set for the future forces, using the frames of the committee but anticipating Wilmink's and probably Van der Vlis' will. Yet, it appeared that the process of the committee was quite separate from another process, which was played and dominated partially by other leaders and which gained more and more importance: the making of the Priority White Paper.

This process went on in the political arena, dominated by the reforming leaders. They set the pace by keeping issues off the agenda. Though Ter Beek admitted that setting up the conscription committee served also to find consensus, its prime objective was to gain time. Time during which he and his collaborators could concentrate on the

evaluation of the Defence White Paper 1991, but also time to see which way the wind would blow on the issue of conscription.

Once he knew the direction - because he was more and more convinced of the operational necessity and partially he had figured out where the political majorities might be - he used judicial procedures to keep hindrance issues off the agenda. The recommendation of the Meijer-commission to ask the Council of State for advice about the necessity for constitutional change gave Ter Beek room to manoeuvre in the debate about the Priority Paper. A step that constitutionally was probably unnecessary, as many legal experts, like the social democratic MP Jurjens, indicated.⁵⁸ Instead of being trapped in procedural discussions, the minister could concentrate on defending the broader plans for the reform of the Dutch defence.

Ter Beek was the one who played the political game. Instead of soliciting broad support, he used the tactic of exclusion. Those who might slow down the process or prevent changes were gradually removed from the game: the defence council in the making of the Priority Paper; Van den Broek with the NGIZ speech; Van der Vlis and Wilmink with the conscription issue, at least during the summer. Or Ter Beek used punishment, like Couzy who nagged about an implementation time of five years during the Battle at Leusden at 1 November 1992 when Ter Beek announced his decision. On that date Ter Beek already told him: 'don't preach to the converted'. However, the general still tried to reach the public and was punished for his article in *NRC* on November 11. Additionally, Ter Beek employed the divide and govern tactic: some information to Frinking, like the NGIZ speech; bi-lateral consultations with the Commanders-in-Chief and the Chief Defence Staff; and above all: never show any one your real intentions until the right moment had arrived to launch your ideas.

Neither in their strategies nor in the outcome do we find evidence for successful conserving leadership in the Dutch case. The conserving actors resisted any change rigidly and they were sole actors. Instead of offering a clear vision for the future of the armed forces, they stuck to large forces, which were outdated, not only financially. More importantly: they lacked the political sensitivity necessary to control the process within a political environment.

The reforming actors acted in quite the opposite way. While they, too, avoided building a grand coalition, they proceeded at a moment they had chosen to launch the first outlines of their future plans. They acted as team actors and avoided any over-commitment. Instead they offered ways out of the crisis, including abandoning conscription or postponing the draft. Most important, however, was the reforming leaders' ability to control the process towards reforms. Besides political skills, such as timing, agenda setting and the control of the forums, it was the leaders' awareness to pay respect to the constraints of the political environment.⁵⁹ By trying not to enforce changes, but sensing the opportunities the first (1989) and second (1992) window of change offered to overcome domestic resistance to change, the reforming leaders of the Dutch defence sector succeeded in the early 1990s.

6.5 Passive and active leadership styles

While some hypotheses receive strong support in this case study, others will have to be rejected. There was no crisis consciousness by the leaders that urged reforms. The actors in the sector only slightly committed themselves to the conscription issue as such. Even within the military top nobody connected his personal future in the armed forces to the outcome of the process. For some hypotheses the case found mixed support. There were plans by the leaders to reform, yet they were not path breaking. The Minister of Defence's NGIZ speech is an example of that, when he announced the necessity of major changes as a possibility, not a necessity. Those who strived for change, started to do so in a later stage of the process and when they did, they followed a different pattern than the theory of reforming leadership might suggest: not actively striving for support, but making use of the procedural room to manoeuvre and building small, not broad, coalitions.

The same holds true for passive conserving leadership. There were actors within the sector trying to prevent changes, yet, they did not develop relevant policy strategies or actively strove for support. This part of the study tries to place the relevant leaders within the sector in the two-dimensional typology of leadership style and type. The aim is to show, that for the Dutch case, active-reforming leadership and active-conserving leadership have to be seen in a different light than in Westminster democracies, where there is more room to manoeuvre for leaders.

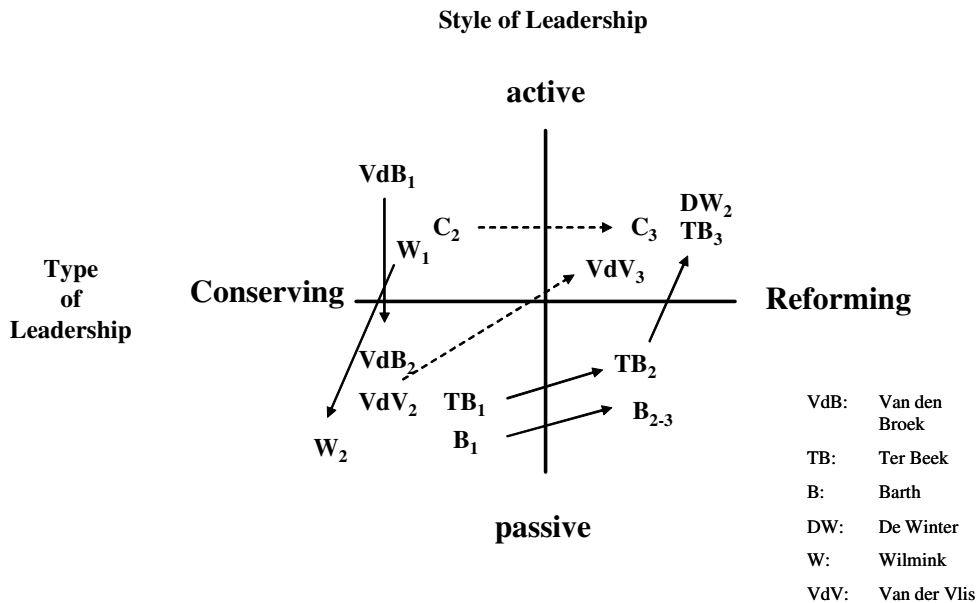


Figure 8: Types and styles of leadership in Dutch defence policymaking towards postponement of draft. Period 1: making of Defence White Paper 1991; period 2: June 1991-summer 1992; period 3: September 1992-May 1993. Note that some actors contributed to the outcome of the process not in all periods.

During the process towards the postponement of the draft three episodes can be distinguished. The first period is the making of the Defence White Paper 1991. In Figure 8 the relevant actors in this period are marked with a 1. The second period is from June

1991, when the debate about the White Paper took place in Parliament until the summer of 1992, when the Minister of Defence was interrogated by the Meijer-commission (2). The last period is from September 1992 until the parliamentary debate about the Priority White Paper 1993, in May 1993 (3).

In the first period the minister of Foreign Affairs, Van den Broek, and the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Wilmink, played a prominent role during the making of the White Paper. Both aimed successfully at conserving the territorial defence and conscription. Ter Beek, and probably Barth, had similar aims with the future of conscription, i.e. maintaining it. Yet, in particular Ter Beek had quite a passive attitude during the making of the defence White Paper; the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the conservative militaries influenced the process.

In the second period, the military leaders Wilmink and Van der Vlis⁶⁰ were highly conserving in their aims but refrained from any active strategy to defend conscription outside their organisation. On the contrary, though they may have had informal talks with other actors, they relied mostly on the committee to do their bidding – with Couzy as liaison. Moreover, Wilmink even followed conservative tactics, preventing his subordinates from thinking about alternative futures. In this period Van den Broek moved from an active to a passive conserving style. While he reacted to Ter Beek's NGIZ speech, at the beginning of April 1992, he did not express his conviction in public or actively strive for support for his plans.⁶¹

During this second period, Ter Beek and Barth changed their tune. Both were increasingly convinced that the postponement of the draft was militarily feasible. Yet, especially Ter Beek was reluctant to strive for this actively. When interviewed by the committee, he did not give the impression that he had changed his opinion. Furthermore, Ter Beek first wanted to find out where the political majorities might be, before committing himself to any option. Important for their change of mind was the changed security environment at the beginning of 1992. Yet, it was necessary that someone took the lead, convincing Barth and Ter Beek that the Soviet Union no longer had an aggressive military capability. It was De Winter who helped with putting those plans on paper.

After the report of the Meijer-commission, Ter Beek took an active reforming course, yet his style differed from some of the hypotheses of reforming leadership. He relied much more on his procedural strength than on leadership capabilities as stated in the theory of 't Hart. Ter Beek refrained from broad coalition building and a clear communication of his plans. Instead, by again keeping conscription off the agenda, now by sending it to the judicial arena, the Minister of Defence had the advantage that political or emotional opposition against the abolition of conscription did not thwart the debate about the Priority White Paper after its presentation. In the end, conscription was postponed. This was, not in the least, a way to win the votes of those who doubted if abolition was wise. Too many people questioned whether the professional armed forces would have the ability to recruit enough young men and women.

There was, however, some active and even reforming leadership among the military. Couzy, in his function as liaison to the Meijer-commission, had the ability to actively influence the outcome of this committee. In the second period, while the Meijer-commission was at work, he was the one presenting the army's plans and calculations, aiming everything at keeping conscription. Yet, already at this stage, it seemed that Couzy had his doubts and that he was actually willing to think about reforms, too. Once abolition had been announced to an inner circle, on 1 November 1992, the turned Gen-

eral obviously supported the reforms, when executing the minister's reforming plans, although he had to sign the loyalty statement. However, the implementation of the Priority White Paper and the postponement of the draft are beyond the aim of this study.

6.6 Leadership and institutional crisis management in the Netherlands: What have we learned?

't Hart already warned that by only looking at top decision makers or persons high in the hierarchy one runs the risk of overemphasising their abilities and influence.⁶² That being said, one cannot deny that Ter Beek was not only successful in achieving his preferred outcome, new modern armed forces, but also in making use of his political skills and the procedural space a Dutch Minister of Defence has towards his organisation and sector. The Dutch case only partially supports the hypotheses of reforming and conserving leadership.

At the beginning of the process, at the end of the Cold War, all actors showed a conservation reflex. A second (micro) window was needed that could be used by the reformers. The case shows that there is room for reforming leadership within the Dutch political system, but when the second window opened, reforming leadership turned out to be different from leadership in Westminster democracies. Terry's and 't Hart's theories find only partial support. Consensus democracies need a less heroic, more 'unobtrusive' form of leadership than their hypotheses suggest. The political system of the Netherlands is able to move beyond incremental policymaking. By sensing the politically feasible moment and by especially using the room for procedural power, leaders have the ability to foster reforms in policy sectors. This is even the case when the policy sector had been static for forty years, like the defence sector during the Cold War. Almost exactly within three and a half years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Netherlands decided to postpone the draft and reform the structure of the armed forces. Ten years later defence is still reforming and the armed forces are still being downsized. In addition, recruiting turned out to be an enduring problem indeed. This, however, is beyond the reach of the study, as is a judgement about the content of the Priority White Paper and moreover about the decision to postpone the draft.

Notes

¹ Van Brouwershaven 1999, this study Chapter 5. Though territorial defence still played an important role in the organisation of the armed forces. The reform of the armed forces is taking years and has actually not been finished completely while writing this study

² Katzenstein 1985

³ Blom 1990

⁴ Haltiner 1998

⁵ Van Brouwershaven 1999: 163

⁶ Compare the parliamentary debate about the white paper on 10 June 1991 page 68f., Van Brouwershaven 1999 (in 5.4)

⁷ Interview Ter Beek, White Paper 1991: 181

⁸ Interviews Hillen, Frinking, Zijlstra

- ⁹ 'Defence Priorities Review. Abridged Version' Dutch ministry of Defence 1993: 2
- ¹⁰ 'Defence Priorities Review. Abridged Version' Dutch ministry of Defence 1993: 2
- ¹¹ The change of the constitution is much more complicated. If the parliament agrees on a change with a qualified majority, those changes only come into effect after parliamentary elections and when this new parliament also votes for the changes with a qualified majority.
- ¹² Cortell & Peterson 1999
- ¹³ Compare 5.6
- ¹⁴ Letter Van den Broek to Ter Beek 06-04-1992, p. 3-4
- ¹⁵ Interview Wilmink
- ¹⁶ Compare interview Barth. Member of Parliament Hillen, one of the proponents of abolition, explicitly underscored this as an aim for his striving for abolition. Compare 5.3
- ¹⁷ Interview Van der Vlis. Van der Vlis forgot someone: his deputy Van den Breemen. Few respondents emphasised that the marine was pro abolition and that he had a double agenda. There is, however, no evidence for that
- ¹⁸ Interview Barth, compare also 5.6
- ¹⁹ Compare 5.6
- ²⁰ Several interviews and Van Brouwershaven 1999
- ²¹ Compare NGIZ speech and interview De Winter
- ²² Ter Beek 1996, interview Ter Beek, interview Ter Beek Volkskrant 04-04-1992
- ²³ Interview Barth
- ²⁴ Ter Beek 1996, interview Ter Beek
- ²⁵ Handout for the minister for his talks to the Meijer-commission on 18 June 1992, Interview Van der Vlis.
- ²⁶ Ter Beek 1996
- ²⁷ Interview Kreemers
- ²⁸ Ter Beek 1996: 143. The Minister of Foreign Affairs would move to the commission of the EU by 1 January 1993. The possibility exists that he was already concentrating on this task by the end of 1992 and that as a consequence he no longer prioritised conscription and Dutch security policy in general.
- ²⁹ Compare also Brouwershaven 1999
- ³⁰ Compare 5.2
- ³¹ Interview Van der Vlis. There was one person who was engaged in the issue at the defence staff, that was Hilderink.
- ³² Interviews Couzy`, Montfrans
- ³³ Couzy 1996
- ³⁴ Compare 5.6
- ³⁵ Interview Kreemers, It is interesting to note that almost all Dutch military on the pictures of Couzy's memories (1996) were marines. Kreemers acknowledged that to Ter Beek the marines stood for the new, expeditionary forces.
- ³⁶ Cortell & Peterson 1999: 188
- ³⁷ Boin, Dekker, 't Hart & Resodihardjo (2001) PATNET, Resodihardjo and Alink EGPA 2002 and/or forthcoming
- ³⁸ Compare 'Ter Beek: Dienstplicht hoort bij sociaal-democratie', *Trouw* 08-06-1991
- ³⁹ Interview Barth
- ⁴⁰ Ter Beek during parliamentary defence committee session 13 May 1993
- ⁴¹ NGIZ and consequently the Priority White Paper including at the end of November 1992 when he already referred to parts of the Paper during the budget debate
- ⁴² After the presentation of the Meijer-commission's report and in the cabinet's meeting when abolition of conscription served as pocket change to financial cut backs, though here he obviously threatened to resign. Compare *Telegraaf* 09-11-1992
- ⁴³ Since he had been dropped at the ministry by the predecessor of the minister and who was as new in the field as the minister himself. Compare for that also Graaff 2002: 19
- ⁴⁴ Brouwershaven 1999: 209
- ⁴⁵ Interview Van der Vlis. The general resigned two years later, when another cut back of the defence budget was unacceptable to him.

- ⁴⁶ The members of the Meijer-commission are not taken into consideration. They might be interesting, too.
- ⁴⁷ Letter Van den Broek to Ter Beek 06-04-1992, p. 3-4
- ⁴⁸ Compare for that Stone 1997: 373-379
- ⁴⁹ Interview Barth
- ⁵⁰ Interview De Wijk
- ⁵¹ Compare interview Van der Vlis
- ⁵² Interview De Wijk
- ⁵³ Interview De Wijk, Hilderink
- ⁵⁴ Interview Brinkman
- ⁵⁵ See *Finer* (1976), *Roman & Tarr* (2001) referred by *Burk* (2002).
- ⁵⁶ 'Dienstplicht nog niet afschaffen', *Legerkoerier* 08-09-1992
- ⁵⁷ Compare for similar critic the De Winter memo and Schoonoord & De Wijk 1994. Note: the Institute Research for Public Policy only calculated the *supply* on the labour market. It was the army the defined the *demand*.
- ⁵⁸ The empirics show that even the legal experts were not sure about that. Whether necessary or not, it served Ter Beek's plans. Compare 5.9
- ⁵⁹ Compare Boin et al 2001 (PATNET)
- ⁶⁰ He became at the end of the period Chief of the Defence Staff, yet, he was a commander of the first army corps when he appeared at the Meijer-commission.
- ⁶¹ Though he might have struggled in November 1992 in the cabinet's meeting when abolition/postponement was decided. Yet, even then, this would not be sufficient for active leadership.
- ⁶² 't Hart 2000: 19

Chapter 7: History of conscription in Sweden

7.1 Introduction

The history of conscription in Sweden much resembled the history of the Dutch conscription from the Napoleonic era on. Both countries experienced a war fatigue after the Napoleonic expansion, principally caused by the explosive costs of those campaigns. Throughout the 19th century, there had also been a struggle between the King and the arising political parties to control the armed forces and lower the tax burden. Like in the Netherlands, the rich had the opportunity to buy themselves free from service and war. In addition, like the Netherlands, but also like France, the modernisation of the armed forces and the change to general conscription occurred around the turn of the 20th century. Another important similarity had been the large defence contributions of the 1950s and 1960s, followed by a declining defence budget as a share of the GDP from the end of the 1960s on. One thing, however, was different from the Dutch experience: the Swedes stayed neutral after World War II.

7.2 The allotment system - 'indelingsverket'

Unlike the Dutch, who were merchants rather than soldiers, the Swedes had a far more aggressive policy towards their neighbouring countries until the 19th century. The reasons for that laid for a large part in the geographical position of the country and the feeling of insecurity that resulted from it. Especially Denmark and Russia had frequently threatened and invaded Sweden throughout the ages. Economics and the wish for an independently growing affluence were other important reasons for the Swedes to have and use a developed army and at some stage a standing army.

In order to understand Swedish military power and the manning of its forces, one has to go back in time, even before the Renaissance. As early as the 13th century, the King had the right to call men to arms. In those days, Sweden was a Kingdom with influential nobility and the King needed the approval of the local nobility. In the 13th century, every free man had the right to carry arms according to the laws of the provinces. With the duty to take part in the defence of the home district, a kind of army may have existed.¹

The fleet was organised according to the so-called 'ledungen'², where peasants formed ship's crews. With the appearance of knights, however, that system became less important for combat by the end of the Middle Ages. Yet, the 'ledungen' was still used as a tax unit for financing the knights and the defence organisation.³

With the expanding claim for influence in the Nordic region as a result of the more efficient building of the empire⁴, the Swedish kings needed a better-organised and available army than they had in the first centuries of the realm. Until the 1680s, every man from the age of 15 had to join the army or navy, if the authorities ordered him to do so. However, only a small part of the male population was actually recruited.⁵ The system that would resolve that was the allotment system, which could be explained as fol-

lows: 'commissioned and non-commissioned officers alike were allotted, in lieu of salary, Crown farms where they could support themselves in peacetime'.⁶ A group of farmers, a 'rotar' or recruitment unit, was obliged to employ a soldier and give him some estate. This system provided the necessary manpower to the campaigns of the Swedish crown.⁷ By supporting a soldier, the farmers paid natural/personal tax. For the understanding of the role of conscription within Swedish society, which is a central issue to this study, it is important to elaborate more on the allotment system.

In 1680 King Karl XI started to change the system to organise and finance the army.⁸ By introducing the allotment system, which had been introduced by the Swedish Parliament in 1683, the state taxed its inhabitants and it could establish a standing army.⁹ The soldiers were between 20 and 55 years old and were not only obliged to fight in war, but also to train on a regular base. While on duty, their relatives had to take care of the crop and when at home, the soldier actually worked for the farmers on a low salary.¹⁰

The provinces and counties had to provide an infantry regiment, consisting of approximately 1,200 soldiers. The whole army had 22 regiments, each consisting of eight companies.¹¹ By the end of the 17th century, the Swedish army could mobilise 43,000 soldiers in the allotment system, with a total army size of 76,000 men.¹² By 1880, this force decreased to 30,000, with a total period of service of thirty days, which had been spread over two years.¹³

In the second half of the 19th century, this recruitment system of soldiers came under pressure. The introduction of the system of general conscription in 1812 was not the actual reason. The relatively weak conscript units were more regarded as militias.¹⁴ It was social change that put pressure on the allotment system. One of the disadvantages of the allotment system had been that some parts of Sweden carried a heavier burden than others.

There had been a second reason for abandoning the allotment system: the abolishment of the taxes on land. Those who lived on unprivileged land had to pay taxes and this covered the farmers who were contributing to the allotment system.¹⁵ With the constitutional reform of Sweden in 1865, the Parliament consisted of two Chambers. While in the First Chamber the privileged nobility were represented, the Second Chamber consisted for a large part of farmers. Due to their growing influence on Swedish politics, this Countrymen party was able to put the issue of unequal taxation on the agenda.¹⁶

The allotment system of the late 17th century not only provided men for the armed forces until the end of the 19th century, it also contributed to the acceptance of the armed forces by the people. That does not necessarily mean that they were eager to join the armed forces. The problems of the second half of the 19th century will show this. Due to its local and regional character – a group of farmers provided a soldier, who in turn was trained at the regional regiment – the allotment system had already contributed to the long tradition of regiments, in which generations of one family had been trained. This tradition had been continued and enforced in the 20th century's conscript system and it would play a role in the post-Cold War reforms of the armed forces.

The renewal of the conscript system: 1860 – 1918

The conscript system privileged the wealthy by giving rich conscripts the right to buy themselves free from service and be replaced during war. This had several implications from a social as well as a military point of view. Firstly, the military burden had been unequally spread over society. Only the lower classes served as a private in the army. Secondly, there was a lack of men who could be educated as officers in the conscript units. Most of the privates had not received the required higher education.¹⁷ The abrogation of this system in 1872 marked the beginning of a 30-year struggle towards a general conscription system.

Besides social and fiscal disadvantages, the allotment-militia system also had its military limitations, as Nevéus points out. Since the beginning of the 19th century, Sweden had a limited conscription for young men between 21 and 25 years. However, the attendance of the training, which actually was rather short with its 30 days, fell short. In 1880 more than one-third of the 60,000 conscripts did not turn up.¹⁸ That figure did not meet the demand of the armed forces, which in 1875 had proposed to modernise the army. To come to a cadre-militia army, they had planned conscripts to join from the age of 21 to 45 from ten and a half months up to seventeen months, depending on the type of service. A refresher training of 80 days had been planned as an addition to the conscription.¹⁹

The successes of the Prussian conscript-army impressed the Swedish military obviously in such a way, that the conscription system in Sweden was given a new impulse.²⁰ Another important reason was that the Swedes, like the Dutch, were aware of the growing power of Prussia, which had led to a shift of the power balance on the continent. Modern mass armies then became imperative to the survival of states.

How different were politics. It appears that in the years from 1880 to 1885, when the change of the conscript system was discussed, the political debate seldom was about the foreign and security implications. Central was the already mentioned taxation system, which the allotment system was part of, and the political struggle for emancipation of the underprivileged class. 'If the 'enemy' is mentioned it is usually a purely imaginary power.'²¹

Therefore, the compromise reached by the parties in Parliament differed from the military's wishes. The Land Defence Commission proposed in 1882, that the conscripts' training should be prolonged to 90 days. The allotment system should be abolished and there should come a new standing force of 25,000 regulars.²² The decision on the proposal led to divisions even within parties, and propaganda campaigns against the proposal had been organised in the rural areas. The aim was the retention of the allotment system and the prevention of extension of the military training.²³ In the end, government and Parliament decided on 9 May 1885 on a compromise: a reduction of 30% of the burden of land taxes and allotment system in exchange for an extension of the military training to 48 days. Nervéus argues that this compromise 'did not involve any large-scale rearmament. Its main value lay in that a deadlock had begun to break and yield possibilities of development towards more modern forms of organisation as regards both defence and taxation.'²⁴

In the years after 1885, the political road was paved to create extensive army reforms. The more so because the compromise had not really satisfied anyone.²⁵ Several new propositions had been put forward in 1891 and 1892, trying – again – to extend the

duration for the training period to 90 days. The conscription question, however, had been closely connected to the right to vote, as in many other countries. The social democrats, founded in 1889, propagated the slogan 'one man – one vote – one rifle'. When a person was obliged to serve, he deserved the right to vote, in times where only 6% of the people, mostly rich, had the right to take part in an election.²⁶

Already in the 1890s, general conscription had become increasingly important to the military organisation, though it took until 1901 for the army reforms to become fact and every man was obliged to serve. The 1892 defence resolution meant an important step in that direction. The numbers of battalions had risen from 65 to 79 by 1896 and the mobilisation time had been brought back to 10-14 days. By 1897, the army could count on 151,000 men.²⁷ This modernisation of the army had been a trade-off between the conservatives, demanding a stronger defence, and the farmers, getting rid of the land-taxes.²⁸

However, by then the issue for the general right to vote had not been solved. Though social democrats, liberals, and the leftist bourgeois repeatedly put the issue on the agenda, it was not solved before 1907-09 and 1918-21 respectively, when suffrage for men and women would be introduced. What had been solved before that, had been the half-hearted reforms of conscription.

It was the newly appointed Minister of Defence, Jesper Crusebjörn, who gave in 1899 the General Staff the assignment to investigate how the allotment system could be abolished and conscription extended to one year. That resulted in a formal directive in June 1900 to create a new army structure.²⁹

On 14 June 1901, known as the birthday of modern conscription in Swedish defence, the Parliament agreed on a compromise.³⁰ The conscripts should come up for the first training during 150 days. This had to be followed by three refresher exercises of 30 days in the second until the fourth year. The conscription age was 21 to 40. The allotment system would be abolished in a stepwise fashion.³¹ The political struggle, however, carried on.

7.3 Conscription and defence policy under neutrality

Swedish defence policy cannot be understood without prior knowledge of Swedish neutrality and the concept of total defence, which has been closely connected to neutrality since the end of World War II.

History of Swedish neutrality

With the coronation of Karl XIV Johan in 1813, Swedish military expansionism ended. The King, formerly the French field marshal Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, steered Sweden on a new security and military course. In the aftermath of the Napoleonic era, he radically changed Swedish foreign policy and brought it more in line with the country's resources.³² Like most European states, the King had learned from the Napoleonic wars that expansive campaigns ruin the treasury. Sweden entered into an alliance with England and its ancient enemy Russia, gave up its possessions on the continent (Pomerania)

and unified in 1814-15 with Norway.³³ Instead of warfare and expansionism, the country started to work towards a Nordic block.

In the decades to come, Karl XIV Johan and his successors had to create a balance between England and Russia, and they did so, by trying not to become aligned.³⁴ That was difficult. The way to neutrality was paved with obstacles. The European powers had an interest in Sweden being aligned. Swedish governments therefore also worked on back-up plans in case neutrality would be violated. Oscar I negotiated in 1853, during the Crimea War, with the Western powers about going into war, though Sweden and Denmark issued a declaration of neutrality when confronted with instability in the Baltic.³⁵

The rising power and ambitions of Prussia in the second half of the 19th century³⁶ made it even more difficult for Sweden to stay neutral. Still during the reign of King Oscar I, it was assumed that Germany had more interest in supporting Sweden/Norway than had England or France, though it seemed that this hope did not have a solid base.³⁷

Conscription and the World Wars

When in 1905 the union between Sweden and Norway ended peacefully, the concept of neutrality was no longer reserved for states at war, but 'started to take over as a maxim for everyday politics during times of peace.'³⁸ With the growing political and military tensions in Europe, this seemed to be the only option for a country like Sweden, which was surrounded by large and militarily strong powers.

Shortly before World War I, the Swedes had secret meetings and negotiations with the German army, in 1910, but parliamentary resistance to an active foreign policy remained strong.³⁹ Yet, within a few days after the outbreak of World War I, Sweden declared its neutrality. Due to conscription, Sweden had large armed forces at its disposal, once they had been mobilised. At the beginning of the First World War, after the transformation to conscription in army and navy had been finished, Sweden had almost 600,000 conscripts after mobilisation. To that end, the conscription law had been changed. In 1914, the basic training had been extended to 250 days and the conscription age had been increased from the age of 20 until 42. To the refresher training of 1901, an additional training of fifteen days in the unit had been added, plus five days for exercising in the 'landstorm' (land protection force). After the First World War the basic training had been reduced to 165 days.⁴⁰

By that time, Sweden already had become a democracy. After the constitutional reforms of the 19th century (in 1840 - the ministerial reform when the government had been divided into ministries, and in 1866 - the representational reform when the bicameral Parliament replaced the Four Estates' Parliament), the first decade of the 20th century brought equal male suffrage. It took until 1921 for the expansion to universal suffrage.

Like the Dutch, Sweden managed to stay out of World War I and like the Dutch, Sweden welcomed the League of Nations after the war. It joined the League in 1920. Though there had been questions concerning neutrality and membership, Swedish politicians were active in the League. The Swedish foreign policy focus on League of Nations issues had an important implication: '[m]atters of security policy were pushed into

the background.’⁴¹ That became, not in the last place, obvious in the 1925 defence resolution.⁴²

In this 1925-defence resolution, the government decided to cut the defence budget by 30%. A few units had been closed and the cadre had shrunk with 40%. The amount of conscripts and conscription training was reduced, too. The training had been reduced to 90 days, with two refresher trainings of 25 days.⁴³ Due to a new classification system, only half of every levy had been drafted.⁴⁴

Those financial and military reductions had been influential on the state of the military organisation at the beginning of World War II. Sweden had been very disappointed with the bankruptcy of the League of Nations, after the Japanese occupation of Manchuria, and the Italian occupation of Abyssinia in 1935. The tensions of the 1930s led the government to a military catch-up during the second half of the 1930s.

With the 1936 defence resolution, which was a ten-year plan, Sweden started a careful rearmament, with the intention to improve the quality of defence. The duration of conscription had been prolonged again. With the 1936 defence resolution, every man between 20 and 45 years had to serve 150 days, with the obligation to refresh once for a period of 25 days. The 1936 defence resolution, however, soon needed extra money, due to the rapid changes in Sweden’s security environment.⁴⁵ The Soviet-German non-aggression pact and the attack on Finland by the Soviet Union in 1939 made clear to the Swedes how vulnerable the country was. Until that time the Swedish government had been convinced, that the great powers of Germany and the Soviet Union were lurking at each other and that they therefore had no time and resources for and interest in the small Northern countries. Therefore, the 1942 defence resolution had been taken already after five years, instead of ten. It boosted the defence rearming effort of the realm. In 1937 the country had 403,000 men for the armed forces at its disposal, of which 186,000 were militia. Eight years later, 600,000 soldiers – almost 10% of the total population – were in the armed forces, with no militia at all and the navy had 126 vessels and the air force even 1,000 airplanes.⁴⁶

At the same time, the Swedish government changed the conscription law that would remain with only minor changes until 1994. In this 1941 conscription-law, the length of the basic training had been set to 360 days. To the already in 1939 introduced extra readiness exercise of 30 days two refresher trainings of 30 days were added, four and nine years after the basic training, and another 30 days nineteen years later. Other important changes were additional readiness exercises, with a maximum of 180 days over the whole conscription time, and the abolition of the ‘landstorm’.⁴⁷

In the end, neither the Germans nor the Russians had occupied Sweden during the war. Johansson & Norman point out Sweden’s situation during World War II very well when they write:

‘Exaggerating slightly, we may say that whereas in the First World War the Swedish government did what it could to assert the *rights* of the neutral state, especially in the field of commercial policy, in the Second World War Sweden witnessed a trial of her ability to live up to her *obligations* as a neutral state.’⁴⁸

The authors refer to the power imbalance in the Nordic region, after the Germans had occupied Denmark and Norway. The government steered a pragmatic course of neutral-

ity. It did not resist the demands of the Germans to have their troops from Norway passing through the country on holiday leave to Germany, or for movements to the Finnish border to fight the Soviets after the outbreak of the war between Germany and the Soviet Union in June 1941. That clearly was a breach of neutrality according to the Hague Conventions, though it was declared by the government that it was an isolated event.⁴⁹ Towards the end of the war, with growing allied successes, Sweden's policy became more and more pro-allies.

Post 1945: The armed forces and the total defence strategy

Sweden entered the United Nations after World War II was over. Contrary to membership of the League of Nations, the country applied without prior interior political debates.⁵⁰ Sweden adhered to the principle of neutrality. Different from the era between the two World Wars, Sweden decided to guarantee its independence with increased military efforts. The realm continued with rearmament, which had already reached a considerable size at the end of the World War.

Though Sweden had been neutral, the strife for a power balance, or stability, in the North was not over. Already before World War II, discussions had taken place about a Nordic defence alliance. After 1948, when Finland signed a friendship treaty with the Soviet Union, Sweden had three choices: follow Norway into a Western alliance, continue neutrality, or search for a collective Northern security.⁵¹ In the end, the objectives of the Scandinavian countries turned out to be incompatible: Norway wanted explicit security guarantees from the United States; Denmark wanted cooperation but pointed at the Swedish-Norwegian contrast. After Sweden rejected cooperation and the Swedish minister of Foreign Affairs declared that Sweden should stay out of the alliance, in February 1949, Nordic defence cooperation had no priority anymore.⁵² In April of the same year Denmark and Norway joined NATO.

In a speech in February 1949, the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs had already pointed to the fact that staying out of any defence cooperation would demand a lot from Swedish defence.⁵³ One important concept that is inseparably connected to those military efforts of the neutral country after World War II, is 'total defence'. This concept was important for the will of the population to defend the country and it was in this way important for the legitimacy of conscription in Sweden during and after the Cold War, though the concept underwent some change in the 1990s. The total defence concept is, like the allotment system and neutrality, central to the Swedish defence and conscription.

The first aim of Swedish defence was to avoid any war against Swedish territory. That meant that defence had to be so strong that the costs of a possible attack against Sweden would exceed possible strategic advantages.⁵⁴ In case, however, Sweden were to be forced into war, the main task for defence would have been to prevent anyone from setting foot on Swedish soil. An official leaflet from 1963 stated: 'Today, however, war is not solely a confrontation between the weapons of different nations. The present-day war is a total war, in which country and population are central. A total defence is indispensable to resist the *total war* successfully.'⁵⁵ Total defence included military, civil, economic, and psychological forms of defence.

The Commander-in-Chief's proposition for the first defence resolution after World War II, the FB 48, used strong language to underscore Sweden's ability for keeping up neutrality. Examples are: 'defence had to rely on military strength, which is the first instrument of security policy', and '[T]he struggle has to be fought to the end even in a hopeless situation. It was even a matter of life or death.'⁵⁶ The defence committee and the government agreed on a budget of almost SEK 1 billion in 1949 prices, which resembles 3,4% of the GDP or almost 12,5 billion in 1992 prices.⁵⁷

In the mid 1950s the defence budget as share of the GDP reached its climax with over 4%. After this time, the armed forces never reached the size of the defence organisation of the hay days of the Cold War, as Table 10 shows. After 1964, the defence budget reduced its share of the GDP, though the budget rose continuously from 1964 SEK 30 billion to almost SEK 40 billion in 1992 prices.⁵⁸

Unit	1948	1964	1972	1982	1992
Infantry Brigades	30	20	20	20*	7
Tank/Mech. Brigades	6	6	6	4	5
Norrlands Brigades	-	4	4	4	5
Destroyer/Frigate	18	17	13	2	-
Other Surface Warship	15	36	33	34	30
Submarines	24	20	22	12	12
Fighter Squadrons	33	30	23	12	11
Attack airplane/Bomber Squadrons	12	12	10	5,5	5,5
Reconnaissance Squadrons	5	8	5	6	6
Personnel (of which employed)	N/A	850,000 (63,000)	850,000 (57,000)	850,000 (43,000)	750,000 (37,000)

Table 10: Parts of the armed forces war organisation 1948-1992. Source: Pallin 1998: 79. * Only eight of the 20 brigades were classified as modern (suited for attacks).

With the 1968 defence resolution, the political consensus about defence started to erode. The bourgeois parties resigned from the defence commission, which was preparing the defence resolution. It reacted to the social democratic government's decision to cut 8% on the defence expenditures in order to balance the state's budget.⁵⁹ In years to come, national economical problems and international détente led to further economics in military spending.⁶⁰ Even when the bourgeois parties held power from 1976-82, they could not change back to a higher defence budget because of the economically difficult times.

Pallin also points to a clash of interests between the military and the politicians from the second half of the 1960s, which led to a different view on the role of defence as part of Swedish security policy. The change of the political generation to the post-World War II generation, the influence of the social democratic antimilitaristic wing and the peace movement in general had been important reasons for that.⁶¹

The financial cutbacks since the end of the 1960s and the changing attitude of the social democratic party towards the role of military and defence in the national security concept did not lead to a direct downsizing of the organisation. Cuts in refresher training of the conscripts and fewer investments in new material had been the consequence.

By the end of the Cold War, most brigades existed and equalled the size of the wartime personnel on paper. In reality, fewer and fewer well-trained conscript soldiers had to work with more and more insufficient and old material.

The Cold War and the role of conscription

With the end of the Second World War, the regime for the individual conscript had been eased. In 1947, the duration for the first basic training period had been set to 330 days and one year later to 270 days. In 1949 the conscription age had been extended. Every man between 19 and 47 was obliged to fulfil military duty. The hands on exercises had been prolonged to 270 days, which would already be reduced to 180 one year later. Also the refresher training had been changed: to three exercises in the combat unit of 30 days, instead of per levy.⁶² Ericson points to the fact that '[w]ith this the conscripts' training adjusted, in fact for the first time since 1901, to the need and the structure of the war-time organisation.' During the Korean War (1950-53) the basic training had been increased to 304 days and there had even been a large refresher exercise with no fewer than 125,000 conscripts.⁶³ By 1954 the minimum serving age had been brought down to 18 years.

Since the defence resolution of 1968, the defence budget effectively declined. The government had already in 1966 decided to cut the military expenditures with 8%. The reasons for that were disappointing results in the local elections for the government - social democrats and agrarians - in combination with negative economical prospects. One year later, the budget had been frozen at the previous year's level. The financial situation of the armed forces became so difficult, that the bourgeois members of the defence commission that traditionally prepared the defence decision, resigned from the assignment by January 1968. The final defence resolution foresaw, among others, the nullifying of the yearly price compensation for material procurement.⁶⁴

In the following years of defence resolutions, not just the budget for weapons' purchase or procurement of equipment declined, but also the number of training and refresher days. With the 1972 resolution, the training days were reduced to 227. On paper the refresher training increased, in reality it declined during the 1970s: 'Rehearsal training as a budget regulator became an often used instrument.'⁶⁵ Table 11 gives an overview of the individual burden for the conscripts during the Cold War until the big duty-law reform in 1995.

In Table 11 the ideal figures had been stated. Yet, in the late 1980s especially the number of refreshers differed from the official figures. While in 1986 45,863 persons joined refresher training in the army combat unit, the figure dropped to 17,183 in 1988. In 1990 the figure had been high again, up to 36,246, still 9,500 less compared to the 1986 figures.⁶⁶

Law, year	decree,	Conscript age	Basic training (days) ⁶⁷	Refresher training	Remarks
1947		20-47	330	Two of 30 days + a after-training exercise of 30 days + readiness exercises	Refresher training was in year four and nine after basic training, the after-training exercise 19 years later. Total amount of readiness exercises could not exceed 180 days
1948 1949		19-47	270	Amount of readiness exercise days to 270	
1950				Three exercises in the combat unit of 30 days, readiness exercises down to maximum of 180 days, again	Switch to the system of exercises in combat units, instead of exercises per levy
1951				Additional command exercise of 10 days	
1952 1954		18-47	304		Constant trainings contingents
1966			255	Five exercises in combat unit of 18 days + five special exercises for command + five mobilisation exercises + readiness exercises	The changes followed the 1960 conscript committee
1972			227	Like 1966	
1986			227	Five exercises in combat unit of 21 days each	Rest like 1966
1992			227		1992 defence resolution (conscripts not needed in the wartime organisation are placed in a so called training's reserve) ⁶⁸
1995		16-70	Conscription maximal 615 Civil duty maximal 320	Maximal 240 days. Basic training and refresher exercises together must not exceed 700 days.	The 1995 law on total defence duty. The obligation to serve can be fulfilled in the form of conscription (18-47 year), civil duty or general service duty (with high readiness).

Table 11: Overview of conscription laws. Source: Tänneryd 2002: 44-45

7.4 Conscription through the ages: a summary

Due to the allotment system, the role of serving the country in the military as a form of natural taxes became much more obvious. Throughout the ages, the rulers not only needed a large army to defend the country's interest, but they used the recruitment system to populate the large country and to ensure a constant agriculture and with that availability of food. For one century that system even existed parallel to the modern form of recruitment, conscription. After the Napoleonic wars, the King introduced conscription, yet its military use had been low, since the conscripts only served in the 'land-storm' (land protection force).

It was the arising bourgeois class and the party of the Countrymen, which started to question the ancient allotment system. To them, as well as to the social democrats of the late 19th century, conscription had been part of the bargain to become emancipated. Like in the Netherlands, the conscript army had not been popular in the military. With the successes of the Prussian conscript army, however, they changed their opinion. The political exchange of modernised armed forces and the reform of the land tax marked the starting point for the modern conscript system in Sweden. Though there always had been a certain element of tradition in fulfilling military duty, until 1901 conscription had not been popular.

Until the First World War, the country made up much ground with regard to the armed forces. After World War I those efforts had slipped. Much more than in the Netherlands, the belief in the abilities of the League of Nations had been influential on the 1925 defence resolution and this led to impressive reductions in the defence budget. One of the victims of that decision had been conscription and the condition of the conscript army. Sweden, however, started to catch-up by the mid 1930s, after the League of Nations appeared to be weak. At the end of World War II the country had such numbers of armed forces at its disposal, which it would have needed at the beginning of the war. Yet, the country had not been occupied, which influenced the choices for the security policy and the armed forces.

With the choice to stay neutral, influenced partially by the failure to build up a Nordic defence, Sweden invested a lot in a strong national defence. The core of that defence had been modern material, produced by its own defence industry, and conscription. By drafting large parts of every levy, by training them for a long time and by having regular refresher training, Sweden had the possibility of mobilising up to 850,000 soldiers. After the financial decline of the armed forces, induced by a policy switch of the social democratic party and forced by economical problems, the strength of the Swedish armed forces had existed merely on paper during the 1970s and 1980s. Yet, unlike the Dutch, serving the country did not become unpopular. During the Cold War conscription had not been a burden, but a necessity to protect the country in the total defence concept.

Notes

¹ Ström 2003, internet

- ² No translation
- ³ Ström 2003, http://hem.passagen.se/mrwalker/military_b.htm
- ⁴ J. Glete 2002: 174
- ⁵ R. Ericson 2001: 254
- ⁶ J. Weibull 1997: 51
- ⁷ T. Nevéus 'Ett Betyggande Försvar. Värnplikten och arméorganisation I svensk politik 1880-1885'. Uppsala, Svensk Bokförlaget/Norstedts, 1965: 345
- ⁸ To complicate the matter: King Gustav IV Adolf had already introduced a similar system in the 1620s, the so-called older military allotment system. Compare A. Pylkkänen 'From the peasant's field to the soldier's table. The allotment of estates and their tax revenues to soldiers and their families in Finland 1636-1654', University of Turku Doctoral thesis, Helsinki, Hakapaino Oy, 1996
- ⁹ Ström 2003, internet.
- ¹⁰ Ström 2003, internet
- ¹¹ Ström 2003, internet
- ¹² Ström 2003, internet
- ¹³ Nevéus 1965: 345
- ¹⁴ Ericson 2001: 259
- ¹⁵ Nevéus 1965: 346
- ¹⁶ Hultqvist 1959
- ¹⁷ Hultqvist 1959: 208
- ¹⁸ Nevéus 1965: 345
- ¹⁹ Ericson 1999: 95
- ²⁰ Ericson 2001: 259
- ²¹ Hultqvist 1959: 354
- ²² Nevéus 1965: 349
- ²³ Nevéus 1965: 350
- ²⁴ Nevéus 1965: 354
- ²⁵ Ericson 1999: 99
- ²⁶ Ericson 1999: 100
- ²⁷ Ericson 1999: 100-103
- ²⁸ Weibull 1997: 97
- ²⁹ Ericson 1999: 107
- ³⁰ Ericson 1999: 109
- ³¹ Ericson 1999: 109-110
- ³² 'Tatsachen über Schweden', Swedish Institute, 2002
- ³³ Carlgren 1984: 11
- ³⁴ Carlgren 1984: 12
- ³⁵ Carlgren 1984: 13
- ³⁶ Compare Chapter History of Dutch Defence
- ³⁷ Carlgren 1984: 16
- ³⁸ Carlgren 1984: 18
- ³⁹ Pallin 1998: 13
- ⁴⁰ Tänneryd 2002:43
- ⁴¹ Carlgren 1984: 26
- ⁴² Defence resolutions in Sweden have the function of a Defence White Paper. Made in close collaboration between government and Parliament, they emphasise the parliamentary system and the parliamentary authority in defence. The first defence resolutions had a scope of 10 years, yet, throughout the decades, international tensions and internal struggles about defence made shorter periods necessary. In chapter 8.2 the system will be described in depth.
- ⁴³ Ericson 1999: 121-122
- ⁴⁴ Pallin 1998: 15
- ⁴⁵ Böhme 1984: 122
- ⁴⁶ Böhme 1984: 127; Pallin 1998: 17
- ⁴⁷ Ericson 1999:137, Tänneryd 2002: 44

- ⁴⁸ Johansson & Norman 1984: 83, their italics
- ⁴⁹ Johansson & Norman 1984: 83-84. Not to mention the deliverance of iron ore to the German armament industry.
- ⁵⁰ Johansson & Norman 1984: 84
- ⁵¹ Pallin 1998: 21
- ⁵² Pallin 1998: 22
- ⁵³ Pallin 1998: 22
- ⁵⁴ Schwedische Gesamtverteidigung 1963: 3
- ⁵⁵ Schwedische Gesamtverteidigung 1963: 3, their italics
- ⁵⁶ Pallin 1998: 33
- ⁵⁷ Pallin 1998: 31, 61
- ⁵⁸ Pallin 1998: 61
- ⁵⁹ Pallin 1998: 41f.
- ⁶⁰ Pallin 89-91
- ⁶¹ Pallin 1998: 65
- ⁶² Pallin 1998: 35
- ⁶³ Ericson 1999: 154
- ⁶⁴ Pallin 1998: 42
- ⁶⁵ Ericson 1999: 154
- ⁶⁶ Värnpliktsverket "Statistika uppgifter enligt Pliktutrednings önskemål", report for the 1992 Total Duty Investigation, archives.
- ⁶⁷ The duration of basic training referred to in the table is the time for the normal soldiers. Specialists and conscripts in commanding postings had to serve longer.
- ⁶⁸ The training reserve, its function and how it came up will be explained in depth in the Swedish empirical chapter.

Chapter 8: From general to special conscription in Sweden

8.1 Introduction

This study started with the question why the Netherlands abandoned military conscription soon after the Cold War, while Sweden has retained it to the present day. In the foregoing chapters, it was shown that in the Dutch case reforming leadership made use of the security, financial, and political climate to overcome structural constraints, bureau political struggles, and, above all, conservative obstruction. The Dutch Parliament decided in 1993 to retain conscription, but to postpone the draft.

Like the empirical chapter on conscription in the Netherlands, the structure of this chapter on Swedish military conscription is chronological. The Swedish empirics by far exceed the Dutch in terms of time. One important reason to compare those cases is that they are representing outliers in the history of conscription after the Cold War. An overview of the institutional leaders will be given in the analytical chapter, which will facilitate and validate the comparison between the two cases. The Swedish way of defence policymaking is so different from the Dutch case, that it is necessary to describe it before addressing empirics.

During the fourteen years after the collapse of communism, the number of conscripts went down from more than 44,000 in the 1980s to fewer than 15,000 by the year 2002. The actual figures differ, in particular the recent figures of draftees and dropouts. There is a discrepancy between official and unofficial figures, which is one of the issues central to this chapter. As early as the 1980s, but accelerating after the end of the Cold War, the number of army units had diminished from 28 brigades to six. However, military conscription still existed in spite of tremendous economical problems and a restructuring of the armed forces from territorial defence to network centric warfare with improved capabilities to participate in international operations.

Throughout the 1990s, different Ministers of Defence came up with suggestions to maintain the institution of the military draft. There is still an ongoing debate in Sweden about the possibility of even enlarging the number of young men and women serving their country and society in a military or civil way.

Forced by the big financial problems of the late 1980s, fewer and fewer young men of an annual intake had been drafted. While at the beginning of the 1980s almost everybody who could, also fulfilled his duty, at the beginning of the 1990s the proportion of a levy actually serving, reached below 75%: only 41,871 of the 57,833 enrolled men.¹ By 1991, a first inquiry about the future of conscription in Sweden after the Cold War was started. Initiated by the social democratic Minister Roine Carlsson, this so-called '1992 Total Defence Duty Inquiry' never had the task to abandon conscription, but to find ways to reorganise the system. One year later, the inquiry came with a recommendation to draft only the number actually needed, instead of a surplus with no military use. The surplus of young men, who were able to serve but for whom no posting had been available, should be placed in a so-called training's reserve, a pool which would enable the authorities to train them in a short period in case of insecure times. The inquiry also advised the centre-right government, in office from autumn 1991 until the autumn of

1994, to combine different military and civic duty laws to one total defence duty. The law came into effect by January 1995.

During and after that inquiry, financial problems forced the Swedish government to cut spending. The armed forces were one of the main retrenchment areas, which led to a further reduction of conscripts. This posed a dilemma on defence policy makers and military leaders, in particular the Commander-in-Chief. The dilemma was where to save money: by cutting back on procurement or by calling up fewer young men? The latter option was strongly rejected by the social democratic Minister Thage G. Peterson (1994-1997), who saw conscription as a core ingredient of the concept of people's defence.

Björn von Sydow, the social democratic Minister of Defence from 1997 until 2002, instigated a new inquiry into conscription. By the end of 2000, the 1998 inquiry committee came up with the advice to compensate economically those few drafted and give them more civil credit for their military activities. This inquiry also recommended making military service more attractive for women. The committee marked another important stage in the process to be analysed.

By the year 2003 Sweden has gotten a special conscription instead of a general one. Though every man who is able to serve is conscripted, only those who are willing to serve are actually drafted. It is no longer difficult to avoid service for conscious objectors or those who simply do not want to serve the country. The Commander-in Chief Johan Hederstedt, and the Minister of Defence Leny Björklund, both emphasise that defence is still the people's defence, but new tasks and ever diminishing armed forces only provide postings for the best.² After 14 years of post Cold War security and defence policy, Sweden has a recruitment system that is best described with the sociological term 'voluntarism based on conscription'. This chapter will show how it came about Sweden, up to the present time arrived at this rather unsocial democratic system of elitist selection of soldiers. Before turning to that the Swedish defence policymaking process will be introduced.

8.2 The organisation of Swedish defence policymaking

Swedish politics in brief

Years	Prime Minister	Party	Government	Support
1988-1991	Ingvar Carlsson	SAP	SAP	156
1991-1994	Carl Bildt	Conservatives	Cons., C, Lib., CD	170
1994-1996	Ingvar Carlsson	SAP	SAP	161
1996-1998	Göran Persson	SAP	SAP	161
1998-2002	Göran Persson	SAP	SAP	131

Table 12: Government composition in Sweden. With a total of 349 seats, 175 seats form the majority, Source: Arter 1999, Tatsachen über Schweden 2001

During the period under study, 1989 until 2002, Sweden was governed by minority governments, which is not unusual for the country. For the foreign observer, however,

some explanations might be necessary to understand the way of policymaking in Sweden.

Though Sweden is known as a traditional social democratic country, it regularly knew centre-left governments. That happened for example in the second half of the 1970s and, important to this study, from 1991-1994. During the rest of the 1990s the country had social democratic dominated governments (Table 12).

All governments of the 1990s have been minority cabinets, which is in Sweden rather the rule than the exception.³

Party	1988	1991	1994	1998
Left-Communists	5,9	4,5	6,2	12,0
Social Democrats	43,2	37,7	45,3	36,4
Liberals	12,2	9,1	7,2	4,7
Conservatives	18,3	21,9	22,4	22,9
Centre Party	11,4	8,5	7,7	5,1
Christian Democrats	2,9	7,1	4,1	11,8
New Democrats	-	6,7	1,2	0,1
Greens	5,5	3,4	5,0	4,5

Table 13: Swedish general election results 1988-2002 in % of votes. Source: Tatsachen über Schweden, December 2001

Since the Swedish system of policymaking differs markedly from the Dutch one, it is worth representing it in some detail first. Executive decision-making within a ministry is not delegated to a single minister, but is expected to express the entire cabinet's views. Yet, department ministers have 'substantial control over routine matters as well as over the budgetary process.'⁴ Defence policymaking in Sweden is traditionally based on broad consensus. Like most Western democracies, the Swedish parliamentary work is facilitated by the work of standing committees. In the Swedish standing defence committee, government propositions for the budget, defence resolutions, and other relevant bills will be debated. Parliamentarians can amend bills by putting forward motions.

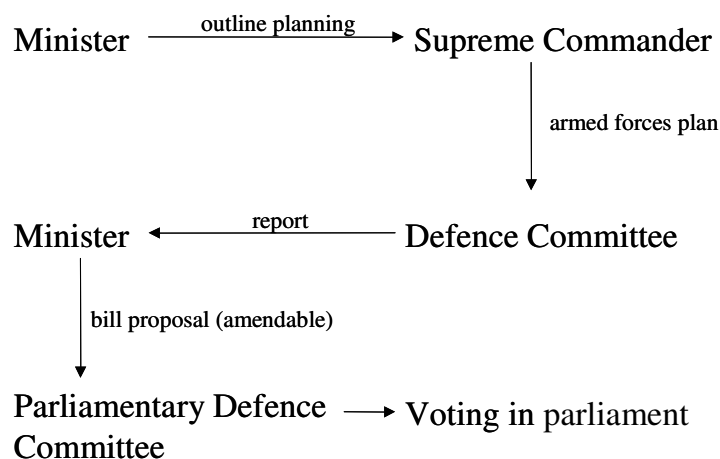


Figure 9: Defence policymaking until the 1990s. Defence committee subset of Parliamentary defence committee

Defence policy planning

What makes the Swedish defence system special is the way in which propositions for the different bills are made. Until the beginning of the 1990s, the main policy paper for the Swedish defence had been the five-year plan, the so-called defence resolution. After a ministerial outset, the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces would present an analysis of military needs for the upcoming five years. This document is often called 'planning for the armed forces' or 'armed forces investigation'.

This analysis served as a starting point for the parliamentary process. As an important tool to reach consensus about defence, defence committees had been appointed every time anew to investigate publicly the five-year military plan. All political parties in Parliament had been represented, though it should not be confused with the parliamentary defence committee. The report of the investigation committee served as a base for the Defence Minister's proposal, which in turn was debated about by the standing parliamentary committee of defence. Salient detail: the members of the investigation committee also had a seat in the parliamentary standing committee. The bill they decided on became the defence resolution. The five-year plan is in a way the Swedish defence White Paper.

However, at the beginning of the 1990s, this process – the traditional way of making defence policy – came under severe pressure. Significant economical problems and the changing world order after the fall of the Berlin Wall put structural constraints on the decision making process. The situation was even worse than in 1968. At the same time, the political climate in Sweden was changing. The centre-right parties gained momentum and strategic non-cooperation in the committee served election purposes. This led to only minor reports and a failure (and in the end 'implosion') of the committee.⁵

It was the defence committee appointed by the government in 1988, which failed. When the committee published its security report 'Swedish security policy in a changing world' in January 1990, it had no chance to foresee the German unification and the agreements between the German Chancellor Kohl and the Soviet Union leader Gorbatsjov about troop reductions in the former GDR.⁶ In addition, Sweden was facing a severe economical and financial crisis by the end of the 1980s.

Especially this latter crisis had severe political consequences. While the social democratic led-government tried to manage the crisis between August 1989 and September 1990, its own rank and file, i.e. the labour party and trade unions, thwarted the efforts 'that demanded sacrifice from consumers and workers.'⁷ The public opinion was turning in favour of the bourgeois opposition consisting of Conservative Party, Liberal Party, Centre Party, and Christian Democrats. In addition, the Moderate Party, led by Bildt, demanded, as the Commander-in-Chief, a significant increase of the defence budget.⁸ For the opposing centre-right parties, obstructing the defence policy process was a strategic choice in the light of the upcoming election of September 1991. In the end, the committee never delivered a final report.⁹

The post Cold War era: A new Swedish Defence Commission

The conservative Minister Anders Björck decided not to revitalise the defence committee. Instead, he used a reduced group of parliamentarians as a sounding board during the making of his defence resolution. This commission was to inform the opposition about the government's plans.

In 1994, when the social democrats regained power, this commission consisting of parliamentarians of all parties supported by a civil servant from the ministry of Defence was upgraded. The social democratic minority government needed a broad consensus on the future four-year plans that provided a quicker reaction to environmental changes. They used the commission as a forum for consultations¹⁰.

Different from the prior committee, where the members voted on the outcome, the chairman of the new commission would decide on the outcome. This led to the need to gain broad consensus, since neglecting the opposition's will too often would make the commission superfluous.¹¹ Yet, the commission was an important 'forum for consultations between representatives of the government and representatives of the political parties of Parliament.'¹² The report(s) of the committee served as a base for government's proposals, which would be debated upon in the standing committee. They would form the basis for the new defence planning, where defence resolutions regularly referred to, which led to a variable planning time of three to five years. During the last few years this commission has also released many debate papers, among others, concerning new threats and new tasks for the armed forces.

The main difference with the foregoing system is, that the ministry of Defence became much more influential and, above all, responsible for defence resolutions. Whereas the former method of defence planning had given a lot of responsibility to the parliamentarians, who in the main not only prepared decisions, but also decided upon them, the new consultations played the ball back to the ministry. This is especially reflected in the role of the secretary of the commission, who is employed by the ministry of Defence.

The inquiry system

A third important way of making policy in Sweden is inquiries¹³. Requested by either a ministry, a government authority or an advocacy group, an inquiry will be started about a technically and/or politically difficult issue. The government, i.e. the responsible Minister, sets the terms of reference for the committee. Those terms very clearly restrict the task of the committee. They also set the duration of the committee's work and the participating members. This inquiry committee consists of experts in the field and sometimes politicians. After the inquiry, where more experts can be heard or authorities will be asked, the committee comes up with an official report called 'Statens Offentliga Utredning' (State's Public Inquiry – SOU)¹⁴. Advocacy groups, relevant authorities and other stakeholders now have the chance to react on this report in an official reply procedure¹⁵. Their reactions, the committee's ideas and the government's ideas about the future bill are then combined in a government's proposal. In this proposal, the government explains why it agrees or disagrees with the committee's report or the considerations of the other relevant stakeholders. It comes up with its conclusions and the draft of a bill¹⁶.

The government's proposal is then discussed in the standing committee, in this case the standing committee of defence. The Swedish inquiries serve as a political panacea, due to their depoliticising effect/use.

	Parliamentary Committee on Defence ¹⁷	Defence Committee	Swedish Defence Commission ¹⁸	Inquiry
Members	Parliamentarians	Parliamentarians	Parliamentarians	Experts and politicians of all levels (national, regional, local)
Composition	17 members and 17 alternate members, representing parties in proportion to seats in Parliament		8 members, of all parliamentary parties	Depending on task
Tasks	Preparation of business before final decision in Parliament	Prepare the 5 year defence plan, called Defence Resolution	'Forum for consultations between representatives of the government and the political parties of Parliament'. Prepares the new defence resolution	In 1992 to merge different total defence duties; In 1998 to raise motivation of those who should serve
Issues	Military and civil aspects of total defence; matters of coordination of total defence activities, peace-time emergency and rescue services	Security and defence policy	Long range development of Swedish defence and security policy.	All societal issues. In this study relevant the two total defence duty commissions, trying to advise on military, financial, social, juridical and political issues
Other	Permanent organ of the parliamentary work	Stopped in 1990 after political crisis	Started in 1994 Due to rapid changes in the security environment long-term plan is regularly checked and if necessary changed. Duration of defence resolution 5 years down to 3 years	Stakeholders can react to the report. Those reactions are referred to, but not necessarily taken into account, in the government's bill proposal. Two important inquiries about conscription after Cold War: 1991-1992 and 1998-2000

Table 14: Overview of commissions and committees in Swedish defence policy process

To conclude, the defence commission is an important consultation and policymaking tool on a regular basis. The inquiry committees are used for important decisions about political, societal, juridical, or technical matters. The standing committee on defence is a parliamentary body that prepares the decisions on all governmental proposals, which are often based on the work of the foregoing two bodies.

Important defence organisations

The Swedish executive is quite decentralised. At the ministry of Defence in Stockholm there are only 130 people working. Much of the work is done by decentralised authorities.

Pliktverket. For conscription, the most important decentralised organisation is the National Service Administration (Pliktverket), until 1995 called 'Värnplikverket'. It is responsible for the enrolment and testing of those obliged to serve. Since the merge of various total defence laws in 1995, the authority not only enrolls the military conscripts, but everybody who might serve in the total defence. The organisation provides all relevant authorities, i.e. the military, civil defence authorities, and other organisations and companies with the personnel they need. This is done by matching the demands with the data of the approximate 2 million men and women who are registered in detail.¹⁹

ÖCB/KBM. Until 2002 the Swedish Agency for Civil Emergency Planning (ÖCB) had been the 'state agency responsible for the overall coordination of activities aimed at strengthening society's capacity to deal with emergencies.'²⁰ The coordination of the civilian defence, in which many civil agencies had been involved, also maintained close relations to the armed forces. The fields of activity included firstly: monitoring the international environment for identifying relevant developments. Secondly, the agency deployed many international activities to build confidence, especially within NATO's partnership for peace (PfP). Thirdly, ÖCB developed plans and structures for crisis management and trained decision-makers. Fourthly, the agency worked closely together with the industry to ensure the industrial supply of the country during emergencies. Finally, the agency would have the responsibility of ensuring sufficient transport during a crisis. Throughout the years, ÖCB had been an important stakeholder in the defence sector, not in the least since it had to advise the government and different committees about the manning of the civil defence. ÖCB was replaced by the Swedish Emergency Management Agency – (SEMA or in Swedish KBM) in July 2002. Since that time it has also taken on some of the tasks of the National Board of Psychological Defence. The latter is also responsible for conducting and publishing national opinion polls on security and defence matters.

Conscript's Council. The Conscript's Council (Värnpliktsrådet) is the interest representation of the conscripts. It started as a reaction to and a solution of the problems of conscripts in military training and to improve their social circumstances. While until the 1970s protests often had been spontaneously organised on a local level, the conscripts started to be more organised in conferences and working groups to share experiences. During the 1970s the conscript movement became more concrete. It demanded, among others, a voice for the conscripts, guaranteed by law, abolition of arrest, constant night permission and higher demobilisation payments. In 1980 the conscripts' conference decided to found a conscript union, which changed its name into Conscripts' Council in

1984.²¹ The annual conference is an important forum for all conscripts, with the Commander-in-Chief and the Minister of Defence as speakers. It receives the attention of the national media.

Society and Defence. The Swedish organisation 'Folk och Försvar' (Society and Defence – FoF) is an independent association of national organisations supporting the total defence. Its task is foremost to serve as a forum for those organisations and the citizens, with the aim to strengthen the bonds between them. The organisation informs the population about important decisions by Parliament and government concerning security and defence policy. To that end, it publishes information about all subjects related to defence and security, including foreign policy. Society and Defence organises courses and seminars, but its most important event is the annual conference. During four days in February, top decision makers, the military leaders and almost all stakeholders within the sector meet to share their ideas about important defence and security issues. It is a major networking and socialising event; the more so as the attendants not only discuss, but also socialise and enjoy themselves.²²

8.3 Coping with the end of the Cold War

The rapid political changes in the communist world, including the German unification, the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union placed the neutral country of Sweden for some problems. While many NATO countries, including the Netherlands, reduced their armed forces relatively quickly and decided, at least in the case of Belgium and the Netherlands, to abandon conscription, Sweden was reluctant to reduce its armed forces.

Though there had been a reduction trend since the 1980s - the number of brigades for example went down from 29 to 21 - the Swedish defence policy slowed down further reductions. At the beginning of the 1990s the centre-right government even raised the investments in the invasion defence. The future had been too insecure to forecast for the majority within the sector. Aside from the insecure prospects for Sweden's security, the traditional way of Swedish defence policymaking prevented faster adaptations to the new environment. The traditional five-year plan of defence had been decided two years before the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

The next decision was expected in 1991, when a financial and economical crisis hit the country, which would lead to a change of government. The Social Democrats were replaced by a centre-right government. The new conservative coalition concentrated more on defence than its left-wing predecessor, though the choice for procurement was a trade-off between equipment and the size of the organisation. Consequently, the number of young men drafted further declined, to three-fifth of an annual levy. In the plans of the policy makers it would eventually take the Swedes until 1995 to reach the real end of the Cold War.

The 1988 Armed Forces Investigation: selective placement of conscripts

It is imperative to start with the defence decision 1988 and the plans made by the Commander-in-Chief, General Bengt Gustafsson, to understand the role that conscription

played in the post Cold War defence reorientation. He was the Commander-in-Chief of the Swedish armed forces from 1986-1994, which exceeded the regular six-year term by two years. Already in the beginning of his term, an ever-decreasing defence budget led to old equipment and an only partially functional organisation. One of the consequences had been a surplus of conscripts. There had not been enough wartime postings in the armed forces for every young man of the levies of approximately 50,000 young men a year. This section will describe the 1987-defence resolutions. Though the first of these resolutions falls outside the period under investigation, it is necessary to refer to it, since already at that time financial problems influenced the manning of the armed forces. The ideas General Gustafsson proposed concerning conscription were contested by different actors.

As early as the 1980s, budget cutbacks by the government forced the armed forces to economise and reduce from 29 to 21 brigades. The large Cold War armed forces of the 1950s and 1960s became financially less bearable. That became obvious, not in least in the equipment. What once used to be modern was outdated in the mid 1980s and partially decrepit. 600 Swedish tanks, which could only fire in a stationary position, and the Swedish Viggen airplane were about to be replaced.

The share of the defence budget in the GDP decreased from almost 4% by the end of the 1960s to 2,7% in 1987²³. At the same time, the general trend in growing affluence and as a consequence growing income during the 1970s, also hit the armed forces. The personnel costs had exploded within 20 years, though the number of employed persons had decreased by approximately 20% and the training days for conscripts had decreased by approximately 35% since 1970.²⁴ The costs for the employees on the other hand had increased by 55% since 1970 and the costs for conscripts had gone up in real prices with 150% to almost 1 billion crowns a year.²⁵ During the two decades, 1970s and 1980s, when the costs for personnel went up, the quality of the equipment went down.

While the navy and the air force had been reduced in size, which enabled a modernisation of the equipment, the army stayed at the same level of units. This had severe implications for the quality of the personnel. There was not enough money to train everyone sufficiently and especially the refresher training suffered. Together with the old equipment, the state of the army deteriorated.

The financial developments led to an imbalance between the main components of the armed force's organisation. While in 1970 those four components, i.e. personnel, conscripts, material endurance and readiness training, used to be balanced, the Commander-in-Chief observed a shift towards a disadvantage of the two latter ones. His aim therefore was to rebalance those components. Especially the refresher training should be strengthened again.²⁶

The Commander-in-Chief's solution

The main task of the Commander-in-Chief should be the presentation of a long-term plan for the army, complementing the 1987 Defence Resolution and mainly covering the training's system and the peacetime or basic organisation. It would exceed the focus of this study to present the Commander-in-Chief's investigation in-depth. Instead, the implications for the conscript system should be central. And it was central to the Armed Force's investigation 1988.²⁷

The defence investigation 1988 (FU88) was one of three major plans, which General Gustafsson presented at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s.²⁸ It was a supplement to the 1987-defence resolution by the government, by its social democratic Minister of Defence, Roine Carlsson. While the planning for the navy and the air force had been delivered on time, i.e. 1987, the planning for the army was difficult to do, because of the budgetary situation. This is why the plan was dated 1988, though it referred to the defence resolution 1987.

To meet the demands of the state's finances as well as those of the general conscription (i.e. that every capable man between 18 and 47 should fulfil his military duty) the Commander-in-Chief recommended a shortened training period for some of the conscripts. One-third of a levy should be trained to secure installations, which were important to the total defence concept.

General Gustafsson argued that due to technical improvements in the defence industry strategic attacks became a greater possibility. Possible aggressors had the equipment to attack strategic objects, total defence's infrastructure and large accumulations of people with short military warning. According to the Commander-in-Chief, there was no force in Sweden available that could be on the spot in a short time to provide sufficient protection to strategically important targets. For this reason he introduced the so-called protection force in his plans.

Unit Type	Number of units/men		
	Preferred Option	Maximum Option	Mix of both Options (less preferred)
Home Guard	125,000	125,000	125,000
Protection Force	110,000	110,000	110,000
Basic Training	2,5	2,5	2,5
Territorial Defence	120,000	175,000	165,000
Basic Training	7,5	5	5
Divisional Unit	108,000	110,000	110,000
Norrland Brigade	5	5	5
Norrland Mech. Brigade	1 ++	1	1++
Brigade G	1+	1	1
Mech. Brigade S	4	4	4
Infantry Brigade	3	8	4-8
Tank Brigade	2	0	2-0

Table 15: Alternative options for army units and personnel. Source: FU 88, XV

Along the regular territorial forces and the home guard, a briefly trained protection force of 110,000 men should be set up. With a trainings period of five months this force would be able to protect the 4,000 targets in the country, which warranted protection. The Commander-in-Chief introduced different models, wherein the size of the home guard and the protection force remained the same, viz. 125,000 and 110,000 respectively. What changed were the numbers of the territorial forces, reaching from 120,000 up to 175,000, and their corresponding number of brigades (16-18).

The protection force, officially presented as an important strategic innovation, but unofficially designed to cope with the surplus of conscripts, which were not needed in the wartime organisation, was only short-lived. A short-term training had been introduced as a test by the social democratic Minister of Defence, Roine Carlsson. Within a period of five months conscripts would be trained to guard strategic targets. By the end of 1991, the new Minister of Defence, the conservative A. Björck, abandoned this training. To him those forces were of very limited military use.²⁹

The Commander-in-Chief, General Gustafsson, was very disappointed that his concept of a protection force, but also the short-term training, had been abandoned. Even more than ten years later, he was convinced that the bulk of the army, especially the Chief of the Army Åke Sagrén, had been lobbying against his plans. General Gustafsson got the impression that the army almost thought that it was he who endangered conscription and not the choices of the politicians: 'They did not believe that the politicians would do anything against the conscription system, because the politicians had talked about conscription so nicely in the past.'³⁰ Though the General was a politically very experienced man, his ideas about the protection force, which especially should contribute to the continuation of a high number of conscripts, had no chance.

In an interview with *Dagens Nyheter* at the beginning of 1995 the army chief, General Sagrén, admitted that he was no supporter of short-term training. When the subject had been put on the agenda, again, he pointed explicitly to the test of a short training in the beginning of the 1990s: 'We found five months very short already, almost immoral to accept.'³¹

His Chief of Staff, Lennart Rönnerberg, remembers that the plans of the Commander-in-Chief split the army. On the one hand, there had been slightly modernised units; on the other hand, there had been units with less training and with the material leftovers of the old brigades. The training those soldiers received felt short, because they had not even learned how to move the units in case of an enemy's attack. 'Sagrén and I thought it was not right.'³² When Björck abolished this training, however, Rönnerberg tried to prevent it, appealing directly to the Minister of Defence. An important reason for that had been that those young men would be facing unemployment.³³

8.4 The armed forces own plans for the future forces

Between the 1992 Defence Resolution and the earlier one of 1987, the security environment of Sweden had changed rapidly. Due to the break-up of the bi-polar world order and the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq in 1990, the security of Sweden became less predictable. At the start of the 1990s the instability in the former Soviet Union in particular put a mark on the Swedish security definition and the armed forces. The Commander-in-Chief admitted that the immediate risk of a confrontation between the super powers had disappeared and that the situation was hopeful, but that the developments were characterised by unpredictability and insecurity the more the Soviet Union disintegrated.³⁴

At the same time, interior political and financial problems delayed and even altered the traditional way of Swedish defence policymaking. Due to Swedish economical and

financial problems in combination with the political tactics of the non-socialist opposition in the light of the upcoming national elections in 1991, the defence resolution had been delayed by one year, to 1992. Commander-in-Chief Gustafsson presented his document for the Defence Resolution 1992, in June 1991 – three months before the national elections.

The government, the social democrats, Roine Carlsson, as Minister of Defence, and his Junior Minister, Jan Nygren, instructed the Commander-in-Chief to come up with an armed forces investigation, calculating three alternatives: a lower (C), stable (B), and a higher budget, with an increase of 3% a year (A) (Figure 10). Those budgets incorporated different forms of ambition level, ranging from the traditional tasks, like the defence of the Swedish territory, without the possibility to modernise, up to the a broader range of tasks, including the possibility to conduct the necessary modernisation of the armed forces. The latter one was also important for the support of the Swedish defence industry that always played an important role in the Swedish independence from other powers, an important condition for neutrality. In fact, the instruction assumed unchanged resources for defence for the upcoming five years, i.e. 30,68 billion crowns a year (in February 1990), which would resemble 32,05 billion crowns a year at February 1991-prices.

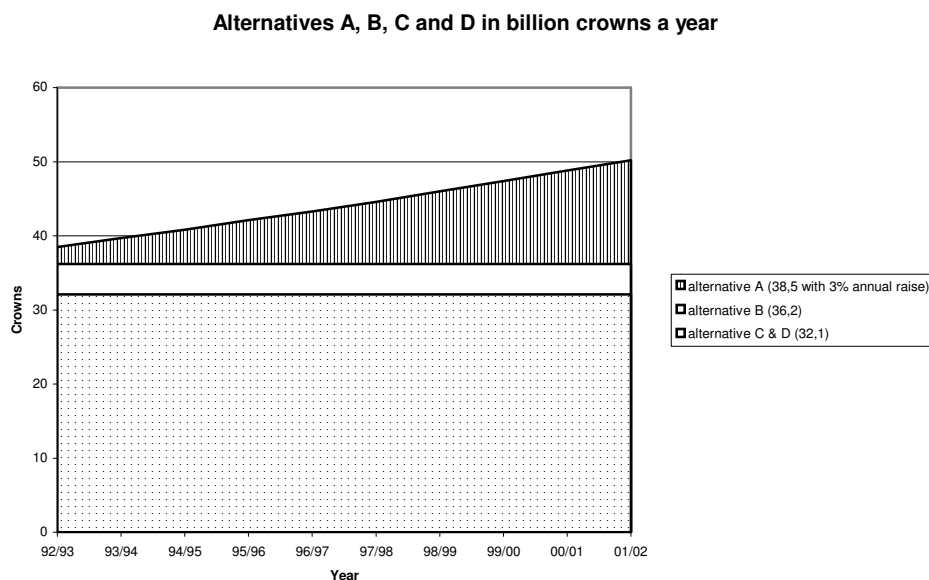


Figure 10: Alternatives A, B, C and D in billion crowns a year (without reservations) (source: ÖB 92: III)

However, the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces added one alternative. He had been aware of the fact that the directives of the government aimed at alternative C with a lower financial and ambition level. With the recent financial problems in mind, the Commander-in-Chief did not exclude the possibility that the budget in the end would decline even further. That is why he introduced the possibility of drafting fewer young men each year. This way the armed forces could be better prepared³⁵ and the support for the defence industry could be continued, ‘because there are not enough resources to

keep both, a general conscription and a large Swedish defence industry.’³⁶ That, however, could be considered a bluff, since the General in fact was a huge defender of conscription. He even proposed to have twenty brigades, ten very well equipped and ten less equipped, share equipment during training, to keep up the number of conscripts.³⁷

The Minister reacted fiercely to this advice, which he had not sought and which did not suit his preferences. Even the media were astonished that Roine Carlsson was furious, since they generally portrayed him as a reserved politician. In a letter to the Commander-in-Chief the Minister reminded him that he only should deliver the investigations the government desired and ordered, which was translated by one of the biggest newspapers in Sweden to ‘I don’t want to hear that anymore. Keep quiet until I ask you.’³⁸ His Junior Minister, Nygren, emphasised in the same article, that the government never asked for such a statement from the Commander-in-Chief and that they were not allowing themselves to be forced into a debate on the issue.

Just one month before, on 6 May 1991, the Minister of Defence gave a directive to start an investigation about the modernisation and restructuring of conscription. Its brief was to merge the laws and regulations of different military and civil duties within the total defence and to come up with recommendations how to handle the surplus of conscripts. In the light of that directive it should be no surprise that the government was not amused that shortly before the elections the subject came back on the agenda.

And then came the 1991 national elections resulting in a centre-right government that supported the ideas of the Commander-in-Chief to invest more money in the armed forces equipment, than towards the expenses of conscription. The conservative Björck saw the necessity – like the Commander-in-Chief – to buy new material to modernise the armed forces. Almost within a month, the Minister agreed that the armed forces would get 9,5 billion crowns over five years. Contrary to the Commander-in-Chief’s plans, the number of conscripts had to decrease by 6,000, according to the Commander-in-Chief of the Army Sagrén.

The army’s own plans

Until the 1st of July 1994 the Commander-in-Chief during peacetime had been more like a ‘primus inter pares’ than a real commander. The commanders of almost 120 different military authorities had direct access to the ministry of Defence. In particular, the chiefs of the three different forces played an important role. In all investigations carried out regarding a five-year plan they had conducted the investigation for their own forces. In the end, the Commander-in-Chief used those as a base for his own investigation. The commanders of the three forces, however, had the possibility to write a dissenting opinion on that document and in 1991, all three took that opportunity.

The Chief of the Air Force, Lars-E. Englund, criticised that the Commander-in-Chief in his financial calculations had not considered the importance of the air force in the future defence, as emphasised by the government. Navy Chief Dick Börjesson rejected further reductions of his organisation. The Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Sagrén, on the other hand, proposed an even further reduction of his organisation with modernisation of the material in return.

The General proposed to reduce the units of the army to 16 brigades, to expel 6,000 conscripts from training, and to use the resources freed by those measures for the im-

provement of the training and the renewal of the material.³⁹ For the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, battle tanks featured on top of his priority list. After becoming Chief of the Army, in 1990, the General had already announced his wishes to the Minister. The 600 Swedish tanks, type S, from the 1950s and the British Centurion, about the same age, had to be replaced, preferably by American Abrams M1-A1. This demand was extra important to the General, since the air force and navy already had new equipment.⁴⁰

Compared to the Commander-in-Chief, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army was much more willing to sacrifice numbers of conscripts to modernise his organisation. Supported by the new conservative Minister of Defence, new battle tanks were purchased, indeed to the expense of the number of conscripts.⁴¹ The Commander-in-Chief Gustafsson tried to convince Björck of his plans, which would contribute to increased numbers of drafted conscripts. The Minister had other plans: largely these would be the changes as proposed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Army Sagrén.

8.5 The centre-right government 1991-1994

On 4th of October 1991, when the centre-right government took office, the new conservative Minister of Defence, Björck, ran out of time for deciding on a new defence resolution. Actually, the resolution following the 1987 defence resolution should already have been decided upon by 1 July 1991. He had to come up with a new resolution before 25th February 1992, which was the time limit for the Parliament to decide upon.

One of the options that had been offered was the prolongation of the current five-year Defence Resolution by one more year. This would have bought the new Defence Minister some time to prepare the new Defence Resolution more carefully. Björck rejected this option determinedly. To him politically the delay of the defence resolution 1991 was very advantageous. In the hypothetical case that this resolution had been decided upon by the social democrats as early as 1991, the conservative Minister of Defence would have been forced to work with it for the following four years. Instead, Björck had the opportunity to put his mark on the future policy.⁴²

Björck and Prime Minister Bildt, an experienced security and defence thinker, asked Michael Sahlin to be the Junior Minister of Defence. To most people this came as a surprise. Sahlin was a civil servant and a career diplomat and he had twice acted as secretary of defence commissions. He had been previously associated with the Social Democratic Party, which, after his time as a Junior Minister in a conservative government, had put him on a political sidetrack.

When asked by Björck, even Sahlin had been pessimistic about the schedule.⁴³ In the Minister of Defence's view the international developments were going so rapidly, that a defence resolution had to come sooner rather than later. In addition, the economic situation of the Swedish defence industry demanded political decisions.⁴⁴ Whatever resolution had to be taken, one thing was certain: the minority government needed support by either the social democrats or the right-wing populist newcomer, the New Democratic Party.

The slogan: 'Smalare men vassare' – leaner but meaner – became central to that resolution, focusing on the modernisation of the Swedish armed forces. On the one hand, the forces had to be cut in size, but on the other hand, the budget would have to be

raised to modernise their equipment. The main task of the armed forces, according to the proposition of the government, was still to resist an armed attack, with brief military warning, notwithstanding the direction the attack might come from. The defence included territorial, air, and naval forces.⁴⁵

Björck described in an open letter the situation and the choices of his government as a compromise:

‘The defence resolution in spring will be ... an encounter between the recognition of the fact that a traditional enemy threat vanished and the change into instability and insecurity, between modern material and trooping the regiment’s colour, between a remaining Swedish defence industry and one totally depending on abroad.’⁴⁶

In addition to the reduction of the organisation to sixteen brigades, one of the measures of the new conservative Minister of Defence was the introduction of a functional price compensation system. Traditional long-term planning, especially the purchase of weapons, came under pressure because of inflation of the Swedish crown. According to Björck, this had killed many five-year plans with the result that many defence projects could not be fulfilled.⁴⁷ The resolution foresaw to increase the defence budget every year with 1,5 % for defence material, not for salary or day-to-day operations. Another important matter, according to the Minister, was that government and Parliament finally decided to continue the new Jas fighter project and buy new main battle tanks.⁴⁸ The proposition foresaw to that end a budget of 8,2 billion crowns for army material (3,3 billion for the year 1992/93) and more than 10 billion crowns (7,5 billion for 1992/93) for buying air force material.⁴⁹ Strengthening the morale and the efficiency of the army had been important reasons for buying those tanks.⁵⁰

The 1992 defence resolution had not been reached easily. One reason had been the requirement of the minority coalition government to gain support from opposition parties. Another important reason lay in the fact that it was not so much a case of international and national security considerations that steered the defence debate, but rather regional and local economics, employment issues, and tradition.

Already before the presentation of the defence resolution to Parliament, parliamentarians, regional and local politicians expressed the need to keep the local regiments. It even got to the point that county heads, such as the county head of Skåne, incited and joined locals to protest against any closures of regiments.⁵¹ During the debate about the final proposition, which took twelve hours, many motions asked for the continuation of regiments in certain regions. Sometimes politicians of opposition and government parties tried to save a regiment.⁵² Those motions had been mainly put forward by locally oriented politicians.⁵³ The debate had clearly been dominated by local politics and less by security issues.⁵⁴ In the end, the centre-right government succeeded with its proposition. Analysts observed no surprises in the decision and the budget for the year 1992/93 was set at 34,67 billion crowns a year, which meant a real increase of 900 million crowns a year.⁵⁵

The Conservative Party, which held the posts of Prime Minister and Defence Minister, obviously concentrated more on security grounds than on local issues for the defence decision. That is at least noteworthy, since in particular the Conservative Party had been very traditional: one province - one regiment!⁵⁶ According to the Minister of

Defence, it had been a hard fight, since the regiments also had a cultural purpose, with their military music and supportive tasks such as clearing the roads from snow.

Björck admitted that his plans never would have succeeded without the support of the Prime Minister Bildt. The foreign and defence expert of the Conservative Party used to be a very active member of the parliamentary standing committee of defence, among others. In this committee Bildt had not only shown his great knowledge of the subject, but also his will to modernise the armed forces. Repeatedly he criticised the social democratic Ministers of Defence for their choice to diminish the defence budget regarding the expenses of the armed forces before he became Prime Minister.⁵⁷

Björck, however, pointed at the same time to his relative autonomy in defence matters. The Prime Minister supported him, but never took over business. That would have been difficult, since Bildt was the leader of a minority coalition government. That meant that he had his hands full with other politics.⁵⁸

Conscription under the centre-right government

At first sight, one important issue had been dealt with only marginally: conscription. According to Anders Björck, one important reason was the Brännström-committee, the 1992 inquiry on conscription, which started in 1991. 'We should wait until we see his suggestions before we finally take a decision about this.' And when asked if the committee acted in this way to wait and see which way the wind would blow, the former Minister of Defence admitted: 'Yes.'⁵⁹

Yet, Björck had already taken decisions about the future of conscription, before the commission came with its report by the end of 1992. Shortly before Christmas 1991, the Minister of Defence decided to send home 2,500 conscripts who had been drafted for a short training period of five months to serve as guards for strategically important objects. According to the Minister, they had a very limited military use, because they could not handle the modern weapons the Swedish armed forces was about to get.⁶⁰

A second decision, which turned out to be very important for the future of conscription in Sweden, was the change of the drafting criteria for conscripts. Already before the end of the inquiry, the centre-right government proposed in spring 1992, that only those conscripts should be drafted, who were necessary for the armed forces and peacetime readiness.⁶¹ The necessity of drafting only those needed was a by-product of the decision to reduce the number of army brigades from twenty-one to sixteen. Both policy changes, the downsizing of the armed forces and the modification of the basic conscription paradigm that every able man had to serve were the important points of the 1992 defence resolution with regard to the subject of this study.

Where did the idea to draft only the required conscripts come from? Why had it been suggested at that moment, in spring 1992? There was still the 1991 inquiry committee on conscription, which was supposed to come up with a practical solution for the problems in the conscription system. Those problems had accumulated during the late 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, due to less money in a shrinking organisation.

The decision to put the surplus of young men in a so-called training's reserve was closely connected to the wishes of the conservative Minister of Defence and Prime Minister Bildt to modernise the armed forces. Björck defended the reduction of the conscripts, though he admitted that the choice felt uncomfortable. According to the Minis-

ter of Defence, the shrinking organisation made it necessary to let the need determine the number of young men drafted. However, this was in sharp contrast to the principle of general conscription. That did not have to be a problem, as the Minister stated: 'By raising the physical and psychological demands for the conscripts, we can sort out those we do not need by objective criteria.'⁶² If the budget for conscription would decline even further, the Minister continued, the question of general conscription had to be openly discussed.

The centre-right government knew that financing the modernisation of the armed forces could only been done at the expense of the size of the organisation and at the expense of the general conscription. The Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Sagrén, understood that. The Minister of Defence told his Commander-in-Chief, Gustafsson, when the latter for the last time tried to convince Björck of his plans: 'I don't have time, I already talked to other politicians that we do the 1992 changes', which meant 'leaner, but meaner' with regard to general conscription.⁶³

In the autumn of 1992, another severe financial crisis hit the Swedish economy. Together with the entire Swedish budget the plans for the renewal of the army came under pressure too. The crisis made clear that new remedies had to be found, like the renewal of the conscript system. It catalysed the downsizing process of the number of conscripts and the work of the inquiry about the total defence duty that had started almost a year before.

8.6 1992 Inquiry on total defence duty

The beginning

On 6 May 1991, the social democratic Minister of Defence, Roine Carlsson, gave a directive⁶⁴ that initiated an inquiry about the basis of the personal duty for the Swedish total defence. At that time, different laws were regulating parts of the total defence duty, such as the 1940 military conscription law, the 1960 law on the civil defence duty, that stated that all citizens living in Sweden from 16 till 65 years should contribute to the civil defence, or the general duty law for everybody between 16 and 70. There was also the law regulating alternative duty for those who refused to carry weapons⁶⁵.

The inquiry was conducted by a committee composed of parliamentarians from different parties, experts from the military and societal relevant organisations, and legal experts from the ministry of Defence. Its mandate was to present a system that combined all the different duties. The expectation was that this would strengthen the total defence and that the human resources could be better used (SOU 1992:139: 195). The concrete directives for the committee stated that it had to investigate, among other things:

- How one law for the total defence duty could be made (p. 195);
- Very practical things like the maximum age to serve, the length of the training and the share of conscripts that should

be trained for a wartime posting in the military defence (p. 196);

- How conscripts in larger numbers could carry out tasks in support and service, mainly in food and supply;
- The possibilities for the formation of a so-called direct recruiting of the conscripts to the civil parts of the total defence (including the medicinal and associated parts).⁶⁶

One important reason for the inquiry can be found in the second point: the share of conscripts in the army. Already by the end of the 1980s, the armed forces had no possibility to recruit every young men of a year class. Due to financial cut-downs, the organisation was too small to provide everyone with a training position. That became already clear in the Commander-in-Chief's analysis by the end of the 1980s. The 1992 duty inquiry had to find a solution on what to do with the surplus of recruits. The expectation was that in the 1990s the share of active serving young men would be reduced even further.⁶⁷

The committee met for the first time on 17 September 1991, under the lead of its chairman, the social democrat Roland Brännström. Since the social democrats were at that moment the largest party in Parliament, this position had been reserved to them. When the centre-right government of Bildt took office, on 4 October 1991, the conservative Minister of Defence, Björck, changed neither the assignment nor the composition of the group⁶⁸. According to the Minister, it was important to find a broad consensus on such an important question as conscription: 'It would not have been politically possible to change the whole conscript system without the agreement, at least a tacit understanding, of the Social Democrats.'⁶⁹

Name	Party	Other relevant function
Roland Brännström	Social Democrat	Chairman, Member of Parliament
Thomas Eneroth	Social Democrat	Social Democratic youth organisation
Jan Jennehag	Left Party (vänster)	Member of Parliament
Robert Jousma	New Democrats (NyD)	Member of Parliament
Henrik Landerholm	Conservatives (M)	Member of Parliament
Hans Lindblad	Liberals	Member of Parliament
Sven-Olof Petersson	Centre party	Member of Parliament
Tuve Skånberg	Christian Democrats	Member of Parliament
Karin Wegestål	Social Democrats	Member of Parliament
Bengt Andeberg	Expert, military	General major armed forces
Ann-Louise Eksborg	Expert, legal	Director General legal affairs department MoD
Björn Janson	Expert, legal	Legal director MoD
Bo Riddarström	Expert	Ministerial Council
Hans Wehlin	Expert, Crisis	Director of department ÖCB
Sven Rune Frid		Secretary of the committee

Table 16: Members of the 1992 Pliktutredningen

Due to the 1991 elections, there had been fluctuations in the Parliament composition. Yet, the Social Democrats kept their three posts in the commission. Those changes happened during the work of the commission. In Table 16 only the members, who signed the final report are mentioned plus the experts.

The contacts with different (semi) official authorities had been important for the work of the committee. The Commander-in-Chief of the Swedish armed forces projected a need of 35-37,000 conscripts a year. That official figure in the 1992 Defence Resolution was used as a base for the committee's calculations. Taking into account an annual levy of approximately 50,000 young men, a growing surplus of conscripts was foreseeable. For the committee another figure became very interesting too: the dropouts. According to the official figures of the armed forces, 80% of a levy passed enrolment. Before the start of the training 5% of those dropped out, due to not clearly specified reasons. In the end, 75% started with the basic military training, of which 8% were leaving during training⁷⁰.

In Table 17 the numbers and changes over the years are stated.

	86/87	87/88	88/89	89/90	90/91*
Completely freed	3,4	4,0	4,5	5,7	6,1
Total conscientious objector	0,5	0,7	0,7	0,7	0,9
Applied for weapon free service	0,9	0,9	0,7	0,7	1,2
Temporarily freed from service	3,0	3,2	3,5	3,9	4,3
Other reasons	3,9	3,8	3,8	3,0	1,9
Total not completing basic training	11,7	12,6	13,2	14,0	14,4

Table 17: Percentage young men of all drafted not completing basic training, * 1990/91 preliminary figures

Especially the number of young men completely released from basic military training increased over the years. There have been several reasons for that e.g. health reasons, economical problems, or disappointment about the military training as such, because it did not comply with expectations. There is also reason to believe that the enrolment had been used to filter the surplus of a levy. By raising the medical and psychological demands, the enrolment board had been able to fulfil political directives.⁷¹ The amount of dropouts of 14% meant that even fewer people would fulfil their military duty. This fact contributed in this way to the growing inequality between those who serve and those who do not serve.

The Results

On 16 December 1992, the committee ended its work with an official report, the state's public inquiry 1992:139.⁷² In this SOU, the committee concluded that a military attack still would be the greatest threat to national security – regardless of the direction from which it would come – and that it remained the main point of departure for the Swedish total defence. The total defence's civil part contained of three main tasks, including the protection of the civil population against the consequences of acts of war.

The system had to be adapted, especially the personnel and recruitment system, which indeed presented the main focus of that inquiry. The main conclusion of the committee's inquiry can be summarised in one sentence: 'the need shall steer'.⁷³ The inquiry proposed to accept what already had been fact and law (remember, the relevant law had already been approved in 1991). There were not enough training postings for everybody of a year's class in the wartime organisation. Though the principles for the

total defence stayed unchanged, not everybody had to fulfil the actual training. All citizens between 16 and 70 years old still should be involved in the total defence, all Swedish men between 18 and 47 years old still should be obliged to fulfil the military service, and the possibility to fulfil an alternative, weapon-free service had been mentioned. The surplus of men, however, for which no trainings or wartime postings would exist, should be placed in a so-called trainings reserve. The selection would take place at the recruiting office. The recruits should stay in the training's reserve until they were 30 years old. The reserve should be used as a pool for the civil and military authorities to enlarge or complete units and to give authorities, companies, and organisations the possibility to have certain employees appointed as so called key-persons. The advantage of that reserve would be that everybody in it had been enrolled and tested, so that their abilities were known. Due to that, suitable persons could be recruited and trained in case of an (military) emergency within short time.

Another important point in the report was the calculation for the future need of military and civil personnel. A yearly average need of 12,000 persons, of whom 8,500 should be trained during peacetime, was expected by the inquiry.⁷⁴ The aim was to have 250,000 persons trained eventually for civil defence. The inquiry committee expected that every year between 5,000 and 9,000 young men would join the training reserve.

Type	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
1. Personnel						
○ 18 year old men	49	48	46	48	49	47
○ Naturalised men between 18-24 years	+ 1	+ 1	+ 1	+ 1	+ 1	+ 1
○ Men who are not enrolled	- 1	- 1	- 1	- 1	- 1	- 1
○ Men who leave during or after enrolment but before active duty	- 2	- 2	- 2	- 2	- 2	- 2
○ Recruited women	+ 1	+ 2	+ 3	+ 4	+ 5	+ 6
Sum influx	48	48	47	50	52	51
2. Need of draftees with examination						
○ Civil defence	4	4	6	6	8	8
○ Military defence	37	36	36	36	35	35
Sum need	41	40	42	42	43	43
3. Training's reserve						
○ Drafted (difference between 1. and 2.)	7	8	5	8	9	8
○ Leavers from military training	+ 3	+ 3	+ 3	+ 3	+ 3	+ 3
○ Drafted for civil defence	- 4	- 4	- 4	- 4	- 4	- 4
4. Training's reserve (accumulated)	6	13	17	24	32	39

Table 18: Personnel inflow and need of duty personnel in the total defence for the years 1994-99 (x-1000; source: SOU:139: 136)

The Swedish Commander-in-Chief expected a need of 35,000 to 37,000 draftees a year, as was stated in the official Defence Resolution 1992⁷⁵. In this figure the so-called

dropouts - young men leaving due to medical, social, and/or mental reasons, between the enrolment and the end of active duty – were included. This personnel was needed for the sixteen brigades and sixteen squadrons of the air forces. For the army it was expected that 160,000 draftees were needed between 1991 and 1997. The committee expected a real average need per year of around 30,000 conscripts for the 1990s.⁷⁶ It already excluded the possible dropouts. In Table 18, those figures are listed in an overview.

The estimated figures above relate to the demographical data. The number of 18 years old Swedish men, who had to be enrolled/inspected - the enrolment age would be kept at 18 - varied between 50,000 and 55,000 in the period from 1986 till 1991. The expectations were that after a low in 1994 (48,000) and 1996 (46,000), the numbers would increase again up to 55,000 in 2006.

It is interesting to note that the SOU 1992:139 was one of the few, maybe the first official, public inquiries that had been delivered without a law proposal. That, however, had apparently no political reason⁷⁷. Yet, it led to two follow-up reports, SOU 1993:36 and SOU 1993:101, that were written solely by legal experts and that were concerned only with the conversion of the political SOU 1992:139 into a total defence law proposal.

The members of the committee acknowledged that there had been a lot of common ground and a good cooperation across all parties. This was not in the least due to two very experienced members on the subject, but also in the parliamentary work: the chairman, Brännström, and the liberal H. Lindblad. They had both been representing two opposing blocks. The social democrat Brännström had been a supporter of conscription, whereas the liberal Lindblad had been more sceptical about it. As T. Eneroth, member of the committee, remembered, ‘their way to function together was very important, because it made it possible that things we agreed on in the committee were also possible to make up in the Parliament.’⁷⁸ In this sense, the inquiry fitted the search for broad consensus in Swedish defence policymaking.

A long goodbye to the Cold War

While the core of the paradigm of Swedish defence remained the same in the first period after the Cold War until 1994, i.e. defend the nation against an invasion, two remarkable developments took shape during that same period. On the one hand, a large modernisation of the invasion forces by the bourgeois government at the beginning of the 1990s. On the other hand, a reduction of the armed forces and the army from 21 (29) brigades to 16 and a decline of conscripts from 45,600 in 1988, resembling 81% of the levy⁷⁹, to 37,330 for the period 1993/94, 63% of the levy.⁸⁰

The centre-right government of the first half of the 1990s had been the first in twenty years that had the intention to raise the defence budget. Before a second financial crisis hit Sweden in the autumn of 1992, but also shortly before leaving office in autumn 1994, the Minister of Defence indeed purchased material mainly suited for territorial invasion armed forces, i.e., tanks and fighter planes. The conservatives in the beginning of the 1990s finally saw the chance to realise their defence policy of the 1980s. It was easy therefore to choose between size and equipment to finance that policy. In

this sense, the political choices contributed deliberately to the conservation of the paradigm and the structure of Swedish defence policy.

At the same time, these political choices contributed to a shift of the paradigm of conscription. The inquiry on conscription, initiated by the social democratic Minister of Defence, Roine Carlsson, an outspoken defender of conscription, changed the organisation of conscription by merging different duties. It contributed to the rationalisation of the drafting process. The conservative Minister of Defence, Björck, initiated that only those needed should be drafted, which actually codified developments already started in the 1980s. Both the Minister of Defence and the Junior Minister, Sahlin, had concentrated on material. To them the commission served as a tool to keep the issue off the agenda.

Almost all actors, the political leaders and the military ones, the politically rather weak Commander-in-Chief, Gustafsson, and the influential Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Sagrén, pretended that the paradigm of having a people's defence had not been changed. On a closer look, it seems that in fact that was not the case and the following had happened. The acknowledgement that there would be no training posting for everyone, neither in the military nor in the civil defence, together with the choice not to allocate the financial resources to that aim, contributed to the erosion of the paradigm of having a people's defence with a general conscription.

In years to come, up to the moment this study is finishing, the social democratic government's policy plans to uphold conscription as a part of the anchoring of the armed forces in society, turned out to be an impossible job. They tried to renovate and embellish a building, when the fundamentals had already been eroded by the political choices and the military interventions of the beginning of the 1990s.

8.7 The social democratic return to power

The 1994 national elections brought the social democrats back into government. During the election's campaign, defence had been an important issue. The oppositional social democrats announced to save 1 billion crowns a year on the defence budget, in case of victory. To them every sector had to save money after the two financial crises in 1989/90 and again in 1992, so why not defence too. The people's party even tried to top that amount with additional annual savings of 9 billion crowns. It would have been almost 25% of the yearly 40 billion defence budget!⁸¹

Those far-reaching plans provoked an open letter of the Minister of Defence Björck in which he outlined a threat scenario in case of further savings: Sweden was to become a member of the NATO.⁸² The social democratic leader, Ingvar Carlsson, swept this away as rubbish and pointed to the upcoming EU membership.⁸³ In the end the social democrats won the elections and they continued as a minority government with a full agenda: making a good start as a member of the EU by the 1st January 1995, consolidating the state's finances, and reducing the defence organisation.

What follows is the story of defence policy planning in the second half of the 1990s, which heralded the definite end of the Cold War for Sweden. It is also about the difficult relation between the social democratic Minister, Thage G. Peterson, and the new Commander-in-Chief, General Owe Wiktorin, who came into office by the 1st of July 1994. This relationship can best be described as a clash of generations: the traditional

social democrat believing in a defence embedded within society, and the air force commissioned officer, a fighter pilot, who saw it as his task to lift the armed forces from a territorial defence to flexible armed forces equipped with advanced devices.

The new Minister of Defence

One of the first public appearances of the Minister of Defence, Thage G. Peterson, led not only to a public conflict with the Commander-in-Chief about the choice between new weapon purchases and conscription, but also to the comment of an observer that the new Minister of Defence really had to learn about economics.⁸⁴ Commander-in-Chief Wiktorin proposed to the Minister to call up 10,000 conscripts less, in order to finance reductions of 5,7 billion crowns for 1995 and 1996. By not calling up new personnel, stopping the refresher training, stopping building projects, and cancelling a big exercise in 1995, defence could save 1,7 billion of that sum. The reaction of the Minister, via the media, was: 'Out of the question. Basic training and conscription are so central - even an ideological question - that this is out of the question. Eventually we can save the money at the cost of material purchases'.⁸⁵

Defence had to cut down its budget with almost 10% of the annual budget after financial crises and devaluation of the crown. Military equipment bought abroad became much more expensive and homemade weapons, like the JAS-fighter and the missile system Bamse, turned out to be more expensive too. In addition, defence had to cut another 1,8 billion crowns, as demanded by the Minister of Finance.⁸⁶

During the next two years it became obvious that the Minister of Defence and the Commander-in-Chief had opposite concepts about the future of conscription. Minister Thage G. Peterson was a traditional social democrat, for whom conscription was inseparably connected to society. Considering his public statements, not at least in the defence resolution, he saw himself as a defender of conscription. The Minister even wanted a mini conscription of twelve weeks, as he stated at the annual conference of 'Folk och Försvar',⁸⁷ which immediately provoked the reaction of the Commander-in-Chief at the same conference: 'Out of the question'.⁸⁸

Thage G. Peterson distrusted the military and he maintained traditional social democratic views on defence policy. In his memoirs, he presented himself as the first Minister of Defence to refuse to pay for the military's miscalculations.⁸⁹ He had conflicts with the Commander-in-Chief about women in the army, the voluntary organisations, and the three-month short-term training.⁹⁰ The Minister was a supporter of everything that served the people's will to defend the country. Raising the number of those fulfilling civil duty would be another important example of this concept obviously supported by Prime Minister Göran Persson.⁹¹ Thage G. Peterson also maintained his close relation with the conservatives and the media, who were critical to social democratic defence and security policy, against the Commander-in-Chief.⁹² Still, he and Commander-in-Chief Wiktorin managed to present a defence resolution 1997-2001.

The Minister of Defence wrote in his memoirs, that the presentation of the defence resolution was more important to him than to have the Commander-in-Chief replaced.⁹³ The Commander-in-Chief said that he shared the government's ideas about the restructuring of the armed forces, though they were half-hearted. In his opinion he repeatedly

criticised the government's financial choices, but he never dared to cross the boundaries of political loyalty.⁹⁴

Thage G. Peterson presented the upcoming Defence Resolution 1997-2001 in two phases. It was a new way of making the Defence White Paper for a new period. In the autumn of 1995, Peterson presented proposition 1995/96:12, which outlined the principles for the security and defence policy, the total defence objectives and the structural and economical scope of the defence system. It was passed on 6 December 1995. The second part, the proposition 1996/97:4, had been presented by the autumn of 1996 and debated by Parliament in November and December of that same year. It concentrated more on the role and content of defence: the principles of total defence and the anchoring of the armed forces in society. They marked the definitive end of the five-year planning, since they comprehended a shorter planning period in order to be able to adapt quicker to international security changes and implicitly to national economics. It is important to note that both resolutions had been worked out in close cooperation with the Centre Party, which was necessary for the minority social democratic government.

The new security definition

The 1995 proposition had been very important for the new security definition of Sweden. In his introduction, Thage G. Peterson wrote that the old threat against the security of the country had disappeared or reduced. The 1995 proposition is the first total defence proposition and a broad security concept, reaching from non-military threats or risks up to armed attacks, to steer the total defence tasks. The ability to change the circumstances of the security policy would be a basic demand for the total defence. The promotion of international peace and humanitarian tasks would remain a regular task for the total defence.

In his security analysis, the Minister pointed to the fact that - with the end of the Cold War - the danger of Sweden being dragged in a war between the super powers had drastically decreased. 'An armed attack against Sweden not connected to a war of great powers is unlikely. This formed always a point of departure for the Swedish defence planning.'⁹⁵ The dissolution of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact, the regained freedom of the Baltic States, and the re-unification of Germany created good conditions for a broad cooperation in the Baltic Sea region. Sweden's neutrality still preserved one important issue, which clearly influenced the defence: 'Sweden's non-participation in military alliances with the aim of making it possible for our country to be neutral in the event of a war in our vicinity remains unchanged. Through our non-participation and by maintaining an adequate defence system, Sweden will continue to contribute to the security and stability in the area around the Baltic Sea and in Northern Europe.'⁹⁶ Yet, although there were many positive developments, some old risks remained and new ones were looming at the horizon, such as regional conflicts, environmental damage, and the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.⁹⁷

In short, those changes in the Swedish security environment made it possible to reduce the budget tremendously. The proposition, 1996/97:4 renewed the 1995 parliamentary decision of a 10% annual saving of SEK 4 billion (4,000,000,000), which should be reached by 2001. The Minister gave two reasons for that large cut-down: the change of

the security situation and ‘the not unreasonable demand that defence costs should be subject to the same stringent scrutiny as other social expenditure.’⁹⁸

Total defence redefined

The renewal of Sweden’s defence stood for a redefinition of the concept of total defence. Instead of the four different defence forms, i.e. military, civil, economic, and psychological defence, four governing principals became more important. Those governing principles were: adaptability, a unified view, internationalisation, and a democratic defence. This section will describe the first three governing principles. The governing principle of democratic defence, which concerns conscription, will be described in the next part at greater length.

The principle of adaptability entailed the end of the territorial defence. In a bi-polar world with the threat of an attack on Sweden, the old concept foresaw huge territorial forces with 29 brigades all over the country. The new concept on the other hand was more suited to the ill-defined threats of the future. The total defence system should be able to adapt to changing threats. In the long term, it might be necessary to counter an armed attack. That would mean that within a reasonable time, one year, a territorial defence could be back. In the short term, the government wanted the total defence forces to:

- ‘Maintain [Sweden’s] territorial integrity;
- Be able to deal with the consequences of crises and conflicts in [Sweden’s] immediate vicinity;
- Take part in international peace support and humanitarian operations; [...]
- Strengthen [Sweden’s] ability to cope with severe emergency situations in peacetime.’⁹⁹

To be able to fulfil those tasks, good information would be needed, which meant investment in intelligence. Another important factor for guaranteeing a quick adaptability would be to have qualified personnel at hand. For this reason the government intended 300 fulltime officers to be employed, ‘over and above the immediate requirements of the war organisation.’¹⁰⁰

With the 1996 defence resolution, Sweden broadened its definition of security, as is expressed in the governing principle ‘unified view’. Additional to classical military threats came new non-military threats, ranging among other things from radioactive fallout, to serious attacks on radio and TV stations and severe epidemics and terrorism.¹⁰¹ An implication of these broadening threats to Sweden’s security was the expansion of the tasks of the total defence, so that they would be able to support peacetime society.

Though Sweden had a long history in peacekeeping operations, the 1996 defence resolution saw the broadening and deepening of the activities as an important principle. Sweden should be able to participate in a broad range of operations, from ‘providing armed personnel for peace support operations to civil and relief missions to strengthen local competence for reconstruction work after conflict.’¹⁰² Therefore, the resolution

foresaw a broad range of activities to prepare the total defence forces. Intended measures were, among others:

- Creation of a rapid reaction force,
- Improvement of Sweden's preparedness to participate in international humanitarian operations, by extending and intensifying PfP cooperation. [...] ¹⁰³

In the next part the fourth governing principle, which actually stood in third position of the proposal, will be presented in depth: the democratic defence. It is central to the study since these had been the plans of the social democratic Minister of Defence for the future of conscription.

Conscription conserved?

Thage G. Peterson emphasised that the government would preserve a democratic people's defence. 'We will never accept that our conscript defence will be replaced by a professional army. Therefore the government will try to prevent a development, where fewer and fewer conscripts fulfil their basic training, bearing the risk that this leads to a professional army.'¹⁰⁴ It was very important to him that the Swedish population would feel responsible for and able to defend their country. He was convinced that this would be best achieved with a defence based on national service. Important arguments were the size of the country, which needed a large defence; the diversity of recruits, providing the organisation with a broad range of knowledge and experience; and that conscription satisfied the deep rooted defence principle in the people. 'A professional army cannot create the will to resist and the strength that a national defence system requires.'¹⁰⁵

To that end, the Minister planned 30,000 recruits a year to be trained in the military defence and 10,000 in the civilian defence. Yet, he admitted that in recent years this figure had never been reached and that the armed forces reported a requirement of 28,800. He also was aware that due to a reorganisation of the defence system, the numbers in 1998 and 1999 would be temporarily reduced. Again, the idea of a three-month training for the home guard, should be introduced, by way of experiment. The resolution foresaw that about 10,000 young people should be placed in the civil defence, of which the number trained would be increased to 5,000 a year over the next four years.

One central issue had been the economical circumstances of the recruits. Already between 1993 and 1995, regular protests by the conscripts' organisations had pointed to the bad financial situation of the conscripts, the growing number of dropouts, and the abuse of conscripts as grey labour.¹⁰⁶ This might be the reason for the announcement that the benefits of those who served would be improved. The demobilisation allowance, already raised by 715 crowns in 1993, would rise with another 500 crowns to 4,500 from 1 January 1997. The housing supplement was increased by 100 crowns per month. The government also proposed immaterial benefits, such as easier access to a university place or the recognition of the basic training for civilian qualifications.

Three other items had been explicitly named in the proposition. Firstly, the role of voluntary organisations: 24 in number ranging from soup kitchens to a female military drivers organisation, which were all exempt from the government's cutbacks. Secondly,

the home guard and increased security patrol had been named. The government wanted to revitalise the home guard and aimed at 125,000 people, which explains the short training trial of three months. The security patrolling should consist of conscripts who have fulfilled their duty, assisting the police's reserve when necessary. The government aimed at 40,000 people in special platoons and 15,000 in police reserve. Thirdly, the government wanted to increase the number of women in the armed forces.

The plans and figures in the defence resolution showed how seriously the defence Minister took conscription and the people's will to defend the country. He not only searched for ways to raise the number of those who fulfilled the duty, whether or not in the military, he even had been aware of the necessity to compensate those who were drafted. To the Minister conscription was the historical and uniting element in Sweden's democracy.¹⁰⁷ It is difficult to translate the Swedish prices of 1997 to recent figures. However, an increase of the allowance in that order has to be considered special. Throughout the ages, draft never aimed at making draftees rich. Quite the opposite had been the case. Those who were obliged to serve the country had been granted only housing and food as an allowance. Every additional handout had been nothing more than a small amount enabling draftees to buy some extras not provided by the state.

It was difficult to bring the policy plans for conscription, which the social democratic Minister had presented in his defence resolution, into reality. The number of military conscripts and those who fulfilled civic duty, one of the central points of the 1992 investigation, dropped even further. By 1997, the year the 1996 defence resolution came into effect, only 25,651 young men had been drafted for active military duty. 1,574 young men joined the civil duty and almost 14,000 young men were allotted to the training's reserve, but were in fact never to be drafted for any service at all. The numbers of active serving men declined further, as did the size of the armed forces. In years to come, it would turn out that sixteen brigades did not represent the bottom line.

8.8 Major military reforms put pressure on conscription

In 1997 Von Sydow took office as Minister of Defence. During his term from 1997 to 2002, the Swedish armed forces made the definite transition from the mass army of the Cold War to small, flexible and versatile forces. Those changes had implications for conscription: fewer men were needed for fewer units. One of the effects had been another inquiry on the total defence duty. In the following sections, the Minister's plans for the future armed forces will be presented in depth, starting with Von Sydow's relevant ideas about conscription.

In the beginning of his term, it seemed that the Minister did not show much interest in the conscript system, which became obvious when he declined to address the conscripts at the annual conscripts' council meeting. Traditionally the Minister and the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces would address the representatives of the conscripted soldiers, announcing policy plans for the future or referring to problems of the conscripts. In March 1997 the new Minister did not want to appear at the congress at all. After being criticised by the conscripts and the Commander-in-Chief, Von Sydow did show up to talk to the conscripts personally, he mingled and talked to the newly chosen members of the conscript council.¹⁰⁸

Until the summer, the Minister of Defence did not noticeably give his opinion about conscription. The 'Riksrevisionsverket' (Swedish National Audit Office – RRV), however, did. On 9 June 1997 it published its report about the financial consequences of current conscription practices of the period 1990-1996 and how they might be improved in the future.¹⁰⁹ Important conclusions were:

- There was a considerable and growing surplus of conscripts: 27% in 1990/91 compared to 38% in 1994/95;
- There was the risk that the best suited would not be drafted, because they were placed by chance in the training's reserve after their enrolment;
- 11% of the conscripts had not been trained for wartime posting but fulfilled so-called support duties.¹¹⁰

If the right measures would be taken, like rationalisations and only drafting the personnel needed, defence might save up to 2,4 billion crowns a year.¹¹¹

The report of the RRV was an important trigger for the Minister of Defence to instigate a revision into the system. Another inquiry into the total defence duty should bring resolve. Beside the financial effects, this inquiry could also investigate social consequences of conscription, such as the constant high number of dropouts, almost 13% in 1995,¹¹² and conscription for women. Before the committee started its work in March 1998, financial problems in the defence budget loomed on the horizon, and they would influence the agenda of the inquiry throughout the years.

The defence budget crisis

In the beginning of December 1997 a financial crisis in the defence budget had been brought to light.¹¹³ For quite some time - weeks and months - rumours had been spreading, but there had been no confirmation. The alarming figures, a gap of 2 billion crowns for the 1998 budget and an overall shortage of 13 billion crowns until 2002, had been adduced by the opposing moderate party during a debate of the Swedish Parliament on 5 December about the forthcoming budget. The conservative defence expert, Henrik Landerholm, blamed the government that already four months after the social democrats and centre party decided on the 1996 defence resolution, the Commander-in-Chief had reported a deficit of 300-500 million crowns. Now, the oppositional politician continued, the debt would probably increase to 13 billion until 2002. He accused the government of delaying the issue until the 1998 elections would be over.¹¹⁴

Landerholm was not the only Member of Parliament referring to the financial gap. Overall, the debate concentrated on the forthcoming defence budget, though Lennart Rohdin from the people's party talked about a scandal and he repeatedly summoned the Minister to talk about the subject.¹¹⁵ Von Sydow refused to talk about the issue, however, arguing that he had not spoken to the Commander-in-Chief and therefore he did not know what the Commander-in-Chief had to say about the issue.¹¹⁶ Table 19 gives a chronological overview of the crisis having its climax in spring 1998. We shall describe these events in more detail in the pages that follow.

Date	Occasion
March 1997	Commander-in-Chief hands in document for the budget planning reporting a gap of 300-500 million crowns a year ($\pm 1,25\%$) ¹¹⁷
August 1997	On government's demand armed forces give reason for deficit
11 September 1997	Defence budget proposition (within regular budget cycle, yet, with complement skrv. 1997/98:4), states that the government finds circumstances striking and serious ¹¹⁸
25 September 1997	Minister of Defence orders to start the second inquiry on total defence duty of the 1990s. The '1998 års pliktutredning', should investigate the: enrolment system, postponement rules, training's reserve, duration of the different trainings, female conscription, resignation/dropouts, training's merits and disciplinary system. On 17 June 1998 and 4 November 1999 additional directives.
8 October 1997	Commander-in-Chief gives presentation to Minister announcing a total deficit of 9,9 billion crowns over the planning's period 1997-2001 ¹¹⁹
21 October 1997	Defence committee gets the information that the deficit might be 9,9 billion crowns
20 November 1997	Budget proposal in defence committee. Government decides to abort purchase of the asset control system Sirius. At the moment of decision, the exact amount of deficit had not been known, according to the government ¹²⁰
5 December 1997	Debate in Parliament, in which opposition states deficit 13 billion crowns over the 1997-2001 period. Minister declines demands for debate about the problems, since he had not talked to the Commander-in-Chief about the problem at that moment. The budget proposition is accepted though there are doubts
10 December 1997	Minister of Defence demands from Commander-in-Chief a report about the reasons for the deficit
11 December 1997	Prime Minister publicly expresses his confidence for Commander-in-Chief ¹²¹
12 December 1997	Commander-in-Chief hands over report: 10,6 billion crowns deficit. Reasons: further demands for reduction by government and Parliament and a miscalculation by the armed forces about needed resources. For the time being, the positions of the chiefs of army and air force had not been under discussion. ¹²²
17 December 1997	Signs are pointing to the fact that the positions of the chiefs of army, air force, and navy will be abrogated [there were plans about a reorganisation before the crisis, but both subjects had been regularly connected to each other in the media]
18 December 1997	Minister of Defence gives order to Commander-in-Chief to come up with a plan how to save conscription by introducing shorter training. Minister sees growing training's reserve as danger for duty system. Minister gives also order to come up with plan for restructuring the HQ command structure. ¹²³ Possibility, that the posts of the chiefs of army, navy, and air force will be transformed to inspector generals. ¹²⁴
15 January 1998	Commander-in-Chief presents plans. Among others: short training for 3,000 recruits (4,5 months instead of 7,5); premature demobilisation of those actually in training ¹²⁵
19 January 1998	Disagreement within the armed forces leadership about plans. Commander-in-Chief wants shorter training, but chief of the army wants a total stop for 5,000 conscripts. ¹²⁶
2 February 1998	Re-structuring of the armed forces will become fact by 2001. Commander-in-Chief gains more power, since the commanders in chief of army, navy, and air force will become inspectors general. The persons holding that posting at that moment, however, would retire or become

	regional commanders. ¹²⁷
4 February 1998	Defence commission of ministry of defence presents (partly) reports about security in a changed environment (Ds 1998:9)
16 February 1998	Commander-in-Chief presents plans to government. Among other things: 3,650 conscripts less a year, shorter training ¹²⁸
26 February 1998	Government doubts that the plans of Commander-in-Chief are realistic. Minister of Defence increase pressure by asking 12 concrete questions about the financial effects. Wants the answers within four days: Sunday 1 March 1998, 14h00. ¹²⁹
19 March 1998	The government comes with proposition 1997/98:84, signed by Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, blaming the armed forces for the deficit. Proposal foresees reductions in material of 1,2 billion crowns and in organisation and basic training 900 million. 3700 less conscripts shall be drafted a year, which would bring the total to 17300. ¹³⁰ Commander-in-Chief finds the proposition 'insulting and offensive' for the armed forces. ¹³¹
17 April 1998	Commander-in-Chief and Minister of Defence interrogated by the constitutional committee ¹³²
7 May 1998	Defence committee debates Proposition 1997/98:84. All motions from opposition rejected by social democrats and centre party (?)
27 May 1998	Parliamentary debate

Table 19: Chronology of defence budget crisis 1997/98 and other relevant policy issues, different sources (see footnotes table)

On 10 December 1997 the Commander-in-Chief had been called to the Minister of Defence to explain the deficit in the defence budget of more than 5%. The central question to analysts and parliamentarians was: who is responsible, who is to blame?¹³³ Analysts were quick with their conclusion. There was a trend in the forces to calculate costs lower than they actually turned out to be. They admitted that it was always a problem to foresee exchange rates and price indices in a five-year plan, but the main responsibility rested with the government. The politicians were responsible for the budget control of defence, but also for the purchase of new weapon systems, which repeatedly turned out to be expensive, like the JAS-fighter.¹³⁴ This is why several defence politicians demanded to further reduce the armed forces or the JAS-fighter project had to be slimmed down.¹³⁵

Two days later, the Commander-in-Chief handed over the report about this record deficit in the defence budget to the Minister of Defence. While the Minister of Defence said that at that moment it was not obvious who was responsible for that, the Prime Minister, Göran Persson, declared his confidence in the Commander-in-Chief. Like the Commander-in-Chief, the position of the Army and Navy Commanders-in-Chief had not been discussed so far.¹³⁶

Crisis resolution: trading off on conscription

It took another week until the Minister came with a rescue plan: shortening the training time for conscripts. Von Sydow intended to achieve two goals: save money and save conscription. He gave the directive to the Commander-in-Chief to investigate the possibilities and to come up with a solution within three months.¹³⁷ At the same time, the Minister of Defence was careful not to sacrifice conscription entirely. Quite the opposite: the Minister wanted to avoid further reductions of conscripts every year. To him

especially the so-called training's reserve endangered the quality of the conscripts and the conscript system in general¹³⁸: 'The growing training's reserve is a danger for our duty system. It is therefore important to me that this procedure will be investigated.'¹³⁹ Two days later the Minister even deepened the subject, when emphasising in the spirit of his predecessor, Thage G. Peterson, as one analyst observed, that '[i]t is a mistake that one demands a long duty fulfilment from one part, but zero from others who would also be suited.'¹⁴⁰ The search for a solution continued.

In the beginning of 1998 Commander-in-Chief Wiktorin presented his plans to solve the financial crisis. Among other things, he planned that 3,000 conscripts should fulfil a short-term duty of 4,5 months instead of the minimal 7,5. Those who were to be drafted in the near future could leave earlier. The training in qualified units, i.e. the expensive training in mechanised units, should be cut down.¹⁴¹ These plans became more concrete by mid February 1998. To save 10,6 billion crowns during the budget years 1998 until 2001, the armed forces should:

- Draft 3,650 conscripts fewer a year;
- Shorten the training time for those who are drafted: two weeks for army and air force, four weeks in coastal artillery, and seven weeks in the navy;
- Dismiss 600 professional officers and 40 civil employees;
- Lower the war units' readiness;
- Prolong the build-up time to full capacity in case of threat to 1-2 years for many units;
- [...]
- Reduce the training in the home guard by 30%; [...]¹⁴²

In addition, the Commander-in-Chief demanded publicly a new defence resolution, because the last one from 1996 had been completely outdated.¹⁴³

Von Sydow doubted the effects of the plans of the Commander-in-Chief and raised twelve concrete questions about expected results. One important reason for that had been the government's concern about the consequences for the defence readiness of the conscripts. This answer had to be delivered by the Commander-in-Chief within four days: on Sunday 1 March 1998, 14h00.¹⁴⁴

Three weeks later, the government delivered its own reconstruction of and resolve for the crisis, the proposition 1997/98:84. In its reconstruction of events, the government argued that a large part of responsibility for the crisis lay with the armed forces themselves. The government pointed to the ambiguity of the military's documents. On the one hand, the military had stated that the mistakes in their first calculations had led to a financial crisis anyway, even without the changes made by government and Parliament in the armed forces proposal, FMP 97.¹⁴⁵ On the other hand, the government was referring to the same armed forces document of 12 December 1997, in which the Commander-in-Chief stated that the financial risk taking of his proposal for the planning's period 1997-2001, the FMP 97, had grown due to the parliamentary defence resolution 96.

The government, instead, claimed that its decision, based on the FMP 97, had been financially balanced and repeated that the armed forces themselves admitted that the changes between FMP 97 and the definite resolution, which had been decided upon by

Parliament and government, had no influence on the imbalance.¹⁴⁶ Instead, the government stated:

‘In the state’s budget process the government has to rely on the fact that the documents of the authorities are correct and carefully controlled by those authorities. This holds also true for the armed forces, although their activities differ from the rest of the state’s administration in size and complexity. It has now become obvious that the armed force’s document for the defence resolution 96, the FMP 97, did not meet that demand. Instead, the plan contained an imbalance between the planned activities and the financial resources the Parliament had decided upon earlier. The government considers this as very serious.’¹⁴⁷

The government proposed several measures. It would exercise more stringent accountant control for certain construction projects than it had done in the past. The armed forces needed the government’s approval for projects over 10 million crowns instead of 20 million.¹⁴⁸ The government also wanted to reduce procurement, saving 1,2 billion crowns for the year 1998, with an outlook on further reductions and even the eventual stop of the development of rocket and other systems.¹⁴⁹ In addition, the reductions in the organisation and basic training should provide 900 million crowns.

In the 1996 proposition that led to the defence resolution 96 and that stated that 25,000 young men should be drafted, the government had already announced that 4,000 conscripts a year less might be drafted. Due to the crisis, the government proposed in the proposition 1997/98:84 that for the training’s year 1998/99 only 17,300 men should be drafted, a further reduction of 3,700 conscripts, thereby following the armed forces proposal. In its proposal, the government underscored that conscription was of great importance for the individual citizen and society as a whole. ‘The duty anchors and contributes to defence in society and it gives the individual citizen the possibility to contribute to the defence of his country.’¹⁵⁰ The abilities of the duty personnel comprise a broad variety of the abilities of society and they contribute to the broad knowledge and experience in society.

In a first reaction, the Commander-in-Chief, Wiktorin, said on national television that the proposition of the government was ‘insulting and offensive’ for the armed forces.¹⁵¹ He found the criticism of the government without nuance, unjust, and too hard-hearted. According to Swedish television, Wiktorin had been enraged, because the government did not follow his advice to cut on the home guard, but instead tried to save 40 million crowns at the expense of the air forces. The Commander-in-Chief remembered five years later only a disagreement between him and Von Sydow about the ambition level between quality and quantity.¹⁵²

The issue was so serious that it was debated in the constitutional committee of the Swedish Parliament. On 17 April 1998 the Commander-in-Chief, General Wiktorin, his chief of the planning staff, Admiral Torsten Lindh, and later that day the Minister of Defence, Von Sydow, appeared before this important parliamentary committee. Its task was, among other things, to scrutinise the work of the government and its ministers.

The Commander-in-Chief and the chief of the planning staff gave different reasons for the financial problems. The armed forces had always been accustomed to calculating

with some unforeseen developments, yet it had been difficult to foresee the effects of rationalisations, which became necessary to save 2,8 billion crowns in the budget. As soon as the armed forces found out that there was a deficit of 300-500 million crowns, in March 1997, they reported it to the government. Another reason for the deficit was that the government had changed the rules for accounting interest and amortisation of loans during the budget period. According to the military, another reason was caused by the political demands for the defence resolution that differed from the military's planning. Especially the continuation and closing of garrison places differed. Another reason mentioned by the military was the uncertainty about the level of interest rates. With 200-250 million crowns a year in interest payments, the slightest change in rate could cost tens of millions of crowns, which was unforeseeable.¹⁵³

Like the military, the Minister of Defence started his appearance at the committee with an overview of the events. This overview resembled largely the government's reconstruction of the crisis, proposition 1997/98:74, which had been referred to previously in this study. Afterwards, the Minister had been sharply interrogated, especially by the former Minister of Defence, the conservative Björck. Two questions were central: control of the military and political responsibility. Von Sydow explained that during the crisis the relations and the control of the military had been good on all administrative levels. The Minister had confidence in the Commander-in-Chief and he was satisfied with the information he received from him. To Von Sydow it had been obvious that the whole government had taken responsibility for the result of the crisis. Asked by Björck what his personal responsibility had been, the Minister of Defence answered: 'My responsibility is that I worked within the government to decide on the aim to solve the problem that hit us.'¹⁵⁴

It is important to note that the search for the reasons of that crisis by the constitutional committee, the following defence committee debate and the parliamentary debate in May 1998, neither led to the dismissal of the Commander-in-Chief nor to the resignation of the Minister of Defence. In fact the Commander-in-Chief came out even stronger and more powerful than before, by announcing the abolishing of the posts of the Commanders-in-Chief of the Army, Air Force, and Navy. This became even more obvious, when the next financial crisis within defence presented itself, by the autumn of 1998.

The crisis in the defence sector did not directly lead to the re-structuring of the command in the armed forces. Due to the downsizing of the organisation, a leaner command structure would probably have followed anyway. Yet, there is reason to believe that the crisis expedited the process. Many material projects had also been postponed. Also, the number of conscripts was reduced again in the plans of the policy makers. There have been differences in those plans. The Commander-in-Chief preferred material purchases and the quality of the training to maximising the number of conscripts. The Commander-in-chief of the Army even topped that. Instead of introducing the Commander-in-Chief's short-term training, he wanted to expel 5,000 young men from service. Both these positions were at odds with the preferences of the Minister of Defence.

Although Von Sydow had had nothing to tell to the conscripts in the beginning of his term in 1997, he turned out to be a defender of the institution during the subsequent crisis. The policy choices the government proposed had been supported by the traditional social democratic arguments about the role of conscription in and its meaning for

society, though even the government had to announce a reduction of the training in the light of the financial crisis in the armed forces.

Additional cutbacks

In the beginning of 1998 the defence commission of the ministry of defence had published its report 'Swedish Security Policy in the Light of International Change' (Ds 1998:9). It was the first report on Sweden's security policy orientation since 'The Renewal of Sweden's Defence' (I and II) from 1995 and 1996. In those reports the Swedish security policy orientation changed from the immediate Cold War threat to a more diverse threat scenario. With this change came a reorientation from invasion defence to adaptable defence. The report contained only one part. Another part should already have been published during 1998. However, this report could not be published until the beginning of 1999. The commission stated difficulties in preparing the overhaul and the national elections as reasons for this delay.¹⁵⁵

The struggle concerning lacking money fresh in mind the main political and military actors started to quarrel again after the summer of 1998. However the Commander-in-Chief already started the arguments in June. Guided by 'The renewal of Sweden's Defence' and in anticipation of the upcoming security reports, the Commander-in-Chief gave a preliminary view on the new armed forces in June 1998. General Wiktorin demanded publicly from the politicians that for the coming reform plans, which were expected in spring 1999, they would have to choose between general conscription and a full defence industry.¹⁵⁶

Alternative	Policy plan
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentrate on research/development • 18,000 men conscript training • 8-10 units shut down → 8-6 brigades left
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International tasks • Reduced procurement • 10-12 units shut down → 6-4 brigades left
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No research • Shut down building projects • 18,000 conscripts full-time training • 17,000 short-term training (3 months)

Table 20: Alternative futures of the armed forces presented by Commander-in-Chief 12-10-98, sources: SVT 12-10-98, DN 13-10-98

After the summer recess and the parliamentary elections (20 September 1998), which resulted in a continuation of the social democratic government under Persson, the

Commander-in-Chief repeated his demands and gave his concrete vision on the future armed forces. On 12 October, the Commander-in-Chief presented three alternative models for the armed forces to the Minister of Defence (Table 20).

The Minister did not react to those plans in detail, but he was not amused by the figures, especially regarding the fact that only 17,000 might be called up.¹⁵⁷ The oppositional defence specialist, former Prime Minister Bildt, had a very outspoken reaction to those ideas and demanded a new defence resolution: 'The defence resolution which the social democrats and the Centre Party have hatched up actually failed. All this talk about an overhaul is actually hypocrisy.'¹⁵⁸ In the long run, the former Prime Minister continued, Sweden would have to join NATO.¹⁵⁹ The People's Party supported a reduction of the number of conscripts to stop wasting money. The Christian democrats, as well as the social democrats, emphasised that the anchoring in society was important and that conscription was a cornerstone. Though the social democrat Christer Skoog added that conscription had an important meaning for democracy, he did not comment further on the Commander-in-Chief's plans.¹⁶⁰ In the weeks and months that followed, General Wiktorin publicly criticised the government, which announced further reductions of the budget by 9 billion for the next three-years period.¹⁶¹

After the 1998 parliamentary elections the social democratic Prime Minister, Persson, found support on the left side of the political spectrum: the Left party and the environmental party became the supporters of the budget from the social democratic government. This cooperation came with its price for the armed forces: a further reduction of the defence budget, which had been a classical demand of all three parties throughout the years.

When it became obvious that the exact amount of reductions had gone up to 9,3 billion, the Commander-in-Chief demanded a 'conscript-free' year with only 6,000 conscripts drafted, 27% of the regular planned number of 22,500.¹⁶² Wiktorin also intended to stop many weapons' purchases. That measure would have endangered the future of several Swedish weapon producers. The Minister of Defence once again rejected the plans of the Commander-in-Chief to draft fewer conscripts: 'I put a big question mark on those plans, because we need a conscript defence in the future and we need to modernise it, reform it.'¹⁶³

The Commander-in-Chief had been disappointed that after the financial crisis of the previous year, he had the task to come up with a new plan and when he presented it, that plan almost immediately disappeared in the waste bin due to political choices.¹⁶⁴ However, in the main not as many people seemed to be as alarmed by the Commander-in-Chief's plans at first sight, as the media wanted people to believe.¹⁶⁵ The government had to prepare the next year's legislative proposition that should steer the armed force's future reductions. Necessary for this proposition had been the postponed overhaul of the security definition. Before the government had the chance to focus on that, the Commander-in-Chief's words started to have an effect. Contrary to the media's suggestion, that General Wiktorin's words didn't have any effect, the Parliament started to act, which even led to an internal fight between the Ministers of Finance and Defence.

Alarmed by the drastic measures of the Commander-in-Chief, the Parliament's defence committee tried finding a solution to prevent further reductions of conscription and material purchases. The social democrats tried to find 6 billion crowns with possible support from the bourgeois parties. The proposed solution was an accounting trick,

i.e. by writing off the money, which the defence department had loaned from the state to purchase materials. The environmental party's speaker, who was not even a member of the defence committee, strongly resisted that more money would go to defence: the 6,3 billion crowns had to be used to reduce the state's financial deficit.¹⁶⁶

It appeared that quite soon the environmental party got support from the social democratic Minister of Finance, Erik Åsbrink.¹⁶⁷ The differences escalated when the Minister of Defence, Von Sydow, tried to back the efforts of the committee to find a solution. On Monday 23 November 1998 Prime Minister Persson even called back his defence Minister from a Nordic Ministers of Defence meeting to solve the crisis. According to Swedish television the three top-politicians were negotiating for days.¹⁶⁸

When after three days the politicians still had not found a solution, they decided to postpone the matter for one week. According to the media, Von Sydow had the difficult task to come up with a solution by negotiating with the Left and the Environmental party, both strong opponents of supporting defence.¹⁶⁹ By the end of November, a political solution seemed to be possible. While the bourgeois parties and the left party saw political room to manoeuvre, the environmental party still had some difficulties.¹⁷⁰ Though the spokeswoman of the environmental party explained that 'defence also has to learn that there are current budget estimates,' the social democrats, left and environmental party came to an agreement: defence could borrow up to 2 billion from its own material estimates.¹⁷¹

Despite the fact that the Prime Minister assured that the decision made by the left parties would have no negative consequences for the traditional broad consensus about Swedish defence policy in the long run, the moderate party remained irritated and rejected the offer of the Defence Minister to talk about the savings. Landerholm, chairman of the parliamentary defence committee, found it useless to talk to the Minister without having an idea of the Minister's intentions, though the moderates had no intention to leave the defence commission, which still was an important institution since it guaranteed a broad support for Swedish defence policy.

With the budget decision of the left parties, the politicians played the ball in fact back to the Commander-in-Chief¹⁷², who shortly before Christmas came forward with the proposal to expel 5,000 young men from conscription, which would have brought the figures down to between 17,500 and 18,000.¹⁷³ The Swedish Defence Commission's report about the reformed defence, which served as a base for the next defence resolution, had yet to come.

Security policy redefined

On 12 January 1999, the Swedish Defence Commission presented its report 'A Changing World – A Reformed Defence' to the Minister of Defence. The postponed follow-up of the Ds 1998:9 report was an important document for the overhaul of the current defence Resolution of 1996, serving as a tool to adjust Sweden's security and defence policy to actual events and setting out the proposition, which should be presented by the government in March 1999.

One important conclusion had been 'that the commission sees no threat of any invasion of Sweden ... within the next ten years, provided that Sweden retains a basic defence capability.'¹⁷⁴ According to the 1996 resolution, the Swedish total defence's aims

were still to repel an armed attack, the defence of territorial integrity, contributing to international peace and security and supporting the population in national emergencies. 'The Defence commission concludes, however, that it is now possible to reduce the part of the armed forces that is structured to fend off an invasion of Sweden.'¹⁷⁵ As a consequence, the wartime organisation could be reduced and the armed forces in general should be more flexible and mobile. The armed forces had to re-structure in such a way, that they would be able to regenerate a territorial defence in case of growing threats.

The Commission was in favour of the conscript system. It gave two arguments for that. On the one hand, the need for popular support of Sweden's defence, which is guaranteed by conscription. On the other hand, conscription served as an important recruitment tool. It continued:

'However, the Commission states that it is the requirement of the total defence system that will determine conscription needs in the years to come. Pending the results of further inquiries, the Commission sets the number of conscripts required at the present figure of 18,000.'¹⁷⁶

With 'inquiry' the commission referred to the ongoing 1998 Total Defence Inquiry, which will be discussed later.¹⁷⁷ The commission based its calculation for the requirements on figures provided by the armed forces, which delivered three alternatives:

- A) Eighteen thousand conscripts a year trained, placed in combat task force after training. Plus a protection force of 30,000 men, fed by the task force.
- B) Like A) plus the ability to use 1,500 conscripts for peace enforcing, followed by peacekeeping operations.
- C) Eighteen thousand conscripts with full training, like alternatives A) and B). Seventeen thousand conscripts with short-term training of 3-5 months needed to fill the protection force of 40,000.¹⁷⁸

With this follow-up report of the defence commission, there was enough consensus for the government to come up with the proposition that served as a starting point for the 1996 defence resolution. Before the government delivered its main document for the overhaul the proposition 1998/99:74, the Minister had to work hard to keep the item of conscription and the work of the 1998 Total Defence Inquiry off the agenda.

At the annual conference of the Association Society and Defence, conscription should have been one of the main issues.¹⁷⁹ Shortly before the conference, the Minister of Defence halted the 1998 Total Defence Duty Inquiry, which was about the organisation of conscription, among other things. Too many changes in the armed force's tasks and structure were imminent for the inquiry's work to make sense at that moment.¹⁸⁰ Von Sydow not only put it on ice, as the newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* stated, but he also summoned the chairman of the Inquiry, the Landshövding Ulf Lönnqvist, not to appear at the conference of Society and Defence in Sälen.¹⁸¹ While the Minister used his address to the conference to propound his view on the future of conscription, limited training to six months and 17,500 young persons, no one else got the chance to join this discussion. Neither the general secretary of the organisation, Olle Frack, nor the Com-

mander-in-Chief Wiktorin, nor the member of the Inquiry, Jan Jennehag (v), were content with the decision, since they had been wanting to talk broadly about conscription.¹⁸² The conservative Landerholm on the other hand found it a smart move to put the Inquiry on ice, where it probably never would be picked up. The bourgeois parties were going to continue their negotiations with the social democrats about the future of defence.

Defence policy redefined

Just one month after the conference of Society and Defence, the government presented its proposition 1998/99:74, based on the Defence Commission's report 'A Changing World – A Reformed Defence'. The centre party had supported the proposition, yet there had been some open and constructive talks with the people's party, the liberals, the Christian democrats and the conservatives, who had all negotiated with the social democrats from 12 January to 2 February 1999 about the document.¹⁸³

The government considered the report of the Commission an important document. The changed security situation, with lower threat to an occupation of Sweden or a large-scale attack against the country, gave room for large-scale reforms of the Swedish armed forces. Important points of the proposal were:

- The invasion defence had to be replaced by a more flexible defence, able to react to a broader variety of threats than in the past;
- The armed forces could downsize, but had to keep the ability to regain its strength;
- The yearly defence budget could be 4 billion crowns lower than the 2001 defence budget: from 43,281 billion SEK in 1999 to 42,464 billion SEK in 2001 and finally to 37,624 billion SEK a year for 2001-2004.¹⁸⁴ That resembled a reduction from almost 39 billion crowns to 34 billion for the armed forces.¹⁸⁵

The government differed from the commission's report, however, not in the least in the ambition and figures of the conscripts' system. The government only wanted to draft 15,000 conscripts in 2000 and 2001. The number of those fulfilling civil duty would be almost half of the actual figures.¹⁸⁶

The Commander-in-Chief needed to set out a new planning for the armed forces on the grounds of the proposition 1998/99:74. In May, he delivered the personnel planning for drastic reductions, downsizing the armed forces with approximately 50%:

- The number of conscripts should be reduced from 18,500 to 15,000 in 2000 and 2001. The figure should increase in 2002 to 16,350;
- A few thousand soldiers should be offered a short term contract between one and three years after they had fulfilled their conscription;
- [...] ¹⁸⁷

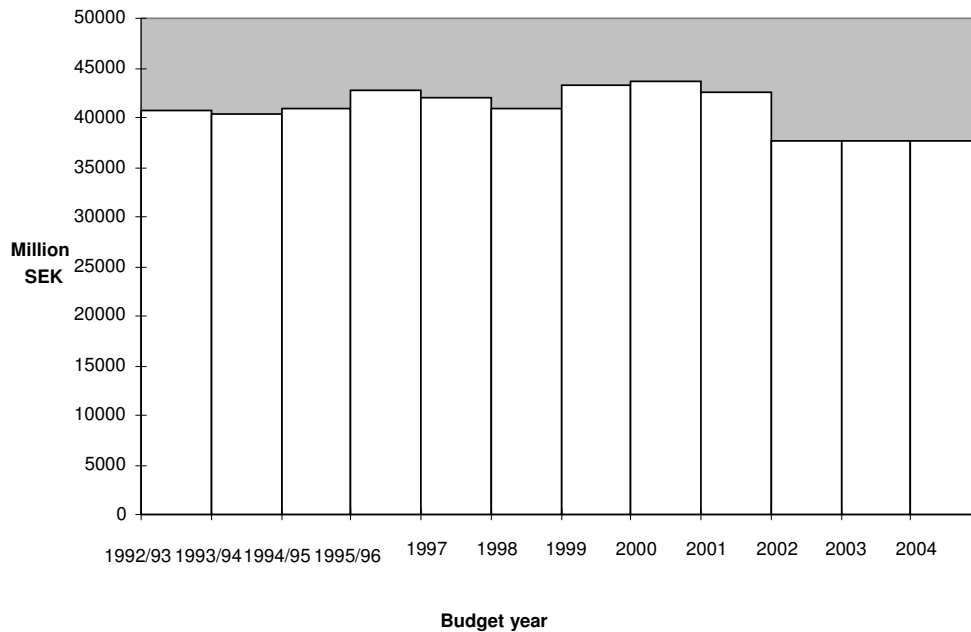


Figure 11: Former and future defence budgets (at 1999 prices); source: Prop. 1998/99:74, part 6.2

Especially the second proposal provoked many reactions and dominated the discussion about conscription almost until the end of this study. Offering conscripts a contract for a limited time was in the eyes of the critics a step into the direction of a professional army. The Federation of Officers saw the end of conscription with only 15,000 young men drafted and demanded 18,000 to 20,000 with a shorter conscription.¹⁸⁸ The Minister of Defence reassured that the social democrats would protect conscription: 'Recently, one hears rumours that a professional army is to come and that the anchoring in society slowly languishes. This is not the case and it will not be the case. A social democratic government will not introduce a defence manned with professional soldiers. We will never sacrifice the people's defence spirit.'¹⁸⁹

Two months later in an interview, Von Sydow had to admit, however, that 18,000 young men – the figure actually drafted – was the limit. If the number would drop below this threshold, it would be difficult to maintain any longer that general conscription still existed.¹⁹⁰

The armed forces restructured

In the autumn of 1999, after the Commander-in-Chief's plans, the Swedish Defence Commission presented the report 'European Security – Sweden's Defence'¹⁹¹. After establishing that the threat scenario had been unchanged since the spring 1999 report, the Defence Commission concluded that the armed forces' restructuring to increase the operational capability for peacemaking had to be conducted faster. 'In order to do this, priority should be given to measures that enhance our international capabilities, while measures that are only of importance for developing the national defence capability will have to wait.'¹⁹²

An important condition for the future armed forces and their international tasks would be a new way of thinking about personnel issues. The Defence Commission pointed to the rapid changes in military and civil technical affairs by the end of the millennium and presumably in future. This required skilled personnel. The basic organisation of the armed forces had to comprise the foremost pool of knowledge and skills together with the new operational task force.¹⁹³ In the personnel section, the Commission did not refer to conscripts or to the conscription system, though a revision of the personnel supply had to follow.¹⁹⁴

The report of the Swedish Defence Commission formed a significant input towards the government's bill 1999/00:30 'The new Defence'. In it, the Minister of Defence announced radical re-structuring of the armed forces. The main tasks of the armed forces stayed the same as in the 1996 defence resolution.¹⁹⁵ On the other hand the organisation changed to enable it to fulfil the international tasks in a better way, without losing the capacity to reconstruct and mobilise strong territorial forces, if such a need would arise. The organisation would not only be reduced from thirteen to six brigades, it should also be modernised according to the demands of modern warfare.

However, the government left no doubt that conscription had to stay central as the basis for the renewed armed forces: 'We can now create a modern, flexible, and versatile defence on the basis of national service.'¹⁹⁶ The government gave three important reasons for that choice: a territorial, a motivational, and a qualitative one:

'A country like Sweden, with a large area and a small population, can require a relatively large defence in numerical terms. This is best ensured through a system of compulsory military service. A professional force cannot create the will and strength to resist that defence of the entire country requires. As conscripted personnel represent disparate social sectors, the system also contributes to broad competence and general experience.'¹⁹⁷

The basic organisation should be organised in such a way that 16,350 conscripts could be trained and possibly even more.¹⁹⁸ Compared to Von Sydow's own words, that meant farewell to general conscription.

Billion SEK				
Year	2001 ^a	2002 ^b	2003 ^b	2004 ^b
Total defence budget proposition	46,1	45,1	43,1	42,1
Changes:				
Decreased budget limit		- 4,0	-4,0	-4,0
Contribution for transition		3,0	1,0	
Reward compensation	1,4	1,4	1,4	1,4

Table 21: Economical limit of Defence for budget proposition 2000, source: prop. 1999/00:30, part 3.2; note ^a at year 2001 prices, ^b at 2002 prices

One of the consequences of the government's plans was that the current inquiry on the total defence duty, which had already started in 1998, received a second additional directive. One reason had been that for the future organisation a new recruiting system had to be introduced, with a growing tendency for voluntarism.¹⁹⁹ The government also announced financial measures to make the service more attractive, without waiting for

the results of the ongoing inquiry. It raised the daily allowance of conscripts from SEK 40 to SEK 50.

The plans of the ministry of Defence contradicted the financial prospects of the proposition 1998/99:74, which had foreseen a reduction of the yearly budget of 4 billion crowns for the years 2002-2004. The government intended therefore to introduce a 'compensation for the transition' of SEK 3 billion in 2002 and SEK 1 billion in 2003 (Table 21).

It can be concluded that by the end of the 1990s Sweden had made the transition from large invasion armed forces to a small and flexible defence. At the same time, the country had changed the system for manning that defence from general to a specialised conscription.

8.9 Implications for conscription: The total defence duty inquiry 1998

As a consequence of the large reductions, less than one third of every levy was used in the wartime organisation. By the end of the decade, another total defence duty inquiry had the task to come forward with solutions that would compensate the few that would actually be drafted for military or civil duty. Starting in budgetary restless times, it took the inquiry commission two years to deliver its report.

While the first inquiry of 1992 dealt with principle questions of how to handle the growing surplus and how to integrate all different duties, the second inquiry at first sight was more of an administrative character. It mainly dealt with the reward system for the conscripts and how to motivate young men to join the forces, by increasing its drawing power. After a short overview of socio-economic figures - the structural considerations for the inquiries - this part proceeds with the directive for the inquiry and its results.

Background of the 1998 Duty Inquiry

During the second half of the 1990s the number of actively serving conscripts further declined. While at the beginning of the decade only 18% of the levy did not have to fulfil military conscription, by 1998 this had been almost 50%. Table 22 shows that in that year 20,026 young men out of 48,503 were placed in the training's reserve.

	1994	1996	1997	1998
Total examined (18 y. or older)	57,588	49,207	41,577	48,503
Enrolled in posting for conscription	33,588	31,092	25,651	24,824
Enrolled in posting for civil duty	7,151	1,055	1,574	3,338
Enrolled in training's reserve	4,485	16,527	13,943	20,026
No obligation for any duty	12,086	533	409	315

Table 22: Enrolment figures. Source: Pliktverket (nb 1994 figures, 1997 change of the system → partly counted in 1998)

Around the same time, different interest groups of the conscripts, like the conscript council, put the economical, social, and educational problems of conscripts on the agenda.²⁰⁰ Though the former Minister of Defence, Thage G. Peterson, had already taken a closer look into that and actually raised some of the conscripts' rewards, it was

not enough.²⁰¹ The financial reward had hardly increased, which in combination with the devaluation of the Swedish crown led to an economical deprivation of those who had to serve. At the same time, an increased number of men enrolled ran the risk of losing their university study position or professional training place. The reason for that could be found in the delayed decision on where to be placed: in active duty or the training's reserve. There were also other problems requiring a satisfactory solution, such as the disciplinary system for conscripts and the number of conscious objectors who had been convicted.

The 1998 total defence duty inquiry: the beginning

On 25 September 1997 the Minister of Defence, Von Sydow, gave the directive to start with an inquiry. The committee, which was later called '1998 års pliktutredning', should investigate the:

- Enrolment system
- Postponement rules
- Training's reserve
- Duration of the different trainings
- Female conscription
- Resignation/dropouts
- Training's merits and disciplinary system²⁰²

The Minister stated in the directive that the total defence authorities, primarily the National Service Administration (Pliktverket), the Swedish Agency for Civil Emergency Planning (ÖCB), and the armed forces pointed to different deficiencies in the application of the total defence system. Those deficiencies were for example that both the system for testing and enrolment and the system of the training's reserve had to be evaluated. The authorities also pointed out problems with large numbers of young men, dropping out between enrolment and draft or during the training. Other items had been the possibility to postpone conscription for those with a civil job, and a review of the discipline system. One important authority had been the national audit board, which stated in its report that a more efficient conscript system could save up to 1 billion crowns.²⁰³

The different perspectives of those authorities above, and other not mentioned here, led to a very broad task for the committee. On the one hand it had to handle very technical questions, but also psychological ones - like how to make service more attractive - and juridical - like the punishment for total objectors - and political - like conscription for women. It should be no wonder then that this inquiry took two years, using fourteen different experts.

During the work of the inquiry - the commission met for the first time on 4 March 1998 - financial problems of the armed forces would lead to two additional directives. On 17 June 1998, the inquiry's task had been adapted to recent developments in the Swedish security and defence policy, such as the need for soldiers for international tasks, or the possibility to fulfil the duty closer to home. On 4 November 1999 the Minister of Defence, Von Sydow, changed the assignment again.

Name	Party	Other relevant function
Ulf Lönnqvist	Social Democ-rats	Chairman, landshövdingen Blekinge
Nicklas Atte-fjord	Environmental Party	Environmental party youth organisation*
Henrik Lander-holm ^{II}	Conservatives	Member of Parliament
Else-Marie Lindgren	Christian Democ-rats	City council Borås
Runnar Patriks-son	People's Party	Member of Parliament
Christer Skoog	Social Democ-rats	Member of Parliament
Anders Svärd	Centre Party	Former Member of Parliament
Oswald Söderqvist	Left Party	Former Member of Parliament, member differ-ent rescue and readiness organisations
Karin Wegestål ^{II}	Social Demo-crats	Member of Parliament
Sven Rune Frid ^{II}		Secretary of the committee

Table 23: Members of the 1998 Duty Inquiry, without experts. * Replaced Ångström just a few months before the end of the commission. ^{II} Already member of the 1992 Duty Inquiry

As can be seen in Table 23, the commission not only consisted of parliamentarians, but also of local and regional politicians. The chairman, Ulf Lönnqvist, for example used to be head of the county of Blekinge, in the south of Sweden. Two of the parliamentarians, Landerholm and Wegestål, were 'veterans' of the 1992 total defence duty inquiry, as was the secretary, Sven Rune Frid.

The results

The committee delivered its report almost exactly two years later, on 22 March 2000. The report of the inquiry started with an appeal that the defence of Sweden is a matter for everybody. That is why the members rejected professional armed forces. The reasons for that were the need to mobilise a large number of men in case of emergency and the high quality of conscript personnel. The issue of quality is also the reason why the duty should be extended to women.²⁰⁴

The members of the inquiry were aware of the fact that fewer and fewer men were drafted, corresponding to the need of the wartime organisation. To reverse the negative consequences for the defence willingness of the population and the declining motivation of those who had to serve, they proposed certain financial and educational measures.

An important way for softening the inequity between those who have to serve and those who avoid the service is to pay a higher allowance. The daily fee should be raised to 66 crowns a day, which resembles the daily allowance for students and approximately two glasses of beer in a cheap pub in Stockholm. Those who serve should also get a higher demobilisation fee. Instead of 4,500 crowns, the conscripts should receive, at the end of their service, 2,000 crown for every month served plus an extra fee for

long-term serving. According to that calculation, those who serve for 15 months will receive SEK 40,000 crown, for 12 months the amount will be 24,000 crown and the lowest demobilisation fee would be for the 7,5 month conscripts, i.e. 15,000 crown.²⁰⁵

Those who face unemployment after conscription should receive an allowance from the unemployment agency. Certain merits of the military training should be recognised for those who will be starting or continuing their civil study at a college or university. an example would be the recognition of the ability to lead others or work in groups. This latter option would be especially interesting for the longer-serving conscripts, who were trained to become conscript officers. Other issues that were dealt with by the inquiry were questions about compensation in case of personal damages during duty and the disciplinary system.

Apart from financial measures to increase the motivation, the inquiry also proposed educational measures. The embedding of total defence in the population, often called the anchoring, was still central. With declining numbers, in the eyes of the inquiry it would be important to enlarge the knowledge about the embedding in the young generation. To that end a way had to be found in which all authorities engaged in total defence might contribute to the dissemination of knowledge. One important way might be an information office. This office should organise, among other things, total defence days in high schools.

A deeper knowledge and regained acceptance by the young population became necessary, after years of decline in the number of conscripts. Since the armed forces only needed 18,000 conscripts a year and the civil defence authority, ÖCB, 900 conscripts, the members of the inquiry pointed to the need for more voluntarism. 'The fact that now only a limited part of a levy is drafted for basic training duty requires measures to motivate as many men as possible to fulfil the training voluntarily.'²⁰⁶

After the usual 'round' during which stakeholders in the sector comment on the proposal, the statements of opinion, the ministry of Defence presented its bill proposal on 26 September 2001 to the Parliament. The Bill differed only slightly from the inquiries proposal. The government fully followed the reward system for conscripts. Important for the proposal, too, were the concept of 'motivation' and the trainings reserve. The latter more or less lost its meaning as a surplus pool. Instead, a difference had been made between those who really would make a chance to be drafted and those who would definitely not be suited for a longer training. That was the majority. Those few who were to be drafted should not only be selected on grounds of their physical and psychological abilities, but also on their motivation. The government emphasised, like the inquiry that only the best suited should be drafted for conscription. 'The personal motivation shall be a very important reason to determine who is best suited to fulfil the duty.'²⁰⁷

That rule, however, placed the enrolment authority Pliktverket for some very practical problems. The motivation of young men and women is not stable. It often undergoes changes within a short period. 'When talking to us', Björn Körlof, the director of Pliktverket explained, 'the young men and women are often very motivated, but a few months later their life has changed.' Normally the potential recruits are in a phase where they are leaving high school and starting a grown-up life. With the changes in their lives, however, their motivation often also changes.²⁰⁸ Another problem that Körlof pointed at is the over-motivation of some persons, leading to so-called 'Rambo behaviour' or political extremism.

8.10 Towards the erosion of conscription?

After more than a decade of restructuring the armed forces and two inquiries on conscription, 1991/92 and 1998-2000, the decline of the young persons serving in the total defence had not stopped as can be seen in Table 24.

	1999	2000	2001	2002
Total examined (18 y. or older)	46,209	47,655	46,359	44,626
Enrolled in position for conscription	19,066	16,658	16,948	16,216
Enrolled in position for civil duty	2,190	1,639	1,126	695
Enrolled in training's reserve	24,744	22,940	25,148	6,745
No obligation for any duty	209	135	40	
Not suited for longer training				20,970

Table 24: Enrolment figures 1999-2002; since 2002 another figure had been introduced 'not suited for longer training'. Source: Pliktverket statistics 1996-2002

It is actually wrong to conclude that of the 16,216 young men enrolled in the basic training in 2002, everybody had fulfilled his service. The number had been much lower, approximately 12600, including about 270 women.²⁰⁹ Not only the number of conscripts decreased, but also the number of those contributing to the home guard. By the end of 2001, approximately 69,000 men joined the home guard, much less than the 90,000 the government was aiming at.²¹⁰

In future it might be that another pillar of the total defence duty would also decline further: the civic duty. In 2002 only 695 men enrolled, a long way from the 10,000 men the social democratic Minister of Defence, Thage G. Peterson, once had in mind in 1996. In September 2001 the government announced that the training for the civil duty airport fire fighters would be abandoned by 2004.²¹¹ That would mean that as from that date only the civic duty for the requirement of the municipalities and the power grid would exist.

However, the politicians in Sweden, especially the social democratic ones, have come up with new ways to man the armed forces and to ensure the will of the people to defend the country. The latter seemed to have suffered over the years. At least it seemed that it is no longer a matter of course to serve one's country. The population is dissociating itself from the idea of a people's defence that is based on (immaterial) ideals such as seeing conscription as a civic duty.

Figure 12 shows that more and more people think that serving in the armed forces should be compensated.

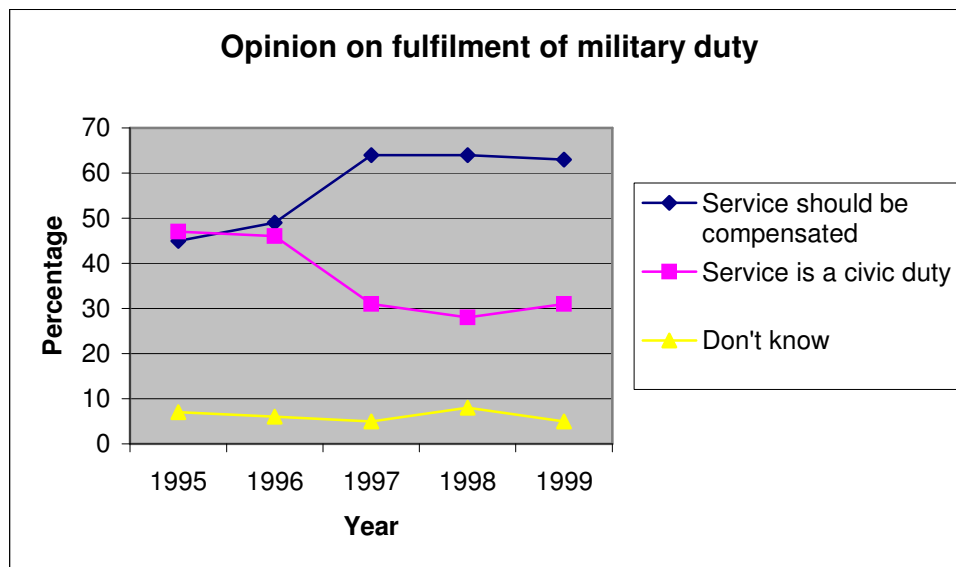


Figure 12: Opinion on fulfilling military duty, SPF Opinion 1999 table 45

While in 1995 the opinion was almost even, 45% thought that military service should be compensated, whereas 47% saw it as a civic duty. These numbers clearly changed in the following years. By 1999, 63% of the Swedes pleaded for compensation, against 31% who still considered it a duty.²¹²

Two measures of the social democratic Minister of Defence, Björklund (2002-), to fill the ranks for international tasks and to secure the people's will to defend Sweden, are noteworthy. Firstly, there are plans to offer conscripts temporary contracts up to three or four years after they have fulfilled their duty. When Wiktorin first presented this idea in 1999 a lot of people rejected it.²¹³ Since the beginning of 2003 this idea has been debated repeatedly by policy makers and the military, like Björklund and the Commander-in-Chief Hederstedt. The latter had even talked about abandoning 'de facto' conscription and replacing it with better-trained contracted soldiers: 5,500 a year.²¹⁴ It seems that the military paying lip service to conscription, but internally, in their planning, they probably have abolished it already.²¹⁵ The debate about conscription is not over, yet.

Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Applied	390	614	504	499	511	836
Recruited	289	341	242	204	271	396
Drop out (estimates)	N/A	21%	14,5%	14%	14%	13,5%

Table 25: Women in the armed forces, source: statistics Pliktverket

Secondly, there is the ongoing discussion about women in the armed forces. While in the beginning of the 1990s the issue was difficult to be accepted by the armed forces, nowadays it is becoming more common. Especially the 1998 Total Defence Duty Inquiry paved the way for a female defence. The reasons for the advocates are different. Some support women serving in the army voluntarily, as part of emancipation. Recently the debate concentrated more on the conscription for women as duty. That would be the

ultimate emancipation. Yet, the majority of women are not keen to join the armed forces, though there is a growing number of applications (Table 25).

Critics also point to the fact that less than 15,000 postings are available in the war organisation for the approximate 50,000 young men every year. With almost the same amount of young women as potential conscripts, the percentage of those actually serving would be below 15%. That would contribute to an even greater inequity between those who are obliged to serve and those who are not.

It seems that for the moment conscription in Sweden is turning towards the voluntary army based on draft. Still every young man (and in future woman?) will be enrolled and physically and mentally examined. Only those, however, who really want to serve, will then be drafted. The enrolment and examination has the advantage that everybody is given the opportunity to serve. This is not an unusual method for recruiting soldiers and it also was an option proposed by the Dutch Meijer-commission in its final report.²¹⁶ It is one possibility of guaranteeing sufficient qualified soldiers in (small) states. In countries where only conscription exists without examination, the recruitment of qualified soldiers turns out to be a problem, like in the Netherlands.

However, the examination leads to other problems. As already pointed at in the previous sections, voluntarism and motivation to serve is difficult to measure for seventeen year-olds and because of that it is still difficult to make plans. This, however, is a necessary procedure for the modern Swedish forces aiming at high-tech warfare abroad, while still dreaming of the broad anchoring of defence in society. In years to come the issue will repeatedly resurface, until draft in Sweden will be abandoned and military ambitions will meet financial support. A study of leadership in reforms is yet to come. For the moment, we will turn to an analysis of leadership in Swedish defence reform in the years from 1989 until 2003.

Notes

¹ RRV 1997:29, p. 178

² 'Framsyn. FOI och FHS om forskning för totalförsvaret' 2-2003, 4-7 (article Björklund) and 8-11 (article Hederstedt)

³ Bergman 2000: 192

⁴ Bergman 2000: 211

⁵ Interview Mohr, Björck, Landerholm

⁶ Ericsson 1991: 58-59

⁷ Hart & Gustavsson 2002: p. 160

⁸ Ericsson 1991: 64 8.4

⁹ Interview Mohr

¹⁰ The commission is called 'Försvars Beredningen'.

¹¹ Interview Mohr

¹² Source: Försvarsberedningen internetsite

¹³ This is the official translation of the Swedish government, compare 'The Swedish Government at Work', Swedish governments office, 2000, internet (2003)

¹⁴ A 'Statens offentliga utredning' (SOU). Those official replies are called 'remissas'

¹⁵ The so-called 'remissas'

¹⁶ Compare for the procedure 'The Swedish Government at Work', Swedish Government's Office, 2000

¹⁷ Source: Riksdag internetsite

- ¹⁸ Source: Försvarsberedningen internetsite
- ¹⁹ Information from www.pliktverket.se
- ²⁰ 'The Swedish Agency for Civil Emergency Planning', information brochure ÖCB 1998
- ²¹ Information www.varnpliktsradet.mil.se
- ²² Interview Juholt; www.cff.se/folkochforsvar
- ²³ FMI 2000: 8-9
- ²⁴ FMI 2000: 9
- ²⁵ FU 88: III/IV
- ²⁶ FU 88, Interview Gustafsson
- ²⁷ Interview Gustafsson
- ²⁸ Defence Decision 1988 (FU 88); Armed Forces Idea 2000 (FMI 2000) – formed together with FU 88 the Commander-in-Chief's contribution for the 1988 Defence Resolution; Commander-in-Chief 1992 (ÖB 92) – the Commander-in-Chief's contribution for the 1992 Defence Decision
- ²⁹ Interview Björck
- ³⁰ Interview Gustafsson
- ³¹ 'Arméchefen vill inte ha kortare värnplikt' *Dagens Nyheter* 31-01-1995
- ³² Interview Rönnberg
- ³³ Interview Rönnberg
- ³⁴ ÖB 91 Delrapport 1: p. 8; ÖB 92: p. X
- ³⁵ ÖB 92: V
- ³⁶ ÖB 92: X
- ³⁷ Interview Gustafsson, see also *Dagens Nyheter* 26-06-94, when leaving office the Commander-in-Chief emphasised that the unequal burden-sharing is 'foremost an ethical problem for me. It is normal that as huge a part as possible of the population shares in the dirty profession that is what the defence of the country means. We cannot buy ourselves out with toy soldiers.'
- ³⁸ 'Röines order till överbefälhavaren: Håll tyst!' *Expressen* 27-06-91 see also 'När blir ÖB försvarsmi-nister?' *Expressen* 26-10-90, about the defence Minister who did not talk much about future defence, but his Commander-in-Chief did.
- ³⁹ ÖB 92 appendix 8
- ⁴⁰ 'KANON-BRA, SA GENERALEN.' *Expressen* på smygtest av nya stridsvagnen' *Expressen* 26-05-90
- ⁴¹ 'ÖB får extra miljarder. Huvudlinjerna i nästa års försvarsbeslut redan klara' *Dagens Nyheter* 24-11-91
- ⁴² Interview Björck
- ⁴³ Interview Björck
- ⁴⁴ Interview Sahlin
- ⁴⁵ 1991/92:FöU12
- ⁴⁶ "'Obekvämliga försvarsbeslut väntar". Det är viktigare att värna försvarsindustrin än enskilda fredsför-band, skriver försvarsminister Anders Björck (m)' *Dagens Nyheter* 08-01-92
- ⁴⁷ Interview Björck
- ⁴⁸ Interview Björck
- ⁴⁹ Prop1991/92:102; 1991/92:FöU12
- ⁵⁰ Interview Sahlin
- ⁵¹ 'Landshövding slåss för regemente' *Dagens Nyheter* 15-12-91
- ⁵² For example 1991/92:FöU12 Bengt Kindbom, centre party, and the social democrat Ingvar Carlsson wanted to save the regiment F 6 in Karlsborg (Fö21 and Fö28, nr. 21). Many motions of this year have been put forward in the Parliament or its defence committee with the sole aim to keep garrisons in one's town or region.
- ⁵³ 'Bantat försvar ska bli vassare. Nytt beslut taget efter maratondebatt' *Dagens Nyheter* 04-06-92
- ⁵⁴ Interviews Nygren, Björck
- ⁵⁵ 'Bantat försvar ska bli vassare, Nytt beslut taget efter maratondebatt' *Dagens Nyheter* 04-06-92
- ⁵⁶ Interview Björck
- ⁵⁷ See for that several protocols of the standing committee of the late 1980s
- ⁵⁸ Interview Björck
- ⁵⁹ Interview Björck
- ⁶⁰ Interview Björck

- ⁶¹ Prop 1991/92:101
- ⁶² "Obehagliga försvarsbeslut väntar". Det är viktigare att värna försvarsindustrin än enskilda fredsförband, skriver försvarsminister Anders Björck (m)' *Dagens Nyheter* 08-01-92
- ⁶³ Interview Gustafsson
- ⁶⁴ Dir. 1991:40
- ⁶⁵ The most important laws: värnpliktslagen – conscription law (1940:967), (1966:413); civilförsvarslagen – civil defence law (1960:74); lagen om tjänsteplikt för hälso- och sjukvårdspersonal samt veterinärpersonal – law on compulsory service for medicinal and nursing personnel together with the veterinary personnel (1981:292); the allmänna tjänstpliktslagen – the general duty law (1959:83). Compare SOU 1992:139.
- ⁶⁶ There is no conscription for women. Fulfilling military service is solely on a voluntary base.
- ⁶⁷ Interviews Andeberg, Landerholm
- ⁶⁸ Certain members were added to the group, since their parties gained parliamentary status after the 1991 election
- ⁶⁹ Interview Björck, compare also interview Landerholm
- ⁷⁰ 'Fördragnin för pliktutredning 1991-11-27'. Riksarkiv YK 4251, map I. The calculations are not completely clear, but it seems that the 5% and 8% are related to the original 100% of every levy.
- ⁷¹ Interview Landerholm
- ⁷² SOU 1992:139
- ⁷³ SOU 1992:139: 18
- ⁷⁴ SOU 1992:139: 125
- ⁷⁵ Those figures were calculated by the Supreme Command
- ⁷⁶ All SOU 1992:139: 18-21
- ⁷⁷ The reasons seem to lie in the personal circumstances of one of the experts of the committee, who was obliged to write the law draft.
- ⁷⁸ Interview Eneroth
- ⁷⁹ On a total levy of 56200 compare SOU 1992:139, p. 81-83
- ⁸⁰ On a total levy of 59539 compare RRV 1997:29, p. 178
- ⁸¹ 'Slingerbultar kring säkerheten. Anders Björck sätter fingret på svårigheterna att snabbt spara på försvaret' *Dagens Nyheter* 14-07-94
- ⁸² "Svagare försvar kräver Natoanslutning". Alliansfriheten omöjliggörs om vi fortsätter att skära på försvaret, skriver försvarsminister Anders Björck.' *Dagens Nyheter* 13-07-94
- ⁸³ 'Försvaret förlorar på s-vinst. Nedskärningar innebär inte Natomedlemskap, säger Ingvar Carlsson' *Dagens Nyheter* 14-07-94
- ⁸⁴ 'Försvaret behöver försvaras. Thage G Peterson bör lära sig något om försvarsekonomi, i god tid' *Dagens Nyheter* 09-12-94
- ⁸⁵ 'ÖB och ministern i strid om finanser' *Dagens Nyheter* 08-12-94
- ⁸⁶ 'Försvaret behöver försvaras. Thage G Peterson bör lära sig något om försvarsekonomi, i god tid' *Dagens Nyheter* 09-12-94, also interview Wiktorin
- ⁸⁷ See chapter 7
- ⁸⁸ For example 'Allt färre får göra sin allmänna värnplikt. ÖB och försvarsministern oense om försvaret ska spara in på materiel eller manskap' *Dagens Nyheter* 08-01-95, 'Försvarsministern vill ha minivärnplikt' *Dagens Nyheter* 30-01-95 (here quotes), 'Värnplikt ska ge poäng. Försvarsministern vill underlätta vidareutbildning' *Dagens Nyheter* 07-03-96
- ⁸⁹ Peterson 1999: 500
- ⁹⁰ Peterson 1999: 516-517
- ⁹¹ Peterson 1999: 543
- ⁹² Peterson 1999: 515
- ⁹³ Peterson 1999: 520. 'Jag tog mig för pannan! Men ÖB avgick inte! Befogad kritik kan riktas mot mig för att jag inte föreslog regeringen att omplacera ÖB till någon befattning i det civila samhället. Men jag ville inte ha in fler moment i försvarsfrågan. Själva försvarsbeslutet var det viktigaste.
- ⁹⁴ Interview Wiktorin
- ⁹⁵ Prop. 1995/96:12, p. 3-4 (Web version)
- ⁹⁶ The renewal of Sweden's Defence: Phase 2, p. 8

- ⁹⁷ The renewal of Sweden's Defence: Phase 2, p. 8-9
- ⁹⁸ The renewal of Sweden's Defence: Phase 2, p. 5
- ⁹⁹ The renewal of Sweden's Defence: Phase 2, p. 16
- ¹⁰⁰ The renewal of Sweden's Defence: Phase 2, p. 17
- ¹⁰¹ For a full list see: The renewal of Sweden's Defence: Phase 2, p. 18
- ¹⁰² The renewal of Sweden's Defence: Phase 2, p. 23
- ¹⁰³ The renewal of Sweden's Defence: Phase 2, p. 23
- ¹⁰⁴ Prop. 1995/96:12, p. 3 (web version). 'Vi kan aldrig godta att vårt värnpliktsförsvar ersätts av en yrkesarmé. Därför vill regeringen hejda en utveckling, där allt färre totalförsvarspliktiga ges grundutbildning, och som därmed riskerar att leda till en yrkesarmé.'
- ¹⁰⁵ The renewal of Sweden's Defence: Phase 2, p. 19
- ¹⁰⁶ Compare "Fler bör få muckpeng" *Dagens Nyheter* 11-05-93; 'Värnpliktiga nöjda med familjepening' *Dagens Nyheter* 11-01-94; 'Ännu inget skydd på soldatens toa. ÖB har fått angenämare värnpliktsproblem' *Dagens Nyheter* 07-03-94; 'Värnpliktiga kräver mer betalt' *Dagens Nyheter* 25-02-95, 'Rotation för värnpliktiga' *Dagens Nyheter* 26-05-95.
- ¹⁰⁷ 'Allt färre får göra sin allmänna värnplikt. ÖB och försvarsministern oense om försvaret ska spara in på materiel eller manskap' *Dagens Nyheter* 08-01-95
- ¹⁰⁸ 'Von Sydow möter värnpliktiga' *Dagens Nyheter* 07-03-97 and 'von Sydow avstod från tal' *Dagens Nyheter* 08-03-97
- ¹⁰⁹ RRV 1997:29
- ¹¹⁰ RRV 1997:29, p. 12-13
- ¹¹¹ '200 000 har gjort lumpen i onödan. Sparförslag. RRV föreslår att värnplikten avskaffas tillfälligt' *Dagens Nyheter* 08-06-97
- ¹¹² 'Många klarar inte lumpen. ÖB oroas av att var åttonde hoppar av Värnplikten' *Dagens Nyheter* 01-04-96
- ¹¹³ 'Analys/försvaret: Militärrocken sitter illa. Försvaret är för stort och kostar för mycket pengar' *Dagens Nyheter* 13-12-97
- ¹¹⁴ Riksdagen Protokoll 1997/98:41, 5 December 1997 (Snabbprotokoll), Anf. 1
- ¹¹⁵ Riksdagen Protokoll 1997/98:41, 5 December 1997 (Snabbprotokoll), Anf. 2, 36, 38
- ¹¹⁶ Riksdagen Protokoll 1997/98:41, 5 December 1997 (Snabbprotokoll), Anf. 35; also *Dagens Nyheter* 13-12-97
- ¹¹⁷ The government specifies this to 28 February 1997
- ¹¹⁸ Proposition 1997/98:1 part 6, p. 14 [Proparkiv Word document – web version]
- ¹¹⁹ Proposition 1997/98:84, p. 8; 1997/98:KU25 statement Commander-in-Chief
- ¹²⁰ Proposition 1997/98:84, p. 8
- ¹²¹ SVT 11-12-97
- ¹²² Proposition 1997/98:84, p. 10. The original document of the armed forces is not available. In its proposition the government is very cryptically, trying to avoid that it would get the blame.
- ¹²³ Prop. 1997/98:83
- ¹²⁴ SVT 18-12-97
- ¹²⁵ SVT 15-01-98
- ¹²⁶ SVT 19-01-98; in *Dagens Nyheter* 28-01-98 (without title) the figure is down to 4,000
- ¹²⁷ SVT 02-02-98
- ¹²⁸ 'Besparingar i försvaret: Tusentals slipper lumpen' *Dagens Nyheter* 17-02-98
- ¹²⁹ SVT 26-06-98
- ¹³⁰ Proposition 1997/98:84
- ¹³¹ SVT 19-03-98: 'ÖB angriper regeringen'
- ¹³² 1997/98:KU25
- ¹³³ Riksdagen Protokoll 1997/98:41, 5 December 1997 (Snabbprotokoll); SVT 10-12-97,
- ¹³⁴ Landerholm (Riksdagen Protokoll 1997/98:41, 5 December 1997 (Snabbprotokoll), Anf. 1), 'Analys/försvaret: Militärrocken sitter illa. Försvaret är för stort och kostar för mycket pengar' *Dagens Nyheter* 13-12-97
- ¹³⁵ 'Hörna/Olof Santesson: Militära hugskott om vårt försvar' *Dagens Nyheter* 12-12-97
- ¹³⁶ SVT 12-12-97

- ¹³⁷ SVT 18-12-97
- ¹³⁸ SVT 18-12-97
- ¹³⁹ 'Beredskapen kan sänkas. Försvarkostnaderna. Regeringen ger ÖB förslag på besparingar' *Dagens Nyheter* 19-12-97
- ¹⁴⁰ "Säkerheten tryggas på sikt". Försvarets budget. Ett rejält värnpliktsförsvar innebär färre personer i utbildningsreserven, menar Björn von Sydow' *Dagens Nyheter* 21-12-97
- ¹⁴¹ SVT 15-01-97
- ¹⁴² 'Besparingar I försvaret: Tusentals slipper lumpen' *Dagens Nyheter* 17-02-97
- ¹⁴³ 'Pacifisten' *Dagens Nyheter* 17-02-97
- ¹⁴⁴ SVT 26-02-98
- ¹⁴⁵ Proposition 1997/98:84, p. 10
- ¹⁴⁶ Proposition 1997/98:84, p. 15
- ¹⁴⁷ Proposition 1997/98:84, p. 16, translation JEN
- ¹⁴⁸ Proposition 1997/98:84, p. 17
- ¹⁴⁹ Proposition 1997/98:84, p. 25
- ¹⁵⁰ Proposition 1997/98:84, p. 23
- ¹⁵¹ SVT 19-03-98: 'ÖB angriper regeringen'
- ¹⁵² Interview Wiktorin
- ¹⁵³ All 1997/98:KU25
- ¹⁵⁴ 'Mitt ansvar är att jag i regeringen har medverkat till beslut i syfte att komma till rätta med de problem som vi har drabbats av.'
- ¹⁵⁵ Ds 1999:2, p. 24. Also announced in the government's proposition 1997/98:83 (12 March 1998). Reason: government wanted to focus on budget proposal
- ¹⁵⁶ SVT 16-06-98
- ¹⁵⁷ 'ÖB-rapporten: ÖB skrotar allmänna värnplikten' *Dagens Nyheter* 13-10-98, different head than the rest
- ¹⁵⁸ 'ÖB-rapporten' *Dagens Nyheter* 13-10-98, my translation
- ¹⁵⁹ SVT 12-10-98
- ¹⁶⁰ All *Dagens Nyheter* 13-10-98 (different articles with reactions with head 'ÖB-rapporten')
- ¹⁶¹ SVT 16-10-98
- ¹⁶² SVT 13-11-98, 'ÖB drar ner på vapenköp. Försvarets konsekvensutredning. Med oförändrad budget måste 9,3 miljarder kronor sparas' *Dagens Nyheter* 14-11-98
- ¹⁶³ SVT 13-11-98
- ¹⁶⁴ Interview Wiktorin
- ¹⁶⁵ "'Sparförslaget en katastrof' Moderat oro över ÖB:s planer' *Dagens Nyheter* 14-11-98.
- ¹⁶⁶ According to TT, referred to in *Dagens Nyheter* 21-11-98 'Pengar till försvaret upprör miljöpartiet'
- ¹⁶⁷ 'Motstånd mot dyrare försvar' *Dagens Nyheter* 24-11-98 with reference to Carl Bildt, member of the defence committee
- ¹⁶⁸ SVT 24-11-98 'Regeringsstrid om försvaret'
- ¹⁶⁹ SVT 24-11-98 Oenighet i regeringen försenar försvarsbeslut'
- ¹⁷⁰ 'Försvarskonflikt nära lösning. Budgeten. Bred uppslutning bakom förslag från centern att ge anstånd med amorteringar på lån' *Dagens Nyheter* 30-11-98
- ¹⁷¹ SVT 01-12-98
- ¹⁷² Compare Dick Ljungberg in *Dagens Nyheter* 22-12-98 'Få svar om försvaret. Besluts skjuts på framtiden. Regleringsbrev fastställt'
- ¹⁷³ 'Värnplikten för 5 000 ställs in i sista stund' *Dagens Nyheter* 20-12-98
- ¹⁷⁴ English Executive Summary of Ds 1999:2, p. 1
- ¹⁷⁵ English Executive Summary of Ds 1999:2, p. 3
- ¹⁷⁶ English Executive Summary of Ds 1999:2, p. 5
- ¹⁷⁷ Ds 1999:2, p. 209-210
- ¹⁷⁸ Ds 1999:2, p. 211. Documents not specified, compare Table 20
- ¹⁷⁹ FoF → Important defence organisations, see chapter 7
- ¹⁸⁰ Waiting for the proposition 98/99, the ÖB's paper, the proposition 1999/2000:30 and 2 weeks before that the additional directive for the inquiry

- ¹⁸¹ 'Kortare värnplikt föreslås. Folk och försvar. Försvarsministern lägger pågående utredning på is.' *Dagens Nyheter* 25-01-99
- ¹⁸² 'Kortare värnplikt föreslås. Folk och försvar. Försvarsministern lägger pågående utredning på is.' *Dagens Nyheter* 25-01-99
- ¹⁸³ Prop. 1998/99:74, p. 9
- ¹⁸⁴ Source: Proposition 1998/99:74, part 6.2
- ¹⁸⁵ Internal version of FMP 00-04, dd. 24-06-1999, p. 1
- ¹⁸⁶ Prop. 1998/99:74, part 3.1
- ¹⁸⁷ 'Försvaret: ÖB vill ha yrkesarmé' *Dagens Nyheter* 19-05-1999
- ¹⁸⁸ 'Officerare vill behålla allmän värnplikt' *Dagens Nyheter* 18-05-1999
- ¹⁸⁹ "Regeringen slår vakt om pliktförsvaret" *Dagens Nyheter* 27-05-1999, my translation of: 'I dessa dagar hörs röster som säger att yrkesarmén är under införande och att den folkliga förankringen sakta tynar bort. Så är det inte och skall heller inte bli. En socialdemokratisk regering kommer inte att införa ett försvar som bemannas av yrkessoldater. Vi kommer aldrig att offra folkförsvarstanken'
- ¹⁹⁰ 'Smärtgräns nådd för värnplikt' *Dagens Nyheter* 16-07-1999
- ¹⁹¹ Ds 1999:55
- ¹⁹² Ds 1999:5, p.4-5, English summary
- ¹⁹³ Ds 1999:5, p.8, English summary
- ¹⁹⁴ The government repeated that demand in its proposition 1999/00:30, which was based for a large part on the Defence Commissions report. On 4 November 1999, the government gave the directive for an inquiry that solely concentrated on officers (of the reserve) and the civil employees. This investigation delivered its report in February 2001.
- ¹⁹⁵ A short version of the Government Bill 1999/2000:30, p. 6
- ¹⁹⁶ A short version of the Government Bill 1999/2000:30, p. 3. This sentence had been one of the first sentences in the English and Swedish summaries. It was also very prominent in the original proposal, prop. 1999/00:30, part 3.1 Politiska utgångspunkter [political points of departure]
- ¹⁹⁷ A short version of the Government Bill 1999/2000:30, p. 13
- ¹⁹⁸ Prop. 1999/00:30, part 5.4.2, head 'Utbildningssystemet, m.m.'
- ¹⁹⁹ Prop. 1999/00:30, part 6.5
- ²⁰⁰ For example *Dagens Nyheter* 01-04-96 'Många klarar inte lumpen. "Det finns grabbar som har det trist"' and 'Många klarar inte lumpen. ÖB oroas av att var åttonde hoppar av Värnplikten', 23-08-96 'Enkät: Värnplikten sänker stridsviljan. Positiv inställning mattas under lumpens gång', 07-03-97 'von Sydow möter värnpliktiga', 03-09-97 "Värnpliktiga är billig arbetskraft"
- ²⁰¹ Compare part Conscription
- ²⁰² SOU 2000:21, p. 571
- ²⁰³ RRV 1997:29, p. 14
- ²⁰⁴ SOU 2000:21, p.19-20
- ²⁰⁵ SOU 2000:21, p. 24
- ²⁰⁶ SOU 2000:21, p. 20
- ²⁰⁷ Prop. 2001/02:11, p. 24 'Vid bedömningen av vilka som är bäst lämpade skall den enskildes motivation till tjänstgöringen vara ett mycket tungt vägande skäl.'; compare also SOU 2000:21, p. 222-223, 225
- ²⁰⁸ Interview Björn Körlof
- ²⁰⁹ Defence Committee 2002/03:FöU1
- ²¹⁰ Prop 2001/02:10, p. 153
- ²¹¹ Fortsätt förnyelse, factblad September 2001, compare also interview Juholt
- ²¹² SPF 1999, Tabel 45. The question was, more precisely: 'now the Swedish military organisation reduces in size not everybody is called up. Fewer men around 20 years old are called up for a longer basic training. Their contemporaries, who are not called up, can meanwhile study or work. Do you think that in the future, those who are called up should be compensated, either economically or by special qualifications; or do you think that those who are called up shall see it as a citizens duty, although it does not incorporate everybody?'
- ²¹³ Compare part Defence policy redefined

²¹⁴ Hederstedt: *Dagens Nyheter* 05-12-02 'ÖB Johan Hederstedt vill ha ett bredare och mer flexibelt värnpliktssystem: "Kontraktanställ nyutbildade soldater"', 01-03-03: 'ÖB föreslår att värnpliktssystemet i praktiken avskaffas och ersätts av bättre utbildade kontraktssoldater som arbetar i fem år. Endast 5 500 personer behövs årligen för att försörja ett sådant system. Nästan alla Natoländer har avskaffat värnpliktssystemet till förmån för yrkespersonal, och för att Sverige ska kunna öva och arbeta måste kunskapsnivån vara lika hög.'

²¹⁵ Interview Juholt

²¹⁶ Compare report Meijer commission, page 125f.

Chapter 9: The silent goodbye to general conscription: piecemeal leadership incrementalism in Swedish defence policy

9.1 Introduction

In a manner of speaking, the Cold War ended in Sweden in 1995. Due to its neutrality the country relied for decades on its own ability to defend itself. With the end of the bipolar world order, long neglected problems in the defence organisation came to the fore: old weapons and turgid personnel figures. Those problems were homemade after almost twenty years of economies on defence spending.

In the early 1990s financial and economic crises in the country brought power to the bourgeois parties, who finally saw a chance to enact their longstanding defence policy: modernisation of the territorial forces and modern air power by procurement at home and abroad. However, continuing financial problems thwarted those ambitions, and when the social democrats returned to power in 1994, the modernisation of the armed forces towards small, high-tech forces began.

Whatever party in government, whatever defence policy those governments envisioned, each defence reform plan nibbled away at conscription. The more severe the cuts in the defence budget, the more rapidly the numbers of those actually serving shrank. This occurred notwithstanding the notion – in particular of social democratic politicians – that the people's defence should never vanish. The actual figures contradicted political rhetoric. From over 80% of a cohort in the beginning of the 1980s the number of conscripts went down to less than 25% by the turn of the century and this tendency has not yet stopped.

In this chapter the leadership's efforts to reform and conserve the Swedish conscript system will be analysed. The case differs from the Dutch situation, not only in time, but also in the numbers of actors and organisations involved. More actors were influential in the policymaking process than in the Dutch case. This is partially due to the long duration of the process (more than thirteen years) and partially because of the more formalised defence policymaking process. The Swedish political system and its culture of defence policymaking offered the military actors involved more room to manoeuvre than was available to their Dutch counterparts. At the same time, Swedish military leaders to some extent also displayed greater skill in playing the political game.

The structure of this chapter resembles the analysis of the Dutch case. First, we look at the outcomes in terms of the extent of organisational change and the success of leadership to re-legitimise defence policy, the organisation, and conscription. In this part the strategies of the leaders in the sector will be shown. Next we will show *why* leaders might reform or conserve and *how* they did so with regard to Swedish conscription. In the concluding parts we will show the scores of those leaders on the style and type dimension.

9.2 Setting the stage: actors, strategies and outcomes

Policy outcomes

Within fourteen years after the end of the Cold War, the Swedish armed forces saw an impressive transition from territorial forces with a sizeable manpower and outdated material to small, flexible well-equipped forces suited for crisis management abroad. After the social democrats regained power in 1994, they decided to invest 50% of the defence budget in procurement, at the expense of conscription, rehearsal training and preparedness for classic territorial defence. The proactive, high-tech systems are a compensation for the decline of the forces' manpower.¹ The number of conscripts declined to no less than 25% of the Cold War situation.

The outcome of the Swedish case differs less from the Dutch case than seemed to be the case at the outset of the study. While Dutch policy makers codified the end of conscription in law, Swedish policy makers avoided this final and symbolic step: they abolished general conscription 'de facto' and it is arguable in how far the momentary situation differs from postponement of the draft for the largest part of a year school. Having everybody conscripted and vetted for military service serves as a recruiting tool. In practice it boils down to a voluntary army based on draft. Only few youngsters join the forces and those who show no commitment are exempted.

Therefore, assessing the degree of change of the Swedish case poses some analytical problems. On the one hand, one might say that the changes over the years depict only incremental changes of the prevailing policy – or in terms of Lindgren it would be a *change of means*: conscription still exists in Swedish defence. However, with the major strategic change away from large territorial forces towards a highly professional network-centric defence, which serves international crisis-management tasks, the use of conscription changed, too. Only professional soldiers or those who prolong their conscription period voluntarily – paid at market level wages – are actually used in the current Swedish defence forces abroad. Already at the outset of the 1990s the beginning of the end of general conscription was initiated, when Swedish policy makers, social democrats and conservatives, codified what had been a rule of thumb on the shop floor: *only the need shall steer*. In fact, when taking the history of conscription during the previous forty years into consideration, when more than 85% of an age cohort served – because it was necessary to defend the large country with many brigades and much manpower – this codification could be interpreted at first sight as a *goal change*.

However, the fact that the territorial defence for and by the Swedish people became a secondary policy objective at the end of the 1990s and the fact that promotion of international peace by enforcing it² became much more salient in Swedish defence policy, meant that this actually led to much further changes. The organisation of the territorial defence, that only concentrated on a very small area of Sweden, became secondary: '...priority should be given to measures that enhance our international capabilities, while measures that are only of importance for developing the national defence capability will have to wait.'³ It is therefore fair to say that the people's defence, which for decades had been the strong fundament of Swedish total defence, formally started to

erode. The way to organise the manning of the forces changed in such a dimension, that those changes actually led to a *paradigmatic change of procedures*.

This, however, was never an official policy, though politicians were involved in those changes and even took the lead, like Von Sydow from 1999. On the contrary, alternatives to military conscription were developed and promoted by the supporters of general conscription, but they made little difference. Civic service declined more and more and is still in decline: in 1995 it was expected to grow to 10,000 persons a year, but at present probably less than 500 persons a year serve in this capacity. The same holds true for the home guard. Although no statistics about the age structure of the 60,000 soldiers are available (1995 plans expected 90, 000), it is reasonable to believe that this form of serving the state is also in decline, when taking into account that this was the trend of the last decade.

The outcome shows that the decline is not necessarily due to the de-legitimisation of the armed forces. On the contrary, the national defence is still seen as an important part of the Swedish state and defending the country is still regarded as a civic virtue. Yet, service to the state is no longer self-evident or idealistic. Opinion polls indicate and an advisory committee recommended that those who serve should be better compensated. The armed forces are gradually becoming less visible in Swedish society. While in the 1960s almost every family had members who served, since the 1990s the armed forces have become increasingly isolated from society. Only a few people are drafted. Instead of being anchored in society and part of the Swedish society, the armed forces are at risk of becoming a marginal phenomenon.

To a great extent this development was the product of political choices. Political as well as military leaders sacrificed conscription when budget choices had to be made. They made a strategic change to reform the armed forces towards a small high-tech army. Garrisons were shut down, and fewer and fewer recruits were drafted at moments when the peace-dividend was cashed in, e.g. during the elections in 1994 and 1998, or when a financial crisis loomed within the defence sector, as in 1997/98. From the second half of the 1990s onwards the forces were modernised and downsized according to new threat scenarios and foreign policy and national defence interests.

The end of the Cold War did not contribute to the de-legitimisation of conscription in Swedish society. Political and military leaders did not hesitate to re-invigorate the defence sector after it had been put under pressure by different crises, however, they saw no reason to defend conscription other than in name. In terms of crisis management it can be said that, although many politicians adhered to a conserving strategy, i.e. keeping conscription alive, their actions ultimately did produce a reform of the institution. In terms of the Boin & 't Hart (2000) typology, this outcome of the critical period of post-Cold War defence reorientation can be characterised as an unintended change.

Actors and strategies

In a period of almost fifteen years many different actors were engaged in Swedish defence policymaking. Like in the Dutch scenario, three different types of leaders are of interest to our analysis: political, military, and bureaucratic. Since the organisational change in Swedish defence policymaking in the mid-1990s (as described in chapter eight) this latter type met the public eye more often. Some personal statements of top

civil servants and associated scientists were published.⁴ However, in the Swedish case it was difficult to find evidence for the engagement of senior civilians in leadership roles.

At the political level, the social democrat Roine Carlsson was Minister of Defence until 1991. With regard to his relation to conscription not a lot of material has been found, except for a few newspaper articles and a defence decision made before 1989, in which he clearly followed a conserving strategy with regard to conscription. In the analysis we will therefore only refer marginally to him. The conservative Minister Björck and his Junior Minister Sahlin (1991-1994) followed a conserving approach. They started to modernise the territorial armed forces in the spirit of the Cold War strategy, but tried to avoid the subject of conscription. The subject was, however, high on the agenda of the next Minister, Thage G. Peterson (1994-1997). At least in public he repeatedly defended the institution, offering various plans to conserve it. His successor, Von Sydow, initially showed less interest in conscription, but in public came out more and more as a defender of conscription. The current Minister of Defence, Björklund, seems to be the first social democratic Minister of Defence to consider an explicit, deliberate reform of conscription, whilst nevertheless trying to avoid the impression that she is aiming at a full-scale professional army.

Different strategies can be discerned at military level. In the beginning of the 1990s conscription found a supporter in Gustafsson as Commander-in-Chief, who tried to find ways out of the decline of conscripts. His successors Wiktorin (1994-2000) and Hederstedt (2000-) had fewer problems to modernise the armed forces at the expense of conscription (Wiktorin) and they have been thinking about new, more professional ways to fill the few posts left in the armed forces (Wiktorin and Hederstedt).

In the Swedish system of defence policymaking there is also some room for leadership to be exercised by parliamentarians, like the chairmen of the conscription committees or the members of the defence committees in Parliament preparing the White Papers. With the change of that system towards the defence commission, bureaucrats also exposed their opinion more and more in public, like Michael Moore.⁵ However, not much leadership could be discerned at this level.

The puzzle

Given the strong conviction of the social democrats that conscription is an inseparable part of citizenship, it is astonishing that this institution declined to a point where the continued existence of conscription is debatable. Although all social democratic Ministers of Defence paid lip service to conscription, the outcome was change. Since economics seem to play an important role in the defence policymaking process, especially when triggered by financial crises throughout the 1990s, it is tempting to neglect the role of individual actors. This impression seems to be supported by the highly formalised way of reaching consensus in this policy sector, which many actors consider to be vital to the neutral state.

Although Sweden is still a neutral state that officially relies on its ability to defend itself, the changes of the Swedish forces since the mid-1990s are astonishing. If neutrality is indeed important for maintaining conscription, as the state needs sufficient personnel for its defence, one wonders why the Swedish forces not only downsized extensively but also hardly held any units in reserve.

Empirical evidence raises doubt if this structural approach provides sufficient explanations for the decline of conscription and the defence policy changes of the 1990s. Different governments, i.e. conservatives and social democrats, made different choices throughout the decade. While structures and procedures suggest constraints leading to slow, incremental changes - which are typical for many Western democracies according to Lindblom (1979) - nevertheless, we see far reaching alterations at certain moments. Those changes cannot be explained without taking a closer look at the actors involved in the policymaking process. In particular, we should focus more on the manoeuvring and interactions of military and political leaders in the Swedish defence sector of the 1990s.

9.3 Leadership opportunities and actor calculations

Leader's crisis awareness

Swedish defence organisations and defence policy makers faced a crisis at the end of the 1980s, due to three factors. Firstly, there was a lack of money to replace old equipment in the large army organisation, which led to less usable brigades. Secondly, there was a surplus of conscripts not needed in the wartime organisation, which rose every year. Finally, there had been the implosion of the traditional consensual defence policymaking, due to a severe financial and economical crisis and subsequent political calculus of the bourgeois parties.

The crisis awareness amongst the actors in the defence sector with regard to the future of conscription differed. The Commander-in-Chief Gustafsson had the feeling that the conscription system faced some serious problems.⁶ Especially the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, SAGRÉN, and his Chief Staff, RÖNNBERG, concentrated more on the state of the defence equipment.⁷ The army was supported in its approach by the conservative government. Neither the new Minister, BJÖRCK, nor his Junior Minister, SAHLIN felt that the disappearance of the bi-polar world order had eliminated threats to Swedish security.⁸ On the contrary, they sensed that the world was becoming more insecure. The failed 'coup d'état' in the Soviet Union by the end of 1991 increased this feeling.

By the mid-1990s this feeling had gone. New threats were identified, which called for a restructuring of the armed forces. These included regional conflicts, environmental damage, and the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.⁹ According to the then Commander-in-Chief, WIKTORIN, the constant downsizing undermined the territorial defence structure.¹⁰ Many brigades existed only on paper. Without sufficient money to keep them going, the system was hollowed out. The Commander-in-Chief thought it was better to make a clear cut and remodel the territorial defence structure into new, smaller and flexible forces. These forces were more suited to face modern threats and to serve the national and international commitment of the Swedish state.

What we see in the Swedish case were three different levels of crisis awareness. On the national level, the changed security environment led to the fact that conserving leaders were more aware of a security crisis of Sweden. In contrast, the reforming leaders had to convince their constituencies that this crisis was over, in order to downsize the

armed forces. On the organisational level, the crisis awareness was induced due to a lack of money. The conserving actors concluded that the budget had to be raised, while the reforming actors were convinced that the organisation had to be downsized and totally restructured. The changed crisis awareness in the security environment supported the reformers' plans from 1995 onwards.

The same pattern can be discerned with regard to conscription. The conserving actors who were aware of a crisis of conscription, emphasised the territorial threat for Sweden. According to them, only conscription could guarantee the large territorial forces to defend the country. Those leaders who wanted to reform conscription had to convince the public that there was no crisis at all, not in the security environment, not for conscription or in the defence organisation as such. They had to ensure that the international security environment allowed room to reform.

The case supports the hypothesis by Cortell & Peterson with regard to conserving and reforming actors.¹¹ In particular Björck and Wiktorin exploited the window of opportunity, because they sensed that doing nothing would raise the costs. From 1991 Björck had invested large sums in procurement to lower the perceived threat potential of the insecure post-Cold War order. In 1998, after the Armed forces' financial crisis, Wiktorin pushed reforms through since he sensed that the half-hearted changes since 1995 would endanger the whole Swedish security policy in the end.

Political calculus of the expected gains and damages

During the analysed period all governments, whether they were bourgeois or social democratically dominated, were minority governments. As predicted by the hypothesis, this limited the manoeuvring room of the Ministers of Defence. Björck found support for his procurement plans in the early 1990s from the New Democratic Party. Björck wasted no time and initiated the changes immediately after coming into office. In terms of the election cycle and possible electoral accountability the timing was ideal. Yet, as Björck indicated, without at least the tacit understanding of the social democrats, he could not have changed the conscription system into a system based on demand.¹²

His social democratic successors had to negotiate defence plans to a greater extent with the supporting centre and left parties. Without going too deeply into budget policy – this will be discussed further on in the section entitled *Institutional position of the leaders* – it becomes clear that the social democratic Ministers of Defence had limited space within their respective cabinets. In particular Von Sydow had little support during the 1997/98 financial crisis of defence. The left parties who supported the government were not willing to invest in defence at the expense of social security.

During the 1994 and 1998 parliamentary election campaigns, the left and liberal parties emphasised cuts in the defence budget up to 10% a year, but none of the parties or political leaders connected those cuts to institutional reforms. During this latter campaign, however, the defence commission postponed a follow-up report about the renewal of Swedish defence. An important reason was the upcoming election.¹³ The government wanted to focus on the upcoming budget proposal before concentrating on reforms. This was in fact the only evidence that could be found in the Swedish case that elections prevented or fostered defence reforms. The electoral cycle plays only a minor

role in the Swedish case. This is supported by the fact that even shortly after the elections Von Sydow kept the issue off the agenda. We will discuss this later.

What about conscription? Conscription was and is to a great extent a non-issue in Swedish society. Only few politicians repeatedly discussed the subject in public, but there was no broad debate. Even the conservatives, who were more and more inclined towards abolition in order to professionalise the armed forces, refrained from initiating a broad debate. Björck emphasised it was 'one of the holy cows'.¹⁴ The former social-democratic Junior Minister of Defence, Nygren, states: 'The political system will not challenge the status quo if it is not absolutely necessary. And there is a lot of space to do things under the headline of a conscript system'.¹⁵ In short, the expected political gains for anyone to demand abolition seem to be nil. Quite the opposite, it appears that the expected political damages are large, at least for the politicians.

On the military level the expected gains were high, however, different than anticipated in the operationalisation. Instead of personal career gains, the military leaders initiated reforms to secure their organisation, at the expense of conscription. In the beginning of the 1990s, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army gained procurement of modern equipment in exchange for the decline of the number of conscripts. Later in the 1990s the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, Wiktorin, had the opportunity to modernise the forces, again at the expense of conscription. He did not hesitate to sacrifice this institution to prevent the armed forces from becoming technically marginalised.

With regard to the hypothesis that elites may be more likely to seek structural reform the more secure they are in their positions and the longer it takes until they are held accountable for their actions, the Swedish case is diffuse. On the one hand, we find evidence that even leaders in minority governments can initiate change (Björck), though the change was aimed at conserving the territorial defence. On the other hand, actors are limited in their space in minority governments, in particular when leftist parties support them. Besides, regardless whether a government is a minority or oversized coalition, the political colour of this coalition and the issue at stake has to be considered.

As far as accountability is concerned, elections play a minor role. There is evidence that leaders initiated military change immediately after elections (Björck), but also that they were still reluctant to put reforms on the agenda at a comparative moment in the election cycle (Von Sydow at the end of 1998). It was the public opinion that interested the leaders. Respondents indicated that as long as there is no need in Sweden to question the system in public, none of the leaders would do so. In short, calculated gains and damages are neither a necessary nor sufficient condition to explain why leaders reform or conserve, the more so as it is difficult to apply to non-political actors. In the concluding chapter, we will try to re-formulate this hypothesis.

Inner convictions regarding necessity of change

The modernisation of the invasion armed forces stood high on the agenda of the conservative party. Before the fall of the Berlin wall, the conservative leader, Bildt, repeatedly criticised the cuts made in the defence budget by the social democratic government. To Björck, Bildt, and Sahlin, conscription was a secondary problem. Björck confirmed that the Brännström-committee served his purpose of keeping the issue off the agenda. Still,

he was one of the few in his party who started to think about abolition. However, not in public: his party was too traditional for that.¹⁶

His social democratic predecessors and successors had a different view. They wanted to conserve conscription, preferably in its most comprehensive form. Little evidence could be found for Roine Carlsson's (Minister of Defence until 1991) conviction, except for some news articles. In general, for none of the leaders under scrutiny could evidence be found about their inner conviction before they came into the office they held during the period analysed. The reasons they gave for their attitude towards conscription was often given in retrospective, like the Junior Minister of Defence Nygren (until 1991) or the Minister of Defence Thage G. Peterson (1994-1997) in his memoirs.

The latter was very explicit in his memoirs that conserving conscription was very important to him because of his social democratic background. The public statements during his term - the newspaper articles as well as the two-phase defence decision 1995/96 - support this impression. When by the end of 1994 Wiktorin suggested saving money at the expense of conscription, Thage G. Peterson rejected this with the words: 'Out of the question. Basic training and conscription are so central to Swedish defence, it is almost an ideological question, and so this is out of the question. Eventually we can save the money on procurement'.¹⁷ His other public statements, policy plans and his memoirs confirm his strong ideological conviction that conscription is part of Swedish society and defence.¹⁸ Yet, he could not prevent the decline of the people's total defence, of which conscription was an important part.

Von Sydow and Björklund were probably the first social democratic Ministers of Defence, with a more pragmatic attitude towards conscription. Neither of them was defending a large number of conscripts at any price. At some stage Von Sydow seemed to defend conscription with traditional social democratic arguments, when he emphasised that the so-called training's reserve endangered the quality of the conscripts and the conscript system in general¹⁹: 'The growing training's reserve is a danger for our duty system. It is therefore important to me that this procedure will be checked up on.'²⁰ Moreover, he even tried to defend conscription much like his predecessor, Thage G. Peterson, had done, when he said that '[i]t is a mistake that one demands a long duty fulfilment from one part [of a cohort, JEN], but zero from other parts.'²¹ Nevertheless, Von Sydow seldom expressed a similarly strong conviction. He saw the necessity of a further modernisation and therefore downsizing of the armed forces²², a concept that did not fit high numbers of conscripts. In addition, Von Sydow faced growing financial problems and cutbacks.

The fact that Björklund began her term by talking about a prolongation of contracts for conscripts, points to a similar sense of pragmatism. However, she was still defending the principle of conscription and emphasising that every comparison with professional forces would be misleading. Her very willingness to 'think along' with Commander-in-Chief Hederstedt about this concept, which had not been negotiable for her predecessor in 1999 when Wiktorin proposed it²³, underscored her more pragmatic focus. Likewise Håkan Juholt's (chairman of the Swedish Defence Commission – *Försvarsberedningen*) views on conscription are evidence of the de-ideologisation of the social democrats on this point. When asked why he wanted to uphold conscription, he gave technical reasons, quality reasons and emancipation reasons. When asked if he might think of any other reasons to uphold conscription, he answered: 'No, no ideological reasons, no (...) no there is no ideological reason, for me. It is just quality.'²⁴ With

the latter, Juholt refers to conscription as a tool to select the best recruits, a view that was unthinkable for a social democrat even at the end of the 1990s. Back then, the social democrats in the 1998-conscription committee prevented every elitist form of conscription. Instead, they aimed at an average of every cohort to be recruited.²⁵

All military leaders repeatedly underscored the importance of conscription in public statements. Commander-in-Chief Gustafsson was most outspoken in his view. Moreover, contrary to his successor(s) he tried to come up with plans to keep the conscript numbers at a high level. Even when retired, he wrote articles in favour of conscription, trying to introduce social conscription.

Wiktorin was less committed. To him conscription was important as a means of manning the armed forces. Yet, contrary to Gustafsson, he was not convinced that it had to be general conscription. It was not an ideological issue to him. In fact, he saw more room for a selective form of conscription. This much better suited the downsized armed forces he was aiming at than the large contingents that the old system produced. That became obvious, not in the least, when he repeatedly proposed to downsize the annual draft in order to modernise. As early as 1999, he was the first senior military who officially toyed with the option of offering short-term contracts to conscripts after their duty. Hederstedt's suggestions about the future of conscription point in the same direction. He, too, preferred a selective form of conscription, as is evident from his proposal to draft only 5,500 young men and women a year.

The Swedish case shows that most conserving leaders had a strong inner conviction towards conscription, while those who reformed the sector had a much more pragmatic attitude. For those leaders, conscription was still part of society, but there were no ideological hurdles for not thinking about new forms of conscription.

Institutional position of the leaders

Being the Defence Minister in a multi-party minority government was a handicap for Björck in advancing his political aims. Yet, his government could rely on the support of the populist New Democratic Party, which came into Parliament in 1991, when modernisation of the armed forces was considered. In addition, Björck's position was strengthened by personal support from Prime Minister Bildt. Very important to the Minister of Defence's position within the sector was the implosion of the traditional defence policymaking process at the beginning of the 1990s. The absence of an institutional counterweight paved the way for Björck's ambitious plans to modernise and strengthen the armed forces. In the traditional system the finding of a consensus for defence policy would have taken several years. Björck pushed his defence decision through the system within several months.

Although the traditional system of defence policymaking changed – Björck changed the committee into a commission that was informed about the government's plans – by the mid-1990s that commission had regained some of its power. Instead, however, of being part of the parliamentary decision-making, this commission was organisationally placed under the Minister of Defence, although MPs were members. Still, Björck's social democratic successors had a relatively weaker position within the system. Both Thage G. Peterson and Von Sydow had to reform the armed forces – now that the Cold War was finally over in Sweden – as part of a social democratic minority government.

However, the ongoing financial problems complicated matters and, from 1998 on, there was also the need to keep the left parties on board (the centre party had stopped supporting the social democratic government). Those parties wanted to cut the defence budget even more than the social democratic Minister of Finance already intended. Although the financial crisis of 1997/98 within the armed forces created a window of opportunity to reform, which was exploited by the Minister of Defence and the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, the institutional setting was not favourable to abolish conscription, the more so as the leftist parties were a defender of conscription.

The new Commander-in-Chief, Wiktorin, had the advantage that when he came into office in July 1994, the structure of the sector had been changed. The Commander-in-Chief was the military cornerstone of the defence organisation and every other defence official had to contact him first before communicating with the Minister.²⁶ Wiktorin admitted that '... in my opinion it would never have been possible to make the dramatic change from the invasion structure to the new structure, without having the authority that was given to the Supreme Commander in 1994.'²⁷

In addition, he came into office shortly before the new Minister of Defence, Thage G. Peterson. This gave him time to settle in before being confronted with a political superior with whom he often disagreed and sometimes openly argued with, especially about conscription. Despite these collisions, Wiktorin was never fired. Peterson wrote in his memoirs that the new defence resolution was more important than the firing of the Commander-in-Chief.²⁸

With the next Minister, Von Sydow, Wiktorin had acrimonious exchanges. Despite the financial crisis of 1997/98 and an interrogation by the constitutional committee, he was not sacked. Why not? Like Thage G. Peterson, Von Sydow needed Wiktorin for the renewal of the armed forces. The former fighter pilot had the will and the authority to change the organisation. From 1997 on, the institutional strength of the Commander-in-Chief had partly been increased by the weakness of his political superior, who was bound in a political struggle about the budget.

The hypothesis that strong actors conserve or reform, finds support in this case: both Björck (conserve the territorial forces and change conscription) and Wiktorin (reform the forces at the expense of conscription) initiated and implemented change. A strong institutional position of the leaders, or – like in the Swedish case – a weak institutional environment was an important - though unnecessary - condition to initiate change or conserve the structure of the sector. Weaker actors had the chance to make use of their procedural abilities to improve their position. We will come to that in greater detail in the next part.

In the Swedish case, the hypotheses that were formulated after the theory by Cortell & Peterson (1999) found different support. Again, all hypotheses would support the reasons why policy makers followed a conserving strategy. As far as crisis awareness was concerned, actors conserved the forces if they regarded the international situation as insecure. With regard to conscription, the strategies depended on the developments in the international security environment. Only after the international environment changed, the reforming actors regarded reforms an option resulting from the organisational crisis of the armed forces. The political calculus was different than expected in the hypothesis. Not so much elections or accountability were important, but the calculus toward the parties which supported the government and the (bureau political) calculus

of the military concerning their organisation's integrity. This latter was secured by reforms. In addition, all reforming actors – or those who strived for reforms – had a pragmatic attitude towards conscription. They gained from their strong position within the system, but some of them did not hesitate to alter their position using their procedural abilities and personal skills. We will see this in the next section, where the ten hypotheses concerning reforming and conserving leadership will be tested. It will turn out to be a much finer tool to analyse actors' strategies to cope with crises than the theory of Cor-tell & Peterson (1999) could be.

9.4 Reformist and conserving leadership: dissecting the process

Set I: Defining the situation

Several defence resolutions and policy papers gave the political and military leaders the opportunity to redefine the security situation and thus the aims and means of defence policy. The conservative leaders, Björck and Sahlin, emphasised the insecure situation in the post-Cold War world. With growing instability in Middle and Eastern Europe, there was no room for army reductions. Björck also saw a danger for the independent Swedish defence industry if no investments were made. According to him, there was, however room to downsize the forces according to the security situation. It served the conserver's plans to modernise the large territorial forces. Conscription was only a part of the framing or of the solutions they offered, as long as they referred to the necessary downsizing of the forces in order to finance new heavy armour.

To their social democratic successors, it was imperative not to frame the situation as a crisis, or being a threat to Swedish security in terms of a large-scale attack. Otherwise, it would have been difficult to downsize the armed forces to the extent they did. Publicly none of them referred to the situation for conscription as critical. Even when the second conscript committee of the 1990s, the 1998 inquiry, was initiated, Von Sydow avoided any statement that conscription might approach a dead end, now that fewer and fewer men were drafted. In the installation directive of the committee this issue was glossed over, by referring to it almost casually, as a secondary point in the argumentation. The social democratic leaders repeatedly emphasised, however, the necessity of conscription for democracy. They implicitly suggested that the absence of conscription would endanger democracy, the state, and the citizens' virtues.

The military leaders defined the situation regularly as a threat to the defence capability of Sweden, yet, from different perspectives and with different solutions. While in the beginning of the 1990s Gustafsson framed the situation as a crisis if conscription would not be saved and more money would be invested, his successor, Wiktorin, framed the general situation repeatedly as a crisis, if nothing would be done. And the solutions he offered hollowed out the conscription system.

Around the social democrats came back into power, Wiktorin became the new Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. He did not frame the international situation as a crisis, but regularly pointed to new military threats, demanding different, modernised armed forces. Additionally, when several economic rounds (or unexpected financial

crises) doomed on the horizon, he did not hesitate to exploit the situation by framing the situations as crises to the defence organisation, which needed strong resolve by making political choices: either fewer conscripts or giving up the reforms of the armed forces and the endangering of the Swedish defence industry.

To conclude, all political actors, except for the conservatives at the beginning of the 1990s, refrained from framing the international situation as a crisis. The military actors on the other hand did not hesitate to make use of the situation, framing it as a threat to the organisation, which needed firm resolve.

Set II: Committed leadership teams

In the Swedish case we twice saw teams who collaborated closely to reach their aims. In the beginning of the 1990s a successful conserving team and at the end of this decade a successful reforming team. In the beginning of the 1990s the Ministers of Defence and their undersecretaries collaborated, or at least they were trying to reach similar aims. The social democrats Roine Carlsson and Nygren had similar objectives when keeping conscription off the agenda. Yet, shortly after they had installed the conscription committee, the social democrats lost power, so not much political commitment of Carlsson and Nygren can be analysed.

As far as the modernisation of the large territorial forces was concerned, the conservative Minister of Defence, Björck, and his Junior Minister collaborated closely. The latter was asked by the conservatives because of his ability to plan a new defence concept. Supported by the Prime Minister the duo dedicated itself to a higher defence budget and the procurement of modern heavy weapons. Conscription did not actually feature on their agenda and they were content that the conscription committee of 1991 helped to keep the issue off the agenda. Björck was the experienced politician who communicated the plans that were made by Sahlin.

There was a high congruency between the publicly announced plans of the conservative team and their actual deeds, though even their own constituency was not spared. The downsizing of the forces came along with the closing of many garrisons, which were held in high esteem, in particular by the supporters of the conservative party, because of tradition, but also due to their economical importance for the region.

Thage G. Peterson came on the scene as a traditional social democratic Minister of Defence, who was very committed to conscription and the concept of total defence. Yet, the actual policy diverged quite clearly from his public statements, considering that none of the figures he proposed for the different services have been reached. Considering the empirical data, there is little doubt that Peterson was very committed to conscription. However, his ideas and plans with regard to the organisation of the Swedish defence differed too much from what was financially feasible and organisationally sensible.

In his memoirs, Thage G. Peterson referred to the difficult relation with Wiktorin. Still, he and Wiktorin set a first, important step towards a new security structure, and the Minister admitted that he had needed Wiktorin for that. Yet, their aims for the future organisation differed extremely. So much so, that there is little reason to believe that they formed a close collaborating reforming team.

The combination Von Sydow-Wiktorin on the other hand was much more like a team. Their plans to finance the armed forces differed, but their aims for the future of the Swedish security and defence policy and its forces were much more complementary than during Thage G. Peterson's term. Both were not strongly committed to conscription, although Von Sydow followed at some stage the official party policy. Yet, Wiktorin and Von Sydow shared the ideas about the future network-centric warfare: '...he and I had a very fruitful cooperation and a very good relation during the rest of my period. And the only point where we were not at the same level was when we were discussing the ambition level, which means the economy. But for the rest it was working very smoothly.'²⁹

It is interesting to note that Björck/Sahlin formed a conserving conservative political-civil servant team, whereas Von Sydow/Wiktorin formed a reforming political-military team. And this combination turned out to be fruitful for the far-reaching reforms at the end of the century. There was some political and organisational resistance to downsize and restructure the armed forces. They fitted the budget plans of the social democrats and the left parties and most political resistance came from the conservative party spokesmen, who repeatedly criticised the low defence budget. In the next section, we will see how the leaders convinced their environment of the feasibility of their plans.

Set III: Leadership persuasion tactics

The Swedish mode of defence policymaking facilitates leadership persuasion tactics. The periodical making of the defence resolution offers an opportunity to the top of the ministry, but also to the Commanders-in-Chief within the parameters set by the Minister, to present well specified plans. Most of the leaders studied here made use of this opportunity by initiating armed forces investigations or presenting defence resolutions. What differed was their argumentation to support those plans.

The bourgeois defence policy makers Björck and Sahlin used threat scenarios, when defending the modernisation of large territorial forces, applying at that stage a conserving strategy. According to the proposition of the government, the main task of the armed forces in 1991 was still to resist an armed attack, with short military warning, irrespective of the direction the attack might come from.³⁰ To them, the territorial forces of the Cold War had proven their value and since the developments in the East were far from predictable, it would be wise to stick to those territorial forces – leaner but meaner. This was, according to our operationalisation, a purely *conserving* argument, fitting conserving leadership.

In addition, they communicated those plans extensively. 'There had been numerous TV and radio programs and, articles; it is hard to believe today how many TV programs we had about the question whether we should buy new battle tanks or not. Today one can laugh. Everybody was indeed his own expert. I have never seen so many experts in Sweden ... But, what happened was ... the army accepted that we downsized, if they got the main battle tank and other equipment instead.'³¹

However, during the 1994 elections, Björck used jeopardizing arguments when trying to react to the plans of the social democrats and liberals to cut in defence spending.³² According to him, further downsizing would endanger Sweden's security and defence autonomy: 'There will be dramatic changes, with consequences for the defence indus-

try, difficult transitional problems for a large number of garrison places and the end of general conscription ...³³. According to the Minister, this would lead to Sweden's membership in NATO. This tactic was aimed at the population's resentments against another membership, in a year when EU-membership was high on the political agenda. Yet, those arguments were too weak to succeed. Firstly, after several financial crises, when Sweden stood at the eve of deciding whether or not to join the EU, defence did not stand high on the political and public agenda. The future of the welfare state was more important. Secondly, precisely in the year 1994 the Swedes felt more secure than in the years before and in the year after.³⁴

During several budget cuts and the 1997/98 financial crises within the armed forces Wiktorin made the political decision makers choose between stopping the modernisation of the armed forces and downsizing the number of conscripts. Practically a non-choice, since it was technically impossible at that stage to stop the reform process of the forces without jeopardizing it.

The social democratic Ministers of Defence, Thage G. Peterson and Von Sydow, often reacted with irritation to the plans of Wiktorin, who proposed to solve economical and financial problems in the defence budget at the expense of conscription. Firstly, Peterson underscored the importance of conscription to defend the large country, which fitted a conserving strategy; at the same time he initiated a further downsizing of the armed in the same proposition 1995/96:12, which is really a contradiction. Secondly, being aware of the clear majority in Sweden against professional forces,³⁵ he emphasised the possibility of professional forces. Yet, none of those arguments prevented a further decline of the number of conscripts. In addition, Peterson's plans to encourage alternative services, like the 'landstorm' and civil defence, did not convince the executive, the armed forces. None of those plans have been successfully implemented.

With regard to conscription Von Sydow had no well-defined specific plan or counterarguments against Wiktorin. In fact, he reacted more to the environment instead of coming up with a clear plan or vision. This occurred, for example, in June 1997, when the Swedish National Audit Office (RRV) published its report on the waste of money in the defence sector because of its personnel policy. This was one of the main triggers for the second conscription inquiry in the decade. The second occasion took place around the same time, when an amount of 12 billion SEK was missing in the defence budget and Wiktorin proposed to solve the crisis at the expense of conscription. The Commander-in-Chief was very successful with his publicly announced cuts in the conscript figures. He not only succeeded in getting the figures down to the level he suggested and managed to save the budget in this way, he also triggered the government and the left parties to come up with a solution to the 1999 financial plans. The media were important for those tactics, in particular since the Commander-in-Chief and the military in Sweden appear to be more outspoken than in many other countries.³⁶

However, with regard to reforms of the armed forces in times of large budget cuts, Von Sydow and Wiktorin presented inevitable and feasible plans. Whenever there as a left majority in Parliament, each plan aimed at raising the defence budget was doomed to fail. The more so as the national audit report had shortly before shown how the organisation could save almost five percent of the budget a year by making good use of conscription. Instead, the leaders aimed at a total reform of the armed forces, away from invasion forces and towards forces with international crisis management capacities. Those smaller forces were not only cheaper, notwithstanding an extra budget for the

transitional phase, they also met the Swedish (leftist) ambition to promote peace in the world.

To conclude, the case supports the hypothesis that reforming leaders have to present well-specified plans, which are feasible and inevitable. Besides, Wiktorin was very good in presenting his plans at the right moment for gaining support. All his options to guarantee an efficient and effective defence occurred at the expense of conscription. The conserving actors on the other hands had well specified plans for the future of the armed forces. However, firstly, in the case of the conserving social democrats, their own plans for conscription did not fit those defence plans. Secondly, their conserving tactics for saving the people's defence often changed into conservative tactics, with arguments not strong enough to find broad political support. Instead of preventing far-reaching changes of the sector because the leaders were convinced of the values, beliefs, and integrity of the sector, their arguments tried to prevent changes as an aim in itself. This also holds true for the conserving tactics of the bourgeois government at the beginning of the 1990s. While in 1992 the defence resolution was a well-defined plan which met the demands of the insecure times, in 1994 Björck had nothing more to offer than jeopardizing arguments against the proposed budget cuts.

Set IV: Building broad support

Until the beginning of the 1990s, the policymaking process in Sweden was highly institutionalised. The system of reaching a defence resolution guaranteed that the military and political actors collaborated. The Minister of Defence ordered the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces to come up with an investigation, which was then further prepared in the *defence committee* and debated in the *parliamentary committee on defence*. With the dissolution of the defence committee and the establishment of its successor, the *defence commission*, this process became less formal.³⁷ In addition, the ministry became more responsible for the defence policymaking, whereas before that time Parliament had been much more influential.

There was no clear connection between those changes in the defence policymaking and the changes of the political-military relations. However, from that time, there was a noticeable tendency for military and political leaders to voice their disagreement publicly during the making of defence policy. It started with Gustafsson and reached its climax when Wiktorin was Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces.

Yet, on crucial moments, once important decisions about the future of the armed forces had been taken, the military supported those plans and helped to solicit support. Little is known about the early 1990s. With regard to conscription Gustafsson and Björck had very different interests. Björck even cancelled the short training that was introduced to keep high conscript figures. However, Björck codified what already was the rule in conscription routine, viz. that it was not the supply by conscripts but the demand of the forces that should be decisive for the actual number of draftees. For that, however, Björck needed the support of the social democrats, as he indicated himself. One important way Björck got that support was by allowing social democrats influential positions in the 1991 conscript committee. It was not only generosity but also political calculus.³⁸ In addition, he had the support of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, because their plans were congruent and, in the end, of the Commander-in-Chief of the

armed forces. Though Björck's plans were not good for conscription, he still invested in the forces.

Little is known about Thage G. Peterson's pursuit of support for his reform plans of the armed forces. It is known that he omitted to incorporate the military in his plans for the future of conscription and the total defence service. None of those plans have been implemented, the figures dropping constantly. That, however, would have been necessary if Peterson wanted his plans to succeed, the more so as he removed the budget for those plans from the defence budget. The armed services were not amused.³⁹

In the second half of the 1990s, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces actively solicited broad support for the defence plans in the political arena and within his organisation. As already mentioned, the Minister of Defence, Von Sydow, and the Commander-in-Chief, Wiktorin, developed those plans together, though they differed about the budget. Yet, Wiktorin remembered that he and his close collaborators at the armed forces had a lot of contact with all political parties in Parliament. They invited them to HQ, informed them, discussed with them and presented their ideas. In addition, to convince a broader audience of the large scale reforms, Wiktorin and his 'colleagues went out and held speeches, four to five speeches a week. We were talking and talking and trying to convince people.'⁴⁰

Though the government and the political parties supported Wiktorin, he faced a lot of resistance. 'We are talking about closing down old regiments. The opposition within the armed forces itself.'⁴¹ Videoconferences were an important tool with which Wiktorin could get support of his organisation. In a direct, internal Armed Forces broadcast on 19 March 1999, 30 September 1999 and 20 October 1999, he explained the implications of the reform plans for the future of the garrisons and the personnel simultaneously to all troops all over the country. Even parliamentary members who at that moment were staying in the countryside joined the broadcast in the barracks, which was greatly welcomed by the general.⁴² During those occasions, conscription was referred to only in a broader sense.

Even though there were only a few examples, the Swedish case showed that leaders indeed actively built broad support. Little is known about Von Sydow, but Wiktorin used many different channels to communicate the reforms with many stakeholders in the sector. He not only lobbied in the political arena for support, but also in his own organisation. By using live broadcasts on an internal circuit, he created a type of personal care for his subordinates. The case showed that the process of support building indeed started at the political level, and went from other stakeholders to the people in the defence organisation. Yet, as far as the central subject of this study is concerned, i.e. conscription, it is fair to state that there was only little common ground between the social democrats and the military leaders and only little military support for the social democratic plans to keep a people's defence.

Set V: Controlling the process

The formalised defence policymaking process in Sweden puts constraints on the Minister of Defence's ability to control the process. The Swedish defence sector is open to many stakeholders and their relations are very horizontal, since many authorities share equal influence in the process. Like in many Western countries, the defence organisa-

tion as such is very hierarchic, in particular since the organisational changes in 1994 and 1998, when the Commander-in-Chief gained increasing power. In addition, the Commander-in-Chief is expected to be politically loyal to the government. Yet, the Swedish case showed that the Commander had informal space to manoeuvre, especially in his relation with the Minister of Defence.

The Minister sets the parameters for the armed forces investigation that is used for the preparation of the defence decision. Therefore, he is able to set the agenda of what is decided upon, but the commission is preparing the decision and afterwards societal actors and stakeholders in the sector can comment on that. Though it is the Minister of Defence, who is preparing the final law proposal, he has to take other systemic constraints into account. For instance, he has limited room to manoeuvre in a minority government, which from the second half of the 1990s was complicated by the fact that the social democratic minority government was supported first by the centre, and later by the left parties. Defence policymaking was therefore more complicated. In the 1998 financial crisis, the left parties supported the cutbacks of the social democratic Minister of Finance, while shortly afterwards the centre-right parties were negotiating with the Minister of Defence about the next step in the reform of the armed forces.

There were several moments when the Ministers of Defence had the opportunity to control the decision-making. Björck and Sahlin used the vacuum in defence policymaking that existed after the traditional way of policymaking imploded at the beginning of the 1990s. They sped the process, by presenting a defence decision within three months after they came into office.

In addition, the conscript committee, initiated by Björck's predecessor, served the purpose of keeping conscription off the agenda. Yet, Björck's procedural influence on its composition was limited. When the bourgeois parties came into office, the committee changed its composition, because new parties came into government. Still, the social democrats had three members in the committee, because Björck needed the support of the social democrats to change the conscript system.⁴³

With changing political majorities in 1994 and the enlarged power base of the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces within the defence organisation, the procedural abilities of the Minister of Defence seemed to deteriorate. Though Thage G. Peterson managed to present plans for the renewed armed forces, he never saw chance to gain support for the large conscription he was aiming for. At the same time the defence commission replaced the traditional defence committee. It was necessary to guarantee the traditional broad consensus about defence policy, but adapt at the same time to a fast changing security environment, which demanded a faster policymaking procedure than the five-year plans could have provided. Though the Ministry of Defence became more influential on this committee, it was yet another limitation to the Minister's room to manoeuvre. Now he had to come up with a defence resolution every three to four years, which gave less room for long-term planning.

With regard to conscription, there are only a few moments when Von Sydow exercised procedural leadership. When setting the agenda of the 1998 conscript committee; when reformulating the tasks during the process; when postponing the work of the committee, since a reorientation of the security and defence policy was coming up, which led to another impressive downsizing of the armed forces; and when keeping this issue off the agenda during the 1999 meeting of the organisation FoF (People and De-

fence). It helped the Minister and the social democrats to prevent an open debate and a possible unintended change.

Formalised policymaking and the limited room to manoeuvre for the minority governments in the second half of the 1990s made it difficult for reforming leaders to control the process. Still, political leaders had the chance to do so, although not every leader used this chance.

9.5 Passive and active leadership styles

The Swedish case, like the Dutch case, shows an inconsistent picture with regard to the hypotheses. The factors that are influencing actors' perceptions once a window of opportunity has opened (Cortell & Peterson 1999) fit most conserving leaders and sometimes the reforming leaders. Most of the leaders who reformed or conserved the sector considered the costs of taking no action high. However, only the traditional ideologist, who wanted to preserve conscription in an extensive form, was blind to the extensive costs. An example is Thage G. Peterson, who defended conscription; however, apart from his policy plans, there is little evidence that he strived for the support of those plans. In particular those leaders who wanted to reform the armed forces had a very pragmatic relation to conscription. In addition, once they decided to reform the forces, e.g. Von Sydow and Wiktorin, they developed well-defined plans and tried to alter systemic constraints.

The same inconsistency can be found with regard to the hypothesis of reforming and conserving leadership. Some of the actors indeed strived actively for reform or actively tried to conserve the sector. Like Björck and Sahlin who defined the situation as critical and the country had to stick to the territorial, yet modernised, forces. Björck actively communicated those plans and controlled the process at some stage. In Figure 13 Björck and Sahlin are placed in the active conserving sector. Except for building broad support they scored high on the hypotheses, although more evidence was found for an active Björck.

On the other side, in the active-reforming sector, are Von Sydow and Wiktorin. Since Wiktorin had been working on the reform of the armed forces since 1994 he can be found in three different stages during the process: (W1) from 1994-1997 where he worked with Thage G. Peterson on the change of the forces to have greater crisis management capabilities; (W2) from 1997-1998 in the transitional phase from invasion forces towards more and more flexible forces, but now together with Von Sydow; (W3) from 1999-2000, after the internal financial crisis and further cuts, he strived for the end of the territorial forces towards the network-centric warfare capability. With every phase, Wiktorin met more of the hypotheses for reforming leaders, which is expressed in the dynamical arrows.

In the third phase, after the financial crisis, Von Sydow backed Wiktorin more. That became clear, not in the least, when he dissented with the Minister of Finance in 1999. Without the intervention of Prime Minister Göran Persson another crisis almost came about. Another example was when he kept the issue off the political and public agenda. During his term the conscription figures dropped drastically, from over 30,000 to under 17,000. Von Sydow never actively strived for abolition. The 1998 conscript inquiry served the Minister of Defence to keep the issue off the agenda. After its installation, he

twice added new tasks to the committee's directive and at the end of 1998 he even postponed its work, since a drastic reform of the armed forces was on its way. Apart from those instances, Von Sydow did not act in favour of conscription according to one of the conserving hypotheses in this study (vS3C).

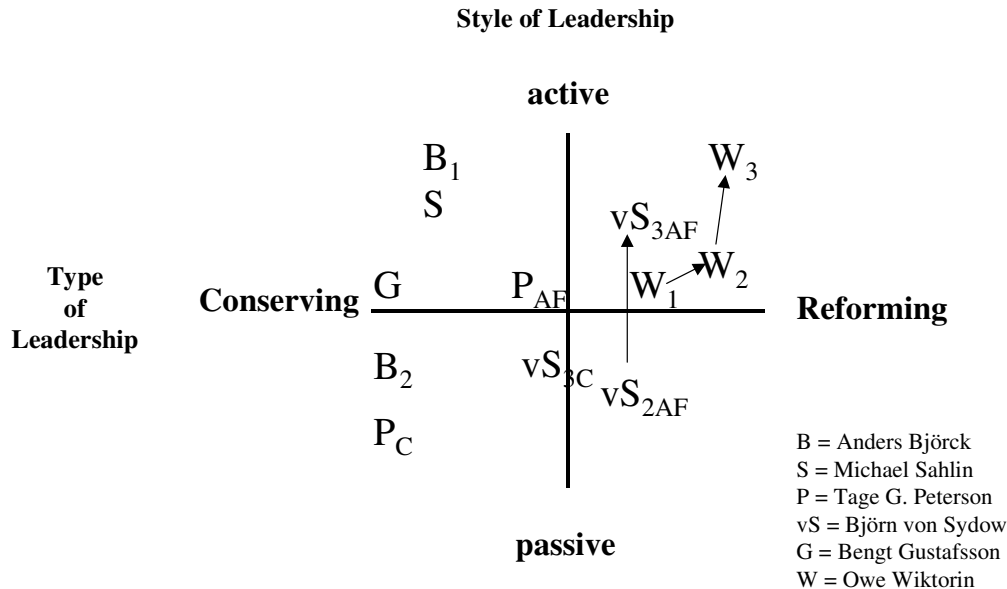


Figure 13: Styles and types of leadership in the Swedish defence sector

On the contrary, almost all actors who wanted to conserve conscription can be placed in the passive-conservative corner of the typology. Those are all social democratic Ministers. The only actor who followed an active-conserving strategy was Gustafsson. However, his plans came too late. The new centre-right government invested in heavy armour, at the expense of the armed forces' size, the conscripts, and Gustafsson's protection guard.

The case shows that large-scale reforms are possible in Sweden. There even seems to be room for active-reforming leadership, as shown by Wiktorin, and Von Sydow to a certain extent, at least in reforming the armed forces. For the abolition of conscription none of the military or political leaders wanted to be the instigator. The large reforms of the defence sector and the Swedish system made a silent goodbye possible. For as long the public is supporting the ever-growing inequality between those who serve and those who do not, no reforming leadership in the spotlight seems to be necessary.

9.6 Leadership and institutional crisis management in Sweden: What have we learned?

The Swedish case shows that policy officials and entrepreneurship is not restricted to elected state officials. There is room to initiate change and reform for bureaucratic and also respective military leaders. While in the British electoral reform of the 19th century Cortell & Peterson identified the lack of a parliamentary majority as an institutional obstacle⁴⁴, it seems that in particular this lack of parliamentary majority for the politi-

cians in the Swedish case of this study gave the military leaders more room to manoeuvre. While the politicians of any government in the 1990s had to find support for their defence policy plans at non-governmental parliamentary parties, the Commander-in-Chiefs of the armed forces or the army had the possibility of bringing large parts of their plans into reality. Finding majorities in Swedish defence policy had been complicated by the fact that from 1998 on the social democrats needed the support of the left parties. Together with the social democratic Minister of Finance they wanted to cash in the peace dividend even more than the social democratic Minister of Defence.

The Swedish case supports Cortell & Peterson's theory that elites are seeking structural change the more secure their positions are. Evidence could have been found for weaker actors instigating change, yet the weaker the actor, the more conserving the strategy was.

Another point that should be highlighted is accountability. While accountability for politicians might be relatively easy operationalised, i.e. electoral defeat or parliamentary support, bureaucratic accountability in the Swedish case was difficult to discern. Formally the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces is accountable to his political superior, yet, especially from 1994-2000 it seemed that the social democratic Ministers had few possibilities to enforce political loyalty or administrative accountability. An important identified explanation was their weak political position. The Swedish case supports what was already an assumption of 't Hart: a consensus democracy like Sweden gives policy actors who do not stand in the spotlight more room to manoeuvre. However, different from 't Hart's expectations, the Swedish defence sector left little room for leaders from decentralized organisations to influence the process.

't Hart's theory of reforming leadership, however, also finds some support in the Swedish case. The reforming actor, i.e. mainly Wiktorin, does not hesitate to frame the situation as a threat to the organisation. He was not over-committed to conscription but committed to reforming the armed forces towards network centric warfare. More often than not he had the better arguments when financial problems urged decisions by the policy makers. His arguments were also decisive, since the arguments of the conserving leaders were rather weak, like those of Thage G. Peterson and Von Sydow who wanted to keep the conscription numbers high. Though the Commander-in-Chief often differed in opinion with the two social democratic Ministers of Defence, it appears that this combination - the social democrats and the general - was a fertile cooperation for the large reforms of the armed forces: from large territorial forces towards small flexible forces. The general's pragmatism was a good counterweight to conserving leaders' rigidity.

Notes

¹ Compare Edström 2003: 257

² Promoting international peace had always, at least since the Second World War, been a high priority on the Swedish agenda. This is not in the least place expressed in the participation by Swedish military in many UN-peacekeeping missions all over the world. What changed was the Swedish will to join international peace-enforcing operations, e.g. in 1999 in Kosovo (KFOR).

³ Ds 1999:5, p.4-5, English summary

- ⁴ Compare 'Sveriges säkerhetspolitiska val – fem forskarkommentarer. En debatserien från försvarsdepartementet' Swedish Ministry of Defence, 2000
- ⁵ M. Moore 'Försvar in förändring', Swedish Ministry of Defence, 2003
- ⁶ Interview Gustafsson, FU 88
- ⁷ Interview Rönnberg
- ⁸ Interviews Björck, Sahlin
- ⁹ The renewal of Sweden's Defence: Phase 2, p. 8-9
- ¹⁰ Interview Wiktorin
- ¹¹ Compare chapter 2
- ¹² Interview Björck
- ¹³ Compare 8.7
- ¹⁴ Interview Björck, the other holy cow is NATO-membership
- ¹⁵ Interview Nygren
- ¹⁶ Interview Björck
- ¹⁷ 'ÖB och ministern i strid om finanser' *Dagens Nyheter* 08-12-94
- ¹⁸ Compare for example the two-phase defence decision of 1995 and 1996 in the empirical chapter.
- ¹⁹ SVT 18-12-97
- ²⁰ 'Beredskapen kan sänkas. Försvarkostnaderna. Regringen ger ÖB förslag på besparingar' *Dagens Nyheter* 19-12-97
- ²¹ "Säkerheten tryggas på sikt". Försvarets budget. Ett rejält värnpliktsförsvar innebär färre personer i utbildningsreserven, menar Björn von Sydow' *Dagens Nyheter* 21-12-97.
- ²² Interview Wiktorin
- ²³ When Wiktorin for the first time offered it as a solution.
- ²⁴ Interview Juholt
- ²⁵ Compare report 1998-total defence inquiry (SOU 2000:21) and dissenting opinion in report by conservative member Landerholm
- ²⁶ The situation before that time had been quite different. His predecessor Gustafsson was a 'primus inter pares'. 120 different military units had direct access to the MoD. When in 1991 the conservative Minister of Defence, Björck, came into office the disadvantage of this system for the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces became obvious. The Commander-in-Chief of the Army, who had different plans for the Army than Gustafsson, had the ability to make a deal with the conservative Minister of Defence, Björck, who strengthened the Army by the procurement of 150 heavy tanks.
- ²⁷ Interview Wiktorin. Supreme Commander = Commander-in-Chief
- ²⁸ Peterson 1999: 520.
- ²⁹ Interview Wiktorin
- ³⁰ 1991/92:FöU12
- ³¹ Interview Björck
- ³² According to Hirschman 1992. Compare 3.3
- ³³ "Svagare försvar kräver Natoanslutning". Alliansfriheten omöjliggörs om vi fortsätter att skära på försvaret, skriver försvarsminister Anders Björck' *Dagens Nyheter*, 13-07-1994
- ³⁴ Compare Opinion study 2002, SPF, Table 19. In 1994 only 13% of the respondents believed that the future would be more threatening (compared to 17% in 1993 and 21% in 1995)
- ³⁵ Compare Appendix 2
- ³⁶ Interview Gustafsson, Wiktorin. Compare also different news articles in the empirical chapter
- ³⁷ Compare historical chapter
- ³⁸ Interview Björck, also above
- ³⁹ Interview Wiktorin
- ⁴⁰ Interview Wiktorin
- ⁴¹ Interview Wiktorin
- ⁴² Interview Wiktorin
- ⁴³ Interview Björck
- ⁴⁴ Cortell & Peterson 1999: 201

Chapter 10: Conclusion

10.1 Introduction

This study started with a quest for possible factors that lead to the abolition of conscription in Western Europe. The key question was why some Western European countries abolished military conscription after the Cold War and why some did not. Though Karl Haltiner¹ provided us with a cross-national quantitative analysis of this question, his conclusion - that abolition of conscription depends on the combination of defence alliance membership, the degree of national military threat, and frequent participation in international missions - was unsatisfactory. It could, for example, not account for differences in the timing, speed, and depth of military changes that exist among West European countries. Haltiner's study 'black-boxed' the policy process, which is where the key to explaining these differences lies. In an attempt to supplement and refine Haltiner's analysis the following question became central to this study: Why did the Netherlands abandon conscription soon after the Cold War and why did Sweden not do so?² In studying the policy process in these two countries we focused particularly on the importance of leadership in reform efforts.

Assuming that the end of the Cold War made large territorial forces obsolete and thus lead to critical challenges for the armed forces and in particular for the territorial armies, the conscription reform attempts were placed in the wider context of crisis and reform literature. This study argued that the nexus between political and bureaucratic leadership is a key factor that accounts for the timing, speed, and depth of reforms in the defence sectors of the two countries. The first empirical question in this study was under which conditions leaders might decide to reform or not. The theory of Cortell & Peterson guided the quest.³ Additionally, by combining this theory with 't Hart's⁴ notion of reforming leadership and deepening Terry's⁵ concept of conserving leadership, a theoretical framework was developed. It was argued that when policy sectors are confronted with external or internal threats resulting in institutional crises, most senior policy makers tend to be inclined to conserve the status quo.

Moreover, the claim was made that it is difficult to apply 't Hart's theory, which was developed on the basis of studies of reforming leadership in Westminster democracies, to consensus democracies like the Netherlands and Sweden, even though 't Hart & Gustavsson tried to do so in their article.⁶ Instead, it was expected that, when leaders in consensus democracies do choose to strive for reform, they will be more inclined to do so unobtrusively, or otherwise phrased: more passively. The activist type of reformer is rather rare in these systems, and likely to remain confined to crucial moments within ongoing, slow-moving processes of policy change.

Using the cases of military conscription in the Netherlands and Sweden, this study showed that both countries differed on outcomes (which is why they were selected – although during the progress of the study those outcomes became more similar than anticipated), but also on process (particularly timing). The Netherlands postponed the draft within four years after the end of the Cold War, with a prominent reforming role for political and bureaucratic leaders. In Sweden, young men are still drafted to serve

the country, though the draft's benefit to the armed forces is deteriorating. Quite contrary to the Netherlands, it was not politicians who took the lead in reform but military leaders. While in the Netherlands the armed forces and, in particular, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army tried to conserve conscription, it was the Commander-in-Chief of the Swedish armed forces, Wiktorin, who sought to modernise those forces even at the expense of conscription.

In this concluding chapter we will first answer the question *why* actors tend to change policy. It was possible to show the conserving reflex of many actors who sensed a crisis for the sector if changes would be made in the armed forces and conscription. Secondly, we will compare leadership types in both countries using the ten hypotheses about reforming and conserving leadership, to compare *how* leaders in both countries acted. One of the remarkable outcomes of this comparison is the different attitudes and political behaviour of the military in both countries. Finally, we will compare the leaders in both countries on the dimensions 'style' and 'type'. This classification will help to understand reforms in consensus democracies.

10.2 Conserving reflex vs. pragmatic reforming leadership

Cortell & Peterson⁷ argue that international and domestic triggers can create a window of opportunity that will alter the perceptions of policy makers to capitalise on those windows for change. The degree of change depends on the size of the window. Non-crisis events, defined here as 'environmental pressure that create localised costs or offer elites only minimal autonomy from political concerns'⁸ open micro-windows. On the other hand, crisis events open macro-windows, with crisis defined here as 'environmental pressure that highlight wide-spread inefficiencies in extant domestic institutions or afford elites wide-ranging autonomy from short-term political constraints'.⁹ Four factors (crisis awareness, political calculus, inner conviction and institutional position) can influence leaders' preferences to exploit those windows, however, those agents are still limited by the structures they operate in.

In this study we tested Cortell & Peterson's theory on the Dutch and Swedish defence sectors after the Cold War, supposing that this event opened a macro window for the leaders in those institutional settings. Widening this concept to non-political actors too, i.e. senior civil servants and senior military leaders, it turned out that leaders on different levels within the respective administrations did indeed sense different windows of opportunity. The theory provided us with good insights about leaders' perceptions. In particular, it could account for the conservative attitude of leaders conducting no or only micro changes. This section will systematically report the empirical findings in a consecutive pattern, starting with an overview in Table 26.

Factors	Netherlands	Sweden	Factors
Crisis awareness	Conserving actors sensed crisis to country and organisation if changes (abolition) would come; Reforming actors low crisis feeling national security, considered costs of doing nothing in organisation high	1991: Conserving actors sensed crisis to country and organisation → large investments in heavy armour; 1995: Change of security analysis 1998: Reforming actors low crisis feeling for national security, but considered costs of doing nothing in organisation high	(+) Supported
Political calculus	Majority government International political calculations by conservers Political gains to reformers diffuse until late stage in policy process (related to institutional position Minister of Defence)	All minority governments; 1991: centre-right government supported by right party 1994: change of government (minority social-democratic) 1995: cash in peace dividend 1998: no support left parties for investments, cut but reformed	(+) Supported
Inner conviction	Ideological ballast for conservers; Pragmatic reformers	Ideological ballast for conservers; Pragmatic reformers	(-/+) Rejected for reformers
Institutional position	Minister of Defence with increasing confidence and ability; Weaker Minister of Foreign Affairs; A-political military	1991: Strong Minister of Defence; Political military leaders 1995: Weak Minister of defence Strong, political military leader 1998: Weak Minister of Defence Highly-political military leader	(+) Supplement to theory: position of other policy makers

Table 26: Comparison of leaders' perceptions

Crisis awareness

In both countries we saw similar effects after the Cold War with regard to the crisis awareness of the leaders within the sector. In the beginning, many actors perceived the threat to the countries' security high and as a consequence they conserved the status

quo. Yet, the approaches to conserving the status quo were slightly different. While in the Netherlands the conserving actors did not want the size of the organisation to shrink below a certain threshold, the Swedish leaders accepted size reduction in exchange for investment in the modernisation of the forces.

Around the same moment when those investments were decided upon in Sweden, in the beginning of 1992, some of the Dutch leaders changed their perception. Under the impression of the failed 'coup d'état' in the Soviet Union and encouraged by yet another cashing in of the peace-dividend, they considered the costs of doing nothing high. That is why they strived for a change of the tasks, modernisation and downsizing of the forces and – as a consequence – the abolition of conscription.

It took the Swedes exactly six years longer to come to the same decision. Under the impression of a vanishing threat in the security environment and confronted with yet another cashing in of the peace-dividend, the reforming actors strived for a change of tasks, the high-tech modernisation and further downsizing of the forces, but no abolition of conscription. Actually, the period from 1994 until 1997, with the social democratic Minister of Defence Thage G. Peterson, was a period in which Sweden slowly adapted to the changed security environment. The Minister admitted that times had changed, but he still wanted a large people's defence as a back up.

The trigger's (i.e., the end of the Cold War) influence on the leaders' perceptions is, in both cases, a necessary and sufficient condition to conserve. In an insecure situation the actors had difficulties calculating the costs of their actions, respectively, there were barely any alternative calculations available. Yet, the trigger was insufficient to alter the leaders' perceptions on initiating change. A second trigger was necessary to induce leaders to reflect on alternative futures for the armed forces. Either way, the hypothesis alone cannot sufficiently indicate the directions the leaders have chosen. That is why we have to turn to the three hypotheses based on the theory of Cortell & Peterson.

Political calculus of the gains and damages

In both countries elections and accountability played a minor role. Only in Sweden, in 1998, did the Defence Commission decide to postpone a report about the future security policy because of upcoming elections. Partially that can be explained by the fact that defence and conscription only played a minor role on the public agenda. The domestic and international political calculations seemed much more important. In general, however, it was difficult to isolate the leaders' position using this hypothesis since it is closely intertwined with the fourth hypothesis, i.e. *leaders' position within the system*. According to this hypothesis reforms were fostered or prevented to improve or stabilise the power and position of leaders. In the Dutch case, however, we saw that a leader, i.e. Ter Beek, attempted to improve his position within the institutional setting in order to be able to reform. Three findings are worth noting here.

Firstly, the political calculus of the gains and damages by the leaders were not restricted to the national arena. In the Dutch case, being part of a defence alliance played an important role for the conserving actors. In particular the Minister of Foreign Affairs repeatedly referred to the consequences of the Dutch position within NATO if the country would downsize the forces and – closely connected to that – abolish conscription.

Secondly, such calculi were not restricted to the political leaders. Bureaucratic and military leaders were found to reason in similar, although more restricted, ways. The assumption was that their calculus was centred on the prospects for their current job satisfaction and personal career. In the end, limited evidence could be found for this. Many of the military leaders tried to preserve or improve the position of their own services. All Commanders-in-Chief of the Armies (Sagrén, Wilmink, Couzy) assessed possible policy changes in terms of the gains and losses for their organisation, i.e., in terms of funding, task structure, and bureau-political status. The same holds true for the Commanders-in-Chief of the Armed Forces (Van der Vlis and Wiktorin) although they were much more concerned with the military organisation as a whole. That approach made it easier for them to support reforms. For example, Van der Vlis supported the abolition of conscription in the end, prioritising the implementation of the Priorities Paper, since he knew that he would not gain a majority for upholding conscription. Another example of this is Wiktorin, who initiated reforms for the sake of the whole organisation even at the expense of conscription.

A third finding that is worth mentioning is the ‘security’ of a leader’s position, operationalised in the size of the governmental coalition. It emerged that leaders in a coalition with a larger majority had some room to manoeuvre, like Ter Beek in the Netherlands. However, that does not mean that minority governments offer no room for policy change. In 1991, the centre-right minority government in Sweden was able to raise the defence budget while supported by the right-populist party New Democrats. With the extra money it managed to conserve the territorial defence of the Cold War. In 1995 Thage G. Peterson slowly started the transition of the forces. However, although this transition started under the pressure of spending-cuts, the changes went only halfway: partly new tasks and still a territorial defence. In 1998, the Minister of Defence in a social democratic minority government had difficulties finding extra spending after a budget crisis in the armed forces. The Minister of Finance, a social democrat, but also the two left parties supporting the government, refused to invest money in defence at the expense of traditional left policy sectors. With the lack of money and the cut in the budget came major reforms. This illustrates that the size of a government (coalition) on its own is of little explanatory value without taking the wider policy context and the colour of a government into account.

Inner conviction

In none of the cases was there a leader who wanted to abolish conscription or restructure the armed forces in a direction that differed from their territorial defence capacity or invasion defence before the end of the Cold War. Even at the beginning of 1992, in both countries many leaders were reluctant and preferred to stick to the traditional forces. The cases contradict the hypothesis by showing that well-formed views on a needed reform are not a necessary condition for initiating change.

Contrary to the theory’s anticipation, ‘ideological ballast’ of many actors in the field prevented them from reforming. This may explain their conserving behaviour.

Particularly the military leaders with roots in the Cold War, Gustafsson, Wilmink, and to some extent Van der Vlis, had problems with the quick changes. It was a similar case for the older generation of Swedish social democrats, like the Ministers of Defence

Roine Carlsson and Thage G. Peterson. The less ideological the leaders were, the more they were willing to initiate change. De Winter was a non-ideological reformer guided by reason. Wiktorin was not only very pragmatic, but he also was an Air Force pilot from a younger generation than Gustafsson. This meant that he neither had the ideological ballast of the Cold War nor was he attached to the Army, which suffered most from the post-Cold War changes.

The question remains why Ter Beek eventually initiated reforms in spite of the fact that he was and remained ideologically predisposed to support conscription even after he had instigated reforms. The answer will be given in the next part, when the last factor influencing leaders' perceptions for change will be discussed.

Institutional position

Both the Dutch and Swedish case support the hypothesis that the policy maker's position within the institutional setting can affect his perception on whether to make use of a window of opportunity or not. The Dutch case shows additionally that leaders not only need to have a favourable institutional position at the beginning, but that they also have the ability to improve their position in order to reform.

In the Swedish case, Björck had the advantage that he came into office at a moment when the social democrats were weak, the traditional policymaking process imploded and the international security situation was insecure, at least in the eyes of many Swedes. Ter Beek, on the other hand, had a much more unfavourable institutional setting to reform. At first this was not a problem since Ter Beek did not intend to reform. Once, however, he changed his mind, in the beginning of 1992, he started to alter the institutional setting. He had already excluded the defence council from the making of the Priorities Paper, but after the failed 'coup d'état' in the Soviet Union he bypassed the Minister of Foreign Affairs, excluded those militaries who might slow down the reform process and he carefully watched the changing political majorities in Parliament. This institutional change helped to effect his plans to abolish conscription.

The Swedish case of Von Sydow was similar. Regardless of the fact whether traditional social democrats believed in conscription or not, when he came into power, he inherited Thage G. Peterson's plans. However, the moment he had developed his own policy and when he was convinced of the direction, he started to alter the setting. In particular his strategies to keep conscription off the agenda are remarkable. We will discuss this in greater detail in the next parts, when we look at the 'how' of leadership in reform.

The Dutch case also showed that some actors at least tried to initiate reform, although their institutional position was unfavourable, like General Brinkman. The Commander-in-Chief of the Army Couzy tried to improve his position so that he could prevent politically desired reforms that he considered too early and too far-reaching. However, both men ran head-on into a brick wall of resistance, since they were not in a position to alter the rules of the game.

Yet, their Swedish colleague succeeded where they failed. Wiktorin profited from the fact that when he came into office, his authority within the military institution had improved.¹⁰ And it improved even further in 1998 when the posts of Commanders-in-Chief of Army, Navy and Air Force were abolished. At the same time he had the advan-

tage that the social democratic Minister of Defence had a weak position within a social democratic minority government, supported by leftist parties.

The case findings show that one factor alone cannot account for the influence of actors' perceptions once a window of opportunity to change has opened. It is the combination of the four factors that provided us with a good insight into the rationale beyond leaders' willingness to initiate or prevent changes. However, certain nuances have to be added.

While the first two factors found strong support in the cases, the ideology factor did not. Well-formed views were important, but when they turned out to be firm beliefs they led to a more rigid conserving behaviour. The number of cases is still too small to weigh the different factors and to generalise their influence. However, even if we would raise the numbers, one of the limits of this theory is that it is still too rough a measure to understand if leaders are making instrumental use of a crisis, or if they were really convinced that a crisis had occurred that would need firm resolve. In other words, the balance between leaders' calculus and their ideological ballast, as we called it, has to be calibrated with finer tools than the theory can provide.

The cases also show that the factors given by Cortell & Peterson still depict political actors very much as subjects that fully depend on their institutional surrounding. The authors anticipated this finding in their article, when demanding further research to focus on the statement of '*when* agents can effectively alter those structures'.¹¹ This study finds evidence that even if the conditions are not as favourable as theory might expect, some actors do not hesitate to alter existing structures, to make more active use of their personal (political) capacities, and to strive for changes even if they themselves had never expected that beforehand. After finding scientifically sufficient, but also satisfactory, answers *why* actors initiate or prevent change, we will turn in the next part to the issue of *how* actors initiate change, where we will gain more insight in opportunities when leaders have room to manoeuvre – even within consensual democracies – and under which conditions.

10.3 From conserving to reforming leadership

Defining the situation

In both countries the conserving actors tried to frame the changes in the security environment as a threat to the country or at least as an unpredictable and instable situation. To them every change in the sector that would excavate the status quo of the territorial defence was dangerous. In the Netherlands of the immediate post-Cold War period many actors in the sector supported this definition. Yet, at the same time they started to downsize the organisation. In Sweden there was only a small majority supporting the plans of the government to invest in procurement, which, according to the latter, was a necessity given the security situation. Moreover, while the failed 'coup d'état' in the Soviet Union marked a turning point in the security definition by an ever-growing group of reformers in the Netherlands, the same event led to a conservation reflex in Sweden.

Though in the Netherlands the process towards the reform of the armed forces already started in 1992 and in Sweden not before 1995, reformers in both countries followed the same strategy. They had to define the situation as secure enough to strive for major changes. In addition, they had to convince their environment that a hypothetical threat to the countries would not occur within ten to fifteen years. This would be time enough to rebuild the territorial defence capacity in case of changes in the international environment, which was in both countries guaranteed with reserve forces and weapons.

There were two differences. Firstly, in 1999 the Swedish reformers had to convince their environment that after all the budget cuts the territorial defence had been so excavated, that a far-reaching reform towards network-centric warfare was the only chance to save the armed forces. Secondly, in the Netherlands postponing the draft was an explicit part of the reforms of the armed forces. In Sweden conscription repeatedly was put on the agenda, but never in the sense that it was necessary to abandon it as part of the reforms.

The cases contradict the hypothesis that conserving actors have to frame the situation as a non-recurring event, while the reformers have to frame the situation as a crisis, which needs firm resolve. However, this is understandable given the nature of the sector. For security policy and the defence sector the hypothesis should be seen the other way round. The different strategic positions of the countries and the neutrality of Sweden can partially explain the differences in the reactions of the conserving leaders – in the Netherlands the downsizing and in Sweden the downsizing and the procurement of heavy armour. The Soviet troops were only a few hundred kilometres away from Sweden, in the Baltic States, and Sweden had to rely on its own defence if the situation in the Baltic region would destabilise. There was, however, another important reason: after years in opposition the conservative policy makers finally saw their chance to implement their Cold War defence policy. Since the mid-1990s this insecure feeling changed extensively and – given the policy process towards network centric warfare and low conscription figures – the fact that Sweden is not a member of an alliance played a minor role. Neutrality proves to be an unimportant factor in explaining the Swedish defence policy of the late 1990s.

What finds support is that the reforming actors were relatively new in the sector, which made it easier for them to de-institutionalise the existing order. Those who had their roots in the Cold War had difficulties adapting to the changing times and to the idea of new armed forces, with fewer or even without any conscripts.

Committed leadership

The cases offer support for the hypothesis. Those leaders who formed cohesive units, whether reforming or conserving, were more successful than the solo players. In addition, those leaders who committed themselves only at politically auspicious moments or showed congruency between word and deed were more successful than those players who committed themselves to a policy that became unfeasible during the process.

Whether they were politicians, like Thage G. Peterson, or soldiers, like Gustafsson, Wilmink and Van der Vlis, they all lost their influence on the policy process because

they all were so convinced of their plans, that they failed to develop contingency plans or alternative futures. The soldiers were taken by surprise when they heard that the official policy line differed from what they had anticipated. Moreover, the Dutch military leaders not only neglected alternatives, they explicitly or implicitly forbade their subordinates to develop alternative models for armed forces without conscription. Instead of using the potential of those subordinates to take the lead in the discussion and offer resolve, they trusted their influence on the conscript committee. No incongruence between their words and deeds could be found. This is in contrast with Peterson, who produced plans to stop the decline of the draftees, but failed to implement them.

All the 'successful' political leaders, such as Björck, Ter Beek and Von Sydow had the advantage of surrounding themselves with one or more persons who actively nurtured their policy plans and helped them find support for those plans. Although in the case of Von Sydow, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Wiktorin was quite self-willed, they still developed the plan for the modern forces together.

Once the units had developed their reforming or conserving (Björck/Sahlin) plans, they did not hesitate to defend those plans in public and to present them explicitly as the solution to the problems, respectively crisis. Björck/Sahlin raised the budget, downsized the forces and shut down many garrisons to finance the procurement for the invasion forces. Though they faced resistance, to them this was the right answer to the insecure situation and they carried out their plan. To Ter Beek and his unit of changing members, depending on the moments in the process, the answer to the changed environment was a changed task for the armed forces in which conscripts no longer played a part. Once they had developed this plan, they waited for a political feasible moment to commit themselves to those plans, or they created those moments themselves. Little is known about the commitment of Von Sydow, but Wiktorin invested a lot of time, energy and inventiveness to convince the sector of their plan.

Persuasion tactics

All reformers eventually had well-specified plans that they tested with trial balloons (NGIZ, Wiktorin's 'spontaneous' models in the media). In contrast, Björck in 1991 was the only conserver who had a well-specified plan. All other conserving actors either did not have well-specified plans (Björck in 1994), or had unfeasible plans (Thage G. Peterson), or failed to communicate them to the relevant actors in the sector, i.e. parliamentarians or the public (Dutch Army). What all 'unsuccessful' conserving actors had in common was their often reactionist argumentation and the omission to test those arguments in public before presenting them as the ultimo ratio.

While in 1991 the conserver Björck had a desirable and feasible plan to overcome the insecure situation by procuring heavy armour and strengthen Sweden's ability to defend itself, the 'unsuccessful' conserver Björck of 1994 only had a 'rhetoric of reaction' against a social democratic (budget cuts) future defence policy. Like Van den Broek in 1992 in his reaction to Ter Beek's NGIZ speech, the Swedish Defence Minister jeopardised the consequences of further downsizing for the sake of Swedish security. Both Ministers had little public and political impact with their warnings. The public climate changed towards a more secure feeling (Sweden). And in times of cashing in the peace dividend by investing in social security - which in Sweden was accelerated by

financial crises - defence did not stand high on the public agenda. Moreover, after the Kuwait-Iraq crisis of 1990/91 and the conflicts in the Balkan, the definitive dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the democratisation in the former East and Central European countries, large territorial invasion forces just did not make sense anymore. The more so as they had been hollowed out after decennia of economics (Sweden) and required many young men who preferred to work on their civil career (Netherlands).

In this situation the arguments of those who had the vision to reform these large, anachronistic forces had the more desirable and feasible proposals. Those plans seemed almost inevitable, considering the changes in the international environment and within the state, such as the growing inequality of those who were drafted, which in both countries became a political problem. Yet, the choices that were made with regard to conscription differed, though leaders came up with similar answers: installing an advisory committee.

Well-defined plans are a necessary condition for reformers and conservers, yet this in itself is not sufficient. The main arguments have to be tested and it appears from the cases that negative, reactionist arguments have less effect than positive, landmark arguments, which took environmental changes plus the expectations of the majority in the different arenas into account. At those moments when reformers (or conservers) were not sure about the effects, they tested them first and once they were convinced, they invested in the communication of their plans in case the majority was not certain. In the Swedish case the conservers and reformers had to work hard to convince their constituency and organisation. They did this extensively, not in the least via the media and, in particular, the television. This is closely connected to the actors' strategies for building broad support.

Building broad support

Building broad support does not appear to be a necessary condition for reform plans, but it enhances the chances for successful conserving leadership. However, some caveats must be born in mind here. Empirical findings are very limited and the systemic characteristics between the two cases are so different, that conclusions cannot be easily drawn.

In the Netherlands the policy planning with regard to conscription was limited to very small groups with little exchange. On the one hand, there were the reformers around Ter Beek, who waited to announce their plans until a majority was within reach. On the other hand, there were the armed forces and in particular the army, who had intensive contact with the conscript committee, but only seldom with the Minister. The military leaders saw little reason for that. Wilmink relied on the committee and Van der Vlis was a non-political soldier. Moreover, the latter received signals from the Minister that the army's model would be favoured and in a later stage he misinterpreted the Minister's plans.

Even with regard to the realisation of the general defence policy's course - the making of the Priorities Paper - the circle of those, who actively worked on it, was limited to the absolute necessary minimum. The Commanders-in-Chief of the different parts of the armed forces only had influence on their respective sections. This process can be explained by the previous experiences Ter Beek had with the writing of the Defence White Paper 1991, his personal policy style, and the procedure of the Dutch defence policy-

making. In the Netherlands, Defence Ministers have a great influence on the persons who work on defence plans. They point out the importance of actors involved. This fitted Ter Beek's personal style of working in small groups and it met his wish to avoid large negotiation organs, which delayed the process, as had happened in the defence council two years before.

The Swedish defence policy process is quite different. It is traditionally an open process that involves many stakeholders and is based on broad consensus. Even in 1991, when the traditional method of defence policymaking had changed, the leaders would solicit support for their plans, in particular at their constituency. No evidence could be found that Björck, the Swedish Minister of Defence 1991-1994, built a coalition among civil servants, and only little evidence for his doing so in relation to the military. He simply expected them to support him, the more so as he invested in procurement. The codification that 'only the need shall steer' appears not to have taken place in close co-operation with Commander-in-Chief Gustafsson. Thage G. Peterson was another good example of a conservative leader who did not engage in coalition building, at least with regard to conscription. He planned the revaluation of the total defence service, which included civil and military defence, not only without consulting the military, but also at the expense of their budget. None of the Minister's planned figures were ever achieved.

The Swedish Commander-in-Chief Wiktorin was the only reforming leader who invested extensively in building broad support, in particular within his own organisation. Above all, he did so by publicly showing commitment to his organisation and by repeatedly criticising the policy plans of the government that would be implemented at the expense of the organisation. In this way he gained more internal acceptance for the changes that he did want to make. We saw a similar effect in the Netherlands with the open letter of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Couzy, in which he appealed to the government to consider a five-year transitional period when abolishing conscription. In particular, due to the fact that he had to sign a declaration of loyalty, he gained stature and trust in his own organisation, which was necessary for the major reforms he had to execute.

When used in moderate doses, creating an 'us versus them' feeling vis-à-vis the political superiors appears to be an effective tool for military leaders. Political leaders on the other hand should be more careful with this strategy. Within a policy system of changing majorities and dependency on many veto players such a strategy can be counterproductive. What all cases showed was that notwithstanding the (lack of) coalition building strategies, all successful actors would gain by their ability to control the process.

Controlling the process

The defence sectors in both countries differed in their openness and formality of the policy process. Although the Dutch defence sector has an element of societal involvement through the Societal Council, which delivers reports about societal relevant issues in the armed forces, the policy process in the sector is relatively closed. Only a few actors are officially involved, like the Parliament, the Minister of Foreign Affairs (only as far as foreign affairs and security analysis is concerned), the cabinet and the (Junior)

Minister(s) of Defence. As far as the internal organisational policy process is concerned the Minister has a great influence on the appointment of the advisors.

In Sweden the sector is much more open than in the Netherlands and the policy process is much more formalised. Stakeholders, in particular decentralised agencies, are officially involved in the process. Not only are they regularly asked for their opinion, they are also invited to react to any policy plan before it becomes an official proposal. In the case of the reforms of conscription and the armed forces after the Cold War, the main actors were the Civil Emergency Agency and the Recruiting Office. Moreover, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces has to prepare a report for every defence decision within the parameters set by the government and until 1998 the Commanders-in-Chief of the different branches had the opportunity to write a dissenting opinion. Parliament is closely involved in all stages.

Although the defence sectors in both countries differed from each other, some similar processes could be discerned. In both countries particularly the strategies of the reforming actors on coping with the subject of conscription were comparable. The Dutch Minister of Defence Ter Beek and the Swedish Minister of Defence Von Sydow were able to keep the issue off the agenda while preparing their policy plans for the radical reforms of the Armed Forces. The conscription committees served this aim very well. As long as the committees were busy, it was not necessary for the leaders to take conscription into account. Originally the tasks of the committees in both countries were similar, in particular when comparing the Dutch committee with the Swedish 1998 inquiry. Both committees had the task of coming up with recommendations on how to make military service more attractive. During the parliamentary debate the Dutch committee was also given the task of investigating the feasibility of abolition.

Von Sydow repeatedly postponed the work of the committee or altered its task in order to gain time, and in the beginning of 1999 he prevented a whole congress from debating the subject. The committee's report was not presented before the proposal of the armed forces' reform. At one stage, when Ter Beek had been forced to talk to the committee because of his NGIZ speech, he softened the tenor of that speech and depoliticised the situation. Actually this was rather an accident, since the press based their comments on a written version in which Ter Beek was more outspoken about abolition. When holding the address he was much more diplomatic. Other than that, he managed to keep the two processes of reform and conscription separate and since there were only a few actors involved in the Priorities Paper process, there was little chance that the actors of both circles would meet too often. That the dual process was enforced upon the committee by Parliament was actually a minor problem to Ter Beek. In the end, abolition was better suited to the new armed forces that were being used for crisis management tasks abroad.

There were also differences between the two leaders. Von Sydow obviously had more difficulties with his Minister of Finance and with his restriction of the Swedish Commander-in-Chief than Ter Beek had had. The Dutch Minister of Defence threatened to resign and with that managed to ease the pain of the next economics round. Yet, Von Sydow made use of the opportunity to command the Commander-in-Chief and to publish governmental inquiries. He did the same during the 1997/98 financial crisis. Repeatedly he ordered Wiktorin to report the problems and in the end he came up with an extensive report that exonerated the Minister. Though the constitutional committee in-

terrogated the Minister and Wiktorin, Von Sydow used all his procedural power to show Wiktorin who was the boss.

Ter Beek excluded everyone who could slow down or oppose the reforming process, including the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Commanders-in-Chief. He punished Couzy when he tried to influence the implementation of abolition via the media. And it was a welcome coincidence that at exactly the same time, in 1992, many of the key actors of the old Cold War generation were routinely replaced. Their successors did not appear to be a personal choice by Ter Beek, the more so as only a few men were suited for the vacant posts.

The Dutch Minister of Defence had the advantage that the Commanders-in-Chief in the Netherlands were not only comparatively new to their office, but that they also acted loyally and a-politically, except for the aforementioned Couzy. In Sweden the Commanders-in-Chief had little formal power, but they had much more opportunity to use informal means. In 1992 the Dutch Commander-in-Chief held little official power and in addition he refrained Van der Vlis from playing the political game. For Wiktorin the transition from a horizontal defence organisation towards a more hierarchical organisation, headed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces was advantageous in 1994. This made him influential during the reform process in his own organisation. In particular after 1998, when the posts of the two other Commanders-in-Chief were abolished, his position was strong and he would not have managed to be successful without this authority.

Though the setting of the leadership's environment is very important for the policy outcome, the political leaders in particular have the ability to control the process, even in consensual democracies. The cases support the hypothesis by 't Hart & Gustavsson that procedural leadership is important.¹² In particular keeping the issue of conscription off the agenda served Ter Beek and Von Sydow well in pursuing their large-scale reforms. In 1991 Björck had the same advantage when he had to convince his constituency that investments in weapons were more important than personnel.

To summarise, the cases did not support all hypotheses of the leadership model formulated in chapters 2 and 3. However, the direct comparison of these two consensual democracies provided us with more insights about the relation between actors and their political environment. In Table 27 the results are presented in an overview. Both cases show that in order to reform military sectors, aimed at drastic task restructuring and downsizing, it was necessary that the leaders convinced political stakeholders that the international environment was quite safe. The moment the reformers considered the threat to the country to be low, they started to reform the sector. It made no great difference if a country was part of a defence alliance or not, though it helped to explain the difference in timing. Contrary to what Haltiner expected the NATO-membership had almost slowed down the process in the Netherlands, since the conserving actors did not want to change the national structures without consultation. As far as Sweden is concerned, given the tremendous downsizing of the territorial forces, not being a member of an alliance did not seem to be considered a security problem. The Dutch reforms quickly aimed at intensive international cooperation. Nowadays, this concept is quite common in Sweden too, but in the beginning of the 1990s it was a non-option.

		Netherlands	Sweden	Hypothesis
Defining the situation		Conserving actors: threat to country, Dutch image, and organisation; Reforming actors: no threat at all, but chances;	Conserving actors: security situation and budget cuts threat to country, organisation, and democracy; Reforming actors: no threat environment; budget cuts threat to defence capability	(-) The other way around: only secure feeling gave room to reforms. Conserving actors had to exaggerate crisis to prevent changes
Committed leadership		Reforming teams commitment at politically auspicious moments; Over committed conservers solo players	Successful congruent reforming and conserving teams; over-committed conservers solo players	(+) Necessary
Persuasion tactics		Reformers: well-defined feasible plans, test balloon, communication via various channels, lot of political work; Conservers: reactionist, no clear plan in public debate, no strong arguments against reformers plans, exaggerating problems in internal/committee plans	Regular well specified plans Conservers 1991: threat scenario with desirable and feasible option to improve status quo; Björck 1994: reactionist; Peterson 1994-97: change forces, reactionist defender conscription; Reformers 1997-2000: From reaction to lead with inevitable, feasible plans, test balloons	(+) Necessary Supplement theory: Trial balloons for reformers
Building broad support		Neither reformers nor conservers, still loyal implementation	Conservers 1991: Yes Conservers other: no Reformers: yes	(+/-) Supplement theory: The stronger the leaders institutional position, the less important this is
Controlling the process		Closed informal structure sector Hierarchically, weak Commander-in-Chief Parliament dualistic	Open formal structure sector Changing from horizontal to hierarchically Parliament monistic	(+) Necessary Supplement theory: Translate to bureaucratic leaders

Table 27: How leaders reform or conserve in Sweden and the Netherlands

The second hypothesis, committed leadership, is confirmed by both cases. Commitment is a necessary condition and it is important that leaders should form teams. However, over-commitment seems to be counterproductive. It appears that most conserving actors

were more or less solo players, who failed to prevent change (except for Björck/Sahlin, 1991). The third hypothesis, persuasion tactics, is also confirmed. The tactics – if any – of the conservers (again, except Björck/Sahlin) were restricted to reactionist, rhetoric and unfeasible plans. If leaders, however, wanted to succeed, they needed well-defined, feasible plans. In both cases it was helpful when the leaders tested their plans or the direction of their initiatives first. Ter Beek did so with his NGIZ speech. In Sweden it is part of the process to invite comments on proposals, but Wiktorin especially was successful in testing the margins, in particular when it came to conscription figures. Although each time when Wiktorin gave low figures, the Minister of Defence struggled in public, the end-outcome always went in the direction Wiktorin had proposed.

Building broad support by the leaders, the fourth hypothesis, appears to be a systemic condition and not a leadership quality trait. In the Netherlands it turned out to be helpful to limit the number of actors involved in the policy to a minimum and there even was no recrimination over the fact that the implementing actors had been more or less excluded. Building broad support is an unnecessary condition in this country. It proved more important that the leadership ability scored high on the fifth hypothesis. In Sweden, however, building broad support would have been part of the regular policy process anyway. In the beginning of the 1990s, Björck was certain of the support of the centre-right parties and the support of the army for his plans. Instead of the implementing actor's support, he needed to strive for support from the Swedish population, support that was used to cutback in defence, particularly in financially difficult times. In addition, Björck needed the support of the social democrats to downsize the forces and codify that 'the need shall steer', since a simple majority would not be sufficient for this societally far-reaching issue. Wiktorin and Von Sydow also managed to build broad support for their plans. It was not uncommon for the social democratic minority government in Sweden to receive support for the low defence budget from the left and support for the concrete defence policy plans from the centre-right. The 1999 plans, however, were so far-reaching that the government needed a temporary raise of the budget for their implementation. The support of all parties on both sides was required for this and Wiktorin and Von Sydow succeeded in achieving broad support to increase the budget. In addition, Wiktorin invested much in the support of his organisation.

The fifth hypothesis finds support in both countries. Successful reformers have to control the process. The agenda setting capability of the reformers proved very important. Von Sydow and Ter Beek had to keep conscription separated from the large-scale reforms and they succeeded in achieving this. The capacity of appointing actors to crucial positions was less important. No proof can be found that when Ter Beek had to fill the vacant posts of the Commanders-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and Army - which came in at an opportune time and proved useful for the necessary reforms since this staff change represented a change of generations - he made deliberate choices for the successor. Although the empirical evidence supported many of the hypotheses, it became clear that the exchange between the leaders and their environment is an important factor in explaining policy outcomes. Certain behaviour of actors could be explained by systemic constraints or opportunities and were not so much dependent on leadership abilities.

10.4 Leadership and institutional reform in consensus democracies

In this study the leadership's environment and the type and style of leadership were expected to be influential for the outcome of the policy processes in the Swedish and Dutch defence sectors after the Cold War. Yet, as anticipated by Bovens et al., systemic constraints can differ per sector.

	Consensus democracy	Netherlands	Sweden
Executive-party dimension	1. Executive power-sharing in broad multiparty coalitions	+	-
	2. Executive-legislative balance of power	+	+/-
	3. Multiparty system	+	-
	4. Proportional representation	+/-	-
	5. Coordinated and 'corporatist' interest group systems aimed at compromise and consultation	+/-	+/-
Federal-unitary dimension	6. Federal and decentralised government	+/-	+/-
	7. Division of legislative power between two equally strong but differently constituted houses	+/-	+/-
	8. Rigid constitutions that can be changed only by extraordinary majorities	+	+/-
	9. Laws are subject to a judicial review of their constitutionality by supreme or constitutional courts	+/-	+/-
	10. Independent central banks	+/-	+/-

Table 28: Conscription policy in the Netherlands and Sweden after the Cold War and the room for reforming leadership. + = positive environment for leadership, - = negative environment, +/- = does not apply or not influential

Not all systemic characteristics identified in 2.5, were important for policymaking in the Dutch and Swedish defence sectors, traditionally considered to be 'high politics', after the Cold War (Table 28). The social democratic dominance in combination with the minority government in Sweden was influential in the process. On the one hand the so-

cial democrats had the will to cut defence spending, in particular since they were supported by the leftist parties in the second half of the 1990s, while on the other hand the same social democratic dominance prevented the 'de facto' abolition of conscription. Leadership had enough room to downsize and modernize the forces, yet abolition seems to have been a bridge too far.

In the Netherlands reforming leaders had a lot of room to manoeuvre, the more so as the social democratic Minister of Defence had the support of the defence experts of the coalition party and – at a later stage – from his own party, who demanded a broader task for the commission and helped the minister organise majorities. Secondly, although it is very difficult to change the Dutch constitution, it was possible to develop new conscription laws. Actually, the rigid constitution served the reformers in gaining time by keeping the issue off the agenda while the larger reforms of the Armed Forces, the Priorities Defence Paper, was guided through Parliament. In particular in the second example the actions of leadership turned out to be influential. By using the systemic constraints to reach their aims, the leaders managed to almost entirely separate two policy processes, which otherwise might have slowed down the entire process. Instead of running smack into a brick wall, the leaders pulled back and waited for the right moment.

Before turning to the types and styles of the different leaders, it is worth mentioning that constitutional rigidity was the only characteristic in the federal unitary dimension that played a role in the process. Defence traditionally is task of the government, whether it is federal or unitary. In the Dutch case there was some debate in the First Chamber, yet, the main debates took place in the permanent defence or joint defence and foreign affairs commission in Parliament, the so called Second Chamber. In the executive-party dimension almost all characteristics were important for the process. However, although both countries are traditional corporatist and although in both countries the military personnel is organised in unions, corporatism was obviously of no importance.

Types and styles

In the two defence sectors central to this study the actions of political and bureaucratic leaders were constrained by their environment. We also found evidence that they had the opportunity to shape their environment and leave their mark on the system. When looking at Table 29 we see that almost none of the actors were static in style and type throughout the process, except for the Swedish Minister of Defence, Thage G. Peterson, and partially the Swedish General Wiktorin (throughout the process he remained an active reforming leader).

The two Ministers of Defence Ter Beek and Von Sydow are examples of the changing relationship between the leader and his environment. In the beginning of their term, both were neither willing nor able to strive for reforms. Ter Beek was a relative outsider in the sector and slowly but steadily grew into office, which is a normal process within political systems. The large-scale reforms actually accelerated this process. Once Ter Beek saw a chance to reform the armed forces, he used his political skills and abilities to overcome systemic constraints. The same holds true for Von Sydow. He tried to change the armed forces as far as necessary within the paradigm of the Swedish defence sector, i.e. territorial defence. Once, however, the system turned out to be too unfavour-

able to the sectors' demands – remember chapter 2 in which one of the factors for institutional crisis identified was the fact that the institution just did not live up to the expectations of its environment – Von Sydow reformed the armed forces. He did so in quite a similar way to Ter Beek by keeping conscription off the agenda/out of the policy stream, with the exception that he did not raise doubts about conscription, but let it silently deteriorate.

	Active	Passive
Reforming	Ter Beek autumn 1992 Von Sydow 1999 Wiktorin 1996→2000	Ter Beek since 1992 Von Sydow before 1999
Conserving	Björck 1991 Van den Broek 1991 Wilmink 1991 Gustafsson until 1992	Ter Beek from summer 1991 on Van den Broek from spring 1992 on Van der Vlis 1992 Wilmink 1992 Björck 1994 Peterson
←Von Sydow (conscr.)→		

Table 29: Types and styles of leadership in the two case studies

In both cases, politicians were actively involved in sectorial reforms. The environmental changes were so profound that their implications for the military needed the attention of the political leaders, this was conceived a crucial condition for both paradigm shifts and paradigmatic procedure changes. Organisational leaders could not have implemented those changes on their own, more legislation had to be involved. One of the consequences was that the political involvement limited the room to manoeuvre for those military leaders who wanted to conserve the status quo. This came in addition to the regular environmental constraints military leaders (and top civil servants) might face, i.e. political loyalty. In the case of conscription this holds true for the Commanders-in-Chief Gustafsson (S), Wilmink (NL) and Van der Vlis (NL). However, in particular, the latter two are examples of leaders who did not even try to strive actively to conserve conscription, regardless of their environment. Although the Dutch system of the early 1990s was more unfavourable to reforming or conserving military leadership than the Swedish system of the late 1990s, the Dutch military leaders limited themselves more than the existing structural constraints demanded. The cases show that personal choices lead to this self-limitation.

The seemingly inconceivable category of a passive-reforming leadership style turned out to be an important asset for those political actors under scrutiny who wanted to reform the defence sectors in Sweden and the Netherlands. At first those actors had to play the system and their environment, before they were able to take a more active role during the reforming process. However, in both cases conscription remained a sensitive issue. Even in the Netherlands the leaders had to de-politicise the issue as long as possible in order to foster reforms of the armed forces.

10.5 What have we learned

As mentioned in chapter 3, the design and case selection of this study make it impossible to produce generalising conclusions. However, the theories used in this study, and with it our knowledge about reforms in policy sectors, can gain from the insights of this study. It was not so much the intention to falsify these theories, which would have been an easy task, since they were developed using insights from a different political system, i.e. Westminster democracies. Besides finding answers to the empirical question, this study wanted to see to which extent the theories of Cortell & Peterson, 't Hart and Terry are transferable to policy sectors in consensual democracies. Do politics and leaders matter in these complex, multi-layer systems with many systemic constraints and veto-players? To answer this question we must first turn back to the concept from which the study departed and which was hypothesised to be an important factor to explain change, i.e. crisis.

Many terms in crisis research and policy studies are borrowed from other disciplines, like the term 'crisis' itself, which refers to a certain – indeed critical – medical condition. The same holds true for the term 'window of opportunity'. Taken from space travel, the term refers to an ideal moment to launch the rocket: the crew sits in the capsule and space control is ready to countdown. As predicted by the highly advanced meteorological advice, the dense cloudbank above space-centre is breaking open and there it is: the 'window of opportunity' to launch the shuttle.

When on 9th of November 1989 the Berlin Wall fell, everybody in the Western world was taken by surprise, including the Armed Forces of the West and their intelligence services. At that time nobody had seriously anticipated the end of the Cold War and the rockets that stood ready to be launched were equipped with nuclear heads. There were no 'policy rockets' ready to be launched; no reforming plans in the drawers of policy makers or the military waiting for the right moment to be implemented. Even the Dutch air-borne brigade, one of the trade-offs given to the Army for the postponement of the draft, was intended as a weapon in the Cold War. And so were the plans for the Swedish defence by the conservative party in 1991. For years they had waited for the moment to launch those plans.

Exploiting a 'window of opportunity' on ideological, well-formed views appears only to be possible when policy ideas and sometimes even well elaborated plans have already been formulated. In particular in sectors, where certain actors are not content with either the official policy or the organisation's integrity and thus anticipate an opportunity to launch their plans, this concept may be of explanatory value.¹³ However, this was not the case in the Western defence sectors at the end of the 1980s. After a second window of opportunity, however, the reforming actors saw a chance to exploit it. The first window initiated the quest for well-formed views and those actors who had those views were prepared when the second window opened. This is in accordance to Cortell & Peterson's theory, which expected that the institutional capacity of the leaders would improve after a second window had opened. According to the authors, officials who are lacking the capacity will be provided with autonomy to overcome their institutional obstacles.¹⁴

The theories of reforming and conserving leadership shed light on the policy process in the Swedish and Dutch sectors. As expected these theories formed a good supplement to Cortell & Peterson's theory, which on its own had difficulties explaining how leaders

act during change processes. All theories in turn gained from the focus on the leadership's environment, in this study illustrated by Elgie's interactive method. In the theoretical part it was hypothesised that the theories at stake focussed too strongly on leadership in Westminster democracies while neglecting the more hostile leadership's environment in consensus democracies. This is why a distinction was made between the two systems and it was shown that leadership in reform could prosper in consensus democracies.

The more the actors perceived reforms as feasible and the more they were willing and capable of striving for those changes - in short, the more active they were - the more they had a chance to succeed. Those actors who relied solely on their arguments without promoting them or who refrained from active lobby work - those who were over-committed or stuck in their noble but inapplicable ideology - had no chance of playing an important role in the outcome of the policy process. This study confirmed what the theory already expected: the less reformers are ideological, the less the existence of over-commitment is. Ideology or basic ideas about how the world is and should look like are necessary reference points in the momentary outlook, in particular, they can provide guidance in turmoil times, but they should not lead to rigid behaviour.

What stands out in both cases is the practical absence of crisis. The end of the Cold War was necessary to open the window of opportunity, yet none of the actors explicitly considered this to be a crisis to initiate changes and only few actors used crisis to prevent reforms. Although the number of cases and the research design allow no statistical inference, the results of this study make it worthwhile to consider the possibility that crisis is not a necessary condition for reforms in consensus democracies. Policy makers in both countries reacted to the end of the Cold War, the anticipatory policy climate in both cases, the institutional design and above all leadership help us understand the changes in the Dutch and Swedish defence sectors after the Cold War.

Notes

¹ Haltiner 1998

² An in-depth case study of the policy process has to be limited. Sweden and the Netherlands are selected, because they are relatively comparable in size and socio-economical structure, but differ on outcome. Compare for further explanations chapter 3 (M&T)

³ Cortell & Peterson 1999

⁴ 't Hart 2000

⁵ Terry 1995

⁶ 't Hart & Gustavsson 2002

⁷ Cortell & Peterson 1995

⁸ Cortell & Peterson 1999: 191

⁹ Cortell & Peterson 1999: 191

¹⁰ It would take until 2002 for his Dutch counterpart to get similar authority

¹¹ Cortell & Peterson 1999: 202, *their italics*

¹² 't Hart & Gustavsson 2002

¹³ Compare Cortell & Peterson 1999: 189; 't Hart & Gustavsson 2002, Resodihardjo forthcoming

¹⁴ Cortell & Peterson 1999:190

Appendix 1: Conscription and the military in the Dutch public opinion

In a yearly poll the Foundation Society and Armed Forces (SMK - Stichting Maatschappij en Krijgsmacht) and the Dutch Institute for Public Opinion (NIPO) interviews a representative sample of the Dutch population about its opinion on the Dutch armed forces¹. In December 1991 they conducted a survey in which the Meijer-commission participated. In that research certain questions about conscription and a possible professional army were included. The outcome of that poll was presented in *Maatschappij en Krijgsmacht* (February 1992), the journal of SMK and in the appendix of the Meijer-report. This appendix presents the most relevant findings of the study.

The Armed forces are	1985	1986	1988	1989	1990	1991
Necessary	48	44	38	38	39	42
Necessary evil	34	33	33	28	41	23
Hardly necessary	7	11	11	16	10	18
Unnecessary	8	9	10	11	5	10
No opinion	3	3	9	7	5	7

Table 30: Necessity of armed forces. Source: Report committee

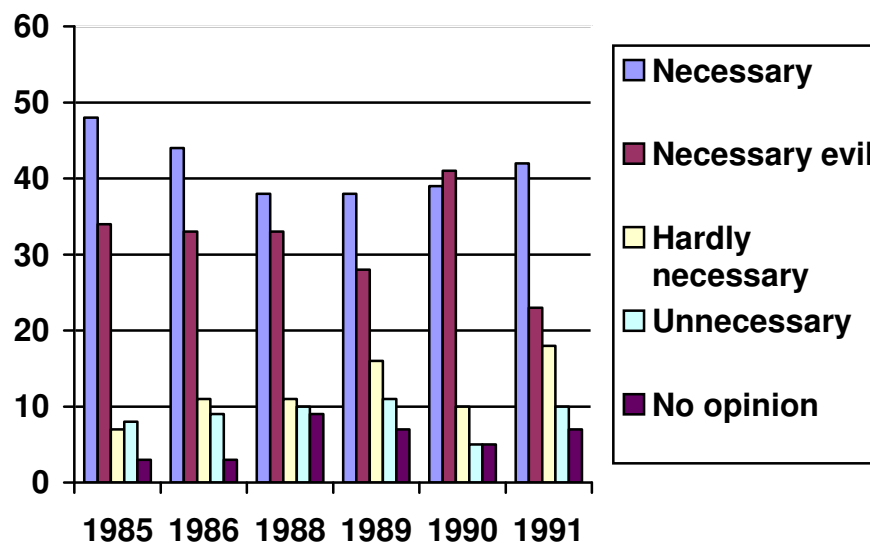


Figure 14: Necessity of armed forces

Since the 1980s the opinion that the armed forces are a necessity decreased slowly but steadily. Whereas 82% of the population found the armed forces necessary or a necessary evil in 1985, that figure decreased to 65% in 1991. The only exception in that trend was found in 1990, during the Gulf crisis.

At the same time the conscription in the Netherlands lost more and more of its legitimacy. Whereas 49% of the population supported that institution in 1989, only 32% was in favour in 1991 (Table 31, see also 1 above).

	1989	1990	1991
Military conscription	49	44	32
Voluntary armed forces	36	43	55
No opinion/indifferent	15	13	13

Table 31: Conscription or voluntary armed forces. Source: report committee

It seemed that only 15% of the population would change its opinion if voluntary armed forces turned out to be more expensive. Apparently the pro or con abolition choice was connected to the political preferences of the population. Green-left voters were pro abolition. Of the voters of the liberal parties, VVD and D'66, respectively 65% and 67% were pro voluntary armed forces. The social-democratic voters were 52% pro voluntary army and 32% pro conscription. Only the CDA supporters came close in both choices: 46% pro voluntary armed forces and 40% pro conscription. Compared to the year 1990, a clear shift in the opinion of CDA and VVD voters and a minor shift in the opinion of the PvdA and D'66 voters could be noticed. The public opinion made a clear difference between the tasks conscripts and volunteers had to fulfil. Especially when it came to peacekeeping missions/crisis control (70% volunteers, 45% conscripts) and warfare outside Western Europe (53% volunteers, 25% conscripts), the majority favoured volunteers.

Overall, it can be concluded that within three years the Dutch opinion on the subject had clearly changed. By the end of 1991 the majority of the population was pro abolition of conscription in the Netherlands. Considering the date when the important outcomes of the poll were published, February 1992, it is very likely that the political top of the Ministry of Defence was aware of this when preparing the NGIZ speech.

Appendix 2: Conscription and the military in the Swedish public opinion

The Swedish public opinion about the armed forces has only slightly changed over the years. It is interesting to note that the newspapers paid regular attention to the armed forces and conscription. The coverage on the issues, especially around the presentation of reports or debates in Parliament, was higher compared to the Netherlands. Yet, it is arguable that a larger portion of the population was interested in the subject. There is reason to believe that, especially during the last years, the interest diminished, though not vanished. This appendix presents the results of public polls. They show that during the last year the population's attitude towards the armed forces and conscription has changed in the direction of volunteer forces, although there is no majority for that as yet.

Secure feeling

Over the last twenty years the feeling of being militarily threatened decreased. In 1986, 28% of the population was convinced that during the next ten to fifteen years the military situation would become more threatening for Sweden, whereas 56% expected no change. Except for a few peaks, e.g. during the unsuccessful 'coup d'état' in the Soviet Union in 1992, this feeling changed. In 2002 only 11% of the population expected future military threats, against 73% expecting no change².

The reasons that the opinions on Swedish security changed can probably be found in the diminishing military threat from Russia. Another possible reason, however, might be the conviction of the Swedish population that other powers would come forward and assist Sweden in case of an attack.

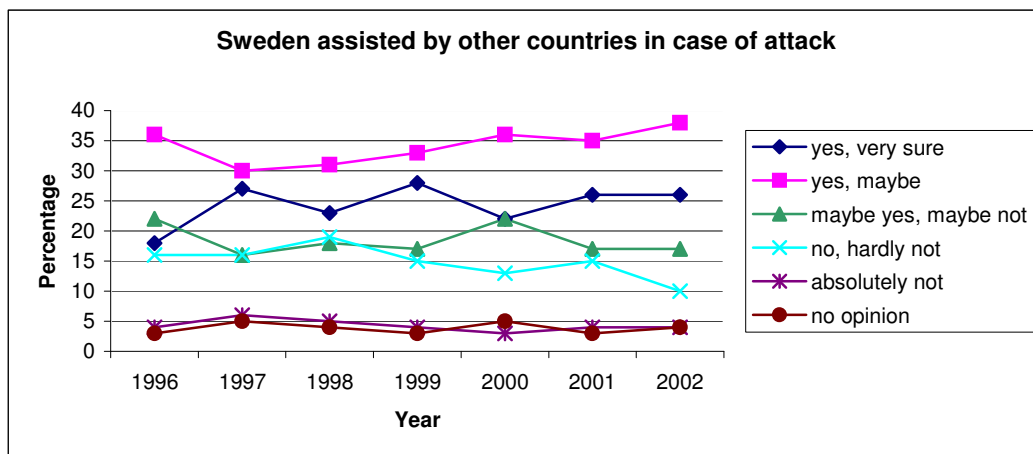


Figure 15: Sweden assisted by other countries in case of attack (source SPF 2002: 37)

Figure 15 shows that in 2002, 64% of the population was more or less convinced that other powers would help Sweden. This figure becomes striking, when one considers the Swedish attitude to a military alliance. When asked if they wanted to join NATO or preferred to stay out of any alliance, 62% of the population chose the latter option in 2002, a quite stable figure throughout the years.

Declining people's defence

Though the Swedish population felt less threatened and they trusted more on military assistance, they emphasised the need for their own military forces. In 2002, 66% answered that Sweden absolutely ought to have a military. That number was only higher in 1984 and 1998, namely 71%, with an all-time low of 47% in 1995³.

However, the will to participate in those forces decreased steadily.

	professional defence	build on duty	no opinion
1998	32	56	
2000	42	49	10
2001	40	50	9
2002	41	52	8

Table 32: Professional armed forces or conscription. SPF Opinion 2002, Table 37

The Swedish Authority for Psychological Defence (SPF) also asked if the Swedes would prefer professional armed forces or conscription. After a jump between 1998 and 2000, the figures remained stable (Table 32). A slight majority of the Swedish population prefers conscription.

Notes

¹ 1,000 persons aged 18 or older were interviewed at home.

² SPF 2002, table 19. The questions asked changed slightly over the years.

³ SPF 2002 table 35

List of Interviews¹

The Netherlands

Barth, D.	Director General Policy Affairs Ministry of Defence, The Hague, May 31 st 2002
Beek, A.L. ter	Minister of Defence, Social Democrats (PvdA), Assen, May 29 th 2002
Beuningen, F. van	Ministry of Defence, Directorate of General Policy Affairs 1989-1994, The Hague, February 20 th 2002
Brinkman, J.W.	Vice-chief planning at the Army staff, Wassenaar, December 20 th 2002
Couzy, H.A.	Vice Commander-in-Chief Army until September 10 th 1992, since September 10 th 1992 Commander-in-Chief Army, The Hague, March 19 th 2002
Doel, M. Van van den	Senior Officer on leave working as military strategy researcher at the Clingendael Institute 1991-1994, The Hague, April 11 th 2002
Folmer, G.J.	Military Representative to the NATO Military Committee in Permanent Session 1991-1994, The Hague, May 17 th 2002
Frinking, A.B.M.	Defence Spokesman CDA, Rijswijk, April 18 th 2002
Hilderink, C.G.J.	Vice Head Conceptual Affairs, Breda, February 13 th 2003
Hillen, J.S.J.	Defence Spokesman CDA, The Hague, April 3 rd 2002
Huyser, G.L.J.	Army General (ret.), member of conscription commission, Leideschendam, April 16 th 2002
Jager, M.	Mayor Wageningen, member of conscription commission, Lelystad, Liberals (D66), March 20 th 2002
Kombrink, J.C.	Director General Finances and Economy, Ministry of Defence, Rotterdam, April 2 nd 2002
Kreemers, H.P.M.	Spokesman of minister Ter Beek, June 17 th 2003, The Hague
Lehning, P.B.M.	Professor of Political Theory and Public Policy Erasmus University Rotterdam, member of conscription commission, Rotterdam, March 20 th 2003
Mazel, L.V.	Vice Secretary General Ministry of Defence and member of conscription commission, The Hague, March 21 st 2002
Montfrans-Hartman, G.W. van	Major Katwijk, member conscription commission, Christian Democrats (CDA), Broek in Waterland, March 18 th 2002
Reitsma, R.	Head Restructuring of the Army Office, Staff of the Commander-in-Chief Army, Soest, January 27 th 2003
Schoonoord, D.C.L.	Senior Officer at the Directorate of General Policy Affairs of the Ministry of Defence and the Defence Staff, Am-

¹ Without military or academic titles. Only (former) functions relevant to the research are listed.

	sterdam, January 14 th 2003
Vlis, A.K. van der	Commander 1 st Dutch Army Corps, from May 1992 on Chief of the Defence Staff, Rijnsburg, May 13 th 2002
Voorhoeve, J.J.C.	Head Netherlands Institute for Foreign Affairs (Clingendael), Member conscription commission, The Hague, March 22 nd 2002
Voorst tot Voorst, B.J.M. Baron van	Junior Minister of Defence, Maastricht, April 12 th 2002
Wijk, R. de	Head Conceptual Affairs in Staff of the Chief of Defence Staff, Leiden, March 19 th 2002
Wijk, R. de	(Former) Head Defence Concepts, Defence Staff, Leiden, March 19 th 2002
Wilmink, M.J.	Commander-in-Chief Army, Leimuiden, August 13 th 2002
Winter, J. de	Deputy Director General Policy Affairs, Voorschoten, March 28 th 2002
Zijlstra, M.	Member of Parliament 1989-2002, Social Democrats, The Hague, April 16 th 2002

Sweden

Andeberg, B.	Military advisor 1992 conscript commission, Stockholm, April 9 th 2003
Björck, A.	Minister of Defence 1991-1994, Member of Parliament (conservatives) 1968-2002, First Deputy Speaker of Parliament 1994-2002, March 14 th 2003
Börjesson, D.	Commander in Chief Central Joint Command (ret.), Stockholm, March 31 st 2003
Eneroth, Th.	Member of 1992 conscription commission, Stockholm, April 9 th 2003
Ericson, S.	Member of Parliament (social democrats) 1969-1994 and head of ÖCB 1996-2002, Stockholm, March 26 th 2003
Fältström, H.	Political Advisor Security and Defence Policy Conservative Party, Swedish Parliament, Stockholm, March 3 rd 2003
Frisk, L.	Deputy Chief Joint Training and Management HQ, Stockholm, April 2 nd 2003
Gustafsson, B.	Commander-in-Chief Armed Forces (1986-1994), Stockholm, March 25 th 2003
Janson, B.	Deputy Director Ministry of Defence and Legal Advisor of the 1991 conscription commission, Stockholm, April 8 th 2003
Juholt, H.	Member of Parliament, Chairman Försvarsberedningen, Stockholm, May 22 nd 2003
Körlof, B.	Head Pliktverket (Swedish National Service Administration), Stockholm, April 9 th 2003
Krönmark,	Army Department and Training Division, Stockholm,

Landerholm, H.	April 2 nd 2003 Member of Parliament Conservative Party 1991-2002, member of 1992 and 1998 conscript commission. Since 2002 President of the National Defence College, Stockholm, March 18 th 2003
Magnusson, G. Mohr, M.	Armed Forces Finance Staff, Stockholm, March 17 th 2003 Secretary of 1992 and 1998 conscript commission, secretary of the Swedish Defence Commission, Stockholm, April 2 nd 2003
Neretnieks, K.	Commandant of the National Defence College 1998-2002, Stockholm, April 11 th 2003
Nygren, J.	Social Democrat, Junior Minister of Defence 1988-1991, Member of the Group Management SAAB AB, Stockholm, April 1 st 2003
Rönnberg, L. Sahlin, M.	Chief Army Staff (1990-1994), Stockholm, April 3 rd 2003 Junior Minister of Defence (1991-1994), Secretary and head of office Standing Committee of Defence Swedish Parliament (1987 - 1991), Stockholm, April 8 th 2003
Stütz, G.	Director of Research, National Board of Psychological Defence, Stockholm, April 1 st 2003
Wegestål, K.	Member of 1992 and 1998 conscript commission, Member of Parliament Social Democrats, Hjärup, April 15 th 2003
Wiktorin, O.	Commander-in-Chief (1994-2000), March 26 th 2003

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Documents

The Dutch documents are referred to in the footnotes.

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Fördragning för pliktutredning 1991/92:FöU12	Document of the 1992 conscript inquiry, Riksarkiv YK 4251, map I, 1991-11-27
1997/98:KU25	Försvarsutskotten (Parliamentary Committee of Defence) Protocol 12, legislation period 1991/1992
2002/03:FöU1	Konstitutionsutskottet (Constitutional Committee) Protocol 12, legislation period 1997/98
Dir. 1991:40	Försvarsutskotten (Parliamentary Committee on Defence) Protocol 1, legislation period 2002/03
Ds 1999:2	Directive 1991:40 for the installation of the 1992 Conscript Inquiry
Ds 1999:55	Departementsserien 1999:2 ‘A Changing World a Reformed Defence’, Swedish version and English Executive Summary
FMI 2000	Departementsserien 1999:55 ‘EU säkerhet svensk försvar’/‘European security Swedens defence’; Swedish version and English summary
FMP 00-04	Försvarsmakten Idee. Armed Forces Idea 2000. Contribution of the Commander-in-Chief for the Defence Resolution 1988
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Samenvatting (Summary)

Leiderschap en institutionele hervormingen in consensus democratieën. De Nederlandse en Zweedse dienstplicht na de Koude Oorlog

Het einde van de Koude Oorlog betekende niet noodzakelijkerwijs het einde van de dienstplicht in Westerse democratieën. De reactie van verschillende landen op het einde van de Koude Oorlog (of: de val van het IJzeren Gordijn) wordt gekenmerkt door een grote mate van variatie. Nederland en Zweden hebben ten opzichte van elkaar zeer verschillend gereageerd ten aanzien van de dienstplicht. Terwijl Nederland al in 1993 besloot de opkomstplicht op te schorten (wat de facto de afschaffing van de dienstplicht betekende) houdt Zweden tot op de dag van vandaag aan deze militaire institutie vast. De empirische vraag van dit onderzoek luidt dan ook: Waarom heeft Nederland de dienstplicht (vrij) snel na de Koude Oorlog afgeschaft en Zweden niet?

De veronderstelling die in deze studie centraal staat is dat na de Koude Oorlog grote legers voor de landsverdediging overbodig werden. Dit stelde de defensieorganisaties voor grote uitdagingen. Daarom wordt het onderzoek in de bredere context van crises en hervormingsliteratuur geplaatst. De vraag is hoe de actoren binnen de organisaties op de veranderende veiligheidsomgeving hebben gereageerd. Het is de verwachting dat de beantwoording van de empirische vraag nieuwe inzichten verschaft in complexe hervormingen en beleidsveranderingen binnen consensus democratieën. Een bijzondere rol binnen deze veranderingsprocessen wordt hierbij aan leiders toegeschreven. Het argument luidt dat de relatie tussen politieke en administratieve leiders een belangrijke factor is voor de timing, snelheid en omvang van hervormingen in de defensiesectoren van Nederland en Zweden. Bovendien wordt verondersteld dat de meeste leiders voor een conservatieve strategie kiezen. Dat wil zeggen dat zij de status-quo en de integriteit van een institutie zo lang mogelijk willen bewaren en hooguit incrementele verandering nastreven. Het onderzoek concentreert zich op de vragen *waarom* leiders hervormen, *hoe* zij het doen en wat de *uitkomsten* zijn, met betrekking tot *beleidsveranderingen* en de *effectiviteit van crisismanagement*.

Conditie voor hervormend en conserverend leiderschap

Internationale en nationale gebeurtenissen, zoals crises, kunnen de percepties van beleidsmakers beïnvloeden om kansen, die door deze gebeurtenissen ontstaan, te benutten en veranderingen door te voeren. Niet-crisis gebeurtenissen, dat wil zeggen gebeurtenissen die maar beperkte kosten veroorzaken of politieke elites maar minimale handelingsvrijheid verschaffen, scheppen een beperkte ruimte voor verandering. Crises creëren kansen voor verandering doordat zij grote inefficiënties aan het daglicht brengen of de institutionele beperkingen voor leiders opheffen. Cortell en Peterson formuleren vier hypothesen hoe de keuze van leiders om al dan niet van een beleidsraam (window of opportunity) gebruik te maken beïnvloed wordt: het crisisbewustzijn, politieke afwegingen, innerlijke overtuiging en de institutionele positie van de leider.

Deze studie bevestigt de meeste hypothesen van Cortell en Peterson. Opvallend is dat de hypothesen vooral helpen de strategieën van conserverende actoren te begrijpen: zowel in Nederland als in Zweden leidde een verhoogd crisisbewustzijn – het einde van de Koude Oorlog verhoogde de onzekerheid met betrekking tot de internationale omge-

ving – tot een conserverende strategie bij politici en militaire leiders. Men wilde de status quo van de Koude Oorlogsorganisatie vrij lang instandhouden. Pas toen het gevoel van dreiging verminderde waren sommige leiders bereid hervormingen door te voeren.

Hypothesen	Nederland	Zweden	Toetsing	Hy-
			pothesen	
Crisisbewustzijn	Conserverende actoren vreesden een crisis voor de organisatie bij afschaffing dienstplicht; Hervormende actoren vreesden geen crisis in de nationale veiligheid, maar verwachtten hoge kosten voor de organisatie.	1991: Conserverende actoren vreesden crisis voor de organisatie → vermindering personeel, investeringen in zwaar materieel; 1998: Hervormers vreesden geen crisis in de nationale veiligheid, maar eisten veranderingen omdat zij uitholling van de organisatie vreesden	(+) Door empirie gesteund	
Politieke wegingen	af- Meerderheidsregering, Internationale politieke afwegingen (NAVO) door conserverende Politieke voordeel voor hervormers werd pas in een laat stadium van het beleidsproces duidelijk (verbetering van de institutionele positie van de minister van Defensie)	Allemaal minderheidsregeringen; 1991: centrumrechtse regering gesteund door rechtse partij, conserverende strategie door zwaar materieel te kopen 1994: kabinetswisseling (minderheidsregering sociaal-democraten) 1995: innen van het vredesdividend 1998: geen steun voor investeringen door de linkse partijen, bezuinigingen maar grote organisationele hervormingen (wel dienstplicht houden)	(+) Door empirie gesteund	
Innerlijke overtuiging	Ideologie beperkte conserverende leiders; Pragmatische hervormers	Ideologie beperkte conserverende leiders; Pragmatische hervormers	(-/+) Niet gesteund voor hervormende leiders	
Institutionele positie	Minister van Defensie groeit in zijn ambt; Verzwakkende positie Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken; A-politieke militaire leiders	1991: Sterke Minister van Defensie; Politiek zwakke militaire leiders 1995: Zwakke Minister van Defensie Sterke en politiek georiënteerde militaire leider 1998: Zwakke Minister van Defensie Sterk politiek opererende militaire leider	(+) Aanvulling voor theorie: ook de positie van ambtelijke en militaire leiders van belang	

Tabel 1: Conditie voor leiderschap: de proposities van Cortell en Peterson getoetst

In Nederland waren dit vanaf 1992 de minister van Defensie R. ter Beek en de topambtenaren D. Barth en J. de Winter; in Zweden vanaf de tweede helft van de jaren 1990 vooral de opperbevelhebber O. Wiktorin en later de sociaal-democratische minister van Defensie B. von Sydow

Politieke afwegingen speelden eveneens een rol, zij het dat in Nederland het voordeel voor de hervormers (met name een sterkere positie voor de minister van Defensie binnen de sector) pas in een laat stadium van het hervormingsproces duidelijk werd. Dit hing dus nauw samen met de institutionele positie van de betrokken leiders (hypothese vier). In de loop van het hervormingsproces groeide de minister van Defensie Ter Beek in zijn rol. Hij ging (het pleit tegen) de generaals en de minister van Buitenlandse Zaken niet langer uit de weg. In Zweden lag vanaf de tweede helft van de jaren negentig de winst voor de hervormers vooral in het verwerven van steun voor de sociaal-democratische minderheidsregering door de linkse partijen. Omwille van deze steun werd op de defensiebegroting bezuinigd, hetgeen ten koste ging van de dienstplicht. Binnen de sterk afgeslankte Zweedse strijdkrachten, die zich bovendien bijna uitsluitend op crisismanagement concentreerden, was geen plaats meer voor een groot deel van de rekruten. Minder dan 25% van een cohort moest tegen het einde van de vorige eeuw daadwerkelijk opkomen.

Eén hypothese wordt in deze studie echter niet bevestigd. De innerlijke overtuiging van de leiders speelt een andere rol dan verwacht. Het blijkt dat in Nederland vooral die leiders tot hervorming overgingen die een pragmatische instelling hanteerden. Met name de Nederlandse minister van Defensie was, ondanks zijn herhaaldelijk geuite steun voor de dienstplicht, op het moment dat het politiek voor hem voordelig leek bereid deze steun te laten varen. Ideologie en innerlijke overtuiging vormden vooral een keurslijf voor conserverende leiders. Het werd op gegeven moment zo strak, dat zij blijkbaar niet meer flexibel genoeg waren om binnen een opponerende institutionele omgeving tactisch te handelen, zoals bij de Bevelhebber der Landmacht R. Wilmink en de Chef van de Defensiestaf A. van der Vlis het geval was. Ook in de Zweedse casus bleek dat de sociaal-democratische leiders die té krampachtig aan een grote Volksdefensie vasthielden, zoals de minister van Defensie T. G. Peterson (1994-1997), de invloed op het proces kwijtraakten.

Van conserverend naar hervormend leiderschap

De theorie van Cortell en Peterson is minder geschikt om het daadwerkelijke handelen van leiders tijdens een beleidsproces te bestuderen. Hun theorie verschaft voornamelijk inzicht in de vraag *waarom* leiders conserverend dan wel hervormend handelen. Daarom wordt in deze studie gebruik gemaakt van de theorie van hervormend leiderschap van 't Hart. Deze theorie omhelst vijf hypothesen, die de communicatieve en de strategische, coalitievormende dimensie van leiderschap beschrijven. Bij de communicatieve dimensie horen hypothesen met betrekking tot de ontmaskering van de *status quo*, de communicatie van wilskracht en het propageren van de oplossing. De strategische dimensie bevat hypothesen met betrekking tot de coöptatie van de uitvoerders en de controle over et spel.

Tegelijkertijd worden er kanttekeningen bij deze theorie geplaatst. Anders dan 't Hart's theorie doet vermoeden, blijkt uit deze studie dat de meeste leiders in defensie-sectoren aanvankelijk probeerden de integriteit en de status-quo van de sector na de Koude Oorlog te bewaren. Zowel in Zweden als in Nederland domineerden conserve-

rende actoren bij het definiëren van de situatie (hypothese 1). In Nederland drukte vooral de minister van Buitenlandse Zaken H. van den Broek zijn stempel op de Defensienota 1991. Volgens zijn veiligheidsanalyse waren er in de wereld nog te veel onzekerheden om veranderingen door te kunnen voeren. In Zweden slaagden de conservatieve minister van Defensie A. Björck en staatssecretaris M. Sahlin begin jaren negentig erin om nieuw, zwaar materieel te kopen en onderstreepten zij aldus het blijvende belang van territoriale defensie. In hun ogen was de wereld door het uiteenvallen van de Sovjet Unie juist onzekerder geworden. Pas wanneer de dominante opinie geloofde in een duurzame vrede lukte het de hervormers ruimte te creëren voor de opschorting van de opkomstplicht (Nederland in 1992) respectievelijk de opkomst onder een zodanig niveau te laten zakken dat er nog maar met moeite van een algemene dienstplicht kan worden gesproken (Zweden na 1996).

In de vergelijking tussen Nederland en Zweden zijn te weinig voorbeelden van de door 't Hart benadrukte 'leiderschapstandems' gevonden om de theorie te steunen dan wel te verwerpen (hypothese 2). Opvallend is wel het solistische optreden van conserverende leiders. In Nederland en Zweden waren voorstanders van de dienstplicht vaak zo overtuigd van hun gelijk dat zij het zoeken van medestanders achterwege lieten. Een uitzondering vormt de combinatie Björck/Sahlin, die in het begin van de jaren negentig de technologische vernieuwingsplannen kon doorvoeren, die de burgerlijke partijen reeds in de Koude Oorlog hadden ontwikkeld.

Björck en Sahlin investeerden veel tijd om politieke tegenstanders en burgers te overtuigen van de wenselijkheid van moderne territoriale strijdkrachten (hypothese 3). Alle andere conserverende leiders, zowel in Zweden als in Nederland, hadden óf helemaal geen plannen, óf presenteerden reactionaire, politiek onhaalbare plannen. De hervormende leiders maakten daarentegen herhaaldelijk gebruik van proefballonnen om de wenselijkheid van hun plannen te testen. Ter Beek deed dit met strategisch getimede toespraken en de Zweedse opperbevelhebber Wiktorin met optredens in de (massa)media.

Hypothesen	Nederland	Zweden	Toetsing hypothesen
Definitie van de situatie	Conserverende actoren: Bedreiging voor land, het Nederlandse Imago en de organisatie; Hervormende actoren: helemaal geen bedreigingen, alleen maar kansen	Conserverende actoren: veiligheidssituatie en begrotingsbezuinigingen gevaar voor het land, de organisatie en de democratie; Hervormers: geen bedreigende internationale omgeving; bezuinigingen gevaar voor defensiecapaciteit	(-) Andersom: alleen een hoog veiligheidsgevoel biedt ruimte voor verandering. Conserverende actoren moeten crisis in de veiligheidsomgeving overdrijven om veranderingen sector te voorkomen
Communicatie van wilskracht	Hervormers gecommitteerd op politiek veelbelovende momenten; Overgecommiteerde conserverende actoren, solisten	Succesvolle congruente teams van hervormers en conserverende leiders; overgecommiteerde conserverende leiders, solisten	(+) Noodzakelijk
Propageren van de oplossing	Hervormers: goed gedefinieerde uitvoerbare plannen, proefballonnen, communicatie via ver-	Goed gespecificeerde plannen conserverende leiders 1991: dreigingscenario met wenselijke en	(+) Noodzakelijk Toevoeging: Proefballonnen voor hervormingsplannen

	schillende kanalen, veel politiek werk; Conserverende actoren: reactionair, geen duidelijk plan in het publieke debat, geen sterke argumenten tegen de plannen van de hervormers, overdrijven van problemen in plannen voor intern gebruik of voor commissie	haalbare opties om de status quo te versterken; Björck 1994: reactionair; Peterson 1994-97: inkrimping strijdkrachten, maar reactionaire voorstander dienstplicht; Hervormers 1997-2000: Van reactief tot hervormend leiderschap met onvermijdelijke, wenselijke plannen, proefballonnen	
Coöptatie van de uitvoerders	Hervormers noch conserverende leiders, desondanks loyale implementatie	Conserverende leiders 1991: ja Andere conserverende leiders: nee Hervormers: ja	(+/-) Toevoeging: Hoe sterker de institutionele positie leider des te onbelangrijker deze hypothese
Controle over het spel	Besloten informele structuur sector, hiërarchisch, zwakke institutionele positie Chef Defensiestaf, dualistisch parlement	Open formele structuur sector, veranderend van horizontal naar hiërarchisch, monistisch parlement	(+) Noodzakelijk Toevoeging: Ook ambtelijke/militaire leiders hebben controle mogelijkheden

Tabel 2: Hoe leiders in Nederland en Zweden hervormen of conserveren: de theorie van 't Hart getoetst

Voor het belang van de coöptatie van de uitvoerders, de vierde hypothese, zijn voor beide landen verschillende uitkomsten gevonden. De uitkomst was afhankelijk van de institutionele inrichting van de sector en minder afhankelijk van het vermogen van een leider. In Nederland was het aantal besluitvormers dat betrokken was bij totstandkoming van het defensiebeleid tot een minimum gereduceerd. Bovendien kon er geen nadelig effect voor de beleidsimplementatie (opschorting) worden vastgesteld ondanks de uitsluiting van de implementerende actoren van het proces. In Zweden worden traditioneel veel actoren reeds in een vroeg stadium bij de totstandkoming van beleid betrokken. Het parlement en de opperbevelhebber van de strijdkrachten schrijven regelmatig rapporten, meestal naar aanleiding van een voorzet door de minister van Defensie. Deze rapporten liggen vaak ten grondslag aan de uiteindelijke beleidsnota's en wetsteksten. Maatschappelijke organisaties en gedecentraliseerde bestuursorganen, zoals de dienst voor de militaire keuring (Pliktverket) of de civiele crisis management autoriteit (ÖCB), worden expliciet uitgenodigd wetsvoorstellen te becommentariëren (zogenaamde remiss). Dit in combinatie met een brede steunverwerving binnen de strijdkrachten voor het beleid van Björck/Sahlin (nieuw materieel en inkrimping) en later van Wiktorin (nieuwe taken en inkrimping), heeft ervoor gezorgd dat er weinig weerstand was bij de implementerende actoren.

De laatste hypothese gaat over procedureel leiderschap: het vermogen van beleidsmakers om de regels van het politieke spel om beleid te controleren. Vooral het beheersen van de politieke en publieke agenda blijkt in beide landen van groot belang te zijn. Zowel de Nederlandse minister van Defensie Ter Beek als zijn Zweedse ambtsgenoot Von Sydow slaagden erin het onderwerp dienstplicht uit het publieke debat te houden

zo lang zij het politiek noodzakelijk achtten. Dit deden zij voornamelijk door het instellen van commissies (waarbij de samenstelling als zodanig van ondergeschikt belang was) en door actoren, zoals bijvoorbeeld de militaire leiders in Nederland vanaf de zomer 1992, bewust buiten de besluitvorming te houden. In Nederland was de inbreng van militaire leiders ten aanzien van het onderwerp beperkt en in Zweden boycotte Von Sydow een breed aangelegd congres over de toekomst van de dienstplicht

De politieke context van leiderschap: hervorming in consensus democratieën

De studie laat zien dat naast persoonlijke leiderschapskwaliteiten eveneens de structurele beperking of ruimte van de sector van invloed is op hervormingen. In navolging van Lijphart wordt een onderscheid gemaakt tussen de regering/partij dimensie en de federalisme/eenheidsstaat dimensie.

Vooraf voor de tweede dimensie lijkt maar een enkele factor voor het Nederlandse hervormingsproces van belang te zijn geweest, namelijk de moeilijkheid om de constitutie te veranderen. Tijdens het hele beleidsproces dreigde de afschaffing van de dienstplicht vooral stuk te lopen op het vinden van de benodigde meerderheid voor een Grondwetswijziging. Pas tegen het einde van het proces werd de benodigde meerderheid gevonden door in plaats van afschaffing de opkomstplicht op te schorten. Dit was voornamelijk een tegemoetkoming aan diegenen, die vreesden dat in geval van een toekomstige bedreiging van Nederland niet voldoende soldaten opgesteld konden worden. De hervormers speelden handig in op deze grondwettelijke beperking. Doordat zij herhaaldelijk juridisch advies inwonnen, ook door de Raad van State, slaagden zij erin het onderwerp uit het politieke debat te houden. Voor Zweden is geen enkel bewijs voor het belang van deze dimensie gevonden.

De regering/partij dimensie lijkt veel meer aan de behoeftes van de hervormers (Nederland) respectievelijk de tegenstanders van afschaffing (Zweden) tegemoet te komen. De Zweedse sociaal-democraten hadden in de tweede helft van de jaren negentig en de steun van de linkse partijen om op defensie te bezuinigen en de organisatie te verkleinen. Dezelfde partijen waren echter zulke grote voorstanders van de dienstplicht, ondermeer omdat zij een professioneel leger niet vertrouwden, dat ze elk debat over afschaffing tegenhielden. In Nederland bood vooral een meerderheid van sociaal- en christen-democraten ruimte voor opschorting van de opkomstplicht, waarbij soms het parlement (via moties), soms de regering invloed op het proces had. Voor de sociaal-democratische minister van Defensie bood vooral de steun door de christen-democratische parlementariërs, die grote voorstander van afschaffing waren, de kans om zijn beleidsruimte ten opzichte van de christen-democratische minister van Buitenlandse Zaken als ook ten opzichte van de premier en de CDA fractievoorzitter te vergroten. Lubbers en Brinkman dachten vooral over de mogelijkheid van een combinatie dienstplicht – sociale plicht na.

	Consensus democratie	Nederland	Zweden
Regering-partij dimensie	1. Machtsdeling regering in meerpartijen coalitie	+	-
	2. Uitgewogen machtsba- lans regering-parlement	+	+/-
	3. Meerpartijen systeem	+	-
	4. Proportionele representa-	+/-	-

	tie		
	5. Gecoördineerde en corporatistisch belangengroepsysteem met als doel elkaar te consulteren en compromissen te sluiten	+/-	+/-
Federalisme/eenheidsstaat dimensie	6. Federale en gedecentraliseerde overheid	+/-	+/-
	7. Verdeling wetgevingsbevoegdheid tussen twee even sterke maar verschillende kamers	+/-	+/-
	8. Starre constitutie die alleen met bijzondere meerderheid gewijzigd kan worden	+	+/-
	9. Wetten kunnen door rechters aan de grondwet getoetst worden	+/-	+/-
	10. Onafhankelijke centrale bank	+/-	+/-

Tabel 3: Dienstplichtbeleid in Nederland en Zweden na de Koude Oorlog en de ruimte voor hervormend leiderschap. + = positieve leiderschapsomgeving, - = negatieve omgeving, +/- = niet van toepassing of niet belangrijk

In beide cases is de manoeuvreerruimte van leiders beperkt door het sectorale beleidsstelsel. Deze studie vindt echter wel bewijzen dat leiders in staat waren het stelsel te spelen. Bijna niemand van de actoren volgde een statische leiderschapsstijl of was een statisch leiderschapstype. Het valt op dat hoe actiever een leider zich opstelde, dwz voluit, hoe eerder hij bereid was zijn plannen te verdedigen, politieke meerderheden te verwerven door goed gecommuniceerde plannen, kortom de beperkingen die in het stelsel besloten liggen te overwinnen, des te groter zijn kans was de sector te hervormen dan wel te conserveren. Dat dit geen open doel is, of dat deze tactiek niet vanzelfsprekend is, wordt aangetoond door de ‘verliezers’ van het hervormingsproces in Nederland en Zweden. Het succes van Björck in 1991 bleek in 1994 verdwenen. Tijdens de verkiezingen van 1994 was niemand meer overtuigd van een reële dreiging zoals in 1991. De succesvolle Van den Broek van de defensienota 1991 speelde tijdens het proces voorafgaande aan de Prioriteitennota 1993 nauwelijks een rol van betekenis. De militaire leiders in Nederland, die weliswaar duidelijke plannen voor de toekomst van de strijdkrachten en de dienstplicht hadden, communiceerden deze niet breed genoeg en elk debat over een alternatieve toekomst – zonder dienstplicht – werd ontmoedigd. De met betrekking tot de dienstplicht zeer rigide minister van Defensie Peterson, bleef onafgebroken op hoge opkomstcijfers hameren, terwijl de werkelijkheid al een heel andere ontwikkeling liet zien. De casus laten zien dat veel actoren zich meer beperkten in hun keuzes dan door het stelsel, of te wel de institutionele inrichting van de sector, was voorgegeven.

Wat in beide landen opviel, is de afwezigheid van crisisbesef. Het einde van de Koude Oorlog was noodzakelijk om het ‘raam’ voor hervormingen te openen, maar geen van de actoren voelden of communiceerden dit als een crisis die hervormingen

noodzakelijk maakten. Maar weinig actoren gebruikten een dreigingsanalyse om veranderingen tegen te houden. Alhoewel het aantal landen en aan het aantal leiders te beperkt is om algemene uitspraken te doen, is het toch mogelijk te veronderstellen dat crises geen noodzakelijke voorwaarde voor hervormingen in consensus democratieën zijn. Beleidmakers in beide landen reageerden op het einde van de Koude Oorlog en het gunstige beleidsklimaat voor hervormingen van de defensie sectoren in beide landen. De bestudering van het gedrag leiders helpt ons de veranderingen in de Nederlandse en Zweedse defensiesectoren na de Koude Oorlog te begrijpen.

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